A Furrow Laid Bare

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A FURROW LAID BARE

Neerlandia District History

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Neerlandia Historical Society wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following institutions and persons:
Heritage Hall, Calvin College and Seminary
Provincial Museum and Archives, Edmonton
Lorne R. Buhr, Legislature Library, Edmonton
Allan Charles, county manager, County of Barrhead #11
Herman Frescher of Shoal Creek for his help in obtaining photos of coins and paper money
Herman Ganzevoort of the University of Calgary for material, advice, and editorial assistance
Al Granger of Friesen Printers for his assistance
Benita Hinse of Canada Post
Ellen Matheis of Sioux Center, Iowa, U.S.A. for help with editing and design
Norman Matheis of Sioux Center, Iowa, U.S.A. for his original drawings for the chapter title pages
Albert van der Heide of *The Windmill Herald* for providing photos
Bill Weber of Alberta Education
C. H. Weir for supplying data on the titles of the land in the hamlet
The society is also grateful for the grant from Alberta Culture

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ISBN 0-88925-465-6

NOV 19 1986

Published by
Neerlandia Historical Society
Neerlandia, Alberta T0G 1R0
Canada

First printing, 1985

Printed and bound in Canada by
Friesen Printers
16644-117 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5M 3W2
Canada
Head Office
Altona, Manitoba
Canada

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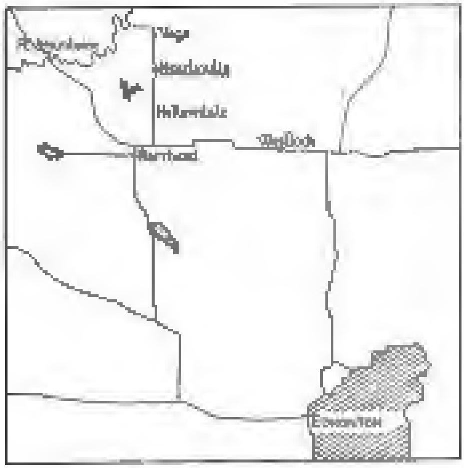
PREFACE

The Neerlandia community is defined as much by church affiliation as by the location of one's land. Therefore the boundaries have been delineated in two ways. Since those who began the community settled in a certain area of Townships 61 and 62, anyone who resides or formerly resided on these sections has been recorded in the book. In addition, anyone who is affiliated with either the Canadian Reformed Church or the Christian Reformed Church in Neerlandia has been included even though they live outside the physical boundaries.

We regret that we were unable to contact some former residents and that some residents did not submit family histories.



INTRODUCTION

For many years the people of Neerlandia said to each other, "Somebody should write a book about Neerlandia," and everyone always agreed. For many years that is all that happened.

Then in 1982 a group of old-timers, children of the original settlers, met to discuss ways and means of recording the history of Neerlandia. Very quickly this group realized the immensity of the task which lay before them. Already in their seventies and with little formal education, they believed the task to be beyond them. They turned to us, their children, and we willingly shouldered the burden.

As we engaged in this labour of love, we grew to appreciate the sacrifices which our forefathers had made to provide a better life for their children. We began to realize the courage and faith they had, but above all we saw the leading of God in their lives.

Neerlandia, whose story we tell, is a unique community. Almost all of its residents, since 1911, have been of one ethnic background — Dutch — and of one faith — Protestants of Reformed persuasion.

There is more than one way to record the history of any area. We have attempted not only to record the events that took place in Neerlandia from 1911 to 1984, but also to show how a people whose express purpose was to establish a Christian community have worked toward that goal.

To you, the reader, we offer this book — a history of Neerlandia. We hope that the people whose stories are recorded herein become as real to you as they did to us.

Neerlandia Historical Society
Editors:
Elsie Navis
Joy Siebring-Wierenga

A FURROW LAID BARE

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

bare as a furrow

[illegible]

[illegible]

Carrie Groot

HOW WE REMEMBER

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Part One

Historical Frame Work

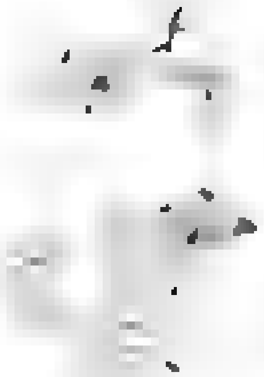
The Setting

FLORA AND FAUNA

[illegible]

Plants

[illegible] spruce, and tamarack. In lesser numbers birch, aspen [illegible]



[illegible]

white peavine grows everywhere

[illegible]

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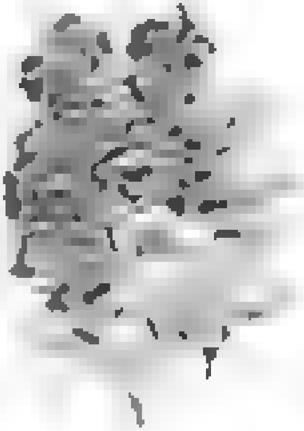


[illegible]

[illegible]

source of wonder and praise

[illegible]

in spring

[illegible]

[illegible]

heralds of spring

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

sudden swoop of a nighthawk

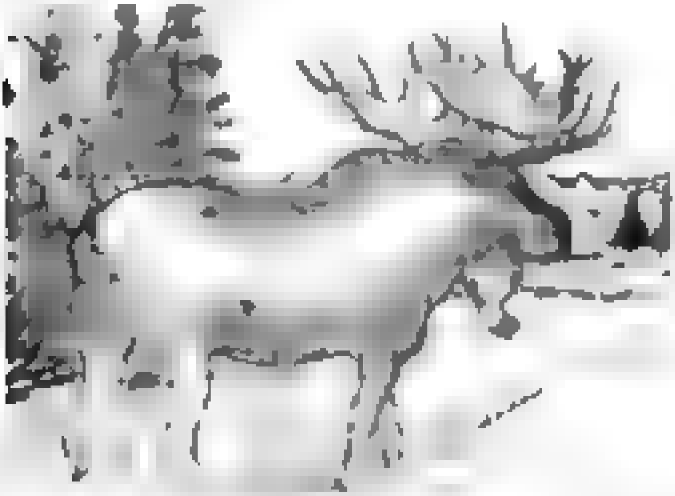
[illegible]

waters. At night the whoo-whoo of an owl could be heard. The great gray owl and the great horned owl are two of the owls which lived in the area. The horned owl, with a head that appeared as large as its body, could be seen sitting in a tree. The [illegible] of gray jays or whiskey jacks [illegible] with a "brrrrrr" [illegible] in the hidden encampment [illegible] could.

Then one morning the Indian was out [illegible] a flock of snow buntings [illegible] swooping about. [illegible] appeared dark [illegible] as the thick tree [illegible]. He knew that fall was over and winter was at hand, for these birds never entered the area [illegible] snow and winter would have [illegible]. Other birds that spent the winter would be seen. He thought of the long winter ahead and hoped that he would be able to shoot ruffed grouse and other [illegible] for his family. They were easy to spot [illegible] in trees but [illegible] that they [illegible] flew away [illegible] before he could release an arrow. The spruce hen, though not as [illegible], was equally [illegible]. As he mused the first snowflakes began to fall and soon the ground was covered with snow.

Mammals

Standing at the edge of the timber on high ground, the bull moose surveyed [illegible]. To the southeast he could see a lake; to the west was the muskeg. The moose had lived here in the swampy land of Alberta for many years. On his hide were scars from battles fought with other moose in the rutting season, but for the moment he was at peace. He lowered his head and began to browse on the tender willows that were all around him. As he browsed he gradually wandered into the muskeg.



[illegible]

[illegible] trees with tender foliage.

[illegible]

[illegible] ways again.

[illegible] marten retired to eat its meal.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The Northern Lights

Those who have seen the Northern Lights have looked in awe at this display of heavenly beauty. There is something so fragile and fleeting, yet so awe-inspiring, about the rays and bundles of light which seem to chase one another across the sky! At first a few bundles appear, then suddenly the sky is filled with rolling running spikes of white, yellow, green, pink, and blue light! They disappear and re-appear and tumble over each other, first here, then there like beautiful long fingers of coloured light. At times the rustling, tinkling sound of the Lights can also be heard.

Hoarfrost

How lovely the landscape is transformed by the first pure white blanket of snow! But a far greater beauty can be seen some winter mornings — every tree, stalk of grain, blade of grass — everything that can raise its head above the snow is covered with hoarfrost. Shrubs, grasses, and weeds are also covered with the beautiful, white, snowlike icy foliage, a display of such great beauty by the Creator. Then the sun comes up and makes the hoarfrost sparkle and dazzle like myriads of diamonds. But the sun also ends this phenomena. With soft plops, the white covering falls to the ground to blend with the soft white snow. So ends a world encased in glittering crystal, again to appear during some other winter night.

Dark Sojourners

EARLY SOJOURNERS: PRE 1910

Neerlandia as a township has a relatively young history [illegible] compared to the thousands of years before white settlers moved in. There the area has [illegible] native tribes [illegible] trappers and traders [illegible] thirty years before settlement began. In those times the area was [illegible] [illegible] The native peoples [illegible] here [illegible] time [illegible] [illegible] remnants of [illegible] [illegible] knowledge of geography, archeology and geology for the rest.

Pre-history in the Neerlandia District

The pre-history of Neerlandia is extremely sketchy. All there is to go on are the tools and [illegible] projectile points which were left behind. These do reveal that a culture did exist here many years ago and [illegible] new [illegible] but [illegible] anything [illegible]

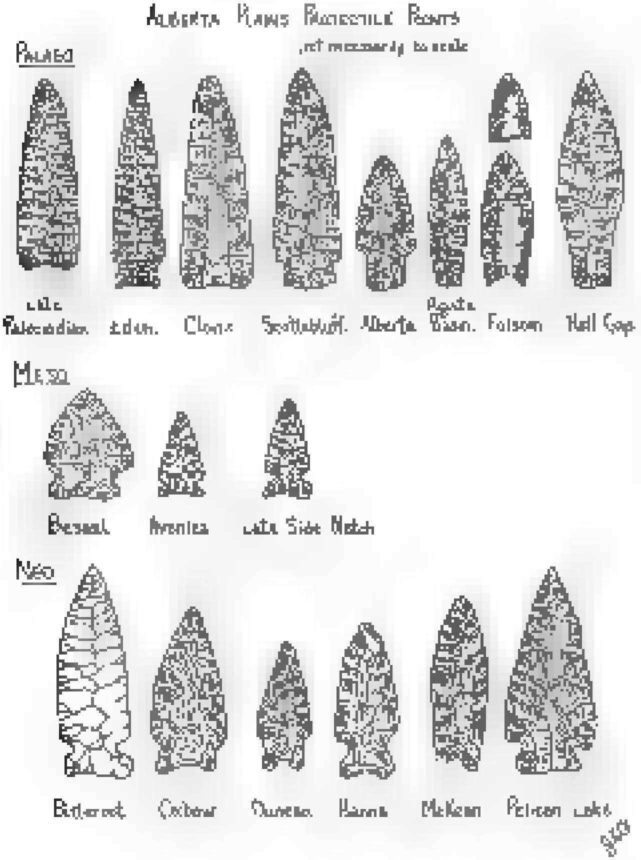
There are many theories of how man came to live in Alberta, much of it speculation. The following ideas are generally agreed upon by archaeologists:

1. Early man arrived in North America from Asia, bringing with them traits such as copper-coloured skin, straight black hair and high cheekbones.
2. They came by way of the Bering Strait which probably was dry land at one time, owing to the larger quantities of water frozen at the earth's ice caps.
3. These people were a Stone Age people, highly skilled at flint knapping [illegible] a [illegible] advantage [illegible] these early inhabitants.
4. They came when much of North America was frozen and travelled through an ice free corridor through western day Alberta.

While many projectile points have been [illegible] in [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] bows and arrows [illegible] [illegible] thought that the bow and arrow probably arrived in Alberta at [illegible] A.D. and the projectile points made before that time are [illegible] spearheads. Not all spearheads however are older than [illegible] A.D.

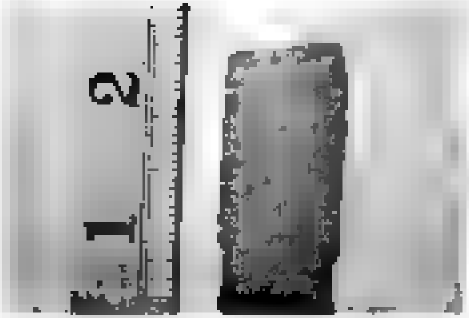
As to the points themselves, much can be learned. Numerous [illegible] points have been found in Alberta and are grouped according to periods [illegible] points are the oldest and [illegible] points are the most recent. Each particular point has a name based on the location where the first such point was located, not necessarily in Alberta.

Clovis and Folsom points, first found in the American Midwest, are the oldest [illegible] found in Alberta. They are characterized by a [illegible] near the base of the point

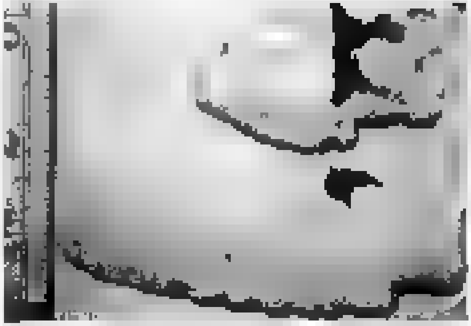


— a so-called 'fluted' point. This type of point is unlikely to be found in the Neerlandia district.

Other Palaeo points, however, have been found. Several fine specimens of Eden points have been located near Shoal Lake. One such point, shown in photograph, though broken and insignificant-looking, is special because of the type of stone used in its construction and the quality of work it displays. Apparently this point was made from Beaver River sandstone, a rock unique to the Fort McMurray area. This may indicate trading patterns between the two regions or a seasonal (or permanent) migration of Indians from that area to the Neerlandia district. This point is also special because the quality of workmanship shows concern for aesthetics as well.

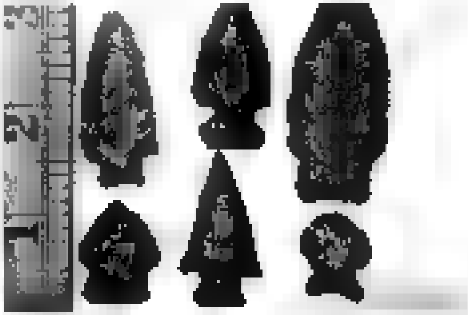


An Eden point from Beaver River sandstone. Note: All artifacts from collections of Cor and Russel Fisher.



Eden and Scottsbluff points

Oxbow points, smaller point Besant, broken point unknown

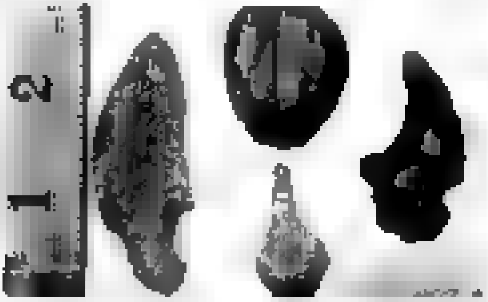


Top: Hanna, Pelican Lake, Scottsbluff. Bottom: Besant, Pelican Lake, Besant.

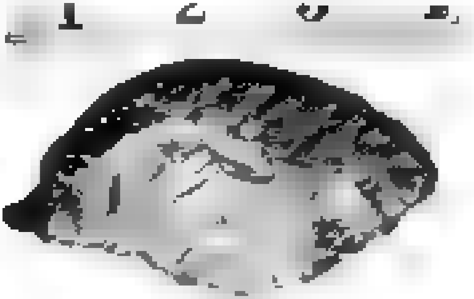
Another almost-intact Eden point was found along Shoal Lake and was constructed from another foreign type of rock — a so-called Knife River flint, commonly found in North Dakota. The stone is a dark translucent colour and is encased in a limestone-like shell. Since archaeologists rarely locate Eden, Scottsbluff, and Alberta points north of Edmonton, these projectile points are quite significant.

A variety of points have been found in the area, but Oxbow and McKean points are probably the most common in the numerous collections around. In addition to what has been noted thus far, other factors to consider when studying the points for identification are size, notched or straight ends, concave or convex bases, the angle of the point, and the kind of chips taken off the point. Even experienced archaeologists find it difficult to categorize all points.

Early man used stone for a great many of his tools, not simply for projectiles. One such small tool was probably used as a spokeshave. This object was bound to a small wooden handle and used to shave the shafts of wooden spears or arrows. Another tool, a small unifacial cutter (worked on one side only), was perhaps used to cut animal hides. Some cutters were constructed of obsidian, which was highly valued for its cutting qualities. The nearest source of obsidian to the area's early inhabitants was most likely the interior of B.C. More common than cutters were bifacial scrapers — large granite or quartzite scrapers chipped on both sides, commonly known as hide scrapers.



Blade, cutter, spearhead. Flint punch



Scraper

Stoneworking was an art common to early man. Judging from the artifacts, he had to be highly skilled, have great strength in his hands, and have a great deal of patience since flaking required this. Often, a piece of moose or caribou hide was placed in the palm to protect the workman's hands from cuts and bruises. Antlers or other stones were probably used to shape the stone. A flake could be expertly chipped from both edges of a projectile point, generating the rib-like design illustrated by the Eden point. Skill was required in selecting the right kind of stone as well, and a brisk trade in Beaver River sandstone from a quarry site near Fort McMurray may have developed.

Early man used his weapons sparingly. Since most points were chipped or broken upon contact with animal bone, hunters wanted to be sure a hit meant a kill. Weapons such as spears and arrows were used in conjunction with snares and deadfalls, with the projectile weapons usually "finishing off" the prey.

Native Peoples in the Neerlandia District: The Beaver, the Cree, and the Assiniboine

Before 1780, bands of Beaver Indians made their camps along the shores of Shoal Lake near the mouth of the creek and hunted the forests. The migratory Indians had one primary concern: food. When they were unable to bring down large game, which was often the case, they would eat the plentiful hares, unless of course these were low in their cycle. Survival was a relentless chore; starvation was reality.

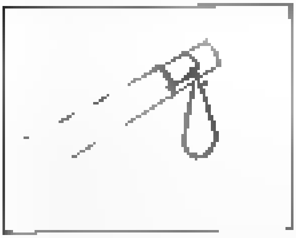
In the hunt, snares and deadfalls were frequently used. Weapons like the bow and arrow and spear were more rare, used usually to kill a snared animal. It was far easier to allow the animals to trap themselves than to expend precious energy chasing them.

Snares were used on animals whose heads were larger than their necks: grouse, hare, fox, lynx, caribou, moose and bear. The

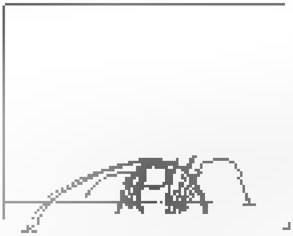
Flint weapons. Drawn from a sketch in National Geographic. Used with permission.

pole snare required a human nearby. The noose snare, probably made from black spruce rootlets gathered in the fall, may have been used to strangle animals already trapped in a set snare, so as not to damage their furs. A spring pole snare required no human assistance.

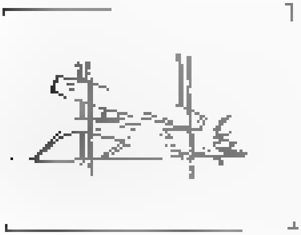
Deadfalls were traps constructed of logs and a bait. When an animal tugged at the bait a heavy log would come crashing down onto its back or neck. The animal rarely lived as a broken neck or crushed skull was enough to cause death.



pole snare



spring snare



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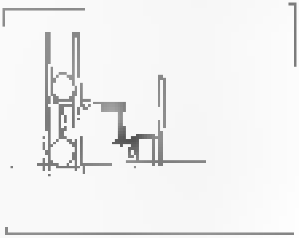
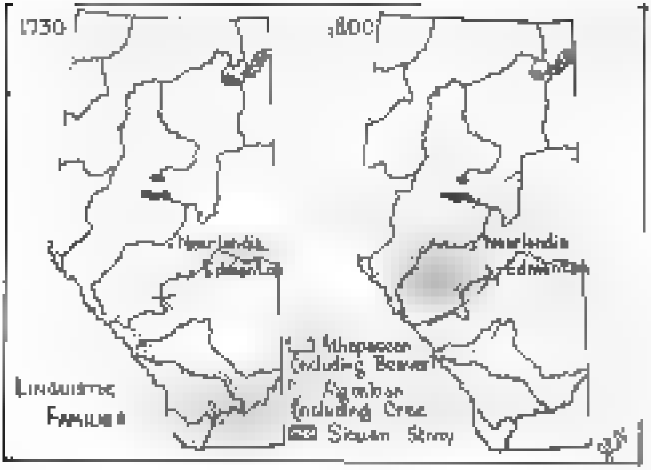


[illegible]

These hunters lived as an integral part of nature. They believed that the animals they hunted allowed themselves to be killed to prevent the hunter from starving. The Beaver Indian considered himself a part of the environment, not a master of it.

The local Beaver Indians experienced the effects of the fur trade (probably as early as 1740) when they began trapping furs for their eastern neighbours, the Cree. The steel trap may have replaced the traditional snares and deadfalls as early as 1800. Yet the benefits of the fur trade — metal goods, guns, liquor, and beads — found their way slowly to the isolated regions of northern Alberta, and European influence on the Beaver way of life was indirect.

By the mid-1700s, events were transpiring that would eventually disrupt the Beaver way of life in the Neetlandia area. The Cree Indians in the Northern forests of Ontario and Quebec around Hudson Bay had begun to exhaust the furs in that area. As well, Canadian merchants began building forts farther and farther westward. The Crees began to migrate in advance of the fur trading posts, in search of more pelts. As they moved west, they put pressure on other tribes, such as the Beaver, to make way. Resistance to the Cree was not feasible; the Cree had the advantage of



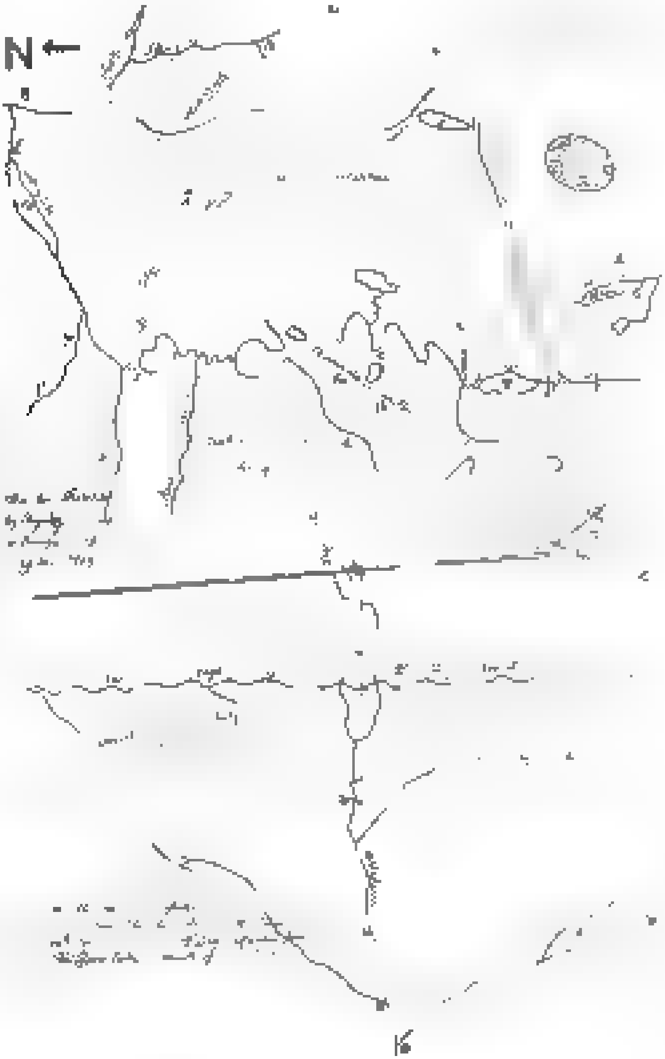
firearms acquired from the Europeans. The local Beaver Indians then began to vacate the Neerlandia area in the late 1700s, moving northward into the Peace River country.

The Cree, a forest people like the Beaver, also migrated in search of food. Since the game they hunted moved in small groups, their bands tended to be smaller family units. They may have wintered on the edges of Shoal Lake, then in the spring moved to the prairies, forming larger bands to hunt the plentiful herds of buffalo.

The Neerlandia district was also the hunting ground of a few scattered bands of Assiniboine Indians. A European explorer, Alexander Henry, reported in 1810 that there were thirty lodges of Swampy Ground Assiniboines at the juncture of the Pembina and Athabasca Rivers, sixty tents of Strong Wood Assiniboines at the MacLeod and Athabasca Rivers (near Whitecourt), and thirty tents of Cree, Assiniboine, and Metis in the forests northwest of Edmonton House.

The Assiniboine Indians had once been part of the larger Yankton Dakota tribe, a powerful group in the mighty Sioux nation. They broke away sometime around 1640 and migrated north to the area above Lake Superior, then westward into the future provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Allying themselves with the Cree in part for protection against the powerful Blackfoot Confederacy, they eventually found themselves in the former hunting grounds of the Beaver Indians. Some Assiniboines, the Strong Woods, preferred the fast pace of life on the prairies and the excitement of the buffalo hunt. Those who drifted into the boreal forests northwest of Edmonton became known as the Swampy Grounds.

For the Swampy Grounds, life in northern Alberta was not unlike that the Beavers had experienced previously. They hunted the big game — moose, deer, and forest species of caribou and bison



This map was drawn for Peter Fidler, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Lesser Slave Lake, by a Bungee Indian chief in 1806. It shows the future Neerlandia district, bounded by the Summerberry (Pembina) River and an unnamed tributary of the Athapescou (Athabasca) River. The Macleod River [illegible] to be the hunting grounds of the Swampy Ground Stony or Assiniboine Indians. The chief indicated to Peter Fidler at that time that these Assiniboines had formerly hunted around Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

for food, probably by shooting them as they swam across Shoal Lake or chasing them as they migrated through the district. Beavers and muskrat were often trapped or dug out of their lodges along the creeks or on the edge of the lakes. Birds were lured by decoys and shot, or snared using willow shoot snares. Starvation was part of everyday life, however, as game was not always available in abundance. When bands became desperate for food, it was the hunters who were the first to suffer starvation. Every unsuccessful day [illegible] was able to continue the following day.

[illegible]

The Local Indians and the Fur Trade

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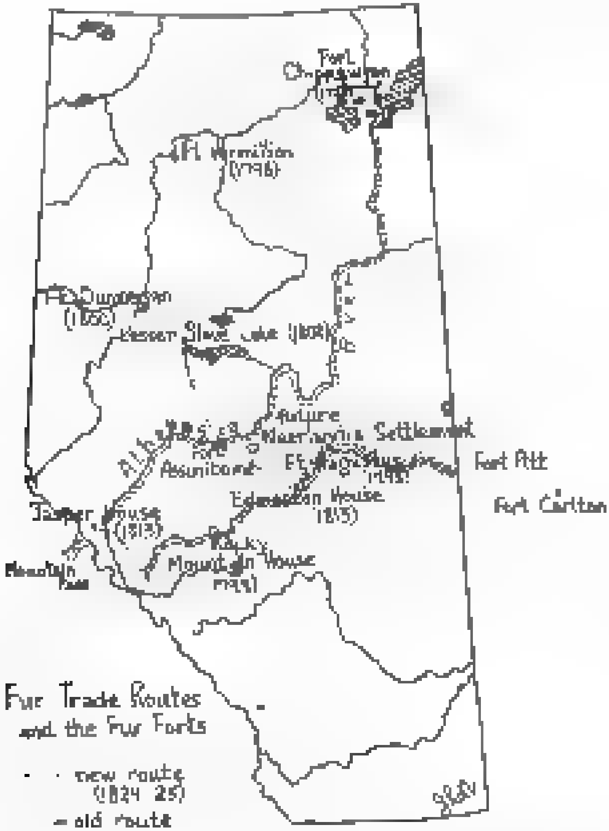

Fur Trade Routes and the Fur Forts

different river systems. To that end, George Simpson commissioned the construction of a road between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton House. It was cut in the winter of 1824-25, and ran just south of Shoal Lake. The trail's construction attracted some Métis and Freemen (traders independent of the Hudson's Bay Company) to the Neerlandia area. Apparently one such person, Jacques Cardinal, helped cut the trail in this region, before going on to be the horsekeeper at Fort Assiniboine several years later.

The relation of the surrounding Indians to the Fort, even though its fur trade never amounted to much, was one of dependence. The Indians relied on the credit system — they bought supplies with any money that remained. They subsisted during the spring and summer by supplying the post with game — mostly deer, moose, and geese.

The Fort also provided charity in periods of illness and starva-

[illegible]

[illegible] quitoes, the latter in myriads and all hungry

[illegible]

[illegible]

The Local Indians and the Treaties

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

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The Settlement Period Begins: The Gold Rush and the Dominion Lands Survey

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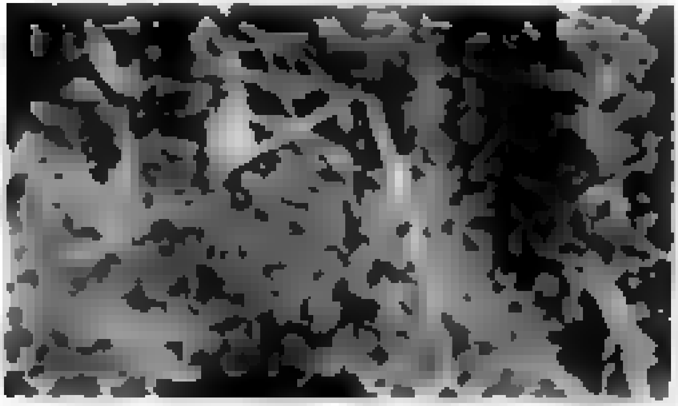

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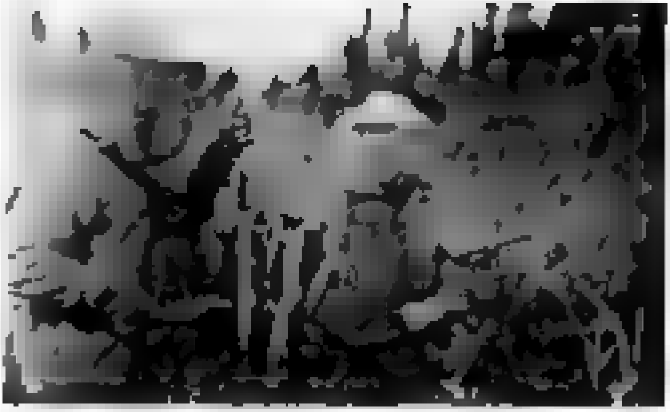

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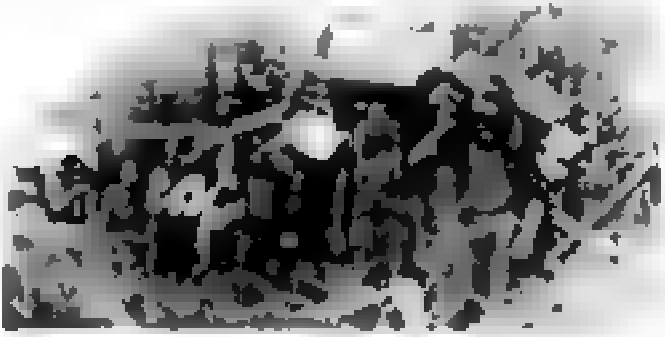

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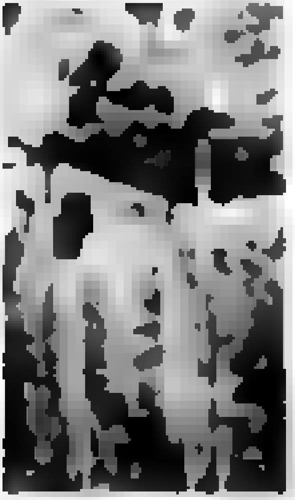
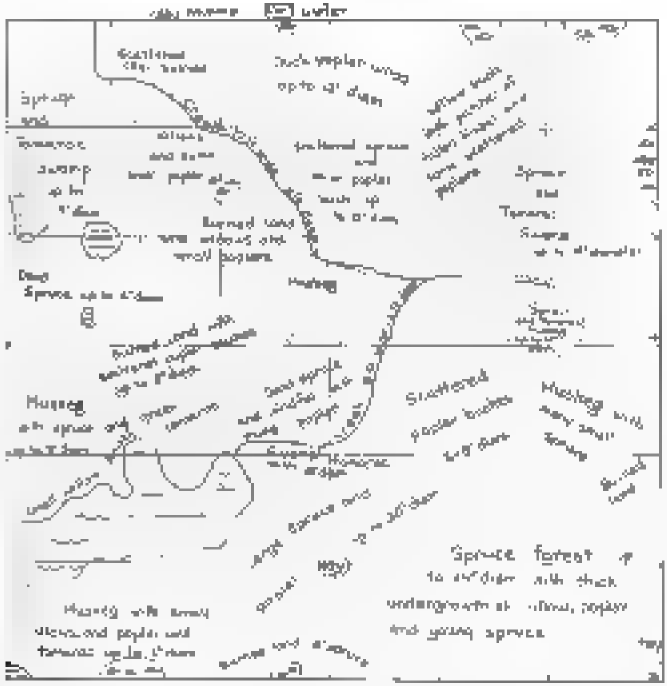


be found near the surface but does not outcrop. There are no stone quarries nor minerals of economic value.

"Game in this township is limited to moose and bear of which traces are frequently seen."



Surveyor's description of Township 61, 1907

The bodies of water in this township are Shoal Lake, Freemen Lake, Lake No. 1 and Shoal Creek. One member of the surveying crew was an axeman named Freeman. Knight recorded the name of the lake as Freeman Lake, later writing it as Freemen Lake, so it is possible that the lake was named for one of his axemen. Shoal Lake presumably got its name by being the source of Shoal Creek, which had been named earlier by another surveyor. The source of the name of Lake No. 1 remains a mystery.

The crew who surveyed Township 62 was led by Allan Findlay, DLS. The crew worked in this area from June 23 to July 16, 1910, three years after Knight had done his work further south. The crew had two transit men, Allan Findlay and James A. Findlay, four chainmen, one cook, one teamster, and eighteen axemen and mounders.

The field notes describe a township swampy in several places, with much deadfall and brulé. The creeks leading into Baird Lake were measured according to depth, flow, and direction of flow. For example, the creek going into Baird Lake from the north was two feet deep at the time and had a flow of one hundred yards per hour.

(One chainman was named Lyle Baird, and it is possible that Baird Lake, the only body of water in this township, was named after him.)

In the muskeg.

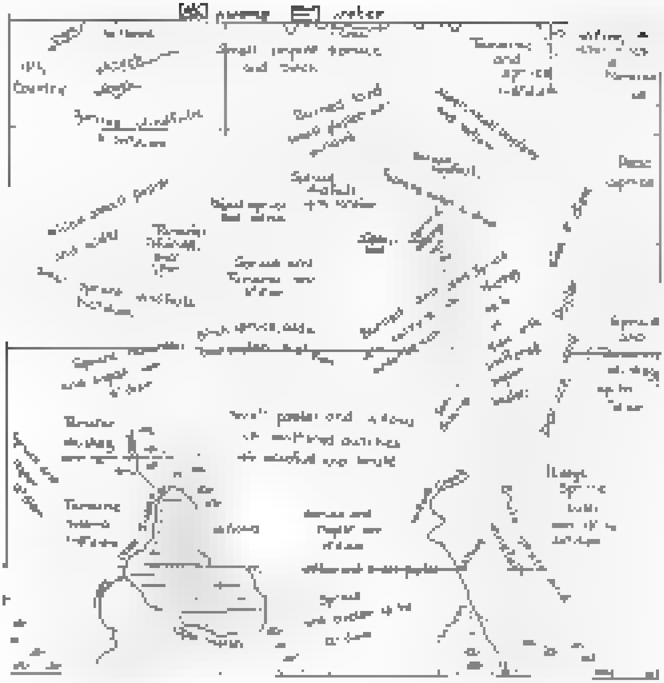
G.H. Beck A.L.S.

In 1910, Findlay was able to report that "This township is reached by a road running north from Mellowdale P.O. The road had previously been as far as Shoal Lake. It was boggy in a couple of places and somewhat blocked up by windfalls." Findlay reported cutting a road entering the township at the S.W. corner of Section 3 and leaving it at the N.E. corner of Section 33. He continues his report to his superiors as follows:

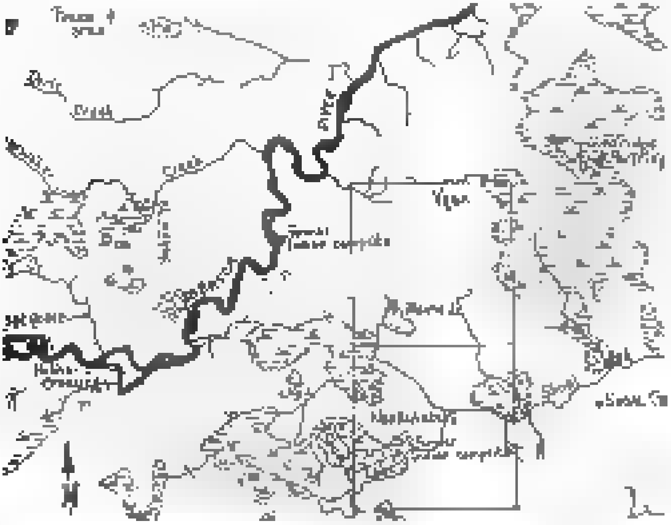
> The surface of the township is fairly level, the main height of land being in the vicinity of the north boundary of section 31. In the swamps there is a considerable depth of moss and peat, the higher ground being composed of 4" to 10" black loam with heavy clay subsoil and being very suitable for mixed farming. Some slough hay can be obtained from the vicinity of Baird Lake.
>
> There is an abundance of fresh water conserved by the forest growth and the muskeg. A number of small streams flow out of the township, but there are none flowing in, and there is no liability of floods nor any opportunity for the development of water powers. There is a plentiful supply of rain throughout the summer months. Some very hot weather was experienced in July, and no frosts were noticed until the latter part of August. Firewood can be procured in all parts of the township, former forest fires having left tracts of dead spruce, tamarack and poplar ready seasoned for use. There are no minerals, coal, or stones suitable for quarrying. Quite a number of black bears were seen, also moose, jumping deer, and some smaller game. Partridge are plentiful. Muskrats, mink and other fur-bearing animals are also to be found.

Early Settlement in the Neerlandia District

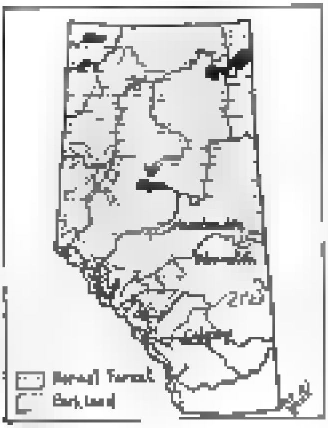
Settlement in northern Alberta prior to the turn of the century had to await the conclusion of the treaties and settlement of Indians on reserves after 1876. The discovery of new strains of wheat suitable for Alberta's growing season in the late 1800s was also a prerequisite. More importantly, settlement depended on a land survey, and this was achieved by 1907.



Surveyor's description of Township 62, 1910.



Early settlement in the Neerlandia district



Many factors had made settlement prior to this date undesirable or even impossible. This district lies on the edge of the boreal forest region. Compared to the parkland region around Edmonton and as far northwest as the Pembina River, the land (Townships 61 and 62) was less suitable for homesteaders. The area northwest of Edmonton also suffered from the lack of good transportation. Early settlers coming into the area prior to 1907 probably used the Klondike Trail (the old Fort Assiniboine-Edmonton road). C. C. Fairchild, DLS, in his survey of the area, commented on the poor condition of the trail. It apparently was in no better shape in 1909 that it had been in 1827 or any time in between, for that matter.

By 1909 the area was ready for settlement and by 1910 settlers had filed on homesteads in the southern sections of Township 61. The Dutchmen were not the first people in this area, nor the first Europeans. Of the native groups, all that remain are a few collections of artifacts, caches of pemmican, and faint memories of now ploughed-under campsites. The natives themselves had all but vanished by the time this district was settled.

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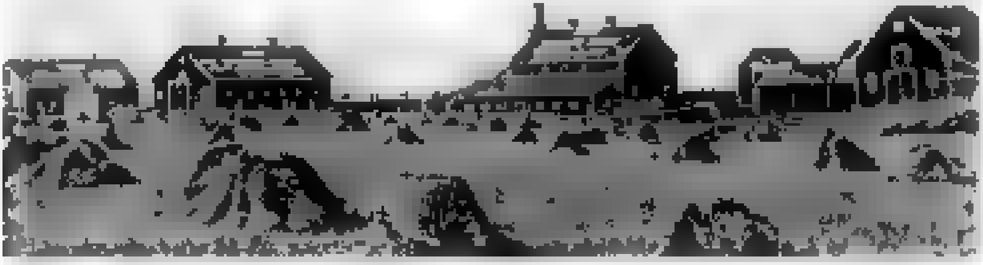
The Settlers Arrive

THE SETTLERS ARRIVE

[illegible]

[illegible]

large tracts of land in Canada that they wished to sell to bonafide farmers. The agents that toured the Netherlands before 1914 emphasized in their lectures the things they felt would have the most impact. They said there was lots of free land and they handed out literature illustrating immense harvests and indicating yields per acre that staggered the imagination. The agents held magic lantern slides showing threshing gangs, prairie homes, fields of grain, and pictures of the Rocky Mountains. They emphasized the 160 acres for only a ten dollar filing fee, but did not relate the saying popular in Canada at that time: "The government bets you ten dollars you can't last three times six months on your homestead." They played down the long, cold winters as not that severe. Besides, a person could live to a ripe old age breathing the "Champagne Air."



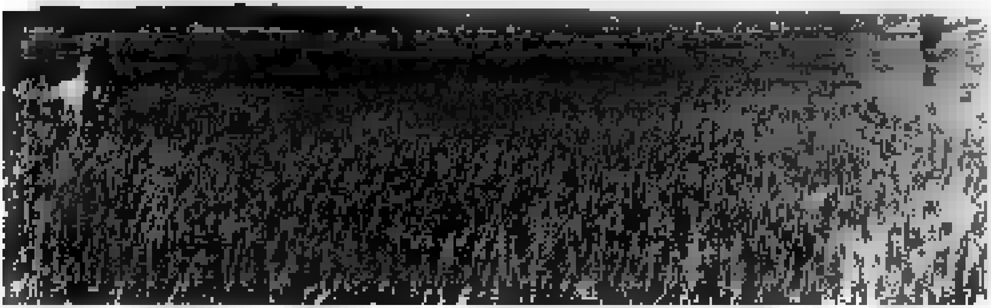
[illegible] Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives

Scenes such as this enticed people to emigrate to Alberta

Few emigrants failed to be influenced by the stories and exaggerated claims of a land flowing with untapped resources and potential wealth. Once a person immigrated to Canada he too became a potential agent. If he wrote home that things were going well it would influence his family and friends. Often these letters were published in papers without critical comment. One such booster of Canada was Henry Kuppers Sr., who wrote articles for Dutch newspapers extolling the virtues of the west.

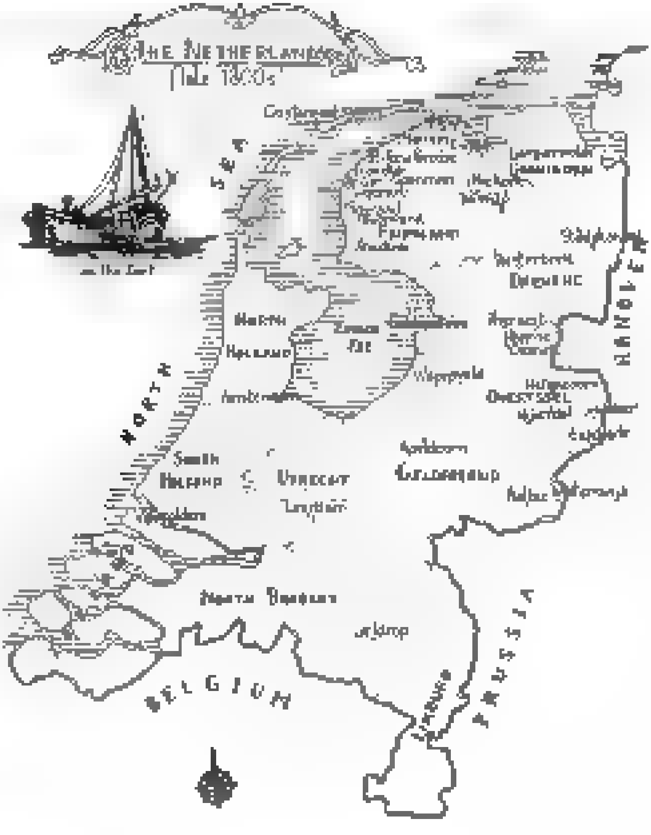
The kind of emigrant that left the Netherlands at that time was described in a pamphlet written about 1913:

> "Most of the emigrants are not reckless young people who throw themselves boldly into the adventures of a new and strange life. Naturally there are some among them, but most of them either quietly [illegible] through poverty and [illegible] to [illegible] themselves to a new outlook. [illegible] Netherlands emigrants have outgrown the years of reckless and adventurous desire. They are more [illegible] middle class or labourers [illegible] who go backward [illegible] small independent artisans who have been cut out of competition, small businessmen who are being pressed to death by larger companies, farm labourers who foresee a dreary life of hard work and no advancement whether for themselves or for their children, and [illegible] small farmers who, pulled [illegible] supported by each other's example, often easily leave their district and homeland in large numbers.



Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives

CPR propaganda photo, late 1890s



The towns the pioneers came from

[illegible]

[illegible]

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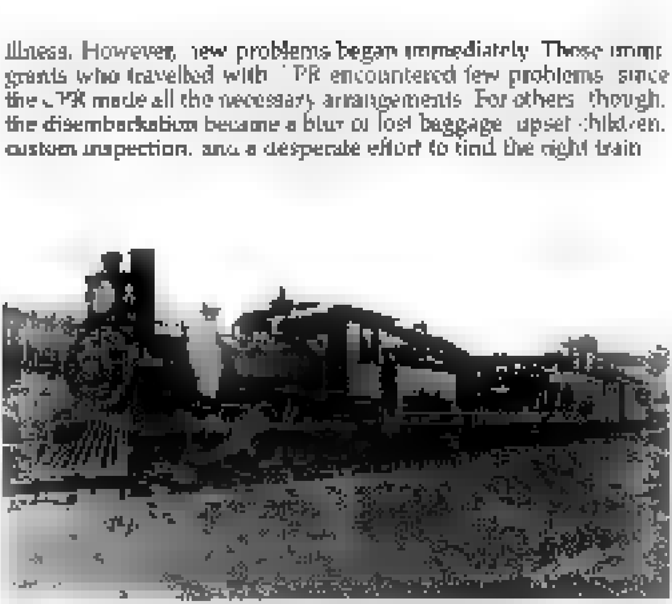
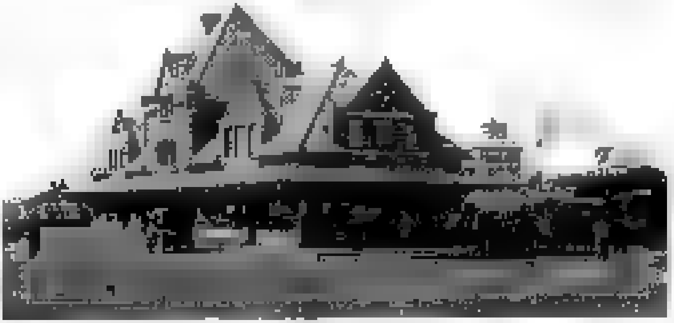
illness. However, few problems began immediately. Those immigrants who travelled with CPR encountered few problems, since the CPR made all the necessary arrangements. For others, though, the disembarkation became a blur of lost baggage, upset children, custom inspection, and a desperate effort to find the right train.



CNR train coming into Edmonton.

B6025, Brown, Provincial Archives of Alberta



CNR Station, 1913

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta

When they found the right train the immigrants realized that no food would be provided, and a rush to buy bread and sausage began. (Later immigrants were advised to bake currant bread to take along, since it seemed the currants would keep the bread fresh for the long journey.) If the trip seemed long, the immigrants accepted it as part of the bargain. For the Dutch, who measured distance by minutes, the train trip seemed endless. Distances between cities were measured in days, and it seemed there was no end to Canada. Day after day they stared at trees and waste land and, except for small areas, it seemed unsuitable for agriculture. The train was smoky, the benches were hard, and the stops at major

stations became a mad scramble to buy some food. Finally they arrived in Winnipeg, where they had a stopover and could refresh themselves.

From Winnipeg they set out for their final destination, Edmonton. When that was reached, the journey was over.

To The Homestead

* * *

The Edmonton newspapers report business as usual for the burgeoning capital in the spring of 1910. The official opening of the Legislature, a Lieutenant Governor's breakfast, and the progress of the High Level Bridge project all make the newspaper headlines. Not as prominently displayed is another noteworthy item: "More foreigners arrive" — foreigners meaning non-British people. The official pomp and ceremony alluded to in the big headlines are a far cry from the dingy Immigration Hall quarters where most of the newcomers stay while the men look for work.

* * *

B4208E Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Edmonton looking east from 2nd Street c. 1911.

Of the Dutch people who later homesteaded at Neerlandia, Fred Baron and his family were probably one of the first to arrive in Edmonton. They came in 1906, and other future Neerlandians soon followed including the families of Cornelius Ingwersen and Henry Kippers. There was little group awareness at first among these Dutch immigrants, but one tragic event occurred to change that situation. In the spring of 1910, two of the Kippers children passed away from scarlet fever. When the *Edmonton Journal* reported the deaths, Dutchmen from Edmonton who read the article visited the Kippers' family to offer their sympathies. Shortly after this, Henry Kippers, undoubtedly moved by the feeling of "communion of the saints" invited a group of Dutch people to his home. He wanted to discuss a matter that concerned many of them, namely the setting up of a Reformed church such as they were used to in the Nether-

[illegible] Church was holding a meeting of Classis Pacific.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] from South Dakota.

*

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

drawing of lots. It need not be said that we will not have a church or school. This can be [illegible] assured of being [illegible].

To be a member of this society one contributes ten dollars. Send that to the treasurer, [illegible] Street, [illegible] Edmonton, [illegible] the secretary of the society. Besides that it is required that we are able to speak the Dutch language. Not only the head of a family [illegible] every [illegible] has a right to [illegible] each member is required to pay ten dollars into the society.

If you desire more detailed information, write us since a good number are interested. [illegible] we have [illegible] the things [illegible] come in the spring [illegible] to Edmonton this coming summer and go with us to the farm. As much as possible the [illegible] will support [illegible] and housing [illegible] for more space. Please give information as soon as possible to the secretary of the society [illegible] the birth of the [illegible] newspaper [illegible] would not [illegible] make the [illegible] emigration society. Therefore the [illegible] would like them to be placed under "Letters". Thank you for the allotted space.

For the consistory,
H. Kippers, Clerk
118 Griesbach St. Edmonton, Canada

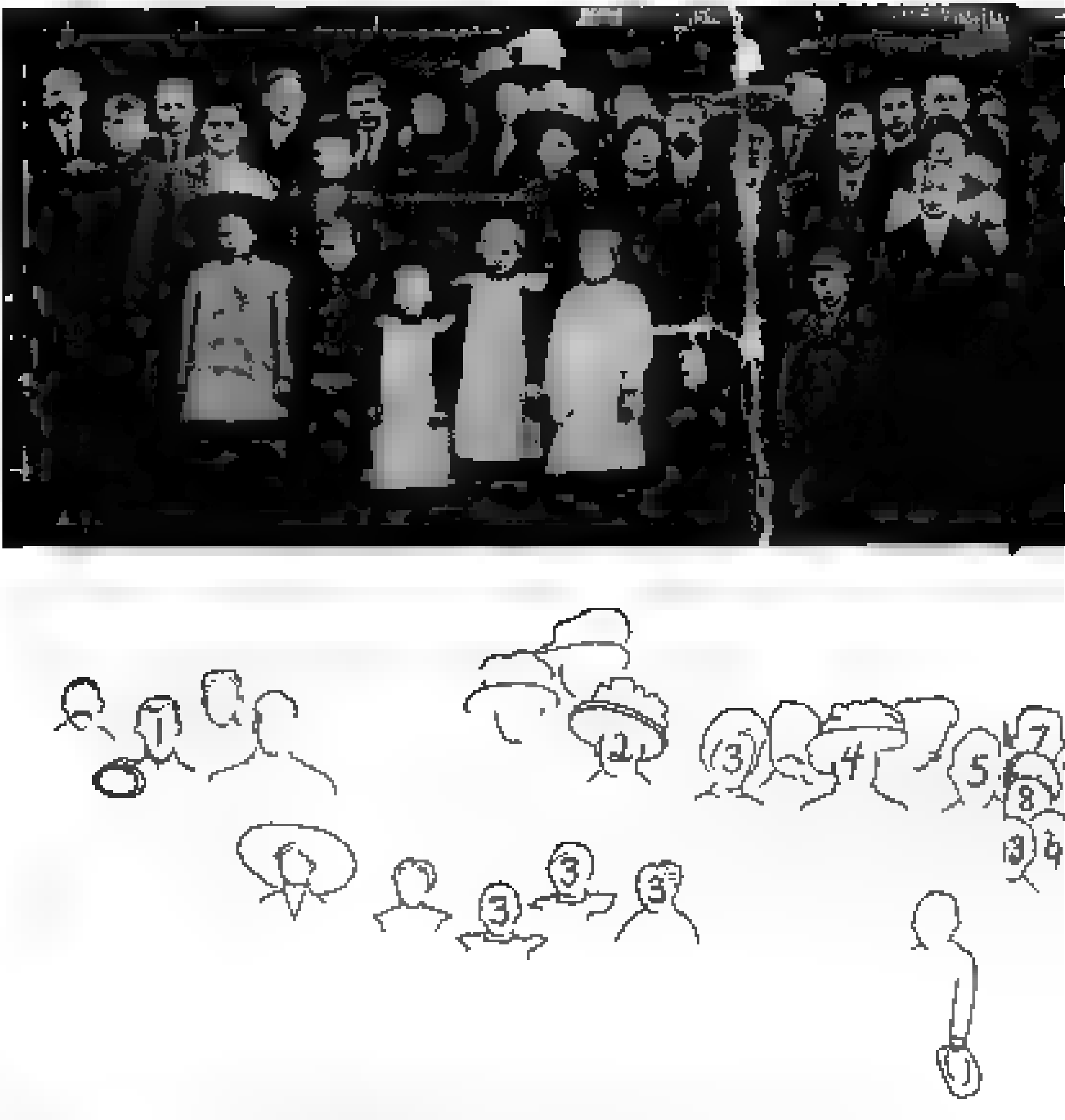
The above letter was [illegible]

* *

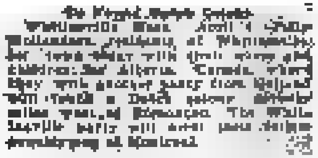
The threat of [illegible] was the reason why these people had [illegible] in [illegible] homesteads in what are known [illegible] the province [illegible] Kippers [illegible] and [illegible]. However, in the summer of that same year these men all abandoned their homesteads [illegible] that the homesteads had [illegible] their [illegible] here.

Many more immigrants came from the Netherlands in the spring [illegible] firmly established. Most of them were [illegible] but then [illegible] had [illegible] to make money.

Many of the Dutch immigrants had [illegible] Flats [illegible] that [illegible] houses [illegible] The [illegible] included [illegible] learning to bake bread. Most of the men had steady work though it may not have been the best paying. It helped of course that [illegible] were held [illegible] in high regard. More than one [illegible] labour [illegible] of the [illegible] and the [illegible] were built [illegible] Public Works department [illegible] on the new High Level Bridge. Many [illegible] Burns packing [illegible]. Where living conditions were not what they had been used to, the [illegible] of the immigrants.



The group from [illegible] (with some railway officials) after arriving in Edmonton, April 1911. 1. Raymond Baker. 2. Katie Baker. 3. Mrs. Hempel and three daughters. 4. Magdalena Baker. 5. Albert Mast. 6. Joseph Baker. 7. Geesie Baker. 8. Aaltje Baker holding 9. George. 10. Catharina Baker. 11. Minke Mast. 12. Koop Mast. 13. C. K. Mast. 14. Henry Mast. 15. Dick Baker. Mrs. Hempel put the clean white aprons on her girls a short time before they arrived, but after reaching the Immigration Hall and seeing the dirty quarters there, she immediately took them off.

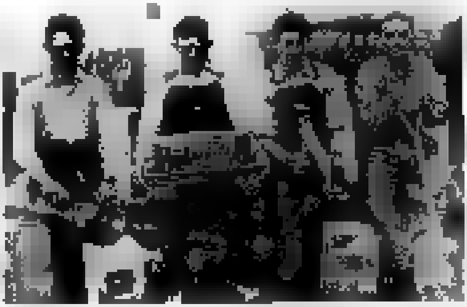


[illegible] Dutch Colony

Whitinsville, Mass. April 4. —Fifty Hollanders, residents of Whitinsville, left today with their wives and children for Alberta, Canada, where they with another party from Holland will found a Dutch colony [illegible] miles west of Edmonton. The Whitinsville party will meet [illegible] at Montreal.

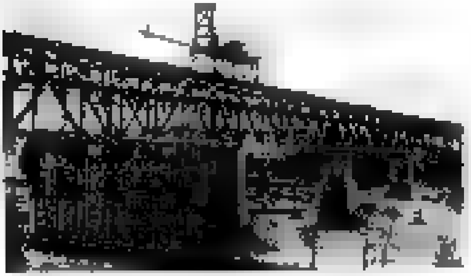
Edmonton Bulletin, April 4, 1911.

Baron's store: James, Maggie Baron.



Working in brickyard: John, Gerrit, Willem ter Horst, ?

At Burns Meat Plant: Lizzie Baron, ?, Ada Terpstra



Construction on High Level Bridge, 1911

The dream of establishing a Dutch farming community was still alive. It seems sometime in 1911 a committee was established to look through the land records to find a suitable location to begin a settlement. The mandate was simple: find an area where other settlers had not yet gone, where there would be enough land to establish a Reformed community, and where there would be room to expand.

By that time, the good land surrounding the city was already occupied by settlers of many nationalities. Even good land at great distances from the city had settlers interspersed throughout. The committee did, however, find a recently-surveyed area to the northwest that seemed to hold some possibilities. If the dream of a place of their own and a settlement that would allow them to carry out their objectives would ever materialize, it would have to be soon. The committee urgently recommended that they should take a look at Townships 61 and 62, Range 3, west of the 5th Meridian.

Dutch immigrants in Edmonton, November 1911. Back: Jan Terpstra, Hendrik Schoonenberg, Jelle Hofstede, Ade Emmerzaal, Jan Aroens. Front: Frank de Jager, Elke Jonkstra, Willem van Ark, Jouke Bakker, Gerrit Botzen.

As a result of this recommendation, about twenty men who were interested made a trip to the area in early December 1911. Because there was no snow yet and temperatures ranged from forty to fifty degrees Fahrenheit, they travelled by horse and wagon. Even though the weather was warm for the time of year, the soil was frozen so the trip was pleasant and mostly easy. They followed the road north from Edmonton, passing through well-settled areas. Along the way, they stayed at stopping places. After they crossed the Pembina River the population was sparse, but there was still a

passable trail. Once they passed Naples, though, they came to a heavily-timbered area and had to cut their way through the bush to reach Township 61.

The group spent a few days looking over the area, then returned to Edmonton. It seemed that everyone was satisfied with what they had found. Six quarters were not available since they had already been taken up by George Caughlin, Tom Lewis, Elizabeth Melsome, and George Wing.

The men had noted the quarter sections they thought suitable for farming. To divide up the land in a fair and orderly way, they put the quarter numbers of the good sections of land into a hat. Each man picked a number from the hat and that became his quarter.

On the morning of December 18, 1911, the following men filed in Edmonton at the Dominion Lands Office:

John Anema	SW	23-61-3
Riemts de Jager	SW	34-61-3
Drikus Huinink	SW	10-62-3
Cornelius Ingwersen	SE	09-62-3
Albert M. Mast	SE	22-61-3
Koop Peter Mast	NE	15-61-3
Johan Messelink	NE	34-61-3
Henry J. Michael	NE	04-62-3
Menne Nanninga	NE	09-62-3
Albert J. Oldegbers	SE	34-61-3
Hendrik Schoemekamp	NW	34-61-3
Berend te Ronde	SE	15-61-3
Douwe Terpsma	SW	35-61-3
John Terpsma	NW	26-61-3
Siebren Tiemstra	NW	14-61-3
Willem van Ark	SW	15-61-3

Three others filed shortly thereafter:

December 26, 1911

Fred Baron	SE	15-62-3
Henry J. Kuppers	NE	10-62-3

February 6, 1912

Arie Emmerzael	NE	28-61-3

These men formed the group whose determination was responsible for the beginning of a new community.

* * *

On December 19, 1911, both the *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* and *The Edmonton Journal* noted that a group of Dutchmen had settled on land near Edmonton. The *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* reported:

> HOLLANDERS FILE ON HOMESTEADS
>
> Yesterday a party of sixteen Hollanders appeared at the land office and filed on homesteads. They had spent considerable time in looking over the country adjacent to Edmonton and returned to the city satisfied that it was a good enough place for them to live and make their permanent home. The Hollanders located on land that will bring their homesteads all together, making them close neighbours.

Early in January 1912, some or all of the men who had filed returned to their homesteads to build houses, since their intentions

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] took a photograph

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] From Clyde they travelled west.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] they improvised a road for the wagon to go over

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] proved quite difficult

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Naples

[illegible] through [illegible]

hardly walk. Just in time, after a thirteen-hour struggle, they reached an old store, the so-called Post Office at Hazel Bluff. There they could enjoy a good warm meal and a decent place to rest.

Early in the morning, after a good breakfast, they went on again. Luckily for them, they would now follow a travelled road. It was clear, a bit frozen, and everything was covered with a layer of fine snow. It seemed like the difficulties of the day before had not done much harm. Only the leader was now the follower. He could not move his left leg very well; the muscles had become stiff. After several miles, he had to quit completely, but it was six miles before the nearest stopping place. Not too far away was a farmhouse, so the invalid went there while the two others continued on their way.

The invalid was received with typical Canadian hospitality by the couple Brown and remained there for two days with rest and a massage with petroleum, the only medication they had on hand, which helped a lot. He felt good enough to continue his journey and, even if he limped somewhat, he could travel the eight miles or so to a certain Marshall, who had a big democrat with two big mules pulling it. Marshall brought him in a few hours to Morinville where he could catch the train to Edmonton. There was a happy reunion with his wife and family and in no time his leg was back to normal again.

Cornelius Ingwersen

Excerpts taken from memoirs written in Dutch by Cornelius Ingwersen during the 1950s.

* * *

Arie [Emmerzael] and more young men had built their log cabins the year before (1912) and I will tell you a few stories about the building program as told to me. There were ten or twelve young men who went together from Edmonton to build a log cabin for each. They were living together in a log barn of an older settler.

They bought wholesale tools — saws, axes, stoves and heaters — and some groceries, not forgetting brown beans and some salted pork, salt, tea and coffee. And they had all things in common (Acts 2:44)."

Different characters were together: one ex-officer from the Dutch army (Willem van Ark), a father and son (Koop and Albert Mast), and Arie (Emmerzael), an ex-laundryman. Also one or two had been farmers in the States (Sierben Tiemstra and Jan Anema). The older man (Koop Mast) was installed as cook and handyman. The young men went into the bush cutting logs and building cabins and once in a while some of them went looking for a homestead.

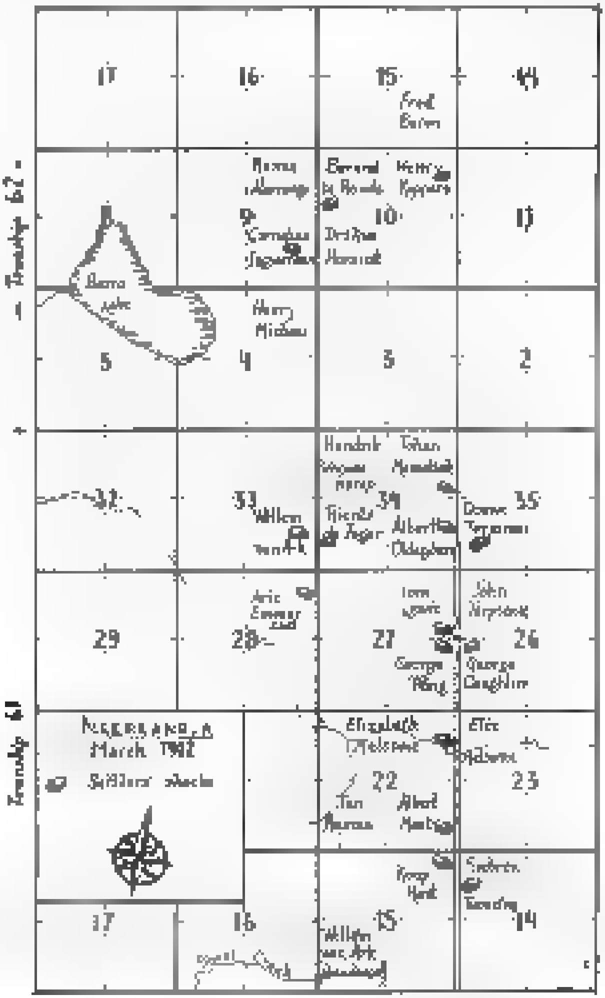
Remember it was winter and snow was on the ground. There were thousands of rabbits at that time and they had their trails all over the snow. Since there was no well, the cook had to use snow water for cooking. It happened one time they were eating beans for supper and the ex-officer was picking out beans and laying them on the table. The cook said, "Are they not done?"

"Yes," was the reply. "They are done alright but not the right kind. They are rabbit beans!"

The cook's son jumped up and said, "Dad, I told you before you should put the water through a cloth!" A few days later the ex-

officer came into the kitchen and saw the old man using the towel for a sieve to clean up the snow water. That night the officer would not eat beans at all, since the towel had been used by all the men beforehand.

At one time a few of the men had been out looking for land and they were returning home over the frozen creek. But Arie was all in and could not go any farther. It was decided the officer should go ahead and Arie should follow slowly. "But stay on the creek so you will not get lost," the officer told him "and I will get you something



to eat. After a rest you will make it home." The [illegible] was just baking pancakes so he took some and met Arie and fed him some pancakes and they made it home.

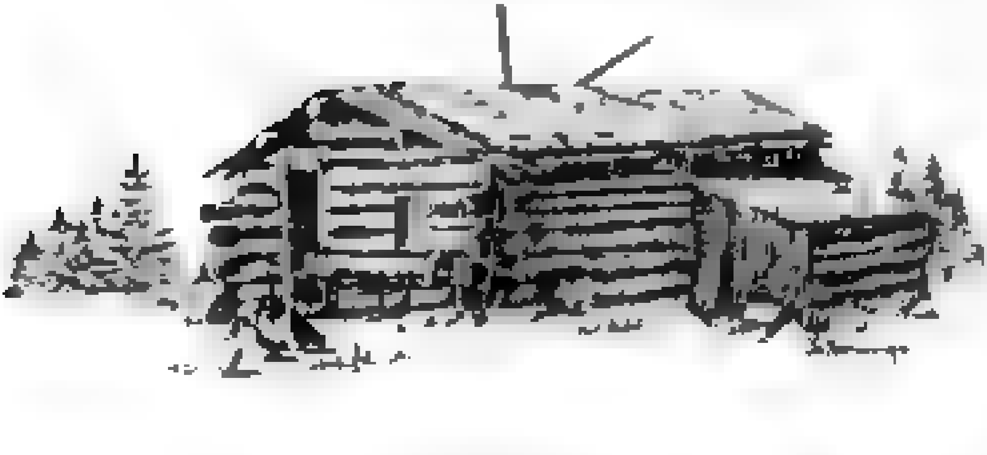
Bert [illegible] Reminisces

* * *

By May the building project was completed. At least twelve cabins had been built [illegible] homesteaders. [illegible] these men had cabins on their homesteads [illegible] the spring of 1912: Klaas de Jager, Arie Emmerzael, [illegible] Jager, [illegible] Albert Mast, Klaas Mast, Johan [illegible], Jan [illegible], [illegible] Renze [illegible], Douwe Jeninga, [illegible] and Willem van Ark. After their return to Edmonton most of the men [illegible] their former jobs. The Mast, [illegible]bers and Jeninga families were the first to leave for their homesteads.

[illegible] pioneers had both courage and determination. Though [illegible] the Jeninga's were in their thirties, the other couples were much older. After Jan [illegible]bers was [illegible] his wife Johanna was [illegible] Klaas Mast was [illegible] his wife Minke was fifty-three. At an age when most people contemplate retirement, they were beginning a new and [illegible] life. Both the [illegible]bers and the Masts had their youngest children with them. John [illegible] was [illegible] and Henry Mast was fourteen when they came [illegible]. For the Jeninga's it was no less difficult. They had five children at home. [illegible], the youngest, was only two years old.

By the fall of 1912 the area had a name — Neerlandia. The pioneers wanted a name that reflected their Dutch origin. There were several suggestions but at a meeting it was finally [illegible] Neerlandia. Willem van Ark's suggestion [illegible] was taken and the votes were for Neerlandia, a name which more [illegible] reflected that the background of the pioneers was from many Dutch provinces.

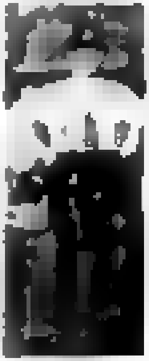


[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



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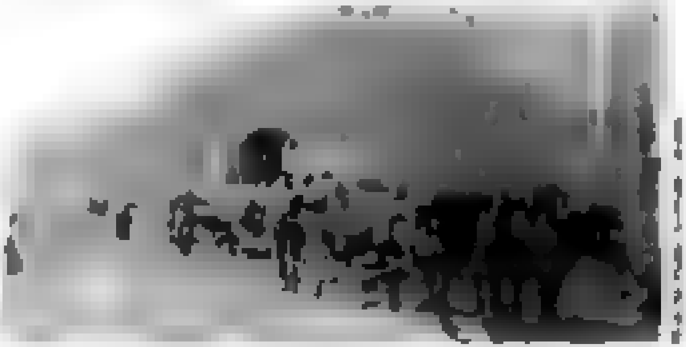


[illegible]

[illegible]

A few families that moved to Neerlandia in 1914 left again the following spring. Most people, however, who came in 1914 stayed and contributed to the growth of the community. By the end of the year more than eleven more families and several single men had begun homesteading.

More settlers came in 1915 and with the arrival of Menne Nanninga in 1916, all those who filed in 1913 had returned to Neerlandia. Of the nineteen who filed, only two did not stay. Berend de Roode lived in Neerlandia for only a few months and Dirkus Hummink left in 191

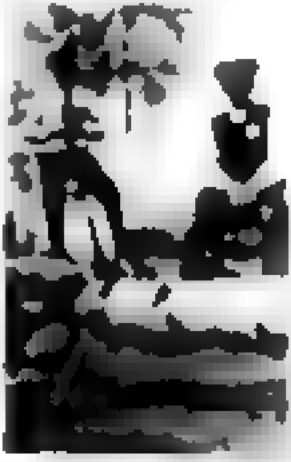
During the pioneer years it was difficult to make a living on the homestead. Some men left their families in Edmonton and worked on the homestead during the summer. Others took their families to the homestead but found it impossible to stay since the money supply was inadequate. They left their families alone on the homestead while they went elsewhere to earn money. Many of them went to southern Alberta during the fall and helped with the harvesting. During the winter they worked at sawmills or in logging camps to provide a source of income. When the men were gone, it was a period of loneliness and hardship for those left on the homestead. Some families moved back to Edmonton until they had earned enough money to continue homesteading. Still others spent the winter in Edmonton and returned to the homestead in summer.

Michael's cabin.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

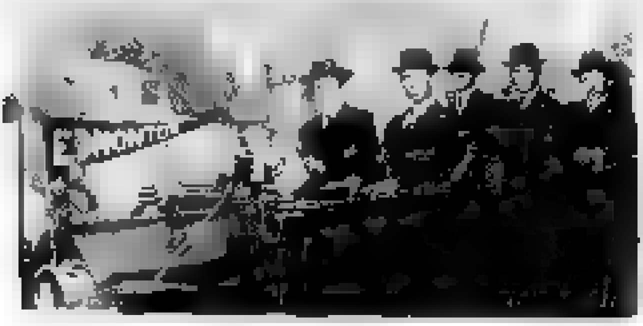
[illegible]

[illegible] off the farm to obtain cash

The requirement to cl [illegible]

Most of the early settlers applied for a patent on their land after four years of residence. By that time each applicant had cleared from five to twenty acres. By 1920 most settlers had ten to twenty head of cattle, including oxen, and about half owned two to four horses as well. From the homestead records it appears that the government accepted any combination of acres cleared and animals owned. Since the main objective was to get people to farm the land, the government accepted any application that indicated a sincere effort to make one's home on the land. It appears that all the patents were approved; the government recognized the difficulties the pioneers encountered.

By 1920, about ten Neerlandia settlers had received the patent to their homesteads and there were more than thirty families living in the community. These early settlers were the pioneers who established Neerlandia. They set the tone for the future and defined the direction others followed.



Mr. Henning, Mr. Schuurman, Willem and Klaas Krikke, Hendrik Schoonekamp.

Song of the Dutch Canadians
Come ye, who boast of Dutch descent,
Sons of the Netherlands,
Who found a home in Canada
Far from "Old Country's" strands
Let us unite in festive song
And praise this blessed land,
To which God in His providence
Did lead us by His hand.

We love the land across the sea,
We glory in its past
We pray for its prosperity:
May it forever last!
But though we love old Holland still,
We now, with all our might,
Must love and live for Canada,
For justice here, and right.

Oh grant, we pray, our fathers' God,
That by Thy guiding hand
We may become a blessing here,
For our adopted land!
Infuse the best of all our past
And what we are today,
Into the life, into the deed
Of blessed Canada!

Author Unknown
(Tune: "Wien Neerlandsch bloed")

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ganzevoort, Herman. *Dutch Immigration to Canada, 1892-1940.* unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1975.
Homestead Records, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

The Depression

DAYS OF MEAGRE RETURNS

"I [illegible] depression on?

Henry Strydhorst Sr

Depression

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

garden, one lady in Neerlandia was able to bake pie every Saturday but was unable to afford a Sunday coat.

* * *

"I remember that first year. My husband worked for his dad and he did all the cropping and everything and we had to buy wheat at one dollar a bushel, Garnet wheat. You know, by the time fall came it was worth nothing — nineteen cents. And then we had all the threshing and everything done and we could not pay all the costs. We were in the hole."

Harda Terpsma

* * *

How do you like that?

"I remember my dad shipped pigs and then he got five dollars apiece for them and the truck driver Lee Reyse got two-and-a-half dollars, so my dad got two-fifty apiece. And [Siebren] Tiemstra bought cows on a sale for eight dollars apiece. And I know John Terpsma took one hundred bushels of oats to the elevator and he got eight cents a bushel — he got eight dollars for that big load — and he had a top on top of his sleighbox yet. — And when he came back, he needed something for the knotter head of the binder and didn't have enough to pay for it. How do you like that! One hundred bushels of good oats!"

* * *

Average Value Per Animal in the Prairie Provinces

year	Hogs	Horses
1929	539	54.60
1930	14.80	47.14
1931	583	52.29
1932	346	32.52
1933	775	36.52
1934	862	41.97
1935	1038	47.23
1936	102	54.80
1937	12	53.45

Taken from Livestock Statistics. M.C. Urquhart and K.A.H. Buckley, eds. Historical Statistics of Canada, pg 07

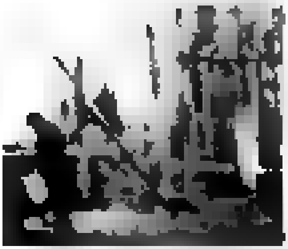
For $.99, in November 1933, you could buy

Amount	Item	Price
2 lbs	meat (roast or stew)	13¢
2 dozen	eggs	45¢
1 lb	butter	21¢
1 lb	cheese	19¢
3 lbs	flour	09¢
1 lb	sugar	.08¢
2 lbs	rolled oats	.07¢
1 lb.	rice	.07¢
2 lbs	molasses	15¢
3 loaves	bread	12¢
1 lb.	tea or coffee	32¢
3 bars	soap	1 ¢

Food and Clothing

In spite of the hard times most people ate well. The food was plain and unvaried — meat, potatoes and vegetables — but there was lots of it. The farmers continued the practice of raising good-sized gardens and storing the produce for the winter. They preserved wild fruit as well. There was plenty of meat available too. Every farmer had cattle or hogs to butcher. The hogs also provided plenty of lard, which was used in baking and cooking and even with a sprinkling of salt and pepper as a spread for school lunches. In many cases the meat supply was supplemented with game.

* * *



Butchering time

"We had pigs, we had cows, whatever few dollars you could get from selling them. My dad would take a load of wheat to the flour mill in Barrhead and get twelve to thirteen hundred pounds of flour plus the bran and shorts and whatever else came out of that, and that lasted a year. In the fall we would butcher a cow and a big, fat hog and have a whole pail of lard and that would do for all the frying and baking. And you had eggs. In the winter you had a deep freeze (outside) and whatever came through the winter you could can, otherwise it was canned right away. It was a lot of work. Everything was either smoked or salted or canned."

Susie [illegible]

*

In those days the hunting laws were not strictly enforced. Gerrit Kuypers shot a moose out of season but only wounded it and followed it for three miles until he came to the neighbourhood of the game warden's house. [illegible] had no bullets left and, knowing the game warden had the same kind of rifle, went to ask him if he could borrow some. It was already getting dark and the game warden said, "Wait until morning and I'll help you. I am not a game warden for farmers, only for strangers."

* * *

A Good Meal

"Once in a while we would eat at the Chat Cafe in Barrhead. [illegible], a Chinese man, was the proprietor then. For thirty-five cents you got good thick pork chops, two of them, a wedge of pie — not an eighth or a sixteenth like nowadays — almost a quarter of a pie, usually raisin or apple, coffee, vegetables, and potatoes.

It was a good meal."

Bill [illegible]

* * *

But many items could not be grown or raised, so the people had to make do in other ways. Many roasted peas or barley in the oven, then ground them for use as coffee. Some collected peppermint leaves and dried them to use instead of tea. Women made their own brown soap from rind or lard that had gone rancid. The [illegible] made syrup from sugar beets to use as sugar. Hendrik [illegible], a heavy smoker, dried sweet clover and fireweed to use [illegible] paid for in cash

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] four miles to church, the potatoes were much

[illegible] proudly home with the rubbers

Enough

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Dollar

[illegible]

[illegible] *other important things*

[illegible]

Health Care

[illegible]

women still had their babies born at home with the help of a midwife even though Dr. Berman was practicing in Barrhead and a hospital, St. Elizabeth's, had been built there. [illegible] had his appendix taken out in [illegible]. Dr. Berman also [illegible] said, "I think he took a pig for my appendix." Sophie [illegible] had her appendix taken out in the Barrhead hospital in [illegible]. Her father [illegible] paid [illegible] part of the bill by bringing Dr. Berman a wagon load of lumber. Sophie paid off the rest by working in the hospital doing the laundry. In [illegible] three year old [illegible] who needed treatment for osteomyelitis. Dr. Berman was paid with eggs and veal. Later [illegible] had to go to the General Hospital in Edmonton for an operation which cost one hundred dollars. The subsequent eighteen month stay cost an additional one hundred dollars. To pay this enormous bill, John [illegible] made an agreement with the hospital [illegible]. He [illegible] animals brought to the [illegible] and the meat [illegible] to the hospital. The hospital credited him with one cent more per pound than the going price for the meat.

The provincial government initiated some free medical assistance during the thirties. In [illegible] a Travelling Clinic came to [illegible] and the medical team did a number of minor operations. The annual report of the Department of Health in [illegible] stated that the Travelling Clinic visited thirty-four centres:

> [illegible] from May [illegible] to September 30th. During this [illegible] operations [illegible] teeth.

The Clinic

The one-room school was turned into a miniature hospital. The little room was used as a [illegible] room and a [illegible] area. The big room was the operating area. The Travelling Clinic had come in a large transport truck equipped with [illegible], the operating tables, and all other necessary medical equipment. [illegible] Children were [illegible] and anyone else needing attention was able to get it.

It was a very hot day in August. The children [illegible] after being given a physical examination and [illegible] further attention was needed, they were sent to wait their turn in the [illegible], one for girls and one for boys. When his or her turn came, the nurse helped the patient onto the operating table and the doctor administered ether. No one who was operated on that day will ever forget [illegible] the smell of ether [illegible], the ringing sounds in [illegible] ears and the flashing lights as one went under. When the patient awoke in the [illegible] it was a [illegible] thing. [illegible] was sick and [illegible] the ether [illegible] and [illegible] where they were and what had happened. [illegible] helped to clean up the patients and get them ready to be picked up by parents. Them

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

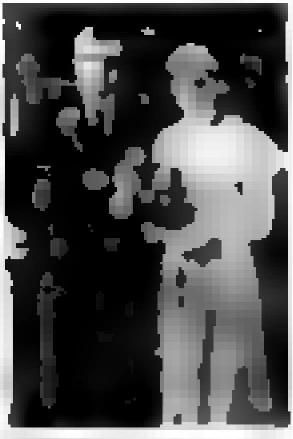
Getting Married

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

Government Work Camps

[illegible]

ment agent came to Neerlandia and went from farm to farm to find anyone that was willing to have a land-clearing camp set up on his land and/or willing to have his land cleared. Siebren Tiemstra and Henry Kippers Sr. each agreed to have a camp set up on his quarter.

On the camp site, canvas tents were erected as living quarters for the men. Each camp had a full-time cook who cooked plenty of good food. The Tiemstra children would get the empty cans of jam from the camp cook. The cans had enough jam left in them that the children could use it on sandwiches — a real treat. Besides the cook, two men stayed in camp each day to cut up firewood using a crosscut saw. Each weekday morning at about eight o'clock, the rest of the men would walk single file to the area that had to be cleared. They were well-outfitted for the work of clearing, being provided with double-bitted axes, mattocks, adzes, and crosscut saws. After cutting down the trees and bushes, the logs and brush were piled up teepee-wise so that water could drain off easily. The men went back to camp for lunch and their work day was over at five o'clock.

* * *

Regulations for men in the land-clearing camp included the following:

"The conditions under which these works will be carried out are as follows:

(a) Accomodation, food and medical care will be provided in kind, and an allowance not exceeding 20 cents per diem for each day worked in Camp, exclusive of days in transit proceeding to camp, will be issued in cash.

(b) Clothing which is issued to personnel on Unemployment Relief Projects does not become the private property of the individual.

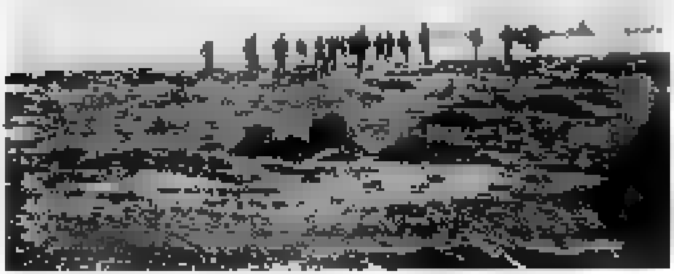
(c) The clothing which the man may be permitted to retain on discharge will be strictly limited to essential articles on his person. Spare underwear, socks, "Necessaries etc." will be withdrawn and returned to camp stores.

(d) Rubbers and Boots, Knee, rubber, are station (camp) stores and will be issued from time to time only as required for specific purposes."[1]

* * *

One land-clearing camp was located on the NE 14-61-3-5. It had forty to fifty men and they cleared land for Siebren Tiemstra, Henry Maat, Bill Olthuis, and Jim Johnman. They spent most of one winter there. Gerben Tiemstra, who was hired to haul water for them, went once a day with a team of horses and a sleigh with four empty barrels on it to the Kalmbach farm in Mellowdale. The Kalmbachs had a good well with a windmill, so if there was a wind Gerben did not have to pump. The water was pumped into the barrels using a hose, but once Gerben got back to the camp, he had to unload the water with a pail. The job took him about four-and-a-half hours. The other camp, which employed one hundred men, was located on the line between the north quarters of 16-62-3-5. These men cleared on quarters belonging to Henry Kippers Sr., John Kippers Sr., and

Bill Bouwman. Gerrit Kippers hauled water for the camp. There was hardly any snow that winter, so he used the horses and wagon. Every morning at about six o'clock, he left for camp where he picked up five 45-gallon barrels and drove to a natural spring north of Bonstrom's in Vega. Once there he and his assistant, a man from the camp, filled the barrels using pails. They made it back to camp around one o'clock. Gerrit often had a meal there before going home again. On Saturdays, he had to make two trips, the second one to Baird Lake to provide water for the men's Saturday-night baths.



Workers leaving the land clearing on Kippers'

Kitchen crew, land clearing camp on Kippers'

The farmers had to pay the government five to ten dollars per acre for the clearing done on their land, depending on how heavy the timber was. After the clearing had been done, though, some of the farmers could not afford to break the land and the brush grew up again. Most of them could not afford to pay the government either, so in later years much of the debt was forgiven.

* * *

Camps

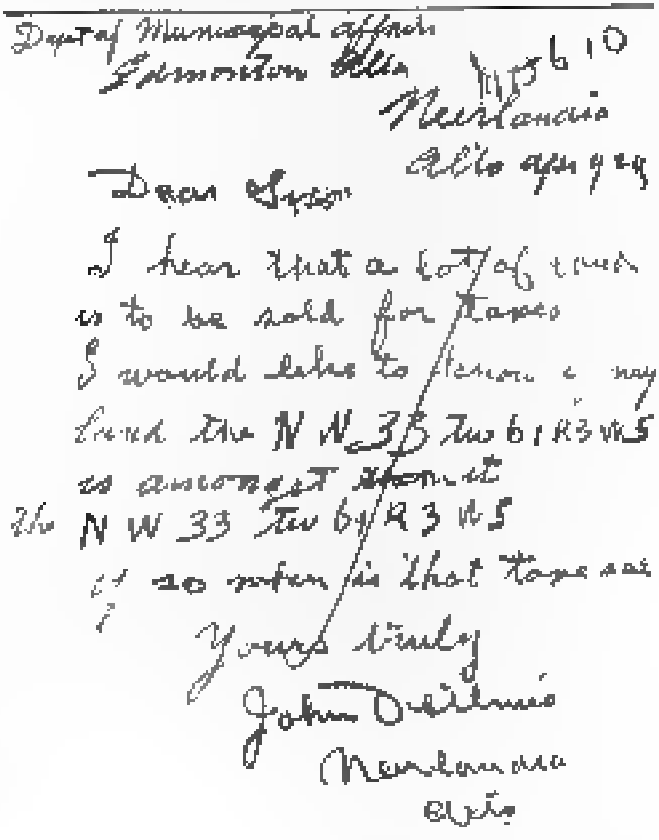
"During the Depression the government was afraid men would rebel. They made camps for men and provided food and a small wage. Siebren [Tiemstra] had a camp. They cleared more than one hundred acres. Farmers were supposed to pay the government six dollars an acre. . . . The government passed a debt adjustment act because people could not pay for it. . . . The debt was wiped out. They got off pretty good. It took a lot of nerve to venture that. There was a lot of jealousy about it."

John Ingwersen (interview)

* * *

Government Aid

The federal government initiated some programs to aid the farmers. During 1932, under R. B. Bennett, the government



Dept of Municipal affairs
Edmonton Alta

No 610

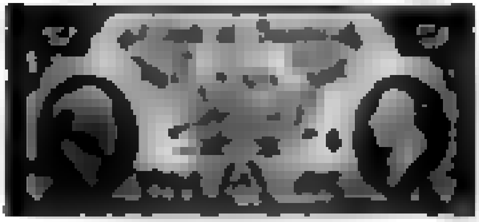
Neerlandia
Alta Apr 9 29

Dear Sir

I hear that a lot of land
is to be sold for taxes
I would like to know if my
land the N W 33 Tw 61 R3 W5
is amongst them
the N W 33 Tw 61 R 3 W5
if so when is that taxes due
Yours truly
John [illegible]
Neerlandia
Alta

[illegible]

[illegible]



CANADIAN BANK OF COMM

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

* * *

Councillors

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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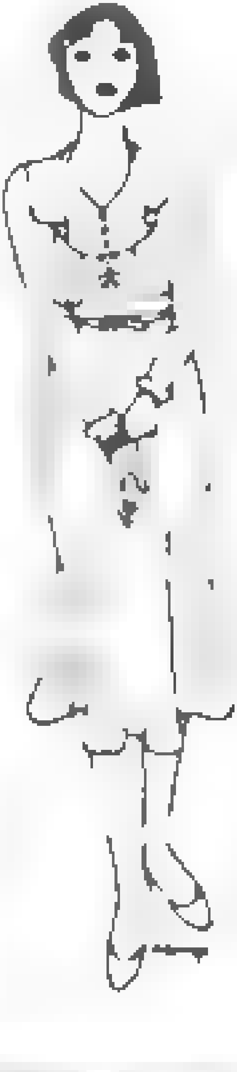
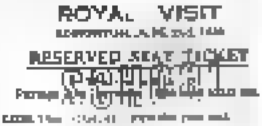


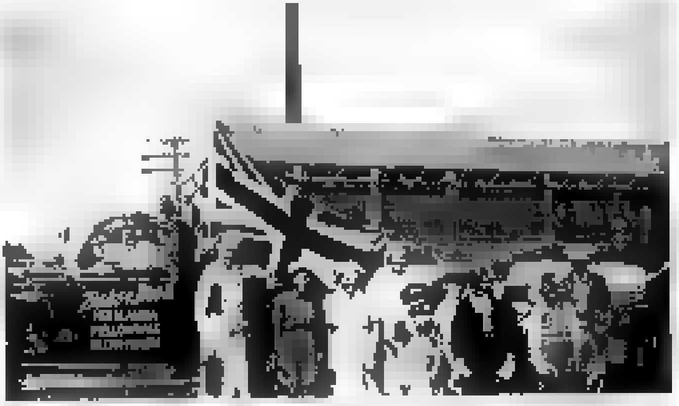
The Royal Visit

A truckload of pupils and some women of the community left Neerlandia at 5:00 a.m. of June 2, 1939, to see King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Mr Ashley (foreground) took the students of grade four and up. A group of students from Shoal Creek went along too. Mr Fisher provided the transportation and put seats in the back of his truck to accommodate the passengers.

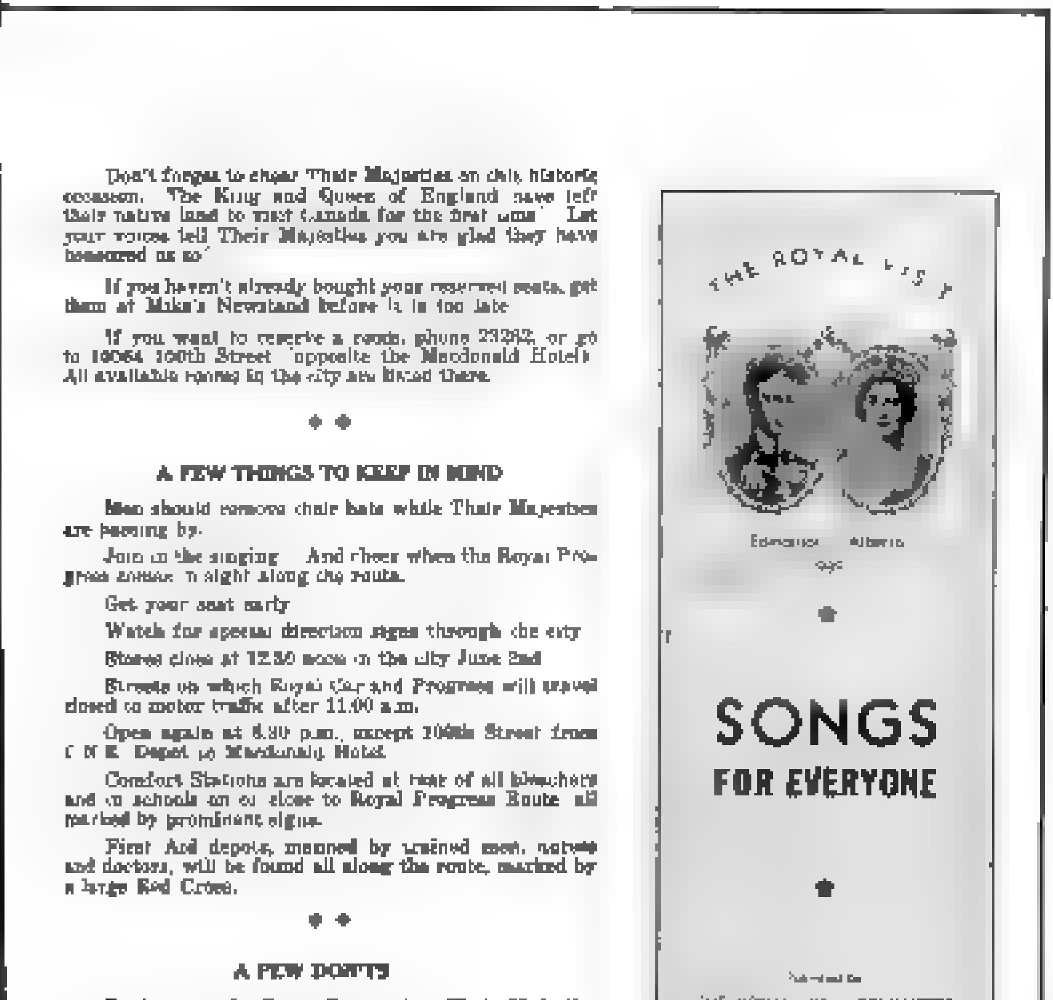
When the truckload reached Edmonton, they went to the mud flats of Laurier Park, where they ate lunch. A cream can of chocolate milk was supplied by Mr Fisher. After lunch they drove to Portage Avenue (Kingsway) where bleachers had been set up. The area was still bush and was called The Hudson's Bay Reserve.



ROYAL VISIT
EDMONTON, JUNE 2nd, 1939
RESERVED SEAT TICKET
[illegible]
Portage Ave [illegible]
[illegible]



When the Parade was over, the group returned to Neerlandia, arriving home at about 10 p.m.



Don't forget to cheer Their Majesties on this historic occasion. The King and Queen of England have left their native land to visit Canada for the first time! Let your voices tell Their Majesties you are glad they have honoured us so!

If you haven't already bought your reserved seats, get them at Mike's Newsstand before it is too late.

If you want to reserve a room, phone 23242, or go to 10064 100th Street (opposite the Macdonald Hotel). All available rooms in the city are listed there.

◆ ◆

A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Men should remove their hats while Their Majesties are passing by.

Join in the singing. And cheer when the Royal Progress comes in sight along the route.

Get your seat early.

Watch for special direction signs through the city.

Stores close at 12.30 noon in the city June 2nd.

Streets on which Royal Car and Progress will travel closed to motor traffic after 11.00 a.m.

Open again at 6.30 p.m., except 100th Street from C.N.R. Depot to Macdonald Hotel.

Comfort Stations are located at rear of all bleachers and in schools on or close to Royal Progress Route, all marked by prominent signs.

First Aid depots, manned by trained men, nurses and doctors, will be found all along the route, marked by a large Red Cross.

◆ ◆

A FEW DON'TS

Don't cross the Royal Route after Their Majesties come in sight.

Don't leave your seat tickets at home.

Don't crowd while standing in line.

THE ROYAL VISIT

Edmonton Alberta
1939

SONGS
FOR EVERYONE

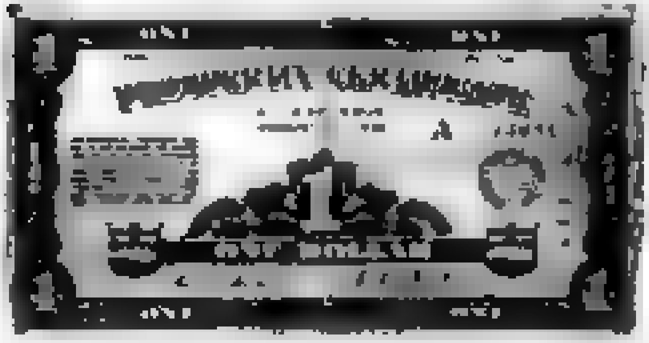
Published by
THE ROYAL VISIT COMMITTEE
Edmonton

eagerly waited on. The household was filled with suspense and excitement in the hope we would win. Win we did, and [illegible] for we received the parcel. Inside was a beautiful [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. What a luxury for our old furniture to have such a pillow setting on the couch.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

A popular radio program in the early 30s was William Aberhart's Sunday afternoon broadcasts during which he preached and expounded some economic ideas as well. William Aberhart, or Bible Bill, as he was often called, was chiefly responsible for forming the Social Credit party in early 1935. There was to be a provincial election on August [illegible], 1935 and among Aberhart's proposals during his election campaign was a program of issuing money in which every adult in the province would receive a [illegible] dollar certificate each month. Sometime before the election the secretary of the Social Credit party, [illegible], held a meeting in the Neerlandia church basement. The place was packed. The idea promised [illegible] dollars a month to everyone and some people "took it in like water." In the subsequent election Aberhart's party carried fifty-six seats out of a total of sixty-three. The United Farmers of Alberta party was soundly defeated, failing to get a single seat. Many people in Neerlandia voted for Aberhart but they maintained it was because he was a Christian and because they believed his election promises of monthly dividends.



Funny money

Aberhart did issue some prosperity certificates in 1936 which earned the name "funny money." Some people in Neerlandia received a certificate but all they [illegible] [illegible] a week to pay the required stamps on the back and the certificate was considered too expensive and quickly redeemed. Anne Schuring was given some certificates by her brother Peter who had received some from his dairy customers and could not use them all. Anne, who was in Edmonton since her son was in the hospital there, went to the Army and Navy store to buy some clothes. Not all stores would accept the funny money, but at the Army and Navy she was able to buy herself a green summer [illegible] and a [illegible] and white clothes for the children, all in exchange for the certificates. Aberhart's plans for monthly [illegible] were vanished, but the party's popularity remained.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] war in Germany. When Canada became involved in the war, the prices of farm products went up and the Depression was over.

* * *

Making Ends Meet

Even though there were not many jobs available, some found other ways to make ends meet. Mr. [illegible] brought two [illegible] for thirteen dollars. After butchering them himself he [illegible] through the settlement [illegible]. He had the hides tanned at the tannery in [illegible]. After selling the meat and paying for the leather he [illegible], although he had kept some meat for himself and [illegible] the leather for repairing his horse harnesses.

* *

Depression Period

By [illegible] we were well established on our farm. Prices for agricultural products [illegible] good and [illegible] the [illegible] wheat was [illegible] we [illegible] a large house. Prospects were [illegible] the [illegible] Banks were [illegible] money [illegible] and after much persuasion we agreed to do what we had never done before, go into debt and [illegible] to build our home. [illegible] the bank loan we had [illegible] with [illegible] eight [illegible] wheat [illegible] that we had been [illegible] bushels [illegible] the [illegible] got the [illegible] building our home.

But [illegible] for the first time [illegible] was in debt, [illegible] building a new house with a bank loan and [illegible] wheat [illegible] threshing and [illegible] bills [illegible] the next spring. [illegible] the same wheat which had sold at [illegible] the [illegible] next spring for [illegible] a bushel.

As a member of the Alberta Wheat Pool [illegible] the advice of the [illegible] and decided to hold my grain [illegible] the spring of [illegible] the wheat [illegible] a bushel. [illegible] the market [illegible] large [illegible] we [illegible] which had never [illegible] since we had come to Canada.

By [illegible] we were [illegible] off than when we started fifteen years before [illegible] throughout the [illegible]. Money became scarce and [illegible] farmers [illegible] hire a man for [illegible] per month [illegible] than board and [illegible] the farmers [illegible] there was no work or money available.

In a way, people in the country fared better than people in the city. There [illegible] we always managed [illegible] [illegible] wheat [illegible] [illegible] managed [illegible] wheat [illegible] [illegible] all [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the garden [illegible] all kinds [illegible] the cattle and horses [illegible] [illegible] if he had succeeded in getting [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] going [illegible] farm [illegible] And so it was [illegible] and people survived.

[illegible]

[illegible]

*

The Hungry Thirties

Then came the Hungry Thirties. [illegible] the farmers were [illegible] [illegible] the government [illegible] [illegible] Edmonton and received twelve dollars for them [illegible] three dollars [illegible] a dozen [illegible] [illegible] wheat [illegible] [illegible] everything [illegible] the grocery [illegible] [illegible] wheat [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] That was the time of the [illegible] [illegible] government [illegible] But we did not starve, we were not poor in the midst of plenty!

Ben Larsen

* * *

* * *

Oil Money

After working for farmers for seven days a week for the grand sum of twenty to twenty-five dollars per month, John Vanee was lured to Turner Valley by the prospects of making big money in the oil fields. In the spring of 1928 he began working as a roughneck for ninety-three cents an hour, fifty-six dollars a week. Living expenses were one dollar per day, allowing John accumulation of excess money to play the stock market. Prior to the crash of 1929, he was worth approximately $20-30,000 on paper. (In 1930 John and a friend took a trip to Ontario for a month in a 1930 Essex.) By 1931, however, John arrived in Neerlandia driving a Model A Ford and owning about three thousand dollars to begin homesteading. He traded the Model A for a cow. For furniture he purchased a solid brass bed, a stove, and a table and chairs, which were brought from Edmonton by Mr. Quick. Four horses and harnesses were purchased at an auction in Edmonton. John also bought a walking plow, a disc, harrows, a wagon, a sleigh, and a buggy. All these purchases, as well as the building of a shack and a barn, pretty well took care of the three thousand dollars.

Frances Vanee Churchill

FOOTNOTES

[1] Annual Report of the Department of Public Health, Province of Alberta, 1935, pg. 16.

[2] Extract: Regulations, Unemployment Relief Works, 1933. Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

[3] Memorandum for Mr. H. S. Kent, Re: Holland Settlement, Neerlandia, Alta. January 11, 1933.

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Kiil, Toivo, ed. *The Hungry Thirties*. Toronto. Natural Science of Canada, Limited, 1977.

The War Years

THE WAR YEARS

[illegible]

September 10, 1939

[illegible]

private tears

[illegible]

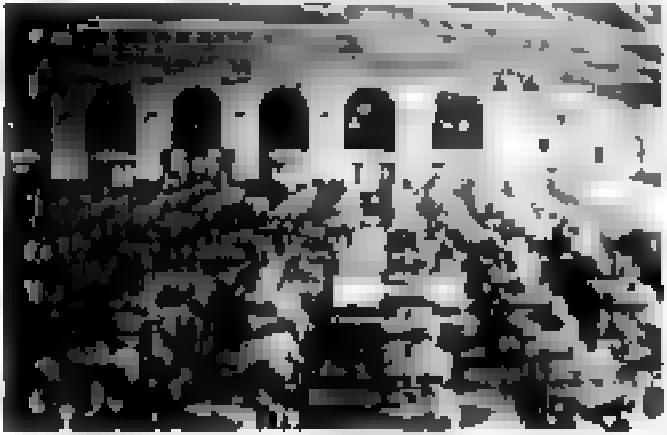
[illegible]

[illegible]

often for punishment. One trainee put it this way: "Along with the lye and homemade soap there were always others who were there beside you, also learning to scrub and [illegible]."

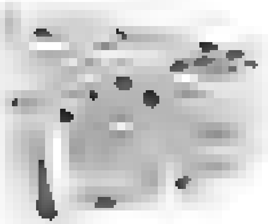
At training camp the boys were exposed to other things. Some contracted measles, mumps, or chicken pox; others became very homesick. For many this first time away from home was traumatic; many had never even been to a barbershop before. Others realized this was only training camp and considered it an adventure. Basic training lasted anywhere from one to four months. At first the boys were allowed to return home on leave after basic training was completed.

Soldiers leaving parade ground after review.



Sleeping quarters. Note rolled up bedding.

Jim [illegible], Clarence Mast, John [illegible], John [illegible], Joe H. Wierenga.



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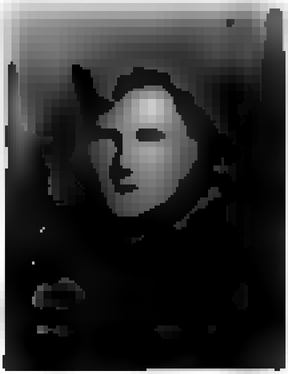


[illegible]

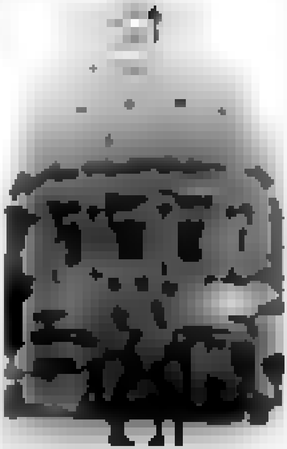
[illegible]

[illegible]

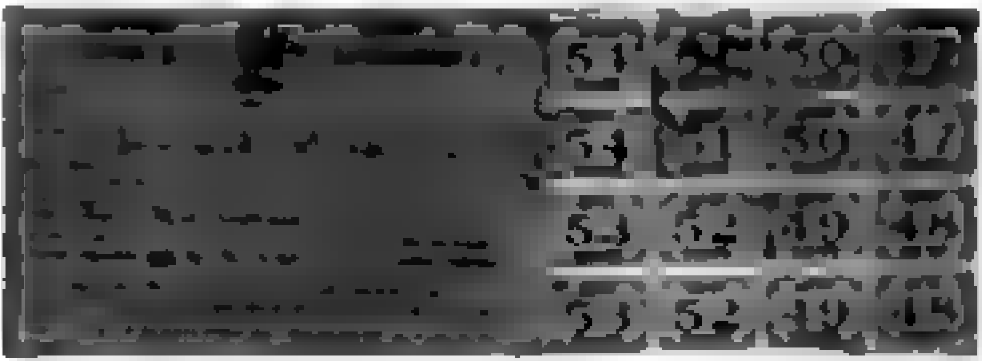
they were seeing it

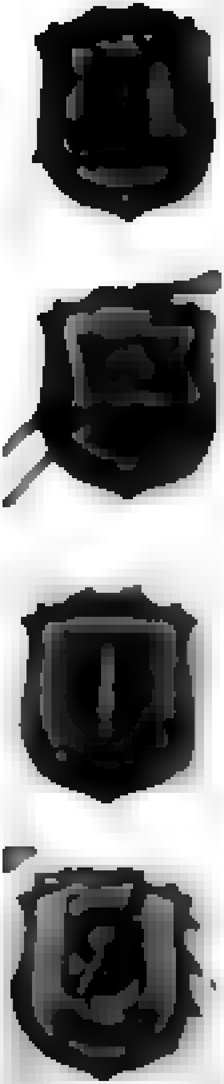
[illegible]

[illegible]



at St. Peter's in Rome [illegible] Emmanuel on the right





[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

would use and appreciate the contents

[illegible]

performed by army women and men

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ment term. Later other loans were available at five [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] from reality and yet they were thankful to be [illegible]

A Prisoner of War

[illegible] Regiment, a group of six hundred men [illegible]

[illegible]

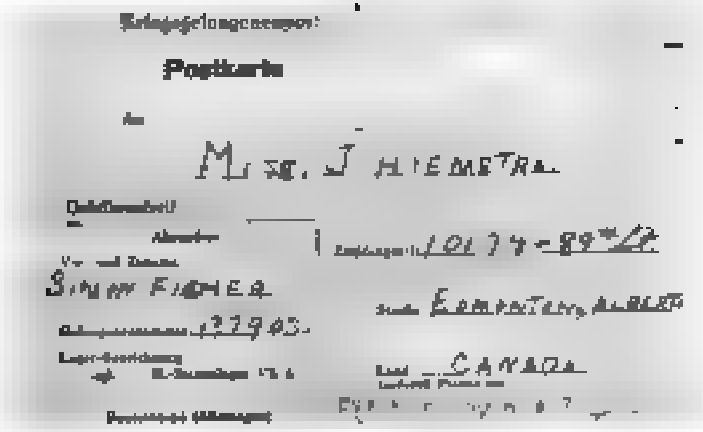
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] stole these potatoes from the Netherlands

[illegible]

[illegible]



Kriegsgefangenenpost

Postkarte

An

Mrs. J. Hiemstra

Gebührenfrei!

Absender:

Vor- und Zuname:

Simon Fisher

Gefangenennummer: 137903

Lager-Bezeichnung:

M.-Stammlager VII A

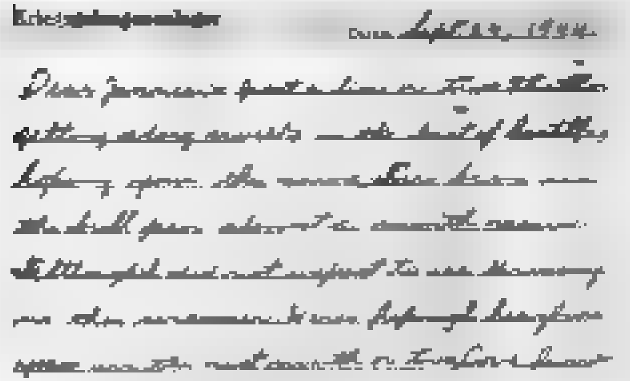
Empfangsort: 10174-89th St.

Straße: Edmonton, Alberta

Land: Canada

Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

Deutschland (Allemagne)

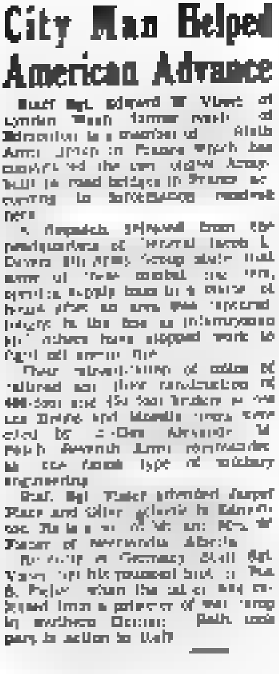


Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: Sept 22, 1944

[illegible]

Letter from Stalag 7A



City Man Helped American Advance

Staff Sgt. Edward W. [illegible] of Lyndon, Wash., former resident of Edmonton, is a member of [illegible] Sixth Army Group in France which has constructed the [illegible] Army-built railroad bridges in France, according to information received here.

A dispatch released from the headquarters of General Jacob L. Devers 6th Army Group states that some of these combat engineers, opening supply lines in a matter of hours after an area was captured, [illegible] in the face of intermittent [illegible] others have stopped work to fight off enemy fire.

Their rehabilitation of miles of railroad and their construction of 400-foot and 450-foot bridges over the [illegible] and Moselle rivers were cited by Lt.-Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army commander, as the finest type of military engineering.

Staff Sgt. [illegible] attended Jasper Place and other schools in Edmonton. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. W. [illegible] of Neerlandia, Alberta.

Recently in Germany Staff Sgt. [illegible] met his youngest brother Pte. B. [illegible] when the latter had escaped from a prisoner of war camp in northern Germany. Both took part in action in Italy.

who often wanted to stop for a bit of gas. I could not figure him out, but later found out he was stalling for time. He knew we would be running into the Americans, which we did. They captured us. I was not in too good a shape and it was through a Swiss doctor that I got back on my feet at Konstanz, Germany. The date of my rescue was April 23, 1945.

From there they flew me to England. At that time I only weighed ninety pounds. They gave me one bottle of Stout beer to drink at every meal; it is a nice beer and nutritious. On June 10, 1945, I went home. I took up farming in Neerlandia with the bullet still in my leg. It will stay there till my dying day. As I recall those days I must say they were dangerous. I hated it at times. We had been trained to kill, to destroy, and that scared me after I came home.

[illegible] have nightmares about it at times.

[illegible]

My Wartime Experiences

[illegible] with other units in war games.

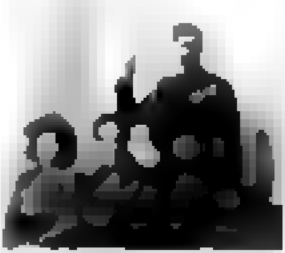
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] badge off the soldier's lapel. I took it with me and [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

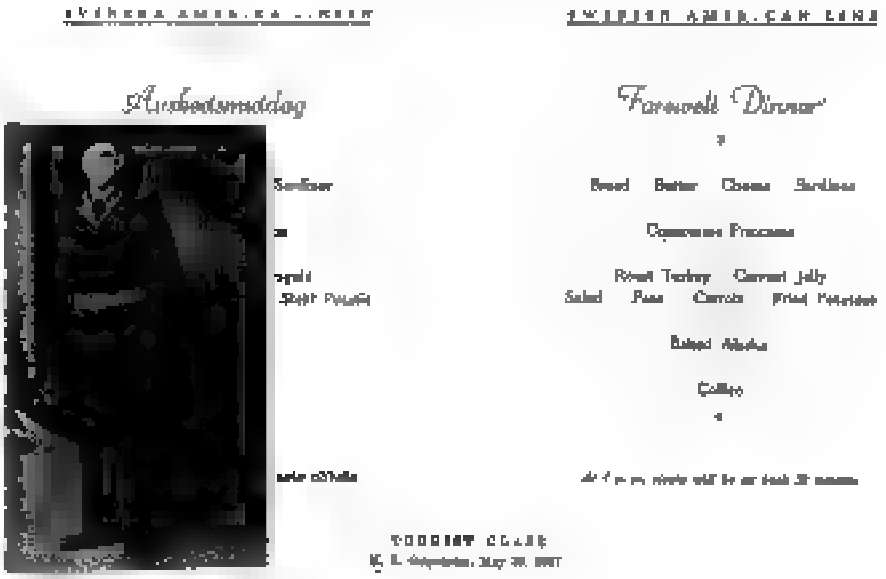
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Rifle Regiment, of which Steve was a member, was to be discharged and was returning to Canada at the end of November 1945. At that moment we both realized that "parting is (not) such sweet sorrow."

Steve promised to send me a subscription to the *Family Herald* and the *Free Press Weekly* so I could learn more about Canada. Moreover, he would let me come to Canada as soon as possible. We didn't anticipate that it would involve much red tape and that it would take two years before we'd see each other again. The Canadian War Brides could go to Canada right away and their passage across the Atlantic was paid by the Canadian Government. But the fiancées had to go through a lot of red tape and their husbands-to-be had to pay for the Atlantic crossing.



SVENSKA AMERIKA LINIEN

SWEDISH AMERICAN LINE

Avskedsmiddag

Farewell Dinner

Bread Butter Cheese Sardines

Consommé Princesse

Roast Turkey Currant Jelly
Salad Peas Carrots Fried Potatoes

Baked Alaska

Coffee

TOURIST CLASS

Dinner for the "War Brides". Inset: Steve

Finally Steve got all the papers approved and on May 10, 1947 I landed in New York on the *Gripsholm*, a ship of the Swedish-America Line. Four other Dutch girls came across with me. Three were headed for Winnipeg and two of us for Saskatchewan. It took three ticket agents at New York Central Station to find the province of Saskatchewan on the map. They had never heard of it and concluded, "Only Indians must live there!"

The trip by train seemed endless and the melancholic blowing of the whistle made me very depressed. But Steve sent a telegram that he'd meet me at Rivers, Manitoba. How happy we were to be together again! Before long we arrived at Melville, Saskatchewan.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and got married at the [illegible]

[illegible]

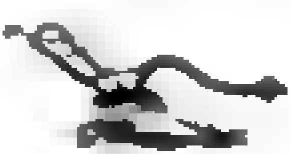
The First War Bride

[illegible]

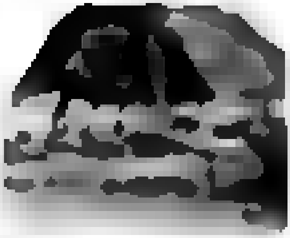
[illegible] was a small boat and only crossed the North Sea [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



Postwar Immigration



[illegible]

POSTWAR IMMIGRATION

[illegible]

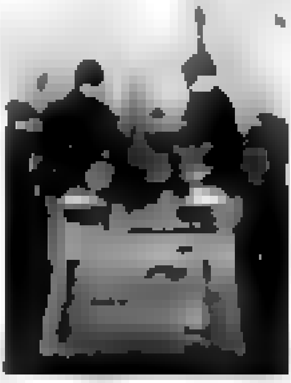
European Background

[illegible]

[illegible]

'Emigration Fever'

[illegible]



[illegible] to Neerlandia where Tine had been hired as a teacher

[illegible] sponsor for at least one year

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Kota Inten

ment quite strongly to allow Dutch immigrants to enter the country. An agreement had been signed late in 1947 to allow for the entry of ten [illegible] agriculturalists. At a press conference the government outlined the new program, the result of which saw many more emigrants embark on the long journey to Neerlandia. The *Kota Inten* and *Tabinta* were chartered for a total of thirteen trips, each transporting [illegible] passengers bound for Canada. The first boats docked at Halifax in March; the St. Lawrence was still frozen, and subsequent boats docked in either Quebec City or Halifax. The 1948 run of these boats carried the largest number of immigrants for Neerlandia, beginning with the [illegible] Nevis and H. Hessels families. The *Kota Inten* and the *Tabinta*, the ships by which most of the immigrants headed for Neerlandia travelled, were unsuitable for the task, one being a converted freighter and the other a troop carrier. Some of the later immigrants to arrive in Neerlandia travelled in remodelled transport ships such as the *Waterman*, the *Groote Beer*, and the *Zuiderkruis*, which were luxurious compared to the earlier immigrant ships.

[illegible]

Why They Came

[illegible]

[illegible] Peters family who later also immigrated

[illegible]

The Voyage

[illegible] boat trip gave people mixed feelings, to say the least [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ness. Another shipboard luxury was showers

[illegible]

[illegible]

yard" for the first time, meeting Marten de Jong was a godsend. The immigrant ships carried not only Hollanders, though, as Rotterdam was the gathering place for French and other European immigrants as well.

Language was not a problem until the boat docked in a Canadian port, but even here the *Deputaatschap* provided helpful services for the immigrant. Some ships had *tolk* "interpreters" aboard; generally they were university students, fluent in English and Dutch, whose trip was provided free of charge. Their job was to try to eliminate complications that could arise once the immigrants arrived at Canadian Customs. No amount of translation seemed to help Marten de Jong and his family of ten children, with as many suitcases and trunks, solve his problem. A five-dollar bill to the right man, however, was enough.

When the ships reached Halifax after the long trip, the city offered a beautiful panoramic sight if it was viewed at night. The lights dotting the gently sloping hillside was a sight not soon forgotten by one immigrant. For another, the squalor and slums of Quebec City's harbour side was his introduction to Canada.

* * *

Leaving the Netherlands

We had never been anywhere before we left. Oh, sure, we had visited neighbouring towns, and we had watched the Germans come ... and go. But when Dad decided to emigrate, there were so many new experiences in such a short time we could not take it all in. We had never been in a big city. Now we had to go first to The Hague to get the necessary papers and then to Rotterdam to board the ship. There were so many new things to see in the city and the harbour. Then there was the ship and the trip itself. Next came the train trip across Canada, the immigration hall, the trip to Barrhead, and, finally, Neerlandia and the snow. It was a case of information overload. Some things will never be forgotten, and others seem not to have happened at all.

*

All Aboard!

For most immigrants, however, docking in one of Canada's harbours was merely a brief interval before being whisked away for a four-day trip in an immigrant railcar to western Canada. The trip was different from the boat trip. Meals and showers were not provided, putting a burden on immigrants who were unsure how far their one hundred dollars would take them. One immigrant had the unpleasant experience of having the washrooms locked up by the conductor for someone's misbehaviour. An added unpleasantry was the dirt and grime which accumulated as a result of the coal-fired engine spewing billows of smoke backwards toward open windows, but at least there was no seasickness. One immigrant recalls the men and boys sitting atop the roof of the car for parts of the trip. For this "luxury" these men sorely needed a bath when they reached the Immigration Hall in Edmonton. Another thing which characterized the immigrant cars were the lines of clothes hanging

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The Fieldmen

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] learn English?

[illegible]

[illegible]

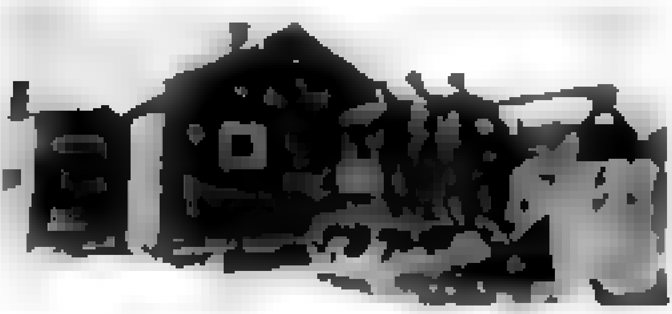
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

This is [illegible]?

[illegible]

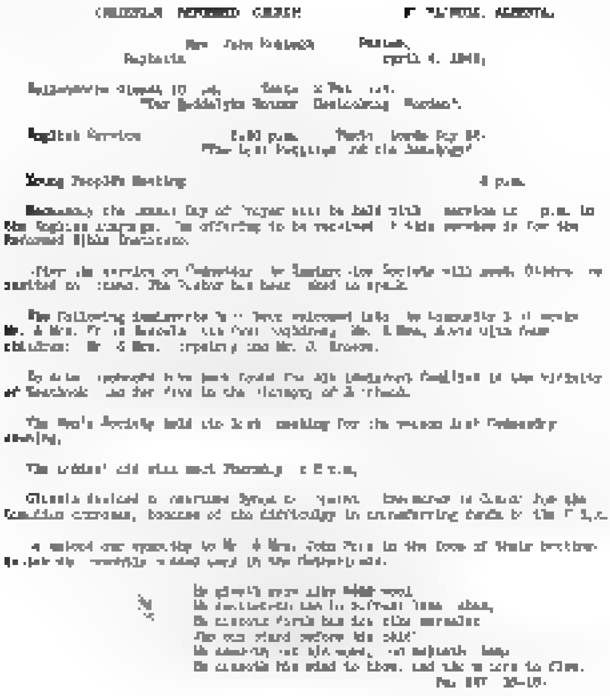


[illegible]

[illegible] used for little else

[illegible] as well as could be expected

[illegible]



five dollars a month for a single person and seventy-five dollars for a family, indicating that more work was expected from a family. Often while the men were in the field, an immigrant's wife was required to help the farmer's wife in the kitchen, in the garden, or bringing meals out to the fields. In those days, a woman's pride was her garden, and fall time meant reaping its fruits. Young women often found work keeping house. Thus, Tjamke Moes kept house for Grace Piers Sr. and made meals for the Piers men. Hers was a 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. job, for wages of forty dollars a month.

* * *

Going to catechism was difficult. The minister would usually indicate by looking at a person that he was the one chosen to answer the question. Unfortunately for us, the minister was cross-eyed.

The [illegible] young people had learned how to tell who the [illegible] but we [illegible] the other answered when we should not have a date [illegible] answer when we were expected to.

* * *

Immigrants were teased a lot in those days, although most did not [illegible]. One man [illegible] the [illegible] the first morning [illegible] going [illegible] in the morning [illegible] the barn [illegible] a good [illegible] that day [illegible] the [illegible] of the barn. The man was [illegible] the big wagon but could not move it more than a few feet. [illegible] the [illegible] had been tied to the under [illegible].

[illegible] the [illegible] camps was an [illegible] they were given a [illegible] the [illegible] a number [illegible]. [illegible] the number [illegible] with their [illegible] a few miles [illegible] the [illegible]. They were provided along by enthusiastic [illegible] in front. There is a [illegible] of the [illegible] there [illegible] and [illegible] the lights ahead. [illegible] them, however, as the army had been moved to an altogether different [illegible].

[illegible] the [illegible] life in [illegible] was strange in many ways. Most expected that the [illegible] would have been bigger. [illegible] expected more [illegible]. The [illegible] left a lot to be desired, [illegible] and [illegible] would [illegible] the Dark Ages [illegible]. But this was [illegible]. After all the [illegible] had been [illegible] more than a [illegible] fifty years before.

* * *

One immigrant remembers being offered a stick of rhubarb and [illegible] the [illegible] eat rhubarb raw in the [illegible]. That immigrant made a [illegible] as if the rhubarb had really been a stick of celery.

* * *

To the amazement of some of the immigrant farmers in [illegible] wore gloves while working [illegible] the summer [illegible] seemed [illegible]. The gloves were for protecting the hands while doing manual work. [illegible] looking [illegible] and all the more [illegible] were [illegible]. More striking still was the [illegible] of the [illegible] having [illegible] all [illegible] after [illegible] the [illegible] morning [illegible] and [illegible] but others who had [illegible] crops already a foot high in the [illegible], it was strange to [illegible] on their arrival in [illegible] that farmers were just getting into the fields.

* * *

Chamber Pot

One newly arrived farm [illegible] Mr. [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] morning one of the [illegible] carrying a large chamber pot with a handle [illegible] the [illegible] a get their daily supply of milk. [illegible] were [illegible] a little fat and a little [illegible] had been [illegible].

One day the lady of the new family asked [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

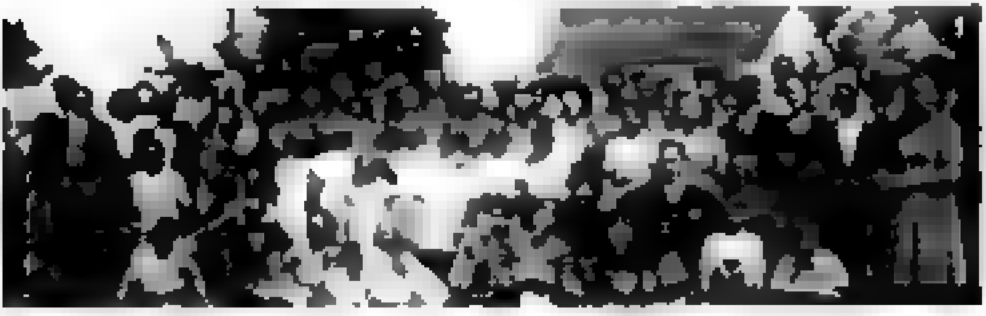
Tine Abdo

In turn, the immigrants seemed a strange bunch to native Neerlandians. They dressed strangely too. The [illegible] wore short pants and their [illegible] were [illegible] pattern. The immigrants [illegible] as they ate. Their appetites seemed insatiable. The immigrants defended themselves by noting that the food was abundant in [illegible] than it was scarce in the Netherlands. Language was a problem for immigrants, [illegible] especially [illegible] [illegible] English [illegible] the Neerlandia young people did not seek out the immigrants. Because [illegible] and friendships were already established and they saw no need to change either. Furthermore, the newcomers were [illegible] and [illegible]. When they even wanted [illegible] at table [illegible], the immigrants were [illegible] before sitting down. What strange behaviour [illegible].

Some of the immigrants were greenhorns at farming. The story is told that [illegible] young [illegible] heads upside down [illegible] farmer [illegible] their mistake. [illegible] young man was sent into the fields [illegible] the farmer decided [illegible] what was taking him so long. He found the horses tied up behind each other [illegible] that [illegible] the fields after being [illegible]. There were many things to learn.

Immigration to [illegible]

Many of the young [illegible] arrived in the Neerlandia [illegible] in the years 1948-1954 [illegible] young men and a few families came after that. In 1951 six young men stepped off the train in



Dutch immigrants in Neerlandia, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] partly because of the [illegible] hold a more liberal view of [illegible]

[illegible] ship as the community continued its development

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] when I worked in Lacombe

[illegible] morning

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] fe house. But after that, although the brew was still [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] next day we ventured into Edmonton unchaperoned. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] we elders now

[illegible]

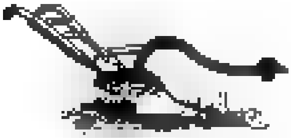
tivities, we practiced once more on the Sturwold road. After the performance everybody applauded so vigorously (Neerlandia style — clapping hands, stomping feet, and whistling) that we did not have the nerve to admit to a one-song repertoire and disappeared on the pretense of going to the bathroom.

My farm chores included taking cows to Elzinga's bull, a mile to the north. While the bull played host to my cow, I had coffee with the Elzingas in their kitchen. The topics of conversation usually centered around Article 31 in the Netherlands, immigration, and Frisians and Groningers. Elzinga wanted me to be a Frisian because of my name. I declined since I was born and raised in Groningen. On the return trip, I mulled over this conversation and concluded that Elzinga's insistence was prompted by the fact that fieldman Herman Wierenga had imported too many Groningers. Anyway, Groninger or Frisian, my cow went crazy from mosquitoes and black flies, took a giant leap and disappeared into the dense bushes, not to be recovered till three hours later. That evening I read about the merits of artificial insemination in *The Country Guide* and agreed, wholeheartedly.

Watching Frank Visser auctioneer the annual Ladies' Aid Bazaar was fun. His enthusiasm opened wallets for the benefit of blacks in Nigeria. The lighting in this hall was dim and Frank could not always see the bidder. The back benches were occupied by young people who threw in fake bids and then pointed fingers at a sedate Neerlandian as the originator. Those smart alecks also watched Klaas Rowaan's wife bring down an armful of blueberry pies to the trunk of the Model T Coupe, only for her never to see them again.

The above events happened thirty-six years ago and a lot of things have changed — progress has changed farming standards and life-style. But my happy memories of Neerlandia will stay the same, thanks to all the Neerlandians.

Bill Braaksma



Part Two

The Generations

1911-1920

Yearly Anecdotes

1911-1920

The first decade of the Dutch in Neerlandia — what a time that was! The immigrants, many of whom had never driven an ox, wielded an axe, or constructed a building, struggled to make a life for themselves in the wilderness. Their lives — the joys and the sorrows — are recorded in the family histories which follow.

The basic information for the family histories was submitted by those whose names appear at the end of the stories. For the sake of clarity we have in most cases changed the stories to the third person. We have attempted to flesh out the histories by talking to friends and family. Some passages — in particular characterizations — have been added as a result of such research. Please read the family histories in the light of this statement. We have made every attempt to be accurate and apologize for any errors.

The editors

MEMOIRS OF BEN LIEVERS

[illegible] Sunday [illegible] the fifth grade.

[illegible] mother would alter to fit me or my younger brother.

[illegible] studied more when I had the chance.

[illegible]

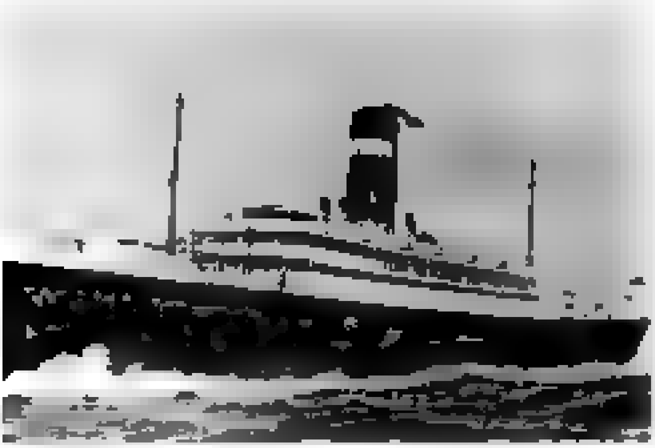
[illegible]

[illegible]

decker bus pulled by two horses. I found out that in England they drove on the left side of the road, not on the right like in the Netherlands. We soon arrived at the dock where the boat was to leave in the morning. There we were herded like sheep into a big waiting room. It was a great hall with an open coal-burning fireplace in the middle and benches along the walls. One mother was nursing a baby and alongside her was a young man playing an accordion. In front of them some folks were dancing. All around was talk in different languages. A real babble. Our children started to cry because they were afraid of the noise. I thought, "Do we have to sleep here overnight?" But after a while somebody came and brought us upstairs and we had a room for ourselves and we had a good rest.

[illegible], 19[illegible]

The following morning we were brought to the boat and had to show our papers and be examined by a doctor. Our oldest girl, Hanna, had [illegible] ringworm on her head. I was carrying her and when the doctor looked, he put me aside. Somebody came and took me and Hanna to a separate room [illegible] the hospital. I did not feel so good. What if they send us back? But as soon as we were out of



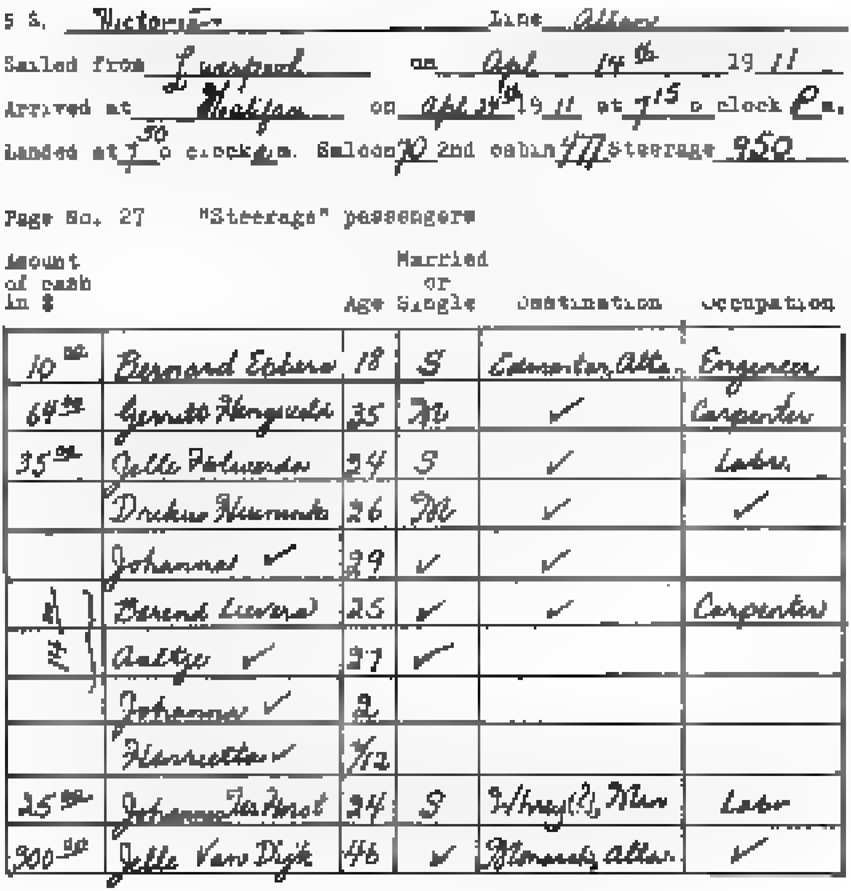
The Victorian

the harbour somebody came and brought us to our room. Alice and Minnie were already there. This boat did not look as clean as the Hub boat and the meals were not as good, but most of the passengers did not eat much because we had a rough crossing.

The first day the sea was calm, but the second day nearly everyone was seasick, except for the children. Alice stayed in bed for the seven days we were crossing. The sea was rough for the whole trip; some days we were not allowed on the deck because the waves were going over it. After a while ropes were stretched over the deck to hold on to, so you would not be washed away overboard. Once in a while the propeller would come out of the water with an awful noise — it did not feel too safe! The worst was over after about three or four days, but I never saw the sun in those seven days.

After seven days, we were nearing land. We saw one or two ships passing us and one iceberg in the distance. The sea gulls were flying around the ship now — a sign of land. It started to rain and blow so the upper section of the ship was all covered with ice and it became dangerous to be on deck on account of the ice falling. Soon we were nearing Halifax and the pilot came on board to bring us safely in, but a heavy fog settled over the sea and we were not able to move till it cleared. As soon as the fog cleared we saw Halifax city on the one side, and on the other side hills with houses here and there and covered with snow — still winter in Canada and when we had left the Netherlands the tulips were coming out. I thought, Maybe the wife was right, it was foolish to go to this wild country. But we were here now and we would make the best of it. Our baggage was unloaded first. The next morning we came off the ship and were looked over by a doctor and had our papers checked. Then our baggage was inspected. After this we were herded on to the train and were soon on our way to Edmonton. Alice said, "This is better than the ship — I will never go over that sea again!"

I liked the Canadian passenger cars better than the English ones; we could go from one car into the other, not like in England



S S. Victorian Line Allan
Sailed from Liverpool on Apl 14th 19 11
Arrived at Halifax on Apl 24th 19 11 at 7^15 o clock P.m.
Landed at 7^30 o clock p.m. Saloon 70 2nd cabin 177 Steerage 950

Page No. 27 "Steerage" passengers

Amount of cash in $		Age	Married or Single	Destination	Occupation
10.00	Bernard Ebbers	18	S	Edmonton, Alta.	Engineer
64.00	Gerrit Hengeveld	35	M	✓	Carpenter
35.00	Jelle Folkerda	24	S	✓	Labor.
	Drikus Nieuwenda	26	M	✓	✓
	Johannes ✓	29	✓	✓	
4	Berend Lievers	25	✓	✓	Carpenter
2	Aaltje ✓	27	✓		
	Johannes ✓	2			
	Henriette ✓	7/12			
25.00	Johannes Ter Horst	24	S	Winnipeg(?), Man	Labor
900.00	Jelle Van Dijk	46	✓	Monarch, Alta.	✓

The above information was obtained from the manifest of the Victorian

where they were divided into different rooms. These immigration trains were just right for travelling — the seats were made so that two made one double bed, and above was a collapsible platform for a double bed that during the day served as a place for the baggage. There was a coal stove in every car on which to make coffee or tea, but we had to supply our own food. It was in Canada that we first saw bananas and tasted pie.

Looking out of the train, we did not like Canada. Small houses, we thought, but the distance fooled us. Ontario was wild bush country, rock, spruce and poplar, and muskeg that we mistook for the heather that we knew in the Netherlands. This cold wild country was not for us! We saw some small lakes full of logs and I wondered, "What are they going to do with all those fence posts?" When we came further west in the prairies, it was also not good: no trees, no green grass, some cows and horses, and plenty of gophers that we thought were rats! No, Canada did not look promising. So far we had not seen anything of those big barns and houses pictured in the Dutch papers. And the English language — we would never learn that. Most of us could understand German, though. Herman spoke German best, so he was our interpreter.

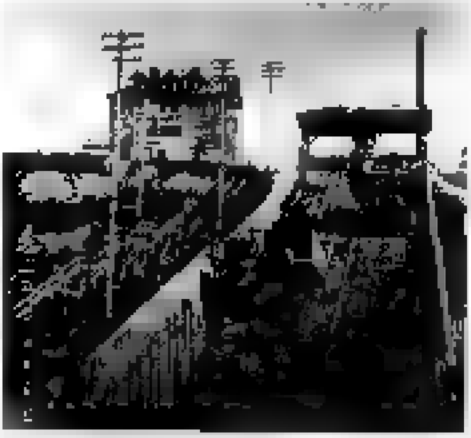
When we arrived at Winnipeg, we changed trains. We stopped there for one hour but did not see much of the city because we were afraid of getting lost. From there, we went to Calgary and then on to Edmonton. There it was more parkland and, farther northwest, heavy timber — more like the part of Gelderland we came from. That we liked, but not Eastern Canada or the prairies. "We are nearing Edmonton," the conductor told us, so we gathered our stuff together and got the little girls dressed. George sent a telegram to the elders of the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton to meet them at the station. We had nobody waiting for us because the man we had been writing to was not in Edmonton but on a homestead in Eastburg.

CPR Station, Strathcona, 1900s

Well, at last we were in Strathcona, not yet in Edmonton. George's family had white roses in their lapels, waiting to meet the elders of the Church. Only it seemed there was nobody looking like an elder — just a couple of fellows in dirty overalls and they turned out to be the elders. They took George and his family but we were left to the CPR. They brought us by horse and wagon over the Low Level Bridge, as the High Level was just being built then. To get up McDougall Hill there was a platform that we, the horses, and the wagon were loaded on, and a steam engine on top pulled us up. Then we were brought to the Immigration Hall. It was April 28, 1911.

First steel lift, looking south.

B6801 E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta



Lift (incline railway) looking north.

B6806 E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

The CPR took good care of us, but we were more or less on our own in a strange city, not understanding a word of English. At the Hall the caretaker told us, in German, that we could stay for a week but that we should get out as soon as possible because immigrants were coming in on every train. We had a room upstairs, but the kitchen and dining room were in the basement. All the utensils needed to make meals were there, and we had to clean up after every meal, of course. We decided to make *pannekoeken*, but had nothing to make them with. So Herman went to the store to get supplies. He came back with salt, fat, yeast, and cornmeal. We did not know what corn was, but meal seemed nearest to the Dutch *meel* (flour). The women made *pannekoeken* with it, but they did not taste very good.

Dining area, Immigration Hall, c. 1911-12

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta

[illegible] wanted to dig a hole [illegible] alright lots of room around us and if we [illegible] Canada.

[illegible]

B5434 E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

[illegible], c. 1910

enough open homesteads here for a Dutch settlement. We travelled that day as far as Edison, the start of a little town with a school, church, livery barn and a few farm houses. After we left Edison, we decided to try to find a stopping place for the night but this was not easy for a team of horses and six men. At the first farmhouse we asked for room for six men, but the answer was "No, not for six of you." It was the same at the next and the next till at last we decided to settle down under spruce trees for the night. But one of us said, "I will ask at the next house and that will be the last." The next house turned out to be a little shed, but they said they would have room for us, although we were wondering where they would put the six of us. The farmer came out and helped to get the horses in the barn. When we came in, after we had a wash at the well, the table was set. After a good supper I wandered around the barn for awhile and then found the others were in the house, and when I came in the fellows were all lying on the floor from one wall to the other. I dropped between two of them on the floor and it was a tight fit, but being young and tired I slept well. After breakfast the next morning we started again. We paid for the food and the night's lodging, leaving the lady of the house with more money than she had maybe seen for a long time.

The third day on the road we did not go as many miles because the roads were not so good and the horses were getting tired. But we reached a farmer's place about fifteen miles from Neerlandia and we stopped there overnight. Some of us slept in a granary full of oats and I found that better than a wooden door for a spring and had a good sleep.

The last day of our trip was the hardest because we were in real timber country. No roads, although there was a trail around sloughs and around big trees. A few settlers had been over it with oxen or horses but we found creeks and sloughs and one of us went in front of the horses with a long stick measuring the depth of the mud to see if it would be safe for the horses to go through. We made it without accident, and arrived at the outskirts of Neerlandia that night, the Simon Tiemstra farm. They had a log cabin and said if we were content to sleep on the floor, we could stay there. So we

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

cabin. He had left Edmonton the day before us so he could clean the cabin before we arrived, but we arrived and no Arie. He came that night, though. Since we needed groceries, the next morning Arie and I borrowed a team of oxen and a sleigh to go to the store, which was seven miles south and was open only one day a week. It seemed that the whole country was there — oxen, horses, sleighs, saddle horses — so we had to wait our turn. It was dark when we started our homeward journey, but after getting stuck behind a stump and losing some groceries, we made it, with one driving the oxen and one walking behind.

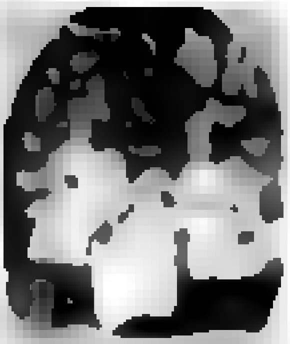
Arie had the necessary pots and pans, so we started housekeeping. Arie and I took turns making breakfast, since John was younger and needed more sleep. Arie was a better cook than either John or I, so we left it mostly up to him to bake bread, etc. He was older than I and not married and I was spoiled already because I had a wife who was a good cook (except in baking bread. She had to learn that in Canada, and the first batches she made were quite heavy, but I had all my teeth yet at that time and an empty stomach, so it did not matter.) One morning I got out of bed and said to Arie, "Look, there is a fire in the roof along the stovepipe." He said, "That's all right. Let's have breakfast first!" A mud roof with a layer of snow on top does not burn fast so we had no trouble getting it out after breakfast.

As soon as we were settled in Arie's cabin we tried our hand at cutting logs but, being green at it, made mistakes. John had never used such tools before, but with the help of neighbours and their oxen we did manage to get the logs to the place. We started to build the frame, got eight feet high, then left it at that, and went back to Edmonton.

E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Edmonton, looking west from 2nd Street, 1914.

The city of Edmonton was growing like a toadstool with the selling of building lots all around it. Real estate offices were doing a great business, selling lots to immigrants who did not understand a word of English. Many found out afterwards that the lot they had



[illegible]

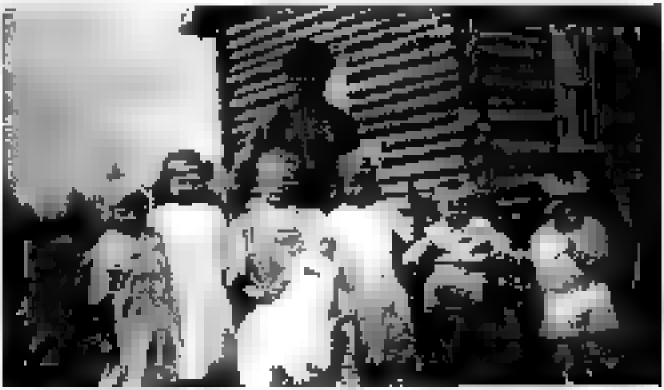
[illegible]

[illegible] wagon was able to get through.

[illegible]

moose hide. Now the job was to break the ox. I put on the harness and put him in front of a stone boat and everything went fine till I said, "Get up!" But the beast did not know what I meant so I gave him a little pat with my stick but he did not move. I hit a little harder with my stick and there he went, right into a haystack! One thing I learned and that was that an ox will not back up! After much hard work I did get him trained to haul my firewood or go to the store. I also did some plowing with the two oxen later on.

We did progress, though, and soon had a few cows. We made butter, which we traded for groceries, and also had a few hens and sold the eggs if we could.



Rieke, Hanne, Alice holding Johannes, Ben, Minne, Henry, Bill. 1918.

In the years 1915 to 1918, we were short of money and there was no work in Neerlandia, so some of the men went harvesting on the prairies. I received a letter asking if I would come and do some carpenter work. I went after April 28, 1915, because that is when our first son, **Bill** (Willem), was born. A few days later I left for Nobleford with my partner, Popko Schuring, and we worked together in Nobleford, Monarch, Granum, and Bendhall building houses, barns, and a church. I stayed away for five months while Alice and the girls did the homesteading. I made fifty cents an hour plus board and room. I made good at that time and came home with about five hundred dollars, with which we bought some haying machinery and a sewing machine for Alice, as well as other things. I went again the following years and in that way we made a start on our homestead. It was not easy and there were many hardships but the family grew and we got a second son, **Henry** (Hendrik), on September 28, 1916. Our third son, **Johannes**, was born November 10, 1917 and passed away March 5, 1919. Another son was stillborn on June 18, 1919.

The winter of 1919 was long and cold and many cattle died because of shortage of feed. We lost some in the spring too. Our last daughter, **Alice** (Aaltje), was born November 25, 1920. Three more sons were born in the 1920s: **Ben**, March 17, 1923; **John** (Jan), January 6, 1925, and **Gerrit**, January 7, 1929. All of them were born at home with just the womenfolk helping one another.

Lewis boys on homestead, late 1920s

When our children were older the girls worked out cooking in the lumber camps. We got a permit from the government for one dollar for about a hundred feet of lumber. We had to cut the logs, bring them to the sawmill, and then bring the lumber home again. This had to be done in the winter as the mill was on the south side of Shoal Lake. The boys and I would start early in the mornings to cut logs, and one of the girls worked at the sawmill as a cook to supply the money for the sawing. Alice and the younger children stayed at home to do the housework and chores. Alice had to bake bread every day to keep us in lunches. We finished the logging that winter and the sawmill had it all sawed, but by that time the ice was melting. We did get all the lumber home before the ice went out of the lake though. The next year I started to build our third house which is still standing today (1966).

The house they built in 1927

Excerpt taken from memoirs written in 1966 by [illegible]

JAN AND FROUKJE (EERDMANS) ANEMA

Jan (John) Anema was born May 8, 1884 in Arum, Friesland, the Netherlands, to parents who were farmers. Froukje Eerdmans was born January 25, 1886 in Bolsward, Friesland. Her father was in the business of buying and selling hides. John and Froukje met and became engaged in Bolsward.

John had worked for dairy farmers in the Netherlands but, lured by the promise of streets paved with gold, John and his step-brother Siebren Tiemstra sailed to the U.S.A. in 1906. Froukje, accompanied by members of her family, followed him in 1907. She went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, because some of her family were already there. John and Froukje were married September 19, 1907 and went to Harrison, South Dakota, where John and Siebren had rented a farm. Two children were born to the Anemas there: Delia (Dirkje), on December 1, 1908, and Susan (Sietske), on February 22, 1911.

Few trees grew in Harrison so buffalo chips had to be gathered for fuel. Drought (the second one in twenty years) hit the state, and South Dakota did not live up to the promise. John and Siebren were attracted to an advertisement placed in *De Wachter* by Henry Kippers of Edmonton, indicating his desire to establish a Dutch farming community near Edmonton. John responded to the advertisement and in 1911 the Anema and Tiemstra families

Froukje and John's wedding photo, 1907

Sister, Froukje, Dela in Edmonton, 1913

arrived by train in Edmonton and settled in Fraser Flats. Although many other immigrants lived in tents, the Anemas were able to get a shack. John found work at the Edmonton Water Works, and he and his wife saved as much money as they could so they would be able to begin homesteading.

At first John filed on a quarter in the Thorhild district, but on December 18, 1911, he filed on the SW 27-61-1-5. This too was temporary. By the time the Anema family moved to what later became Neerlandia, he had re-filed on the SW 35-62-3-5, January 21, 1913. The big move came in 1914. By this time there were three children to take along since a baby girl, Tena (Katharina), had been born March 27, 1913.

John hired one of the teamsters who made a business of taking new settlers to their homesteads by horse and wagon. The Anemas loaded all their possessions on the wagon: beds, one dresser, a stove, a heater, a wringer, a sewing machine, and many other necessary items. On the trip Froukje's hat was knocked off and sank out of sight in a mud hole. The loss of the hat was in itself not so important, but it dramatized the drastic change that was taking place in her life. Her childhood had included maids, stylish clothing and the amenities of city life in The Netherlands. Now she was being jounced over a muddy trail in a wagon to an unnamed spot in the wilderness.

On their arrival the family stayed with the Siebren Tiemstra family until their home, a cabin with a sod roof, was built on the homestead. This house consisted of one large room partitioned by curtains to form two bedrooms on the end. The Anemas purchased chickens, pigs, and cows and began growing potatoes. They also grew grain, but the first crops were often poor because of early frosts.

The wringer brought from Edmonton saved Froukje many hours of wringing out the wash by hand. It could be attached to a washtub and then turned to also serve the rinse tub.

The area in which the Anemas settled was still wilderness. Clearing the land had begun but there were few trails. To get to the Tiemstras it was necessary to walk part of the way along a trail on which logs were placed to make it possible to cross streams or wet, low [illegible] es. On at least one occasion Della slipped off [illegible]

[illegible] built a log house, barn, and granary, dug a twenty-foot well and constructed two miles of [illegible] wood or iron; the mattresses were stuffed with [illegible] handmade from scraps [illegible] family warm at night.

This new land was good to the Anemas: here their only son, George (Gerrit), was born [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

dred-pound flour sacks, some of which she [illegible] was a favourite pastime, and Frankie became so [illegible]

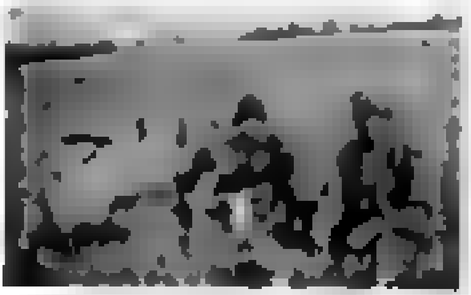
John, being a farmer's son, usually raised good crops. Other income was derived from the sale of eggs, butter, and cream. Hay grew in the sloughs and was cut with a scythe and [illegible]

On the frontier, regard for the law was sometimes lax. One summer day John was burning brush without a permit, when the long arm of the law reached as far as Neerlandia. The officer arrived at the Anema farm and told John that the penalty for this infraction was a ten [illegible] by horse and buggy, to Clyde, someone in higher authority decided that the penalty was foolish and allowed John to return home. Only [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] neighbours. Della and Susie were milking and [illegible]

[illegible]



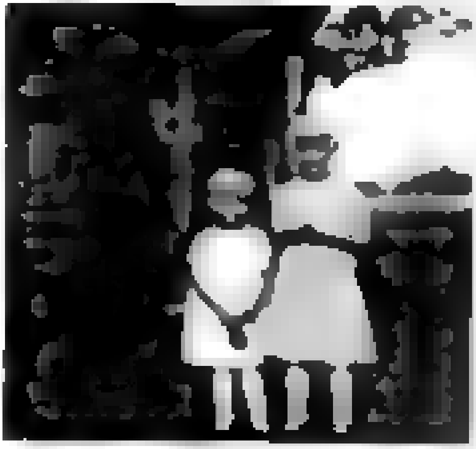
[illegible]

[illegible]

Fowkje also baked, washed, ironed, and men[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

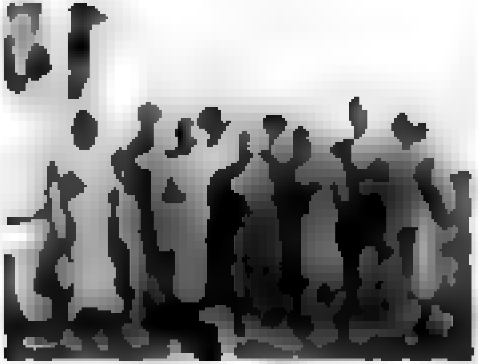
seven or eight or age fifteen or sixteen. Della and Susie were school janitors for some years. They would arrive early in the morning to start [illegible] and shavings which they brought from home. With their first year's salary, a table was purchased for the living room. Later, Della went out working in Neerlandia and Edmonton. While working in Neerlandia she continued to help on the farm. She married Raymond Baker [illegible]

[illegible] ing too, and send most of the money home where it helped to pay for a new sewing ma[illegible] her mother. She also contributed toward the [illegible]

Tena's first paying job was baby sitting at the [illegible] ton were given by Billy Quick, the trucker. Tena married Louis Nannings in 1935.

George, who was called Boy with a certain amount of pride, completed grade eight and [illegible] called to join the army, but was gone for only [illegible]

Since John had chronic bronchitis and asthma, he found farming difficult, so in 1945 John



[illegible]

and Froukje moved to the hamlet and George took over the farm. The Anema house was located directly north of the Co-op store. From there John could see everything that was going on. He had always enjoyed being with people [illegible] location made it easy for the grandchildren to [illegible] playing Flinch or checkers with Pake. An avid reader, John enjoyed the many books sent by Froukje's relatives who owned Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses in Grand Rapids.

Anna helped many families in the [illegible] She kept house for George until her marriage to [illegible] attack in 1980. Anna took up babysitting, a job [illegible]

When Frances was nineteen years of age [illegible] ceremony with Sophie and Lambert. Fran and Jake worked among the Navajo Indians in Rehoboth, New Mexico. Six children were born to the Bols. Frances died of cancer on December 15, 1964. Jake died in 1967 in a chemical plant [illegible]

Sophie was the only one of the Anema fam-ily to complete grade nine, but school was not [illegible]

[illegible] crest Lodge in Barrhead. There they lived hap- [illegible]

Anema Family

GAELE AND CATHARINA (VISSER) [illegible]

Gaele Bakker was born July 30, 1858, in [illegible] over. Gaele married Cathanna (Catarena) Visser (Vlsfer) on May 17, 1884, in Witmarsum [illegible]

Gaele and Catharina immigrated from the [illegible] seven children: John (Jan, February 2, 1885), **Joseph** (Jouke, November 6, 1886), Jenny (Jacobje, April 4, 1888), **Raymond** (Riemer, Januar[illegible] 13, 1891), Magdalena (February 21, 1893), D[illegible] (Dirk, June 20, 1895), and **Katie** (Grietje, April [illegible] Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A., many years earlier, and her brother Dirk Visser had [illegible] the Whitin Machine Works. The Bakker children went to school and, as they grew up, found work in the Machine Works or in the cotton mills. There was a Dutch Christian Reformed community in Whitinsville, and Jenny and Joseph married into Dutch families. While

Back: John, Raymond, Joseph, Magdalena. Front: Catharina, Katie, Gaele, Dick, Jenny, c. 1910

in the States, the Bakkers changed their last name to the English "Baker". It seemed the Bakers were well settled in their adopted country.

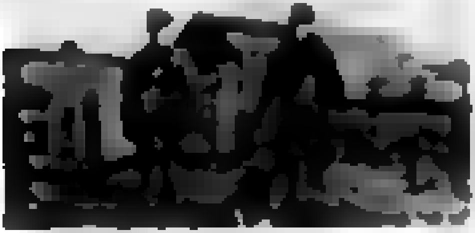
Then the Bakers read an article in a Dutch newspaper that told of good farmland available in Canada for free. The Bakers corresponded with the writer and were told jobs and houses would be waiting for them. It looked promising, so they made the move to Edmonton. John decided to stay as did Jenny and her husband. Joseph, his wife Aaltje Mast, their one-year-old son George, and the Mast family, as well as a number of single men, all travelled together. The group arrived in Edmonton on April 8, 1911. The Bakers were disappointed; things were not as they had expected. There were no jobs or houses awaiting them; in fact, they spent their first nights at Immigration Hall. Some of the single men who had come could afford to go back to Whitinsville, and they did.

Soon, however, the Bakers found work. Gaele got a job working on construction of the High Level Bridge. He also found a place to live, a shack in the Parkdale area. Joseph and Aaltje lived in a tent nearby.

Magdalena, who was eighteen years old, often had stomach pains. But Gaele and Catharina did not go to a doctor unless absolutely necessary. In Edmonton, when Magdalena had a recurrence of the trouble, they finally decided to take her to a doctor. He diagnosed an inflamed appendix. Magdalena was operated on immediately but her appendix had already ruptured, and she died September 4, 1912.

On July 19, 1912, Gaele and his son Raymond each filed on land northwest of Edmonton where the Masts and some other Dutchmen had taken out homesteads. Gaele filed on the NW 15-61-3-5 and Raymond filed on the quarter north of his father's. Gaele and Raymond built a cabin on Gaele's quarter, and in February 1913 Gaele and Catharina moved to Neerlandia with Raymond and Katie. Dick had a good job in Edmonton and never did try homesteading.

Gaele and Raymond kept cattle on their homesteads from the first year they were there; the cows were kept in a fenced pasture. The creek running through their land provided the [illegible] watering trough by hewing out a balm log with [illegible] from the creek with a bucket and fill the trough [illegible]



[illegible]

Raymond worked to clear the land. He used [illegible] plow the oxen went through a hornet's nest. They took off on the run, going right through [illegible] would relate this incident and laugh about it.

The Bakers had dug a well near their [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] der. The services were held in various homes, [illegible]

[illegible] song.

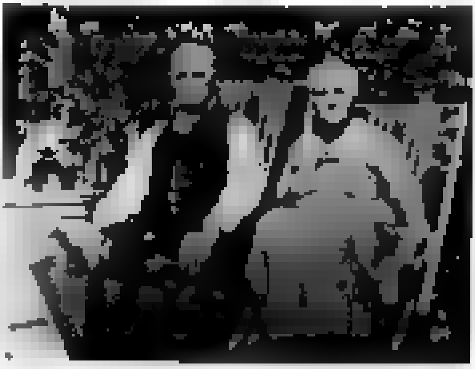
[illegible] acres cleared and three brushed. In 1914 he [illegible] nine cattle and two horses on the [illegible] would quickly give them a piece of meat on his fork. One animal Gaele never did learn to handle however was the horse. He never rode one and the only horse he used was a tame pony that his son Joseph gave him in [illegible], which Gaele made use of by hitching it to the stoneboat.

Gaele never lost his baking skills. His specialties were marzipan letters and shortbread. For special occasions he would bake [illegible]. One such occasion was the wedding of his son Dick to Florence Terpstra in 1941. Generally though Catharina did most of the daily baking. She always had white bread and cookies or cake in the house. This food was a real treat for her grandchildren, who did not get such food at home.

Ann Terpstra, Katie, Flora Baker, Catharina, Gaele with his dog, early 1920s

Gaele and Catharina enjoyed working in the garden. They raised many vegetables and also kept a strawberry patch. In 1916, at the local fair in the church, Gaele exhibited ripe tomatoes — something many of the settlement children had never seen. Catharina canned most of the vegetables in jars which she had taken along from the States.

Katie married Henry Haemstra in 1919. Raymond lived and farmed with his parents until 1934 when he married Della Anema. Around that time Gaele and Catharina had a small house built on Henry and Katie's farm and moved there. Raymond took over Gaele's quarter.



Gaele and Catharina, 1942

Catharina was blessed with simple faith and love for all. She was loved wherever she was. Gaele was of a different temperament. In his old age he wanted to move again, this time to some distant place such as California where his daughter Jenny was living, but the Lord provided for him just the person to temper him. Catharina was as patient as he was impatient and as settled as he was of a roaming nature. Catharina died in February 1943 at the age of 79 and Gaele died May 28, 1945, at the age of 87.

Baker Family

JOUKE AND AALTJE (MAST) BAKER

Jouke Joseph Baker at the age of thirteen, immigrated to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A. with his parents in [illegible]. While he lived there he went to trade school and became a journeyman machinist at seventeen years of age. He married Aaltje (Alice) Mast on September 4, [illegible].

Jouke worked on a repair gang, where the work was more interesting than some of the other factory jobs in Whitinsville. But Jouke was not completely satisfied, so he was drawn to an article he had read in a church paper that told of farming opportunities around Edmonton. The Bakers corresponded with the writer, who sent an encouraging reply. He mentioned

Jouke and Aaltje's wedding photo

among other things, that even though the Dutch immigrants there had only been in Canada a few years, they already had water and light in their houses. It sounded attractive, and Jouke and Aaltje decided they would try homesteading. As requested, Jouke sent some money to provide for a search party to find suitable homesteads.

Aaltje, George, Minke Mast, 1910

In April 1911 Jouke, Aaltje, and their one-year-old son, **George** (Carle, April 8, 1910), moved to Edmonton. With them travelled both Jouke and Aaltje's parents and their families. Conditions in Edmonton, though, were not as they had anticipated. Jouke first lived in a tent close to his father's shack in Parkdale. In their tent they did have light and water but, as with the other Dutch immigrants, it was nothing more than the light coming through the window and the water standing in the barrel. Jouke's tent had boards on the floor and at the end of it he built a lean-to big enough for a double bed. Aaltje used the tiny woodstove inside for cooking as well as for heat. Jouke again took up his trade, working for Coutts Machine Shop and for Nickel Brothers. He often travelled far to different sawmills or other industrial shops doing repair work.

In front of Bakker's shack in Edmonton: Minke with George, Alice with Minnie, c. 1912

A daughter, Minnie, was born to Jouke and Aaltje in July 1911. The following year an epidemic of summer complaint went through the Dutch community. Minnie became ill and died of the sickness on August 4, 1912. Aaltje received great comfort from her mother-in-law, Catharina, who lost a daughter shortly afterward. The two women would often sit outside in the warmth of the autumn sun holding hands and not saying a word. On November 4, 1912, a second daughter, also named **Minnie**, was born into the family.

Jouke had filed on a quarter in the Thorhild [illegible] lots. The prices for real estate had been [illegible] slumped. Eventually the taxes on the lots were higher than the price Jouke could sell them for, so he let the city take them over.

In 1915 Jouke filed on the NE 20-61-3-5 in [illegible] the intent of homesteading in earnest. But the house with its contents burned down, so Jouke decided to stay in Edmonton to work and have Albert Mast build another house for him.

In 1917 Jouke and Aaltje were ready to move to the promised land. In preparation, a team of [illegible], a light wagon with two-inch-rimmed [illegible] three hundred dollars. On the wagon they [illegible] a pump organ, a cookstove, bedsteads [illegible] much too light for such a load, but Jouke had no [illegible] frost was coming out of the ground. Jouke walked alongside the wagon and George and [illegible] of total exhaustion. Then Jouke would have to ask a nearby farmer to come with a team of horses to pull them out. When Jouke saw the [illegible]

When they stopped at night the cook stove [illegible] would cook a meal and also extra food for the day ahead. When they reached Neerlandia they first stayed at Koop Mast's place. Koop lent them a team of oxen to move their goods to the homestead. The trail was tough, with sloughs and muskeg and mud holes. The oxen were powerful but slow, so Jouke told Aaltje to drive the oxen home herself and he would walk ahead to start a fire and make some tea. After [illegible] resting and contentedly chewing their cud [illegible]

That same year, on September 25, 1917 Kay (Catharina) was born. Before her birth, Aaltje, when she knew it was time, walked from the homestead to her mother's place. Along the [illegible]

At that time the price for grain was good [illegible] some livestock, which they soon obtained [illegible] end of a log and Aaltje would hold the other end so it would not roll, while George sawed it [illegible]

During the winter of 1918 Jouke worked in Edmonton again. Besides helping with chores [illegible] eggs to Kampnar's store and exchange them for groceries. That winter of 1918 was the winter of the flu epidemic. Because they feared contamination, the authorities allowed no one to mail letters, and the Post Office was closed. Aaltje did not hear from Jouke for many weeks. Reports were that in the city many had died from the flu, and Aaltje had no way of knowing

[illegible]

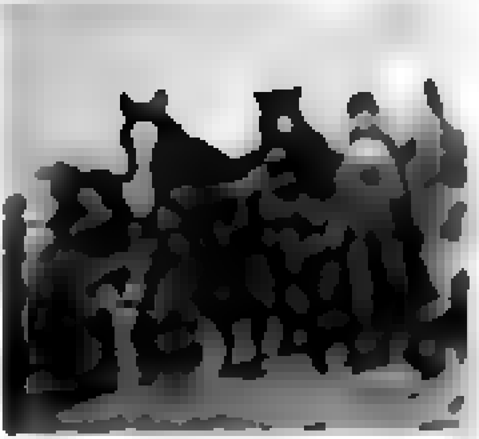
if Jouke was alright. One day when Geor [illegible] Bertha Kampnar told them that their father had [illegible] was doing well. George and Minnie hurried [illegible] statically happy, as they expected, she burst [illegible]

[illegible] the homestead, there were six cows and six horses to care for. Each day it was George's task to take the animals to the muskeg one-half mile east to water them. Jouke had put up a consid [illegible] thought it was red top hay, but it was actually [illegible] Aaltje and George would pack the mangers [illegible] when they checked the animals before going to bed, the mangers would be empty and have to be refilled. None of the livestock died that winter, but in the spring two cows died after calving.

Another son, **Charles (Karel)** was born March 30, 1920. That fall Jouke left to work in Edmonton for the fourth winter in a row. In [illegible] 1923, **Magdalena** was born, a wee twerp of [illegible] suffering from cancer, came to live with the family until her passing away in 1925.

In the spring of 1926 Jouke moved the family back to Neerlandia, this time to stay. By 1928 [illegible] hundred acres, then we can do this or that". In the fall of 1929 he had a good crop. Wheat was [illegible] dollar a bushel, but by spring it was sixty cents and later that year it went down to sixteen [illegible]

As the Depression got worse, people found [illegible] carded and spun the dirty, oily wool, then [illegible]



[illegible]

Aaltje washed the first sweater she had knitted [illegible] their mistake and washed the wool before selling it. To make clothing, Aaltje would get flour bags, then bleach and dye them to make shirts or other things for the family. For purple dye [illegible] onion skins and boil them to produce a yellow [illegible]

[illegible] however, who consulted a specialist and they decided to operate. After a lengthy con [illegible] bill was twenty-five dollars and Jouke made an [illegible] ent with him to settle for two dressed [illegible]

As things got worse, everyone had to ad [illegible] dried sweet clover but later, to keep peace in the family, he turned to leaf tobacco. Vegetables, potatoes, and tallow gravy were common fare

Most of the tallow had to be scraped out of the [illegible] learned to barter. Jouke grew many vegetables [illegible] possible to trade a can of tobacco for lumber [illegible] chicken.

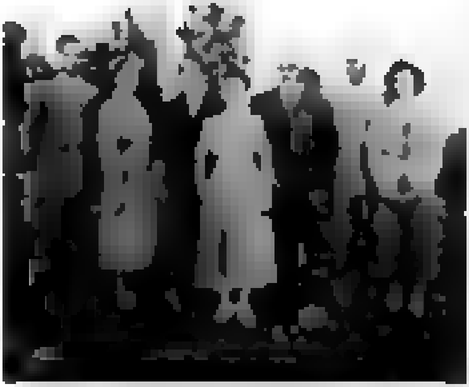
Aaltje was a brave woman who would take [illegible] was also a great help with the livestock.

Jouke's greatest asset was his ability to walk. [illegible] to Neerlandia to visit the family. Later he [illegible] and never [illegible]

[illegible] times wondered if this was the promised land. In 1939 war was declared, and that added to [illegible] Neerlandia.

All the children had left home by that time. [illegible] lings in 1932, and Charlie had married Betty de Jong in [illegible]

[illegible] after completing grade ten, [illegible] her education [illegible] obtained a position with the



[illegible]

[illegible] Department [illegible]

Magdalena, after graduating, went to Normal School in Edmonton for one year. After teaching for three years in Neerlandia, she taught in Whitinsville, Massachusetts and Ka[illegible]

[illegible] Joseph [illegible]

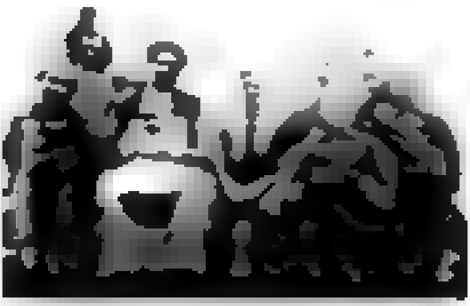
Jouke and Aaltje enjoyed a lengthy and, for the most part, healthy retirement. Aaltje died [illegible] died May 4, [illegible] at 79 years of age.

Charles Baker

FREDERICK AND MAGGIE (BODE) [illegible]

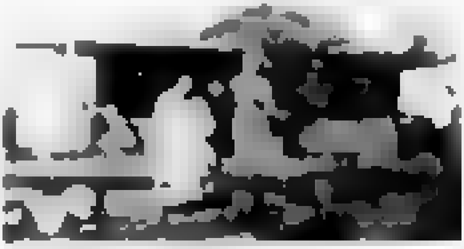
Fred (Foppe) [illegible] was born April 21, 18[illegible], [illegible] de Wilp, Groningen, the Netherlands. He [illegible] and married Maggie Bode (June 3, 1875) on December 14, 1894. They first lived in South Holland, Illinois, but soon moved to Montana with three children: John (Jan, September 12, 1896), Lizzie [illegible] November 1, 1901), and [illegible] (December 17, [illegible]

[illegible] (Barend, December 30, 1909). Two years later [illegible]


[illegible]

Fred had taken [illegible] homestead [illegible]

[illegible] he had seventeen cattle and six horses. He only cleared five acres though, and [illegible]


[illegible] Maggie and the children

Fred [illegible] house. He had built two log barns and put up a [illegible]

[illegible]

While they lived in Neerlandia, Bill and Bennie ran a trapline for muskrats. Sometimes [illegible]

[illegible] moved to Minnesota, U.S.A. They had a time auction to sell everything on their place — even [illegible]

Ben Baron
John Sankey

HARRY AND HATTIE ([illegible]) BEAUMONT

[illegible] On March 28, 1913, he filed on the NW [illegible] nearby quarters for his father, **Henry** (c. 1857) and brothers John (c. 1886), Clarence (c. 1890) and Earle (c. 1892), who all lived in Cleveland [illegible] parents on their homestead until they returned to Cleveland about a year later. In early 1915 Earle also left for Cleveland, having cleared [illegible] left Neerlandia during those years.

John and his wife, Edna, came to the home [illegible]

Harry and Hattie continued living on the [illegible] patent to it. He had cleared eighteen acres and built a log and lumber house, two hen houses, and a log barn. He had dug a well and put up two miles of fence. Hattie was a delicate [illegible]

GEORGE AND CHRISTINA (MACKENZIE) [illegible]

When George Caughlin came to the wild [illegible] there were already homesteaders living in Mellowdale but the rest of Township 61 was untouched by axe or grubhoe. George had been born in November 1880 in Lobo, Ontario, the third son in an Irish immigrant family of [illegible] should know how to build a house. George loved the wilds and had spent much time hunting as he was growing up.

George came to northern Alberta with a [illegible] trapping and hunting. They both filed for homesteads on May 13, 1911: George Caughlin [illegible] next to his. That fall they each built a log house on the north corners of their homesteads so the [illegible] nal uncle, Tom Lewis, later took up the quarter just north of Wing's, and his log house was built [illegible]

The three bachelors often went trapping [illegible] sleigh that could be pulled by one horse and used to take the freshly-killed game out of the [illegible] a few of the men, most of the Dutch people [illegible]

Every spring and summer, George worked [illegible] relatives of his.

George did not mind baching at all; he could [illegible] and in 1913 George went there to stand as best man for him. One of the bridesmaids at the [illegible] cember 16, 1915, in Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary. They went East after the wedding to

Tina, George 1910

introduce Tina to George's family and spent their honeymoon at Niagara Falls.

Tina had been born May 22, 1880, in Tigh-[illegible], Ross-shire, Scotland. She was a nurse and had also trained in Belgium as a chef. Since there was not much employment in England, she had come to Canada. After nursing in Hamilton, Ontario, she had gone to Vancouver where one of her brothers lived.

When George and Tina came to the homestead, they lived first in the small old log house, although George had begun building a new one. The new house was 16 by 22 feet, two storeys high, and had a shingled roof.

Tina had never lived on a farm before, so homesteading was quite an experience for her. George by this time had one riding horse as well as two work horses. Tina, however, did not know a thing about horses and never did learn to ride one. Later George began breeding horses, something his father and grandfather had also done. Once, after he had sold a few horses, he bought Tina a pretty little gold brooch with part of the proceeds.

George was tall and slim, smoothly shaven, and had light brown hair. He was a great reader and took many courses to further his knowledge. One of his hobbies was photography; he developed the photos himself in enamel developing trays. George was also good at playing the Jew's harp.

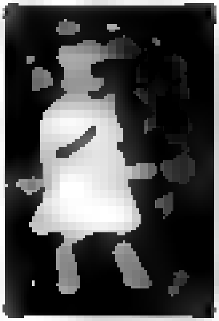
Tina was much shorter than George. She had brown-red hair that was long enough for her to sit on. She always parted her hair in the centre, either putting it up in a bun or plaiting it into two thick braids and wrapping them around her head twice, securing them with large hairpins. Tina was a warm, happy, outgoing woman, always calm. She loved to bake and would often bring baked goods to George Wing or Uncle [illegible], who had moved to Mellowdale by that time. Though she was an accomplished chef, George had to teach her how to make bread. Tina had taken a portable Singer along to the homestead. George built a stand with drawers for it and also converted it so it could be used with a treadle instead of a hand crank.

In the winter of 1916 George went to work in a box factory in Edmonton. Since George never left Tina alone on the homestead when he was working out, she went along. That winter, on December 10, a daughter, **Isabelle** Christina Sarah Ann, was born to them in the Royal Alexandra Hospital.

The following spring, after they returned to the homestead, George applied for the patent to his land. Besides their house, he had built a log stable and chicken house, was cropping fifteen acres of land and had five more broken, and had also put up a [illegible] rail fence. After inspection, the patent was granted.

Each year, Tina put in a garden to provide vegetables for the family. She loved the wild strawberries that could be found in the woods nearby and often went blueberry picking. The family always had plenty of wild meat to eat, and one year they butchered a steer. The only time Tina ever complained about life on the homestead was a very windy day when George and Wing had gone away for the day. Tina was home with Isabelle when a grass fire came right to the edge of the buildings before burning itself out, a terrifying experience for Tina.

[illegible] though Tina was kept busy watching that Isa [illegible] her up by the hair and brought her to Tina [illegible]



[illegible]

In the winter of 1917 George and Tina, with Isabelle, went to Vancouver since George had work there. The following winter the Caughlin [illegible] homestead, they found their house had been [illegible] taken, the drawers on the stand had been [illegible]

[illegible] et and pull out a piece of liver or some [illegible]

[illegible] Lewis and George's maternal aunt Belle [illegible]

One hot Sunday morning, September 5 [illegible] returned. When George did not answer her call, she decided to go for help. She first [illegible] across the road to the Davis homestead [illegible] there was a store and a phone. No one [illegible] tinued on and asked twelve-year old Herbert [illegible] gas. Then Jimmy went down and found the three men dead. They had all died from [illegible] called "black damp". The bodies were brought up using the windlass and a few days later [illegible]

Tina and Isabelle left Neerlandia soon after. They moved to Vancouver, where two of Tina's

brothers and some of George's relatives were [illegible]

to Tom Wilson and Albert Scott then sold it to [illegible]

ut from my mother and from his Aunt Belle Trigger, I know he was happy there. Had he [illegible]

[illegible]

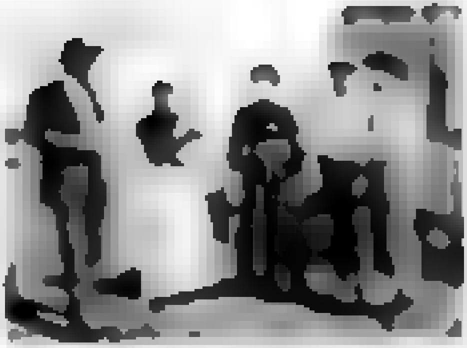
in Oldebroek, Gelderland, the Netherlands. He was a widower with six children when he married Hendrika Blom on April 25, 1890. Hendrika had been born February 26, 1849 in [illegible] had died of tuberculosis. They had a family of three or more children. A daughter, Manna (Gerdidina Hermanna) was born to Willem and Hendrika on December 3, 1892.

In 1912 Willem, Hendrika, and Manna im[illegible] of Hendrika's children (daughters) had died of tuberculosis, but another daughter, Wig (Willemina), came with them as well as some of Manna's cousins (de Groots). They travelled third class, but Manna would go on the first class deck and mingle with the people. She could get away with it because of her beauty [illegible]

The de Groots went to Edmonton where [illegible] Hendrika was an aunt to Aaltje Olthuis, who also lived there.

In 1914 Willem took up the NW 27-61-3-5 as a homestead. He built a 16 by 24-foot log house [illegible]

The land on the homestead had to be cleared, and Willem often had Hendrika help him. At times she would have to pull on the rope winch while Willem chopped at a stump to [illegible] 1921 Willem was able to obtain the patent to his



[illegible]

land. Over seven acres were being cropped and [illegible]

Soon after receiving the title to his land Willem sold it to Klaas Tuininga, who wanted to [illegible] closer to school. Willem moved onto [illegible]

Hendrika died in 1923 or 1924. Some years [illegible] Netherlands where his daughter Manna [illegible]

[illegible]

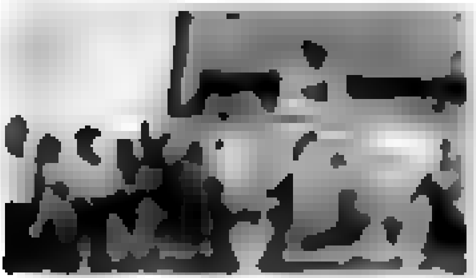
ents de Jager, a single man, was among [illegible] steads in Township 61 and 62 on December 18,

[illegible]

its laziness. The following story was often told [illegible]

[illegible] clearing. The oxen pulled and [illegible]

[illegible] was loose. Again the oxen leaned forward, a [illegible]



[illegible]

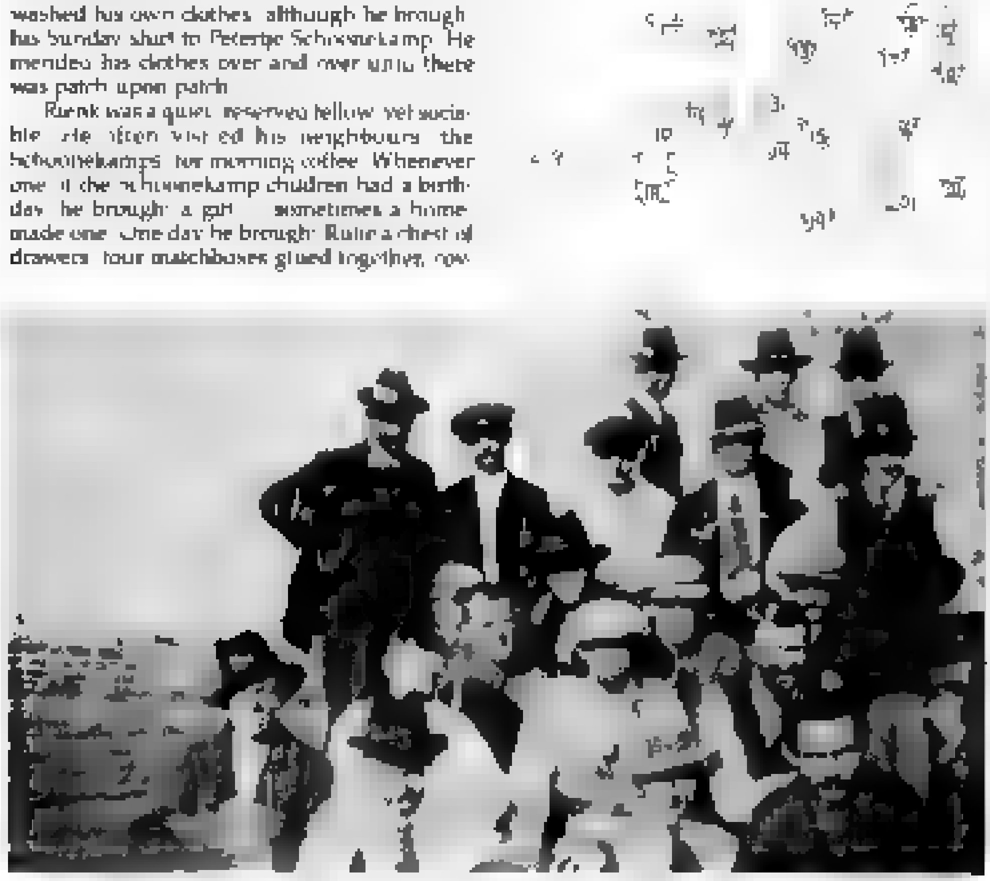
[illegible] cemetery. After watching the burial, at which only three men were present, Rienk [illegible]

[illegible] took?"

[illegible] y.

The house was a cozy place with a wood [illegible] covered with an oilcloth that had a design of berries on it. Rienk would often say to a young visitor, "You're probably wishing that was real fruit on the table, heh?" Besides the living area, there was a small bedroom downstairs and an extra bed up in the loft. Rienk did all the household chores himself. He churned butter, baked bread, cookies and cakes and kept a garden in summer to provide vegetables for himself. For fresh meat, he sometimes went hunting near the slough on the south of his quarter. There he would wait behind nearby trees to see if he could shoot a meal of wild duck. Rienk also washed his own clothes, although he brought his Sunday shirt to Peterje Schoonekamp. He mended his clothes over and over until there was patch upon patch.

Rienk was a quiet, reserved fellow, yet sociable. He often visited his neighbours, the Schoonekamps, for morning coffee. Whenever one of the Schoonekamp children had a birthday, he brought a gift — sometimes a homemade one. One day he brought Ruth a chest of drawers: four matchboxes glued together, covered with wallpaper and buttons on them for drawer pulls. Rienk also visited the Joe Baker family. During the winters that Joe worked in Edmonton, Rienk would sometimes help George and Minnie Baker with the chores, such as chopping down trees for firewood. When the Klaas Tuiningas moved to the quarter south of Rienk's in the late twenties, Rienk enjoyed going there and speaking Fries. (Rienk never did learn to speak much English.) Of the Tuininga children, Annie was his favourite. Annie



Some men of the community posing for a photo on the First of July c. 1922: 1. Rienk de Jager 2. Klaas Krikke 3. Pete Tuininga 4. Joe Howerda 5. C. K. Maat 6. John Oldegaarn 7. Popko Schuring 8. Dave Tuininga 9. Douwe Terpstra 10. Hendrik Schoonekamp 11. Ryer Krikke 12. Pete Louws 13. John Louws 14. Jan Anema 15. Toney Sturwold 16. Jacob Oldhuis 17. Case Ingwersen 18. Albert Reitsema 19. Willem van Ark 20. Bert Lubbers 21. Harry Kippers loved cornflakes, but her family could not afford to buy them. For her fifteenth birthday, though, Rienk brought her three skeins of embroidery cotton and a box of cornflakes

[illegible]

Dutch papers that he received, thus keeping himself current on other matters as well

Being a thrifty person, Rienk watched his [illegible] from his weekly cream cheque, and once it was [illegible] dresser runners. When he paid someone [illegible] too late. Rienk was upset. Others, however, said it must have been the Lord's will, since his sister needed the money

There were not many eligible single women [illegible] member which day of the week it was. To keep track, he would put a check mark on the calen[illegible]

[illegible] Rienk's for Sunday dinner, since Gaele always walked to church services and Rienk suggested he stay there between services instead. After morning service Gaele found Rienk busy kneading bread dough. Gaele asked, "Are doing your work on Sunday?" In spite of it being Sunday, the bread was most likely baked anyhow

When the threshing crew came to Rienk's though, he did not do the cooking and baking [illegible] for Petertje Schoonekamp and her [illegible] to do it instead

[illegible] by Stewart Plantinga. About two years later a [illegible] promised him that if he would stay and farm [illegible]

The sore on his leg continually bothered Rienk. He never rode his horses, and when he was on the wagon or cutter, he went on his knees to ride instead of sitting. In the early [illegible] walking behind the harrows

The ill effects of the tuberculosis increased [illegible] Arie Emmerzael to do the chores and daughter Annie to help with the housework [illegible] wash the cream separator outside so the kitch[illegible] around, but later that year, on his birthday, when Annie came to haul water from his well [illegible]

In January 1938 Annie again came to hel[illegible] crowd of people at the funeral service. C. K. Mast, Jan Kuiung, and Klaas Tuininga were [illegible] farm and everything else was auctioned off [illegible] begun in Europe by then and the Canadian

Government would not send money overseas [illegible]

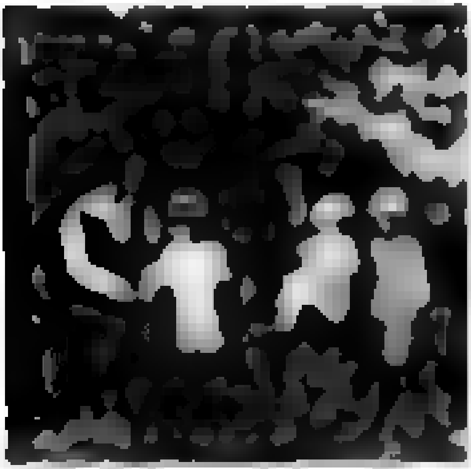
ARIE AND MARTHA (VAN DALEN) [illegible]

[illegible] 1911 as a single man. He had been born October 5, 1878, in Vierpolders, South Holland, the Netherlands. Before coming to Canada, he had [illegible]

[illegible] tar fee and filed on the NE 28-61-3-5. He was among the first Dutch settlers in the area after [illegible] house built for himself and worked to prove up the homestead. Every fall, he left to go out [illegible]

[illegible] time he met Martha van Dalen. They were married January 20, 1918, in the log church in [illegible]

[illegible] family: Annie (Aartje, January 13, 1919), Peter (Pieter, February 19, 1920), and Helen (Hilligiena, October 16, 1921). All were born with the [illegible]



[illegible] besides a log house, he had a log stable, a hen house, and one-and-a-half miles of rail fencing [illegible] given two acres of his quarter to the Shoal Creek School District. The acreage for the [illegible] bouring quarter and his own, as well as often [illegible]

[illegible] Leonard (Leendert) on February 3, 1925, and [illegible] While Arie was gone, William took sick one Sunday. Martha immediately sent a message to [illegible] (9, 1927) before Arie returned home. Arie did not come home until Friday evening, so the burial was on Saturday. Meune Nanninga made the coffin.

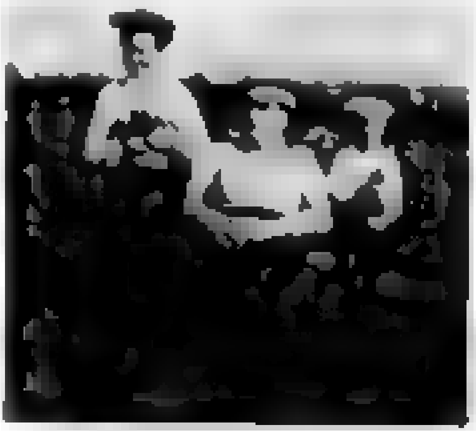
Another incident almost led them to be [illegible] at night on their own. One Friday night, however, in 1928 or 1929, the cattle did not come home. The next morning Martha sent Pete to look for them. Pete took along their dog Bobby and headed east. It was an overcast day and though he eventually found the cattle, Pete [illegible] getting worried and, towards evening when [illegible] through. They hunted until midnight, and the [illegible]

[illegible] Pete had wandered [illegible] know where Toney Sturwold lived. Pete knew [illegible]

Opoe van Dalen died in early 1929. Later [illegible] turkeys.

Arie also owned a cayuse named Dolly. She had [illegible] cultivator for some work in the garden. She [illegible] finally hit her with a switch, but he happened [illegible] ear. She fell over unconscious, but having given Arie a proper scare, she came to after a while.

Among the turkeys running loose on the yard was an aggressive gobbler. [illegible] Arie's quarter had to pass the Emmerzael place on his way to and [illegible] to the red socks Mr. Dickson wore, and whenever the gobbler spotted them he would give [illegible] the gobbler did not like that hat either, and often the Reverend would come running into the house and say to Martha, "Missus, war heb je de bezem?" (Mrs., where do you have the broom?) He would then rush out with the broom and chase the gobbler away.



[illegible]

Arie was a [illegible]

As they grew older the children did their share of [illegible]

[illegible] van Dalen died in 1932. During the [illegible]

1934. Dr. Bell's products included spices, flavourings, feed additives, medicines for man [illegible]

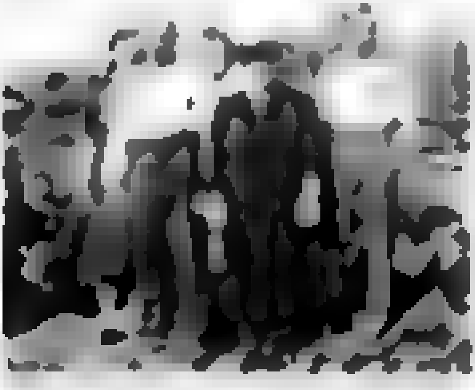
[illegible]

black liquid, that had to be put in hot water and [illegible]

[illegible] rubbed on externally for rheumatism. Arie bought a covered laundry [illegible]

[illegible]

Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses. Psalters, commentaries, daily Bible calendars and cards. He travelled with these through the [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

and Martha moved there. Martha passed away December 31, 1950, at the age of 67. After her death, Arie bought Albert Reinsma's house. He moved it onto Pete and Eva's yard, and lived there until he passed away November 8, 1954.

Annie Sturwold

JOHN AND REKA (WICHERS)

[illegible]

[illegible]

appear to be much of a future in the Netherlands for him or his parents, it was decided John would go to Canada and look for work [illegible]

[illegible] remained in Canada for lack of money and [illegible]

[illegible] so Jacob was to keep a brotherly eye on him [illegible]

fiance, John Boer, and his brother, Jacob Boer, were already living. There John Gelderman had various jobs, including ones at the Hotel [illegible]

[illegible] ging. During one winter he did not receive any [illegible] only his room and board. His homestead [illegible] and his three companions had already returned to Edmonton. The following year, John and his cousin Jacob took out homesteads in Neerlandia. John filed on the NW 36-61-3-5 in [illegible]

[illegible] Granum where he and Bill Oldegbers worked as farmhands for William Willemsen. That fall

John met Reka (Hendrika) Hermana Wachers, and later began courting her. Reka (born March 20, 1896) and her family had just immigrated from Nijverdal, Overijssel. She was the oldest of eight children. The Wachers had been advised by relatives in the Granum area to come to the good country of Canada. After they came Reka found work at her cousin's, William Williamson, doing housework. Later Reka worked for other families and John found work with an English couple who had no children. For the three years John worked for them he lived in with them and was treated as their son. While there he learned to speak English well.

John Gelderman, John Ebbers, Bill Oldegbers

In September 1919 John returned to Neerlandia to work on the homestead. He bought five cattle and two horses and began clearing land. He also fixed up the log house, putting in cupboards and making a table and a set of chairs. On July 1920, John and Reka were married in Edmonton, since there was no minister in Neerlandia or Granum. Reka travelled from Nobleford by train while John went to Westlock by horse and wagon (which he left with a farmer) and then on to Edmonton by train. The wedding took place in the home of the minister, Rev. H. J. Kuys, and those present were John's brother Jacob, his sister Hendrika Boer, and her husband John. The reception was lunch at the Boers' home with some friends. After spending a few days in Edmonton, John and Reka left on their honeymoon to Neerlandia. Travelling with them was George Toebes, who was curious to see Neerlandia, Bill Oldegbers, who had a homestead in Neerlandia, and Hendrik de Groot, who wanted to visit his brother, Willem. In the morning they all caught the train to Westlock and from there they continued by horse and wagon. John and Reka camped overnight in the bush with the three men and a host of mosquitoes for company. They arrived in Neerlandia the following morning.

Some days later a reception was held for the newlyweds. Everyone in the settlement came. Among the gifts John and Reka received were a bread pan and a hen with chicks. These gifts came from people who had not much more to give than their help and kindness. The Young People's Society gave them a gas lamp.

The year after he was married, John received the patent to his homestead. According

Reka, John, 1920

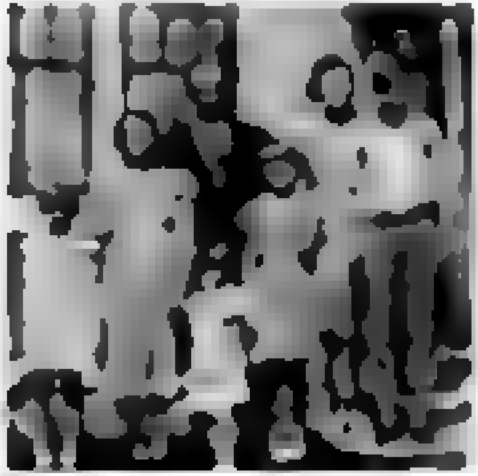
[illegible]

...tle had increased to ten but his horse herd ...d decreased from three to two. Other im... ...ements listed were a 22 by 24-foot log and [illegible] foot well, and 1¾ miles of fencing.

[illegible]

...ants somewhere along the creek where they grazed, since the horses kept at the yard were not affected. Through all problems, there was always enough for the family to eat and they experienced the Lord's blessings.

One blessing was John and Reka's family of [illegible] 1926), Rita Hermina (October 25, 1928), Joan [illegible] 1935), and Joanne May (April 28, 1942). All of the children except Joanne were born at home with the help of a midwife — either Johanna [illegible] blond, and John wondered if they had taken the right baby home from the hospital!



[illegible]

Shortly after they were married, John pur... [illegible] learned sewing skills. She sewed most of the family's clothes, many of them from flour sacks. Sometimes her family sent material or [illegible] material sent by the family. But she was ... frustrated by the time John came home ... there was not quite enough fabric, and she told him [illegible]

[illegible] doing the wash. Reka, however, had it better than some. Instead of a washboard, she had a [illegible]

[illegible] organ for church services. He also gave organ [illegible] to the house, but for many John gave lessons in [illegible]

John and Reka were a loving father and mother. They believed Christians had to show [illegible] When the children criticized people, John [illegible] Bible but not to what he felt were rules and traditions made by men. Thus the Gelderman girls were allowed to wear slacks for sports

[illegible]

John [illegible] would understand.

John was always actively involved in com[illegible] help.

[illegible]

As the Gelderman children grew up, they all married and raised familie[illegible] ably good health.

Gelderman Famil[illegible]

[illegible] AND JOHANNA [illegible]

[illegible]

land and build a log house for his future bride [illegible] back to Edmonton to marry his bride, Johanna G. Bosch, on January 23, 1916. That same week [illegible]

Wouter had been born on March 9, 1881, in Genemuiden, Overijssel, the Netherlands. He had emigrated in 1910 because, besides there [illegible] and, upon hearing about the opportunities [illegible] Canada, decided to go to Edmonton. He had [illegible] land and abandoned it on November 19, 1914 stating that it had too much muskeg.

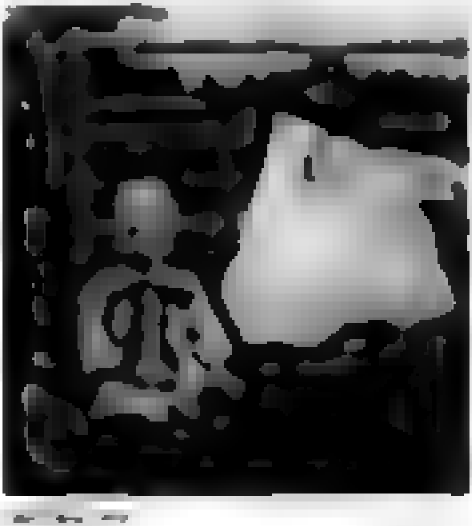
Johanna had been born in the city of Enschede, Overijssel, on October 13, 1884. She had started working in a factory when she [illegible] twelve years old, and had continued to work [illegible] her paternal aunt Willemina ter Horst and her husband, Jan, were living near Edmonton in Eastburg. After Johanna and Wouter had met and decided to wed, they made plans to begin homesteading. Johanna, having grown up in [illegible]

When Wouter and Johanna arrived at the homestead after their wedding, Johanna asked, "Where is our house?" Even after Wou[illegible]

[illegible]

Wouter and Johanna soon bought a few [illegible] help with the clearing and breaking. There was [illegible] ty of work to do. First of all, the land that [illegible] was: Johanna simply could not keep those oxen [illegible] uated by this, but could do nothing other than trade places with her. Johanna did, however, learn to milk cows and even shoot the chicken hawks that tried to steal the chickens.

On Friday, January 26, 1917, Johanna went into labour with their first child. The midwife [illegible] doctor thirty miles away and it being the heart of winter. The baby still had not been born by Sunday, so Siebren Tiemstra went on horseback to summon the doctor, who arrived the next morning. After examination, he said that he thought he could save Johanna but had no hope for the baby. The child was a boy and though he was blue and purple when he was



born, through a miracle he survived. The baby [illegible]

[illegible]

1918. Wouter and Johanna soon noticed that she [illegible]

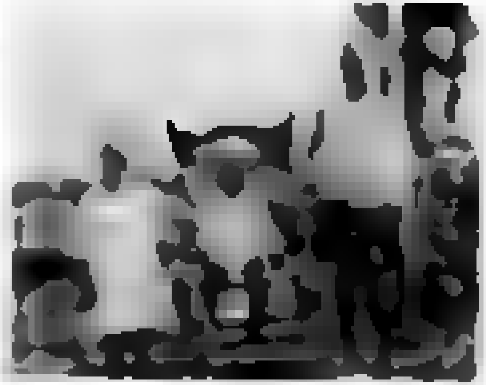
[illegible]

12, 1920, and a second son, **Hendrik**, on Janu- [illegible]

[illegible] Wouter left the homestead to work elsewhere. He needed to make money to [illegible]

In the fall of 1923, Wouter went 360 miles [illegible]

[illegible] stock, Johanna was up half the night with the children. Hendrik, who was nearly two years [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] southern Alberta and could not be contacted immediately, so it was some time before he [illegible]

After all this, Wouter and Johanna decided [illegible]

[illegible] and Sena lives (1984) in Lynden, Washington, with her family.

Sena wrote, "I never knew my mother to be [illegible]

[illegible] had many happy memories of Neerlandia [illegible]

[illegible] other's joys and tears; and through it all, the [illegible]

Wouter often longed to go back to Neerlan- [illegible]

He lived to be 77 years old and died in 1958. He [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] who had some veterinary skills, was [illegible]

[illegible]

HENRY AND KATIE (BAKER) HIEMSTRA

[illegible] he boarded the *Anacosti*. He went to Kitchener [illegible]

[illegible] Baker on March 22, 1919, in the Granum Pres- [illegible]

In 1921 Henry obtained the patent to his [illegible] foot log house. On the homestead there was also an 18 by 28-foot log barn, an 8 by 14-foot hen house, and a fourteen-foot cribbed well. Henry also had put up three miles of wire and [illegible]

When Cor was a small child, Henry went to [illegible] sometime later, Cor saw a frightening stranger — a great big, black, bushy-bearded guy [illegible] threw her arms around him: Henry was back [illegible]

[illegible]

More children were born to Henry and Katie: **Catherine** (Katharina, March 30, 1923); **Gertrude** Richtje (August 6, 1930); **Gilbert** (Geele, September 19, 1934); and **Donald** John [illegible] help with the sick because of the knowledge he [illegible] and Donald in 1948, and left the farming to Cor. Catherine married Harry Janssen. Gertrude had gone to B.C. before her parents. She ma[illegible] Westminster. Katie passed away November 21, [illegible]

JOE AND CATHERINE (WIERENGA) [illegible]

Jelle Wieger Holwerda was born December [illegible] lands. Jelle's parents owned a farm, but he received a good education and later did some teaching. In April 1911 he traveled to Canada with the Tjeerd Visser family, to whom he was [illegible]

In March 1912 Jelle had filed on the SW 28-62-3-5 as 'John Holwerda', but by the time he took up the NE 3-62-3-5 on September 5 1914, he wrote his name as Joseph (Joe). He soon built a 14 by 22-foot log house on that [illegible] be: [illegible]

[illegible] write English well; he spoke it with hardly a trace of an accent. Joe was soon appointed road [illegible] Thompson. In this position he was responsible [illegible] ployees. Joe also became Justice of the Peace. If there was trouble between neighbours, he was [illegible] ment. The hearing was held in the log church and Joe admonished the witnesses, "Speak the truth, in the name of the King!" Joe was the game warden for a number of years and he was also the person to see if one needed a fire or [illegible] accident. Once he had been working with a breaking plow when it got stuck. Joe urged the [illegible] evener broke in two and one end hit Joe in the [illegible] and consequently not eating regularly. Yet, he [illegible]

Joe obtained the patent to his land in 1921. [illegible] house, he had put up a 30 by 34-foot log stable [illegible]

Joe obtained the SW 9-62-3-5 and the SE 10-62-3-5 during the twenties on government [illegible] It was wide enough for four horses [illegible] not mind the girls at all. He was attracted to Catherine, one of Lammert Wierenga's girls but she had some growing up to do — she was only seventeen at the time. But eventually, one month after her twenty-fourth birthday, Catherine became Mrs. Joe Holwerda. It was a double wedding ceremony with Bill Olthuis and Carrie Wierenga on Sunday March 11, 1934.

Joe, Catherine 1934

Joe had been elected councillor for Neerlandia in 1931. He was elected two more times, each for a two-year term. The meetings were held about two miles east of the Shoal Creek store on Jim Allen's homestead and Joe rode there, as usual, on horseback.

On December 15, 1934, a son, Wilfred, was born to Joe and Catherine. Joe was very proud of his son and vowed that he was going to have a good education. But human intentions and plans can only be performed as far as the Lord permits. The Lord called Joe home three months later on March 15, 1935. He was unable to fight off a bout of pneumonia and died after being taken to the hospital.

Wilfred was *Pake* and *Beppe* Holwerda's only grandson. A highlight in Wilfred's life came at the age of twelve years (1947), when Catherine took him to the Netherlands to visit the Holwerda family. *Beppe* had passed on but *Pake* was still very fit at the age of eighty-six years. The two Holwerda uncles were both living too. From that experience Wilfred could form an imaginary father-image.

Elly Wierenga, Hattie Elgersma, Wilfred, 1947

Wil Holwerda

DRIKUS AND JOHANNA (NIJMAN) HUININK

Johanna Nijman was born August 21, 1881, in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands. Four years later, Drikus Huinink was born in Winterswijk on January 31. Drikus and Johanna were married in early 1910. Drikus was a vrachtrijder — he drove a large team of horses and made deliveries. Johanna worked in a comb factory.

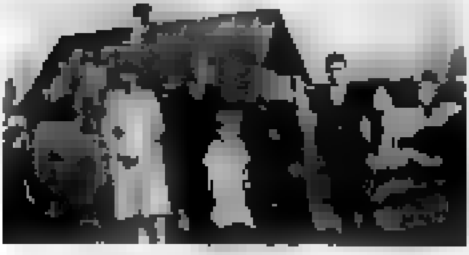
Drikus and Johanna were acquainted with Henry Kippers who was living in Edmonton and who wrote to them about the good land and opportunities there. Consequently, the Huininks decided to emigrate to Canada. They sailed on the *Victorian* in April 1911. After landing in Halifax, they took the train to Edmonton. There they lived in Fraser Flats, sharing a shack with the Tjeerd Visser family. Drikus soon found a job with the City Water Works.

Johanna, Drikus, 1910

Drikus, like many other Dutch immigrants, wanted to farm in Canada so he went with a group of Dutchmen to Townships 61 and 62 in 1911. When he returned, he was thrilled to find that a daughter, **Margaret** (Grada), had been born while he was away (December 10, 1911). Drikus filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on December 18, 1911. A son, **Henry** (Hendrikus) was born in 1913.

After coming to Neerlandia in 1914 or 1915, the Huininks spent about a year on the homestead. But when it became clear that Johanna's health was such that she would not be able to handle the homesteading life, Drikus reluctantly gave up the homestead. He abandoned it in December 1915, stating that he had resided on it for fourteen months, had built a house and a stable, had broken two acres and cleared ten. He had sold his cow to Jacob Olthuis which thereafter became known as "old Huinink".

Drikus resumed employment with the City



In Edmonton: Margaret, Drikus, Dena, Johanna, Henry, 1920s. [illegible] in the background

Water Works and the Huininks remained in Edmonton for many years. Another daughter, Dena, was born in 1918. The Huininks had become good friends with the Kampepeters and others [illegible] Neerlandia [illegible] them as well as the Ben Leevers family. Johanna died September 30, 1960, and Drikus August [illegible] 1967.

Huinink Family

CORNELIUS AND HERMINA (GOTZEN) ENGWERSEN

In 1909, Case (Cornelius) Engwersen immigrated to Canada, at the age of about 29 years. He left behind his wife, Hermina, aged about [illegible] years, a small son, Conny (Cornelius, born September [illegible], 1908), as well as parents, brothers and sisters. Parting was not easy, but life for him in the Netherlands had become more and more unbearable. Working with his father in an upholstery business was boring and tiresome. The urge to be free and get away from the narrow confines of the store had become an obsession with him. Moreover, he had read in a Dutch newspaper of the wonderful opportunities there were in Canada, and land was literally being given away. For a mere ten dollars one could buy a whole quarter section of land. That was too good to pass up, he thought. After he talked it over with his family, they reluctantly consented to let him go. It was decided that Case would go alone first, and when he had a house and a job, Hermina would come and join him. She was not very happy with that decision, but she also saw the merit of it.

So it was that Case Engwersen arrived in Edmonton. Things were not as rosy as he had expected. Jobs were hard to find, and then there was the language problem. He found it very hard to understand these Canadians, and [illegible] to rent was a small shack in Ross Flats, along the Saskatchewan River in Edmonton. He was glad [illegible] wife was not there to see it. Being alone did not bother him too much. There were [illegible]

[illegible] reply. Finally, he went to the post office [illegible] letters that he had filed under the name C. Tingwersen (the written Dutch I looks [illegible] through them to the latest. When he got to the [illegible] was no way out [illegible] the best of it.

Hermina had a bad trip across the ocean [illegible] they came to their so-called "home" she broke [illegible] the way from the Netherlands to live in [illegible] he could find a steady job. Hermina did not [illegible]

[illegible] er than it was outdoors. Into this situation, their [illegible]

[illegible] After this scary experience they decided to be [illegible]

[illegible] 2, 1915, and it became the Ingwersen home [illegible]

[illegible] Hermina tried to make a cozy atmosphere in [illegible]

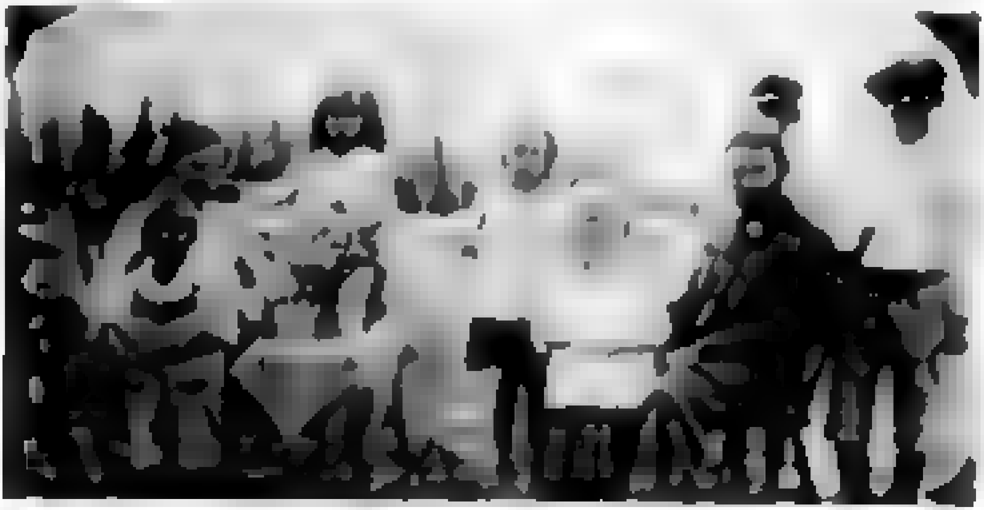
[illegible] As soon as the house was repaired, [illegible] it rained, the dirty water would drip [illegible] where — onto the beds, the floor and, worst of all, onto the table with Hermina's beautiful Dessa *tafelkleed* on it (the only thing which resembled her home in the Netherlands). [illegible] suffered from toothaches and pleurisy.

The living conditions on the homestead were a sharp contrast to what Hermina and Case had been used to in the Netherlands, and it bothered Hermina the most. For her, the pi[illegible] up, and they had enough to eat — what more did they need? Their food consisted mainly of rabbits and prairie chickens, which were plentiful in those days, and, of course, they got milk [illegible]

[illegible] send parcels with used clothing, toys, and so [illegible] rejoicing at the Ingwersen household. Hermina was a good seamstress and transformed the [illegible] to wear. She seldom wore any of the beautiful [illegible] been out of place in that setting. But many [illegible] money so Hermina could buy a sewing machine. The machine was a big help, and she treasured it more than anything else.

Case spent many winters working at a sawmill or doing roadwork. He would stay [illegible] Hermina was scared still of those creatures. With just one switch of their tails, they could [illegible]

[illegible] raised himself. The one he bought was a large beast with a great set of horns. It was a reliable [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

these two oxen Case paired up to pull stumps [illegible]

them, the small one refused to move. After [illegible]

ground and could not get free until they got [illegible]

[illegible]

decided to build this one of lumber. It was built [illegible]

[illegible]

Antoinette), was born on April 5, 1916, when [illegible]

years later, on July 17, 1918, a healthy boy whom they called John (Johannes) [illegible]

The two oldest boys, Corny and Gerrit [illegible]

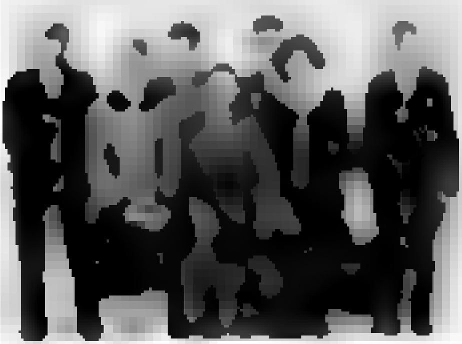
hauling trip. It was a very warm day, and the [illegible]

horses so much that the horses took off on the run and Case lost control of them. He fell off the democrat and his legs caught in the spokes of a [illegible]

awhile in the hot sun. he was found [illegible] brought to Edmonton in Dave [illegible]

[illegible] leg never straightened out completely. He remained crippled for the rest of his life. Her [illegible]

husband finally returned and was able to take over again.



[illegible]

[illegible] 33-61-3-5 from William Swaffield. There [illegible]

[illegible]

Corry, Gerrit, Grace, Johanna, Nettie, John, Samuel; Case [illegible]

The elder Kaewersens often made the tri [illegible] get the place where they had spent the be [illegible] ships, their hearts were still there. They had spent many happy years in Neerlandia, which [illegible] homesteads — everyone was poor. The pi oneers came to appreciate one another, helping [illegible] er parents was their love of music and singing [illegible] singers. As a family, they spent many evenings [illegible] realize now that those were times well spent.

Another thing that was evident was the in [illegible] member, he worked hard for the education of [illegible]

[illegible] healthy man, and lived to be ninety-two. Her [illegible] years later, in 1982. Case and Hermina had lived [illegible]

[illegible]

Lambartus (Bart) Janssen was born in Waar denburg, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on July 4, 1888. As a young boy he helped his father in [illegible] he grew older, he decided to join the mounted [illegible]

About 1912, he walked out to the Neerlandia [illegible] ing.

Not many days later, two Mounties came to [illegible]

[illegible] steaders would never waste meat. After those [illegible] truth about the meat. His wife became quite [illegible]

[illegible] back the desperately needed supplies. The [illegible] ed higher.

[illegible] the road. Bart managed to sell a few rabbits to

[illegible]

[illegible] and then [illegible] for the night [illegible] the night. The weather [illegible] [illegible] Bert [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] tedious.

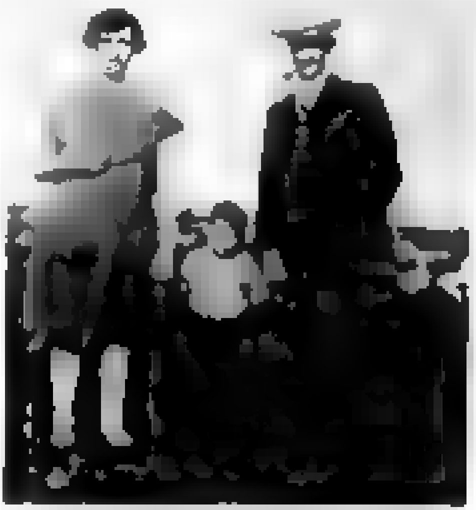
Then came a day when the butter was al- [illegible] there was [illegible] left. [illegible] the [illegible] Bert [illegible] [illegible] the family back to [illegible].

[illegible] Bert [illegible] [illegible] their [illegible] house was being built.

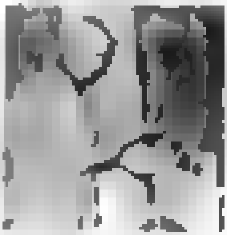
Bert often talked about the winter of [illegible]. The [illegible] blizzard of the [illegible] [illegible] However after a [illegible] [illegible] a four and a half pound baby girl [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible].

More outstanding was the [illegible] that the snow never left after the October [illegible] and many old timers recall the winter of [illegible] as the [illegible]dest winter in memory. Many cattle died. Spec- [illegible] [illegible] spring [illegible] Bart Janssen crammed his cattle into a square [illegible] had very little feed for them. But it was all for [illegible] the market [illegible] and cattle were worth very little the following spring.

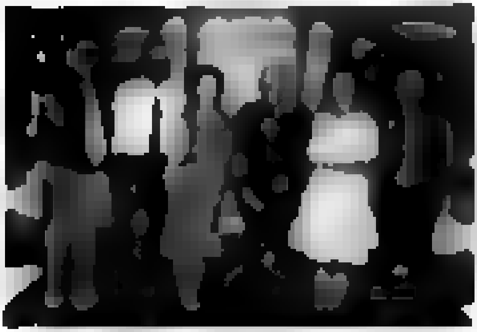
[illegible] had the cattle suffered through [illegible] in the spring Bart loaded up his possessions once again for yet another move to Edmonton. With [illegible] was during that time (1928) that their youngest son, Jack, was born.



[illegible], Jack, Lambertus in Edmonton, c. [illegible]



Lambertus, c. [illegible]



[illegible]

Since the dairy farm was beside the airport [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. Once more the family moved to Neerlan[illegible] [illegible] SW 15-62-3-5, which Bart bought from Arie Rylaarsdam.

Betje died of a heart attack at the age of fifty eight in 1948. Bart lived a rich, full life until he [illegible]

[illegible]

ELKE AND JANKE ([illegible]) JORRITSMA

Elke Wynia Jorritsma was born December [illegible], 1885, in Franeker, Friesland, the Nether[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] thirteen years of age he started to wor[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] years in the Dutch mobilization, Cavalry Divi[illegible] [illegible] feed company. His mind was already made u[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] that work. He then worked on the construction of the High Level bridge and the Tegler Building.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] homestead (NE 27-61-3-5) in Neerlandia on April 18, 1914. He built a log shack on the land and began clearing. There was no money to be [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and harvesting in Saskatchewan, Elke rented his land to Peter Kampner. Then he went to Portland, Oregon, with Popko Schuring. There [illegible] Unfortunately, Elke was hit by a train and se[illegible] [illegible] He spent eighteen months in the hospital recovering. His friend Popko often visited Elke [illegible] able, he returned to Neerlandia. Instead of baching, he boarded with Douwe and Betty [illegible]

[illegible] War I for Canada, but by the time his enlistment papers came the war was over and he did not go. By this time he was again living on his [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia and Elke decided to sell them his quarter. They moved into the house and cropped the land but they did not stay, so Elke [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] calves she fed and the melody cop[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Immigration Hall. Then she stayed with the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ty things from Friesland to make the cabin [illegible]

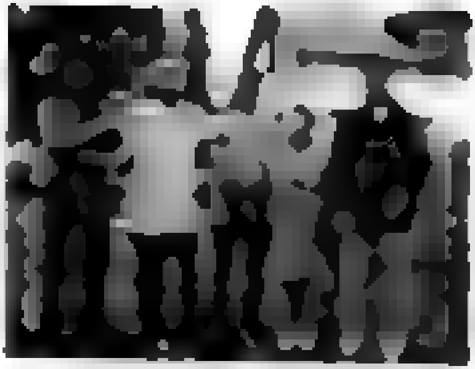
The Jorritsma's first son, Jim (James), was

born April 24, 1928. A year-and-one-half later another son, Norman, was born prematurely and died six weeks later. A third son, Edward came on March 22, 1931, and a girl, Tena Ida, [illegible] born April 16, 1934. Elke was busy all the [illegible] large barn in 1932. He was a powerful man who loved animals, especially horses. He always [illegible] and chickens. He cleared his whole [illegible] by year until only four acres of bush remained. Wheat, oats, and barley were seeded.

Janke was good-natured and very patient. She knitted many pairs of socks and mitts [illegible] her family and mended all their clothes. Her [illegible] and they spent many hours together.

The boys grew quickly and were helping to [illegible] by creek with Martin Wierenga. [illegible] had to go to school. He thought everyone [illegible] Wilson because he knew no English. When the other children went into school, Jim ran into the bush. He did that for six weeks until Tom [illegible] to school. Meanwhile Jim was making [illegible] school from now on. [illegible]

Elke's first tractor was purchased in 1942 from C. K. Mast for $1127.35. Nevertheless Elke never liked working with machinery. He [illegible] ting the grain and did a fair bit of work for [illegible]



[illegible]

was no time for play, except to sneak away for the occasional swim in the creek.

In 1944 Jim quit school and went to work at the Dutch Mill for a short time. The next year he went back there and after that sawmills and lumbering became a permanent part of his life. [illegible] joyed working on the harvest crews when he could. Ed and Jim did contract stooking at seventy-five cents an acre and could stook about two acres an hour together. That made nice spending money in 1955.

At sixty-seven years of age Elke was a sick man. He sold his farm to Ed and Jim and bought a house in Barrhead. He moved there in [illegible] 26 from a brain tumor. Janke continued living in [illegible] had a stroke which left her paralyzed. She lived in St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, Edmonton [illegible]

In 1952, Jim had purchased a rig for sawing [illegible] sawing today (1984), especially now that w[illegible]

In 1955 Ed decided he needed a change. He moved to B.C. and worked in sawmills year round. He is married and lives with his wife and their three children in Merritt, B.C.

Tena grew up accustomed to working and [illegible]

[illegible] claim along with her brothers. On a visit to [illegible]

[illegible] farm, where he spends his summers cropping [illegible]

[illegible] and Ed Jorritsma

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Peter (Piebe) Kampnar was born in Kollum [illegible] 1894) and John, went to Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. All of them saved money until the rest of the family were able to sail on the *Ryndam* in [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ber 29, 1897; and Ida (Itje) born March 18, 1900. When the Kampnars sold out in Montana they had to get their cattle and house-hold effects to

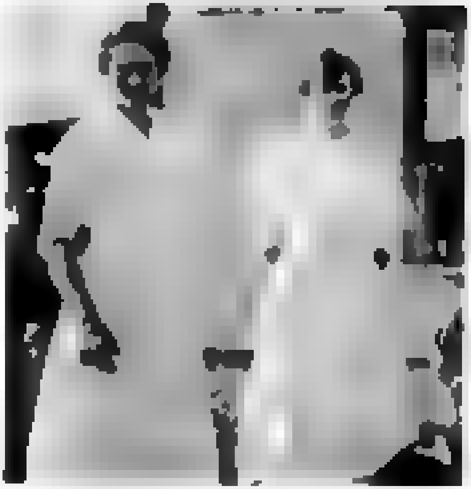
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] doctor to see Jake, and he diagnosed Jake's illness as typhoid fever. There was no way of [illegible]

The rest of the family had arrived in Neerlandia in July 1917. Since Pete and Annie had only a small one-room shack they could not [illegible] Kampnar family. Peter Sr. and the children set [illegible]

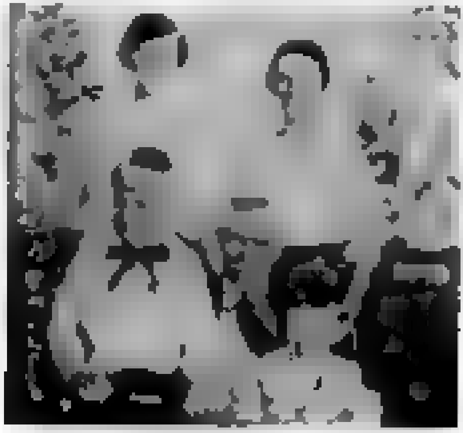
[illegible] mow what was left of this crop to try to get feed [illegible] quarters, so in order to survive the cold [illegible] erected inside a larger [illegible] tent.



[illegible]

Peter Sr. bought the NW 23-61-3-5 and broke the land with the help of his daughters. He also set up the first general store in Neerlandia.

A son, also named Peter, was born to Peter and [illegible] on February [illegible] 1918. The Peter Kempnar family returned to Montana in [illegible]. They were there [illegible] after their return Peter died on February [illegible] [illegible]



[illegible]

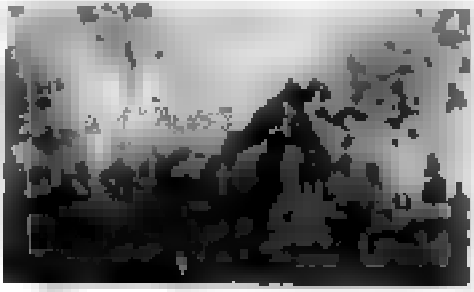
The elder Kampnar suffered from cancer and the winter [illegible] he left for Great Falls, Montana, in 1926 and passed away there the following year. Bertha arranged [illegible] to farm the land for her. By this time [illegible] had [illegible] Kennema and Bertha later married Charlie Kennema.

[illegible]
[illegible]

HENDRIK AND MINA (WINKELHORST) KANNEGIETER

Hendrik Jan Kannegieter was born January 4, 1886, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands. When he grew up he [illegible] While there he met Mina [illegible] In April [illegible] Hendrik set out for Edmonton, Alberta, where he worked for the City Water Works.

Hendrik took up the SW 16-62-3-5 in Neerlandia on September 17, 1913. Later that year he returned to the Netherlands where he married Mina on January 29, 1914. That same day they left for Canada. After arriving in Edmonton they found that work was scarce and decided to move to the homestead as soon as possible. [illegible] in March and he and Mina moved there in August 1914.



Hendrik on the homestead

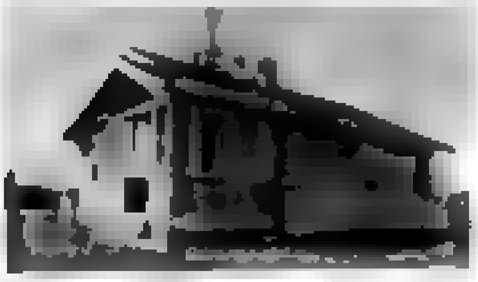
When Hendrik obtained the patent to his land in 1921 he was cropping thirteen-and-a-half acres and owned twenty-one cattle and three horses. He had obtained seven of the cattle in 1917 and the three horses in 1919.

Hendrik and Mina going to church

Hendrik had built a [illegible] hip roof cow stable and a [illegible] hip roof barn. There was a [illegible] well on the place as well as three miles of [illegible] fencing.

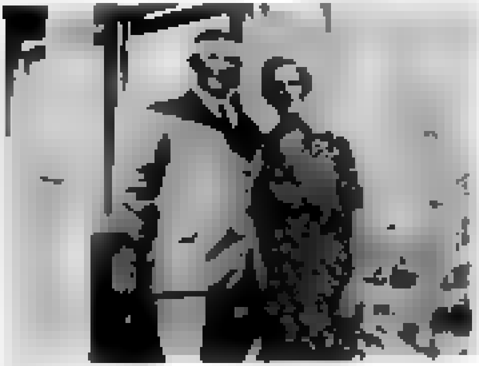
The Kannegieters, especially Mina, enjoyed having young people and children over. They often had [illegible] and [illegible]. Some time during the 1930s [illegible] stayed for a whole summer. Every Saturday, when Mina went to the store to get groceries, she would buy a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. His [illegible] was to get one square of that [illegible] though he was expected to work hard. Henry was always treated well by the Kannegieters.

Hendrik was an excitable person and could be loud, but laughed a lot. He could sing like a lark. Mina was gentle and soft-spoken. Hendrik was a good farmer and was also very frugal. He used to say that he [illegible] [illegible].



Kannegieter house built c. 1930

In 1930 the Kannegieters built a lumber house in which plaster board was used on the inside. During the thirties Hendrik obtained the S.E. [illegible] after paying the taxes on it. After Hendrik bought a tractor, he would get one of the neighbour girls to drive it while he sat on whatever piece of machinery was hitched up behind. If he wanted the machinery to go in reverse he would yell "Reverse." Hendrik also bought a Ford car, but was never able to drive it properly, often driving into fences and so on, so he eventually sold it.



Hendrik and Mina, [illegible]. Note the Ford car in the background which Hendrik eventually sold.

Mina was a neat housekeeper. She would not let Hendrik chew his tobacco in the house, so before he came in from outside Hendrik would put his chew in a hollow near the door jam. When he came outside he would take it out of the hollow and begin chewing again.

Hendrik and Mina never had children. Fred [illegible] would often walk over to Mina's and get cookies, and Mina always said that she wanted to adopt him. If [illegible] came over, Mina let them look at all the interesting things she had in the house. Fred was fascinated with the radio she had — imagine a box that could talk!

In [illegible] Hendrik sold the farm. The deal was sealed with a handshake — no papers were signed. The Kannegieters retired and moved to [illegible] and in [illegible] they moved back to the

Netherlands. Hendrik died there on Janua [illegible]

Joe Van Doesburg

RUDOLF AND GEESJE ([illegible]) KIENEKER

Rudolf George Kieneker (c. 1877) was born [illegible] Assen, Drenthe, the Netherlands. He later became a carpenter and owned a shop in Amsterdam, but after the shop burned down he decided to immigrate to the U.S.A. in the early 1900s. His wife, Geesje, and the children followed later. The family was living in Grand [illegible]

[illegible] Jenny (Jantje, June 30, 1898), Grace (Grietje April 26, 1900), Ted (Theodorus, September 7 1901), Lina (Roelina Hilberdina, December 18 1903), Henry (Koenraad Hendrik, May 13 1909), Hermina (July 13, 1911), and Hendrikje [illegible]

[illegible] games was to see how far they dared to walk [illegible]kwards toward the creek without looking [illegible]

It was difficult to make a living on the home[illegible]

[illegible] be paid back) from the federal government. In spite of this, the family left after a few years and

[illegible]

[illegible] Later they moved to Washington, U.S.A. After [illegible]

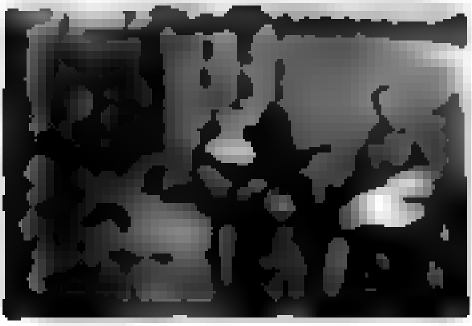
HENRY AND JENNIGJE ([illegible]) [illegible]

Henry (Hendrik) Kippers was born Novem[illegible]

[illegible] in the *Twentsch Volksblad* by a teacher [Evert Aldus], who lived in Nijverdal, Alberta, Henry [illegible] whole village was full of talk about immigration [illegible] you" the rest of his life for three-cent haircuts [illegible] helped out with haying on her father's farm. Even so, Henry invited a Canadian agent from [illegible] The agent gave information and showed pictures of the good life in Canada. After [illegible] though, they could not get enough money for [illegible]

Finally on the morning of April 30, 1910, the [illegible] Henry (Hendrik, January 25, 1905), Klaas (May [illegible] and Harm (Jan, March 28, 1909). The oldest [illegible] dee. They went by a Batavier Line boat across to [illegible] already living.

Henry Kippers wrote memoirs of his immigration experience. The following account



[illegible]

the memoirs begins with their arrival in Ed[illegible]

Henry was determined that he wanted to live where there was a *Gereformeerde Kerk* and Christian School, or at least a chance of estab[illegible]

[illegible] are difficult for man. After about a week in [illegible]

[illegible] immediately to the hospital and the younges[illegible] may stay with you for now." Henry and Jen[illegible]nigje understood only half of it, but they knew very well what was meant. Then the Lord dealt a hard blow. Only a few days later the feared [illegible] came — Klaas had died (May 13, 1910) and neither Henry or Jennigje were allowed to go there. Not even at the burial were they per[illegible]ed to see their child. It did not go better with Herman at home; this little one the Lord took to Himself also (May 9, 1910). There they were, in a strange land, among a people whose [illegible]

[illegible] to visit, and [illegible] he indicated to Henry that he was willing, if they wished, to lead the funeral of the children. He read Psalm 23, which they knew very well. Here the Lord gave comfort [illegible]

[illegible] something. I'll see if I can help him." But the man was already knocking on the half-open door.

"Is this H. Kloppers'?" he asked, in good [illegible] something inside of me said, 'You have to go there.' Then I thought, 'I must go there, not [illegible] also serve the same Lord.' [illegible] My name is Fred Baron. I came from the U.S.A., but for the last five years I have lived in this city and worked in a coal mine." Henry wanted to know if there were more *Nederlanders* in the city, and they decided to try to find them.

[illegible] there." To their great happiness, after some [illegible] those were looked up, Henry said "I invite you all this coming Sunday to our place. Bring your [illegible]

[illegible] amazing thing was that nearly all had been in correspondence with the writer of the *De Stan*[illegible]

[illegible] was made president, and Henry secretary. Henry received the same position when they [illegible]

[illegible] cannot be done in the city. They wanted a piece of land large enough for a decent-sized colony where they could have their own church and school so that they could continue their church [illegible]

[illegible] a congregation. In response to the writing a [illegible]

[illegible] and received a good reception at Classis (held in Lynden, Washington). After the meetin [illegible]

[illegible] were submitted, and after that an election [illegible]

"The Lord is good and great," said Henry [illegible] through the death of our children the way was [illegible]

In Edmonton the Kuppers family first lived [illegible] (Klazina), was born November 27, 1910. Henry first operated a harness-making shop on Castino Avenue, then a small grocery store on Pine Street. But he wanted to begin farming, and he [illegible] 28, 1911. He abandoned that quarter and later [illegible]

Another son, Gerrit, was born in Edmonton on November 15, 1913. Early the following year Henry and the family moved to the homestead. Their 20 by 30-foot house was built of spruce logs and, for a roof, poles had been put across the top and covered with sods. The floor was lumber except for a little piece of dirt floor under the bed. They discovered that the sod roof leaked badly when it rained, so later a slab roof was put on. Once some friends came over and they asked, "Which is the house and which is [illegible]

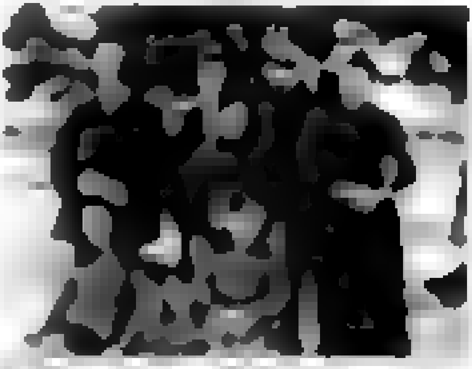
Henry had a good education and could [illegible] monism and *De Hollandsche Farmer*. In *De Hollandsche Farmer* the articles were on such topics as 'Grain Prices', 'Irrigation in Egypt' and 'Cattle in Argentina'. In appreciation for [illegible] from *De Hollandsche Farmer* [illegible]

[illegible] straw to tie up the bundles. When the grain was dry, it was threshed by clubbing it out with sticks and used to feed the chickens during the [illegible]

[illegible] a homemade carrier with two poles. The har [illegible]

[illegible] knew Whom to go to with their cares. They laid it before the Lord, and the next morning a Vega farmer who owed Henry some money for work [illegible]

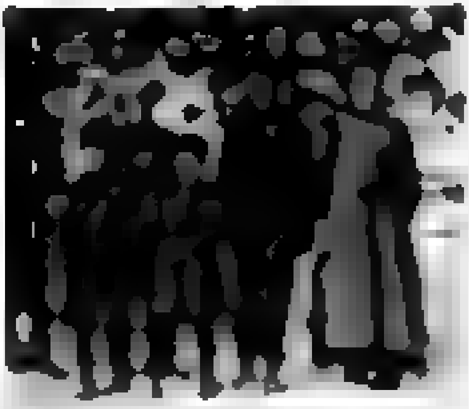
[illegible] 21, 1916)



[illegible]

[illegible]

Each spring Jennigje put in a big garden. It [illegible] froze because the growing season was so short. Other vegetables such as beets [illegible] family could afford it, material was ordered out of *Eaton's* catalogue. But more often the clothes [illegible] got a new outfit — a blouse made out of flour [illegible]

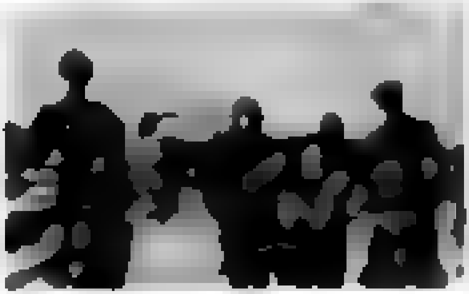


[illegible]

at the Anemas between services. Once Henry had such a bad toothache that he set off for Westlock to see a doctor. He had gone as far as Old Barrhead when his toothache disappeared [illegible] cellar which was beside the house. The wood [illegible]

For many winters Henry worked at the Chisholm Lumber Camp to make money to keep the family through the winter. He would [illegible] and coming home the following Saturday night. He often took eggs and butter along to [illegible] money for the family. With part of his earnings [illegible] was green with a soft fur collar.

When it was too dark to do any work, the children would sit around the table together [illegible] Henry was one of the first Sunday School teach[illegible] Christmas story to the children.



Hendrik, Gesina, Alice, Gerrit, John, Jennie, [illegible]

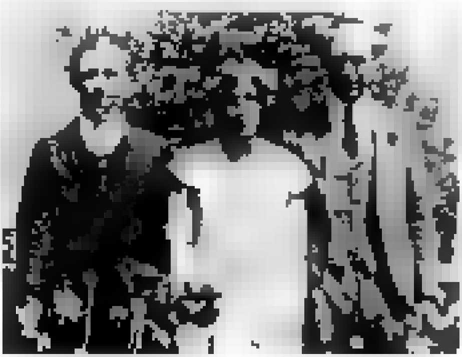
The Kippers children often played with their neighbours, the Schuring children, and [illegible] about two miles away. There were chores to do [illegible]

cows who grazed east in the meadows along the creek. Sometimes they would go on horseback to get them. Jennigje did the milking.

Around 1925, when Gladys was fifteen and Gerrit was fourteen, they quit school to help out at home. Even though Gladys preferred to work outside, she did a lot of household chores. She took over the sewing work and also did knitting. She began canning vegetables. Jennigje had either stored them in the cellar or salted them down in crocks. Gerrit did not work in the lumber camps during the winter but instead went hunting and trapping. He trapped mainly east of the homestead, getting coyote, squirrel, weasel and muskrat pelts. These he shipped by mail to the Hudson's Bay Company. The money he received went to the family.

In 1928 Gerhard Paas, a bachelor, moved in just north of the Kuipers homestead and came over quite often. Twice a week he came to get milk and some of Jennigje's good home-baked bread. One New Year's Eve the family was sitting in the kitchen and around midnight was startled by two shotgun blasts near the house. After a few minutes Gerhard came in — he had fired right outside their window to announce the new year.

One day around 1929, Gerrit was working the land, walking beside the four harrows. Suddenly the horses went on a runaway and Gerrit broke his leg. Rev. Van Der Woude took him to Barrhead with his car, but the doctor there could not set it, so Rev. Van Der Woude took him to the Misericordia in Edmonton. Gerrit stayed there for about a week.


John, Jenny, Gerrit, c. 1937

By the 1930s Henry had about thirty head of cattle. He was milking twenty-four cows and shipping the cream to Edmonton. In 1932 Henry took out a second homestead, the NE 10-62-3-5.

Gladys married Hendrik Strydhorst in 1932. Henry Jr. married Sophie Wierenga, daughter of Lammert and Hendertje, in 1936. In 1942 Alice married Ekke Rowaan and Gerrit married Clara Knikke. In 1944 Jennie and Klaas Rowaan were married and in 1948 John married Lucy Post.

Jennigje, Hendrik, c. 1940

Henry and Jennigje had retired from farming in 1944 and moved to the Centre. Henry still kept active. He managed the Credit Union, sold license plates, and looked after the cemetery. He kept the books for the Credit Union until he was 80 years old. Jennigje was bedridden for about a year and went to be with her Lord on April 19, 1946. In May 1949 Henry remarried to Ann Lanning. In July 1973 Ann died of a heart attack. She was buried in the U.S.A. Later that year Gladys and Henry Strydhorst

Ann, Henry, Jacob

moved into Henry's house with him as he was too old to live alone and would not move in with them. He was 89 years old then. Henry passed away October 6, 1977, at nearly 94 years of age.

Gladys Strydhorst

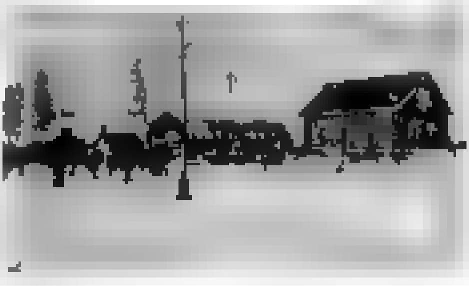
ROELOF AND BOUKJE (KEMPENAR) KOOY

Roelof (Ralph) Kooy wanted to move from the prairie where he and his family lived. Having read glowing reports about Neerlandia in an article written by Henry Kippers Sr. in *De Wachter*, Roelof and a friend went in 1913 or 1914 to look the north country over. But Roelof was not impressed. He wrote to a friend of his, Jan Postman, who lived in Grande Prairie that "There is too much wood on the ground out there so we didn't take up homesteads. [illegible] a fine place for hunters and fishermen, but too hard work to clear a farm out there." It was not that Roelof was afraid of hard work, but at middle age he was almost too old to begin a pioneer's life.

Roelof had been born in 1866 in Groningen, the Netherlands. He married Boukje (Bertha) Kempenar (born in 1863, Surhuisterveen, Friesland) in May 1891. Roelof was a shoemaker by trade and was operating a shoe shop in Surhuisterveen when he decided to immigrate to America. He, Boukje, and their seven children arrived in Chicago in 1905. There their youngest child died of measles. A year or two later the family moved to a farm in Vesper, Wisconsin, but there was too much heavy timber on it to suit Roelof. The next time the family moved (1910) it was to the Dutch settlement of Nijverdal (Nobleford) in Alberta. But there the problem was hail and drought, which wiped out their crops in the following years. This made Roelof anxious to find another place to farm.

Roelof made a visit to Neerlandia but was considering a move to Grande Prairie. Finally he decided on Neerlandia — likely because of the Christian community. He took out a homestead (SW 5-62-3-5) on November 23, 1914. That first winter Roelof's son **Pete** (Pieter, December 20, 1894) and daughter **Alice** (October 24, 1896) came to the homestead with him. (Roelof's oldest son, John, continued farming in Nobleford but came to Neerlandia for visits, while his family lived here.) Alice did the cooking but she left in the spring, and her sister **Helen** (Henke Martha, May 1, 1899) took over. Roelof and Pete were building a house with some help from Ben Lievers, Jacob Olthuis, and **Henry Kippers**, so Helen did the cooking for those men as well.

The house was built of logs, but was nicely finished off inside with lumber. It was big 28

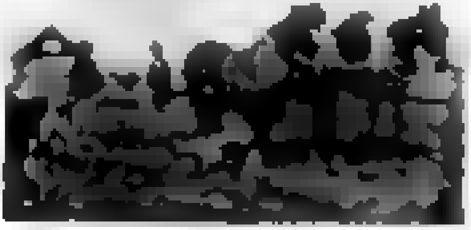


Kooy homestead

by 24 feet — and had seven rooms, most of which had clothes closets. The Koops built their [illegible] a [illegible]

Earlier that winter the Neerlandia church had been built. The following story has often been told about Roelof's involvement with the building project. The church was built of logs, and most of the men of the community, includ[illegible] heavy, Roelof decided to take a shortcut to get [illegible] After an hour or so he still had not reached the [illegible] heard a dog barking. He picked up his load and hurried toward the sound. To his surprise it was his own dog barking — he was back home!

[illegible] (Grietje, May 1, 1901) and Ida (November 10, 1902) came with Boukje to the homestead in 1905. They travelled by train, first to Edmonton and [illegible] up with the horses and wagon.



[illegible]

The [illegible] homestead [illegible] made a rowboat so that the girls could go boating in the summer.

[illegible]

Roelof brought cattle from Monarch, probably first shipping them [illegible] twelve of them, including a big red Shorthorn [illegible] built a log hip roof barn. On top of the barn, the [illegible] he owned eight cattle and two horses. As well as the house and barn, a granary had been built. There were also two wells on the place

[illegible]

and one-and-three-quarter miles of wire and [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] December 1916 until the family left Neerlandia. Boukje had never liked it on the homestead, so [illegible] daughters moved again in 1925, this time to Lynden, Washington, U. S. A. Roelof died there [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

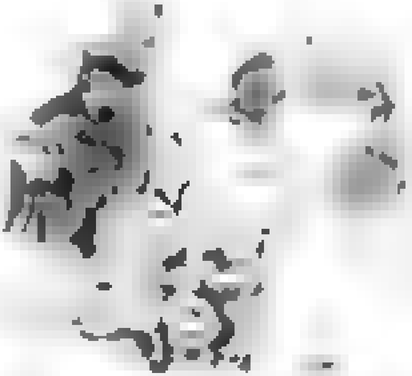
KLAAS AND JANNA (OLDE[illegible]) KRIKKE

ALBERT KRIKKE

[illegible] Canadian federal government spon [illegible] older sister, Lammetje. Now Klaas and Bill [illegible]

[illegible] structed. A bunch of young, high-spirited men [illegible] These men were no exception. Their early at [illegible] took for one meal was also a challenge. The first [illegible]

When each of the men had his own cabin they played pranks on one another. Bill Old- [illegible] day Klaas Krikke and John Gelderman went to visit Bill for an evening. On the way, they [illegible] to satisfy the visitors; they put on their over coats and buttoned them up. Even then they seemed unable to get warm and moved closer to the fire. Finally, complaining that since Bill was unable to get his cabin warm they would have to go home to get warmed up, the visitors [illegible]



[illegible] other already in the Netherlands where they [illegible] however, their interest in each other grew and [illegible]

Jongbloed of Edmonton officiated at the cere[illegible]

[illegible]

home was the bachelor shack with the sod roof [illegible]

[illegible] ing through. The floor of the house [illegible]

brush, then wiped dry with a cloth. Big cracks [illegible]

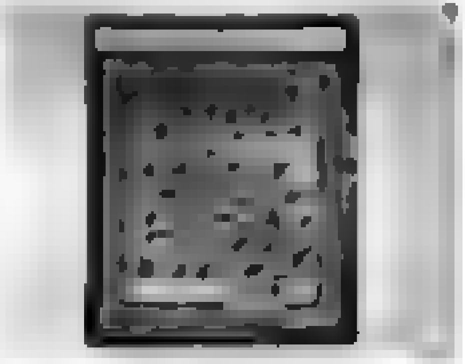
have to scrub the floor again when they were [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] to earn cash to [illegible] their farm and home.

Sometimes it was very rough, and "If we could've crawled back to Holland we would've," Janna said. There were many good happy, and prosperous times though, when they got pleasure and a sense of achievement [illegible]

[illegible] hours hand-making a baptismal gown. The [illegible] work to the Messelink and Anema girls.



[illegible]

As a mother, Janna Krikke kept busy. She did much sewing and knitting to keep her family warm and well dressed. The family continued to grow in size and number. Glad[illegible] (Klazina) was born September 26, 1920; Lily [illegible] arrived October 10, 1925; and Albert Jan was born January 10, 1929. The Krikkes were good and loving parents, putting their children's [illegible]

[illegible] ticular about keeping the farm neat. He would [illegible] he pulled up the root as well. He seldom

[illegible]

[illegible]

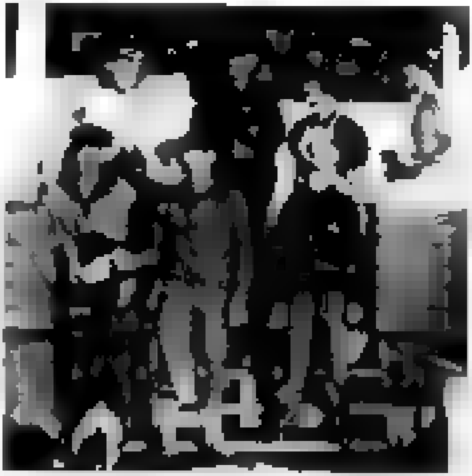
had spare time because draining puddles, fixing fences and making other repairs kept him busy.

It was not all work with Klaas though. His sense of humour often surfaced. He knew he could always expect visitors on Halloween. One year he decided that the best way to cope with the pranksters was to join them. To that end he hid in the hayloft, a favourite target. Sure enough, some young fellows soon climbed up there. In the darkness Klaas blended in with the group as they discussed what to do. Now it so happened that Klaas had not had time to put his binder away for the winter and, disguising his voice, he subtly encouraged them to move the binder. This they did, and with their task accomplished the pranksters, laughing at their joke, left the farm. Klaas returned to his house laughing too, because he now had the binder exactly where he wanted it without any effort on his part.

The children too had fun as they grew up. Upstairs in the log house Johanna and [illegible] would play tag when they should have been in bed. One night in their excitement they almost set the house on fire. They knocked down the red-hot stove pipe and it lay smoking on the floor. Klaas came up, put on his mitts and put the pipe back in place. Then he took the mitts off and directed a stern reprimand to Johanna.

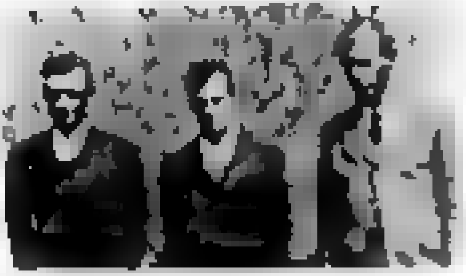
As the children grew up they were expected to help on the farm. One of the fall tasks was filling the mattresses with straw. Each child had to shake out the old straw and take the empty cover to the straw stack, fill it with fresh straw and drag it home. Once the mattresses were back on the beds the children had great fun jumping on them to get them into the desired shape.

Klaas kept ten or fifteen sheep in the 1930s



[illegible]

No. [illegible]



[illegible] [illegible], Albert

[illegible] and her daughters carded, washed and spun the wool. The Krikke girls also had to help their mother [illegible], cleaning and mending, but when their assigned tasks were finished they were free to do as they wished. [illegible] encouraged her girls to draw and paint and gave them some instruction on how to do it. Johanna enjoyed painting [illegible] and [illegible] preferred living subjects, finding birds' nests, picking berries and studying the plants. In their free time, [illegible] Ralph and Albert often gathered around the organ and sang hymns while their father played. Evert, the oldest child, was a serious boy who enjoyed doing marquetry.

The boys followed their father by becoming farmers. The girls worked out for a time, all of them in the [illegible] area. All the Krikke children [illegible] live in the district. Evert married [illegible]. Johanna married [illegible] Bender of [illegible], and [illegible] married [illegible] who became a registered nurse, married George Allen of Craigmyle, Alberta, on [illegible] 1965. They have [illegible]. Ralph married [illegible] and Albert, who stayed single, lives on the original homestead where he keeps [illegible] cattle.

Klaas died [illegible] 19[illegible] at the age of [illegible]. His wife [illegible] outlived him by several years. She was housebound for the last years of her life because of arthritis, but she remained cheerful. She died August 12, 1982, trusting in the Lord's promises.

Krikke Family

WILLIAM AND CORNELIA (VAN DER VEEN) KRIKKE

William Krikke was born in Avereest, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on October 15, 1891. Avereest was a factory town and his father was employed there. At the age of twenty, William and his brother Klaas decided to join the migration to Canada. [illegible] that arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. From there it was a long train ride to Edmonton [illegible] parts of America not seen by those immigrants that landed in Eastern Canada.

Upon arrival in Edmonton, they immediately made contact with others whom they knew from the Netherlands. William and Klaas, too, caught the vision of a Dutch settlement in which to bring up their future families and to teach their beliefs in freedom. With these thoughts in mind, William filed on the [illegible] on September 25, [illegible]. His first home was a log shack.

[illegible] in the Netherlands [illegible] William [illegible]

When the First World War broke out, William received his call to serve in the Dutch army. He strongly felt it was his duty as a Dutch citizen to return to the Netherlands. [illegible] in August 1914 and was placed with the regiment known as the Queen's Guard. [illegible] the duty of the regiment to protect and guard Queen Wilhelmina. They traveled throughout the Netherlands with the queen.

After he was released from the army, William served as a policeman in Rotterdam. During a skating outing a friend introduced him to Cornelia Martina van der [illegible]. She had been born in Leiden, Utrecht, on September 18, 1890. Cornelia had worked in different homes mostly doing housework.

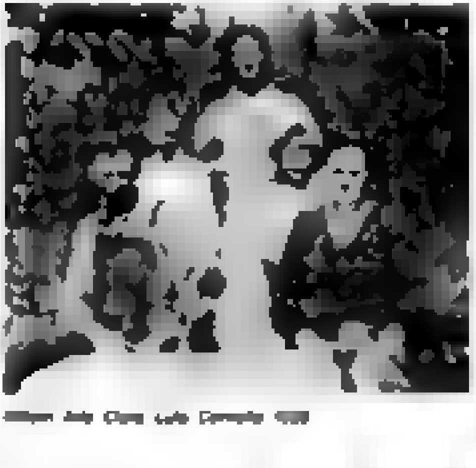
Wedding day, Cornelia, William, 1919

William and Cornelia were married in Rotterdam on May 7, 1919. They immediately made plans to travel to Canada and left the Netherlands in November 1919. This time the route was via Montreal, and within two weeks they arrived in Neerlandia. Their first log house was soon constructed and Cornelia tried her best to make it cozy. From the Netherlands she had taken a German-made sewing machine that even had a reverse stitch on it. This was put to good use. This machine is still being used by a daughter, Lula. Because umbrellas were in frequent use in the old country, Cornelia brought several umbrellas with her. The only use they ever saw in the "new land" was inside the sod house where it rained [illegible] as hard inside as outside. They later ended up as toys for the children.

William worked away from home to make some extra money. One summer he helped clear some of Tjeerd (George) Visser's land. In his absence, Cornelia had to milk the cow. The mosquitoes were so thick, she swathed her arms, legs, and neck in newspaper to keep from being bitten while doing the chores. She churned the cream into butter which was sold for cash to buy essentials.

In the winter William also worked for the [illegible] Lumber Company. He froze his toes several times while walking home. During the summer he managed to clear about five acres on his farm and the following year [illegible]. When William received his title on November 26, 1923, it is recorded that he had nine acres cropped and another five broken. He also owned twelve cattle, two stables, a well, granary, two and a half miles of wire fencing, and a half mile of wire fencing. All this plus the log house were valued at [illegible].

The Kokkes had three children: Clara (Klaasje Raampje), born March 14, 1922; Arie, born November 12, 1927; and Lula (Lammigje), born June 17, 1930.



William, Arie, Clara, Lula, Cornelia, [illegible] though his life was in danger, he eventually [illegible]

[illegible] wood and Toney Sturwold came and sawed it. After this illness, William caught colds easily [illegible]

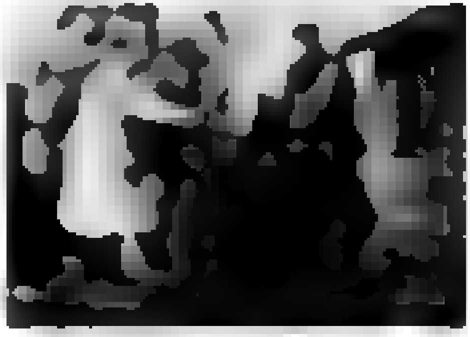
Cornelia suffered from phlebitis and often [illegible] problems, Cornelia felt very much at home in Neerlandia. Nevertheless, she wrote letters [illegible]

[illegible] wife that she certainly had been "taken in" by those fast talkers. When the last chickens were [illegible]

[illegible] beautiful, thin, lovely china dishes. They were almost too nice to use, but were used on special [illegible]

In the winter, an old coal oil lamp was [illegible]

The children helped their parents when possible. Clara did many hours of work [illegible] horses had to be caught. This was difficult be[illegible] always as far away as possible. Clara would [illegible] and then slip a halter over the horse's head [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

The Kriske children grew up and got mar[illegible]

[illegible]

Tom (Thomas) A. Lewis filed on the NE [illegible] ters his friends George Wing and Geo[illegible] old at the time. He had been born in Huron County, Ontario. He was a tall man — nearly six feet tall, rather thin, and had brown hair. He [illegible]

[illegible] then he had cleared three acres of land and had also grubbed the roots out of the cleared acres. He moved to Ontario, but later returned to this area and took up the NE 34-60-3-5 in Mellow [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] fifteen acres, but the balance was heavy bush. [illegible] On the farm he had built two log stables [illegible] the SW 4-62-3-5.

[illegible]

[illegible] moved in (1914), the dry grass was so tall that [illegible] dry place in the house was under the table. B[illegible] east side of the house and vice versa. They [illegible]

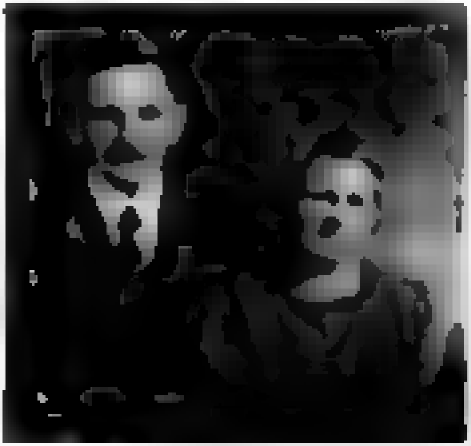
When they were little girls Hanna and Min[illegible] two china dolls from an aunt in the Netherlands. One day, when Mother [illegible] Lievers thought they were being so good that [illegible] duties. But then Hanna teased Minnie, who became so vexed that she got a hammer and smashed Hanna's doll to pieces. When Mother

[illegible]

[illegible] with the children while Dad Lievers was carpentering in southern Alberta. At these [illegible] take that place. As she was a light sleeper, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

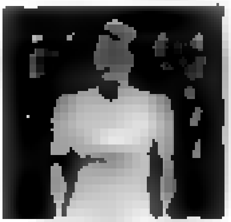


[illegible]

pranks. Once a neighbour boy was at their place. The Lievers had a Fordson tractor with four coils that could give quite a kick when [illegible] tried to catch a chicken but really wanted the neighbour boy to do that, so edged him along to catch this chicken. He finally did and then held it to the coil. Guess who got the kick? He [illegible]

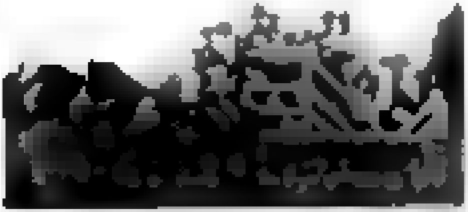
Hanna married Ralph Krikke. After Minnie quit school, she got a job housekeeping for [illegible] ilies in Westlock and Edmonton. Bill married Gwen Broadhead in 1946.

Ben Sr. had a farm sale in 1947 or 1948 but continued to live on the home place. His wife [illegible] the age of 66. Then Minnie came home to look after



[illegible]

her dad. Ben Sr. took a trip to the Netherlands [illegible] the Netherlands: Ben and Bill Wakeman and Gerhard Bevers. They all stayed at the Lievers' [illegible] table for them as well as for her brothers and her dad. Those were busy years for her.



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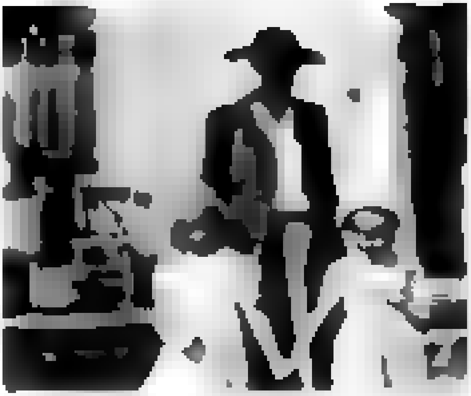


[illegible]

After Minnie had helped at home for twelve years, Rieka took over and Minnie got work with the Housekeeping Department at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. She worked there for twelve years until her retirement. She is now living in the Multart Homes in Edmonton. Henry Lievers married Jean [illegible] a job with Import Tool in Edmonton, where he still works. John married Helen Kipp of Westlock in 1954 and they have two sons. John bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Ben Jr. in 1956. He [illegible] Gerrit married Betty Wilson of Lethbridge in 1957 and they live in Abbotsford, B.C.

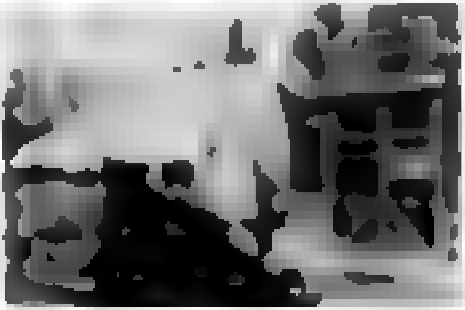
In his later years Ben Sr. would walk to the [illegible] stopping along the way to talk to another old [illegible] 1971.

Lievers Family

HENDRIK AND JENNY (LIEVERS) LIEVERS

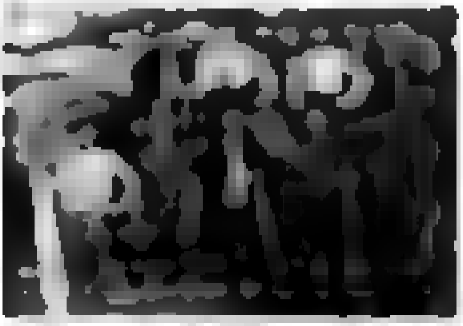
Hendrik was born July 18, 1888, in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands, and later married a distant relative Jenny (Jannigjen) Lievers born February 14, 1891. Times were poor in the

Netherlands, and Hendrik was persuaded to immigrate after hearing Canada advertised as a land of milk and honey. When they left in 1912 Hendrik and Jenny already had a fam [illegible] three: Bill (Jan Willem, July 29, 1908), Harde (Gerhard) Johanna (October 10, 1909), and John [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

success, and the Lievers family moved from there to a number of different places in B.C. [illegible]

[illegible] and Hendrik hoped to farm and be his own boss. On February 25 the Lievers family came from Edmonton to Westlock by train and from [illegible] stopped at Old Barrhead to warm up, as it was a [illegible] Monday morning and come home Saturday night on horseback.

That first summer of 1920 Hendrik met with [illegible] stead of going to Kessington, he stayed home [illegible] needed Hendrik to walk ahead and see where the holes were, because if the horses stepped in a hole it could cause an accident. Hendrik put a stick in the ground wherever there was a hole [illegible] yelled and Hendrik got Ben to use long grass and a hankie from his pocket as a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. Ben could not lift Hendrik to [illegible] as it was their turn to bring tea that day. They were wearing white Dutch aprons, and the apron strings were used to tie up the wound. The girls helped Ben put Hendrik on the horse and so they brought him home. Hendrik lay at home all night with the cut continually bleed [illegible] time and begged him to come and fix up the [illegible] since Douwe had one of the few democrats in [illegible] took for them and was fortunate enough to find [illegible] sma took the democrat to Lievers' place [illegible] and John drove to Kampnar's place. By that [illegible] Kampnar's with a car and they took Hendrik from there to Westlock, where he was given something to ease the pain. Hendrik remained conscious until they reached the hospital in Edmonton. There he passed out and did not [illegible] doctors there amputated his leg, and after he [illegible]

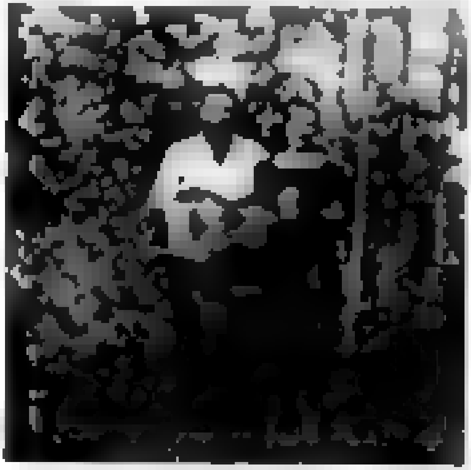
Hendrik learned to get around quite well with his artificial leg. He took out the SE [illegible] him break the team in. John Oldegbers came by to help too. John had just put some hay on the [illegible] of water. After chopping out a block of ice, [illegible] but it was knocked down by the runaway horses as they ran through the trees and got [illegible] started to kick, but the more they kicked the worse it got. They ran about a quarter of a mile [illegible] smoked horsemeat.

Hendrik did not own horses at first, so the [illegible] deeper. Bill and Harda were sitting on a board laid across the top of the wagon box and the [illegible]

The Lievers children were quite a lively [illegible] boys dared brother John, usually called Short [illegible] wagon across the ditch. When Joe finally brought them [illegible] and he [illegible] at the [illegible] and gave [illegible].

[illegible] and the children spent many hours outdoors as well. The boys had [illegible] such as [illegible] squirrels, [illegible] the [illegible] spruce tree and then [illegible] the branches to the ground, or climbing poplar saplings and [illegible] were [illegible] on these adventures and was part of the [illegible].

On long winter nights the family would sit around the [illegible] and [illegible]. [illegible] and all the children loved to sing.

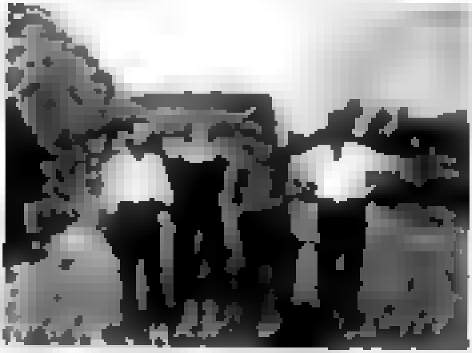


George, Marie

Around 1922, Jenny became sick and was later bedridden for three years with asthma and [illegible] her health and [illegible] as a result of [illegible].

After Jenny's death Harda kept the house. She had quite a time of it, trying to keep things in order. The boys would [illegible] the door and then [illegible] would be there. After a few times of this she finally [illegible] a little tune and whenever the boys knocked [illegible] the house [illegible] the door [illegible] started to sing [illegible] gave up [illegible] a little [illegible] give them [illegible].

[illegible] also had quite a time with [illegible] and [illegible] to keep the [illegible] she [illegible] sing a little tune. [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] through the door [illegible] and the family did their own [illegible].



[illegible], Marie and [illegible] George

[illegible] good nature [illegible] the younger [illegible] a lot of the time and, having nothing better to do they made a tunnel through the [illegible] and [illegible] it with [illegible] (much the same way it was done in the coal mines). It was quite safe and they used to spend a lot of time in the tunnel. [illegible] would [illegible] along and with the help of [illegible] a bunch of sows through the tunnel while the younger [illegible]

behind them. So they were never in any real [illegible]

pig. The sow would get excited, of [illegible] thinking he had one of her little ones [illegible]

been banked all around with dirt [illegible]

to reach the coop; none of the children ever [illegible]

hundred-pound bag of flour on the kitchen [illegible]

episode; when Dad Lievers came home there [illegible]

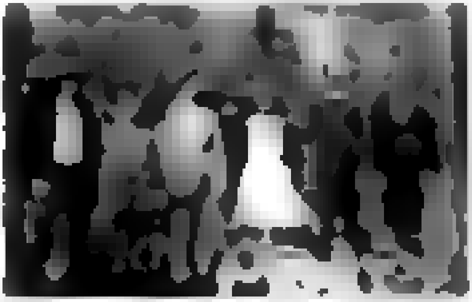
dismissed, and the Lievers children were [illegible]

dragging behind. What a temptation for a [illegible]

turned, with Slim completely out of control [illegible]

Slim jumped off the horse and took after Jim [illegible]

from Allacane, Saskatchewan, with two chil[illegible]



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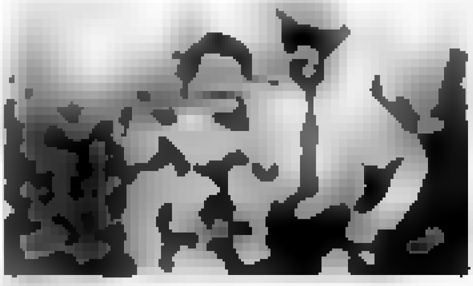


[illegible]

In 1936 and '37 Bill, Harry, and George went to the Peace River country to work. Dur[illegible]

[illegible]g, but they got board and room. Then the Second World War broke out. Bill and Harry volunteered for the Army, and George and James were drafted. Another brother, Stanley [illegible]

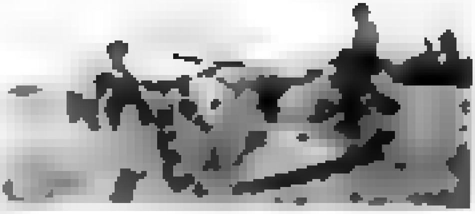
Bill had taken out the NE 6-62-3-5 as a homestead in 1926. He was a great outdoors man. He loved to hunt and trap and was a crack [illegible] He later married Opal Desjarlais. In later years Bill and Opal divorced, and Bill remarried. He farmed in Flatbush for a number of years before moving first to Edmonton and then to Ponoka where he passed away.

John homesteaded the NW 6-62-3-5 for a [illegible] and living with his sister Hazel in New Westminster, B.C.

Harry homesteaded the W½ 9-62-4-5. He married Hannah Thullen of Veteran, Alberta. They have nine children; one passed away. They moved to Flatbush in 1953 after selling [illegible]

Annie left home quite young and worked [illegible]

In 1946 George began homesteading the SW [illegible] 1954. He married Eileen Munro of Condor. They have four children and live on a farm in Flatbush.



[illegible]

Jim homesteaded the SW 31-61-3-5 for a short time before the Second World War. In the army he attained to the rank of sergeant and [illegible] the time of the Blitz. Jim married Joan Styles whom he met in England during the war. They settled in Fort Macleod where they operate a bulk gas station. Jim and Joan have five children.

Edward married Emma Neumann of [illegible] ing their land in the 1940s, they lived in Edmonton for some time and then farmed for many years in Flatbush. They have five children. Ed [illegible] dren. After leaving Neerlandia Frank worked

George and Harold [illegible] for school, [illegible]

as a truck driver. Presently he is working as a bus driver in Edmonton.

After her schooling Violet Gilbertson worked at various jobs in Neerlandia. She married Mel Barr of Wetaskiwin, and they had two children. She later married Nick Gerak of Edmonton.

Like the rest of the family, Stanley was educated in Neerlandia school. As a boy he spent a lot of time in a bush camp in Ft. Assiniboine [illegible] and rebuilt motors. In recent years he has built his own racing cars. Stanley married Carmen [illegible] of Vancouver, B.C. They have one child. Later they were divorced, and Stanley married Beverly Friesen of Coronation. They have two children and live in Cache Creek, B.C.

[illegible] same age sixty-five, [illegible] months of each other.

George Lievers
Harda Terpstra

PETE LOUWS

Pete (Pieter) Louws (c. 1892) had lived in Conrad, Montana, but although the rest of his family moved to Lynden, Washington, he moved to Canada. Pete first took up the NW [illegible]

[illegible] and soon built a 10 by 12-foot log shack with a sod roof. It was a low house and he had to duck [illegible] acres cropped, he had slashed ten acres and enclosed the cleared land with a fence 260 rods [illegible]

A brother of Pete's, John, also spent some [illegible] on the homestead — usually during the winter — he would do some trapping, but he kept no

[illegible]

[illegible] remember sermons word for word. In his later years here he listened to sermons on the radio rather than come to church to hear them. He had always been somewhat of a loner.

[illegible] the mines in Edmonton. As far as is known [illegible]

[illegible] MAST

Albert Mast came to Edmonton with his parents in 1911. As his father did, he filed first in the Thorhild area and later in what was to become Neerlandia. He chose the SE 21-61-3-5 [illegible] the homestead with the rest of the men in June [illegible]

A son, Carl (Koop) Pieter, was born March 1913, to Everdina and Albert, and just three weeks later the Masts packed up their belong

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] died May 20 at about two weeks of age. Albert made the tiny coffin himself, and the baby was buried on the northeast corner of Koop's land. When land was designated for a cemetery in [illegible]

[illegible] his growing family. Albert worked at a variety [illegible] still roamed free (the only fences were around the gardens), so Everdina had to tramp about looking for the cattle. Carl, then about [illegible] 1917; and **Pete** (Pieter Koop) born November 13 [illegible] fence post and ring a cowbell. She could hear this bell for a long way and would follow the sound home.

[illegible] records, he had built two log stables and a hen house, constructed one-and-one-half miles of [illegible]

[illegible] born a son, whom they named **William** [illegible]

[illegible]

On an extremely cold night in December, **Kobie** (Coba) was born. It was December 22 [illegible] under the porch [illegible] entered the world. Two years later on July 3 1928, **Albert** was born in the quietness of the [illegible]

[illegible] Aaltje, March 4, 1930) and **John** (Jan October 3, 1932) were born in the log house, but not Joe (Johannes). A new chicken house was under construction and when it was finished it was such a nice building that the family decided [illegible] children. The chickens got the old house. They did eventually get the house which had been built for them, after Albert and Everdine built a frame house for themselves [illegible]

[illegible]

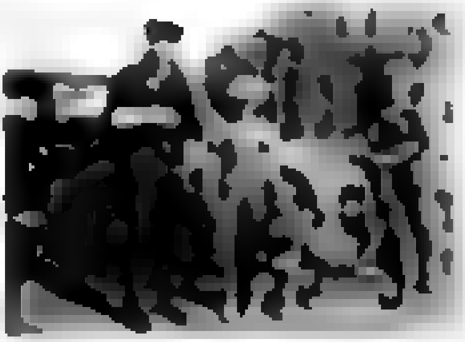
Everdine loved all animals and was especially fond of sheep. Her boys inherited her [illegible] walking to get to school. They trained their dog, Towser, to pull a sled. That got them to school [illegible]

[illegible]

and Sport who pulled Albert, John and Joe to school.

[illegible] check the fires.

[illegible] Clarence was in Europe during World War II [illegible]



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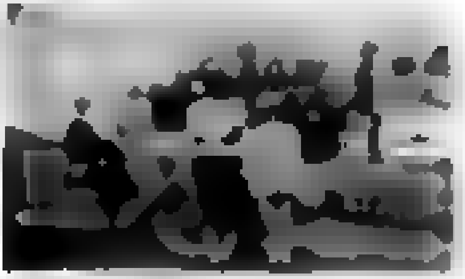


[illegible]

[illegible]

Christian Senior Citizens Home in Edmonton. Even though the family suffered many hard [illegible]

Joe Mast

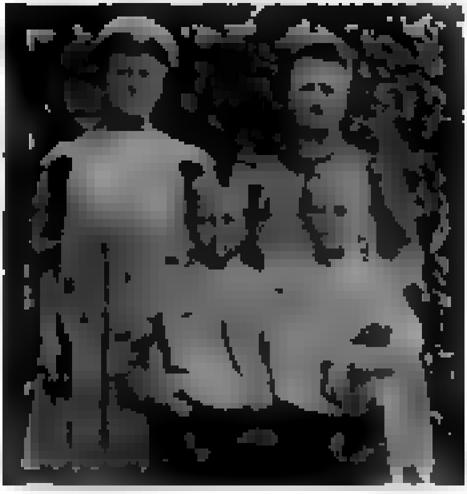
[illegible]

[illegible] Friesland, the Netherlands, and moved freight from place to place along the canals. But living [illegible] growing family, and it did not pay enough to support the family. The children were able to [illegible] and Minke did some custom sewing. [illegible] look for work. The family did not hear from him [illegible] land of opportunity, through a local news[illegible]

Since the Netherlands was overcrowded [illegible] the country where it was possible to own some [illegible] store to buy some *klompen*. He came home with the biggest pair he could find. His mother [illegible] price.)"

The Masts travelled to the U.S.A. at the turn [illegible] one girl: Peter (1882), Albert Minne (November [illegible] Koop, 1895), and Henry (Hendrikus, March [illegible] York, and found work in the cotton factories

[illegible]



[illegible]

Albert could not work there because he was allergic to cotton; it made him break out in hives. So he sold milk from door to door with a horse and wagon.

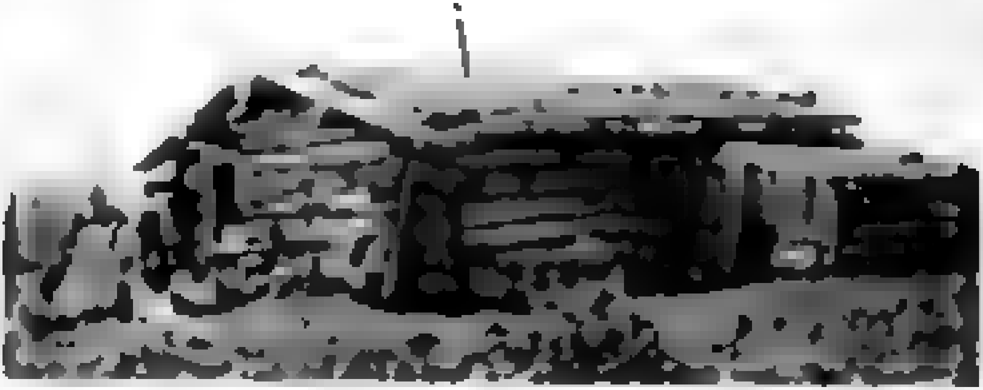
Peter became very ill, contracted diphtheria and died in 1908 at the age of [illegible] years. After living in [illegible] for about seven years the family moved to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, again for better job opportunities. There they worked in the cotton factories, and Albert worked on a farm. While working in the factory a belt of the machine at which Joseph was working hit him and damaged his eyes, leaving him with poor eyesight.

The Masts met the Baker family in the U.S.A. and Albert married their [illegible]. Then in a Dutch newspaper they read about Canada where one could buy land for ten dollars a quarter. This was too good an opportunity to pass up so the Masts and the Bakers came by train from Whitinsville and arrived in Edmonton on April [illegible]. There they first lived in a tent. They took up land near [illegible] but abandoned the land to go northwest of Edmonton with other Dutchmen. Joseph filed on the [illegible] in December [illegible].

In the spring of [illegible] the Mast family moved to their homestead. The Albert, Jan [illegible] and Joseph Mast families travelled together to Neerlandia. John Oldegbers reported that they came to Neerlandia over the Klondike Trail. At first John Anema and [illegible] accompanied them with horse teams but they had to return [illegible] and when it was impossible to use the horses [illegible]. Albert [illegible] The Masts also had oxen. When Anema and [illegible] left them the others left some of their belongings behind.

Even with the oxen it was necessary to double up the teams to get the wagons through some parts of the trail. Sometimes the men would unhitch the teams, drive them around a mucky spot, stretch chain across and pull the wagon through in that way. It was necessary to walk for much of the way because both the oxen and the horses had enough to pull without the added weight of people. Finally after about two weeks they reached the Big Timber. It took them two days to get through that. The trip was long and hard. Just south of the homestead was another slough. Here the wagon got quite stuck. This last struggle overwhelmed Joseph. "Just roll me over into the creek," he said.

At first the Mast family lived in a log shack. This was later replaced by a sturdily-built log house.



[illegible]

Minke Mast was also sturdily built. She was [illegible] the waist emphasized her size. Because she had [illegible] many of those pounds were muscle. She had no trouble bending over and hefting a [illegible] slightly-built man whom she could lift — chair and all — when she was sweeping the floor. [illegible] rescued a little dog that was floating down the [illegible] were always dogs and cats around the Mast household because Minke loved animals.

Koop walked to Edmonton many times. [illegible] trip to see his daughter Alice's new baby. Another time Koop grew tired, lay down, and fell [illegible] his own wife opened the door.

Koop and Minke worked hard in their pioneer days though they had come to Neerlandia in their late fifties. Koop was not in the best of health but his sons, Carl and Henry, helped to develop the homestead. They took turns [illegible] homestead. Minke worked as a midwife for a number of years. Koop and Minke were a [illegible] ple with big hearts, ready to help others [illegible] s of age.

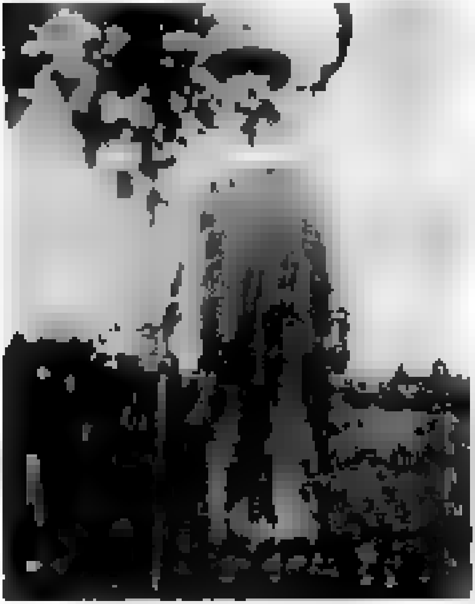
Marion Mast

[illegible]

John (Johan Albert) Messelink, born August 16, 1886, in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, grew up to be a farmhand and occasionally worked in a factory. He married Dina (Everdina) Oldegbers on October 13, 1910. Life in the Netherlands was difficult for the young couple, so when Everdina's parents [illegible] During this time two children, **Margaret** [illegible] 7, 1913) were born.

John had applied for a homestead (NE [illegible] birth of Johanna, John and Everdina moved to Neerlandia. Here, in a 14 by 20-foot log house, Lily Aleida, was born on October 25, 1914, and Albert Jan on May 11, 1916. Albert wrote: "Many fond memories linger with us of the old log house and the years that were spent there. When it rained hard the only dry place seemed to be under the table. We also had a free loader at all our meals, a big one-eyed cat that sat at the end of the bench."

On the homestead there was a 16 by 22-foot log barn and a chicken coop. There were two wells, one twenty-four and the other thirty feet deep. A few acres of land were broken and put in crop and harvested. John also put up 1½ miles of a three-strand wire fence.

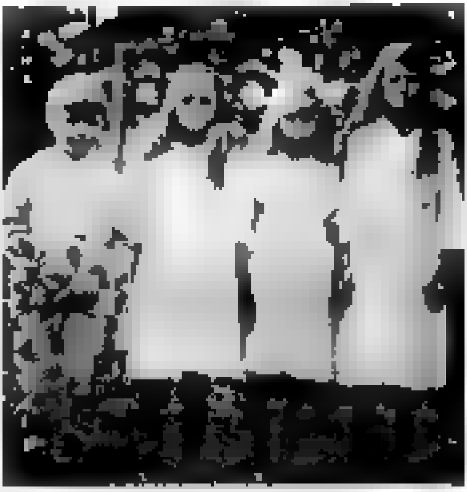


John on the homestead

John had heart trouble for several years, and on November 21, 1916, he passed away. At the request of Dina, Case Ingwersen, clerk of the church, wrote a letter to John's father in the Netherlands. Here are a few excerpts:

> Dear Brother,
>
> during the last days his illness was such that humanly speaking there was no hope for recovery. Happily, he had been spiritually ready for a long time to leave this vale of tears.
>
> Still, his dying was unexpected to everyone. He left this morning at eight o'clock, quietly and peacefully, to his eternal home. ... Knowing that he died in Christ, we may assume that also his dying was profit for him.
>
> His widow requested on behalf of the family to advise you and yours of this sad news. I hereby fulfill this painful task.
>
> Also on behalf of the consistory, of which our brother was a faithful member, I offer you ... our sympathy and condolences. We wish you the comfort of the Holy Spirit in this painful loss.
>
> With sincere condolences
> C. Ingwersen

The death of John changed the life of the family and the subsequent development of the homestead in a dramatic way. No doubt Dina had some misgivings about what was to become of her family, but because of her faith in God and his Providential care, the children felt secure and happy as they grew up.



Albert, Johanna, Lillian, Margaret, early 1920s

Trying to live on a small widow's pension, doing the wash for one of the "better off" families, and being janitor of the school to help pay for the school taxes became part of Dina's life. As school janitor she had to light the stove each morning. Carrying a bag of kindling one mile in twenty-below-zero F. weather was hard, cold work. When spring arrived the roads became quagmire, and a lot of mud was carried into the school in large lumps. Many Saturdays were

spent scraping the mud off the floor to get it [illegible]

[illegible] an adequate supply of fuel. Large trees were [illegible]

Repairing roof of Messelink's house: John and Bill Oldegbers

[illegible]

[illegible] the Messelinks had [illegible] milk cows. After the morning milking the [illegible]

[illegible]

Weeks of excitement preceded the first of [illegible] ice-cream and pop. After all the practising they had done for the three-legged race, stick race [illegible] how much money they could make. Quarters [illegible]

[illegible] to friends at school and put on a fence post some yards from the house. In exchange, the [illegible] we would wait until our friends had left and run and get the letters."

[illegible] her cousin Bill Oldegbers in exchange for a [illegible] family left Neerlandia. On March 16, 1963, at the age of ninety-five, Everdena Messelink passed away.

Albert and Lil Messelink

HENRY AND ANNA (MICHAEL)

[illegible]

[illegible] children, he learned the upholstery trade instead of farming as his father and grandfather [illegible]

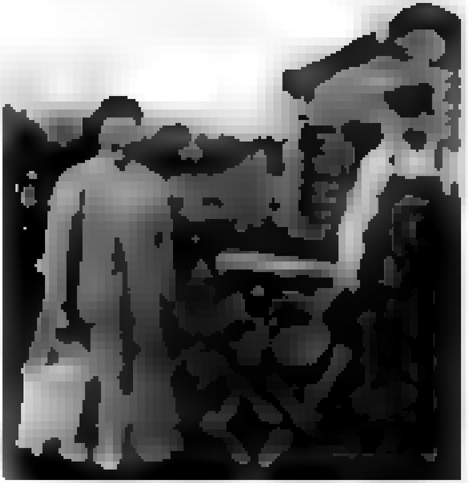
[illegible]

[illegible] Breda, South Holland, when they read an advertisement in a Dutch newspaper encourag[illegible] in a tent. Henry worked for Blowey-Henry [illegible]

[illegible] to Townships 61 and 62 with a group of other [illegible] ing fee and took out a homestead (NE 4-62-3-5) [illegible] build log houses. To build, they used the trees [illegible] plished, the men walked back to Edmonton.

Walking through the bush was very difficult, and in seeking an easy trail one of the men walked on a frozen creek. Suddenly he went through the ice and had to stay at a stopping [illegible] It was a Saturday evening when the other two, tired and with swollen feet, arrived home in Edmonton. The next day they went to church anyway.

[illegible]



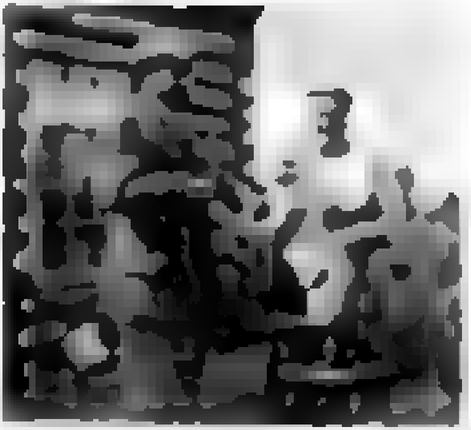
[illegible]

In 1913 Henry and Anna bought a beautiful [illegible] the homestead. Henry and Anna hoped for a child but Anna hemorrhaged easily and always [illegible] to Anna with some advice. Queen [illegible] Princess Juliana had been born — maybe Anna [illegible] although she found it quite trying to stay in bed for so long. The neighbour women helped with [illegible] November 25, 1916, a son was born to Henry [illegible]

[illegible] the oxen — they were slow, but at least they [illegible]

Henry had to work hard to make a living on the land, but joy and satisfaction came with each additional acre cleared. One fall (1918) he [illegible]

When the government of Alberta intro-



Henry [illegible] Anna, [illegible]

[illegible] from the settlement, applied for the grant. The [illegible]

[illegible] much-needed groceries were bought with the [illegible]

[illegible]

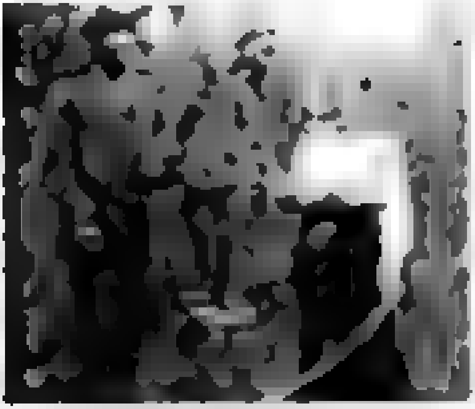
[illegible] Michael

[illegible] Once Henry hid the garden hoe on [illegible]

During the winter months Henry [illegible] his upholstery tools and [illegible] love seat, and Oene Piers wanted a bench to put [illegible]

Both Henry and Anna were musical and could sing well. Henry also directed Choral [illegible]

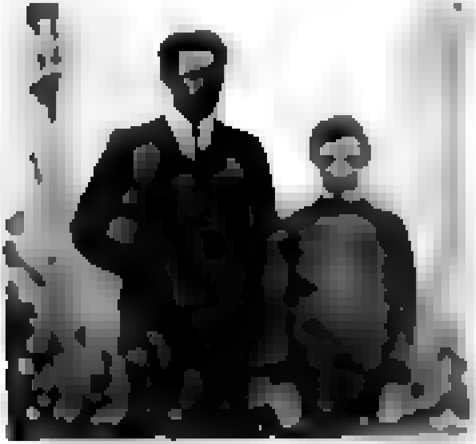
Anna had a serious thyroid condition as [illegible]



[illegible]

neighbours were very helpful during that time. Henry considered going back to the Nether[illegible] could. Henry's sister-in-law Deana Michael, a nurse from Michigan, U.S.A., came for three [illegible] did the housekeeping. He learned to cook. [illegible]

[illegible] en coop in 1929. Later that same year their log house burnt down due to a brush fire which



[illegible]

caught the grass along the fence. Nothing in the [illegible] in the chicken coop. The following year they [illegible] to fifty dollars, a lot of cream cheques!

Bert had a trap line on the way to school [illegible] school. In it, he caught squirrels and weasels as well as the occasional skunk. He also trapped many muskrats in Baird Lake. The money from [illegible] life: "Buy first what is necessary, then what is useful, and last what is desirable."

[illegible] Bert was fourteen he quit school to help his father with the farm work. During the De[illegible] much as possible. One time, when their hog return was over $100, Bert got a new .22 rifle [illegible] himself the happiest boy in Canada. But Henry [illegible] hunted deer and moose for meat. When the [illegible] tried his hand at mink ranching during the '30s [illegible]

[illegible] from enlistment in the army because he was [illegible] father. By that time, Henry, due to his age and arthritic condition, had difficulty keeping [illegible] were praying for a helpmeet for Bert. Their [illegible]

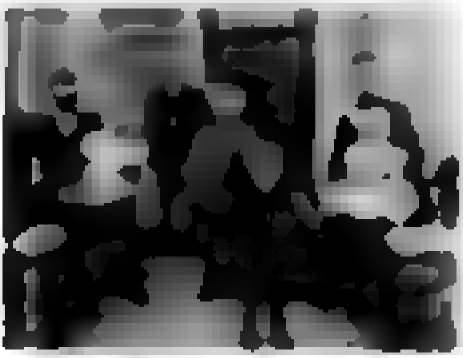
Henry lived with Bert and Jenny until he [illegible] loved.

Jenny Michael

[illegible]

[illegible] Groningen, to a family of boeren. The couple [illegible] night school to learn more about his trade. While in the Netherlands three sons were born [illegible]

The year after Louis was born, in April, Menne and Aaltje left their families behind and sailed for Canada. They became sea-sick the [illegible] enable him to provide for his family. A fourth [illegible] after they arrived in 1911. On December 18, 1911, while living in Edmonton, Menne filed on the [illegible] built a house in Edmonton for his family. The Nanninges milked cows and had a small milk [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] 1914, but she died six-and-a-half months later. Both children died from summer complaint. Another son, **Andrew** (Enne) was born Novem[illegible]

Menne built two houses in what is now the Norwood district of Edmonton. The first he [illegible]

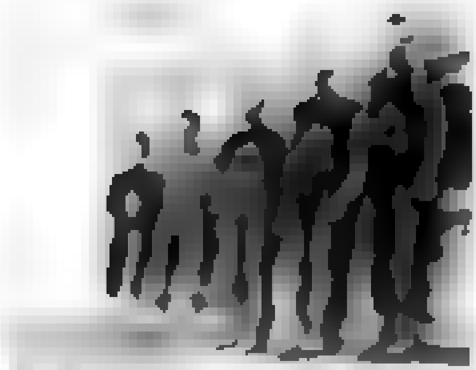
The year of the move to Neerlandia [illegible] 1916. Menne had filed on the SE 32-61-3-5 in 1915. He chose that quarter because he could [illegible] homestead (there was still snow on the ground [illegible]

A daughter, Grace (Geeske), was a welcome [illegible] (Cornelis), was born April 1, 1919. That was the [illegible] been used to buy cows, but four of the cattle [illegible]

[illegible] 28-feet, had two storeys, and was considered a [illegible]ace. Another girl, **Hilda**, was born in this [illegible]use on December 16, 1923.

Menne received the patent to his homestead in 1920. At that time, he had already [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

cattle. In 1919 obtained eleven more but by 1920 had only sixteen cattle. He also owned four [illegible]

[illegible] time, took him to Westlock where his foot was [illegible] one took him to Edmonton where he received X-Rays. Louis came home a celebrity because he needed a cast for that ankle. Minor medical [illegible]

Butchering was a necessary part of pioneering [illegible] sseldorf with a pig's head that Aaltje used for [illegible]

Aaltje worked hard on the homestead. She [illegible] was on a board that had been put across the [illegible] cows, feed animals and tend a huge garden.

Making a living for such a large family did [illegible] after the farm. In Oregon Menne worked on buildings for the World Fair. In later years, he [illegible] combe Research Station during one harvest [illegible] sleigh and went up and down the hills with glee. Chasing rabbits or riding steers was fun [illegible]

[illegible] finally got put on the table after twenty years of [illegible]

[illegible] sons, Andy and Ike, helped to purchase the [illegible]

In 1932 Menne decided to set up his own sawmill. There was an abundance of trees and a possible demand for lumber. Besides, Menne had his own home-grown crew — seven sons. The idea worked well. With this mill he also did quite a bit of custom sawing.

Menne was skilled at drafting and architectural work. He drafted many blueprints for the homes of his children as they married. He enjoyed this more than farming.

Menne Nanninga built the first lumber school in 1918 with the help of Ben Lievers and Jacob Olthuis and he also worked on the second school. He drafted the plans for the two Christian Reformed Church buildings and the first parsonage. Menne worked with other carpenters in the second Co-op store. In 1938 he also had a hand in designing and building the present Co-op building. Menne Nanninga, as well as Ben Lievers, was often called upon to construct coffins for community members who had passed away. After making the coffin, Menne usually delivered it and stayed to help prepare the body for burial.

Menne, Aaltje, 1948.

Both Menne and Aaltje had great faith that their heavenly Father had led them to this country for a purpose and they trusted in Him for all things. Menne was active in church and community. He served on the consistory and was a charter member of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association.

In 1947, when Menne was 68 and Aaltje 66, they sold their farm to Bert and moved to the Centre. All the children were married by then. They bought a house from Henry Bouwman (probably the first house they ever bought instead of built) and enjoyed retirement. A chicken house, however, had to be built there and Menne also spent many happy hours drafting blueprints for houses in his little room upstairs. Aaltje passed away October 12, 1962, and Menne nine months later on July 12, 1963.

Nanninga Family

BILL OLDEGBERS

Bill (Willem) Oldegbers (born March 15, 1890) and his sister Dena (Everdina, born May 29, 1891) had been taken in by their uncle and aunt Jan and Johanna Oldgebers in 1893 because their mother, Gerritje (Witpaard) Oldegbers, had died and their father, Klaas, was unable to cope with his loss. When the Oldegbers immigrated to Canada in 1911, Bill and Dena decided to go along, though their father begged them with tears to stay in the Netherlands.

Bill before 1931.

When Bill came to this area, he filed on the SE 4-62-3-4, on September 24, 1913. Here he lived alone, eating many a meal of rabbit — fried, roasted, or stewed. Though he stayed only a few years, he worked hard to clear his land, and became known as a helpful friend, more than ready to help anyone in need.

As time went on, Bill went to Edmonton to

[illegible] mained very strong, however, and Uncle Bill [illegible]

[illegible] selling it to him. For as many years as possible until old age prevented him from doing so [illegible] He had many good friends among the adults, teenagers, and children. He was a great reader of Christian books, and when visiting his [illegible] had just read. This telling would be a lon[illegible]

[illegible] always had his pockets filled with candy or gum, and was known to the children as the [illegible] and his visits always included jokes and riddles [illegible] way through his head — pushing it in throu[illegible] how come he could make his nose crack when [illegible] More amazing, it never hurt him when he did these things!

Bill was a very honest man, completely trustworthy in business dealings. He believed other people were too, especially those whom he considered fellow Christians. Because of [illegible]

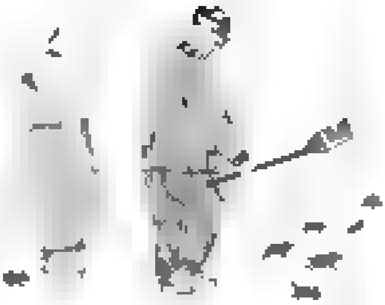
[illegible] approximately one year. This man was from [illegible] would not be returned to the Netherlands to fight in World War I. At first no one knew that [illegible] one on the roof. More curious than ever, he [illegible] roof was someone he had previously met in Granum. The fugitive had married shortly be[illegible] quarter. Bill was relieved when the war was [illegible] again because he thought it was not right [illegible] Works until his retirement. He was also the janitor for the First Christian Reformed Church [illegible]

Johanna Bender
Rita Kribbe

JAN AND JOHANNA [illegible]

At the age of sixty most people start thinking of taking it a bit easier. Not so with Albert [illegible] and their husbands, Henry and Petertje (January 18, 1883) Schoonekamp, and Albert and [illegible] Lily (February 18, 1894), and Jennie (1896); their [illegible] early age.

The boat the Oldegbers family had orig[illegible] stayed while awaiting the proper train. The [illegible] stayed was so infested with mice that the men [illegible]



Jan Johanna, 1930

fastened their pants tightly around their ankles to prevent the mice from crawling up their legs. The women experienced greater difficulty yet trying to tighten their skirts around their ankles. Sleeping was a nightmare since the mice ran around and over the people. The Oldegbers were delighted that their stay was just a short one. A ten-day trip by train took them from New York to Edmonton. They spent another ten days at the Immigration Hall in Edmonton while looking for their own accommodations. They received food and shelter there and, best of all, there were no mice.

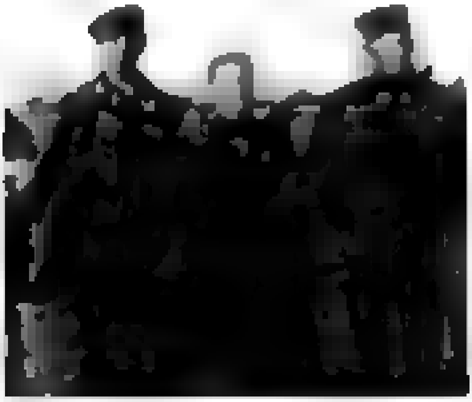
In Edmonton they rented a house, and as many family members as possible went out working to earn money to enable them to start homesteading. Because John was still young, he had to attend school. Jan Oldegbers soon left with eleven other men to find land where they could all farm close together. About ninety-five miles northwest in Townships 61 and 62 they found the area they liked. The first thing they did was build a shack where they could live while they looked the land over. The quarters were all numbered with government stakes and the men made a list of the ones which interested them. Then they put the numbers in a pile and began to draw. Each went back to Edmonton with the land number he had picked. Jan drew the SE 34-61-3-5, the quarter on which the shack had been built. Since the family could live in this cabin they moved to the homestead in 1912.

After hiring two teams of horses, two wagons, and two drivers, John Aarens and Siebren Tiemstra, the Oldegbers and their son John and the Knop Mants and their son Henry left for their homesteads. They were the first of the twelve to bring their families to the wilderness and the first Dutch people to settle the area.

The trip was a nightmare — only a winding trail through the bush, criss-crossed with sloughs, creeks, and rivers. There were hordes of black flies, mosquitoes, and other insects for company. The men and often women too would walk to make it easier for the horses. When they came to sloughs they had to decide whether to find a way around or to struggle through it. If they were to go around a slough it meant extra miles and time. If they went through the slough the men would use logging chains and both teams to get the wagons across, one at a time. At one place the Oldegbers had to leave some of their furniture behind in a shack and when they returned later most of it was gone.

The Oldegbers spent many days travelling, sleeping in the bush along the way. When they

finally come to what is now Neerlandia, they [illegible] settle in their new home and start farming. Jan had taken some chickens [illegible] the way in but some difficulties [illegible] the trip. He [illegible] along the way. The [illegible] girls had remained [illegible] earning money to help the parents on the farm. For the first few years they sent groceries and other needed supplies. The Oldegbers family had [illegible] There were also many [illegible] he had [illegible] a good hunter and kept the family supplied with meat [illegible] keep [illegible] had a small garden [illegible] vegetables and [illegible] difficult [illegible] had to make [illegible] Jan [illegible] made a [illegible] covered it with [illegible]



[illegible]

Farming was difficult. On occasion Jan Oldegbers and Douwe Terpsma would put up hay together. They would look for open spots where grass grew. Then working by hand with scythe, rake, and fork, they would make hay. The [illegible] and [illegible] the hay. [illegible] they had made two stacks and [illegible] that because of the dryness and the fire hazard they should put a fireguard around them. They had just completed one fireguard when a whirlwind came and deposited sparks on the other stack. Before the men [illegible] the entire stack was consumed [illegible]

Jan was [illegible] He was [illegible] animals. He often [illegible] to help [illegible] In a number of [illegible] he [illegible] all the [illegible] Whenever he was needed he was ready. He [illegible] although he himself was not healthy, suffering [illegible]

[illegible] and appeared to be a stern man, but he could also be [illegible]

[illegible] loved pretty things and tried to make her [illegible] home [illegible] flowers [illegible] she planted hops which grew [illegible] the walls [illegible] From the flowers of the [illegible] she made an herbal tea [illegible] was a quiet person [illegible] in her garden, but she was also helpful and good [illegible] people. While her husband [illegible] animals [illegible] people, often working as a midwife, helping at [illegible]

The two oldest Oldegbers daughters remained in Edmonton with their families a few years [illegible] Neerlandia in [illegible] their parents and brother. [illegible] to Neerlandia as the roads were [illegible] They would come by freight train to Clyde, then by wagon [illegible] Neerlandia area. [illegible] from Edmonton took two days.

The regular stopping place was [illegible]worth's. Many travellers stayed the night there. The [illegible] because the men would begin drinking, become rowdy, and make improper advances to the girls. The man of the house, however, was a [illegible] He [illegible] the girls [illegible] and he himself would sleep right outside their door.

which was simply a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] one would bother them. From [illegible] [illegible] place to [illegible] the girls had to walk. Brother John would come to meet them and help carry their baggage.

[illegible] married [illegible] [illegible] and became a [illegible] wife. [illegible] married John Ebbers [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Tuinenga, and Bill stayed single. Dena had mar[illegible]

[illegible]

Jan passed away in 1926 at the age of 79. Johanna Oldegbers then sold the farm to Jacob [illegible] were spent in the Schoonekamp home. She passed away in [illegible] years of age.

Rita Krikke
Sake Nanninga

[illegible]

[illegible] February 10, 1885. They were [illegible]

[illegible] bricklayer, and he operated a small hardware [illegible] Jacob and Aaltje were relatively well-to-do. They had three young sons: John (Jan, De[illegible] 1908), and Fred (Frederick, July [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] that Canada was the land of freedom and op[illegible]

[illegible] April 5, 1911 Jacob booked [illegible]

[illegible] been born on January 12, 1913. As Jacob had [illegible] across Canada they arrived safely in Edmon[illegible]

[illegible] Parkdale school and the family soon made new friends as the Hollanders found each other [illegible]

Fred and the baby were ill with summer com[illegible]

(Eerlandje), was born. Dr. Johnston attended the birth as he was their family doctor. During [illegible] massive unemployment in the city and Jacob [illegible] provide for the family of four children. Jacob decided to settle in Neerlandia. This meant another move in order to pioneer on a homestead.

[illegible]

Jacob had purchased two horses [illegible]

Though the early pioneering days with [illegible]

[illegible] eke out an existence. Neighbours and [illegible]

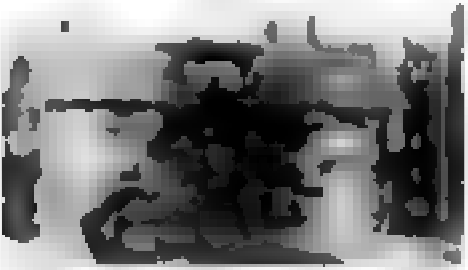
straight and uniform enough, resulting [illegible] were not heavy enough; they were too thin and the cold could readily penetrate. The heavy [illegible] soaked through the sod roof, showerin[illegible] sat up in bed, holding up an umbrella, in order [illegible]

The first tilling of the land was by spade and [illegible]

[illegible] do other bits of cooking. It worked extremely [illegible] no hot breakfast that morning!" However, [illegible] other ring-lid was quickly made because the [illegible]

Jacob would also cook eggs for the family's [illegible] with certainty because Jacob himself could not [illegible] exactly what had happened to him. He [illegible] look and hastily turned away, paused [illegible]

[illegible] ly of eight moved back to Neerlandia. It [illegible]



[illegible]

Conditions and times were not as austere for the Olthuis family on their return as those which they had experienced on arrival in 1915. [illegible] 1921 Jacob made application for the homestead [illegible] head of cattle, four horses, five sheep, and [illegible] hogs and chickens. Jacob also applied for [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Jacob bought a Ford truck, hoping to launch a freight-hauling business between Neerlandia and Edmonton. This venture was not a success mainly due to the unusual weather and the resulting road conditions. In 1925 the hauling business was discontinued.

From 1924 to 1926 the family lived in a two-storey lumber constructed house on John's homestead (NW 33-61-3-5). Then they moved into Bill van Ark's house and lived there until Jacob bought the Oldegbers farm in 1927. Bill and Fred also made applications for homesteads, as John had done earlier and these were granted. Bill filed on the NE 13-61-3-5 and Fred on the SE 7-62-3-5. For a time John, Bill, and Fred bached together in a shack on Fred's homestead. Then one Sunday disaster struck. The Olthuis brothers had gone to stay at their parents home for the weekend and when they returned the place was burned to the ground. The cause of the fire is still a mystery. R. De Vries had checked the cabin on his way to church and found nothing amiss. Though it was just a one-room cabin it was a great loss because all their worldly possessions were in it. Bill still regrets the loss of "the best rifle I ever had". In spite of this setback all three brothers eventually patented their homesteads — John in 1929, Bill in 1934, and Fred in 1937.

A furrow field team. John at left

When the Olthuis family first lived in Neerlandia many services were non-existent. The nearest doctor and medical aid was available at Westlock and in later years also from Barrhead. When in 1924 many cases of whooping cough were evident, the doctor did come to check on the patients in various homes. Eva suffered greatly from the disease. In 1930 an epidemic of chicken pox hit the community and

Fred, Bill, Eva, 1931

Eva, Carrie, Alice, c. 1927

[illegible]

[illegible] during another. Others offered help too [illegible]

Jacob served as member of the church [illegible] it was his task to count and record the [illegible]

[illegible]

"Nah," John replied, but on taking a closer [illegible] Laevers, and Henry Michael. Dusk was [illegible]

[illegible] The adult bear was divided among the [illegible] fat still covering its body which made good eating. The Olthuis family says that bear meat can best be compared to pork for flavour and [illegible]

[illegible] were trapped for their pelts. Bill was the [illegible] of weasel, muskrat, and squirrel obtained by [illegible] orge's hero and he copied Bill in many ways [illegible]

[illegible]

The year of the caterpillars, 1924, descended [illegible] and crawled into open doorways; they [illegible]

Three animals were remembered by the [illegible] ing to perform for her master when she was [illegible] off to live her remaining years on Bill's farm. The ram was a general nuisance. He butted [illegible]

Mother Olthuis had long black hair which she twisted or braided and then rolled into a bun. It was held in place with large hair [illegible] chignon. Her hair was a bit curly and waved easily about her face. Aaltje's eyes were

[illegible]

[illegible] was strong in spirit with a lucid mind and a steadfast will to carry on without complaint or lament. Her feelings and responses were often [illegible] filling, jobs were for doing. Aaltje was [illegible] tive, ingenious and resourceful. When the [illegible] worked well. Aaltje never threw anything away; everything was saved for possible future [illegible] often sick, the patching and mending were not [illegible]

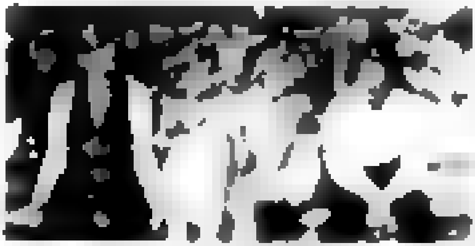
Mother Olthuis roasted wheat and ground [illegible]

baked in lard or syrup pails. The Olthuis children would at times cut the first slice from a loaf and with a spoon dig out the centre of the loaf [illegible] and sugar were added [illegible]

[illegible] make large meals, especially on Sundays. Up[illegible] welcomed to the Olthuis home, which was central. Aaltje was a good cook and served tasty [illegible]

[illegible]

Threshing time called for special meals [illegible] home-canned pork and to grind it up; spiced and seasoned to taste, it made an appetizing [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] that Aaltje had a family of nine adults [illegible]

One feat that Jacob enjoyed was makin [illegible] Canada, how I've been deceived! — all this [illegible] made of split rails laid close together. Once [illegible] with cream stood. The churn tipped over and [illegible]

[illegible] enjoyment and pleasure. Both Eve and Fred [illegible]

Jacob was of medium height and rather stocky build. Bright blue eyes looked out from [illegible] e mustache which he would sometimes [illegible] gave him a good measure of satisfaction.

[illegible] McGavins Bakeries. John and Jennie reside in [illegible]

[illegible] married Winnie Prins in 1940. He was a radio [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and manager of Edwards Hatcheries. He was also employed at Dow Chemicals. He is retired [illegible] three years. Alice, homemaker, married Peter [illegible]

[illegible] June 14, 1960, at age seventy-five. Father Jacob lived to be eighty-six and he died March 16, [illegible]

[illegible]

TED AND IDA ([illegible]) REITSMA

Ted (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born April 15, [illegible] he had met aboard ship. He found it difficult to get started in a country where he could [illegible], waiting for him. Lubbe (who was Ted's age) and Ted formed a team and decided to "go west." Ted had the address of a friend, George [illegible] of Roelf Kooy in Monarch, in southern Alberta [illegible] Dykema they got work for the fall harvest and then just worked for room and board over the [illegible]

[illegible] Sipko Schuring. These gentlemen [illegible] persuasive, telling in glowing terms the good [illegible] vest they accompanied John Anema north. The [illegible] four hours on the train to arrive in [illegible], and then a long walk in the dark carrying full packs, to arrive at Anema's home at 3:00 A.M.

After looking over the land with Simon [illegible] on their homesteads. Ted filed on the SE 21-61-3-5. Because this quarter had a one-room lumber shack, a well, a barn, and many other improvements on it, Ted had to pay forty dollars rather than the normal ten-dollar filing fee. Ted and Lubbe lived together for the first win[illegible] and flipping the hotcakes over. Unfortunately he lacked her expertise and the pancake stuck to the ceiling, where it still was stuck when Lubbe came in for supper.

Ted and Lubbe left each [illegible] was coming down with the flu himself, filled [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 1920

The following winter Ted went to work in a logging camp but spent his weekends at home. His visits home paid off when he married Ida Kampman on January 3, 1923 at Mellowdale, Alberta. That summer both Ida and Ted worked in [illegible], returning to Neerlandia before the birth of their eldest daughter, Sadie, on November 2, 1923. This set Ted to doing something to improve the shack, finishing it off and adding a fourteen by twenty foot log lean-to which served as a bedroom and kitchen. Each year more land was cleared and more livestock added. But ends would not meet and Ted went to Edmonton for two winters, working in the mines in Beverly. Ida took care of the stock by herself for those months.

Ted, Sadie, [illegible]

Ted became a Canadian citizen in 1927. He took an active part in the community by serving as chairman of the board of directors of Neerlandia Co-operative Association. Ted also took a course at The University of Alberta to qualify as Weed Inspector. For two years he travelled on horseback to do the job. Then he purchased a Model A Ford, which made it easier for him to get around.

Soon it was time to build a new house. Two more children had been born: Helen on November 15, 1925 and Harry on November 14, 1927. For the first time Ted and Ida went into debt to build a lumber house, only to have the Depression bring them near to bankruptcy. The Reitsmas' last child, Anna, was born on May 3, 1933.

Ted, Helen, Harry, Sadie, Ida. Front: Anna, 1942

As time went on Ted became involved in the co-operative movement, which formed implement co-ops, stores and credit unions. He became a director of Alberta Wholesale and Implement Co-op and traveled to such places as Winnipeg, Toronto, Calgary, and Toledo. In the meantime, the children were growing up and getting jobs of their own. From the time she was fifteen until she left Neerlandia in 1942, Sadie worked as a clerk in Neerlandia Co-op. Then she worked in Edmonton [illegible] before her marriage to Peter Prins in 1946. They have two daughters.

[illegible] Ted Lumber House [illegible]

Helen completed high school at Barrhead and then joined Sadie in Edmonton in 1944. She left for the U.S.A. in 1947 to study at Calvin College. After teaching in Denver, Colorado, [illegible] Edmonton and married [illegible]. They have three children.

Ted and Ida sold the farm to Jerry Reitsma in 1946 and, with the rest of their children, moved to Edmonton. Harry finished high school in Edmonton and [illegible] After [illegible] a [illegible] and [illegible] in [illegible] and they have [illegible] [illegible] who a nurse, and married [illegible] in [illegible]. They have one son.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skirrow

ALBERT AND SUSANNA (JANSEN) RITSEMA

Albert Ritsema was born in Groningen, the Netherlands, on November 3, 1875. In 1891 he and his family immigrated to Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. The Jansen family had also [illegible] in the [illegible] where Susie (Susanna) was born November 17, 1875.

Albert and Susie met, and married in the spring of 1900. They set up their home in Grand Rapids were five children were born to them: **Fred** (Fredus), May 31, 1901; **Sadie** (Sara), Sep [illegible] **John** [illegible] **Tena** [illegible] and **Clara** [illegible]

Because of Susie's health, she and Albert decided to move to Canada. Susie had tuber[illegible] Alberta, where they had relatives. The Ritsemas arrived in 1908 and farmed there until 1918. Here seven more children were added to the family: **Jim** (Jacobus) on February 4, 1909; **Gertie** (Gerhardina) on June 16, 1911; **Pete** (Pieter) on December 16, 1912; **Henry** (Hendrik) on [illegible] **George** [illegible] **Lena** Magdalena [illegible] and **Garret** [illegible]

[illegible] Henry, Albert holding George [illegible]

[illegible] in Neerlandia in 1914, then in 1918 he and [illegible]

[illegible] the well by pail so you see it was a losing battle [illegible]

[illegible] to [Elke] Jorritsma. The neighbours all pitched in and got that fixed up, making four beds with [illegible]

[illegible] started carrying things out [illegible] I wrapped the [illegible]

Albert and Susie's last child Minno (Menno [illegible]) born in Neerlandia on January 27 [illegible]

[illegible] would [illegible] and Oltmans helped Albert build a [illegible]

[illegible] ferent from ordinary moving. This is a moving [illegible]

[illegible] tance. We had to move by train or boxcar. My [illegible]

[illegible] pen take apart a [illegible] two binders, a seed [illegible]

[illegible] and out I was supposed to turn left but [illegible] went [illegible]

[illegible] because they were very tired. When my father [illegible] home and I was not there, he didn't know [illegible] about sixty miles. My parents stayed u[illegible]

[illegible] finished the walk home. The lights were on when I finally walked in the yard early in the [illegible]

[illegible] up, and drink it down. With such a big family, Susie wasn't too fussy about her floor be[illegible] bed no one was scolded for walking on the wet [illegible]

Once Clara had an especially scary experi[illegible] home from school. Instead of taking the graded [illegible] I left the patch quietly and as fast as I could running all the way [illegible] mile. I sure did run!"

The whole family looked forward to the winter holidays, especially the *Kerstfeest* held at church. They spent the whole day there, had [illegible] nice program. There were also snowball fights, [illegible] sleigh to go home again. Another great holiday [illegible]

There was a time that Albert would take the farmers' eggs and cream to Westlock and then bring back groceries. Clara remembers that, "One time Pauline Sturwold and I went along. We would ride a while and then walk, as it was a thirty mile trip one way. Then we stayed at a [illegible] Pauline and I did a little shopping too. I remember we bought some apples, oranges, and ba[illegible] to eat on the way home. We did enjoy the [illegible]

By 1923 Albert got the patent to his home[illegible] miles. He was cropping twenty acres of lan[illegible] and a few hogs. Even with the improvements made, however, things were not so good finan[illegible] relatives in the U.S.A. offered Fred and John jobs, and Albert and Susie money to move back, they decided to go. On April 1, 1924, they loaded everything into Dave Tuininga's truck and said good-bye to Canada.

Sadness came to the family in 1936 when an [illegible] writes, "We lived in an interesting age, from rags to riches. We were rich in good health, long life, and friends, and we are very thankful [illegible]

Ritsema Family

HENDRIK AND PETERTJE (OLDEGBERS) SCHOONEKAMP

Hendrik Schoonekamp was born July 21, 1881, in Heemse, Overijssel, the Netherlands. In 1907 he married Petertje Oldegbers. Three-and-a-half years later they immigrated to Canada with the Oldegbers family. Hendrik and Petertje did not really want to leave the Netherlands, but Petertje's mother did not want to leave any of her children behind, and so they agreed to go along.

Hendrik, Petertje, 1908.

In Edmonton the Schoonekamp's first residence was a shack in Fraser Flats near Little's Brick Yard. This little dwelling was often shared with others who had no family. They also had boarders. Hendrik worked at construction. While in Edmonton two children were born to them: **Jennie** (Janna, June 28, 1913) and **Annie** (Albertje Johanna, March 22, 1915).

Hendrik came to Neerlandia and filed on the NW 10-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911, but he did not move to Neerlandia at that time. On March 28, 1913, he abandoned that homestead and refiled on NW 34-61-3-5 because it was closer to the rest of Petertje's family. He built a cabin there in April of the same year. On April 27, 1915, when Annie was only six weeks old, the Schoonekamps moved to Neerlandia. It is unknown how they came. They had no oxen and it was several years before they got any. They lived in a little sod-roofed shack.

Hendrik plowing.

The first years, Hendrik went to southern Alberta each fall to work in the harvest. He did this to make enough money to buy supplies and clothes for the family. When he came home he would bring apples, and that was one time the children could each have a whole apple.

While her husband was gone Petertje would carry on alone. One chore that always had to be done was to look for the cows who roamed at large. Sometimes Petertje would be gone so long that the children would be afraid she was lost, but eventually she would return with the cows.

The Schoonekamps were hospitable folk and made everyone feel welcome. Because they lived close to church and school, their home was often a place for people to come. On Sun-

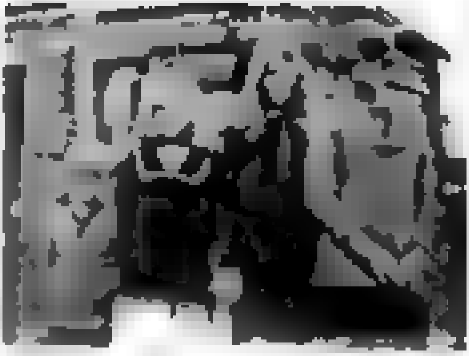
The team is yoked and ready to go. Hendrik beside his oxen.

[illegible] between [illegible] there were. Often [illegible] people [illegible] the Schoonekamps went out of their way to visit where there was need. [illegible]

[illegible] the sod house was not easy. [illegible] get wet from the drips. When it stopped raining all the [illegible] and bedding [illegible] day the Schoonekamp family sat down to supper. On the table stood their treasured oil lamp casting a cheerful glow. As the family sat around the table the roof began to leak. Plunk [illegible] glass lamp chimney and cracked it, extinguishing the flame. [illegible] who sighed, "That was my last chimney."

Schoonekamps log house

On July 26, 1917, Rutie (Roelfje) was born and [illegible] Albert [illegible] Schoonekamp's only son, arrived. Just before Albert was born the family moved into a new log house with a shingled roof. Ben Leevers built the house and little Rutie watched carefully as he built. Why, she wondered, did he take so much trouble to put the floor boards so close together — they would just fill up with dirt [illegible] Winnipeg couch that could be pulled out and



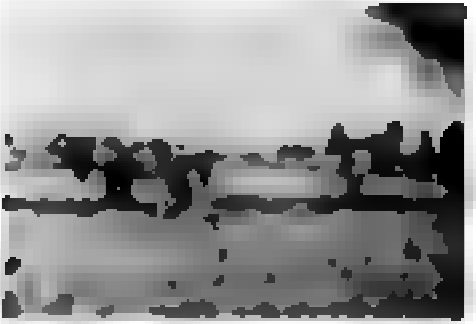
[illegible]

made into a bed. Often people who stayed slept [illegible]

Billy Quick, the truck driver, also stayed at Schoonekamp's place. This made for a lot of [illegible] understanding her and one time embarrassed her by accusing her of not speaking proper English.

[illegible]

Hendrik was a small man, about 5'6" and [illegible] and did everything quickly.



[illegible] Hendrik playing with his horses

[illegible] she was quicker and a good organizer. Even though there were often a lot of people at her [illegible] times when the children got up in the morning she would be gone and they would know that someone had come during the night for her. [illegible]

[illegible]

Peterije used flour and salt bags for the girls' [illegible] move, this often meant free advertising for the [illegible]

[illegible]

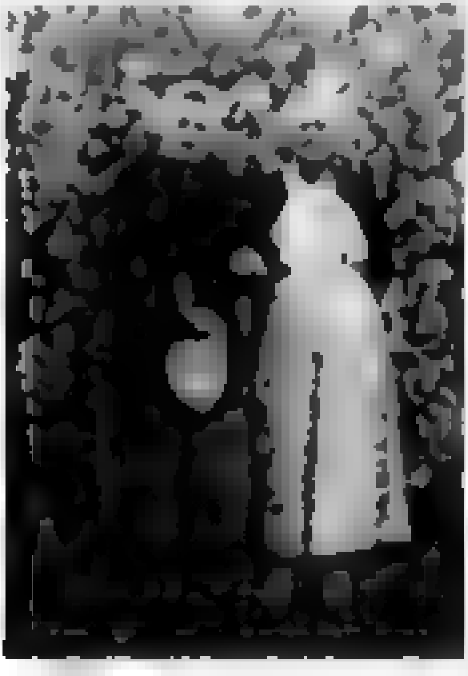
One time, in 1918, a couple was going to be [illegible] bench, and that was fine. Then he helped the [illegible] taking the couple with it.

The church was made of logs, and the door [illegible] flies and the hot sun, one cow knocked the door down, and the herd entered the church. When [illegible]

[illegible] children were married: Jenny to Ike Nanninga, Annie to Cecil Tuininga, Rulle to Andrew Nanninga, and Albert to Clara Visser. Before they married, both Jennie and Annie worked for [illegible] in the Neerlandia Co-op and Post Office.

[illegible] Peterije lived in a house they had built in the

[illegible]



[illegible]

hamlet on part of their homestead. [illegible]

Schoonebeek family

POPKO AND JANTJE (VAN DALEN)

[illegible]

Popko Dirk (born November 27, 1878) [illegible]

Popko took up a homestead, the SE [illegible]

[illegible]

Popko had been a choirmaster in the [illegible] the songs that were sung were Dutch. Before the Christmas concert, Popko would practice [illegible] lead them at the concert. Besides directing choir, Popko also served on the consistory of the church and one year was a delegate to a meeting of Classis Pacific in Montana.

Back: Jantje, Popko, Joe Horwertz (driving team), John Kooy (sitting on it). Front: Marinus Geleynse, Alice Kooy, Helen Kooy, Jennie, Hilegien van Dalen, Pieter van Dalen. 1915.

Helen, Cora, Jennie. 1918.

[redacted]

If we have to eat rabbits and potato peels

[redacted]

There were two wells on the place — a cribbed

[redacted]

was born in 1928. Fopko passed [redacted] and Jantje in 1972.

Schuring Family

TONEY AND RULIE (SMIT) STURWOLD

Toney Sturwold was born June 4, 1885, in Groningen, the Netherlands. When he was

[redacted]

A. Toney married Rulie (Roelofje) Smit in

[redacted]

Drenthe, the Netherlands, and her family had

[redacted]

sons; the doctor had advised him to find a job where he could work outside

[redacted]

ine (March 6, 1907), Lukas (November 8, 1908), and Lala (Lammigje, March 30, 1913)

lived in Iowa for two years, then moved to Lark North Dakota. In both places Toney did farm

[redacted]

hailed out another, so they decided to move to Canada, where one could get free land. This

[redacted]

aughter, Margaret (Maritje, October 4, 1915)

Toney filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on July 13,

[redacted]

quarter, he paid an additional fifteen dollars besides the ten-dollar filing fee. There was already a house on the land so the Sturwolds moved into it. That first summer Toney went south to work on the prairies.

Toney became well-known in the Neerlandia community. Case Ingwersen wrote the fol

[redacted]

Toney was a man with foresight, who saw a

[redacted]

and he was received with gladness into the settlement. He bought a one-horsepower

[redacted]

a pair of oxen in front — later horses —

[redacted]

p this up day after day, through all hours

[redacted]

ing a beard each fall so that in the winter months he was decked with a handsome full

[redacted]

grain crusher on his wagon, so that he was busy the whole year through. [When Toney came to

[redacted]

helped cut up the mountain of logs into short

[redacted]

It was bigger — 18 by 28 feet — and well-built. All the logs were dovetailed.

By 1921 two more children had been born into the family: **Jake** (Jacob, June 4, 1919) and **Ralph** (Roelof, November 1920). When Ralph was two years old he became ill with pneumonia and died about nine days later (May 1923). In November of that year another boy, **Toney**, was born, but he lived for only ten days.

In the workshop he had on the farm Toney did blacksmithing and also shoed horses. He would straighten and sharpen plowshares, first making them hot in coals and then working them on an anvil. When someone had a broken piece of machinery, he would bring it to Toney to be fixed.

Rube was an excellent seamstress and also a good cook. She knew how to make good bread and apple pies, something she had learned as a girl. Many times she would have extra people at mealtimes — farmers who had brought something to be fixed were invited in to stay for the meal.

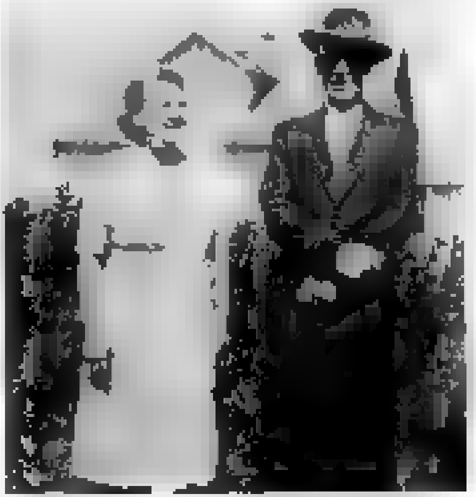
Back: Jake, Ruby, Thelma, Janet. Front: Margaret, Lola, Lukas, Pauline 1939

Three more daughters were born to the Sturwolds: **Ruby** Roelofje (October 13, 1924), **Thelma** (May 20, 1928), and **Janet Magdalene** (April 18, 1930).

Through the years, the Sturwold children all married. **Pauline** married Jim Tuininga of Edmonton on January 5, 1929. They had four children; one passed away. **Lukas** married Annie Emmerzael in 1943. Lola married Art Fisher in 1938. Margaret married Jack Tuininga in 1935, and Jake married Tena (Koning) Seinen in 1950.

Rube, Ruby, Jacob, Lola, Margaret, Lukas c. 1928

Ruby (later called Rulie) married Angelo Cavallero in 1945. They lived first in Edmonton, then moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. They had two children. Ruby died in 1978. Thelma married Harry Reitsma in 1954. In



Rube, Toney c. 1941

1955 Janet married Jack Stuk [illegible] children and live in Hudsonville, Michigan U.S.A.

[illegible] Jake married, Toney and Rulie moved into a small house that had been built for them on the [illegible]

WILLIAM AND EMMA [illegible]

[illegible] lung (or heart) condition. Edna and Hattie and [illegible]

[illegible]

The family stayed in Neerlandia only two [illegible] one mile of fencing.

[illegible] ty. They lived near Schoonekamps, and the mail was brought alternately to the two homes [illegible] it. Young Norman Swaffield and Willie Olthuis sometimes played "war" together, they made [illegible] paper.

The Swaffields left Neerlandia in December 1915 and moved to Eston, Saskatchewan. Emma

[illegible]

died in 1921, and William remarried. He died [illegible]

Olive Swaffield

HENDRIK AND WILLEMINA [illegible]

Hendrik (born August 25, 1862, in Lonneker) and Willemina (born February 9, 1867, in Hellendoorn) ter Horst lived in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, with their family [illegible] factory. Their youngest son died at the age of [illegible]

[illegible] dren, Gerrit, Bill (Jan Willem, December 26, 1895), Henry (Hendrik Johan, January 17, 1899) and Rika (Hendrika Johanna, March 15, 1900) sailed first to Liverpool, then on to Canada in April 1910. With them travelled Mina Nyland and her five month-old daughter Hermiena [illegible]

[illegible] put the basket into the baggage car. Gerrit, who could not speak English, quickly uncovered the [illegible]

Hendrika, Hendrik Jnr., Gerrit, John, Willem, Willemina, Hendrik, 1908.

raised because he thought the conductor assumed it was his child.

Hendrik and John took out homesteads in Eastburg (south of Hazel Bluff), but the ter Horst family joined the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church when it was formed in 1910. Hendrik was actively involved in the Immigration Society that had been formed in Edmonton and wrote letters to prospective immigrants in the Netherlands, encouraging them to come. The ter Horsts became members of the Neerlandia church in 1916, although Hendrik and Willemina continued to live in Eastburg. As members of the church they received *huis bezoek* once a year and also contributed to the church. The ter Horsts also visited the Neerlandia community where Willemina's relatives, Wouter and Johanna Groothuis, lived.

In 1915 Gerrit and Bill took out homesteads in Neerlandia, Gerrit the NE 8-62-3-5 and Bill the NW 9-62-3-5. While they lived here they would sometimes visit the Kooy family, who lived across Baird Lake. The ter Horsts would paddle across in a makeshift boat which leaked so badly that one of them had to bail almost continuously while the other paddled. If they wanted to visit friends or family, Gerrit and Bill usually had to walk. They often saw wild animals when walking through the woods. Once Gerrit saw a brown and a black bear along the path and another time a wolf crossed the path in front of him.

Gerrit went to the U.S.A. for a trip in 1919. He visited Floris Visser in Everett, Washington, during the trip. While in Everett he met Carrie Klein, whom he married in 1920. Gerrit did not return to Neerlandia to live because he found the winters much warmer in Washington. Bill also went to Everett for a visit and met his future wife, Rena Colyn, there. After their marriage in August 1920 they came to Eastburg for three months. But Rena was unhappy, so they returned to Everett. John ter Horst and his wife, Eva de Groot of Edmonton, moved to Everett in the fall of 1920, and Hendrik and Willemina soon followed their three sons. Henry and Rika remained in Canada.

Shortly after they moved to Everett

Hendrik broke his neck in a fall from a scaffold. He and Willemina were caretakers of the Christian Reformed Church in Everett for some years. Hendrik died in July 1930 and Willemina on June 9, 1952, both of cancer.

Carrie Bennett
Viola Vander Wall

BEREND TE RONDE

Berend te Ronde filed on the NW 10-62-3-5 [illegible] with the group of Hollanders that travelled to [illegible] houses. On Berend's quarter a 16 by 24-foot log shack was built. After leaving in the sprin [illegible] but left two months later. He is reported to have [illegible] *doodskist* (coffin), and on his declaration of abandonment he stated that there was "too heavy timber".

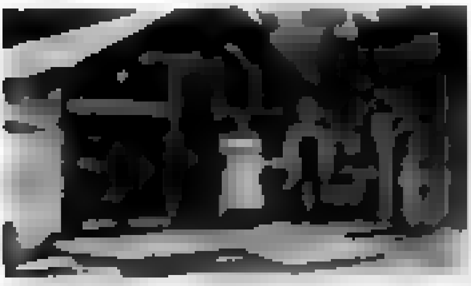
[illegible]

It all began overseas in Friesland, the [illegible] Terpsma was born. A year earlier on July 19 [illegible] Dijkstra, had been born. These two met some [illegible] in Canada there were good prospects for future generations. He was an excellent story writer and story teller. By his stories "that the land was ready for the plow" and the pictures he sent to [illegible] Alberta and the prairies blowing in the wind he managed to persuade many a young man's [illegible] farmer, and the pictures of the vast wheatfields [illegible] the Netherlands was a densely populated [illegible] perous there for his six children as it did in western Canada. So the difficult decision to leave was reached. Their relatives and friends would be left behind, as well as their home and many of their possessions. This was especially [illegible] hind her husband. Correspondence took place with Henry Kippers. Douwe sent a ten-dollar [illegible] for them. Henry Kippers promised that he [illegible] ion. He would wear an orange ribbon (the co [illegible]

Thus, in the spring of 1911 Douwe and Betje [illegible] of the family, Elke Jorritsma, accompanied them. They had booked passage on a second- [illegible] provided was cooked in [illegible] food and, after indicating to the cook how many were in the group, would get that man [illegible] ing their orange ribbons, there was no one [illegible] find Henry Kippers. They had been told that he [illegible] stay in at the Hall and declared that the family was not staying there. So she and the rest of the [illegible] gage beside them, waiting for Douwe and John [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] next morning, he would take them to work at Swift's. Douwe soon moved the family into a tent in Parkdale, next to Geele Baker's house [illegible]



[illegible]

That winter of 1911, Douwe, John, and [illegible]

[illegible] manner of ending each verse with a high [illegible]

[illegible] anticipation of homesteading, as well as a wagon for the journey. John went to the prairies [illegible] homestead. They packed their belongings on [illegible] furniture, groceries, a cross-cut saw, axes, and [illegible] (Frookje, November 21, 1895) had to sit on top [illegible] (Nanning, September 21, 1909), were allowed to ride on the wagon. Betje, Ada (Aaltje, May 23, 1899), and Art (Otto, October 16, 1902) had to walk alongside [illegible] When the streetcar came along, the conductor [illegible] up by their nose rings. When Ada saw him [illegible] on the oxen she exclaimed, "Oh missus, please don't hurt the oxen!" But she [illegible] of Morinville, there was a lot of [illegible] good use in clearing the way so the oxen could [illegible] a farm. Betje would sometimes ask Art or Ada [illegible] way house. At one such stopping place, they had bedded down for the night when [illegible] Clyde, Edison, and on to Rossington. At the Pembina River, they took a few more trunks off [illegible]

for a smaller one to lighten the load still more since the trail was becoming worse and the oxen were becoming weaker as a result of the arduous journey.

Finally, after having travelled for fifteen days, the Terpanus came to the Shoal Creek where the [illegible] family lived. The children had to get off the wagon since the oxen had a difficult job bracing themselves going down the steep bank into the creek. The creek was high from spring run-off and the logs that had been laid across to make a footbridge were covered with a few inches of water. [illegible] crossed over the logs holding Irma with one arm and Norman with the other. She was halfway across when she slid off the logs into the waist-deep water; somehow she managed to keep Irma and Norman from getting wet. Once on the other side, [illegible] advised them not to go farther with the wagon because there was a deep mud hole on the trail between Wing and [illegible] quarters and he felt the oxen would never make it through, especially in their exhausted condition. He offered to take them the rest of the way with his team and stoneboat. Therefore the [illegible], [illegible], the bedding and a few necessities were loaded onto the stoneboat and he took the family the last one and a half miles of their journey. [illegible] walked the distance with the oxen and the cow and went back soon afterward for the wagon and the rest of the load. Sometime later in the summer he picked up the bigger cook stove he had left at [illegible].

Once the Terpanus got to the homestead they found that the cellar was filled with water from the spring thaw. The cabin itself had not been completely finished; the four walls were up and the roof logs were on but they still had to be covered. As soon as the family was settled in, [illegible] and the children found small branches to put on the roof, then dug up sod which was [illegible] to put over the branches. The sods were placed beside each other and seemed to [illegible] the roof quite well because the roof was built nearly flat. As the sods dried later that summer great cracks appeared between them.

[illegible] log house built in 1912. [illegible] at the [illegible], Norman and [illegible] on the [illegible]

[illegible]
diet of rabbits and pancakes. It was Florence's
[illegible]
morning, she would check the snares and skin
[illegible]

[illegible]
provided milk for the young children and [illegible]
rest of the family. Even though most of the area
[illegible]
to show up at the usual milking time. Florence and Ada were sent to find her. They followed
[illegible]
from another. Then they noticed smoke above
[illegible]

[illegible]
than Douwe had anticipated. There was heavy
[illegible]
who could not help but laugh at the words
[illegible]
work to be done from morning until late at

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]
the girls spent three days helping Henry Mast
[illegible]

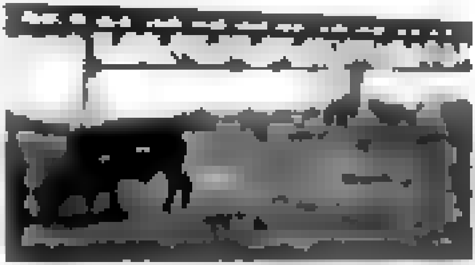
needed the logs for building a barn, and her father [illegible] After [illegible] had helped [illegible] gave [illegible] a pair of [illegible] leather shoes. They were a [illegible] ence; the only other pair of shoes she owned was a rather sloppy pair that had been made from a leather football.

The summer was soon over and by fall, Douwe had four acres cleared. Sometime later, he discovered that those acres were part of the [illegible] quarter to the north. What a disappointment! When that quarter was [illegible] was promised [illegible] cleared on his land in return. But it was never done.

[illegible] along the way, and the heater had also been left. [illegible] spring [illegible] took his family [illegible]

Douwe stopped at the farms near Morinville and [illegible] pick up the [illegible] that had been left, but he found the owners had moved and the trunks were gone. This was a big disappointment. Bette had been depending on [illegible] to make a pair of [illegible] Art.

The family moved again to the area near the [illegible] Bridge. [illegible] night. [illegible] But one time, after the cow had just been moved to a new location, Douwe decided to leave her there for the night. The next morning, the cow was gone [illegible] only the rope and peg were left.



[illegible]

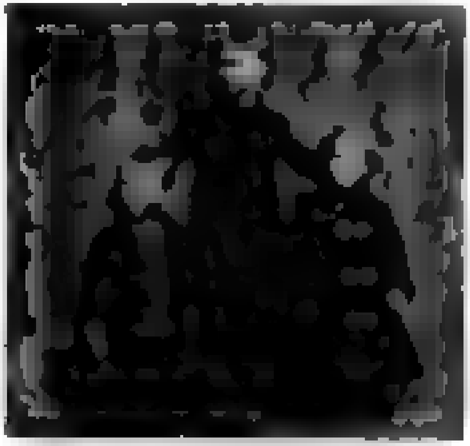
Along the river bank, not far from the [illegible] there were [illegible] Though Bette was afraid of them, when she saw a bull [illegible] trying to take one of the [illegible]

[illegible]

she yelled, and the man quickly left. After the [illegible]

[illegible]

Florence and Ada soon got jobs at Burns wrapping butter and candling eggs, and Dou[illegible] construction. John had returned from the prairies and was working on the High Level Brid[illegible]



[illegible] High Level Bridge 1913 [illegible]

Douwe went twice to the homestead that year — from March 5 to June 4 and from August 4 to October 25. During one stay he took the whole family to the homestead and during the other only John and Florence [illegible] hope on that trip until they reached the Big [illegible] of the wagon load. A slat broke off the crate and [illegible] escaped into the bush. Art ran after them and [illegible]

[illegible] Kensington. Among the items in the trunks were a long Fries wall clock and Beije's good clothing from the Netherlands. John loaded up [illegible]

[illegible] fall of 1913, Douwe got some crop off [illegible] next year though, the family came to the [illegible] money they made to their parents. John built a [illegible]

[illegible] populated with poplar, spruce, willow [illegible] and the boys backed up their firewood for the [illegible]

Each year Douwe raised a calf from the milk [illegible]

[illegible] things.

[illegible]

[illegible] eleven head of cattle but no horses. On the farm, he had built a 16 by 24-foot log house, a 20 [illegible]

[illegible]

water and kept it from leaking through the roof. [illegible]

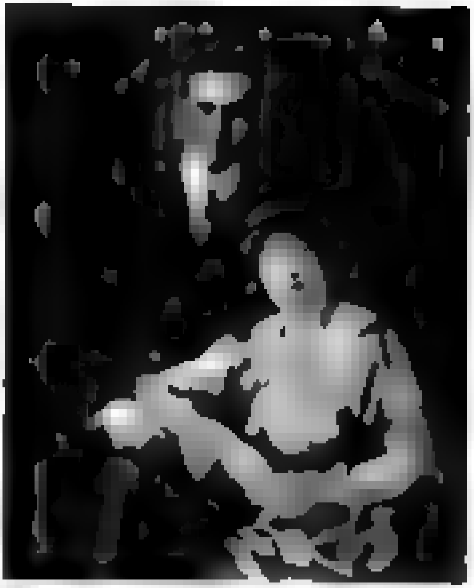
[illegible]

[illegible] brought a stallion around to the local farmers would stay in the area for two or three days every time he came. One time he stayed with the Terpenas, and slept in one of the upstairs [illegible] jumped in to soothe the itching. When Betje

[illegible]

mentioned the incident the following day, their [illegible] eated bedbugs might be the cause [illegible] of them.

[illegible] But Rev. Jongbloed, after taking the train from Edmonton, became stranded in Westlock because everything was drifted in after a bad [illegible] especially the wedding attire. Since Florence [illegible] shops. For her wedding, Florence purchased a [illegible] show that he was serious, he took out his jack[illegible] too gaudy. But Florence firmly replied, "Me [illegible] bought and paid for them myself. I plan to wear [illegible] mony was held during the following afternoon [illegible] spoke and baked goods and chocolate milk



[illegible] wedding dress. [illegible] and Florence's wedding photo, [illegible]

[illegible] spring of 1918 in order to work and save some [illegible] struction. Norman and Tena continued their schooling in Edmonton.

By the winter of 1919 they had saved enough money to buy new cows and return to the [illegible] Art and John herded them to the homestead. Then John came back for the family. They trav[illegible] burning and the smoke went out a pipe at the top. It was warm inside and the family slept in it at night. The Terpsmas called it a caboose. John [illegible]

horses made good time with the sleighs glidin [illegible]

hitched behind the caboose and on nice days Tena and Norman took turns riding her. In- [illegible]

Along the way they would stop to buy bread or [illegible]

Once again the Terpsma family arrived at [illegible]

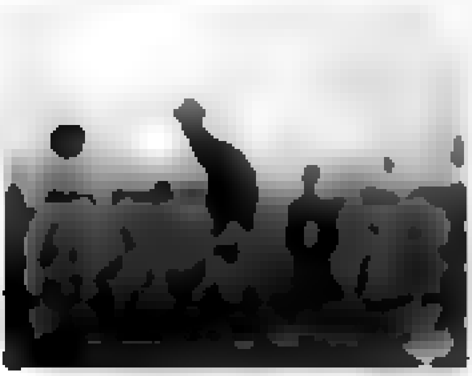
of the cows and shipped cream. They fed their animals from the grain they raised, but shipped some grain as well. It was usually a [illegible]

sell him a flock. So Tena and Norman were [illegible]

to buy enough chickens to get started. Since [illegible]

the children, old Kate was hitched up to the stoneboat. It had no shafts so Kate had to hurry [illegible]

settlement, buying one or two chickens at each



[illegible]

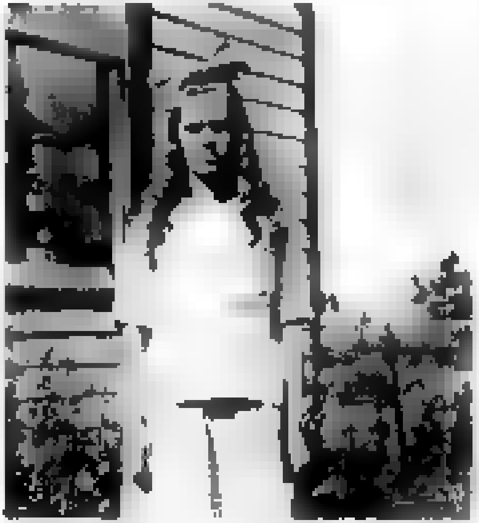
horses, like others, roamed and grazed at [illegible]

Just before 10:00 p.m. when she was gettin [illegible]

Ada married Ernie Schelly, an Irishman [illegible]

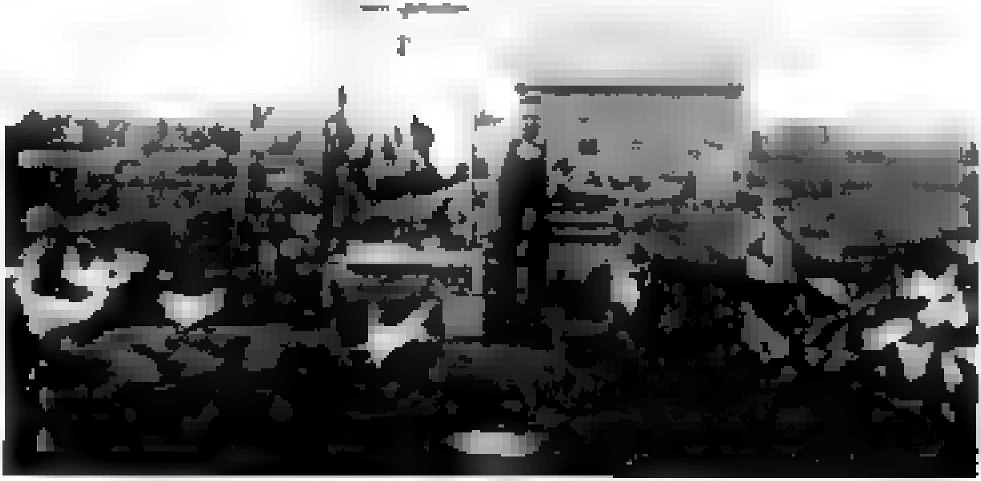
Violette of Naples in October 1923. They re [illegible]

Tena suddenly took very ill on a Friday. Peter brought her home, where Bethe helped nurse her. A doctor came out from Westlock and diagnosed her sickness to be infantile paralysis (polio). There was no medication to be given and the health authorities did not know much about the disease. A week later (September 30, 1920) Tena was called home to her Heavenly Father. A health inspector came from the city and quarantined the Terpstra farm. No one could come and no one could leave. The family prepared the body for burial and the casket was brought to the road where C. K. Mast picked it up with his truck. Ada and Florence came from the city and accompanied C. K. to the funeral services which were held in the graveyard. Neither Peter nor the others of Tena's family were permitted to attend the funeral service. Quarantine was not necessary, but at that time little was known about the sickness.



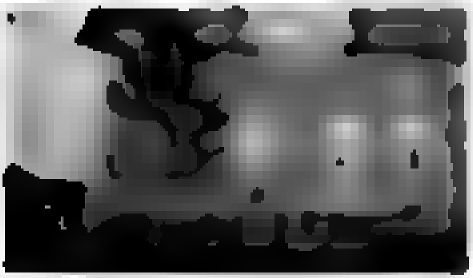
Tena c. 1919

Douwe enjoyed gardening, each year raising many vegetables and potatoes. During the winter he sold carrots, beets, turnips, or potatoes to the Chisholm lumbering camp run by Tom Wilson. Douwe delivered them to the camp, but had to wait for mild days so the vegetables would not freeze. One winter day in 1921 John had to bring a load of potatoes to the camp. Muskeg Michael rode along since he had a job at the Chisholm camp. John and some others were planning to log in another berth on the Athabasca River, so John needed his team



[illegible] [illegible], George, Harry Schelly c. 1921 of Clydesdales and a cook stove along. The potatoes were put in the bundle rack on the sleigh and the cook stove was put in the cutter which was hitched up behind the sleigh. Both [illegible] Clydesdales and the light team were needed to pull, so Norman came along to take [illegible] chop the trees down before continuing, but the weather turned cold and it began blowing and [illegible] rack was left. When they got to the Horseshoe Bend hill just above the lumber camp, John took the heavy team and what was left of the bundle rack down the steep hill. Muskeg Michael followed with the light team and the cutter. After [illegible]

Betje did a lot of sewing for the family. She [illegible]



A tragic incident struck the Terpsma family [illegible] spilled was being burned in the cook [illegible] kitchen floor. Betje had to run through the fire to reach the water pail and her clothes caught [illegible] severely burned in many places [illegible] against her body. Betje did not want to go to the [illegible] we put cotton batting on the burns. Dr [illegible] later from Barrhead and painstakingly plucked the cotton strands out of the wounds [illegible] and around again. Florence came and took care of the family for the first six weeks. Others [illegible] bedbugs in the house anymore. During the [illegible]

In the spring of 1929, Douwe and Betje decided to return to Edmonton. They had a farm [illegible] and George, went along to Edmonton. There [illegible] they were selling ninety pounds of potatoes for [illegible]

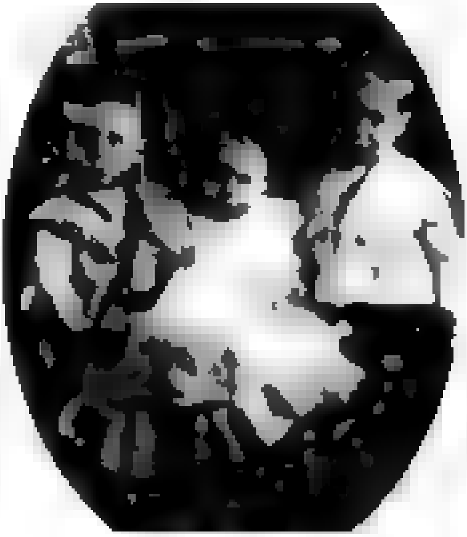
[illegible]tje lived on their acreage for ten years. On May 16, 1939, Betje passed away [illegible] visited his children and spent the summers with [illegible] and his [illegible] he married a widow [illegible] Resing [illegible] Randolph [illegible]. They were married three years and then he became a widower once again. He moved to New Westminster and resided there till his passing in April 1954 from stomach cancer. Both [illegible] and [illegible] are buried in the [illegible] cemetery.

Florence Baker
Norman Terpsma

SIEBREN AND WILLEMKE (DE BOER) TIEMSTRA

Siebren [illegible] Tiemstra [illegible] was born May [illegible] in [illegible], the Netherlands. When he grew up Siebren wanted to join the army [illegible] was refused because he was too short. Willemke de Boer, a [illegible] to Siebren, was born April [illegible], 1884 also in [illegible]. She was born into a farming family. When she was five years old she had to deliver bread every morning before school, a job for which she was paid three [illegible] a week. But Willemke soon had to quit school and work [illegible]. Through school she knew [illegible] Eerdmans, who lived in a splendid house in the same town. Sometimes when Willemke passed by the Eerdmans house there would be the sound of people singing and an organ being played, and she would stand by the house and listen to the beautiful sounds. [illegible] was of a different social class, and that meant the girls could not have much to do with each other.

Siebren began courting Willemke, but in [illegible] he and his [illegible] went to America. Willemke's [illegible] farmed at Harrison, South Dakota, so Harrison was Siebren's destination. He found work with a farmer there and later rented land from him. Willemke came to Harrison in [illegible] and she and Siebren were married January [illegible]. [illegible] Eerdmans also came to America and she married [illegible] Anema. [illegible] in the Netherlands, where social class divides people, Willemke and [illegible] became close friends. Siebren enjoyed farming here and had an opportunity to buy the land he was renting, but was attracted by an article placed in [illegible]. It stated that in Alberta, Canada, 160 acres could be bought for ten dollars, although it did not say that the 160 acres were [illegible]. Siebren could not resist the lure, and in 1911 he, Willemke and their two sons, **Albert** (Albe) George (May 30, 1908) and **Gerben** (April [illegible]) travelled north with the Anemas by train to Edmonton.

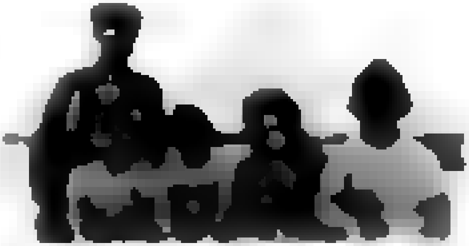

Albert George Tiemstra [illegible]

Once in Edmonton the Tiemstras lived in a tent in [illegible]. The tent had a [illegible] of boards and during the winter [illegible] over the tent. Beside them lived the [illegible] families and [illegible] were often [illegible] lice, much to the disgust of Siebren, who cleaned them up.

Siebren was anxious to begin farming. One of his [illegible] had [illegible] area and [illegible] and he had [illegible]. Siebren [illegible] on a quarter in that area in April 1911. But later he discovered that most of the land was under water and he abandoned [illegible]. [illegible] 1911 Siebren [illegible] which was later [illegible] as a homestead. He built a [illegible] 1911 and stayed there until April [illegible] when he returned to Edmonton [illegible]. **[illegible]** was born [illegible] 1912. The Tiemstra family moved to the home

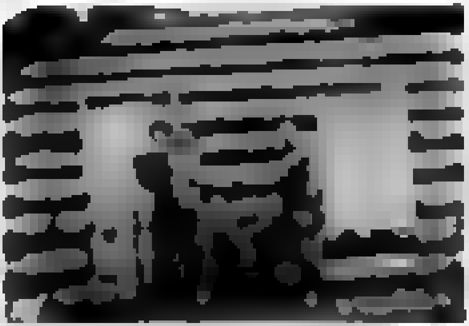
[illegible]

[illegible] Siebren got a horse in 1916 he hatched it up to a [illegible] themselves because they were underage [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

Shoal Creek. He and Jan Anema usually [illegible]

[illegible] the coulter on his breaking plow broke. Siebren quickly decided that he could walk just as fast as his team of oxen would and carried the twen[illegible]

[illegible] tion, to walk all that way with such a heav[illegible]

[illegible] back the same day with the coulter.

[illegible]abrand became sick with the measles in [illegible] ing, took a turn for the worse. Within a few [illegible]

[illegible] his neighbours helped each other out. When [illegible] Siebren did their chores. Later Lambertus returned the favour when Siebren became sick. Pete Louwa, a bachelor who lived just north of [illegible]ienstras, came over when he felt the flu coming on — he was afraid that if he became desperately ill, no one would find him. After [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] close friends and visited each other often [illegible]

[illegible] brought his clothes to Willemke to be washed [illegible]

[illegible] plate off the stove to let the smoke spread [illegible] to escape. Then Willemke and the chil[illegible] would kill the mosquitoes with wet rags. The [illegible] until four or five o'clock in the morning [illegible]

[illegible] five smudges in five-gallon pails and spaced [illegible] too much distraction.

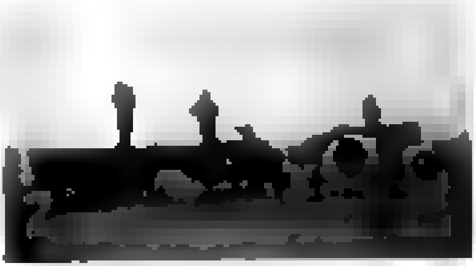
[illegible]

[illegible] took up to one-and-a-half hours with the horses and wagon. The trail was so poor that [illegible] wagon. He would often walk to church instead, sometimes with Emma on his shoulders. In the [illegible] read them Bible stories. In between services the [illegible] many years. He kept up on church matters by [illegible] Siebren taught Sunday school for some years and would often tell the Christmas story to the children at the annual Christmas concert in church.

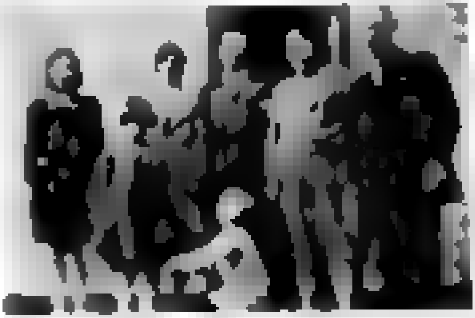
[illegible] Jerry, during the 1920s. Siebren found them to [illegible] plowed three rounds with them the first day [illegible] plow three rounds, then stubbornly refuse to [illegible] mules, hitched up to the buggy, to take the [illegible]

[illegible] dripped whenever it rained. Willemke would [illegible] Johnman, he built a two-storey lumber house.

Albert and Gerben had already quit school by the time Emma was old enough to go. She [illegible] school in 1926, when she was seven years [illegible] home weekends, Emma became homesick and [illegible] then bring her to school [illegible] ing. Later, after the Albert [illegible] back from Edmonton. Emma walked to school with the Mast children. Doris Wilson also lived along the way, and the children looked out for her, but she usually had work to do before and after school and rarely had time to walk with [illegible] she either wore rubbers or went barefoot.



[illegible]



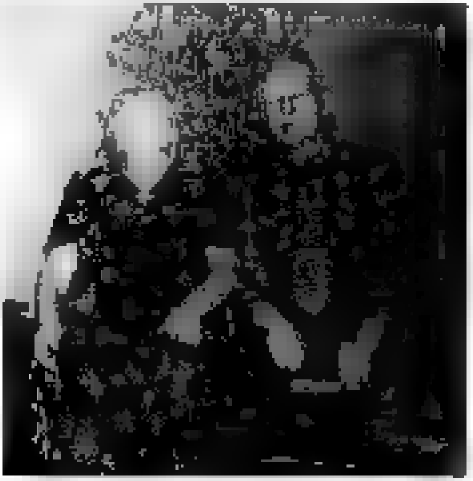
[illegible]

Siebren and Willemke had two more children: Rose (Rooske) was born October 20, 1923 and Joe (Johannes) on March 1, 1929. In 1931 [illegible] married Tena's cousin, Trientie, daughter of Andries and Rika Wiersma.

[illegible] Rose married John Ingwersen of Neerlandia.

Siebren and Willemke retired in 1944. Their sons took over the farm, with Albert taking the

north half of 14-61-3-5 and Gerben the south half. Siebren bought five acres at the Corner from John Ingwersen. He resold it in 1946, and he, Willemke and Joe went for a trip to the states, first to South Dakota where Willemke's brother lived, and then to California where a sister lived. In 1947 Siebren and Willemke moved to Lynden, Washington. Joe stayed in California and married Charlene Kamphof in 1949.


Willemke, Siebren, 1959.

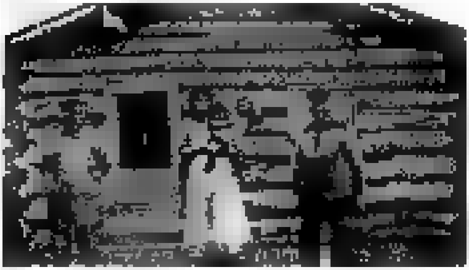
Around 1955 Siebren and Willemke returned to Neerlandia to live. They bought Henry Bouwman's house and moved there. Siebren remained an active person. A week before he died he was still doing handstands. He passed away May 25, 1960. Willemke then moved to Barrhead, living in her own home until 1974 when she went to Barrhead Nursing Home. She passed away February 3, 1979.

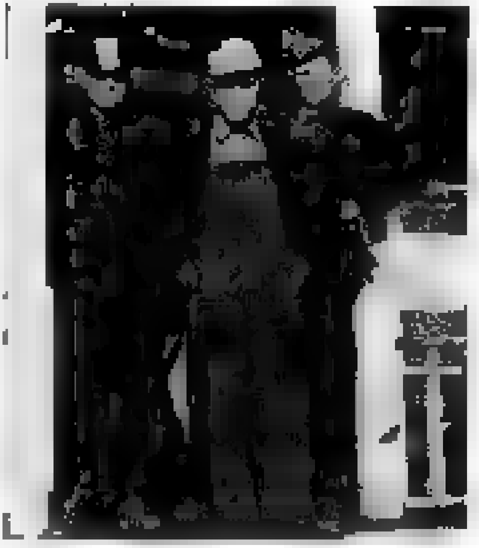
Tiemstra Family

ULBE TIEMSTRA
IKE TIEMSTRA

Ulbe Tiemstra (Tsjemstra) was born August 3, 1854, in Wommels, Friesland, the Netherlands. He later owned a farm in the area. His first wife, Roosye de Boer, died, leaving Ulbe and four children, one of whom was Siebren. Ulbe remarried to a widow, Sietske de Haas, who had two children. One of those two children, Jan Anema, immigrated with Siebren to the U.S.A. and later both of them homesteaded in Neerlandia.

Two more children were born into Ulbe and Sietske's family, Ike (Yabrand) on September 1, 1898, and Charles (Tjeerd) on January 30, 1903. Sietske died in a flu epidemic in 1919. Ulbe had sold his farm in 1916 because he was dissatisfied with the government intervention in farming. Then Charles decided to immigrate to Canada and he persuaded Ike to come with him. Ulbe decided to go along and visit Siebren. He planned to stay for about six months.


Siebren, Willemke with Emma, Ulbe. 1920


Coal miners: Ted Fietema, Charles, Ike, c. 1921.

[illegible] the country so much that he decided to remain [illegible]

In the fall of 1920 Ike and his brother Charles, worked on a roadcrew. During the following years he worked for other farmers and, during the winter, in an Edmonton coal mine. He bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Jacob Olthuis in 1924. On it he kept a few milking [illegible] mained a bachelor. The difficulties of pioneer [illegible] remained there until his death on October 25, 1952.

Tiemstra Family

JELLE AND ANKE (WIJNIA) TUININGA CLARENCE AND TRIENTJE (WIERENGA) [illegible]

In the early 1900's, a Dutch newspaper [illegible] an article written by Mr. Henry Kippers of Ed[illegible] ernment was selling 160-acre parcels of land for [illegible] Anke Tuininga (born on January 6, 1866) took [illegible] Netherlands, and sailed across the ocean.

The Tuiningas had two sons — Klaas, born [illegible] July 19, 1896. Jim sailed with them but Klaas, then 18 years of age, stayed behind because of lack of funds. Upon arrival in Canada, Jelle, Anke, and Jim boarded a train and travelled to [illegible] financial situation, Anke took in boarders. [illegible] It was early spring when the ship arrived in Canada. The St. Lawrence river was still frozen, and the ship was forced to dock at Halifax rather than at Montreal. From Halifax, Klaas took the train to Edmonton where he joined his family. For three years he worked at Swift's Packing Plant along with his brother [illegible] 1913, he set out for Neerlandia with his friend **Anne Rintjema**. They travelled with a team of horses and a wagon loaded with supplies, among which were a sulky plow and a tent. On January 3, 1914, they filed on adjoining quarters [illegible] 20-61-3-5. They lived in a tent the first winter. One night they were so cold that they took the [illegible] bacon. Anne did not stay in Neerlandia and never did prove up his land.

[illegible] in the lake, but a variety of birds, including red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds, frequented the area. The lake was to be the water supply for man and beast for many years. [illegible] roof was bought from a sawmill in the area for $10 per thousand board feet. Then, when the [illegible]

[illegible] cookstove and a square drum heater were a [illegible] washed by hand and ironed with flat irons. Jelle and Anke grew their own vegetables. Grauwe erwten were raised and eaten regularly.

In the spring of 1915, Klaas came to join his parents. He and his father cleared and plowed the land using horses, rather than oxen as many farmers did. Then during the late summer or fall, Klaas would go to southern Alberta to work for other farmers, and during the win [illegible] sawmills and lumber [illegible]

[illegible] lands she had peddled bread and stopped to have a little [illegible] at each house [illegible] friends on their way to visit her husband's [illegible] possible.

[illegible]

Jelle and Anke were both of medium height. [illegible] breakfast, dinner and supper were served ex-actly at 8:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m. respectively.

[illegible]

During those years, ministers came from [illegible] usually stayed at Jelle and Anke's place, because they had more room than others did. [illegible]

[illegible] was one of the few frame houses in Neerlandia [illegible]

[illegible]

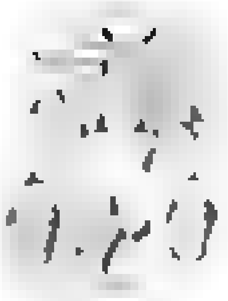
But perhaps Klaas had plans no one knew about. [illegible]

[illegible]h. Klaas decided to court Triengje [illegible] dertje. They saw each other, at most, twice a [illegible] tively. Klaas and Triendje thought there was no [illegible] married. Klaas had become a Canadian [illegible]

[illegible] to work in the field. That was the first day it was [illegible] in July 1932. Mother Anke died from cancer at [illegible] him; there were no other expenses involved.

On August 13, 1933, Klaas and Trientje's first [illegible] lowing August, on the 24th, a son, Jelle, was born. Then on April 8, 1936, along came a sec[illegible] third, James. For every delivery, Aaltje Baker [illegible]

Doing the wash for a family of four children was quite an undertaking. Pake Jelle would



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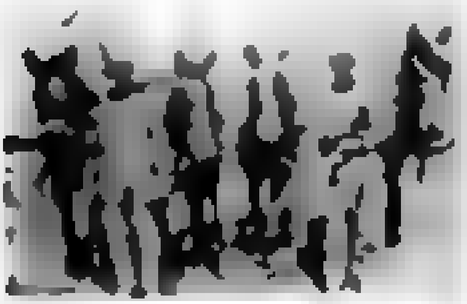
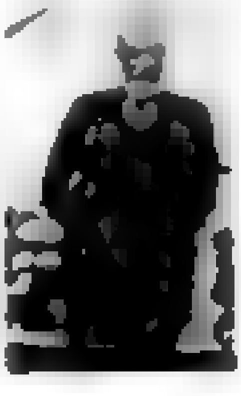




During the first years of their marriage Klaas and Trientje were plagued by bedbugs [illegible]

[illegible] regularly to the weekly Men's Society meet[illegible] heard coming a mile away.

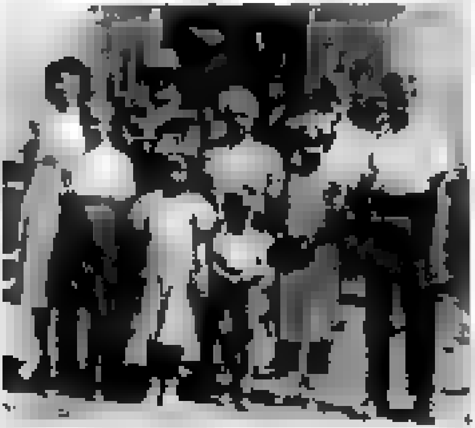
Although the Tuiningas had no radio, th[illegible] Auke, was born [illegible]

[illegible] day morning in order to reach the church on time. They travelled in a closed sleigh drawn by [illegible]

[illegible] stayed in a small heated shack located [illegible] cold, and everyone shivered till the fires were [illegible]

[illegible] make the outer rim fit over the inner. Klaas' [illegible] nothing of the passengers, who had expected [illegible]

[illegible] together, came to drill a well for the Tuiningas [illegible]



Back: Henry, Clarence, Trientje, John. Front: Jim, Anne, Gordon, Edith, Lambert, 1950

dust the house before breakfast. To get ready on time, they had to get up at six o'clock in the morning.

As the Tuininga children walked to school they were joined by others, so that the group numbered about a dozen by the time they reached their destination. It usually took the Tuiningas about an hour and a half to walk the four miles to school.

To keep life interesting, another boy, **Gordon**, was born on November 6, 1944. This baby was born in St. Joseph's Hospital with Dr. Verreau and the nuns there to help. During the final weeks of each pregnancy and for a few weeks thereafter, Trientje always had one of her sisters come to help her. This time was no exception.

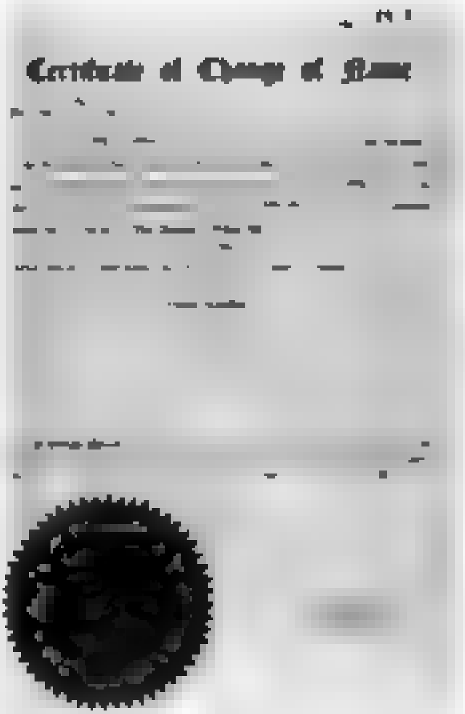
During all this time, Pake Jelle was living with the family. Trientje found him to be an uncomplaining person who was easy to get along with. On November 6, 1946, after a few weeks in St. Joseph's Hospital, he passed away at the age of 78.

Harvesting days were a busy but exciting and enjoyable time, because of the many neighbours getting together to help. An embarrassing moment for Trientje was when Jacob Haemstra was about to eat some lettuce with his noon meal. *"Ik dacht al dat mijn eten bewoegde,"* he said, as he pulled a big green worm out of his salad. (I thought already that my food was moving.)

Clarence holding Henry, Trientje holding John, 1939

Through the years there was a lot of confusion in the post office concerning which mail was meant for Klaas and which was meant for his uncle, also Klaas Tuininga. Therefore, on April 22, 1955, "Klaas, the younger" had his name officially changed to Clarence. To do this cost him $15 and a trip to the courthouse in Edmonton.

Clarence and Trientje, both strong-willed, dynamic people, have left their mark on family and community. As a young man, Clarence conducted Boys and Girls Society for many years, teaching Bible study and church history. Later he diligently taught catechism. He also served in the consistory. Ministers heard from him in no uncertain terms, as to whether the sermon was good or bad. There was never any



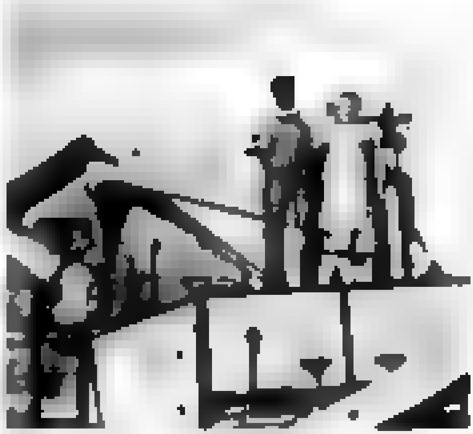
Certificate of Change of Name

question of where he stood on any issue. [illegible] was knowledgeable and he could [illegible] discussion on a variety of topics [illegible] could be heard in the [illegible] household. The daughters, who were expected to help Jennie with the housework, did not always appreciate their mother's [illegible] strength. [illegible]

[illegible] during the summer holidays, while [illegible] took her nap [illegible] would sneak out and hide behind the garage hoping not to be found and put back to work. But [illegible] and clear [illegible] could not be ignored.

Even the farm animals were expected to know who was boss and [illegible]. If they went the wrong way, [illegible] addressed them in strong language.

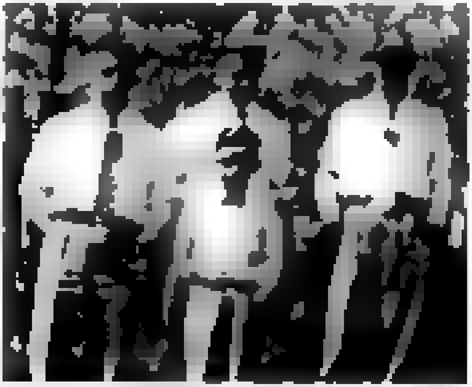
It was not all work and no play, though. After supper, [illegible] and Jennie relaxed and spent time with the children doing such things as playing games with them or helping them with their homework. When the children were small, they would stand on their father's feet and he would walk them around the kitchen.



[illegible]

Sometimes he would take one of the children on his knees and bounce them up and down to the rhythm of [illegible] a Frisian rhyme. In spite of [illegible] defect which caused [illegible] cripple, she would [illegible] the children around the table, and join in the laughter and [illegible] when they all fell in a heap. She [illegible] her [illegible] children [illegible] like [illegible]

[illegible] the outhouse was something to be dreaded in the winter months. [illegible] marked with difficulty at the best of times, struggling against wind and snow made them



[illegible]

[illegible] one of the children would go [illegible] vent her from falling.

As time passed and the boys grew up, Clar [illegible] them. The last year that he was actively in [illegible] of age, when he had lost his hair because of [illegible]d fever. He became a bit more rotund as [illegible] could be seen planting and hoeing the garden picking berries, or walking down the road. He averaged five miles a day, swinging his arms [illegible]

[illegible]

Life has not always been easy for Clarence and Trientje. There have been difficulties and differences of opinion, but throughout the years of work and play a strong sense of commitment and love for the Lord has flowed. Presently (1984), at the ages of 90 and 81 respectively, Clarence and Trientje are able, with the [illegible]

Four of their children are living in other parts of Canada. Jelle married Henrietta Viss [illegible] Reformed Church. They have four children [illegible] Rapids, Michigan, in 1962. They are residing [illegible] where James is serving as the minister of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church. Edith married William Sinnema from Granum, Alberta, in 1961. With their five children, they live in Edmonton where Bill is an electrical engineering instructor at NAIT. Anke lives in Toronto, Ontario, where she worked for the Curriculum Development Centre for several years. She is now doing family counselling in [illegible]

[illegible]

KLAAS AND SJOERDJE (WYMA)

[illegible]

Klaas and Sjoerdje Tsitunga left Oosterend, Friesland, the Netherlands, in the spring of 1912, with nine children ranging in age from six months to thirteen years. Klaas had been a machinist in a butter factory, but did not see a future for his children in the Netherlands and had heard many good stories about all the land [illegible] gration would have remained a dream. Some acquaintances, however, agreed to lend him [illegible]

[illegible] Two bachelors on board looked after them. For [illegible]

[illegible] housing was so scarce that many people lived in [illegible]

[illegible] it was for her to cope in this little shack in a strange land! Her husband had a Dutch-English dictionary which he had studied before [illegible] human soul was in his large collie dog and [illegible] reason. When Sjoerdje, who already had so many children to look after and so much to do discovered that this included allowing the dog to shake his wet coat all over the house, she decided it was too much for her to bear. Soon they found another house, where they lived for [illegible]

[illegible]

During their three years in Edmonton, three more children, Joe (Jelle, September 2, 1913) Cecil (Sietze Willem, February 23, 1915) and Annie (Anke, December 7, 1916) were born to [illegible] city, they decided to move to the bush country. With twelve children to care for, one ought [illegible]

Klaas' brother Jelle and his family were already in Neerlandia and, with their encouragement [illegible] spring of 1917 Klaas bought one team of horses and a sleigh and his nephew Clarence (Klaas) [illegible] belongings were loaded on these two sleighs [illegible] went to Neerlandia, with a red cow and calf completing the entourage.

A ninety-mile trek, it took many a day

[illegible]

With so many children it was hard to travel

[illegible]

Before they left Edmonton, Klaas had purchased $80 worth of groceries (no luxuries [illegible] he bought were expected to last all year. When [illegible]

When the Tuiningas arrived in Neerlandia, they moved into a house owned by Martin [illegible]

[illegible]

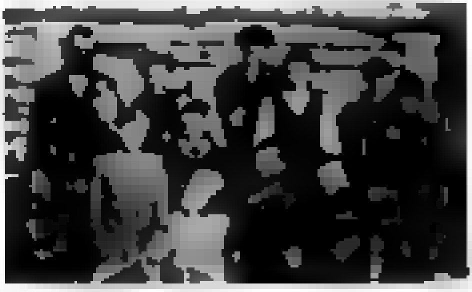
The eldest children, Bertha (Boukje, [illegible] 16, 1899) and Claus (Klaas, June 15, 1900), stayed [illegible]

[illegible] up, the water would splash against the cribbing [illegible]

A year or two after they moved to [illegible] homestead, Klaas built a larger log house with a large kitchen and bedroom downstairs and an upstairs for additional bedrooms. They had lumber [illegible] for the floors and the roof, but there were no shingles, only tar paper, which [illegible]. Many a night Mother Tuininga went upstairs with tins to catch the drips.

The old house was converted to a barn and gradually [illegible] buildings were erected, among them a larger log barn and a granary. With the help of the [illegible], land was cleared and a large garden planted. Jenny (Jan[illegible] [illegible]), Pete (Pieter, May 3, [illegible]) and their mother all liked gardening.

Although the Tuiningas were [illegible], the children [illegible] had a happy home and never went hungry. [illegible] day Pete would go outside to the garden and bring in some [illegible] white turnips and bright carrots for the family to enjoy. Mother Tuininga would show the [illegible] how to make a meal out of the [illegible] [illegible] potatoes, beets, turnips and carrots were put in the [illegible]. Sjoerdje made sauerkraut and salted down beans in crocks.

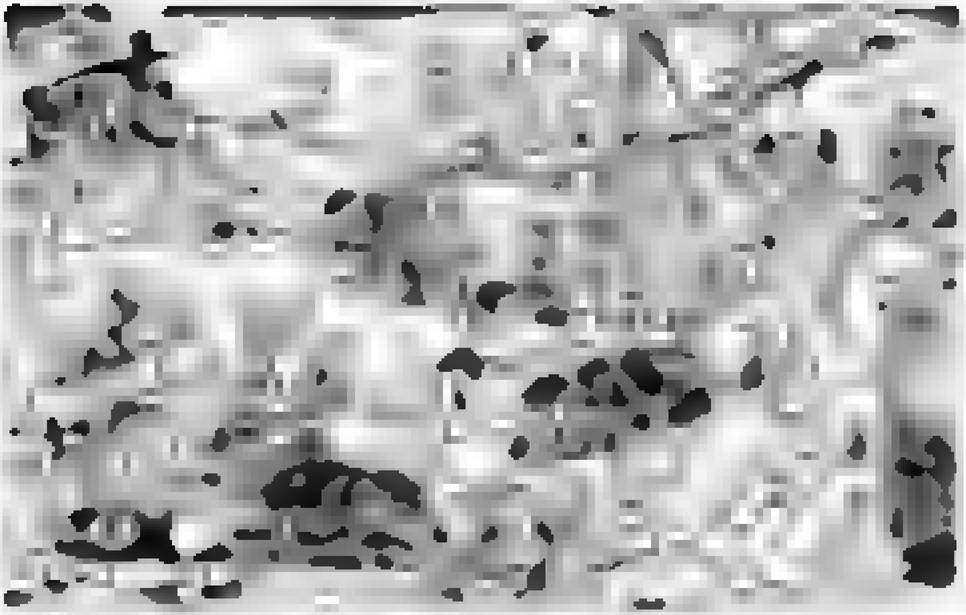


[illegible]

Two more children, Simon (July 11, 1919) and Grace (Grietje, February 17, 1922), were born, with Aaltje Baker serving as midwife. There were now so many children all over the house that they named the place "Doowille" after a comic strip in the Grain Grower's Guide. Klaas and Sjoerdje firmly believed that if God had entrusted them with these children, He would help them take care of them. They never suffered any serious consequences of all their poverty or hardships.

[illegible]

The Tuiningas did go through many hard times. The [illegible] influenza struck all of them. Their neighbours, the van der Heiden and Jelle and Anke Tuininga, were very helpful during this and other hard times. One especially bad time was the winter of 1919-20. When Klaas patented his land in January [illegible], the [illegible] showed that he had a [illegible] log house, a [illegible] log stable, a [illegible] well, two miles of [illegible] fences, and twenty acres of cleared land. These improvements were valued at $[illegible]. He owned seventeen head of cattle and [illegible] horses. During that hard winter most of the cattle and horses [illegible] of the [illegible]. Klaas managed to [illegible] [illegible] spring [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] When spring came, he turned them out to grass. One Sunday evening, Pete went on horseback to look for the cows. There they all lay, dead, near the slough in which they had looked for a green blade of grass — but had found only poison hemlock. Pete came home crying. No doubt his parents felt like crying



[illegible]

[illegible]

owned!" Sjoerdje, unable to see the humour would reply, "Ach, I would gladly give [illegible]

Mother Sjoerdje was very thrifty and [illegible] her hand at many things such as making soap from tallow and syrup from sugar beets. The [illegible] these Sjoerdje made the children look quite presentable.

The children all walked barefoot until the frost. Then the mail-order catalogues did [illegible] lined underwear, woolen stockings, felt shoes, [illegible] year, the [illegible] girls helped at Tjibbe [illegible]

Sjoerdje, Jack, Berta, Grace, [illegible]

soon the cold did not seem so bad and she enjoyed the walk. After she was home for a while, her mother noticed bloodstains on the freshly-scrubbed wooden floor and wondered where they came from. On investigation, it was found that Carrie's toe was bleeding. Her shoe had worn out. Her mother had sewn thick pieces into her socks, but these, too, had worn through, exposing her toe to the freezing cold. Because of her frozen toe, Carrie, then about ten, was unable to go out for six weeks. This was still a happy time for her because the school library had just acquired some books, which Carrie could read without interruption. Best of all, she still passed her grade.

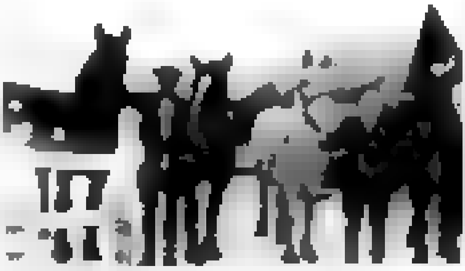
Gertie (Geertje, June 28, [illegible]) loved dolls, but with fourteen children to provide food and clothing for, the Tuiningas could not afford dolls. Aafje [illegible] and set to work. One day when Gertie came home from school, there in the window sat a cute little rag doll with nose and all, a handmade gift from Aafje.

At one time, to supplement their income, Klaas Tuininga and Siebren Siemstra bought a small threshing machine [illegible] Mill. In the winter, Klaas and Siebren would go from farm to farm threshing. They would charge by the bag. The acreages were small, so they could thresh for many farmers.

Because Neerlandia was far from sources of supply, it was not always possible to get even the necessities. Sometimes the Tuiningas would be unable to light the lamps because they had run out of oil, so then they would sit in the dark while Father Klaas would teach the children hymns, holding the hymnbook so the light of the open cook stove door would fall on the page. Klaas and Sjoerdje both enjoyed singing, and in their old age sang many songs which they had marked in their hymnbook as favourites. Just the same, Sjoerdje was often homesick. She would stand outside at night gazing at the stars and say, "These same stars are shining on Mem in Friesland," and that made her feel somehow closer to her mother.

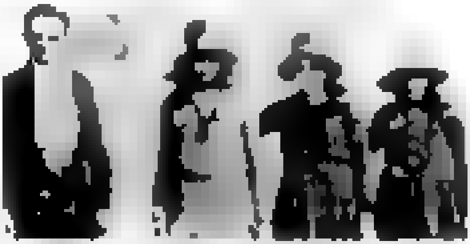
As in most families of Christian Reformed persuasion, it was customary after each meal in the Tuininga household to read one chapter from the Bible, regardless of the length of the chapter. If the chapter was a lengthy one, the children would become [illegible] and restless. Dave [illegible] sat opposite the mirror and, as he lost interest in what his father was reading, he would begin making faces at himself in the mirror, much to the amusement of everyone except his parents.

In those early years, there were many



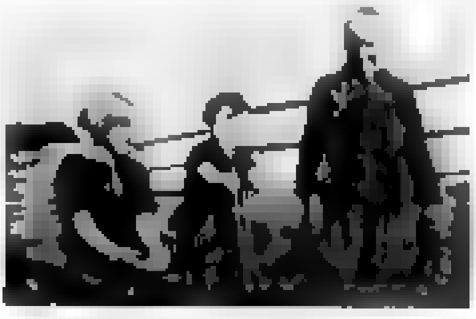
Dave, Jack, [illegible]

muskrats and weasels, to Jack Jacobus, March 29, 19[illegible] and Pete did a lot of trapping. From the proceeds of the sale of the pelts in 19[illegible] both bought new suits.


Jan, Sadie, Gerrie, Carrie

For a time, things went well; prices went up and in 1924 Klaas could afford a small Fordson tractor. He also had a second-hand Model T Ford. Later a larger tractor was obtained and used for breaking land. In 1925 the Tuiningas moved from the [illegible] farm to the NW 27-61-3-5, which Klaas bought from Willem de [illegible] in order to be closer to the church and school.

Then came the Depression, and it was back to the good old flour, sugar, and oatmeal bags for pillow cases, sheets, dish towels, aprons and so forth. Grandma was back at soap making. In addition, she made coffee from roasted barley and starch from raw potatoes. She would grate the potatoes and pour the water off. The residue was left to dry. It was then used to thicken puddings and to starch clothes. She even tried making yeast.


[illegible]

The entertainment [illegible] was self made. Church was [illegible] with homemade [illegible]. The children had sleigh rides, visited other families to sing and play the harmonica, and played such games as Rook and Upset the Fruit Basket. Pete and Sadie [illegible] February [illegible], often played their mouth organs together. Beginning in 19[illegible] the girls went to a girls' society on Wednesday afternoons where their older sister [illegible] taught hand sewing. Part of the afternoon was spent in Bible study. During the winter season, Young People's Society was held every week. Bible discussions and reading essays on Bible passages were the main activities. The Tuininga youngsters faithfully attended these societies.

Ready for church. Carrie holding Jayne Muller, 1938.

Life in the new country brought about many changes. The Tuininga family became trilingual. They spoke Fries, their mother tongue, at home, Dutch in church and at catechism classes, and English in school.

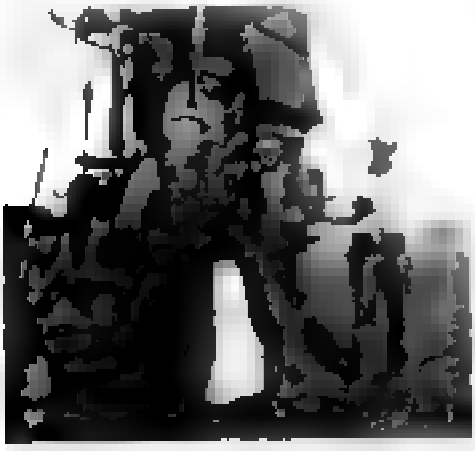
All of the children married and spent part of their married life in Neerlandia, except the following three. Klaas married Beatrice Kitz and from this union four children were born. At the age of 69, Claas died from a heart attack. Dave married Catherine [illegible] and lived in Bowness, Alberta. He and his wife had one daugh-

Grace, [illegible], Anna, Cora, Joe, Carrie, Sadie, Gertie, Jack, [illegible], Pete, Sjoerdje, Klaas, Clara

ter, Ruth. In 1949 Dave, Kate, and Ruth moved to Mellowdale, where he died of cancer at the age of 69. Gertie married Herman Muller. They have eight children and live in Richmond, B.C.

Klaas and Sjoerdje both lived to a ripe old age. Sjoerdje had waist-length black hair which she wore in a bun at the back of her head. When she was in her eighties her hair was just as dark as it had been when she was eighteen. Klaas suggested (tongue-in-cheek) that the unusual phenomenon was a result of her having a life with no worries.

The Tuiningas were eventually able to repay their debt to their benefactors, although it was not till all the children were married and the land was sold to their son [illegible]. They finally were able to enjoy some of the material benefits of their years of hard work: a comfortable warm house, electricity, a car. In 1947 Klaas and his sons Pete, Jack and Joe bought one of the first combines in the Neerlandia area. Both Klaas and Sjoerdje enjoyed good health until 1959 when they died within a few weeks of each other. Klaas died in May at the age of 86. His wife followed about six weeks later, at 80 years of age.



First combine in Neerlandia: Klaas, Joe, Jack, Pete

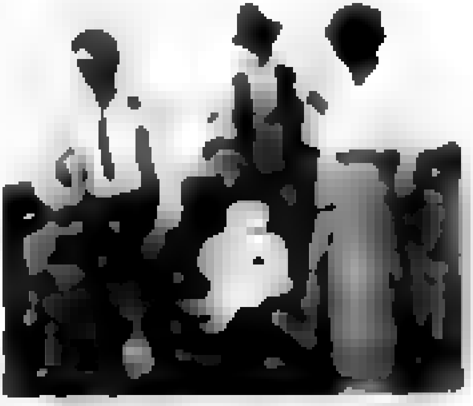
Carrie Olthuis

WILLEM AND MANNA (DE GROOT) VAN ARK

Willem van Ark (c. 1889) had been born in South Holland, the Netherlands, and emigrated from there in 1911. He travelled first to England, then left from Liverpool on May 7 aboard a ship which had been renamed Canada. After arriving in Canada, Willem first lived in Ontario for a while, then headed west [illegible] Maurer Director of the Infor [illegible] ciety (February 17 1915), Willem wrote [illegible] Edmonton, Alberta, who wanted to take up [illegible]

[illegible] was capable of expansion in the future, there [illegible] and properly, we returned and each took up a [illegible] for our homesteads to build the first houses [illegible]

[illegible] serving in the Dutch army as a sergeant



[illegible]

[illegible] (Willem) and Zus (Hendrika). Willem filed on the NW 21-61-3-5 on August 24, 1916, for his [illegible] Amsterdam and lived with the van Arks for a short time before returning to the Netherlands

Manna was an excellent seamstress and she could make do with very little. The family al [illegible] regation bought an organ, Manna served as the church organist. She also started a singing [illegible] land. According to the records he was cropping nine acres of land and owned ten cattle and two [illegible] fence, 3½ cleared acres, and 2 brushed acres [illegible] School for a year, then taught in Neerlandia School from 1922-25. He was a strict teacher but [illegible] moved to the Netherlands. By then another [illegible] the van Arks there. Later the family moved to Ontario and then to the U.S.A.

PIETER AND [illegible] VAN DALEN

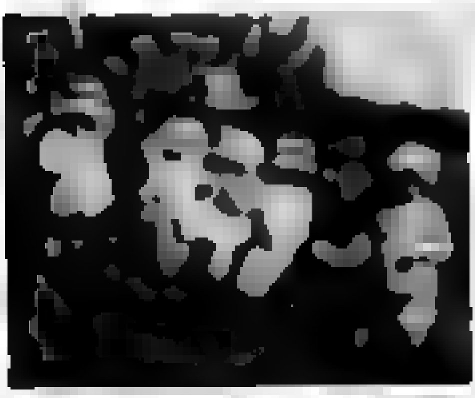
Pieter van Dalen, born January 29, 18[illegible] [illegible] nce. His cargo was usually sugar beets and turf, which was used for fuel. By 1912 Pieter [illegible] grated to Canada, where he lived in Edmonton. He thought Canada was a good place to live [illegible]

June 1912 Pieter, aged 67, Hiligien (February 7, 1857), and their children Martha (August 16, 1893), Nellie (Niesje, March 14, 1895), and Bob (Bartel) made the move. Daughter Jennie (Jantje, August 21, 1888) stayed behind since she was engaged to be married.

[illegible]

Popko and Jennie. Martha, Nellie, and Bob [illegible] often came to Neerlandia to visit. The [illegible] Dalens moved into a one-room log shack close to Popko and Jennie's house, because Hiligien was an invalid and needed Jennie to cook meals [illegible] the two houses, but put in a door so that each [illegible]

Pieter loved music and singing, and passed [illegible] and Nellie often sang together at the [illegible] Christmas concert and if Bob was [illegible] the young people's coffee party on Sunday evenings. He was considered one of the best players and his playing was enjoyed by all [illegible] Neerlandia. In September 1921 Nellie married [illegible]



[illegible]

In the first years on the homestead, Pieter helped Popko in any way he could. He even [illegible] self while Popko was working on the prairie. By [illegible] Fortunately she was a tiny woman, making [illegible]

1923, the Emmerzaels moved into the [illegible] for by Martha. The Emmerzael children, An[illegible] their grandparents. Pieter chewed tobacco and bought one-half pound of leaf tobacco at a time [illegible]

year Pieter moved with the Emmerzaels to van[illegible] still took his grandchildren for walks occasionally or kept an eye on them when Martha was [illegible] walking or sitting in his chair would often sing [illegible]

VAN DEN BURG

y (Hendrik) van den Bu[illegible] Neerlandia on December 2, 1914. He [illegible]

willow pickets, but instead they spent [illegible]

[illegible] angement did not provide [illegible] h money to stay on the

[illegible]

[illegible]

Martin van der Heide, born March 10, 1890 in Ferwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, was the oldest in a family of seven children. When [illegible]

America and in 1914 he convinced the girl he was courting, Anna (Antje) M. Jansma (January 6, 1890), to go with him. On March 20 they [illegible]

next morning at City Hall with the aid of an [illegible]

try was hilly, bare of trees, and rocky; their [illegible]

odd jobs in Edmonton, they were hired to work [illegible]

In the spring of 1916 we went to Edmonton [illegible]

decided that I should go to Neerlandia and, if it [illegible]

was drifting. It seemed to me like Siberia. After [illegible]

warm. At Dusseldorf, where I stayed over night, I bought a pair of overshoes.

The following morning I started off for [illegible]

ing for a suitable homestead. After considerable walking I decided on a place at the [illegible]

a small barn, both made of logs, about two acres of cleared and broken land, and a dug hole for a well. Also, some fencing had been done. I believe that for this we paid fifty dollars. This [illegible]

of poplar logs which were so crooked that in places you could see between them to the out [illegible]

first night we lodged with a farmer near Morin [illegible]

reached Gaele Baker's place where we had diffi [illegible]

there over the poor trail, mud holes, and [illegible]

and shovel. Although we had a team of [illegible]

On warm days the mosquitoes would attack [illegible]

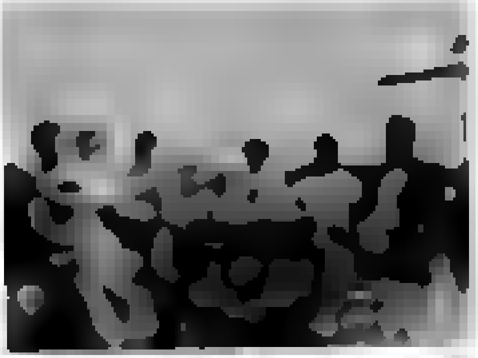
one hand free to keep them away. We usually [illegible]

We could not buy fresh meat, we had to kill our own or go without. Anna would watch for prairie chickens and shoot them with a .22 rifle. In the evenings I often went to a small lake

[illegible]

you need experience to get a moose

[illegible]



[illegible]

But we did not mind it, we were young and strong and always healthy. We were happy in [illegible]

[illegible]

pass. We went flying all the way along the [illegible]

[illegible]

it, but one of them saw me coming and they [illegible]

[illegible]

There I traded them in for a gentler team [illegible]

[illegible] for the homestead once more, camping alon[illegible]

[illegible] with our full load. We unloaded twelve rolls of barbed wire, a plow and a disk² and left them in the bush beside the road. With the lighter load we made it through the mud hole and got [illegible]

A day later I returned to pick up the stuff [illegible]

[illegible] was Dutch and as far as I know a member of the church. He had stolen a large quantity of items from many people. For his crime he was sentenced to two weeks in jail. In my opinion he [illegible]

[illegible] ipment. He later moved to the U.S.A. [illegible]

[illegible] work clearing and breaking the land. Anna helped by burning brush and so on. That summer we made a lot of hay with our friend and [illegible]

[illegible] evenings we would play the harmonica and sing together. At the end of the week we would [illegible]

[illegible] horses to haul the hay through the deep snow. Often I had to guess where the road was. Be [illegible]

[illegible] had never trapped before I decided to give it a [illegible]

[illegible] never done this job before. I skinned them and tacked the skins to a stretcher. After a few days I [illegible]

[illegible] caught two muskrats per day except, of course on Sunday. That meant seven dollars a day [illegible]

$200 worth. Unfortunately it did not last long, since the lake was rapidly becoming trapped [illegible]

Things looked promising. Cattle were hi [illegible]

[illegible] stock, and plenty of hay to feed them. Quite a few farmers from across the lake wanted to buy hay, and I could have asked almost any price, but because I was in partnership wit [illegible] neighbour and we needed the hay for our own cattle I could not sell it. Then followed the hard winter. One or two of our cows died and the few skinny ones that remained were not worth [illegible]

[illegible] ner, hauling it home, and feeding it to some cows which were not worth much anymore. The little trapping I did brought more money than all the hay and cows.

In March a neighbour asked if I would go to [illegible] homestead at the Land Titles Office there. (He didn't want his son, who was eighteen years [illegible]

[illegible] carrying sandwiches to save on meals. Sometimes we would get off and walk a mile or two [illegible]

[illegible] taken blankets along. However we saved ourselves a hotel bill and that compensated somewhat for our hardships. Next day we arrived home stiff and sore. Never again, I promised [illegible]

The following summer we worked hard [illegible] son, Henry, was born (September 18, 1920) with only a neighbour lady attending and she [illegible] thing went fine and we were all healthy and [illegible]

[illegible]

twenty acres of land broken, a quarter section [illegible]

[illegible] izen. After about three months I was requested [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] akes nearby and one about three miles west of [illegible] log I could slide over the snow. I caught quite a [illegible]

[illegible] it on a willow branch about a foot above the [illegible] it. I had thought that I would do much better [illegible] dropped considerably. Muskrats were [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] no roads or trails through the muskeg, bush [illegible]

[illegible] ings on the wagon and I drove to Edmonton [illegible]

The van der Heides operated a dairy farm in Edmonton for about eighteen years. They and their two sons then moved to Prince Rupert and later to Chemainus, B.C. Anna died there in 1962 and Martin in 1974.

Maynard Vander Heide

Some excerpts were also taken from the English version of [illegible] Publishing Company. It is unclear what unpublished story [illegible]

FRANK VIOLETTE

Frank Violette (May 15, 1894) moved to Neerlandia from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan with his sister **Hazel** (March 29, [illegible]) about 1914. Frank took out the NE [illegible] as a homestead and built a log cabin to live in while they were building a larger house. While living in the cabin, Hazel tamed a skunk. Thinking to prevent an accident, she sewed a pair of pants for it. It is not known if the experiment was a success.

Frank's father had died in 1919, and Frank's mother, **Annie Scott**, soon came to the homestead with the rest of the family: **Ruby** (December 7, [illegible]), **Robert** (January 3, [illegible]), **Roy** and **Rosemond** (November [illegible]) and **Glen** (May [illegible]). About a year later the log house burned to the ground, and the Violette family moved to the Laughlin place, where they lived for two years.

One day Roy and Rosemond were playing on a nearby bridge. Rosemond picked up a rock and dropped it into the water. It fell several feet and landed on the head of a pike. They had fresh fish for supper that night. Social events consisted of activities held at the Christian Reformed Church. At one of these Rosemond met Arthur Terpsma, whom she later married.

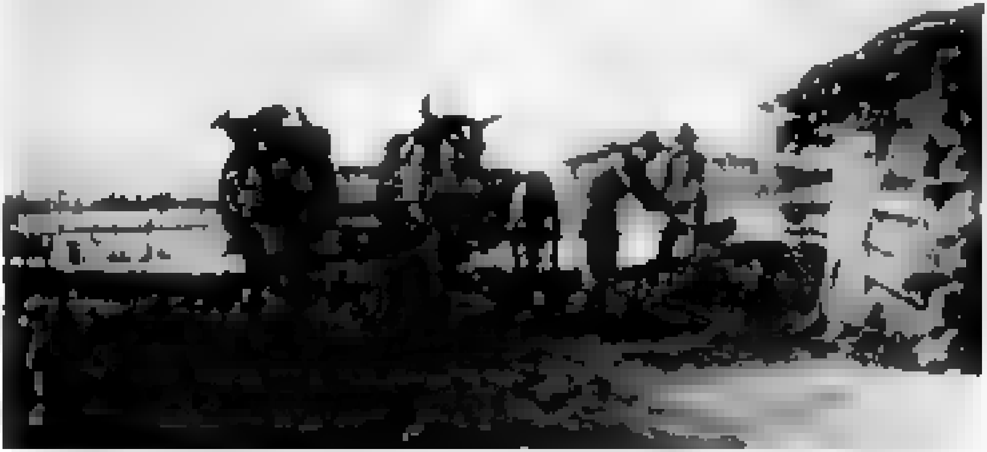
After a disagreement with **Robert**, Frank left and moved to California. Rosemond and Arthur stayed with the family for a short time and then moved to Edmonton. Hazel married Charlie Wiscarson. The rest of the family left Neerlandia by the mid-twenties, most of them moving to the U.S.A.

Ada Lundlen

JACOB AND WILLEMINA (WONINK) VISSER

Jacob Visser (born in 1884, Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands) immigrated with his cousin Jan Gelderman in 1911. Jacob took up a homestead in the Darwell area in September 1911 and lived there from November 1911 to May 1912. He had built a log shack on the homestead, but abandoned it later in 1912.

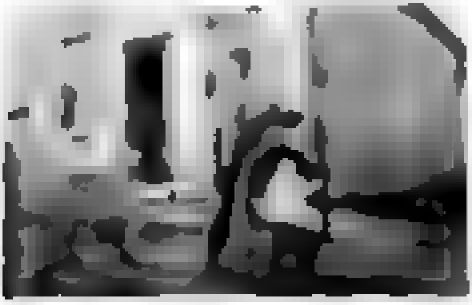
Willemina (Wip) Wonink had been born September 16, 1887 in Oldebroek, Gelderland



[illegible]

Willemina immigrated to Canada with her mother, stepfather (Willem de Groot), and half sister (Manna de Groot), in 1912. Willemina and Jacob had known each other in the Netherlands [illegible] ion by Rev. Jongbloed. Their oldest daughter [illegible] ber 14, 1913.

Jacob took up the SE 28-61-3-5 as a homestead in Neerlandia on June 8, 1914, and the [illegible] t was sixteen by twenty-four feet and one of the nicest houses in the settlement. Jacob had peeled all the logs for the house before using them. He later built a ten by fourteen-foot [illegible]



[illegible]

Two more daughters, **Reika** (Hendrika) **Hermanna** (February 26, 1916) and **Anna** (Jan [illegible] 10, 1917) were born in Neerlandia. Willemina had a good sense of humour which stood her in good stead through the difficulties of homesteading. She suffered from hay fever and her health was not good at times, but both she and Jacob were hard workers.

In March 1917, the Visser family left [illegible] Willemina. They moved to Portland, Michigan [illegible] 1956.

After he had left Neerlandia, Jacob applied for the patent to his homestead (1921). He had broken ten acres and had cropped six. A well had been dug and a log barn and one-and-a- [illegible] Siebren Tiemstra later bought the homeste

Reika Ragin

LOUIS AND IDA (KAMPMAN)

[illegible]

In the winter of 1920 Louis (Lieuwe) and Ida (Ytje) Westerbaan, both close to fifty years o [illegible] don, Manitoba, where a friend of Louis lived [illegible] daughters were living. They travelled as far as [illegible] to Uncle Kampnar's place. His [illegible] The land was mostly bush, with just a [illegible]

[illegible] though there was no school during the winter she was in grade six when she left Neerlandia [illegible]

Hilda remembers [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and Ike had come from Friesland. They came over for coffee sometimes, and Pake Tiemstra told the Westerbaans that Simon was building a piece onto the house and it was beginning to [illegible]

[illegible]

The change from life in the Netherlands to the [illegible] [illegible] much for Ida, so the Westerbaans' stay in Neerlandia was short. In August 1921 they left [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] saw her old school chum, Tena Terpstra (then Mrs. Pete Tuininga), a happy wife and mother-to-be. In September her friend died — the one [illegible] [illegible]

Another thing that cemented the ties with [illegible] 1932, to John Elzinga of Neerlandia. They [illegible] [illegible]

Louis Westerbaan died in Gibbons at the [illegible] [illegible]

Hilda Elzinga

THOMAS AND ELIZABETH (SCOTT) [illegible]
ALBERT SCOTT

In 1882 a baby girl, Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie), [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] received the two north quarters of section 22 as homesteads through Ernest E. [illegible], a Boer War veteran. He was entitled to 320 acres of land, but transferred the scrip from his name to Lizzie's. [illegible] and George did not settle in [illegible] but stayed to help Lizzie and Albert get settled and then left for the U.S.A. Although Albert stayed to farm with Lizzie he did not file on any land.

Being amongst the very first settlers in the district, Lizzie had the pick of the land and she chose one of the most beautiful locations in the whole area. The [illegible] Creek, good for fishing and swimming in the summer, ran through most of the land and sported wild strawberries, raspberries, and [illegible]berries in abundance along its banks. On warm summer evenings one could take lovely walks along the creek, finding berries also on the hillsides.

Lizzie was a crack shot, and shot rabbits, ducks, and partridges for the table. She also caught fish and prepared them for meals.

Only necessities and a few prized possessions could be brought to the wilderness. Lizzie chose to bring a lovely piano which she protected with canvas because of her leaking roof. Although she had never had a piano lesson in her life, Lizzie loved music and played by ear. The piano remained a part of her home as long as she lived. Even the box the piano had been packed in had a special place in the house. It was a huge, sturdy wooden box, and it took the shape of the piano. After having shelves built in and doors put on, and receiving a coat of paint, the box became quite an attractive cupboard and was the only kitchen cabinet Lizzie had for many years.

Every Monday morning, Jimmie would leave home for school in Freedom, the nearest school. He would spend the week with a family in the district, and return home on Friday evenings. Because Harry was deaf, he spent three years in Montreal at a school for the deaf. Lizzie grieved at being separated from her handicapped son, and when she heard the stories he told of life at the school, she could bear it no longer. Though she had only three or four years of formal education, she brought Harry home and set about teaching him herself. She did, in fact, teach him to read and write. More

[illegible]

[illegible]

When Jimmie was 12 years old (1917 or 1918), [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] fairly large frame house and barn on the NE 22-61-3-5. Being on the route taken by the men [illegible]

[illegible]

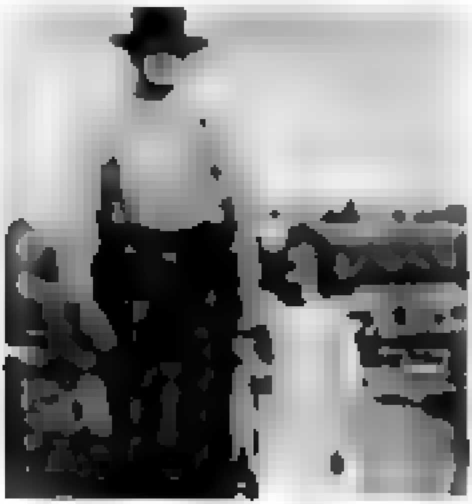
Tom loved his work and continued with it until he retired in 1936. Born in Minnesota, U.S.A. in 1872, he had learned the logging trade while working in Oregon. Logging was winter work except for two or three weeks in [illegible] Though easy-going in his personal relationships, he had high expectations of the men on [illegible] success. Tom was always ready to help oth[illegible]

[illegible] team of black driving horses, Dan and Charl[illegible] two-mile corner. He picked himself up, went back to Barrhead, and bought another.

The outdoors had more appeal for Lizzie

[illegible] had help in the kitchen. Among those who [illegible] Mast, and the Andries Wiesenga girls. At the best of times, the English-speaking Wilsons and their Dutch neighbours had a hard time [illegible] to understand that she would hire the girls, and [illegible] twist her tongue around that name, the closest she could get was "Teate" and Teate she remained to Lizzie.

Lizzie was a resourceful woman and [illegible] sick animals. Or when the neighbouring bachelors were sick, Lizzie would bring over a pot of [illegible] medies she considered necessary. When one of these men was too sick to look after himself [illegible] thought was too frail to bear all the children she did.



[illegible]

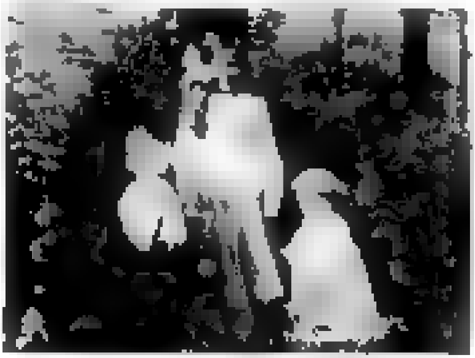
When after two years of marriage Tom and [illegible] might be too old to have a baby. Therefore, in

[illegible] name our phone went by till my [illegible] Neerlandia in 1942."

[illegible] years.

[illegible]

John Howey, Tom holding Thomas, Lizzie (unnamed infant) holding Mary, Bob Howey, Mrs. Cole, Albert Scott, Ethel Howey, Archie (unknown), Mr. Cole, Neil Lindquist, Harry. Children: Fred Cole, Doris, Bertha and Ethel Howey, Carl Cole standing, Archie Howey sitting, 1927



Thomas, Doris, Mary 1929

passed the test and Doris married him in 1941. They farmed with Archie's brother Neil for three years, before moving to Hythe, Alberta, in 1944. Archie and Doris have six children. Archie died in 1959, but Doris and the children continued living on the farm. She remarried in 1962. Her second husband, Harold James, died in 1978.

Because Tom was in poor health, he and Lizzie, with their children Harry, Thomas and Mary moved to Penticton, British Columbia in 1942. Tom died in 1945 at 71 years of age. Harry died in 1965 at 62 years of age. Lizzie then came back to Edmonton to be near Thomas. She died in 1971 at 89 years of age. Mary lived with her family in Hope, British Columbia, till she died in 1981. She had four children. Thomas and his wife and family of three children live in Edmonton.

Doris James

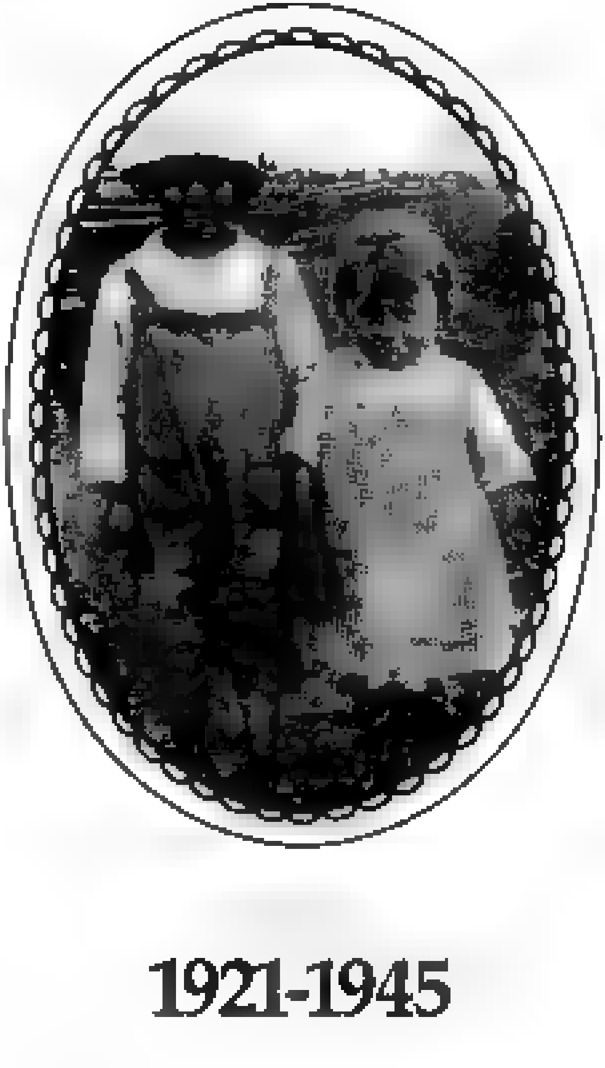
GEORGE WING

George Wing ([illegible] 1878) was born in Elgin County, Ontario. On May 13, 1907 he filed on the SE 27-67-3-5 in what was later called Neerlandia. On his homestead application he listed his occupation as carpenter and his last place of residence as Vancouver. George built a log house on his land in October 1911 and began living there around the same time.

On the quarter next to George's lived his friend George Laughlin. They did a lot of trapping and hunting in the area. George also spent some time working on his land so that by the time he received his patent in 1915 he was cropping fifteen acres, had built a log barn, dug a well, and put up one-and-a-half miles of fencing. The only animal he kept was a horse.

George often visited Siebren Tiemstra and sold his quarter to him during the 1920s. He eventually moved back to Ontario.

Living conditions changed for pioneer youngsters who came to Neerlandia. A studio photo of Minnie and George Baker taken in Massachusetts, U.S.A.



1921-1945

1921-1945

From 1921 to 1945 the immigration to Neerlandia slowed. There were several young single men who came, stayed, and married Neerlandia girls. There were a few families who came, notable among them a clan from Uithuizen, Groningen — the Peters and the three Wierenga families — with a grand total of thirty-five children.

But this time was mainly one of the pioneer children attaining adulthood and marrying those they had known all their lives or, of course, the Wierengas. Their stories comprise this section.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] brother

[illegible] the eaves, forming icicles three or four feet long

[illegible]

[illegible] another day's supply of firewood

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] under them for the night

[illegible] home the next day

[illegible] four, and the Senior had grades five to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] our table for a meal

[illegible]

[illegible]

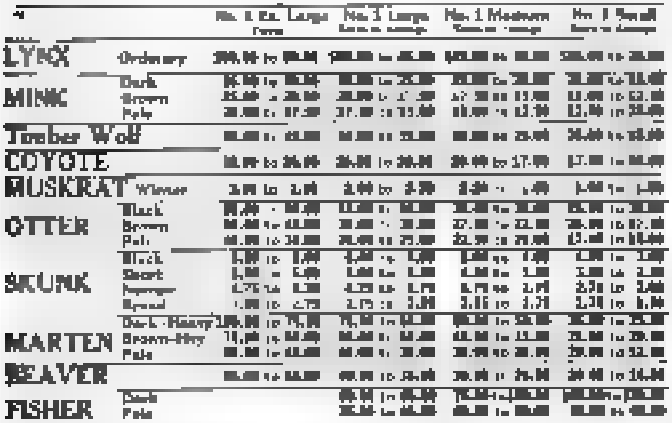
[illegible]

[illegible]

rifle and enough shells to last for a year. Slim said squirrel pelts were worth about thirty-five cents and weasels were worth about a dollar-fifty, maybe even two dollars for an extra good one. Slim would teach me how to skin these animals, and how to make a stretcher board to dry the pelts on.

Slim had learned all these tricks from his brother Bill. I thought if Slim had been taught by Bill, he should be able to write a book about it. Bill was one of the best hunters in the country. I had heard he kept the family supplied with moose meat. I had seen a live young coyote chained to a kennel in their yard that Bill had taken live out of a trap and had taken home without getting himself all chewed up by the animal. And Bill made scads of money every spring trapping muskrats.

I was confident that with Slim as a trapping partner, my money problems would soon be solved. When I told my dad about my new venture he was not too enthusiastic about it. If I would go trapping every day after school I wouldn't have time to help him with the feeding, and he wasn't about to give that up. I finally came up with a solution. On Saturdays I had to take the cows to the muskeg for water anyway. If I would do this on horseback I could quickly go along my traps and be back about the same time the cows were back. He consented to this and even bought me six new traps.



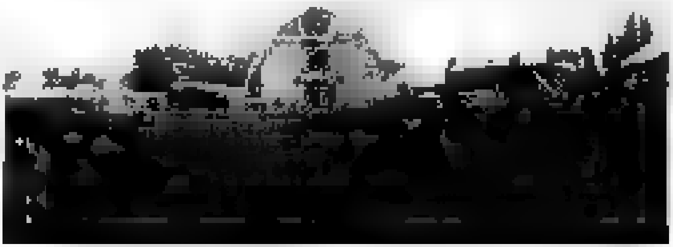
		No. 1 Ex. Large	No. 1 Large	No. 1 Medium	No. 1 Small
LYNX	Ordinary	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
MINK	Dark	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Brown	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Pale	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Timber Wolf		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
COYOTE		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
MUSKRAT	Winter	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
OTTER	Black	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Brown	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Pale	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
SKUNK	Black	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Short	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Broad	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
MARTEN	Dark - Heavy	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Brown-Silky	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Pale	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
BEAVER		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
FISHER	Dark		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Pale		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The fur buyers in Edmonton sent out price lists during the winter, and every time a new one came out Slim told me prices were going up and we should make pretty good. When spring came the first year, our fur parcel wasn't that big, and after splitting 50-50 with Slim I didn't have enough saved to buy my new rifle. So I had to save my money and try again next year. When I was ten I had enough saved to buy my rifle and I was the proudest ten-year-old in Neerlandia.

When the fur price lists came by mail, they also listed black cat pelts for about eighty cents. In March the tomcats would come to visit the neighbours' barnyards to see if they could get a love affair

going for a few days with the neighbours' pussycats. If a nice black tom came around, he didn't always live to go back home, but went to Edmonton in my fur parcel.

My dad and our neighbour Mr. John Gelderman used to help each other castrate pigs. In those days nobody was paid for helping a neighbour. They just helped each other for anything that help was needed for, and never kept track of a few hours more or less. When I was eleven or twelve years old, my dad thought I was big enough to help him with the castrating, and then he would not have to go to help John Gelderman any more. When we had finished castrating our pigs, he said, "Now you better go to Gelderman and help him do his." So off I went to the neighbour's. I told him my dad had said I should help him castrate his pigs. He looked at me as if he was thinking, "You snot kid, do you really think you can do that?" I told him I had just finished helping my dad do ours so I guess he thought, "It has to be done, and John Aneona isn't coming, so we better give it a try." He must have been satisfied with my assistance because when we were finished with the pigs he said, "Now we better do the cats. They have a habit of running away at this time of the year and sometimes they don't come back." I noticed he had two nice black tomcats and I thought "Too bad, there won't be any black cat pelts in my fur bundle this year." He must have been satisfied with my assistance with the cats too, because then he said, "Now we better do the dog." When the dog was done I thought, "I wonder who is going to be next?" but he said, "That's all for today."



Toward the end of September 1930 a man came walking up to our driveway. When he was asked to come in he told my parents that his name was Joe Slagboom. He had worked in the harvest in Nobleford and as harvest was finished there, he said he would like to work at our place that winter for his board. My father had built a new barn that summer which was not yet completed, and Slagboom said he was a handyman, so he could help with that. My father also wanted to cut some tamarack logs that winter to have sawn into boards at Meane Nanninga's place, who had a sawmill at that time. He needed these boards for the floor in the new barn. My parents discussed this situation. They thought there was enough food in the larder to feed an

[illegible]

[illegible] and I'm not sure he [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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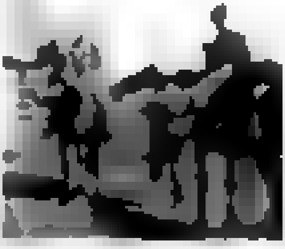
[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] home-baked bread. It was delicious

[illegible]

[illegible] eight dollars each

[illegible] Mc Quack and me

[illegible]

Bonstrom and Charlie Anderson of Vega. The grainfields were small yet. The first patches were cut out with a sickle, and bundles were tied by hand. When the fields got a little bigger, several farmers got together to buy a binder. The grain was stooked to dry, and then my father and Mr. Gelderman helped each other haul this to the barnyard and it was put into stacks to wait for Bonstrom and Anderson to come with their threshing machine. They pulled the threshing machine from place to place with horses. It was powered by a large stationary engine mounted on a heavy wagon also drawn by horses. This engine had two big flywheels about five feet in diameter. I wasn't going to school yet at that time, so I eagerly watched all this action going on. This engine was too big to turn with a crank, so Charlie Anderson would stand on the spokes of the flywheel to start it. For some reason it backfired and Charlie went sailing through the air, landing about twenty feet away. He must have had a soft landing, because he got right up and seemed none the worse for it.

One man had to cut the twines on the bundles of grain and feed them into the threshing machine a little at a time. There was a bag attachment where the grain came out and the bags of grain were carried away to our first little granary. The machine didn't have a blower, so a few men had to stand behind it to take away the straw and stack it.

By the time more land was opening up, Pete and Julius Bosman had moved to Vega. They had a Rumely tractor and a new threshing machine that didn't have to be fed by hand and had a straw blower on it. Simon Tiemstra, Henry Kippers, and Menne Nanninga also bought threshing machines. The grain was not stacked in the barnyard anymore but was brought directly from the fields to the threshing machine. Menne Nanninga did our threshing for many years. The farmers he threshed for helped each other bring in the grain from the fields.

Bosman's steam driven Rumely tractor.

As more land was opened up, the threshing run became longer every year. I was allowed to stay home from school on the days the threshing crew was at our place. It seemed like a lot of fun to me and I couldn't wait until I was old enough to be a part of it. I graduated from grade eight when I was fourteen-and-a-half. By law a kid had

[illegible]

[illegible]

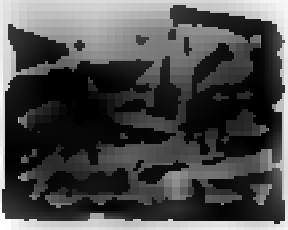
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] on our own for getting the harvesting done

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

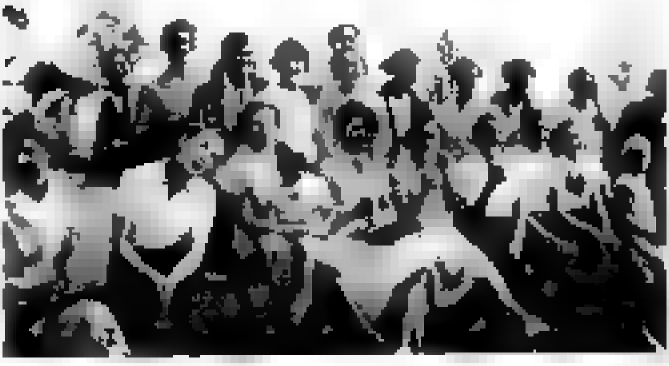
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] position was going to be [illegible] [illegible] Charles Baker was the backup pitcher, but Bert had practised a lot, and we thought he was good. Cecil Nanninga was catcher and he was good. He could throw that ball to second base so fast, not even a rabbit had a chance to steal second base. Jake Sturwold, the second base man, still had crooked fingers to prove the speed of Cecil's throws. John Ingwersen was first base, Corney Hiemstra played third, Corny Nanninga shortstop, I was in right field, Albert Elgersma left field, and George Baker centre field.

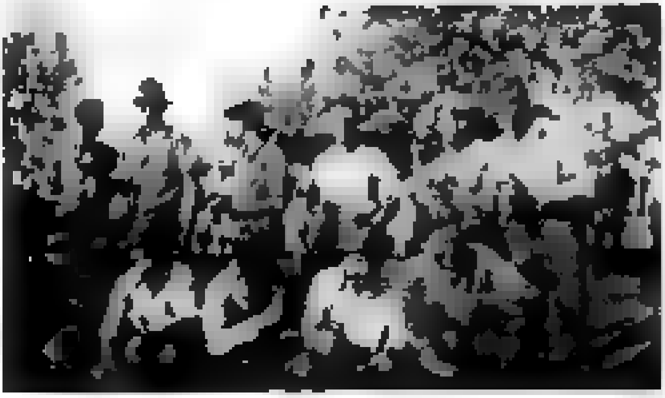
The game was close; sometimes they were a few runs ahead and we would catch up to them again. We made some good hits, but their fielders were able to catch all our fly balls. Bert lost control in the sixth or seventh inning, so Charlie took over as pitcher.



Crowd watching the game.

It was the beginning of the ninth inning and our turn to bat. The score was 7-7 and this was our last chance. We had one man on second and one on third base, and John Ingwersen was up to bat. He hit a line drive between centre and left field and we got two runs in, and that was it. Now we had to hang on to our lead. Edmonton had a man on first and a man on second. The batter hit a line drive right toward me in right field, but it was coming high. The runners on the bases thought I could never reach that one so they all ran and didn't look back. As the ball came over me, I leaped as high as I could and reached up as far as I could for the catch. I fell as I came back to earth, but had the ball in my hands. We got the ball to second base before the runners could get back, and we had three away. We won the game, and a great cheer went up for the clodhoppers. We were rewarded for all the practising we had done.

The first time I went to Edmonton for a sport-meet picnic, we made the trip in Billy Quick's truck. There may have been a few Model T Fords in Neerlandia at that time, but not enough cars to take the whole gang. Mr. Quick had put a plank along the outside of his old International truck for seats. A tarp was put over the top in case of rain. There was no pavement north of Edmonton yet. He managed to get through or around Morinville. There one wheel sank deep into a hole, and one of the truck's axles broke right in the mud hole. Mr. Quick got to a phone in Morinville, and as soon as



After the game. Back: Charlie Baker, Albert Eggenschw[illegible], Curtis Nanninga, George Anema, Conny Hemmens, Ben Nanninga. Front: John Oosterman, George Baker, Jacob Stuiveld, Cecil Nanninga.

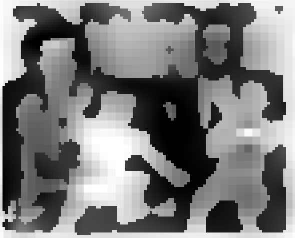
possible a mechanic came out from Edmonton with a new axle. The whole load of passengers came out and stood along the side and back of the truck box. We lifted it up high enough to replace the axle. Then we all gave a push and the truck came out and we continued our journey. We got to Edmonton a bit late, but still enjoyed our sports day.

Around the 1940s a lot of cars started coming into the settlement, and you could see people were beginning to enjoy prosperity from then on. The Co-op store was doing more business every year, and started branching out its services, including the building of a garage and service station to serve the community. About 1951, A. Munneke was hired as a clerk in the Co-op store. Mr. [illegible] and Mr. H. Dieteman were running the garage. They had all emigrated from the Netherlands shortly after the end of the war. Mrs. Munneke had a sister named Tina (Trijntje) Veleman. She was a nurse and had also immigrated to Canada. She had a nursing job at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. In the spring of 1951 she became employed with the Victorian Order of Nurses as a public health nurse. This meant she had to drive a car and, as she had never driven a car, she had to have lessons. She would come to visit her sister in Neerlandia on weekends.

My parents had retired from the farm and had built a house in the village, so I was on the farm by myself and not doing too well. I was not cut out to be a good bachelor. The Munnekes and Tina came up with a solution to the problem of the driving lessons. I was given the honour of teaching them. Early that spring the lessons began. The moon was full at that time, and after a few lessons Cupid even came along and it started getting quite romantic. In fact, it became so romantic that it grew into a love affair that still hasn't stopped growing to this day.

That summer Tina's parents came from the Netherlands for a visit and we thought it would be nice if we could have our wedding while they were in Neerlandia so they could take part in it. I asked her father if I could have her for my wife, and on the 18th of July Rev. Hanenburg asked, "Who gives this woman to this man?" and

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] Rodney (October 19, 1954)

[illegible] and we were on our way to B.C

[illegible]

[illegible]

Kees (Cornelis) Johan Hendrik Andriessen

[illegible] ways."

[illegible]

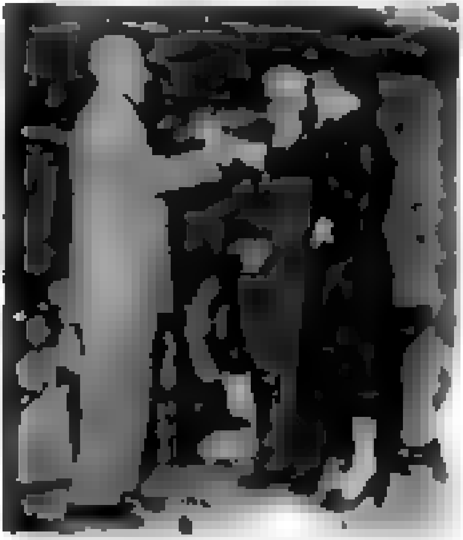
board. An agreement had been struck, and Aubrey was appointed principal of the [illegible] school. [illegible] grades [illegible] four were taught by female teachers, and Aubrey took grades five to twelve. What started as another teaching assignment turned [illegible] a long and pleasant association with the settlers of Neerlandia. But we are getting ahead of the story.

Aubrey C. Ashley was born December 1, 1900, in Oldham, Nova Scotia. It was not until 19[illegible] that he came west to Washburn, Saskatchewan, to help with the harvest. The west must have cast a spell on Aubrey, because he was to return to Nova Scotia only for brief visits thereafter. After harvesting, he entered Normal School in Saskatoon and then moved further west to Alberta and [illegible] to earn a teaching certificate. This was followed by teaching assignments in Brighton, [illegible] and Radway before arriving in Neerlandia. Teaching was Aubrey's life and for twelve years, as the community grew and prospered, he saw many students pass through the country school. [illegible] teaching was [illegible] these years and when the opportunity for work at the Neerlandia [illegible] arose, Aubrey took a job as accountant and later became the manager. It would be [illegible] another [illegible] years before the decision to move to Edmonton would be made. [illegible] in 19[illegible]. After a brief stint with [illegible], Aubrey returned to teaching at [illegible] school where he remained until his retirement in 19[illegible].

Elsie Isabella [illegible] Ashley accompanied Aubrey to Neerlandia in 19[illegible]. She was born at Burnside, Manitoba, on September [illegible], 19[illegible], and shortly afterward the family moved to Edmonton, Alberta. Elsie's formative years were spent in Edmonton, where her grandfather Jones worked as a carpenter on the Alberta Legislative Buildings. It was later, when the Joneses moved to a farm north of Radway, Alberta, that Elsie and Aubrey met. They were married October 22, 1927.

Harold Aubrey was born April 1, 1930, in Radway and was already a year old when the family arrived in Neerlandia. Later he met and married [illegible] of [illegible], Alberta. After a brief stay in [illegible], he moved to Calgary to settle down and raise a family.

Kenneth Ira arrived October 12, 1934. He



[illegible]

[illegible]

was born at the Barrhead hospital, which in those days provided the closest facilities. Ken later met and married Betty Vandervalk from Granum, where they currently reside.

Shirley Doreen was a redhead, born February [illegible], 1939, also at the Barrhead hospital. She later married Edward Piers from Neerlandia.

[illegible] [illegible], Harold [illegible]

Harold writes, "As I think upon those years of growing up in Neerlandia there are interesting recollections of so many things. Many of these memories are about daily and yearly routines that we went through at home, at school, and in the community.

There were the noon hour sports activities that my father used to organize, from which no one was exempt. These activities usually matched the seasons as well. For instance, in winter we would play soccer or, if there was fresh snow, probably fox and geese. In the wet spring we would play a game called anti-i-over. I remember my father as a teacher. He was a man who stood for honesty and fair play. He was a strong disciplinarian and loved to see his students achieve. Many long hours after school were spent in preparing lessons and correcting exams. I know, because I was one of his pupils as well as his son.

Then there were the yearly Christmas concerts that we used to spend time preparing for in order to put on a one-night show for our proud parents. This was followed by a rare treat that consisted of a brown bag containing a mandarin orange and a few nuts and some mixed Christmas candy. Mom and Dad used to make homemade candies to add to these bags.

And then there used to be the annual field trip where we all got loaded into one of Fisher Brothers' trucks. Art or Dick would haul us to a creek south of Neerlandia and all of us would hike to a spot where we would spend the day playing games, relaxing, and enjoying the outdoors complete with mosquitoes.

We used to spend a tremendous amount of time in our garden growing vegetables and flowers. Even more time was spent in the harvesting of peas, beans, corn, and beets which were prepared and canned for the long winter.

Then in the winter there were the many loads of logs that were brought to our home and sawed into blocks. In turn, [illegible] Ken and I would split the blocks and pile the wood to dry for the coming year to burn in the cookstove and heater. It was a yearly ritual to have the chimneys [illegible] with a [illegible]. We would [illegible] around to find enough salt to throw on

Harold, [illegible]

the fire to kill the flames. It was a wonder that our house never burned down. I remember having to go each evening to Schoonekamps' farm and pick up the milk. Some nights were so [illegible] moon, the reflection on the snow made it so [illegible] that you could almost read a book.

There are so many recollections that one could go on and on: the fun of harvest time in the fall with the binders, the stooked fields, the haystacks, and threshing machines; the skating parties on the frozen lake at Lievers; and the many years I walked to Lievers for Sunday [illegible] ranges on their farms. Many of the things that were treats for us in those days do not exist [illegible] times were hard and everyone worked hard."

[illegible]

CHARLES AND BETTY (DE JONG) BAKER

Charles was born in Neerlandia in 1920. In 1922 the family moved to Edmonton and in 1925 [illegible] the spring of 1926 the family moved back to Neerlandia to stay, so Charles started school in [illegible]

School for Charles was something that had [illegible] ture study was done swimming or hunting rabbits or just walking through the woods. His class had a different teacher every year and sometimes even more than one teacher in one [illegible] school, which was not all bad since there were usually fish in the creek that could be caught! For the most part there were no roads, just a path, and through the muskeg areas his par- [illegible] Charles' tasks after school was to carry home [illegible] eries [illegible] sugar, blocks of tallow, and the like. Those logs in the muskeg got very [illegible]

Lunches were carried in a five-pound syrup [illegible] were placed on the big pot-bellied stove, which [illegible] boots giving off a very undesirable smell. In [illegible] catch pollywogs or butterflies. The lunch that went into that pail consisted mostly of brown bread (made from home-grown wheat crushed [illegible] dessert. One can be sure those pails were filled with love and often a few tears. At one time Charles had been very sick and when he was somewhat better he asked for a piece of white bread. This request brought tears, but no [illegible]

[illegible] for it," because the prizes were given in coins. Their summer holidays were spent weeding [illegible] the farm doing whatever was required as well as always opening up more land. In 1940 [illegible] land (S½ 29-61-3-5) as a cultivation lease and [illegible] where Charles went to church on Sundays. He did a little scouting and then some st[illegible]

Betty had been born November 16, 1922, in Echten, Friesland, the Netherlands, and came to Canada twice with her parents — first for four years when she was one, and then again when she was nine. After her schooling, she first worked as a housekeeper. She was working in a store when she met Charles. After she assured him she would face the hardships and the joys of farm life with him. He applied for farm leave and headed to Neerlandia to prepare a home and grow crops and raise hogs. On July 27, 1942, Charles made confession of faith in Neerlandia, and by coincidence Betty made confession of faith the same day in Vancouver.

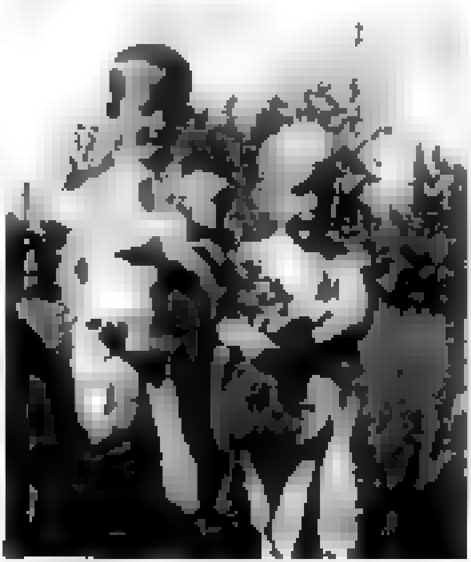
Charles and Betty were married January 12, 1944, in Vancouver and after a few days headed for Neerlandia, first by train and then by bus to the Barrhead depot, where Dad Baker met them with his car. The roads were very icy and Dad Baker hit the ditch so hard that he blew a front tire. Since it was war time, tires were rationed and hard to get, so there was no spare. They rode home on the rim. Dad Baker let Charles drive this time.

Before we were married - Charles and Betty 1943

Charles and Betty lived with Charles' parents for four months, then moved into their own little house. It was built on skids, ready to be moved to another location. They had pigs all around them, even under the house. An electric fence surrounded their lot and Betty had to step over this to get water or wood. In August 1944 they moved the little house to the hamlet where Charles' folks moved to retire, and Charles and Betty moved into the farmhouse.

Our first home 1944

After the war, Charles received his discharge from the army and took title to the school land he had previously leased. That was possible through the Veterans' Land Act and a veterans grant. First Charles hired an Indian family to clear brush. Sometimes there would be one family, sometimes four or five families, and much of the time none. The clearing went much more quickly when John [illegible] and Sam [illegible] came in with their Caterpillar tractors, although the root picking was still left for Charles.


Our sons David and Mike

In 1949 Charles and Betty welcomed **David** (born June 17, 1949) to their family. After his schooling in Neerlandia, David first tried hospital work as an orderly and later truck driving, but finally set himself to farming, especially raising hogs. He has now taken a share in the farm. On January 11, 1974, David married **Irene Reitsma** from Blackfalds. Irene was born March 6, 1953, in Lacombe. She worked on the family farm and as a secretary before her marriage. David and Irene have three children: **Randy**, born March 30, 1976; **Scott**, born January 13, 1978, and **Suzanne**, born April 18, 1980.

On January 14, 1952, **Joe** (Joseph) was born to Charles and Betty. After high school Joe studied at Dordt College. He married Heather Wierenga on May 12, 1973. After Joe's graduation they lived in Neerlandia with their children **Becky** (Rebecca) Jo, (April 15, 1974), **Jennifer Marie** (February 24, 1976), and **Reuben** Todd Donovan (July 2, 1980). In 1981 Joe and Heather and their family moved to Rocky Mountain House, where Joe has a teaching position in the local Christian School. Another son was born there in 1984.

Irene, Scott, Randy, David, Betty, Charles, Joe, Becky, Heather, Jennifer. Front: Suzanne, Reuben. 1983.

In 1984, Charles and Betty celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. They have had a happy life together. They experienced ups and downs, but through it all they must confess that God is good, and with His blessing they hope to retire.

Charles Baker

RAYMOND AND DELLA (ANEMA) BAKER

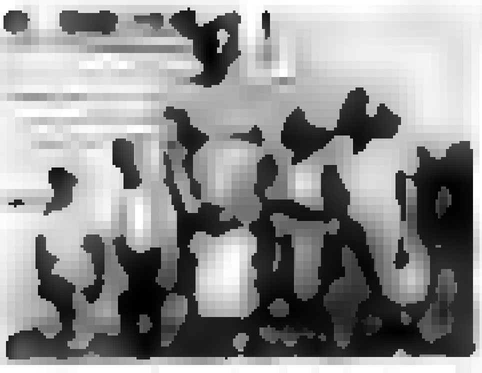
Raymond Baker was working in a cotton mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, in 1911, but he disliked both the work and standing in one spot all day to do it. At this time an article appeared in *De Wachter* extolling the virtues of Alberta as a place to start farming. This idea appealed to Raymond and he decided to go to Canada. When his parents saw that he was determined to go, they made the decision to go along with him. By July 19, 1912, Raymond had filed on the SW 22-61-5-5, but lived and farmed with his parents until his marriage to Della Anema on September 23, 1934.

Wedding picture, Raymond, Della, 1934

When Raymond married, his parents went to live near their daughter Katie, and the newlyweds moved into the house. They enjoyed furnishing their home. They had purchased a stove and a large kitchen cabinet at a farm auction. In the cabinet Della put a set of china that she had received as a wedding gift, a set of silverware she had bought, and other kitchenware. A table made by Geefe Baker and a set of chairs which were a gift from Joe Baker were [illegible] the front room, and bra[illegible] and now her handiwork made the room cozy. On Sundays, Della and Raymond would sit here and listen to hymns broadcasted over the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and a Model T Ford by the time he married. Later he traded the car off for a newer model. Then in January 1944, a sad event took place when Raymond died suddenly of heart failure [illegible] after five children, the oldest of whom was [illegible]. Not being able to drive a car or look after [illegible]



[illegible]

While living in the hamlet Della had to haul water from the store. The store had provided a [illegible] Vanderleest and Gerrit van Dijken.

The family decided to move back to the farm in 1955, since John and Gilbert were now old [illegible] down, but he refused. Suddenly one of the panels of plasterboard, which had rock wool [illegible]

[illegible] years, but then John and Gilbert began buying [illegible] During the winter they took turns working of[illegible]

Della's family soon grew up and began to leave home. Florence married George Visser in [illegible] November 1956; Dorothy married Simon

Tiemstra in March 1957, and Gilbert married Jeanette Wegner in October 1970. John remained single. He and Della bought a mobile home, sold the farm, and moved to the hamlet. John works in a sawmill in the winter and operates a manure-hauling business in the summer.

Kay, John, Gilbert, Florence, Della, Dorothy.

Although life was not easy for Della, she made the best of every situation and never complained. To others she always presented a calm demeanor. One day as the family was walking home, a thunderstorm began to rage. The children were afraid but their mother walked on calmly and resolutely. To them that exemplified her approach to life. She always seemed strong and brave.

Della is a big-hearted, out-going woman. In her younger days she shared her garden produce and baked goodies with anyone who could use it. Her favourite pastimes were knitting and crocheting. When the children were small, she would often get up early to stoke the fire and then sit and crochet until it was time to wake the children. Many people have her handiwork in their homes, as she always contributed more than her share to the annual bazaar. Della retired several years ago, but can still enjoy her family. She is thankful to God for keeping them all well and for sustaining her through the hard and lonely times.

Florence Visser

MEINDERT AND ANTJE (DE KROON) BOORSMA

Meindert Boorsma was born September 6, 1902, in Burgwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje De Kroon was born March 20, 1904, in Bakhuizen, Friesland. They were married in May 1928 and soon after embarked on their journey to Canada. They had heard much about Canada from friends and relatives who had left their homeland to make a new life in Canada, where it was said there was plenty for all — the land of milk and honey. On June 6, 1928, they boarded the *Montclare* at Liverpool, England. The journey across the ocean took ten days. It was ten days too many for Meindert, as he was ill a great deal of the time. He decided if he were ever to return to the Netherlands, he would find some method other than by water.

Meindert and Antje's wedding photo.

After arriving in Quebec, Meindert and Antje went by train to Edmonton, arriving there on June 20. The Immigration Department there placed them with a farmer in Red Willow who had requested Dutch farm workers. Since

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] hospital when he was three weeks old. On Feb- [illegible] on December 10, 1934, and **Sophia** on October [illegible]

[illegible] cold, but somehow they got by.

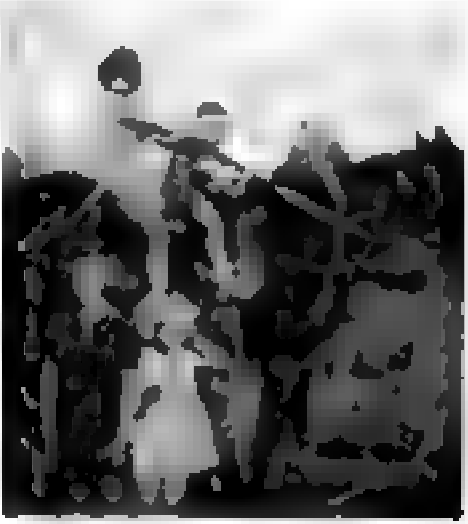
[illegible]

[illegible]

hours with her. She had many magazines which she let the children cut pictures out of (the Boorsmas had no money for magazines). Mina also had handsome china cabinets in which she kept all sorts of beautiful china and jewelry. These items she would let the awed children examine piece by piece, much to their [illegible]

[illegible] and from the store and church. He had a big black stallion named Tony and a small brown [illegible] one. He had to get ahead of everything on the [illegible] of the road and the road was scarcely wide [illegible]

[illegible] the family out of the snowbank and took them [illegible] found, they were taken home.



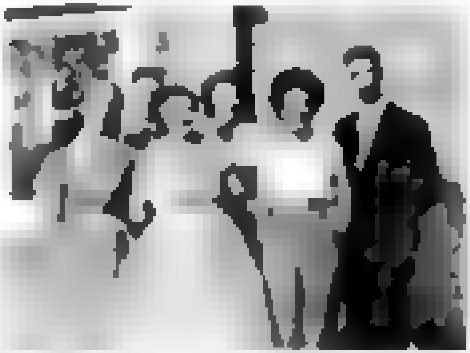
Kate and Johan on Sherry. Front: Alice and Sophie

Katie, Alice, and Sophie made the four-mile trek to school daily with the Bouwman and [illegible] men usually walked home too, arriving after [illegible] Rabbits, squirrels, and other small creatures were very intriguing to the children and slowed [illegible]

[illegible] and Meindert and Antje with their five [illegible] lived on the northeast corner of the church lot with a wooded area between their house and the parsonage.

Meindert took a job as janitor of the two-room school. Later on a three-room school was [illegible] from elsewhere. As part of the job, Meindert swept and cleaned the floors, carried water in [illegible] farms. Then Antje and the older children would clean the school. Since the work was being done by a woman, the wages were re[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

Meindert worked on farms in the Fraser [illegible] for a few years and finally settled in [illegible]

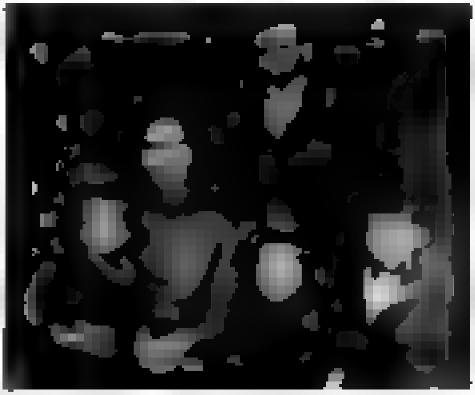
[illegible]

BERTUS AND HILDA (VAN DER HOEK) BOS

[illegible] served in the army during the Great War of [illegible] ge) van der Hoek on December 12, 1919. Hilda [illegible] Overijssel. Bertus worked as a farmer and also [illegible]

[illegible] **John** (Jan, April 19 1920), **Lalla** (Lammigje, A. [illegible] and **Elizabeth** [illegible]

Dedemsvaart, Overijssel, in April 1927. They sailed from Liverpool on the *Montrose*. On board, they met Rienk de Jager of Neerlandia, [illegible]



[illegible]

From Edmonton the Bos family travelled by truck with Billy Quick. When they arrived [illegible] Neerlandia, they stayed with the Siebren [illegible] family until they found a house to [illegible] that year a daughter, **Grace** (Grietje, August [illegible] Menne Nanninga's place.

Bertus wanted a place of his own, so he filed [illegible] house was finished. During the fifteen years they lived in Vega, three more children were born: **Ralph** (Roelof, February 8, 1932), **Betty** (Bertha Gerda, July 26 1935), and **Bill** (William John, November 20 1942). Bill was the only [illegible]

[illegible] Vega and Neerlandia. He began the job in Au[illegible]

The new home, 1928. Hilda, Bertus, John, Lil, Grace, Lida.

picked up the mail in Neerlandia and arrived back in Vega about 3:45 p.m. He carried the mail on horseback in the summer and with horse and cutter in the winter. A few times when Bertus was not able to get the mail, Hilda filled in for him.

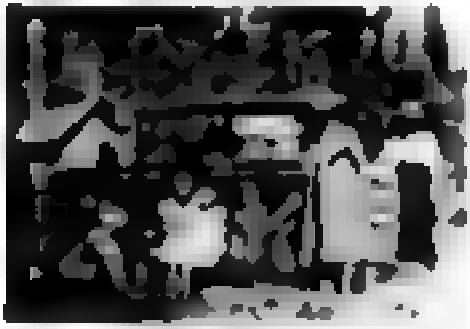
Bertus cleared many acres of land for himself and for others. It was all done by hand with an axe and grub hoe and sometimes with the help of horses to pull out the heavier stumps. Hilda often helped Bertus with the clearing. When he cleared for Hendrik Kannegieter, the children were left with Mina Kannegieter because the clearing was heavy and Hilda was needed to help. Bertus had a two-horse breaking plow, but reset it so it could be pulled by three horses. At first he borrowed horses from Bill Krikke and worked for him in return. Later, in 1933, he obtained three horses of his own.

One year Bertus made a stoneboat. He was using it while clearing for Bill Oldegbers, when a thunderstorm came up. Bertus was on his way home when lightning struck very near. The horses scared and went on a runaway. Bertus was thrown off the stoneboat, but got tangled in the reins so he was dragged for some distance before he could stop the horses. He was not hurt seriously but was very muddy.

Another time Bertus was clearing with a double-bitted axe when it hooked on a limb above him and came down heavily, gashing his head. The wound bled quite badly and he came home with blood running down his face. Hilda was worried, but Bertus had no ill-effects except a scar and a bald spot for the rest of his life.

Since there was not much crop to harvest on his homestead in the early years, Bertus and others went to the prairies to help with the harvest. That was a good source of income. During the fall and winter, Bertus did what he enjoyed most — hunting and trapping. He hunted moose and deer and trapped through the Vega area. The whole family helped skin coyotes, foxes, weasels, squirrels, and other small animals. Hilda also learned to shoot with a double-barreled shotgun. She became a good shot and killed the hawks and owls that bothered the chickens. Once there was a weasel in the chicken coop, so Hilda loaded both barrels in the shotgun and took aim. She accidentally pulled both triggers at once, shooting the weasel clean in half.

The Bos family obtained groceries at Boman's store in Vega. Bertus often sold furs to the storekeeper there and received groceries in exchange. The Bos children attended school in Vega and usually had to walk there. The children attended Sunday school in Vega too, but the family belonged to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Since they lived four miles from the church, it was not easy to attend regularly, especially in winter. They took turns going, because they had to share clothes. They used various modes of transportation: walking, horseback, cutter, wagon, and dog sleigh. They [illegible] chase because years later his son John made it into a truck and used it to haul firewood and the moose and deer which he had hunted.



[illegible]

In 1935 Bertus became a naturalized citizen [illegible] came citizens as well. Hilda received her Cana[illegible]

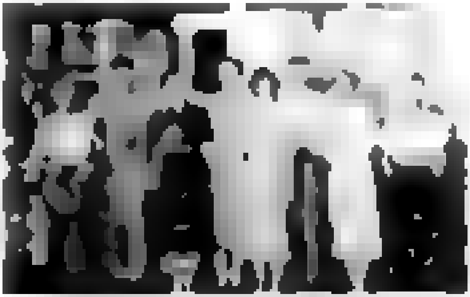
[illegible]

[illegible] him about two days, with an overnight stop [illegible]

[illegible]

While Bertus was gone, the children helped [illegible] trained the four dogs, a mixture of Airedale [illegible] the trip would take only one day with the dog [illegible]

[illegible] The Bos family returned to Neerlandia in 1946 and Bertus bought back his former farm. [illegible]



Bertus, John, [illegible]

home and eventually married. Elizabeth [illegible] married John Dieleman in 1956. They [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] where [illegible] works as an [illegible]

[illegible] on the Bos homestead until [illegible] [illegible] passed away [illegible] at the age of [illegible]

John Bos
Elizabeth Warringa

HENRY AND ALBERTA (CONTE) BOUWMAN

Henry Bouwman (January 12, 1899) came to Canada [illegible] the Netherlands [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] later they sailed to Canada and went to Edmonton [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Margaret [illegible] Those were the Depression years and jobs were hard to come by, so Henry and Alberta decided to try farming.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] on the Schoonekamp yard for three dollars a month. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the evening [illegible] Schoonekamp [illegible] them in for tea and a snack, which was greatly appreciated.

Henry, Jenny, Alberta

Having attended Sunday school and Bible [illegible] glad to find Sunday school in Neerlandia. It was taught by Rieke Lievers in her home.

Little did the Bouwman family realize that [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] stoves devoured countless blocks of wood [illegible] [illegible] split the wood while Jenny and Margaret did [illegible] work they did, the Bouwmans received nine dollars a month. Later this was increased to thirteen dollars.

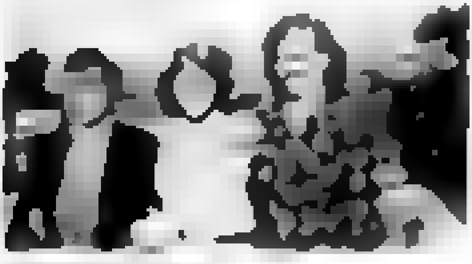
Besides working as janitor, Henry took on [illegible] whether it was digging basements, clearing, logging, or root picking. Sometimes she did the [illegible] [illegible] pile logs for lumber.

[illegible]

thankful that his hand, through partially dis[illegible]

[illegible]

the Flathead high school. Then she entered the [illegible]



[illegible]

During his years in Neerlandia, Henry built or helped to build several houses and farm [illegible]

[illegible] need to keep animals anymore, so they sold the property to Menne Nanninga.

[illegible]

[illegible] instead of straightening out, he kept turning [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] plaint, looking forward to her heavenly home [illegible]

[illegible] hauled in. In 1954 Margaret left Neerlandia to attend Calvin College where she obtained a B.A. degree. Later she taught in Taiwan, in the [illegible]

[illegible] married Peter Younghans. Henry passed [illegible]

Jenny Michael

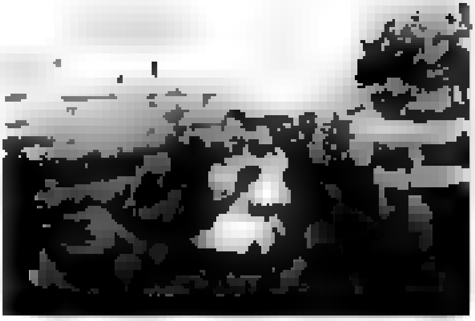
WILLEM AND ANNA (TOEBES) BOUWMAN

Willem Fredrick Bouwman was born in Tubbergen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on De[illegible]

[illegible] April 25, 1899. Anna Christina Toebes was born in Winterswijk, Gelderland. Later her [illegible] they were married. The Bouwmans set sail for [illegible]

[illegible]

In 1929, after the purchase of two horses



[illegible] Henry, Anna, Ben in Edmonton [illegible], 1927

the Bouwmans moved to Neerlandia, eager to start farming. Upon their arrival, John Schuring helped them build a one-room shack that was just high enough to stand in. They spent one winter in it with their two small sons. The next year they built a house on their land, the NE 8-6[illegible]-3-5. The living conditions were poor and wretched.

Two more children were born to the Bouwmans in Neerlandia: **Grace** on January 28, 1932 and **John Henry** on June 29, 1938.

Bill with the hayrack which took the family to Neerlandia, [illegible]

After many years of hard work and saving money, Willem was able to put a down payment on a Case binder. He later put down another deposit, but it was not enough to satisfy the company and the binder was repossessed.

Henry worked in the [illegible] store from 1939 to 1942. In January 1943 he joined the RCAF as air crew. In 1945, he was transferred overseas on Anti-Submarine Patrol and later to Transport Command. He was discharged in March 1946 with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Henry attended the U of A from 1946 to 1953 when he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine. He now resides in Edmonton with his wife, Terry, and their five children.

Henry, Anna, Ben, Fort Grove, 1930

In 1958 the Bouwmans sold their farm to Raymond [illegible] and moved to Rocky Mountain House. Willem died September 28, 1962. Ben with his wife, Jeanne, and their five children continues to farm there. Anna resides in Rocky Mountain House, in the Senior Citizens Lodge.

Henry Bouwman

PETER DEN HARTOG

Peter Aart den Hartog (c. 1878) had been born in Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. He and his wife (c. 1882) had lived in India before coming to Canada. Peter filed on the SW 16-62-3-5 in October 1926. There were three sons and one daughter in the family, but none came to the Neerlandia area to live except **Peter Jr.**, who took up the SE 20-62-3-5 in 193[illegible].

The quarter Peter filed on had a [illegible] shack on it and five acres of light clearing. For these improvements he paid twenty-seven dollars besides the ten dollar filing fee. He had proved up the quarter by 19[illegible], by which time he had [illegible] acres cleared. He did not spend all his time on the homestead, but also spent some [illegible] district. Peter sold the farm around 1940.

[illegible]

[illegible] Groningen, the Netherlands, on February [illegible] existed in his homeland, he left, coming to Canada to seek the space that he could not find [illegible] different farms in that area over a span of [illegible] had heard about Neerlandia when still in the Netherlands and yearned for a place to settle down and be close to a church. He filed on [illegible]

[illegible] prairies (Nobleford area) to work on a thresh[illegible] But upon arrival, they found that wages [illegible] cost them almost what they earned in wages [illegible]

[illegible] Billy Quack's truck for the long trip to Edmonton. One group of three pigs that was sold in [illegible]

[illegible]

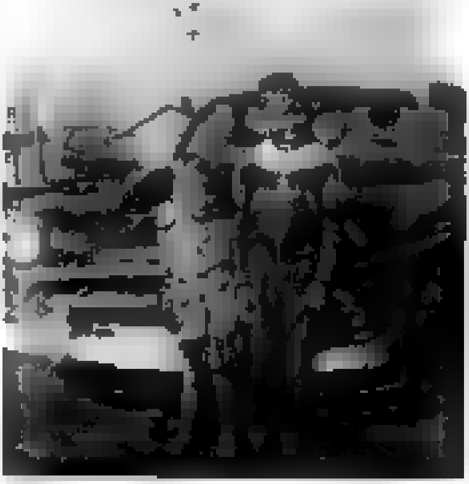
[illegible]

ilse and Jan had two horses that they used for, among other things, hauling cream to Neerlandia, where it was picked up by Fisher Bros [illegible] had a cow that needed servicing. When Jan came by with the bull and wagon, the bull would be unhitched and brought to the cow [illegible] bull could retire from the harness.

On January 26, 1941, Reitze married Agnes [illegible] 1938 with her parents Lambertus and Botje Jan[illegible] and raised in Edmonton. Reitze and Agnes had [illegible]

[illegible]

Reitze and Agnes' marriage was blessed with the birth of four children. **Jerry Richard** was born on December 11, 1942. **Lambertus Terrence** arrived on the scene the day Japan surrendered during World War II — August 14, 1945. Reitze remembers walking along the streets of Barrhead that day — all ears were tuned to the radios. **Richard David** was born on December 19, 1950, and **Brenda Janet** on September 24, 1954.



Brenda, Dick, 1958

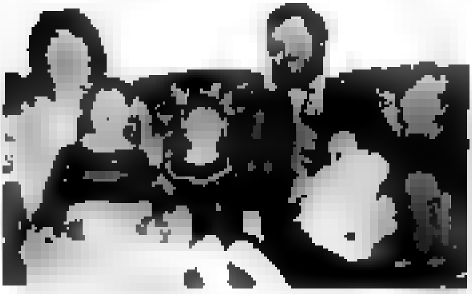
Life on the farm slowly became easier as mechanization occurred, and the farm produce increased in value after the Depression. Beginning in 1940, Reitze was able to devote some of his time to community work by serving on the board of directors of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. He spent many years on the board between 1940 and 1970.

The DeVries family had an eventful year in 1967. Jerry married Ann Elgersma in June. In August, Terrence married Janny Vaartstra of Edmonton and settled on the home place, in the house that was built in 1940. Reitze, Agnes, Jan and the two younger children moved to a house in Neerlandia that had been purchased from Gerrit Bevers. Reitze and Jan slowly retired from the farm, but kept busy, as Reitze was janitor of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, a position he held from 1967 to 1983.

In November 1972 Brenda married Kenneth Stevdhorst. They settled in the Neerlandia area and took up farming.

Richard continued his education at the University of Alberta, graduating with a Bachelor of Education degree in 1972. He taught at Lacombe Christian School for five years. In July 1975 he married **Johanna Boskers** (Joanne). Joanne was born on February 13, 1953, in Rocky Mountain House; her parents were also Dutch immigrants. She graduated from Red Deer College in 1974, and worked as a nurse in Red Deer Hospital. Joanne now works part-time at Barrhead General Hospital.

Richard and Joanne's oldest child, **Steven Glen**, was born on April 4, 1977, in Red Deer. That summer, they moved back to the Neerlandia area to begin farming, and in 1978 bought the N½ 2-61-5-5 in the Vega area. **Christine Joanne** was born on February 8, 1979, and **Andrea** Denise on February 3, 1982. On Christmas day, 1983, **David Michael Noel** was born.



Joanne holding Andrea, Christine, Richard holding David, Steven 1984.

In 1979, Jan moved to Hillcrest Home in Barrhead. Later, in 1982, he went to Barrhead Nursing Home, where he continues to reside [illegible].

Reitze and Agnes still live in Neerlandia, where they enjoy their extended family. The Lord has truly blessed them and their family and they are thankful for all the Lord has guided them through.

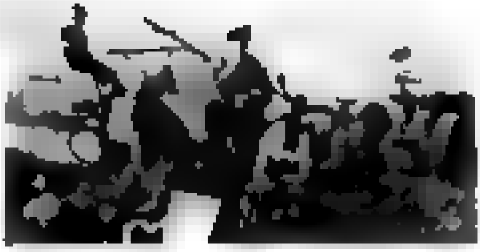
Richard DeVries

SJERP DE VRIES

Sjerp De Vries was born in Friesland, the Netherlands, on December 15, 1903. In his early

twenties he worked for farmer in Tzummarum, Friesland. When, however, a couple that he worked with, Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, decided to immigrate to Canada, Sjerp resolved to go with them. They all arrived in Neerlandia in April 1926.

In June of 1926, Sjerp filed on the NE [illegible]. For several years he lived there in a shack but later bought a small house that had belonged to Cecile Baker. On this quarter he made a meagre living. It was proved up in 1935.



Sjerp at back of binder. Sitting on ground: Albert Mast, Clarence Mast. [illegible]

Sjerp

Sjerp never married and spent the last years of his life almost as a recluse, going out only for supplies. Jacob and Janke Hiemstra would visit him occasionally, and Janke and others would do small favours for him, such as making [illegible] or giving him baked goods. Moreover the neighbourhood boys often visited him and were always welcome. But Sjerp returned none of these visits.

In spite of his solitary habits, Sjerp always knew what was happening. He had a radio to which he listened with regularity. Jelle Fisher, who walked to and from church services, invariably stopped to converse with Sjerp and to give him the weekly church bulletin on his way home. In addition, when anyone came to visit, the visitor would be asked about various members of the community. Sjerp could converse on a variety of topics and enjoyed debating the merits of different makes of tractors.

In his later years the only visitors he had were men [illegible] except for one. One day, as [illegible] had car trouble on her way to Barrhead, she stopped and knocked on Sjerp's door. In stunned surprise Sjerp said, "A woman, be god, mistaken!" When he overcame his surprise he helped her on her way.

In January 1968 Sjerp died of a heart attack and was found about three days later by some neighbours. He was buried in Barrhead cemetery on January 22, 1968. Because he left no will, his land was sold by the Public Trustee and the proceeds were sent to relatives in the Netherlands.

Jennie Fisher
Clarence Mast
Jerome [redacted]

ALBERT AND MABEL (ELZINGA) ELGERSMA

Albert Elgersma and Mabel Elzinga were married June [illegible] in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church with the Rev. H. Van Der Woude officiating. They took up farming on the [illegible] with ten cows, one heifer and two sows. The former owner, Pieter den Hartog, had built a lumber house on it, but the east side of the house had no outside siding on it. That first winter, therefore, the water in the kettle on the cook stove would be frozen in the morning many a time. [illegible], however, was plentiful and so were the [illegible].

The following spring, on Saturday, April 26, [illegible], the heavy spruce bush on their neighbour Lucas Sterenwold's land caught fire and the south wind blew the burning needles across the road into the straw stack just west of Albert's farmyard. It lit up like a volcano and so did the granary beside it which contained all the cleaned seed grain. The rail fence of the pig yard, a few little sow coops, and two more granaries filled with grain also burned. Burning needles from the spruce trees kept coming and were all over the yard. Many men and women came and worked hard to prevent more

[illegible]

A few days later, on April 30, Albert and [illegible] two-bottom plow, a disc, and harrows were bought from the McCormick-International [illegible]

[illegible] removing them. With feed in hand Albert would call and lure the sow away from the straw stack, while Mabel would crawl into the tunnels to grab the little pigs. Often the battle [illegible] On one occasion forty little pigs were hauled [illegible] springs.

[illegible]

Andrew Simon was born May 23 [illegible] through mud holes in the road many times.

More children were born to Albert and [illegible] three days before the Lord took him Home. The [illegible] Two more sons, Melvin Peter (February 20, [illegible]

[illegible] 16-62-3-5 from Henry Kippers and in 1959 he [illegible]

Albert and Mabel Elgersma farmed for four [illegible] Neerlandia. Andrew married Henry's sister A[illegible] in September 1962 and they lived in Neerlandia for three years. They now (1984) [illegible] runs a trucking firm. Winson married Joyce [illegible] Winson is attending law school. Ann married [illegible] Annette married Bill Nanninga.

On November 12, 1976, Melvin married Car[illegible] ary 23, 1981) and Melissa Laurelle (June 30,

Back: Ann, Andrew, Wilson, Sandra. Front: Annette, Mabel, Bertram, Albert, Simon, Melvin, c. 1960. Inset: Susan, Gloria, c. 1967

Carol holding Melissa, Melvin holding Leanne, 1969.

1963). Melvin and Carol farm on the SE 27-62-3-5.

Bertram married Debra Bouwer of Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. They and their daughter live in Grand Rapids. Bertram is district manager of an insurance firm. Gloria and David Lenz are living in Barrhead with their son. Susan and her husband, Wesley Hiemstra, live in Neerlandia with their daughter.

Albert and Mabel moved from their farm to the hamlet in October 1977, into the house vacated by Anne Mast. Albert became councillor of District 7 of the County of Barrhead in 1980.

Mabel Elgersma

ANNE AND HAITENA (SCHMIDT) ELGERSMA

Anne Elgersma (July 23, 1893) of Schraard, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje Reinsma

(July 29, 1893) owned a large dairy farm in [illegible] Holden.

[illegible]

[illegible] moved to Bluffton where Simon and Albert attended school for about six months. [illegible]

[illegible] damaged her heart. Next the family moved to [illegible] Christian Reformed church building.

[illegible] April 11, 1929, and bought the SW 17-61-3-5 from Jim Tuininga of Edmonton for $500.00. He had also bought a small herd of Holstein cattle four horses, a wagon, household articles, and [illegible]

Anne had instructed the two boys to herd [illegible] other as they followed the road they had been instructed to take. One cow, however, proved [illegible] boys, so they sat down on the road and cried. Several hours later their father returned with [illegible]

That first winter was a difficult one for the cattle. Because the Elgersmas had arrived due [illegible]

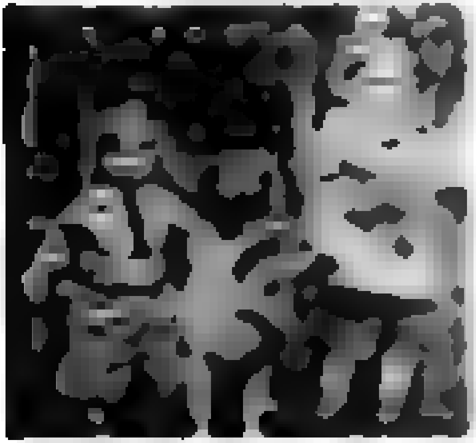
SW 20-61-3-5, then moved into the house that [illegible] ter. The boys started subfreighting for Billy Quick. Every Monday and Thursday mornin[illegible]

[illegible] listed for them to buy at the store. This added [illegible]

[illegible] logs a day with a horse. Considering those were the Depression years, the two boys made [illegible]

In 1936 Simon had an operation and spent [illegible] came home again in apparent good health.

[illegible] to Anne and Haitena: Jurina (Akke, August 16, 1929), Bert (Bouke, July 18, 1931), Hilda (Hinke, June 9, 1933), Tillie (Mathilda, June 15, 1934) and Agnes (Akke, July 12, 1935).



[illegible]

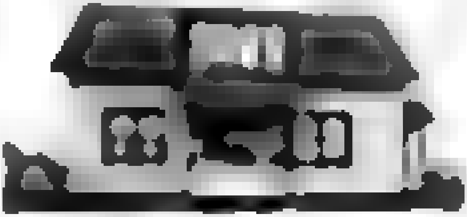
[illegible] moma, little Agnes passed away in the hospital. Haitena brought her to the grave alone [illegible]

[illegible] for the children and doing the housework. Baby Haitina was brought to Catherine Holwerda, who was willing to take care of her. For the [illegible]

[illegible] returning. In January 1940 he was admitted [illegible]

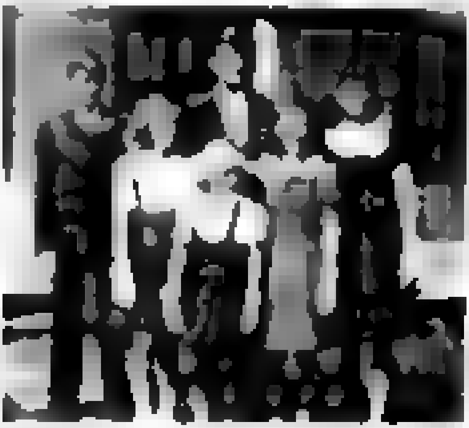
[illegible] were impassable for vehicles. The funeral was held May 1, 1940, a sunny day. That week Rev. van Der Woude had received new den[illegible]

[illegible] the family and the congregation.



[illegible]

In 1940 the Elgersma family moved to the SE 33-61-3-5, which Anne bought in 1943 from William van Ark. Rieka Lievers helped the family out by washing, ironing, and baking. She taught Jurina homemaking skills and in 1943 [illegible] came back to live with the family. Catherine Hofwerda was a good mother and had taken good care of her, but the family wanted her back, though it must have been difficult for Catherine to give her up.



[illegible]

Albert married Mabel Elzinga. During the fifties, Jurina married Ryer Krikke, and Bert married Tjamke Moes. After Bert married, Anne lived with him and Tjamke for about one [illegible]

Hilda married Sam Aardema. They have five children and live in Edmonton. Tillie married Karl Hestermann. Haltina worked at [illegible] store. She married John Van Zalen on October 20, 1958. They live in Westlock, where John is a painter. They have three daughters. Anne [illegible]

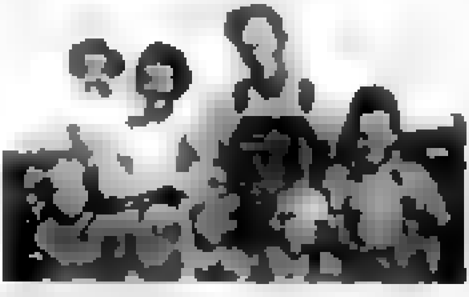
Albert Elgersma

ANDREW AND [illegible]

Andy and Jennie were married in Neerlan[illegible]

stil maar, net als een klein pigje ... lekker warm houden (just like a little piglet ... keep her [illegible] over them. Lewis Henry was born January 3 [illegible] right in the centre en ja there came a car and hit the ditch, but we nicely kept going. When [illegible] there. The driver said, 'Some drunk so-and-so drove me in the ditch.' So Andy pulled him out and [the grateful driver] handed him five dol[illegible]

[illegible] with a small motor bought in the Vega store [illegible] mending Wednesday and Thursday, cleaning house on Friday and Saturday. Sunday should have been a day of rest, especially in church. But not for Andy and Jennie: they took all the children along to church.



[illegible]

Sandra Ann was born March 13, 1950. Short [illegible]

[illegible] Andy and Jenny moved to the Emmanuel [illegible]

Jennie Elzinga

[illegible]

[illegible] looked after the livestock on the farm, and his pay was the weekly cream cheque. He did not [illegible]

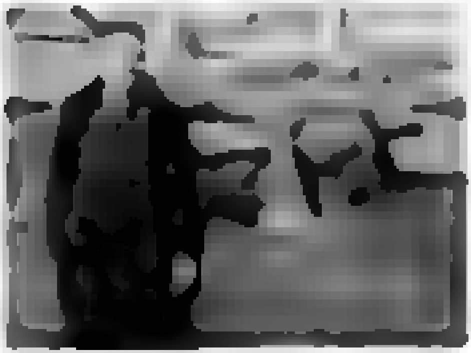
In the spring of 1927 Melle sent money for [illegible] took out the SW 21-62-3-5 as a homestead on May 20, 1927. John also took out a homestead but it was later cancelled.

In the spring of 1929 Melle wrote to Calvin College, requesting admittance. But when his father came unexpectedly that year, he aban [illegible]

[illegible] bit bigger farmers. Since they worked w [illegible]

[illegible] fairs and concerned about the welfare of [illegible]

After his parents died, Melle remained on [illegible] house and the contents burned down. A [illegible]



[illegible]

Even though he had always been somewhat

74 that Melle began attending art classes and

Mabel Elgersma

WIJNZEN AND SAAKJE (MAMA) ELZINGA

After their marriage on May 10, 1900, Wijn

would be difficult to establish his five sons on farms and he did not want them to be labourers or store clerks, so in 1926 the eldest son, Melle

andra, the oldest daughter, stayed behind)

day, September 17, 1928. They were met by Melle, who had arranged for Billy Quick, the Neerlandia truck driver, to pick up the trunks

to Neerlandia that same day. The family all

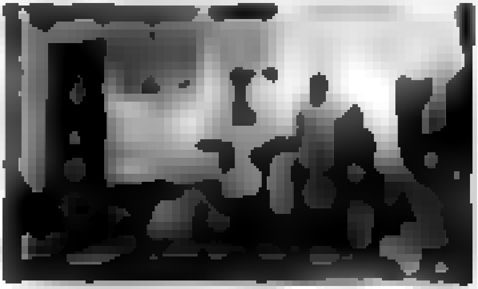
all except the youngest. He also promptly

to her, and said in *Fries*, "Binne wy en

taught Mabel her first English. The first few days were difficult ones. Mabel had long curly hair which was braided into two brai

Then Rulie Schoonekamp came to the rescue

friend. Many times Mabel's braids and ri



After the harvest Andy (Anne, December 25, 1914) also came to school. Mrs. Levy was thorough and did not allow the th sound to be

has some inconsistencies that were a problem [illegible] she did some work on the blackboard. When [illegible]

[illegible] Anna (Antje July 26, 1912) were employed by Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra to help with the harvest. One day Peter said, "I believe I heard a [illegible]

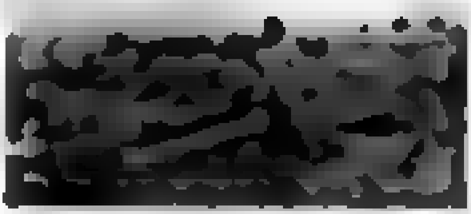
[illegible] for some time doing housekeeping. Peter worked at a dairy and later owned his own dairy farm in Edmonton. David died Septem[illegible]

[illegible] room and board (The room was often the cab or [illegible] the back of the truck). The roads were [illegible] from Edmonton to Clyde they were [illegible]

[illegible] d, even though after the first attempt Wijnsen [illegible]

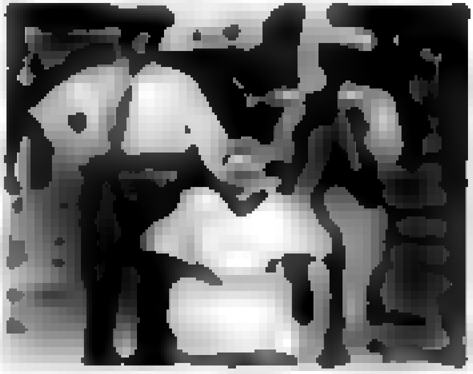
In the spring of 1929 the family moved to [illegible]

[illegible] been accustomed to a big house in the Nether[illegible]



Wijnsen about to burn brush piles, [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] lead the girls the first hour in Bible discussion, [illegible] the summer months, on Thursday evenings [illegible] Vereniging would meet on Monday eveni[illegible] some age [illegible] 1940.

Andy married Jenny Wierenga in 1943 [illegible] field there for eighteen years. She is now [illegible]

Wijnzen and Saakje remained on their farm until their deaths. Saakje passed away January [illegible] country. The fact that the quarter section of land was their own property was so rewarding to them that they enjoyed every moment of working and living on this farm.

Mabel Elgersma

ART AND LULA ([illegible]) FISHER

Arthur Fisher was born in the Netherlands [illegible] dam.

Lula was born in Michigan in 1913 and came to Canada with her family after spending short [illegible] 30-61-3-5, Art's father's quarter.

Lu liked to recount the story of their marriage. The story as retold by their son follows.

At the age of twenty-five, Lula was a clerk in the [illegible] Art. Early one winter she went to Edmonton for a short holiday and caught a ride with Art, who was hauling a load of hogs to town.

[illegible]

[illegible] ning. That night Art proposed and wanted to get married immediately. Lu accepted the pro[illegible]

So Lula stayed in Edmonton with her sister Pauline while Art returned to Neerlandia with

[illegible]

[illegible] until 2:00 a.m. the next morning.

[illegible] won't surprise me if [illegible] when they come home."

[illegible] moved into their new house people knew [illegible]

[illegible] (Tony) Arthur (July 11, 1941), **Rosalie** Thelma (March 22, 1944), **Marlene** Eunice (September 18, 1946), and **Dennis** (August 4, 1951). During [illegible]

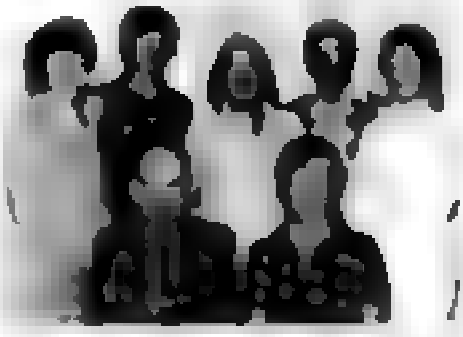
The family moved to Edmonton in 1950 and [illegible] still lives (1984) in their original house in [illegible]

Tony Fisher

CORNELIUS AND ELIZABETH [illegible]

Cor (Cornelius) Fisher, born in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia with his parents in 1927. He attended school first in Edmonton and later in Neerlandia. After he left school he worked for various farmers. In the winter of 1931-32 he worked at Chileen's lumber mill — a six mile walk across Shoal Lake. After this he stayed on [illegible]

On June 12, 1941, Cor married Elizabeth Pe[illegible] [illegible] 10-61-3-5, which Cor had purchased from his [illegible]



[illegible]

Cor farmed all those years [illegible] shells by the case. Next day they would complain of sore shoulders. Just never satisfied!"

[illegible] Wayne to continue with the farming. Cor and

Elizabeth moved to the SW 10-61-3-5 where they had built a new house.

In the meantime the children grew up and went on with their own lives. Betty married Henry Gelderman. Janet married Richard Kalmbach. They had two sons. Janet and lives in Fort Nelson, B.C. Joe married Hilda Wierenga, and Wayne married Hilda's sister Hendrene. Bernice works at Craig Insurance in Barrhead.

Cor and Elizabeth Fisher

PETE AND LULLA (BOS) FISHER

Pete Fisher, born in the Netherlands and educated in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia in 1927. He farmed with his brothers and parents until 1943. Then he bought Bertus Bos' farm (NW 22-62-3-5) in Vega and married his daughter Lulla on September 22, 1943.

Pete discing, 1930s.

Lulla had also come to Neerlandia in 1927. After she finished grade ten and part of grade eleven in Neerlandia school, she would have liked to become a nurse, but for further education she would have had to go to either Barrhead or Westlock and board there. Her parents could not afford this, so she quit school and went out working. She did housework for a neighbour for ten dollars a month. Three years later wages for housework went up to twenty-five dollars a month.

After their marriage, Pete and Lulla lived in Vega for three years. Pete cleared a lot of land with an axe and a team of horses. Their first son, Edward Simon, was born September 10, 1944. In 1946 Pete and Lulla sold the land back to Lulla's father and bought Chris Leder's quarter (SE 4-62-3-5). While living there, they had four more children: Hazel Beatrice (November 6, 1947); Geraldine Elizabeth (September 21, 1952); Bertrand Peter (November 2, 1957); Daylene Joy (October 6, 1964).

Pete and Lulla's wedding photo

Lulla always liked carpentering. Before her marriage, she and her sister Liz had made cupboards from V-joint boards for their father's house. Later, Lulla built herself some kitchen cupboards from spruce veneer and finished them with varnish. Pete enjoyed farming and fixing machinery, but Lulla did simple repair jobs around the house. Pete enjoys singing and, from the time he was a teenager, has always belonged to some choir.

In 1966 Pete and Lulla sold their land to Ryer Krikke and moved to the Mellowdale district, where they had bought the SW 18-60-3-5. All of the children except Bert are married.

Lulla Fisher

RICHARD AND KATHARINA (WIERENGA) FISHER

Dick Fisher came to Neerlandia in 1927. He first worked on the farm, and in the lumber

camps in the winter. In 1932, he went to work as a truck driver for Billy Quick. He was able to buy a truck and start his own business in 1934.

On June 2, 1935, Dick married Kay Wiegenga. They were married on Sunday afternoon, and early Monday morning Dick left on his trucking route for Edmonton. It was a wet spring and the roads were very bad. Late Saturday night he returned home to his bride — not exactly the most romantic way to spend a honeymoon!

Dick, Kay

In 1936 Dick's brother Art became a partner in the trucking business, and Fisher Brothers Trucking Co. had its beginning. That same year, on March 18, a son, Wilbur Richard, was born to Dick and Kay. He was soon joined by two little sisters, Hilaria Katherine on May 8, 1937, and Jeanne Shirley on October 5, 1938. Seven years later, on September 17, 1946, another little sister, Dianna Karen, was born.

For the first five years of their married life Dick and Kay lived in a four-room house on the original Fisher homestead. In 1941 they moved to a new house on SW [illegible]. About this time Kay became the proud owner of a new hand-powered washing machine. After fifteen minutes of frantic cranking back and forth, the load of clothes came out nice and clean. What a luxury and it sure did save my knuckles.

Bill, Hilaria, and Jeanne began their school years at Shoal Creek Heights School. They walked one-and-a-half miles across the fields in all types of weather. In 1945 and 1946 they were bussed to Neerlandia school in Uncle Albert Tiemstra's school bus. In 1947 they again attended Shoal Creek Heights for one year, then were transferred back to Neerlandia School, which they attended from 1948 to 1953.

In 1955 Dick dissolved his partnership with Art and purchased Vega Mercantile. On July 15, 1955, the family moved to Vega and Bill began trucking full-time. About this time Dick started a Massey-Ferguson dealership and built a shop in Vega.

On July 20, 1956, Hilaria married Philip Bryan of Vega. That same year, on August 17, Jeanne married Jack Bozak. On March 17, [illegible] Bill married Faye Singley.

With land being rapidly cleared and farming becoming more prosperous, business thrived, and soon many farms were decorated

Dianna, Dick, Bill, Jean, Kay, Hilaria, [illegible] with red Massey Ferguson machinery [illegible] In 1962 he was honoured as the second highest Massey Ferguson Dealer in North America.

In [illegible] with Massey Ferguson was terminated [illegible] and Bill [illegible] busy with the store and the trucking business.

In October 1977 Dick was diagnosed as having [illegible] hospital and was [illegible] home [illegible] and [illegible] the ground. Dick had two years remission from [illegible] his health failed again. He died [illegible] at the age of [illegible].

[illegible] sold her house in Vega in [illegible] and moved [illegible] Apartments in Edmonton [illegible] for the past seven years and has done [illegible] hospitals. She continues [illegible] good health.

[illegible] and [illegible] reside in Vega where they farm and have a gravel trucking business. They have four children: Jeanne and [illegible] the Vega area and are [illegible]. They have [illegible] children [illegible] Fisher reside and farm in the Vega area also.

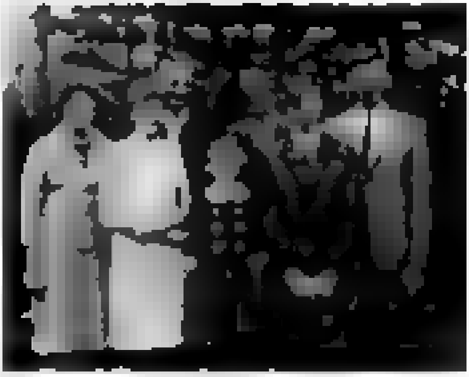
Richard Fisher

SIMON AND JENNIE (HIEMSTRA) FISHER

Simon Fisher was born in Edmonton and spent his first [illegible] years there. In [illegible] he moved with his family to the Neerlandia district. As he grew older Simon farmed with his brothers [illegible] and [illegible] and was spare driver for Fisher Brothers trucking.

In 1942 Simon joined the Royal Edmonton Regiment of the Canadian Army. After training in the British Isles his unit was sent to Sicily and took part in the invasion of Italy. He was taken prisoner of war and kept in Stalag 7A [illegible] Germany, for nine months. He was suffering from malaria and starvation when he was rescued by the American Forces. When he arrived in England he [illegible] weighed 90 pounds. After recuperating a short while in England he returned to Neerlandia in [illegible].

On December 26, 1945 Simon married Jennie Hiemstra and they began farming on the [illegible]. They have [illegible] children. Peggy June was born November 24, 1946. Now Peggy [illegible] Barrhead [illegible] and works as secretary at the Barrhead [illegible].



Jennie, Peggy, Simon, Crystal, Barry, Russell, Brenda, [illegible]

[illegible] was born April 25, 1949. He married Brenda Matthews in 1971 and they live in Barrhead with their two children [illegible] the Barrhead [illegible].

Russell, Barry, Crystal holding [illegible], Peggy, [illegible]

[illegible]

original farm where they do mixed farmin- [illegible]

[illegible]

While living in the Neerlandia district Si [illegible] munity activities. Simon and his sons are all [illegible] re was more bush in those days. In fact Jennie tells a story of Simon shooting a moose [illegible] hunter. One bear that was shot got cooked for [illegible] Russel and Barry. They are now enjoying life in [illegible]

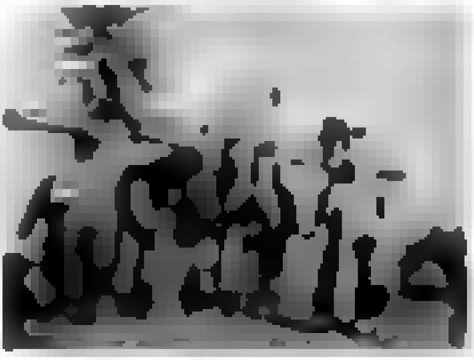
Jennie Fisher

WIEBE AND JISKE (WIERSMA) [illegible]

Wiebe (Wybe) Visser was born May 13, 1874 [illegible]

Jiske (Jiskje) Wiersma was born July 26, 1879, in Gaastmeer, Friesland, and lived there until she got married to Wiebe. Upon their mar- [illegible] Bildtdijk where they had bought a bakery. Six of their children were born there. Jelle (Yeller) [illegible] on April 30, 1905; Jennie (Sjoukje) Anne Se [illegible]

[illegible] those days [illegible]



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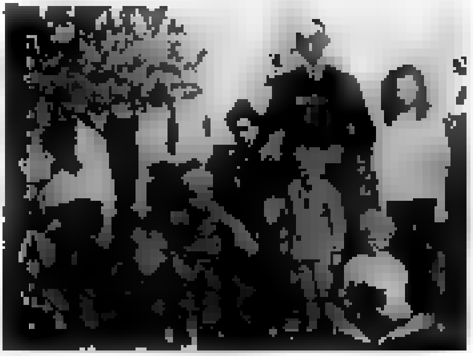


Back: Art, Yelter, Ed, Jetje, Wiebe, Jennie. Front: Pieter, Simon, Cor, Dina, 1919

dent happened to Yelter, then a young boy. He was working on a mower while his younger brother Pete was holding the retarding spring lever. But unable to hold on any longer Pete let go. It hit Yelter on the head and he suffered a broken skull. Through the work of many doctors, his life was spared, though he suffered epileptic seizures after that.

In the spring of 1925 Wiebe came to Neerlandia with his sons Dick and Pete and bought NW 10-61-3-5. They had come with a team of horses, a hayrack, canvas and supplies for the summer. They began to clear land and also spent time patching up an old log house. Wiebe, Dick, and Pete moved into the house and the mice followed shortly after. Dick was a good shot and, as a form of recreation, would sit in one corner of the house with his .22 rifle and shoot the mice.

In the winter Yelter came. He homesteaded the quarter just south of his dad's, the SW 10-61-3-5. Wiebe and the boys cleared and broke 20 acres by 1926. A few years later Dick took out a quarter by Shoal Lake, the NW 9-61-3-5.

In 1926 Wiebe sold the dairy business in Edmonton, and in the winter of 1926 Iske and the rest of the children came to Neerlandia. Edward had gone to Washington State, U.S.A., and Art stayed in Edmonton.

In the fall of 1929 the Fishers had a fire. The chicken coop, the cow barn, some granaries and even some stooks burned. All that was left was the old log house and a small log barn for horses. The first thing they did was make a

Back: Pieter, Arthur, Edward, Yelter, Dick, Cornelius. Front: Annie, Jennie, Jetje, Wiebe, Simon, 1925 lumber barn for the ten milk cows. The pigs [illegible]

Almost every year Jiske would take a trip to [illegible] another pot and then another until they had used up almost every pot in the house. [illegible] and the doctor said that she wasn't but he figured she soon would be because the boys were dragging the floors.

Although there were hunting regulations, [illegible] hunting. [illegible] that muskrats were to be trapped rather than shot. [illegible]

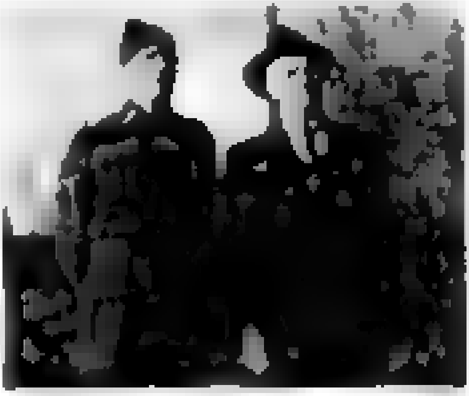
[illegible] married [illegible] in 19[illegible]. Three years later [illegible] married in 19[illegible] and Edward married [illegible] in [illegible].

Wiebe remained on the farm until he passed away in May [illegible]. Jiske stayed for a few years after that, living with her oldest son, Velter until he died in April 1958. Shortly after Velter died, Jiske went to live with Annie. She died in 19[illegible].

Fisher Family

WILLIAM AND MARY FOX

William Arthur Fox was of Irish descent. He was born in 1876 in [illegible] Manitoba. His wife Mary, was also Irish. She immigrated to Manitoba with her parents when she was two. After their marriage Bill and Mary moved to various places [illegible] Bill was a wanderer by nature and loved trying new ventures. One such venture brought the family [illegible] in 19[illegible]. They stayed for about four years.



[illegible]

[illegible]

Minetta (August 30, 1911, Winnipeg) married [illegible]. **Ellen** (November 21, 1913, Redcliff, Manitoba) married Frank Ciochetto of Naples. **Mary** (February 27, 1915, Winnipeg) married Pete Johnston and they farmed in the Vega area until the war

Tom (January 24, 1917 Winnipeg) and J [illegible]

[illegible] tended school in Neerlandia. Both served in [illegible]

Mary passed away December 13, 1939, in Edmonton. William lived to be 94 years old; he passed away in 1970

Ellen Clochetto

SIMON AND CARRIE (OLTHUIS) GROOT

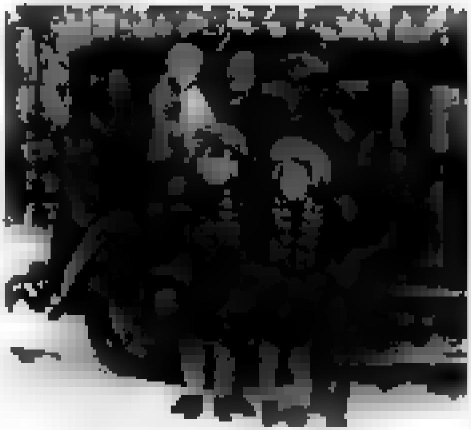
It was a cold February day in 1940 when the Groots arrived in Neerlandia. Si and Carrie were newlyweds and it was here they began their first home. They rented a house on the [illegible] the home of the store manager and [illegible]

During the autumn of 1939 Si had made inquiries regarding the feasibility of setting u [illegible] buildings were ideally situated and could read [illegible] agreement was reached and Si was given freedom to renovate and equip the store as a [illegible] dollars a month and set about making the necessary changes. Tools, equipment, and sup [illegible]

Si, born March 1, 1913, was fourteen when he came to Edmonton from Andijk, North Holland, the Netherlands. First he farmed with his [illegible] along with on-the-job training at an Edmonton garage. By the time he came to Neerlandia he had his mechanic's license, a welding certif [illegible]

The move to Neerlandia was a new venture for both of them. Si began as manager and [illegible]

[illegible]



Carrie holding Ed. Simon. Front: Elsie, Shirley Gilhuys, 1945

ing. Incidentally, after the roof was fixed, the rent went up to twelve dollars a month.

In April 1946 the Groots decided to move back to Edmonton. They left by car but, since a road ban was in effect due to the spring thaw, their furniture and other belongings were left behind until the trucks could travel the highways again. They spent just over three years in Neerlandia and those times remain special and are indeed memorable.

Brief Epilogue

Three months after the Groots left Neerlandia, their daughter Sherryn was born. Soon they learned that she was blind. This altered their lives considerably. In 1951 they moved to Vancouver because of the special education available for her there. They were blessed with two more children.

In August 1965 Si suffered a massive stroke and passed away. After Carrie had attended the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, she and the children moved back to Edmonton in 1966 where Carrie taught grade one for seventeen consecutive years at the Christian School.

Carrie Groot

ANDREW AND KATHERINA (KOHLER) HEBERLING SR.

Andrew Heberling was born in Bettanpus Polnanegye, Hungary, on November 9, 1886. In 1910 he married Katherina Kohler, who had been born on November 20, 1891. A daughter, **Katherina** (Katie), was born to them in 1910.

The Heberlings immigrated to Racine, Wisconsin, U.S.A., in 1912, leaving their daughter with her grandparents. In 1915 a son, **Andrew**, was born. About 1920 they went back to Hungary to get their daughter, but stayed for five years. They had thought that, after World War I, the small states in Hungary would unite and life would be better. When they found that the borders remained, they began to long for the greater freedom they had known in the U.S.A.

Soon the call of America became too strong and they decided to come to Canada. Here they bet the government ten dollars that they could make a home on 160 acres of wilderness. Andrew filed on the NE 9-61-3-5 in 1926. On this homestead Andrew and Katherina's last child, **Louise**, was born in 1930.

Back: Katie, Andrew Jr., Louise. Front: Andrew Sr., Katherina, c. 1947

In 1940 they sold the homestead to their son Andrew and bought the Peter Wagner homestead in Mellowdale, which they farmed till 1952, when they retired to Barrhead. Daughter Katie married Lewis Bentz. They have one child. Louise married Helmut Elmer Bastert.

[illegible] died on August 22, 1981. Both are buried in the Pentecostal Cemetery in Bloomsbury.

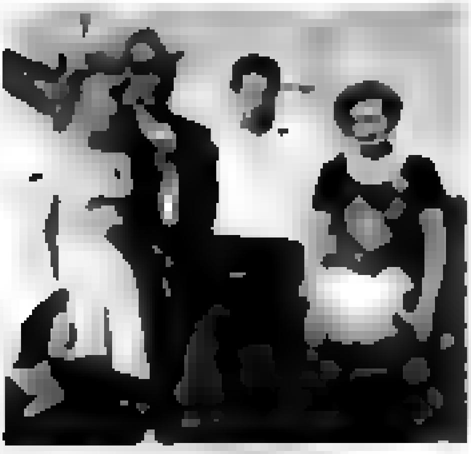
Andrew Heberling, Jr

ANDREW AND OLGA (BRUK)

[illegible]

Andrew Heberling Jr. was born in Racine [illegible] of fish and the bush full of furbearing animals. [illegible]

In 1940 Andrew married Olga Bruk of Camp [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] 1945.

In 1948 Andrew Jr. sold the homestead to Joe A. Wierenga and bought the Jim Dunn farm in the Leighton district. Barry Andrew, the Heberlings' third child, was born in 1954. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Jacob Hiemstra was born in Tzummarum [illegible] Janke Boonstra was born September 20, 1900 in Noord Bergum, Friesland. They [illegible] May 3, 1923, and worked for a wealthy land[illegible] Jacob had come to the conclusion there was not [illegible] They decided to come to Neerlandia because they wanted to be near the church and because [illegible]

[illegible]

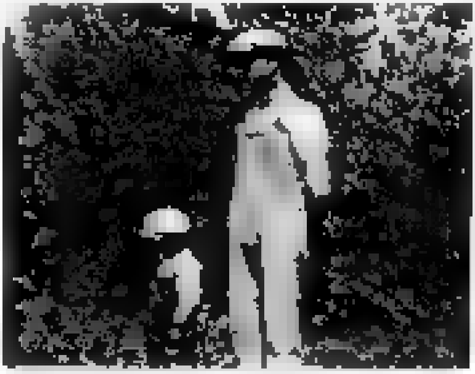
Jacob bought a cow from Klaas Tuininga for [illegible] was able to buy two horses and a sleigh. They [illegible] some visiting.

The July 1st picnic was a special highlight and much enjoyed. Blueberry picking in August was also a great adventure. Sometimes the family started off at four or five in the morning, went across the Athabasca River to James Fowler's place, and returned for afternoon chores.

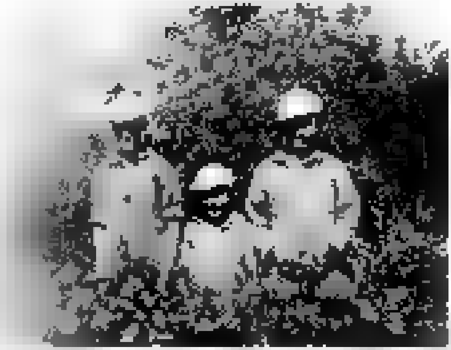
All the berries and meat were canned in sealers. Strawberry jam was a real treat. Low bush cranberries were stored in crocks in the cellar and used as needed. In the fall Jacob took his grain to Manola and exchanged it for flour and cream of wheat.

All socks and mitts were knit at home, and most of the clothes were homemade. Overalls had to be bought and a pair of rubbers cost one dollar.

Jake (standing), Jennie, Jantje, Henry, Arnold, Corry, 1933.



Father and son: Henry and Jake, c. 1938.



Arnold, Henry, Corry, c. 1938.

Butchering time: Jake, Arnold, 1938.

Jacob and Jantje raised four children, who eventually married and raised families of their own. **Jennie** (Jantje) (February 24, 1924) married Simon Fisher. **Cornelius** (November 4, 1926) married Grace Tuininga. **Arnold** (Aagel) (December 19, 1929) married Corry Clements.

Henry Hendrik, (November 29, 1933) married Jessie McCullough.

Jinke passed away in 1979. She had left all of her family in the Netherlands and [illegible] existence. In 1980 he took a three-week trip to [illegible] first trip home after 50 years of living in Canada.

[illegible]

JOHN AND ETHEL (INGLIS) HOWEY

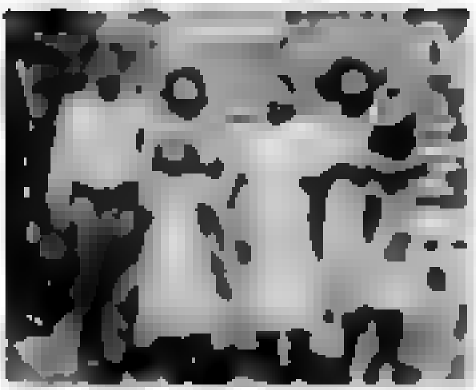
John Young Howey left Owen Sound. On [illegible] Chisholm Lumber Camp, where Tom Wilson of [illegible] a team pulling a hayrack with the family's be[illegible] Neerlandia, where they settled in George Caughlin's house on the SE 27-61-3-5. George [illegible] on the homestead (NE 21-61-3-5), which he had taken up for his son, Sam, and held for him till he reached 18 years of age.

On January 28, 1928, just as Charley Rest[illegible] was going to bed, he happened to see from his bedroom window that the Howeys' house was on fire. Had he not warned them, the re[illegible]ts could have been serious. As it was, no one [illegible]

[illegible] 1924) all went to school in Neerlandia. During this time, John and Ethel worked for the Wi[illegible]

Margaret left home on May 6, 1924, to work [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

en had two daughters and one son. Her youngest daughter, Ethel, was killed in an accident while riding a pony when she was 13 years old [illegible]

Mary married Harlan Cox and had three sons and two daughters. Both Mary and Harlan [illegible]

Bertha married Bill Lievers of Neerlandia. For a time Mrs. Howey looked after Bill and Bertha's three children. Bertha is now (1983) in [illegible]

John Howey died in May 1943. Ethel, his wife, had a stroke in June 1955 and also passed [illegible]

Margaret Anderson

[illegible]

united them in marriage using as text, "As for [illegible] the service it was snowing and the families got [illegible] new home on the homestead (SW 36-61-3-5) no honeymoon trip in those days. The weather [illegible]

[illegible] eighteen cents a bushel. The next year things were better and Gerrit met his obligations.

On October 18, 1938, the Ingwersens' first [illegible] cows and raising some chickens and pigs to [illegible] dollar 30-30 rifle he would get the occasional coyote, whose fur could bring five dollars if prime. For meat they relied mostly on moose and deer, which they usually smoked. Moose in particular was delicious when smoked and [illegible] was really cold and clear and crispy. We could [illegible]

[illegible] cle. (Usually the family was not with Gerrit when this happened, as he drove quite a bit faster by himself.) Then he would fix it with [illegible]

[illegible] Helen was born April [illegible] Schoonekamp was not a[illegible]

[illegible]

Burchead hospital. That same winter Ken de [illegible] to the bush: Gerrit and Grace, three children [illegible] gang. They acquired a nice supply of lumber [illegible] lost on the farm.

Gerrit and Grace's fourth child, [illegible] born January 24, 1946. That year also saw them [illegible] the charger. They took it down in one piece hauled it home on two wagons, and put it up [illegible] told Gerrit that the grace of God was also suffi[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] three or four years old, waking up early in the [illegible] back and the poles. Another time I came out of bed in the morning and there were pots and pans all over the floor of the kitchen with water [illegible] After giving me something to eat she told me to [illegible] would send me out while it was raining, but [illegible]

Not too long after that, our family moved [illegible] What a whale of a time we students had in those four short months. When we found out [illegible] problem then was finding the gang. Sometimes [illegible] find them, not only because of the noise they made, but also because of the smoke which [illegible] had not won [illegible] birthday party at George Anema's. It [illegible] minute I was unconscious but then came to. I felt sick so I went home, which was a mile of walking. After going a quarter mile, blood [illegible] home and they put me to bed. For two weeks I was in a sort of coma — never went to a doctor [illegible]

[illegible] roam far and wide. They usually followed a creek or went to large meadows where there was a lot of grass. When I was not very old, it became my job to get the cattle or horses. We [illegible] was a different story. One time my brother Gerrit told me to get the horses. I went west about a mile, then south to the creek which went over [illegible] came home without the horses, Gerrit would call me a baby. Well, I certainly did not want to be called a baby! So on I went. After about another half mile I came to another large mead[illegible] living there. I thought, "No one probably [illegible] home. I was all excited. I first told Gerrit, be[illegible] imagining things. At the supper table I told my [illegible]

[illegible] steel-wheeled tractor was bought new in 1937 for $1405). Even though the tractor had a lot of weight, it often got stuck. So they had to have [illegible] brush cutting done, so George Anema and [illegible] John lost an eye from flying wood

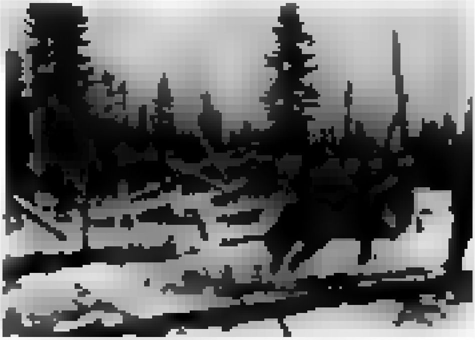
[illegible]

On October 24, 1941, John married Rose Tiemstra. They lived on John's dad's farm (NE [illegible] John, and Jake hauled the logs out and, at the [illegible] suitable, they would saw lumber, the customer [illegible] at their place. (Lunches would also be brought [illegible] and the mill burned down. John and Bill, with some help and advice, rebuilt a better and bigger mill. After three or four years, they sold the mill.

Sawing logs

In the fall of 1946, John and some others bought a D8 Caterpillar tractor with John Molodowich, although he sold them his share by springtime. They bought a brush cutter and piler for the Caterpillar and went to work clearing land. After a year-and-a-half of trying to farm and [illegible], John sold his share and tried [illegible] farming.

After 194[illegible] John and Rose had several bad years in which they were hailed out, so John went back to what he knew best and enjoyed. He bought another mill which was more profitable than the previous ones, and went back to the bush. In 195[illegible] John sold the mill and stuck to farming.


[illegible] skidding logs

John and Rose have five children: Winnifred Rose, born May [illegible], 194[illegible]; Marion Eve[illegible], born June [illegible], 194[illegible]; Neil [illegible] John, born March [illegible], 19[illegible]; Myrna Maxine, born June [illegible], 1955; and Dale Stanley, born August 6, 1958.

Back: Winnifred, Myrna, Neil, Marion. Front: Rose, Dale, John.

In 19[illegible] Winnifred married Henry Piers. Henry and Winnifred later went to California, but in 19[illegible] when they came back to Canada, John and Rose decided to go into partnership with them. John and Rose sold their farm and with Henry and Winnifred bought a dairy farm in Abbotsford, B.C. Their daughter Marion had married Ken Piers in 19[illegible] [illegible] was made with the three young [illegible]. [illegible] years later they sold the dairy farm. John [illegible] worked for [illegible] an American company that [illegible]. John and Rose are retired and live in Abbotsford, B.C.

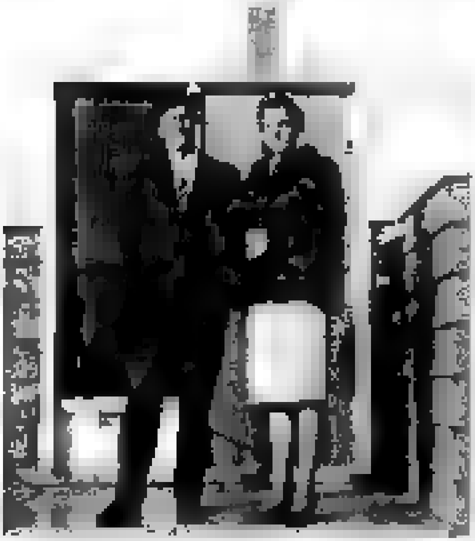
John Ingwersen

HARRY AND CATHERINE (HIEMSTRA) JANSSEN

Harry (Henry) Martin Janssen was born in Edmonton on September 27, 1917. Once before Harry was born, his father, Bart Janssen, had attempted to make a living in Neerlandia, and he had tried again shortly after Harry arrived. Thus Harry recalls that when he was three years old, they left for Edmonton with all of the furniture loaded on the hayrack and the cows tied behind. The third time Harry's family came to Neerlandia it was 1936 and Harry was twenty years old. He was quite able to [illegible] his load of

the work, and came to put in the crop before his parents arrived.

A few years later Harry met Tenie Hiemstra and they were married December 22, 1942, when the new house which they were building on the NE 21-62-3-5 was ready. Harry was a farmer from the ground up and a great help to his father. But Harry owned only the south half of the quarter and eighty acres was not enough to make a living on, so one and a half years later Harry and Tenie moved to B.C. That was to be a short stay, however, determined by Harry's mother passing away in 1948. Bart Janssen wanted his son to come back to Neerlandia, so while Bart went to the Netherlands for one year Harry took care of the land. This could not remain a permanent situation because there simply was not enough land for Harry, his father, and his brother Jack. In 1950 Harry and Tenie moved onto the Henry Hiemstra homestead (SE 20-61-3-5). They stayed there for five years. Then, because Tenie became ill, they followed her parents to Abbotsford, B.C.



Harry, Tenie, 1963

Tenie kept herself busy with handcrafts of all sorts and loved teaching Calvinettes. She died of cancer on November 12, 1978. Although Harry never stayed long in Neerlandia, he loved farming and the community life, and still calls it "back home." He appreciates the scenic country and continues to come for visits in the summer.

Harry Janssen

LAMBERTUS AND LILLIAN (TAYLOR) JANSSEN

Albert (Lambertus) Janssen (November 3, 1912) married Lily (Lillian) Taylor, who was a farmer's daughter born April 26, 1917, in Namao. After she married Albert, they moved to Edmonton where they stayed for seven years. During this time their two oldest sons were born, Bert (Lambertus, September 7, 1937) and Bob (Robert) David (December 30, 1939). Albert was working for a dairy farmer for two hundred dollars a year.

Lambertus, Lillian, 1937

Neerlandia proved to be irresistible when it offered Albert the possibility of having a farm of his own. Albert and his brother Harry bought Fred Morin's homestead, the NE 21-62-3-5, in March 1944. Harry had the south eighty acres and Albert had the north. On May 1, Albert came out with his oldest son, Bert, and Bob joined him in June. Since the house was not finished yet, that wet summer they lived in two granaries — one for sleeping and one for eat-

[illegible]

ing. Soon after Lillian arrived, the third son Jack (Jacob) Wallace was born (August 24, 1944).

[illegible]

Albert began clearing the land by hand, grubbing the large trees and chopping down [illegible]

[illegible] 14, 1946. Bert, Bob, and Jack began school in a small schoolhouse one-half mile north of their home. When Bert was in grade six, a new Vega school was built [illegible]

In March 1948 the Janssens bought their first [illegible] yard. He built an 18 by 24-foot garage as well. In [illegible] During the next years Albert bought two more quarters and built larger barns.

[illegible] Because Albert had had experience in this area, neighbours within a twenty-mile radius began calling him to help them with their sick or hurt animals. [illegible]

[illegible] again by Sylvia Ruth on June 13, 1959. Finally on [illegible]

[illegible]

It was around 1950 that Albert hurt his back [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] in Edmonton show that he had a se[illegible]

[illegible] received training and certification as artificial inseminator [illegible]

[illegible] after her husband's death, Lillian moved to the Neerlandia hamlet where she lives today. By then most of the children were married.

Bert married Bertha [illegible]. Bob mar[illegible] [illegible] and their three sons make their home in Spruce Grove where Marty [illegible] as an equipment operator for the [illegible]

[illegible] married [illegible] Lillian. Ivan and his wife Janet [illegible] Skyler Adam (November 29, 1977), in Edmonton. Paul also lives in Edmonton and is working in a sheltered workshop.

Jensen family

JIM AND MINNIE (FOX) JOHNMAN

Jim Johnman was born in Kilbeam, Scotland on March [illegible]. He and his brother Bill were the first of the Johnman family to come to Canada in 1921. In 1927 their father, **James**, left his sheep farm in Fifeshire, Scotland and came to Canada with his wife **Joan**, their son **Pete**, 17 years old, and Joan's father, **William Petrie**. They all came to Neerlandia at that time.

Minnie Fox was born in Winnipeg on August [illegible]. She came to Alberta with her family and married Jim on July 21, 1934.

Jim, Minnie, c. [illegible]

Jim and Minnie farmed the N.E. 14-61-3-W5 in Neerlandia. Jim also worked as a carpenter and helped build many homes and other buildings. He worked on the Neerlandia Church and Store and also on the old Barrhead hospital.

All three brothers, Jim, Pete and Bill, enlisted in the [illegible] in [illegible]. He trained in Grande Prairie and became instructor in the [illegible]. Jim was Corporal of the Instructors in the Royal Edmonton [redacted]ent. Bill was a jeep driver for the Infantry in the Royal Edmonton Regiment, and fought in Africa and Sicily. While in action his jeep was blown up. He was hospitalized, but recovered [redacted] his death in March 1984.

Jim and Minnie returned to the family farm in 1944 and continued to reside in Neerlandia until 1957. At that time, they sold their farm to [redacted] 13, 1939) resides with his family in Germany. He [redacted] (April 3, 1938), Bill (October 7, 1946), and John [redacted] James and Joan, and William Petrie. Jim Johnman passed away October 31, 1974. Minnie still [redacted]

and pile brush for Arie Rylaarsdam. They each cleared ten acres. Gerrit filed on SE 13-62-4-5 [redacted] there. There was no proper road to the quarter, [redacted] cough right after harvest. She had [redacted] rode around the countryside. Clara's [redacted] one chore girl, until her marriage to Gerrit [redacted] way home from Barrhead, picked a beautiful bunch of roses on a hill in Mellowdale and decorated Noah's Ark with them. When they drove into Neerlandia one resident teased them saying, "So you got married and didn't [redacted] churched, hey?" They did get churched [redacted]ruary 8, 1942. They were the last couple to be married in Neerlandia by Rev. H. Van Der Woude before he moved back to the U.S.

About two weeks before the wedding Gerrit and Clara went to Edmonton, and for $200.00 they purchased everything essential for their wedding and home furnishing: a cook stove [redacted] with chairs, groceries, wedding clothes, rings, cooking pots, and dishes. This all went into a little two-room house that they had moved to [redacted]

Gerrit farmed with his father and brothers and also continued to trap in the winter. He [redacted] 35 cents for squirrels, $2.00 for weasels, and $15-20.00 for coyotes. His best coyote pelt was

[illegible]

sold for thirty five dollars but that was a rare price. Years after Gerrit sold a coyote pelt and could only buy a box of shells in return. He quit hunting coyotes after that.

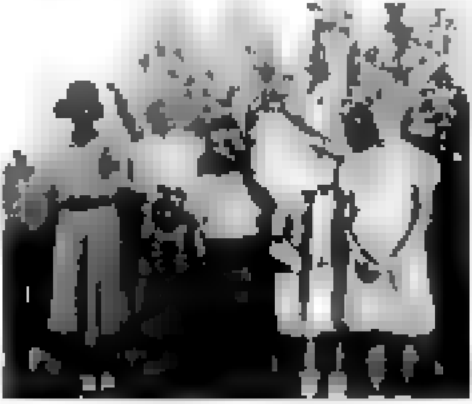
Cornelia Marlina was born to Gerrit and Clara on December 10, 1942, **Jennie Rena** on [illegible] 8, 1944, and **Louise** Gertrude on January [illegible] 1946.

In 1947 Gerrit and Clara decided to move to NE [illegible]-62-3-5 which Gerrit purchased from his father. The little house was moved to the new place when Clara was in the hospital giving birth to **Arlene Claire** (July 9, 1947). Their first son, **Bill** (Gerrit William), was born January 27, 1949. The children were growing fast. When [illegible] and Jennie were little they were real climbers and would even climb into the separator bowl.

Gerrit built a new house in 195[illegible]. When they moved in the kids ran from one room to another like wild Indians, loving the space.

Gerrit slowly began buying his own machinery. He raised chickens and sold the eggs, milked cows for the cream, raised pigs and grew grain. In 195[illegible] he had seventy acres with a nice crop of wheat but a big hailstorm came through and that nice crop yielded only ten bushels in total. There was hail for three years in a row and money was not too plentiful. So in 195[illegible] Gerrit bought hail insurance.

Gerrit and Clara were blessed with five more children: **Gladys Josephine** (February 23, 195[illegible]), **Annette** June (February [illegible], 1954), **Hazel** Lorraine (April 15, 1959), **Harvey Arthur** (February 11, 1961), and **Alfred Clarence** (August 29, 1963). None of the children were ever seriously ill. Clara always had a huge garden and canned over 200 quarts of food yearly. She had time to do only a few chores such as gathering eggs, slopping hogs, or milking. In the fall she still helped with the harvest. Sewing and patching were necessary too. She was always busy.



Back: Jennie, Louise, Cornelia, Gladys, Arlene. Front: Annette, Bill. 1956

Gerrit enjoyed farming and began to expand his land base. In 19[illegible] he purchased NE 18-62-3-5 from the government at a public land sale held in Barrhead. The quarter had forty acres cleared and cost $[illegible]. He also purchased NW 32-61-3-5 in 196[illegible]. Gerrit grew registered oats on some new breaking, and his records indicate that in 1962 he sold [illegible] bushels for $[illegible]. In 1962 a new John Deere combine, pull-type with power takeoff which could handle an eight foot swath, cost $[illegible]. He also bought a John Deere 420 Crawler in April 1962. He used it, among other things, to break land, clear snow, and push brush piles.

In 197[illegible] Gerrit and Clara sold the farm to Bill and retired. Bill had already bought the NE 18-62-3-5 from his father in 19[illegible]. He enjoys grain farming and also works for Zeidler Forest Industries Ltd.

On November 16, 1974, Bill married Bev

Mennink. Bev was born in Barrhead on Decem- [illegible]

[illegible] Rae Jean Amber (February 5, 1979), Jolaine Marie (December 22, 1981), and Ashley Lynn (January [illegible]

[illegible]

Mystery Lake. Jennie married Bob Nienhuis and lives in Edmonton. Louise is married to [illegible]

Gerrit and Clara Kippers

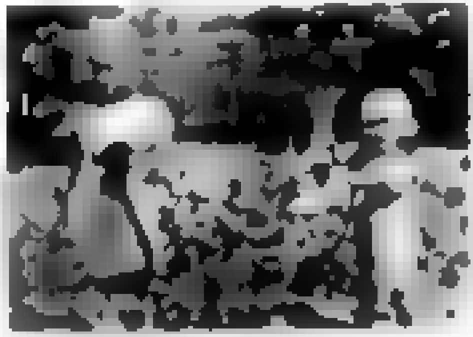
HENRY AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) KIPPERS

[illegible] crops and gardens were gone. Their farmstead [illegible] 1938).

Both Henry and Sophie enjoyed visiting but [illegible] limited on whom they could visit. Often Henry [illegible]

[illegible]

home. Henry (born June 3, 1941), as well as the [illegible] hospital. More girls were added to the family: Grace on September 17, 1943; Gladys Lillian [illegible] 1946. By this time, things on the farm had improved. The Kippers had their own water [illegible]


[illegible]

A second son, Lennert, was born February 27, 1949. At this time a terrible snowstorm hit [illegible] Two miles west of their place a bush fire was [illegible]

[illegible] She did manage to get the livestock out of the [illegible] what was lost throu[illegible]

[illegible] move, this time to the Emmanuel [illegible]

Sophie Kippers

[illegible] a big change from an office job in the old coun[illegible]

[illegible] were married. After the trip to the Stadhors [illegible] not even know the exact date and time of the [illegible] him that they were now married. Jan told his [illegible] new man.

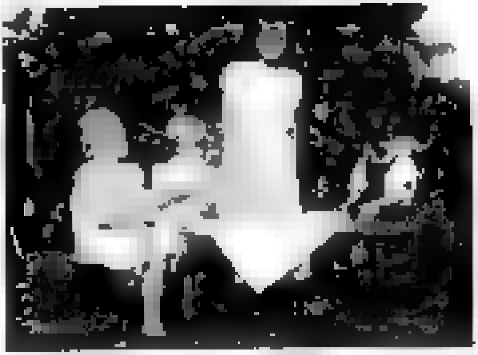
Soon after the 'wedding' Jacoba said [illegible] bye to her parents, relatives, and friends and [illegible] safely. This was the beginning of a lonely life for [illegible] ally married. On December 20, 1927 Tena Albertina was born and on June 5, 1929 Betty (Elizabeth) Christina was born to Jan and Jacoba.

After three years the family moved to Free[illegible] Reformed settlement was to be started. Here [illegible] was about twenty miles away. Jacoba stayed at [illegible]

[illegible] tian Reformed settlement never did materia[illegible]

[illegible] got the job; that was a day of rejoicing. The [illegible]

[illegible]a spent many hours helping in the store while Sophie Wierenga and Minnie [illegible]



Betty, Tena, Alice and Gerrit Jansen, 1933

store so the Konings were able to go on holidays to Sylvan Lake for a week one July. Sophie Wierenga went with them.

Jan, Tena, Betty, Rita, Jacoba, c. 1937

The day when radios went for sale in the store was an exciting one. Soon many people were buying them. These were battery-operated radios and required a long aerial up on poles. Jan installed these as far as the Vega ferry to the north, Glendale to the east, and Mellowdale to the south. Betty and Tena often accompanied their dad on these trips.

Store business went well and a new Co-op store was completed in 1938. Konings lived upstairs in the new building and enjoyed battery-powered lights and running water for the first time in Canada. Jacoba spent many hours in the Post Office and also checking the McKaskey in the store each day.

Bertha Wierenga minded the children and helped in the house. She accompanied the Konings on one of their trips to Banff. Sadie Reitsma, one of the girls who worked in the store, also accompanied them on two of the trips. On their first trip to Banff they were surprised that the car could make the steep hills, but it was not uncommon to have to put their thermos of tea in the radiator.

Ready for vacation, Jan, 1930s.

Jan and Aubrey Ashley obtained films from the National Film Board and showed them in the Neerlandia Community Hall. This was a big event and many people appreciated these educational pictures. Jan and Aubrey also showed these films in surrounding communities. The Koning and Ashley children all got to go along even though it meant extreme overcrowding in one car.

On May 30, 1940, an important event took place: little Johnny (Jan) was born. Jan was so overjoyed that he treated all the Neerlandia school children to a chocolate bar and an orange.

For the store board meetings, which were held regularly, Jacoba would always prepare a plate of sandwiches and cake. One evening one of the girls brought the sandwiches downstairs, knocked on the door, and dropped all the sandwiches on the floor. A rather embarrassed Jacoba quickly made a new batch. Jacoba also welcomed the store clerks into her kitchen each day for coffee and tea. She always provided a big plate of bread and a can of jam for them.

Jacoba gave sewing lessons to the schoolgirls twelve years and older after school. She did this once a week in her home and always provided a snack. She also organized an evening of entertainment by the girls which was put on for their parents. The highlight of the evening was a tableau entitled "Faith, Hope and Charity." All the lights in the hall were [illegible]

During the war, many Neerlandia women joined the Red Cross Society, which met regularly in the community hall. At one of these meetings Jacoba was elected president. She was [illegible]

The Koning family and the Pete Bootsma family of Barrhead had become acquainted when the Konings moved to Freeman River [illegible] gether.

[illegible] College in Edmonton to take grade ten. They stayed in the dormitory and once they got over [illegible]

In the fall of 1944, Jan heard of a store for sale in Houston, B.C. He was very interested [illegible] April 1945.

Jan became quite ill with heart trouble in 1952 and he died at the age of fifty-eight [illegible]

Betty Lieuwen
Tena Sturwold

FRANK AND [illegible]

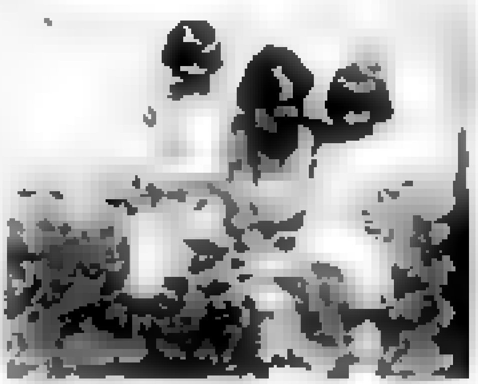
Frank Kowalchuk (Kowalczyk) was born in 1902 in Krasuw, Poland, where his parents [illegible] because there were many Polish and Ukrainian [illegible] dren: Mary was born in 1939, Joseph in 1943 [illegible]

Mary Kowalchuk married George Kostiniuk in 1958 and lives in Glendon, Alberta. Joseph worked part-time at Neerlandia Motors from 1960 until his death in a car accident near Vega in 1963. Raymond disliked the bus ride to Barrhead, so he attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1962. He married Judy Kenely in 1967 and they live in Burnaby, British Columbia. Victoria attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1965. She married Frank Brunner of Vega in [illegible] the 1970s and are now farming near Fawcett, Alberta.

Raymond Kowalchuk
Victoria Brunner

JAMES AND THELMA (HARE) LEVY

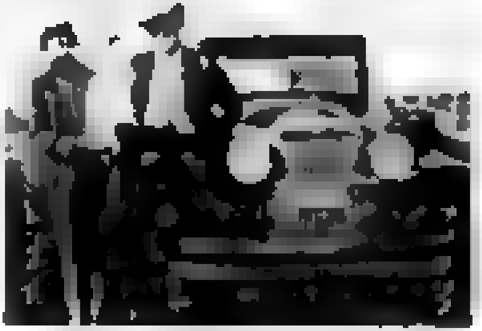
James and Thelma Levy both taught in Neerlandia in [illegible] When school [illegible] in the fall [illegible] she left the community.



[illegible]

In the spring of 1926 James R. Levy came to teach in Neerlandia. He boarded with the Toney Sturwold family. He, too, left at the end of the term. James Levy had been born April 2, 1899, at Waterville (now Vaughans), Nova Scotia and was educated at [illegible]

After teaching in [illegible] Thelma and they married [illegible] in a Baptist church in Vancouver, Washington. While attending summer school at the U of A in [illegible] answered an advertisement in the *Edmonton Bulletin* which indicated that Neerlandia was in need of two teachers.



[illegible]

In August [illegible] James and Thelma left for [illegible] **Buddy** James [illegible] three months [illegible] He had been born May [illegible] **Hugh** [illegible] and [illegible] in Boyle, Alberta.

Thelma Levy

CARL K. AND ANNE [illegible]

[illegible] packing plant, but after his father, Koop, died in 1915, he went to help his mother, Minke, and brother Henry on the homestead. On June 1, 1918, Carl enlisted in the Canadian army, but the army was [illegible] later that year since World War I was over.

[illegible] on August [illegible] 1919. He never proved this land up, however and in fact was more interested in studying. [illegible] attend Alberta College where he stayed in residence. [illegible] World War I and re-entering the teaching force.

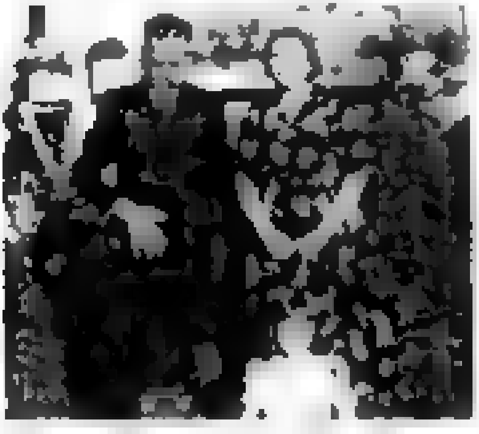
After attending college Carl worked as a

[illegible] between Westlock and Edmonton. While [illegible] and had to spend a long time in the Westlock hospital.

In Westlock Carl met Anne Mar[illegible]. Anne had been born February [illegible] in [illegible] Bohemia, [illegible]. She came to [illegible] with her family when a young girl. When she met Carl, she was working as chief cook in the Westlock Hotel. On June [illegible] 1940, Carl and Anne were married.

Carl and Anne first lived in a little shack at the Neerlandia corner. Later they built a house in the place where their shack had stood. Here Carl [illegible] a machine shed and became a dealer for Oliver and, later, John Deere machinery. Since his physical condition did not allow him to do heavy work, he found employment in various [illegible]. He worked for a time as a sub-agent for the area's insurance companies such as Mutual and [illegible], and later became an agent himself. He had a real estate business also. Besides this he was a Justice of the Peace. [illegible] the community [illegible] writing legal letters for people in the [illegible]. [illegible] became a trustee, representing the Neerlandia area in the Pembina school division. He served as trustee for [illegible] years.

Soon after they were married, Carl and Anne adopted a girl, Marilyn Ann [illegible]. They later adopted a boy whom they called Kenneth Carl (July 27, 1948).



C.A., Anne, Marilyn, [illegible]

Carl was a kind man and a hard worker. Anne was also an asset to the community. Anne will be remembered for her [illegible] when she catered for many weddings and other celebrations. Her flower and vegetable garden was a [illegible] and she shared the produce with her neighbours at the Neerlandia corner.

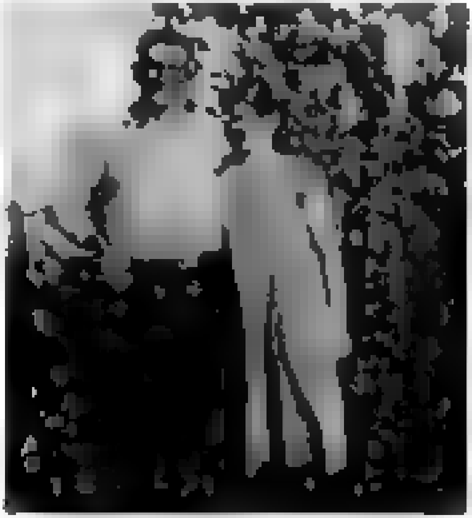
C.A., [illegible] Anne, [illegible]

At the age of sixty-one, on December 26, 19[illegible], Carl died of a heart attack. Marilyn married Jim Nanninga of Neerlandia. Ken married [illegible] of [illegible]. Anne remained in Neerlandia, keeping boarders and continuing the insurance business. After a few years she moved to Edmonton. She worked a short time for the Canadian Institute for the Blind. Anne developed cancer of the liver and passed away December 31, 1972.

HENRY AND INA (HOLM) MAST

Henry Mast was born in Bergen, Friesland, the Netherlands, on March [illegible]. His parents, [illegible] and Minke, homesteaded the NE [illegible] in 19[illegible]. While Henry was trucking freight from Edmonton to [illegible] with his truck, he met his future bride, Ina Holm.

In a tiny Swedish settlement, [illegible] in Finland, Ina Holm entered the world on August 23, 1901. In May 1926, at age twenty [illegible] Canada. [illegible] her first [illegible] there [illegible] down store. Here their courtship began and [illegible] 1926 Henry and Ina were married by Rev. [illegible] Henry took his new bride to the farm in Neerlandia which his father had homesteaded.



[illegible]

During the first year of his marriage, Henry worked in the [illegible] camp. Ina stayed home and looked after their few pigs and [illegible] their horses [illegible] Henry also purchased his first car, a Model T Ford. Henry and Ina were both quite proud of this purchase. Henry also worked in a few other sawmills.

The first years were lean ones. Henry and Ina lived off deer and moose meat. All they bought was flour to make their bread. Of course, Ina churned her own butter.

Once Ina made a housedress out of an old mattress [illegible] made many [illegible] of flour sacks, using the sewing machine left by Henry's mother.

Henry and Ina both worked very hard with axe and horses to continue the clearing of the land begun by Henry's dad. Slowly they got [illegible] farming.

In 19[illegible] the [illegible] helped Henry build a new house. A few years later Henry and Ina were [illegible] daughter, Rose, born June 5, 1937, who made their family complete.

When Rose was still [illegible] and wanting to help, she went [illegible] the barn and [illegible] completely [illegible] on the floor. No milk for that day!

[illegible]

Henry's interest turned to registered Hereford cattle and hogs which he raised during the [illegible]. He was an active member of the Barrhead and District Agricultural Society for several years. He also showed cattle at the Edmonton Exhibition and won championships with them there. In 1958 Henry Nanninga married their daughter Rose.

Henry and Ina lived on the farm until [illegible] when he sold his farm to [illegible] and retired in Barrhead. Henry lived there until September [illegible], when he died of a heart attack in the Barrhead Hospital at the age of [illegible].

Ina still lives in the same house in Barrhead. She manages with some help from Henry, Rose and her grandchildren.

Rose Nanninga

ARTHUR MICHAEL

At the age of thirty-two, Arthur Michael, a farmer [illegible] came to Neerlandia in February [illegible] with his twenty-three year old [illegible]. There he [illegible] up the [illegible] homestead. After moving to Neerlandia, he became known as "Mus [illegible] had a lot of muskeg on it) to keep him apart [illegible]

Mrs. Michael would bring the cattle to a muskeg hole near their quarter to water them. One time she and Harry Wilson both came to [illegible] crowded for the occasion. Elizabeth Wilson spoke for her son, and Mrs. Michael also had her say but the outcome is unknown.

[illegible] two-foot well. He also made four hundred tamarack fence posts. But the family left the homestead in April 1924 and moved to Idaho. U.S. A. Arthur wrote on the declaration of abandonment, "My reason for wanting to abandon the land, is that I was almost entirely surrounded by a Clan of Hollanders, which made it very undesirable from a Social standpoint. these people being of a very clanish nature."

JOHN AND SOPHIE ([illegible])

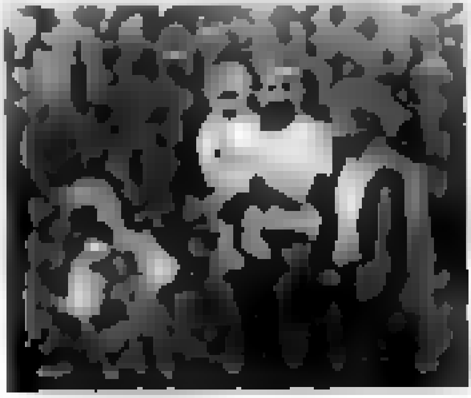
[illegible]

[illegible] lived in the Barrhead area. Their first child, Hilda Johanna, was born there on November [illegible]

Then in 1942 the family moved to Neerlan[illegible] to go trucking, so Sophie took care of the [illegible] She shipped cream from their two milk cows [illegible] Neerlandia store. Sophie's father and brothers would come to help, especially with putting up [illegible] pigs.

John Sr. had bought the NW 5-62-3-5, but sold it to Sophie's father during the 40s. The family moved to Edmonton for a time but returned to this area shortly after the war. John [illegible] brushpiler, and he used it to clear land in the [illegible] a Caterpillar tractor. He sold it to Sam Howey and later bought another one which he sold to Bill Olthuis in 194[illegible]

During those years, John Sr. had bought Jerry Reitsma's house but, after the family had lived in it a short time, he sold it to Sophie's [illegible] also, to Sophie's parents. A third child, Peggy, was born in September 1947.



Peggy, Tena, Sophie, John Jr. c. 1950

The Molodowich family moved to Barrhead in the late 40s and, after many more moves, finally bought a farm in McBride, B.C., where [illegible]

Sophie Molodowich

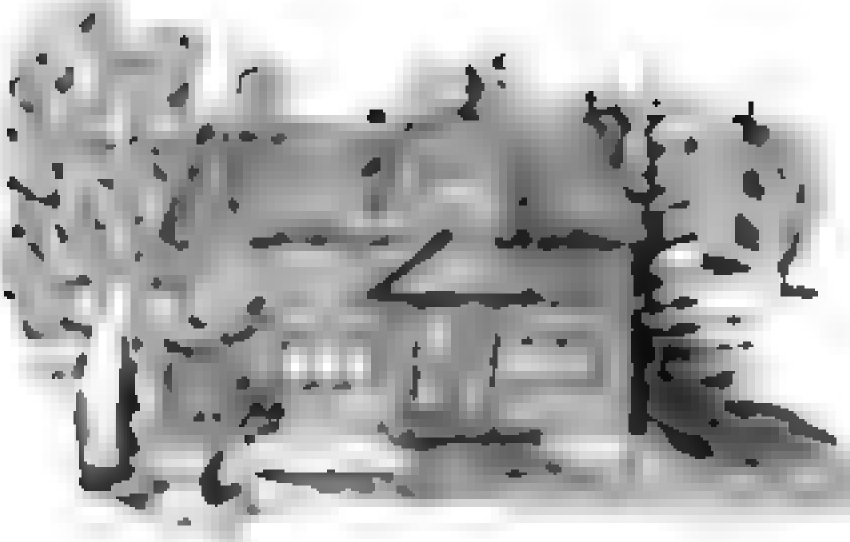
ANDREW AND RULIE (SCHOONEKAMP)

[illegible]

Andrew Naaninas was born in Edmonton [illegible] year. Except for two harvests during which he worked in the Morinville area, he worked [illegible] marriage. In 1940 he purchased the SE 21-62-3-5 from Loe Revse. It consisted of forty acres of [illegible]

On November 26, 1941, Rulie Schoonekamp of Neerlandia became Andrew's bride and the [illegible] by Andrew and his father and brothers.

Andrew and Rulie's first car, a 1927 Whippet



Andrew & Rulie Wierenga's
First home built 194[illegible]

[illegible]

sedan, is remembered for at least one embar [illegible]

[illegible]

besides being the year of their firstborn, it was [illegible]

Almost two years after Mark was born, Rose (Primrose) arrived on March 16. The year 1945 was also notable in that Rulie filed on a homestead quarter (NW 14-62-3-5). Shortly thereaf [illegible]

Andrew Wierenga [illegible]

Rose was follov [illegible]

[illegible] With Andrew expanding the farm, she was the [illegible]

The kids enjoyed endless games of tag in and out of the house. On winter evenings the [illegible]

[illegible] ward when the kids had the measles and Rulie became a capable nurse. Another trying time

[illegible]

was when Andrew was in a body [illegible] and for his frequent back problems. Ruth took on the [illegible] besides her regular work. When she had a few minutes she would play hymns on the pump organ.

Washing clothes was an exasperating chore, but with many interesting smells. The [illegible] gas engine on the washing machine [illegible] and it would always leave a puddle of [illegible] smell of lye soap irritated the nostrils. Yet the clothes came off the clothesline clean and smelling fresh. Soon the steam from the hot [illegible] would permeate the kitchen [illegible] and shirts [illegible] boards.

[illegible] meat and rendering fat were [illegible] the house with water [illegible] over the [illegible]

[illegible] Christmas [illegible] gifts [illegible] Christmas [illegible] There was a family gathering [illegible] and always a gift [illegible] Christmas was a time for new [illegible] and [illegible] to eat and always a piece of [illegible]

Money was not plentiful but there was a congenial and secure home life. At night after the children had been tucked in bed, Andrew would read the weekly Dutch paper [illegible]

[illegible] would [illegible] with the [illegible] of [illegible]

During the [illegible] again extended their holdings by purchasing the NE 14-62-3-5 from Fred Tansowny.

Mark took his schooling in Neerlandia and continued to farm with his father. On January 10, 1976 he married **Jo Ann Bakker** (December 5, 1954) of Edmonton. They have three boys **Matthew Dean** (March 18, 1977), **Jonathan Andrew**, (February 2, 1980), and **Nathan Todd** (February 4, 1983). They farm and have a broiler-breeder operation.

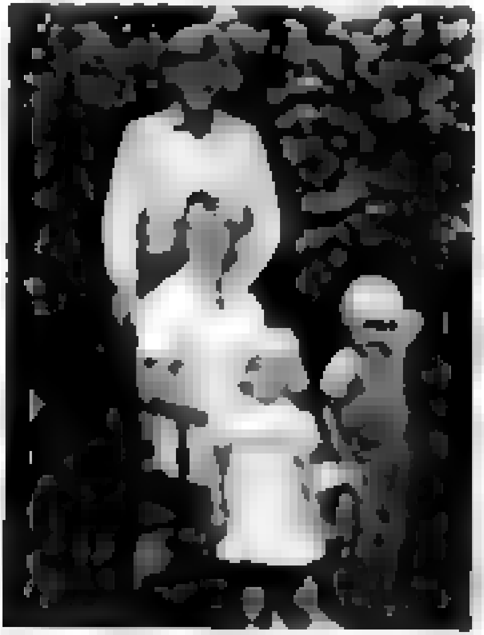
[illegible]

[illegible] attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead after which she began nurse's training at the Alberta Hospital. She returned to Barrhead to work at the Barrhead [illegible] In [illegible] she married [illegible] of Neerlandia.

Arnold attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead [illegible] returned to Neerlandia where he married [illegible]

Ruth obtained her Registered Nursing Aide certificate after being educated in Neerlandia and Barrhead. On May [illegible] she married [illegible] They presently are [illegible]

[illegible] attended school in Neerlandia before taking his welding trade at [illegible] school in Edmonton. On November [illegible] he married Sylvia [illegible] (July 23, 1956) of [illegible]



[illegible]

During 1973 Andrew and Rubie moved [illegible] an acreage in Mellowdale on the SE 33-60-3-5 [illegible]

Allen Perry

ANDY AND ANNIE [illegible]

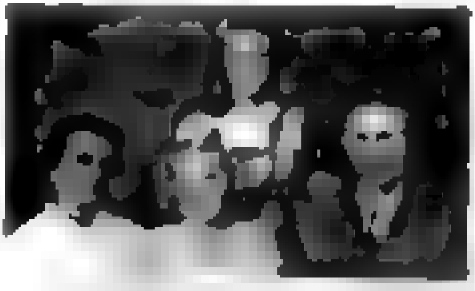
[illegible] Annie went "honeymooning" with horse and sleigh to their home on the NE 2-62-3-5

Andy and Annie's lumber home had only a cook stove, so it froze almost as hard inside the house as outside. The following day they [illegible] to the store to buy some groceries and a drum [illegible] that night they had not only the drum heater on the sleigh, but also two of Andy's brothers [illegible]

Andy and his brothers had built the house and Andy's dad had made a table, a large but [illegible] appreciation for playing the church organ for several years, the congregation gave Annie an [illegible]

[illegible]

Until the three Nawanga brothers could af[illegible] with the help of horses. Often Annie would



[illegible]

[illegible] help of tractors. But while his brothers had several sons to help on the farm, Andy and [illegible] acre farm. After finishing school, both of their [illegible] passed away in 1963 after suffering from bone [illegible] daughters and their families live in Agassiz, B.C.

[illegible]

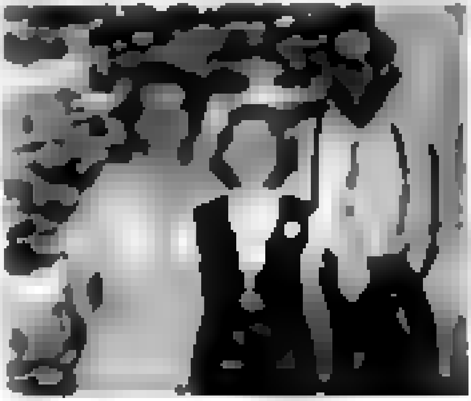
GERRIT AND CARRIE (MAST) NANNINGA

Carrie Mast was born in Neerlandia on Oc[illegible] home and help her mother. When her brothers and sisters were older, Carrie did some housework for the Wilsons, Bill Dieleman, Joe Fowler, and John Terpsma. She also did the wash and cleaning for Annie Elgersma on Mondays, not returning home until after dark. Later [illegible] time there were many pairs of frozen combination underwear to struggle with, since she had [illegible]

The Nanninga family moved to Neerlandia and [illegible] years until his marriage to Carrie on May 8, [illegible]

[illegible] place. On their way home they met R. J. de [illegible] "Home of course," they replied. R. J. then said [illegible] out the shack that Ger[illegible]

On September 14, 1946, the Nanningas were [illegible] piece of rope to ensure her safety.



[illegible]

Gerrit and Carrie worked in the field many [illegible] order to save her legs. The family left the farm in 1956 because Gerrit had a heart problem and [illegible] of A. C. Ashley. Carrie worked as a clerk in the [illegible] worked at CanFor Industries in a lumber mill and Carrie worked as caretaker for the Grande Prairie School District. They are both retired [illegible] parents, has enjoyed working at Macleod's for [illegible] goals.

Carrie Nanninga

IKE AND JENNY (SCHOONEKAMP) [illegible]

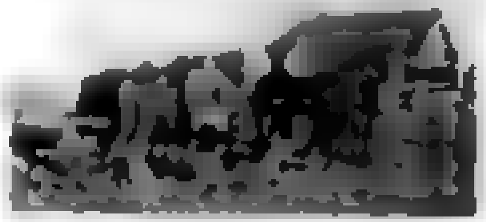
[illegible]

[illegible] on it himself. On August 17, 1926, Ike filed on [illegible] homestead. Then Andy got married, leaving [illegible] in with them.

[illegible] because Ike and Jenny could not afford to have [illegible]. (The outside was unpainted and [illegible] bought a dresser with a big mirror on it for six [illegible] sessions. At the bridal shower, which was held [illegible]

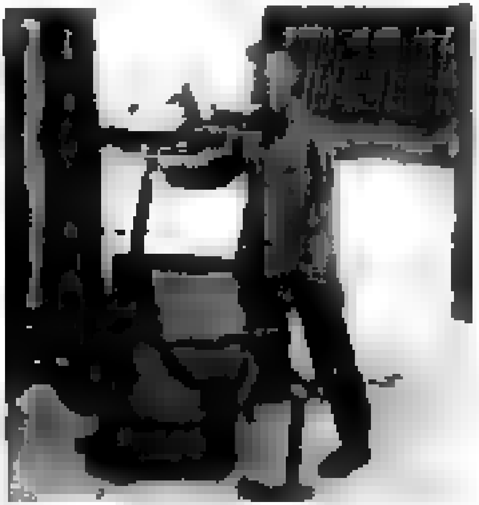
[illegible] Jenny melted snow for household use. How [illegible]

[illegible] These vehicles were pulled by Rally, a [illegible]



[illegible]

Ike suffered from ulcers and had an operation in which eighty percent of his stomach was [illegible] Later several small growths were removed. As a result of the operations, Ike lost a lot of [illegible] Rochester Clinic in New York to see if anything could be done to save Ike's arm. He was told that there was nothing to be done and that he had to have an operation as soon as possible. Sadly they returned to Edmonton where Ike underwent a quarter amputation. (This meant that the arm, shoulder, and shoulder blade were all removed.) The operation was a success and, although the repeated operations had weakened his heart, Ike returned home where he was soon back at work.



Ike, 1959

Louis had helped a lot whenever Ike had an operation. Now a young immigrant, Dan Vriend, was hired. He worked for Ike for about one year. Ike would not give up and soon was able to do most of the farm tasks. He showed great patience and perseverance in attempting to master a task but little things such as hard butter would make him angry because then he could not butter his bread without tearing it into pieces.

Alvin, their third son, was born May 27, 1940. The three boys were born at home with the help of Jenny's mother. Patricia, though, was born in an Edmonton hospital on August 31, 1944. The Nanningas' last son, Ronald, was born in the Barrhead hospital on February 24, 1950.

In other ways too the family was making progress. To provide electricity a wind charger was installed in 1945. It was a real pleasure to have electric lights and cold running water for the house and barn. The Nanningas built a new house in 1952. Although Grandpa Nanninga was retired by this time, he helped to build the house. To store their meat and other food, an icehouse was also constructed.

Back: Henry, Alvin, Manny. Front: Jennie, Patricia, Ike, 1949. Inset: Ronald, 1953.

By this time Ike and Jenny had two quarter sections of land. In 1958 they bought a third quarter. Henry, who married Rose Mast, lives on this quarter. Manny married Lois Van Dyke in 1961. Alvin married Joanne Gelderman in 1963 and moved onto the home quarter. At that time Ike and Jenny with their two youngest children moved to Edmonton.

Nine months later, on May 19, 1964, Ike passed away from a heart attack. One year later Patricia married Peter Elzinga. Ron stayed with his mother until his marriage to Hazel Fisher in 1972.

Jenny Nanninga

LOUIS AND TENA (ANEMA) NANNINGA

Louis Nanninga and Tena Anema were both raised in Neerlandia, and Louis courted Tena for about five years before their marriage on February 3, 1935, a beautiful winter Sunday. Their honeymoon was a two-and-a-half mile trip from the Anema farm to their new home. Louis had filed on the SW 12-62-3-5 in 1928 when he was eighteen, and had worked here clearing the land. By 1935 he had about fifty acres of crop land ready and had built a lumber house and a barn with the help of his brothers and his dad, Meine Nanninga.

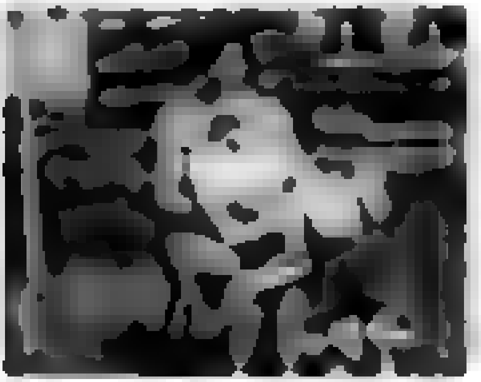
Tena's parents had given them a couple of cows. They also had four horses. They bought some pigs and chickens, and were on their way together. Groceries were inexpensive. Tena re-

[illegible]

[illegible] was a much better car

[illegible] mended a child specialist in Edmonton. Two [illegible] huge stomach. He examined Marvin and de[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

At first Louis shared machinery with his [illegible]

"I was never a lover of horses and this may [illegible] curred while I was working with them. One [illegible] have any garden tools except a hoe. The har[illegible] and a lot of turning had to be done. Work horses usually had bridles with blinkers on so they could not see directly behind them, but in the turning process, one horse saw the harrows and me. He spooked and kicked over the [illegible] broke and the other was pulled through my hand. Away the old nags went — through the road allowance with brush on it and through a [illegible] the evener broke, but the horses went for a [illegible]

"What this all meant ,along with a temper [illegible] leather. Copper rivets were generally used to [illegible] help with the threshing. They were fine in the field, but when they came by the separator they [illegible] wheel of the thresher. This prevented the horse from rearing up and from going either forward [illegible] chained to a wall. Horses are not always as [illegible] no more frisky broncs to put up with," said Louis.

Meanwhile, Louis and Tena were also [illegible]

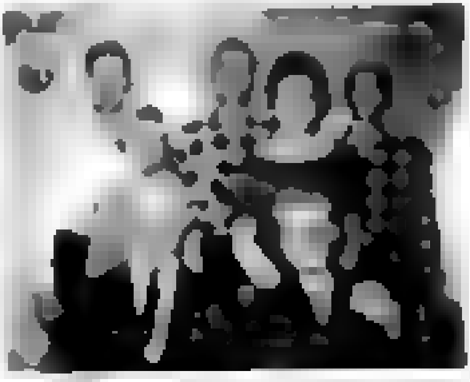
"It sounds good — ready to be used again." It [illegible] four benches down when the bottom fell out of [illegible] born two years later on November 17 [illegible]

[illegible] Louis bought a share in a D8 caterpillar and [illegible]

[illegible] Abday. Their second girl, Sharon Darlene, was [illegible] grain, pigs, cows, cream, and eggs. The price of farm produce was good, and during this period [illegible] Louis constructed a fairly large hip roof barn. The main floor was for pigs and cows and the

[illegible] those in need.

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] and had an enjoyable time, though there were [illegible]

Their last land acquisition was the NE 11-62-3-5 in 1962. In 1967 Louis and Tena sold [illegible] there. They also travelled a little — to the [illegible]

[illegible] and leaving home. Jim went to work in Edmonton as soon as he graduated from high school. On March 31, 1959, he married Marilyn Mast. They have seven children. Jim is a partner [illegible] Budget Rent-a-Car business. Eleanor married Ray Merkus in 1961.

After high school, Gerald took an electronics course at NAIT. For a short time he worked in the city but soon returned to Neerlandia to farm with Marvin. Gerald married Vera Plantinga in 1973.

Sharon was an athletic girl. She excelled in sports, especially in running, and won several medals in this field. After high school Sharon enrolled in a Certified Nursing Aide course and got a job in Edmonton. There she met and married Victor Schappy in 1977. Victor is an optician practising in Edmonton. They have three children.

Marvin continues farming and now lives on the home place (SW 22-62-3-5). In 1964 Ted Reitsma, Jack Jansen and Marvin obtained their private pilot's licenses. The following year they bought Neerlandia's first small airplane. The runway and hangar were on the Hanninga farm.

In 1974 Marvin went to work on an oil rig for the winter. Always curious, he found out what camp life was all about. He decided, however, that that was not where his future lay, and on April 25, 1975 he married **June Hallquist** of Edmonton. June was born in Ottawa, Ontario, on June 23, 1937. In the 1960's she came to Edmonton where she worked at a variety of jobs before she married Marvin. They have one son, **Timothy** Louis.

Marvin has other interests along with farming. He bought a gravel truck in 1976 and still owns one. He enjoys being on the road, especially with a payload. He also does a bit of commercial flying. June is an excellent cook and always has a huge garden along with her chickens, turkeys, and other animals that she loves.

In 1979 Louis and Tena bought a mobile home, which was moved to the hamlet one year later. They are happy to be retired in the community where they have spent their lives. Louis enjoys woodworking and doing crossword puzzles. Tena is a charitable person who visits the sick and shut-ins.

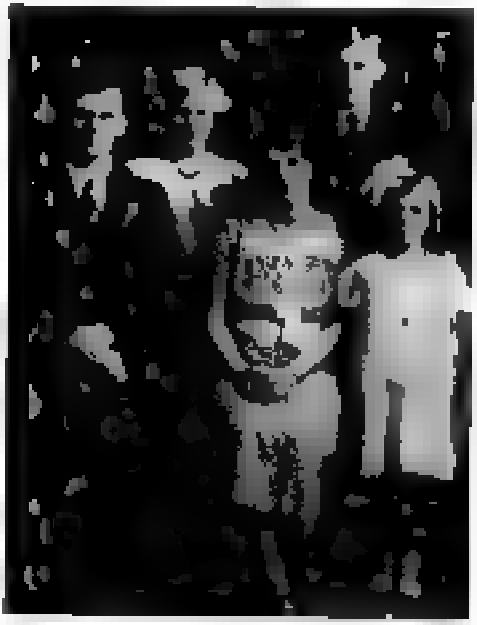
Eleanor Markus

JOHN AND JENNIE (TUININGA) OLDEGBERS

John Oldegbers and Jennie Tuininga were married December 1923. They lived for a time in Elke Jorritsma's house. Then, with help from the family, a house and barn were built on the SW 31-61-3-5 land owned by John. Here two children, **Susie** Sjoukje (June 3, 1924) and **Albert** Jan (January 28, 1926) were born.

John and Jennie moved to Edmonton in 1929. There three more children were born. Sorrow came to the family when Jennie died of pernicious anemia in April 1946. Her youngest child was two years old.

John worked at a variety of jobs before he was hired by the Canadian Pacific Railway. He worked there till his retirement. He remarried in 1979 and lives in Edmonton.



John, Susie, Jenny, Albert, Clara

WILLIAM AND CARRIE (TUININGA) OLTHUIS

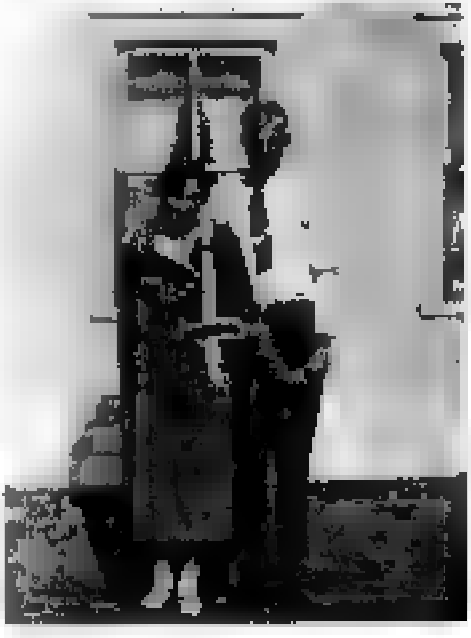
William Olthuis, better known as Bill or even Willie, spent most of his life in Neerlandia. There he learned the art of trapping, became known as one of Neerlandia's two best hunters (the other being Bill Lievers) and was at times the bane of a teacher's existence. Life on the frontier was a great adventure for him, but that was all to change.

The hunter, 1925.

The lady or the horse?

One day a strange thing happened to Bill: instead of admiring the fine lines of a horse he found himself admiring the fine figure of a woman. Before long he realized that one woman, Carrie Tuininga, was nicer than all the rest and he began to court her. The Tuininga parents, Klaas and Sjoerdje, were not sure what to make of this young fellow coming around. It was not that long ago that Klaas had had to reprimand Bill for spitting tobacco juice between the cracks in the church floor. One of Carrie's rascally younger brothers once shot Bill in the nose with an arrow, but no harm was done to the nose and Bill's ardour was dampened not a bit. Little by little Carrie's parents were won over as Bill showed signs of settling down.

When Bill asked for Carrie's hand in marriage Klaas said that he saw the potential that Bill had and knew he would be able to provide for her. He hoped, though, that Bill would stay home more than he had done in the past. With the blessing of both sets of parents Bill and Carrie were married March 11, 1934, in the Sun-



Courting days. Carrie, Bill, 1933.

day afternoon church service in a double ceremony with Joe and Catharina Holwerda.

Bill and Carrie settled on Jacob Olthuis [illegible] located than Bill's homestead. Here, one half [illegible] little rooms — a bedroom, front room, utility room, and kitchen — on the main floor. The [illegible] hard and money scarce (these were the Depression [illegible] essentials: a new cookstove for thirty-eight dol [illegible] painted chairs. Bill's father was handy and made them two tables. Bill and Carrie bought some aqua paint and painted the tables, chairs, and [illegible]

[illegible] decided to join the family in Edmonton and John moved in with Bill and Carrie. For the next [illegible]

That winter Shirley made her arrival on a [illegible] things, but many other things in life made up [illegible]

The following spring the Olthuis family [illegible] Bill's youngest brother, who came to stay with [illegible] spring and remaining until November [illegible]

A severe frost damaged most of the grain in August 1935. That was also the year the Alberta [illegible] and that looked pretty good at the time. Elsie [illegible] ber 23, 1935). When the new baby was about a week old, Carrie developed phlebitis in both legs [illegible] get out of bed. Gradually she improved and began to walk on crutches, but her legs continued to trouble her so that she required hired help many times through the following years.

[illegible]

"[illegible] marriage," Carrie said, "but Bill was a person [illegible] selling his well-drilling outfit. Bill and [illegible] the eight [illegible] wells they drilled was a flowing well [illegible] Alex [illegible] The [illegible] drilled was [illegible] feet deep and [illegible]

In the meantime the family grew. Jean was born August 30, 1938. When Bill and Carrie got married they had a small buggy just right for the [illegible] but now with three [illegible] it was too small [illegible] three had to stand behind the seat [illegible] on her lap. In [illegible] were returning [illegible] telling Bill all the latest news when Shirley [illegible] was [illegible] picking herself up [illegible] scream. She was unhurt and soon the family continued on its way.

Ready for a buggy ride. Shirley, Elsie, [illegible]

While Bill provided well for his family, he did not [illegible] she was unable to walk [illegible] wagon [illegible] pushed her to the [illegible] a few days Carrie was getting around by pushing a chair on which she could rest her injured ankle. Another day when Carrie was [illegible] under [illegible] her legs were bothering her again [illegible] she grabbed [illegible] more strength than [illegible] toward the barn door [illegible] the wall and [illegible] the floor [illegible]

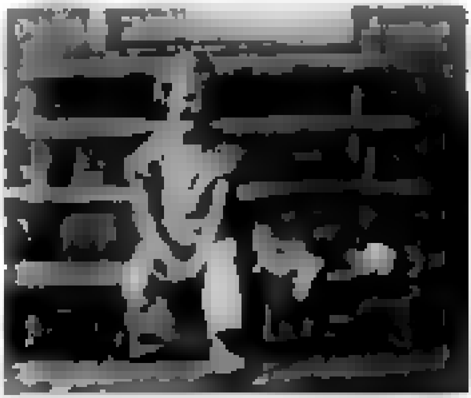
After three girls, the boys began to arrive. Jack [illegible] was born August [illegible] and Clarence [illegible] on March [illegible] 1944. By this time the [illegible] house was getting rather crowded so Bill decided to build a new one [illegible] the present house [illegible] of the church and school. The basement was dug with a [illegible] and scraper. The cement was mixed in small cement mixers and poured by the wheelbarrow [illegible] Bill's dad, a carpenter, spent the summer with the [illegible] family and put up the [illegible] Henry Bouwman Sr. helped with the finishing. The house had hardwood floors throughout. Bill [illegible] them and then [illegible] Anema and [illegible] did the sanding and varnishing.

Elsie, Jack, [illegible] Jean, Shirley c. [illegible]

Bill drilled his own well on the new place and then [illegible] Tuininga thought that finally Bill was going to stay home. She was to be disappointed. [illegible] was a farmer at heart and was always looking for new challenges. In partnership with Jack Tuininga and John Ingwersen, Bill bought a [illegible] With it they cleared and piled many acres of [illegible] the Vegas and Naples. After a year [illegible] Nan[illegible] [illegible] Anemia bought [illegible] and [illegible] shares [illegible] George and Bill worked together. [illegible] hired men to work for them and kept the [illegible] going twenty-four hours a day during the summer. Then Bill bought the other partners out and was sole owner until he [illegible].

Bill then worked in partnership with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] Anemia. At times this machine [illegible] worked day and night. The threshing machine was [illegible] with his brothers-in-law, Charles [illegible] and the [illegible].

In the meantime three more children were added to the family: Frederick [illegible] Stanley [illegible] 1951 and [illegible] Karen on September [illegible] 1953.



[illegible] 1958

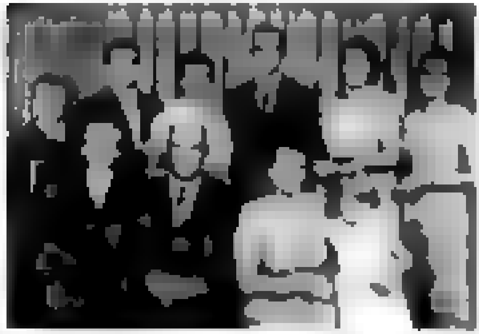
Both Carrie and Bill delighted in their children and eagerly anticipated and welcomed each new arrival. Although Bill [illegible] awkward to handle them [illegible] once they were [illegible] enjoyed giving them horseback rides and wrestling with them on the floor. Rainy days were especially [illegible] for then the whole family would play games or put jigsaw puzzles together. Sunday evenings when there was no company, the family would often sing hymns and [illegible] a week the family would gather in the [illegible] for Bible study.

Twice each Sunday the family went to church. Often though someone had to babysit whoever was the youngest at the time. Between services Bill and Carrie generally lay down for a nap. When she thought it was time [illegible] get up and when everything was [illegible] she would wake Bill and he would come out of the bedroom stuffing his shirt in his pants and [illegible].

Bill and Carrie had different musical tastes. Bill [illegible] [illegible] classical music [illegible] the Messiah [illegible] Carrie much to the children's amusement.

The [illegible] children were expected to do well [illegible] [illegible] the children were [illegible] well but if one had forgotten to stand up tall or had [illegible] while speaking, he would hear about that too.

As the girls grew up they were a big help to Bill [illegible] remarked that they were as good as boys for doing chores and helping with the harvesting. [illegible] the house and garage [illegible] tasks, much to Elsie's dismay, and the girls went on to high school and university.



[illegible]

Bill was courteous and soft-spoken. The [illegible] heard him use were "Blasted!" and "Judas Priest". This mannerliness stood him in good stead [illegible] deal with (sometimes unreasonable) people on a daily bases. In 1955 Bill was elected to repre [illegible]

[illegible] head Westlock-Thorhild Auxiliary Hospital board, and several local boards. Who would have thought that young Willie Olthuis would [illegible]

[illegible]

Everyone was welcome there and treated [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] College where he met Sandra Wichers. They were married in 1973. Stan followed Fred to Trinity but later went to Toronto where [illegible]

[illegible] Bill and Carrie ever made was to take Linda to [illegible] to be well-cared [illegible]

[illegible]

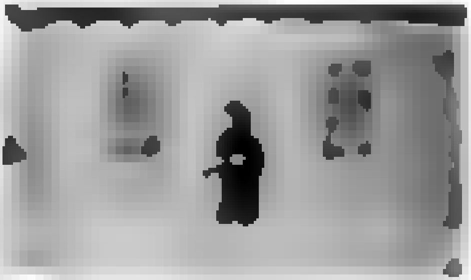
[illegible] he took his father-in-law's advice and is staying [illegible]

GERHARD PAAS

[illegible]

a farmer in Nobleford and later moved to Coal [illegible] took up a homestead (SE 15-62-3-5) there in December 1928.

Gerhard built a little 10 by 18-foot frame [illegible] ped and grain was practically worthless [illegible]



Gerhard standing in front of his shack, 1930s.

Gerhard had one brother in the "old country" and before World War II kept in contact with him by writing regularly, though not [illegible] When the war was over he started writing [illegible]

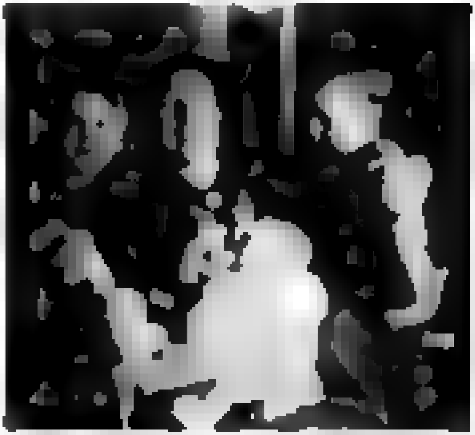
Meanwhile, Jan (February 23, 1919) and Ebeltje (July 1, 1918) Paas had been married in [illegible] ouse. When the opportunity came to go to Canada, they were eager to go. Their uncle [illegible] old daughter, Derkina (July 16, 1946). On June 20, 1947 they boarded the *Waterman* and [illegible] they stayed at their home overnight. The next day the Vissers put them on the bus to Barrhead. Norm Toebes was on the bus with them, and the Toebes family was in Barrhead with a car to take them to Neerlandia. Jan and Ebeltje were the first immigrants to come to Neerlandia after the war except for some war [illegible]

The next day was the First of July picnic, and they had to go there, although Ebeltje and the [illegible] Ebeltje to the store and bought some thin[illegible] were very impressed with the generosity of the [illegible] bought Cecil Tuininga's house, but it had to be [illegible] with his Caterpillar tractor to the southwest [illegible] barn which they moved near Jan's house. The Paas family moved into their house before the winter. At the time they came to Canada they could take only one hundred dollars per per[illegible] winter was very lean. They bought two milk [illegible] Jan helped some neighbours getting firewood. On the average they had no more than five dollars a week for groceries, but they managed [illegible] this Jan writes: "My wife expected the baby in [illegible] time my uncle was living with us in the house [illegible] head. Jack was twenty at that time. The roads [illegible] of Neerlandia and there a culvert was washed [illegible] There was a big gap in the road. So Jack got [illegible] Schoonekamp, she was very reluctant to [illegible]

[illegible] ber 15, 1948) in his shack. He had been to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



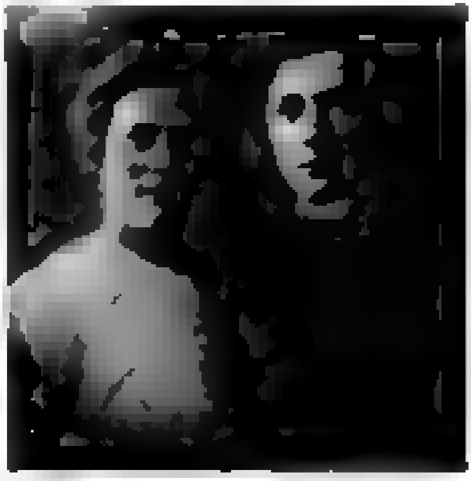
[illegible]

That summer Jan and Ebeltje had made [illegible]

[illegible]

John (Johannes, August 15, [illegible]) and Elizabeth (January [illegible], 1868) Peters lived in

Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, with their five children: **Tena** (Trientje, July 24, 1917), **Della** (Dieuwerke, May 13, 1920), **John Jr.** (Jan, October 14, 1921), **Elizabeth** (November 9, 1923), and **Hilda** (Hiltje, November 21, 1925). John worked as a farmhand. Some families of Uithuizen, one of them John's brother-in-law Hendrik Wierenga, were planning to immigrate to Canada. John was eventually persuaded [illegible] together, but the John Peters family left Rotterdam about a week later. On April 3, 1928, they left on the *Nieuwe Amsterdam*. The voyage took ten days.



[illegible]

After arriving in Edmonton the family went [illegible] church services in Tofield.

John wanted land of his own, so he came to Neerlandia in the fall of 1928. The family moved into an old log house on the Kampnar place. The old saying goes, "Don't let the bedbugs [illegible]

Siebren Tiemstra and Menne Nanninga [illegible]

[illegible] After clearing a little land John, with the help of [illegible]

[illegible] had come from [illegible] John moved his [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

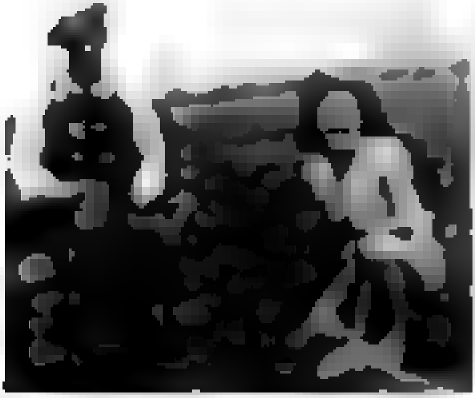
[illegible] at 4:00 a.m. to look for them. Sometimes he [illegible]

[illegible] But when the children got a [illegible] chores before and after school. She would have [illegible] walk all the way. When Tena was fourteen she [illegible]

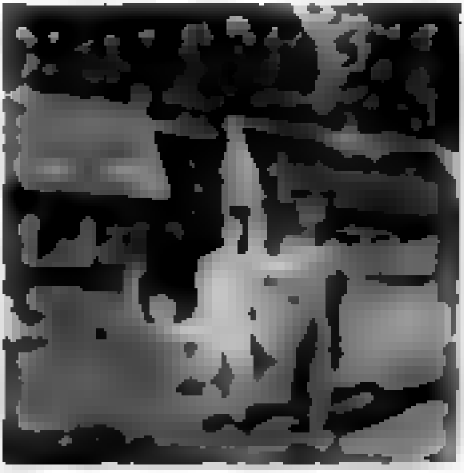
[illegible] and harrows all day.

In the 1950s Job [illegible] married Kay [illegible] family farm.

John Sr. [illegible]



[illegible]



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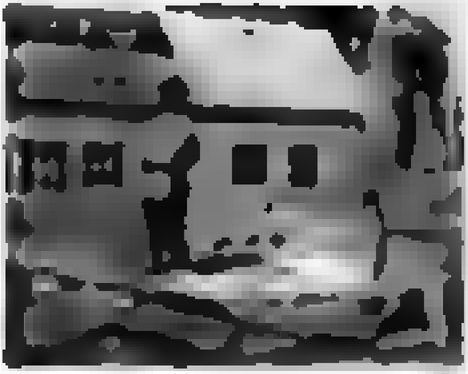


[illegible]

John Sr. was taken to his Lord on September [illegible]

Della was also taken Home on July 8, 1983 after a lengthy illness. She had one son, Phil Novikoff (June 25, 1953). The other three daughters also married: Tena to Ed Visser, El[illegible]beth to Cor Fisher, and Hilda to Joe Wiereng[illegible] son of Andries and Rika.

John Peters Jr.

OENE AND GRACE (WIERENGA) PIERS

The town of Marum in the province of Gro[illegible] then he and Reitze De Vries each took up a homestead in Topland, Alberta. Together they cleared twelve acres on one of the quarters, but soon realized that there was no future for church life there. They were aware of the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia and visited there from time to time. On these occasions they stayed at the Tiemstras. These must have been more than just social visits, because soon Oene Piers bought the SE 28-61-3-5 from Siebren [illegible] came available as a homestead lease, and second. Oene met Grace (Grietje) Wierenga. Reitze and Oene discussed which one of them [illegible] that Reitze saw the handwriting on the wall [illegible]

On December 25, 1931, Grace and Oene were married, and she replaced Reitze as Oene's companion in the little log house.

Before marrying Oene, Grace had worked [illegible] who said that he wanted her, not her [illegible]

During their years in the log house, three [illegible] Peter was born October 16, 1932. He was fol[illegible] and Henry (Sid) on January 31, 1935.

[illegible] and Oene's married life. Only a few acres of land could be cleared each year. Trees were chopped down by axe. The ground was then [illegible] their marriage. Oene worked out during the week, clearing land with Joe Holwerda. Grace stayed at home to look after the farm, doing [illegible] of cows and a few pigs were the only livestock housed in the little log barn, but since Grace [illegible]

Those first years the Piers family did not [illegible] the boys, so Grace made new clothes from old; an old coat of hers was turned into a new jacket [illegible]

In 1936 a new house was built with the help of Jerry Reitsma. On October 17, 1936, a new baby was born in the new house — another boy

whom they named **John**. In 1938, Grace and Oene expectantly awaited the birth of their fifth child. On December 23, **Edward** was born. Three years later, friends and relatives eagerly awaited news on the arrival of a sixth child. They thought that this one would surely be a girl, but on June 13, 1941, **Kenneth** made his appearance in the household. Each of the boys was born with the assistance of midwife Aaltje Baker.

John, Edward, c. 1948.

Ed feeding the chickens.

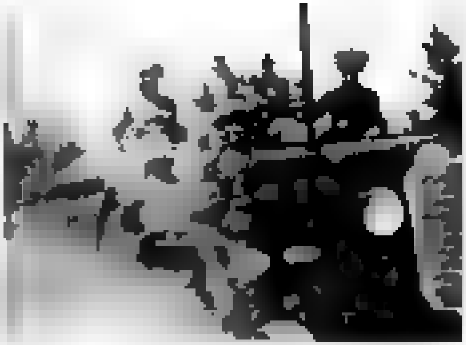
Six boys kept Grace Piers busy, but in 1943 the time drew near for yet another baby to join the family. It was decided that Grace should go to the Barrhead hospital for this birth. There on February 1, **Hilda** arrived. What joy there was in the family when God finally blessed them with a girl!

In order to keep up with the work in the house, Grace established a schedule: wash clothes on Monday, iron on Tuesday and patch on Wednesday. There was always lots of patching to do. The rest of the week was as carefully structured. The two oldest boys helped their father on the farm, but Henry was often pressed into service in the house to help his mother who suffered from backache. There was lots of work to be done and as the other boys grew up they, too, had to help their mother. Every morning sandwiches had to be made for school lunches. Then when the boys returned from school another loaf of bread would be sliced, spread, and devoured. To keep up with her sons' healthy appetites Grace had to bake bread every day.

Hard work, but also a lot of playing, characterized life on the farm. The boys had great fun playing together in the evenings. On crisp winter evenings, they could be heard from afar, not only playing hockey, but keeping a running commentary in true Foster Hewitt fashion. The Piers brothers played so vigorously that cut lips and chipped teeth were a common occurrence. On one occasion, Bert had a whole tooth knocked out.

"The Piers." Back: Bert, Peter, Henry. Middle: Ed, John. Front: Hilda, Ken. c. 1950.

The farm slowly expanded into three quarter sections of land. An Oliver 70 tractor purchased in the early 1940s was a great help. Later, in 1948, a John Deere D was bought. Oene's brother, John, who had just emigrated from the Netherlands, was impressed with this tractor. He said, *"Dat is een heel handig ding."* (That is a real handy thing.) Of course, anyone who knows the John Deere D realizes that it was



Our first tractor and our boys: Dene, [illegible], Ed, Peter, Ken, John

Grace, Dene, [illegible]

anything but handy. Nevertheless it served the farm well.

As the boys grew up and were able to do more of the farm work, Dene was able to devote more time to community life. He served numerous terms on the church council, the school board, and the store board, as well as on municipal boards.

In 1959, Dene and Grace Piers retired from farm life. They purchased a house from Klaas Tuininga Sr., and settled in the hamlet. During their retirement years together they spent some time visiting and travelling. Suddenly on February [illegible] 197[illegible] Dene suffered a fatal heart attack, and went home to be with the Lord. Grace continues to live in the house and enjoys visiting her children and grandchildren.

Though Grace and Dene worked successfully to provide a good life on the farm, only one of their children, Peter, followed in their footsteps. Ben, who married Jeanne Van Dyken, is driving truck in Ripon, California. Henry and his wife Winnifred live in Abbotsford, where he works for Ritchie-Smith. The next three sons are all educators. John is principal of Neerlandia Public School. Dr. Edward Piers, who has a Ph.D. in chemistry, teaches at The University of British Columbia. He married Shirley Ashley in 1959 and they live with their two sons in Richmond, B.C.

Dr. Ken Piers also has a Ph.D. in chemistry. He is chairman of the chemistry department at Calvin College. He married Marian [illegible]. Since their three children are grown, Marian has become a registered nurse. [illegible] married Russell [illegible] on December [illegible] 1962. They live in Calgary with their two children.

John Piers

AEBE AND MINNIE (BAKER) PLANTINGA

Aebe Plantinga (born November 22, 1900) came to Neerlandia from Franeker, Friesland, the Netherlands, in April 1929 at the age of 28. He had been driving truck between Haarlem, Franeker and Leeuwarden for some years but as he saw no future for himself in the Netherlands, he began thinking of emigration. Since his cousin Jake Hiemstra had immigrated to Neerlandia three years earlier, that also became Aebe's destination. After arriving in Neerlandia, Aebe boarded and worked at Jake's for about a year, then hired himself out to Raymond Baker. He worked there for about two years, and at the same time began dating Raymond's niece, Minnie. The two had met some years earlier when Aebe had gone with Jake Hiemstra over to Minnie's parents' farm to borrow a sack of flour. Aebe soon stole Minnie's heart.

It was in May 1932 that Aebe and Minnie heard that a dairy farmer in north Edmonton had work for a young couple. They were interested, and Aebe went to take a look. The job looked promising, so Aebe and Minnie decided

[illegible]

Two days after their wedding, Aebe and Minnie started work. They had to be up at 4:00 a.m. to milk the 28 cows by hand. "Only one of [illegible] was a good milker, the other was fair," wrote Minnie. The milk had to be carried to the milk [illegible]

[illegible] began. Aebe usually worked in the fields and [illegible]

[illegible] Minnie get into the field and do the stooking [illegible]

[illegible] raise (they made only $35 a month between the two of them), and the boss refused [illegible]

[illegible]

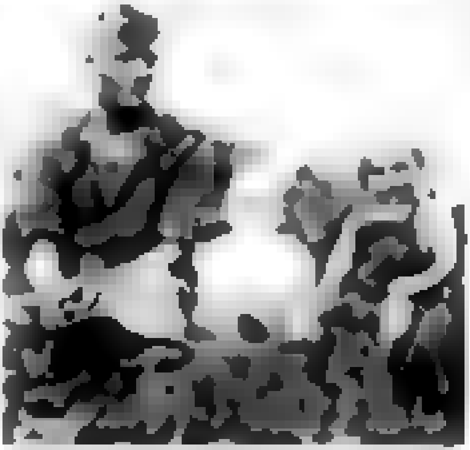
The new job had shorter hours, but less pay [illegible] was help with milking five to twenty cows each day. All went well at their new job until Aebe [illegible] pump engine. The fall put a few bones out of place in his lower back, and he was confined to his home. But Aebe's boss took him [illegible] ropractor who put the bones back in place. A[illegible]

[illegible] odd jobs. He and Minnie also kept a cow, a few chickens, and some lambs on the homestead [illegible] in the shack Aebe and Minnie called home. They named him Stewart (Sjoerd). He proved [illegible]

[illegible] homestead so that they had more livestock and buildings than before, and also some small ma[illegible]

[illegible]

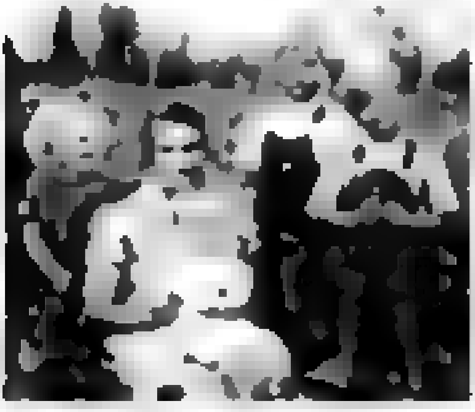
Aebe and Minnie during the Depression — [illegible]



[illegible]

In the fall of 1936, Plantingas' homestead [illegible] a few days with Minnie's parents, and then [illegible] a house owned by Neerlandia Co-op that stood where the Service Centre now stands ([illegible]) That winter proved to be one of the coldest winters Aebe and Minnie can re [illegible]

The next year, towards spring, the Plantinges bought a small house and with the help of others had it moved on skids to their homestead. Soon, an addition to the house and a small barn were built and the Plantinges were [illegible] garden. On February 17, 1942, **Ella Catherine**, Aebe and Minnie's second daughter, was born.

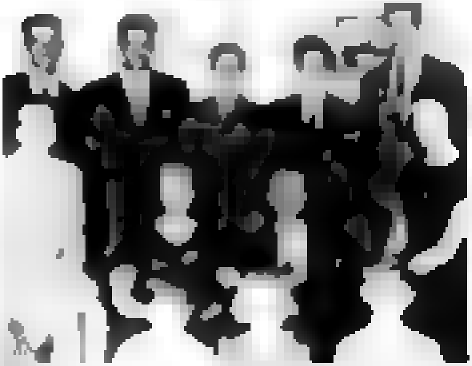


[illegible] Minnie holding [illegible] Stewart, Joe, c. 1941

After the Second World War, the Plantinges sponsored Aebe's sister, **[illegible]**, her husband **[illegible] Elzinga**, and their two children, **Anne** [illegible]

Netherlands to sponsor yet another of Aebe's [illegible] few months later, Aebe's aged parents, **Sjoerd** [illegible] land. Aebe's father was a city person, used to [illegible]

As time went on, Aebe and Minnie acquired [illegible] The two oldest boys, Stewart and Joe, spent a [illegible]



[illegible]

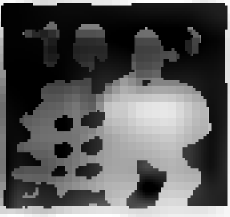
cows. The cream cheques that came in weekly [redacted]

Also welcomed by the Plantingas during [redacted] **Richard** Henry (September 19, 1947), **Albert** Charles (December 5, 1948), **Dora Kathleen** (April 12, 1952), and twins, **Duane Philip** and **Donald** John (November 22, 1953). Aebe had been concerned for some years that Neerlandia [redacted] to start up on their own. So in 1953, after reading an advertisement about available land, Aebe, Stewart (21), and Joe (19) went north to [redacted] and Joe each had chosen a half section in Forest Creek. Aebe helped them get started and they have been farming there ever since. Joe was the first of the Plantingas to get married. He married Cathy Solomons in 1964 and they have five children. Two years later, Stewart married Doris Ebens; they have two children. Gilles was also attracted by the good land at Blueberry [redacted]

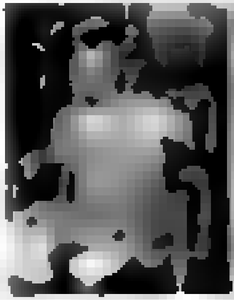
[redacted] ning water and electricity, something the [redacted] Then in May 1966, Aebe bought Paul Kalmbach's farm in Mellowdale (E½ 35-60-3-5, NE 26-60-3-5) and sold his other land. Because the Mellowdale farm had better land, it was here that Aebe harvested good crops for the first [redacted] previous year. Grace, who had been born on [redacted] taught at Lacombe Christian School for two [redacted]

Albert and Grace's daughter, **Malinda** Grace, was born on August 11, 1976. Their first son, **Brian** Ashley, was born on August 20, 1978, and their second, **Daniel** John, on September 6, 1981.

[redacted]


[redacted]

[redacted] the Neerlandia area on the NE 11-62-4-5. He married Marilyn Elgersma on November 29, 1974. They have two daughters: **Trina** Marie, born on April 24, 1978, and Tania Lynn, born on [redacted] April 5, 1980, died of cancer on March 21, 1982 after a lengthy illness.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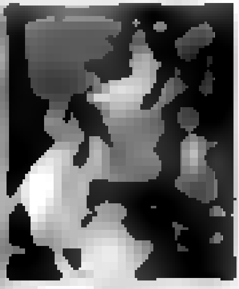

[redacted]

[redacted] three children. Frank works for Woodwards. Ella married Walter Land in 1964, and they reside in Lacombe with their three children. Walter owns Land's Wash and Lube and Ella is vice-principal in Lacombe Christian School.

[redacted] at College, where he met Sheryl Schrotenboer whom he married in 1974. They live in Red [illegible] a principal of Red Deer Christian School.

Minnie Flaskinga

[illegible]

Charlie (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born in Oostermeer, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 9, 1901, the oldest in a family of ten [illegible] family had immigrated to Canada. One of Charlie's younger brothers, Jerry, and a cousin, Ted, were both in Neerlandia. Now Charlie [illegible] dollars in my pocket." On his arrival in Neerlandia, Charlie made his home with his cousin, Ted, and his family until the cabin on [illegible] W 16-61-3-5 on April 21, 1927, and patented it [illegible] Dick Fisher. To make ends meet, Charlie [illegible] her father died in 1926.

Bertha, who was now living and working in the U.S.A., returned to Neerlandia several [illegible] began courting her, and on March 8, 1933 [illegible] farm. They also purchased the Pete Louws farm.

[illegible] busy elsewhere. One fine August day [illegible] chased. Bertha was attending to a sow that was [illegible] pened to glance toward the yard and saw [illegible] ablaze. By the time they reached the yard the fire was so far advanced that nothing could be saved. All the Kampman records and keepsakes were destroyed in the fire. The Reitsmas lost both their home and their possessions, but the community rallied around them. Tom Wilson supplied a shack for them to live in and others [illegible] on their own until Charlie and his brother, Jerry, built a new house.

Shortly after the completion of the house, [illegible] adopted a little girl, Margaret Patricia Mae [illegible] Therefore, on April 13, Charlie made the trip [illegible] companied him to the adoption agency. He was immediately charmed by the first baby he was [illegible] an attractive, curly-haired baby. She was a special source of pleasure to her father and [illegible] She is now married and lives with her husband in Vancouver, British Columbia.

[illegible]

[illegible] through the Reitsma farm, provided an ideal [illegible] ple of that time remember sliding down the hill [illegible]

[illegible]

dries Wierenga and moved to Edmonton [illegible]

Sadie Prins
Helen Skurrow

[illegible]

[illegible]

Jerry and Jennie settled happily in their [illegible]

[illegible]

ringa, and Jerry often worked as a team. Two [illegible]

[illegible]

the children that they were going for tea that [illegible] forewarned Alice that visitors were coming!

[illegible] only until June 1946 when they purchased SE [illegible] Wierenga bought their former house and moved it to his home quarter.

By this time Jerry was not working out much [illegible] vise the building and work on a new church

This he agreed to do. Due to his age and health [illegible] was not able to do much. He usually [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Royal [illegible] Association and later [illegible] [illegible]

Back: Jennie, Ted, Jerry. Front: Art, Joyce, Bill, 1940

The children were married in the years 1955-1959. Art married Helen Buczutra, Joyce married Gerrit van Dijken, Ted married Carol Howie, and Bill married Elsie Detzlaf. Bill [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and Jennie [illegible] [illegible]

The farm [illegible] [illegible] and Jerry and Jennie [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 1964. Jerry still went to his workshop on the farm and did an occasional building job until his death in July 1966. Jennie still lives in her own home in Barrhead.

Jennie Reitsma

LOE REYSE

Lodewijk Fransiscus Reyse was born in Amsterdam, North Holland, the Netherlands on August [illegible], 1905. He was an office worker when he decided to immigrate to Canada with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] where their maternal uncle Case [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] his brother William [illegible] ber 19, 1901) immigrated to Neerlandia, as did [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and William soon went their separate ways. Loe lived on his homestead for about two years. During that time he broke seven acres and cropped [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] These improvements were [illegible]

He could sing and whistle beautifully. He sang in the choir and at many wedding receptions. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Alice Klevers all winter while he recuperated.

[illegible] 1931. In 1929 he managed the store for six weeks while his Uncle Case made a trip to the Netherlands. Loe worked for the Neerlandia Co-op from 1932 to 1938. During this time he lived in a shack close to the store. He also boarded at [illegible]

[illegible] He bought the Vega store from his father-in-law [illegible] Boman [illegible] in 1940. Loe and Julius and Pete Boman built [illegible] [illegible] them while they lived in Vega. After leaving there in 194[illegible] [illegible] in Alberta and B.C., either operating a [illegible] farm or a general store. Two more daughters were [illegible] moved to Kelowna, B.C. Loe bought a truck mounted vacuum system and travelled around

[illegible] Emma 1930

learning [illegible] furnaces and [illegible] systems. He [illegible] the [illegible]

In [illegible] changed his name [illegible] as much [illegible] had great [illegible] for his fellowmen regarding their spiritual [illegible] about young people. He died June 10, 1980.

John Bus
Emma [illegible]

JOHN AND EMMA (BOSSIN) BOTH

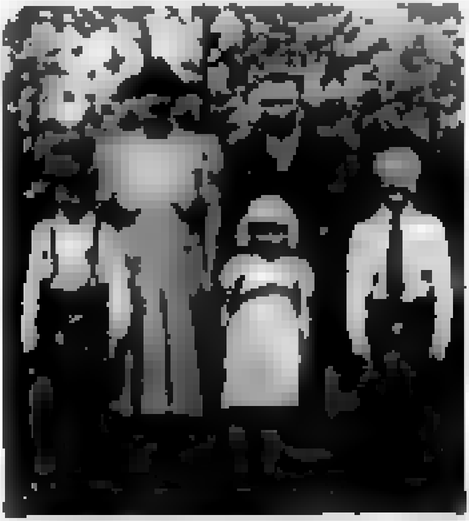
Just before the turn of the century [illegible] was born and registered in Besedak, Hungary. Almost 26 years [illegible] he immigrated to Canada, going with friends to Bruderheim, Alberta.

Later, John worked in the Leduc area for Daniel Wetter but his friends from Hungary, [illegible] encouraged him [illegible] the Neerlandia district where they had settled. On May 26, 1928, he took up as his homestead the S.W. 15-61-3-5. During that summer, he cleared enough land for a house and garden, and also built a one-room house. At harvest time he returned to Leduc to work. There he met Emma Bossin.

Emma, the youngest daughter of Gustav and [illegible] Bossin, was born on [illegible] in Russia. She came to Canada in [illegible] with her parents, who were homesteading in Bruderheim.

John and Emma were married on March 12, 1930, in Bruderheim Lutheran Church. After their wedding, they came to their homestead in Neerlandia. In the fall, John once again returned to Leduc, where he helped with the harvest. This way he raised enough money to buy two cows and two horses. In the meantime, Emma was busy on the homestead. When the harvest was completed, John and Emma worked together to clear the land. These were the depression years and times were tough. The Boths experienced many years of hard work and hardships.

Three children were born to John and Emma Both. Henry was born on April [illegible] Paul made his arrival on September 10, 1935. Finally, on April 27, 1937, a daughter [illegible] was born. [illegible] the [illegible] house was [illegible] early forties an addition, including a porch, was built onto the original structure.



[illegible] Emma, John [illegible] Paul [illegible] Henry c. 1940

In the 1940's, [illegible] became a little easier. John bought the [illegible] from the Bruks. [illegible] power also came in the '50s so

there was no longer any need for lanterns or lamps.

In 1964 John and [illegible]

[illegible] daughter.

John and Emma lived at their home in [illegible]

[illegible] 13, 1982, Emma entered Barhead Nursing Home, where she still resides (1984).

[illegible]

[illegible]

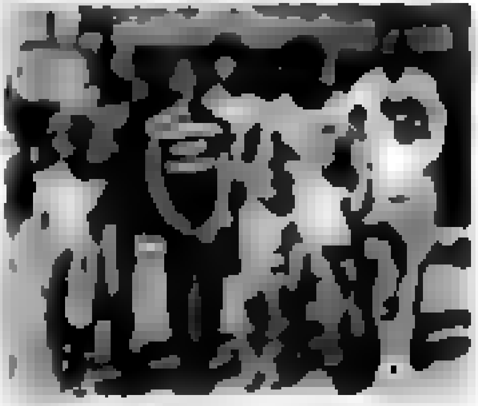
[illegible] brother Ko joined him in Neerlandia. They each [illegible]

[illegible] son, Henry, was born June 8, 1947 and [illegible]

[illegible] more children followed: Jim (James) [illegible] 20, 1957 and George John, January 28, 1959.

[illegible] Andy, Bie, and Louis Nanninga — "three very [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

Later the Rowaans moved to the SE 14-62-3-5. They left Neerlandia for Ontario in [illegible]

[illegible]

HENDRIK AND NIESKE (APOL) ROWAAN

Hendrik (April 16, 1878) and Nieske (August 28, 1878) Rowaan left Oldenzijl, Gro[illegible]

[illegible] May 9, 1911), and Clarence (Klaas, February 22, 1915). After a nine-day trip they docked in Halifax where they boarded a train for a five-day trip to Winnipeg, Manitoba. There Hendrik had a market garden. After two years they moved, first to Shackleton, Saskatchewan where there was a Christian Reformed congregation, and then to Beechy, Saskatchewan.

[illegible] called the Dirty Thirties or the Dustbowl years [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] in the spring of [illegible] Hendrik, Nieske and Joe moved there too. They rented a half section of land (E½ 18-61-3-5) from Anne [illegible] Hendrik died in [illegible] Joe had married Johanna [illegible] a daughter of [illegible] After her husband's death, Nieske went to live with them [illegible] together. When [illegible] got married in 194[illegible] [illegible] bought a house and Nieske came to live with him. Although [illegible] married in 194[illegible] his mother [illegible] living with them [illegible] When [illegible] Rowaans for the house. Nieske went to live with Ko and Alice. She died in March 1963.

Ko Rowaan

KO AND ALICE (KIPPERS) ROWAAN

Ko Rowaan and his brother Clarence left [illegible] in the early thirties [illegible] moved to Neerlandia in 19[illegible] [illegible] until the following year. [illegible] together but in 1940 their parents and brother, Joe, moved to Neerlandia also. Of that time in their lives Ko wrote:

[illegible] parents and brother Joe, the oldest of the three, [illegible] the farm. That left Klaas and myself to roam. And roam we did. We worked then here, then there. We did any kind of work we could lay our hands on, but mostly farm work. We stayed as much as possible [illegible] the [illegible] because our feet were the only transportation we [illegible]. As good boys we wanted to keep up the good [illegible] of our fathers so we went [illegible] Christian Reformed Church [illegible] every Sunday. As we were both single, we were looking for [illegible]. We [illegible] luck with girls. Two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kippers [illegible] charms. After three years [illegible] married Alice.

[illegible] the SE [illegible] He worked hard [illegible] years and with the help of his neighbours [illegible] his house with the lumber from the land he cleared.

Ko and Alice married January 18, 1942. After they had been married for [illegible] years they got [illegible] "She was the sweetest baby ever," wrote Ko. [illegible] we named him Edward [illegible] three [illegible] weeks old when we [illegible] up with him. [illegible] was born August [illegible]

[illegible]

Ko and Alice made progress on the farm. They did [illegible] they had cleared all of the original quarter they bought the [illegible] they sold their farm and Ko went out working. After two years he got tired of that and decided to move to [illegible] where he bought a twenty five acre [illegible] The Rowaans are thankful to [illegible]

Tie and Andy Nanninga for helping "with anything you can think of."

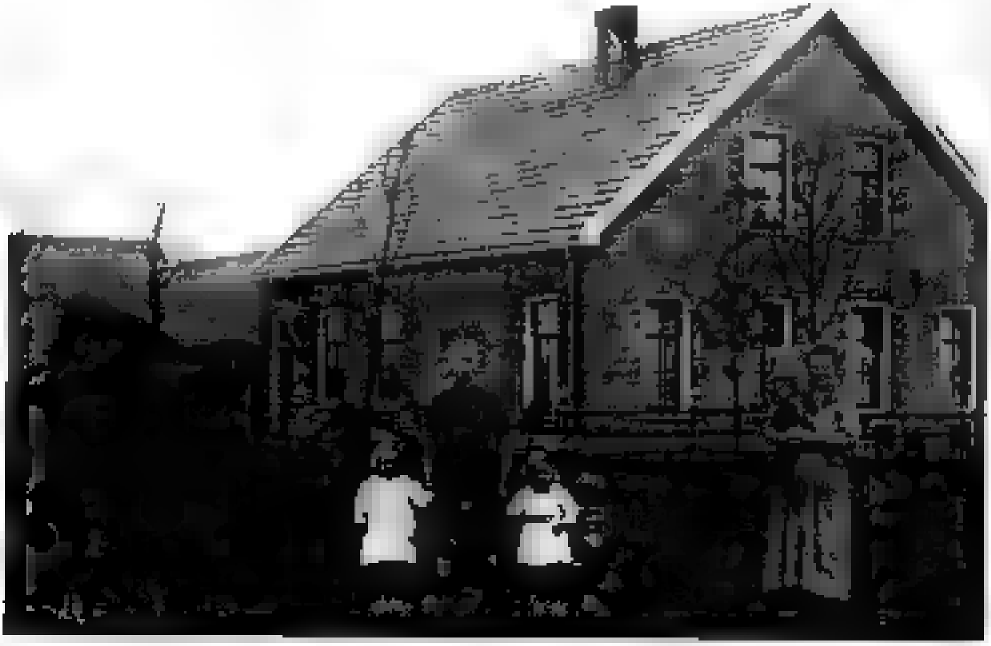
Ko Bowman

ARIE AND JAAN (KOK) RYLAARSDAM

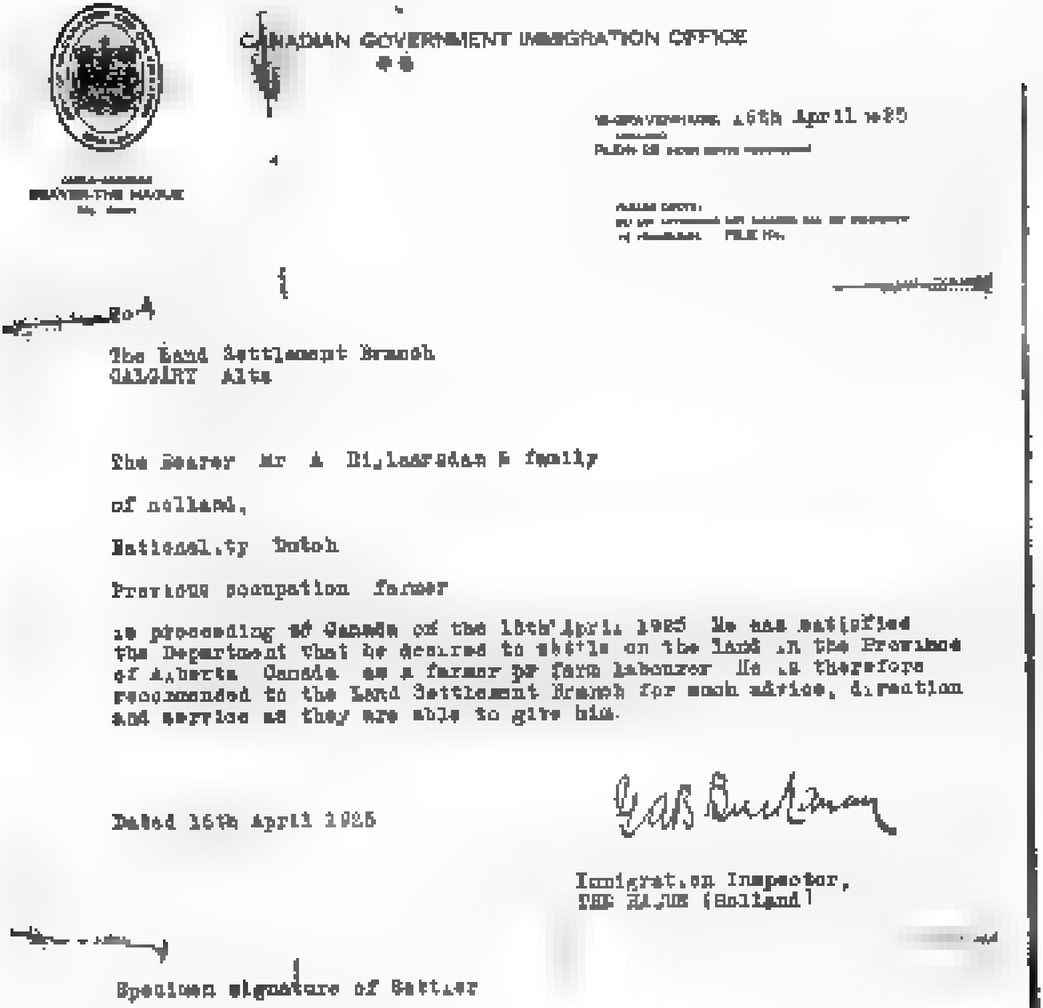
A big house in Holten, South Holland, the Netherlands, was the home of Arie and Jaan (Bastiaantje) Rylaarsdam and their five children. Arie had graduated from an agricultural college and now had a dairy farm. Jaan was an accomplished cheesemaker. Arie played pipe organ in the local *Gereformeerde Kerk*, and Jaan, who had a beautiful soprano voice, sang in the choir. Since Arie had an inheritance from his father, there were few financial worries. A hired man and woman were permanent members of the household.

Back: Barend and maid. Front: Arie, Adriana, Gerry, Pleun, Jaan, Eva, Anna standing at her mother's knee, 1925.

Then the cattle contracted hoof-and-mouth disease and had to be destroyed. This disaster so discouraged Arie that he decided to take his family to Canada. Jaan did not want to go, but in those days a wife had little voice in making such decisions. Arie applied for immigration as a farmer. Because he wanted to produce sugar, his desired destination was southern Alberta.



The Rylaarsdam home in Holten: Arie, Eva, the maid, Gerry, Jaan holding Pleun.



CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IMMIGRATION OFFICE

[illegible]
[illegible]-THE HAGUE

's-GRAVENHAGE, 16th April 1925

PLEASE QUOTE:
[illegible] FILE No.

The Land Settlement Branch
CALGARY Alta

The Bearer Mr A Dijlaarsdam & family

of Holland,

Nationality Dutch

Previous occupation farmer

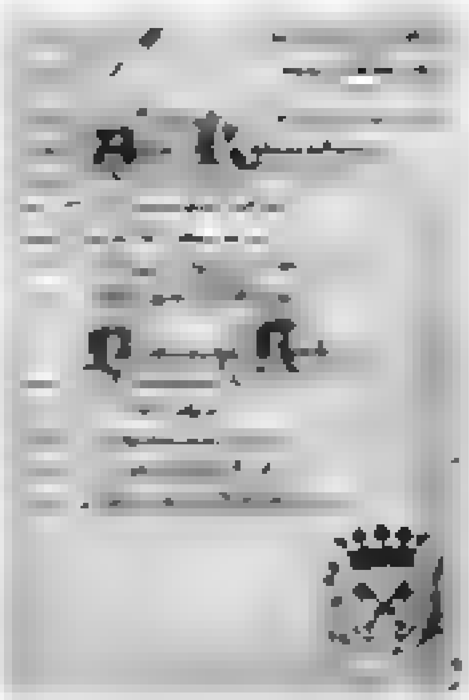
is proceeding to Canada on the 18th April 1925 He has satisfied the Department that he desires to settle on the land in the Province of Alberta Canada as a farmer or farm labourer He is therefore recommended to the Land Settlement Branch for such advice, direction and service as they are able to give him.

Dated 16th April 1925

GAB Buchanan

Immigration Inspector,
THE HAGUE (Holland)

Specimen signature of Settler



[illegible]

The family consisted of Father Arie, born [illegible] land, and Mother Jean Kok, born July 10, 1894 at Hazerswoude, South Holland, and their five children: Eva, born July 2, 1915; Gerry (Gerrigje), born October 4, 1916; Pieter Adriaan [illegible] diary.

[illegible]

[illegible] Canada — to come up in the world, as Father said.

May 10, 1925

[illegible] destination — Lethbridge. (Lots of Hollanders there, Father had said.) Father found employment quite readily with a large rancher at Coaldale, Alberta. Mother is quite ill. Father moved us into a three-room shack. The heat, dust, and [illegible]

July 1, 1925

Our brother Arie was born today, but Mother is still very ill so Dad is taking her to the Lethbridge hospital. Our infant brother is left in the care of my sister Eva, who is nine years old, as Father has to leave early every morning to work on the ranch.

September 10, 1925

Eva's growing up real quick. The rest of us [illegible] terrible situation. They had to take Mother's gallbladder out and it took Mother a long time to come home. She is still very weak.

[illegible]

[illegible] Mother is failing in health. Today Father came [illegible]

March 13, 1927

We are preparing to travel by train to Ed[illegible] Neerlandia — where the grass and the trees are [illegible] Mother longs to be among Dutch people again. Everyone is anxious to get there.

[illegible]

[illegible] children, Peter and Josephine, are travelling [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] for a few months because Father and Mr. Hoof[illegible] a family named Poleter. On Saturdays we chil

dren also help in order to earn much-needed cash.

We have been told that all children over age six have to attend school at Freedom, or we could be in real trouble, so Eva, Fleun, Adriana, and I trot off to school every day, and we really enjoy that! Mother is getting worried, wondering if we will ever get to Neerlandia where we are going to make a new start.

June 4, 1927

Yesterday we started out for Neerlandia with a cow behind the wagon. Dad said it would only take a day. It must have been a long day. We got stuck — horses, wagon, cow, and all — in a mud hole, by Henry Mast's place. We have met some Dutch people, such as Tiemstras and Anemas, along the way. That gave Mother a little chance to speak to someone that she could talk to, and so her spirits are lifting a little.

And now we have finally arrived at the hamlet and sure enough, there is the store, school, and church. Father tells us that we will be going to that school there in September.

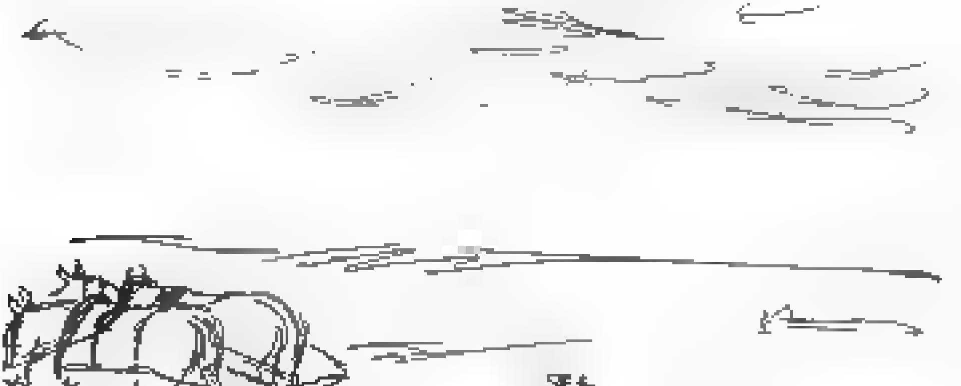
July, 1927

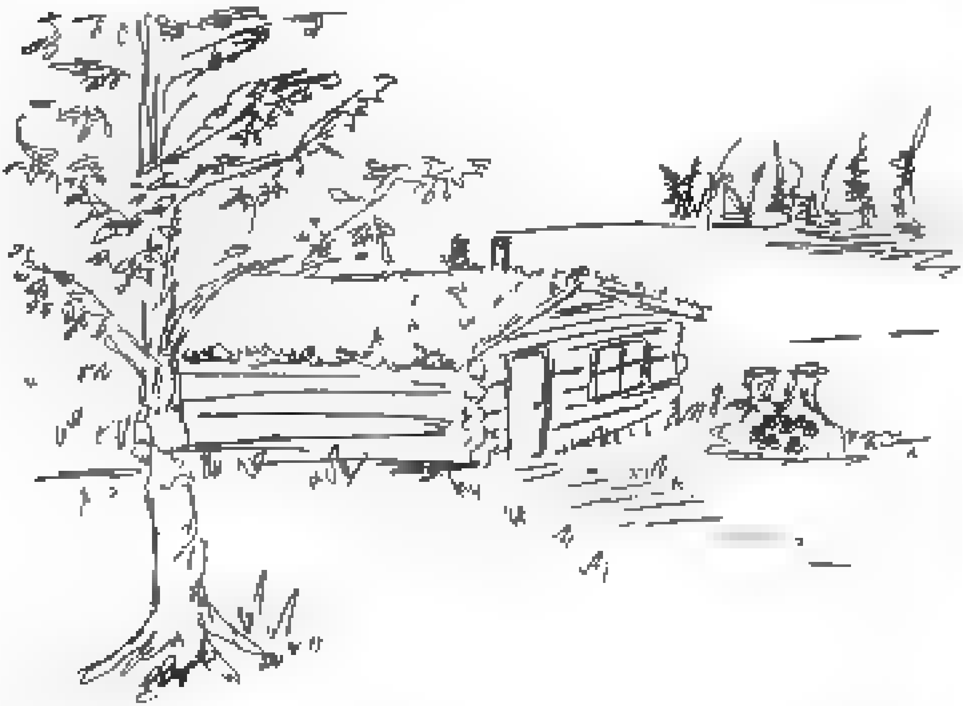
We are finally settled on our quarter, two miles further north from the store. We live on the SW 15-62-3-5. The Hoofdakker family moved to the quarter one-half mile north of us. We are suffering untold hardships. Fortunately we met Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter, who are helping us out a lot. They are very kind; I will never forget them.

Dad is planting a garden. He already built a make-shift log cabin. My father is many things that are good, but a carpenter he is not! He built that cabin with the biggest green poplars he could see right close by. Well! We could only lift them five logs high, all of us helping all we could. At that point Mother said that she wished she was dead. Dad said, "We are on the frontier and things will soon get better." He put a sod roof on that cabin as we didn't have money to buy tar paper. Well, we moved in, and he has gone away to work around Freedom. Mr. Hoofdakker went with him.

July 27, 1927

Dad and Mr. Hoofdakker are still gone, and





more troubles are here. The monsoon season hit us; the rains kept coming down for days without stopping. The sod roof is not waterproof and the rain soon started dripping through. Mother tried to keep us dry, even put up an umbrella in the house. We were getting soaking wet and so was everything we owned. Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter worried about us; they came to look and see if we were okay. They moved a lot of our belongings into some of their empty granaries.

The Hoofdakkers have a real neat log cabin with a decent roof that doesn't leak. Mother moved us into their cabin, and I don't know how that was possible as there are seven of us, Mother with us six children, but she did it. It is really crowded in the cabin, but Mrs. Hoofdakker never complains. As for Mother too, it just makes me wonder about the patience she has and, not being in the greatest health, she really must have some great strength inside to carry her and us on.

August 6, 1927

The rain keeps on. Father and Mr. Hoofdakker are back. He says they came walking home in the mud and rain. When Father popped his head into our cabin, he got a surprise to find it empty, with wife, children, and all the household goods gone. He knew we couldn't have gone very far. After a time he found us at the Hoofdakkers.

August 14, 1927

Today we moved back to our dugout cabin. The rain stopped and everywhere outside it's drying up, but not inside. We had to bail all the water out by hand first.

August 20, 1927

We all have colds because of the rain. I'm surprised none of us are dying of pneumonia or something worse. Mother cries at night, and sometimes during the days too. Father's spirits haven't faltered; his strength is really amazing, because, like Mother, he was born in a middle-class family and is used to lots of comforts that [illegible]

September, 1927

[illegible] be going to Neerlandia school, but now we can't. Father didn't know then that our land is in a different school district. We aren't allowed to attend in Neerlandia, and the Vega district where we are supposed to go doesn't even have a school. So we don't go to school at all.

[illegible] earning an extra twenty-five cents here and there. Every little bit helps out.

[illegible]

[illegible] stayed in belonged to somebody and now he's come and he tells us that we owe him a whole pile of money for back rent. So Father quick went to Freedom this morning to try to earn some money to pay the debt.

September 18, 1927

[illegible] some of our possessions to pay for the debt. He [illegible] of the horses, and some other things. Mother started crying and the man finally left without taking anything. Now Mother and Eva are on their way to Freedom to get Father and what money he has. I hope that man doesn't come [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] at least we don't owe the money any more. [illegible] nearly enough money to pay the man, and [illegible] selves. Someone told the people in Neerlandia [illegible] be because Mother and Eva are so very upset about it all. It's like their pride is hurt, having to depend on others for charity after once having plenty.

July 12, 1929

Today I had to walk to the grocery store for a [illegible] tired when I got there. Mr. Ingwersen is the manager. He saw I was hot and gave me a big juicy orange! I ate it slowly under a tree, it was [illegible]

September, 1929

[illegible] schoolhouse! We haven't gone to real school [illegible] Boman. Then they finished building our Vega school and twenty-two other children come too. Our teacher is Miss Muriel Willis.

[illegible]

[illegible] home to come to a farm here in Ardrossen, Alberta. I milk cows and do other chores for [illegible] to be able to earn that much money in one [illegible] crushing crew at Didsbury, Alberta, and Eva is [illegible] ing up now.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] was no place we could buy a casket from, so Ben [illegible]

[illegible]

November 1, 1930

The family are all grief-stricken, but Anna's death is especially hard on Mother. Mother loved to sing, but no one is allowed to sing in [illegible] tragedy on her; life is becoming [illegible] for all of us.

March, 1932

Our family continues to suffer hardships, but we keep learning to get by. Sometimes all [illegible] she adds milk and eggs which make them taste [illegible] them! We also eat wild game, including deer [illegible] the river on the corner of the NW 22-62-4-5. There we sleep on the sand and rocks and wake [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ishing.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] are all that is left of our family, and we are very close. We often talk about all the things that happened to us. Life in Canada was not kind to Mother. She died a little every day, one tear at a time. She passed away August 1, 1964, at 70 years of age. Our sister Adriana was 38 when [illegible] July 28, 1971, at the age of [illegible]

[illegible]

elbow grease and getting to work. Life wasn't [illegible] was difficult for him to carry on conversations with other people. His best friend was Melle [illegible]

[illegible] ture, the hunting and fishing. He didn't care [illegible] weekly fishing trips he said that then he was with his God. He liked to go fishing to be alone with his thoughts. Father passed away February 19, 1972, at 81 years of age.

Gerry Bozak

JOHN AND ANNA (ELZINGA) SCHURING

John (Jan) Schuring was born January 28, 1908, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands [illegible] permanent home there, but his family had [illegible] dreams on to his son, because in 1926 John applied for immigration to the U.S.A. There [illegible]

[illegible] in May 1926. He took a train to Toronto where a friend had secured a job for him on a farm. He [illegible] John decided to go with his cousin, Steve Ber[illegible] elled with other eager young men on the [illegible] twenty-five dollars for a return ticket. John and [illegible] struck. They thought this meant the end of [illegible] that John and Steve decided to head further west. They caught a train to Vancouver, where it rained the entire five days of their stay. They decided it was too wet in that part of the country and headed back to Edmonton. They sent their suitcases on to Edmonton while they caught the freight train. A railroad employee found them hitching a free ride and asked where they were going. On discovering their [illegible] the freight train to the States. So they jumped off and hopped on the next freight [illegible]

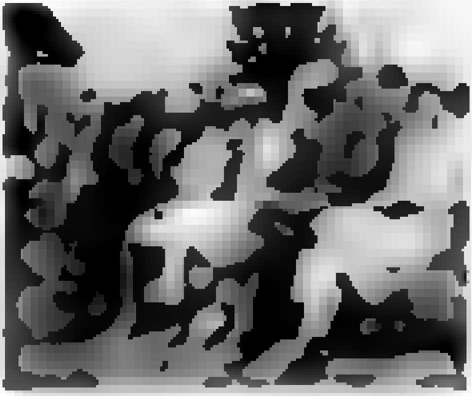
[illegible] Schoonekamps. They left their church papers in Neerlandia, because John liked the com[illegible]

[illegible] Bill Bouwman. They boarded at Krikke's [illegible]

[illegible] dollars a day. Late that winter John was back in [illegible]

[illegible] rested and recuperated for several days. The [illegible] was courting Anna Elzinga

[illegible]



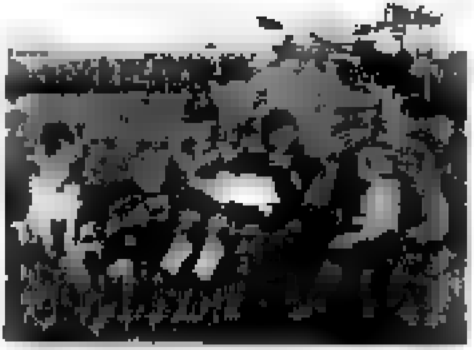
Cooling off with ice cream, July [illegible] John Schuring, Anna [illegible]

John and Anna were married November 29 1931, by Rev. Van Der Woude. They lived [illegible] twelve by fourteen-foot shack with a lean-to for a bedroom. John fashioned a table from spruce lumber in addition they had two chairs, a cou[illegible] chairs. By this time John had about seventy acres cleared and he owned four horses, a wagon, sleigh, and some farming machinery.

[illegible] oon two boys came to fill John and Anna's little house. Cornelius, born September 22 [illegible] hens to set on them, and raised twenty-three chicks. Two fat pigs were sold for $2.50 each. Their first tractor, an Oliver 70, was purchased [illegible] headlights. John was glad to have a rubber [illegible] one disadvantage. John was plowing with the

Oliver and when he came to the fence he cried "Whoa" but the tractor kept going, right through the fence.

Anna holding Cor, John, 1932



Cornelius, Wilbert, John, Jentien, 1949

By 1940 the Schurings had a mixed farm which included pigs, cattle, chickens, one hundred ewes and grain. Anna also liked to work outside with the animals. Their first car, a 1941 Chevrolet, was purchased in 1942 for nine hundred dollars. In 1945 the SW 7-62-3-5 was purchased from Grandale, and Anna also took up the SW [illegible] 62-3-5 first as a grazing lease and later as a homestead. In 1944-45 they also built a new house and barn.

John and Anna's chosen daughter **Jentien**, arrived June 14, 1945. John was a trustee on the school board at Grandale School and the boys attended there until grade eight.

The whole family worked hard and in 1944 they purchased SE [illegible] 62-3-5 from Snelder. In 1951 the SE [illegible] 62-3-5 was acquired.

In 1954 John, Anna, and Jentien moved to Barrhead, and Corny and Wilbert each farmed some of the land. Cor had married Lena Vander Zouwen and soon thereafter Wilbert married her sister, Willie. John and Anna were however, not quite ready to retire. John first worked on construction and later at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Anna worked at Barrhead General Hospital for five years and at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Both John and Anna remain very active.

JAKOB AND GRACE (BULTSMA) SCHUURMAN

Jakob Schuurman was born on November 8, 1908, in Bierum, Groningen, the Netherlands. In 1927 Jakob immigrated to the Granum, Alberta district. As a young man of 18 he wanted to see Canada and planned to stay just one year. He came as a farm labourer and later rented a farm. On September 22, 1937 he married Grace (Geertje Jacoba) Bultsma. She had been born on September 15, 1913, in Wirdum, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1916, at the age of four, she had immigrated with her parents and two brothers to the Fairmont, Alberta area.

Jakob did not particularly like irrigation farming and hence Jakob and Grace sought land in northern Alberta. In 1944 they purchased the S.E. [illegible]-62-4-5 from Gerrit Koppers.

Jakob and Grace, with their two children **Henry** (Hendrick Teake) and **Bessie** (Beeuwkje Jantje), moved to Neerlandia in the fall of 1944. The first winter was spent in George Baker's

[illegible] had a milk cow tied behind. It was quite exhausted by the time they reached Pete Mast's [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] The fact that it was a wet fall did not help. He [illegible]

About 1950, Bill Olthuis, Louis Nanninga, [illegible] The project was abandoned because they could not cope with the water coming in. The project [illegible]

Over the years they purchased two more [illegible] (Teake Albertus), Jennie (Jantje Jacoba), Edna [illegible]

[illegible] interest on a smaller scale. Since his parents' retirement, John farms the home place. Jakob enjoyed helping John and Tom farming, even in his retirement. On February 11, 1982, Jakob passed away as a result of a heart attack. Grace still resides on the acreage and enjoys good [illegible]

Henry was born on May 22, 1942. On April 18, 1970, he married Judy Schultz of Fawcett. At present they reside on their farm in the Frisco [illegible]

Bessie was born on July 9, 1944. After [illegible] much of the globe. Bessie now lives in Nelson [illegible]

[illegible] 9, 1979, and Tamara Dawn, born on May [illegible] 1981.

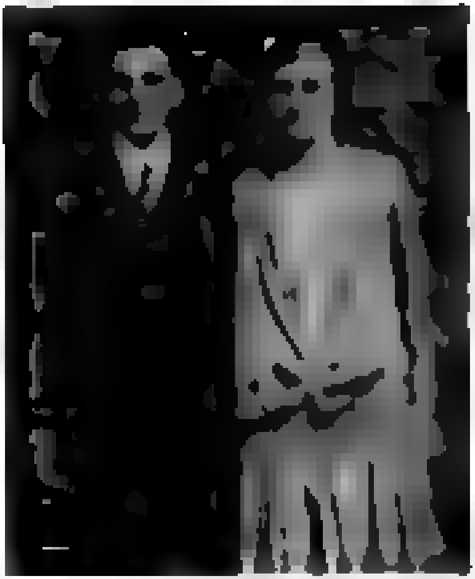
[illegible]

Edna was born on May 2, 1951, and married [illegible] three daughters.

John was born on January 31, 1955. On October 2, 1976, he married **Josephine Pozniak** of [illegible] dren, **James** Dale, born August 27, 1979, Lance [illegible] General Hospital.

Grace Sc[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] subsequently moved back to the Netherlands in 1935, in the hope that she could be helped there. This was not to be, and she [illegible]

Carrie Olthuis

[illegible]

[illegible] thirteen years old he quit school and began to [illegible] however, that he did not want to make furniture [illegible]

[illegible] Colonization and Immigration in Canada had a [illegible] Saskatchewan could ask for workers from [illegible] was an English-speaking Canadian, Henry had [illegible] guage.

In December 1924 Henry went to Calgary [illegible] weeks. The hotel in which he stayed charged $3.50 a week, and offered both hot and cold running water. Finally he got a job baling hay [illegible] in the summer and baled in the winter. The [illegible] heard about Neerlandia from an acquaintance who had a cousin, H. J. Michael, there. The [illegible] Henry would look at it and try to locate [illegible] the exact name of the town, and was looking for Hollandia. A few weeks later he suddenly remembered the correct name was Neerlandia [illegible]

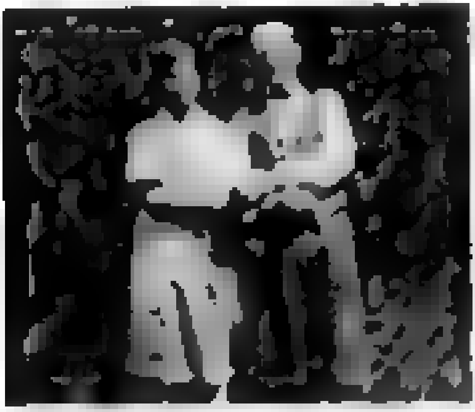
[illegible] moved to Neerlandia in June 1926. Ben Sievers [illegible]

[illegible]

negieter, he built a shack. Then the clearing began. Five years later Henry raised his first [illegible]

Henry did not consider bachelorhood to be all that great. Although he usually got bread, milk, and butter from Mina Kannegieter, Hendrik's wife, he still had rough times. One [illegible] that when he threw it against the wall of the shack it did not even crumble. The next time he [illegible] to his friend Joe Holwerda's place, he took the [illegible]

[illegible] he later sold with the farm to his son Jake.



[illegible]

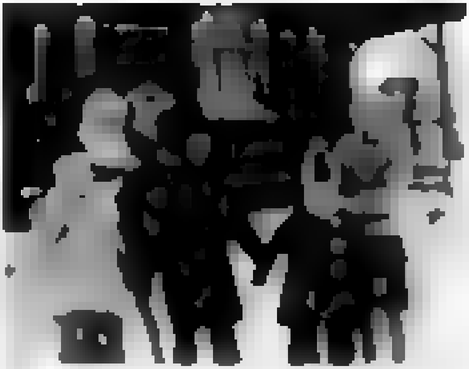
The newly-married couple moved into a fourteen by twenty-foot log shack and lived [illegible] 1936. They were born at home with Peterije [illegible]

[illegible]

When [illegible] they had a big can with a little tap near the [illegible] down the road to Toebes' place where the mail [illegible]

[illegible] barrelled shotgun for it once. He had bought the gun from Henry Michael for five dollars before he was married, but when the flour ran [illegible] gun had to go. He sold it at Koop Mast's trading [illegible]

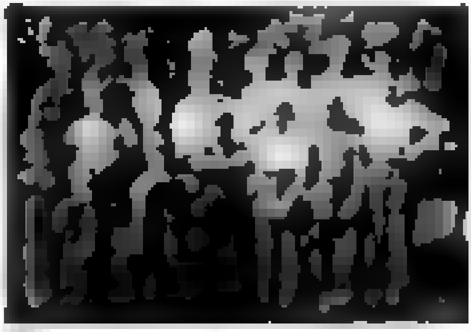
[illegible] had a large family. [illegible] 1941; George, June 20, 1942; and Jake (Jacob), November 20, 1943. Along came one more girl, Gladys, born February 10, 1945, and then again three boys to fill the quiver: Cor (Cornelius), born September 16, 1946; Andy (Andrew), January 11, 1948; and Ken (Kenneth), September



Back: Gladys, Alice, Bertha. Front: George, Jake, John, [illegible]

21 1950. All but the last three boys were born at home.

With so many children, a hundred pounds [illegible] stove. Henry and Gladys recall that at times they bought a thousand pounds of flour at a time. Henry would load the hundred-pound [illegible] hundred pounds of flour [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] later in 1962, they got running water in the house [illegible]

Henry Jr. and James worked in a lumber camp [illegible] earnings were spent on a truck, the first motorized vehicle the family owned. Before this they had relied on horses with a wagon or [illegible]

[illegible] use. The Strydhorsts never bought fruit.

There was little time for relaxation. Gladys would have loved to do embroidery or crocheting but there was never any time. She had to stay up late at night to knit the needed garments for her family.

It was 1968 when Henry sold the farm to Jake. Henry and Gladys continued to live on the farm, however, until 1973, when Gladys' stepmother died. Then they went to live in the [illegible]

Jake holding Heather, [illegible], Jewel, [illegible], [illegible]

Nine of the Stryddhorst children live and [illegible] the first Sya **Spronk**. Sya was born in Her-en-Boscop, South [illegible] Jake and Sya have three children: **Jared** Henry born October 31, 1978; **Sarah Anne** Klazina born January 18, 1980; and **Heather** Nicole born February 26, 1984.

John married Margaret Peters of Clairmont in 1964. They live in La Glace and farm with their four children. George married Pat Zilenski of Edmonton in 1966. He is a carpenter and has a hobby farm in Whitecourt. They have four children. Gladys married Art Reitsma of Lacombe in 1965. They farm in Lacombe and have [illegible] age 17, of the Bangkok flu, complicated by a rare blood disease.

[illegible] to read and crochet.

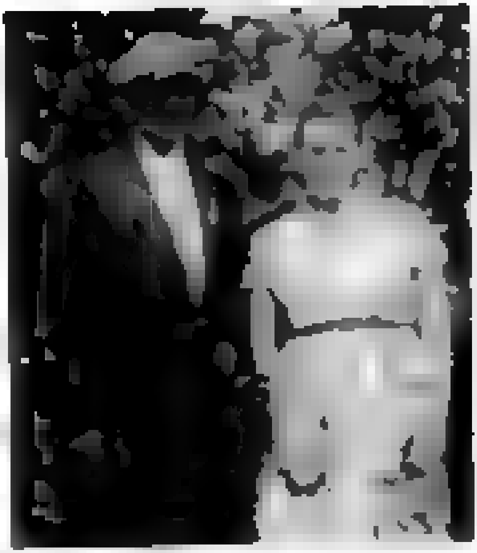
[illegible]

LUCAS AND ANNIE (EMMERZAEL) [illegible]

Lucas Sturwold, son of Toney and Roelofje came with his family to Neerlandia in 1936 [illegible] to go to the neighbours with the crusher to crush grain. He also had a wood sawing outfit and would go around the community sawing firewood. In 1932 Lucas obtained the NW [illegible] Emmerzael on June 27, 1943. Before he got mar[illegible] farm. He and Annie lived there for two years and then the house was moved to Lucas' farm with a Caterpillar tractor driven by Johnny Molodowich and a tractor driven by Bert Michael [illegible]

Lucas and Annie had six children: **Rena** (May 5, 1944), **Martha** (September 6, 1945), **Tom** (January 17, 1948), Arlyn Percy (September 18, [illegible] **Rodney** [illegible] and **Sherri** Lee Anne (October 10, 1958).

Like most Neerlandia farmers, Lucas raised grain. The grain was cut in the fall with a binder



[illegible]

and tractor. When they were old enough, the [illegible] family grew up, the children helped to stook the grain.

Threshing time was a special event. If the weather was nice and the threshing went well it was an exciting time for all. The men worked [illegible] would come into the house, where a large din[illegible] girls always ate their dinner after the men had left the house. Soon a large lunch would be [illegible] afternoon tea. Special baking was always done for the men, and the children enjoyed the different foods. Many hot and cold drinks were also sent to the field for the thirsty men.

When Lucas first started farming, he was [illegible] Sturgeon men. When [illegible] and Bert were old enough they joined too.

[illegible]

[illegible]

1950s the roads were in such poor condition as [illegible]

By the time Reta began school, the school [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

1968. Martha studied nursing at the Royal Alex [illegible]

head nurse in the emergency department. She [illegible]

and Rose. He has two children. Rod married Cathy Wallace in 1982. They live near Campsie [illegible]

Annie Sturwold

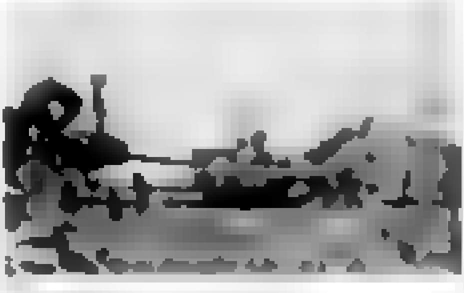
[illegible]

[illegible] 14, 1897 in Poland and later immigrated to Canada. John and Anna were married November [illegible]

[illegible] children were born to John and Anna: Fred [illegible]

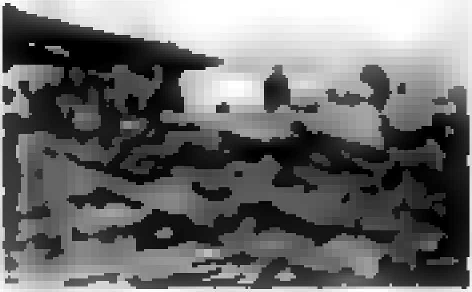
[illegible] the SE 13-62-3-5. The area was heavily [illegible]bered, but John cleared enough land for buildings, moved his sawmill there, and squared up enough logs to build a house and a barn. The family moved onto the homestead in the fall of [illegible]

[illegible] and a homemade shingle mill, which cut many thousands of shingles from jack pine and white poplar. John also used the engine to run [illegible]



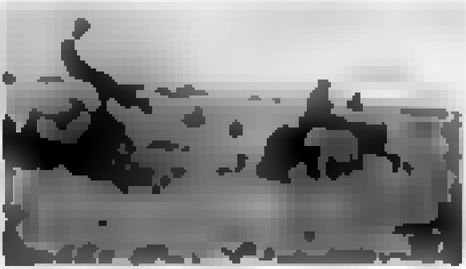
[illegible]

In 1935, John had a setting west of the [illegible] home. John sawed over one million feet of lumber. When Fred was twelve years old he helped his father at the mill and learned how to scale [illegible] at the mill at that time and was paid $1.25 a day. He would write down the size of each log in a scribbler, and in the evening Fred would calcu[illegible] ize the total number of board feet sawed that day for for each customer. Fred helped with all [illegible] help Anna with housework, setting the table and washing the dishes. John always had hired men, and at times some of the customers would eat there also. Henrietta Wierenga and later her sister Jenny worked for Anna. As years went [illegible]


[illegible]

When Fred was old enough to go to school [illegible] board with Mr. and Mrs. McKinty, who lived close to the Shoal Creek school. But when John [illegible] maybe he was scared of their girls. So Fred did not start school till he was ten years old. Then he went to Neerlandia school which was nearly six miles away. In the summer John would take [illegible] shop, which was close to school. Walter took [illegible] on the NW 6-62-2-5, so Fred finished his last year of school there. After moving to the Neerlandia area John and Anna had two more children, Billy (William), born May 7, 1936, and Cecilia, born February 17, 1939.

After Fred quit school he worked with John on a threshing crew. In the winter of 1941 he worked at Boman's sawmill in Vega for [illegible] dollars a month with room and board. The following winter he drove truck for an Edmon[illegible] many schools in the Westlock-Barrhead area. The trucker had the school contract for supplying the coal for heating. There would be times when Fred would not get home till midnight [illegible]

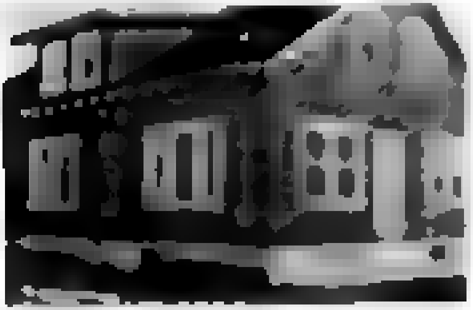

[illegible]

John bought a trucking route in 1943. Since [illegible] merchandise for the Shoal Creek. [illegible] operated a gravel and sand pit business from [illegible]

In the summer of 1943 Joan Lobley of Sundre came to teach at Grandale School. The first [illegible] at Neerlandia in 1968-69. Fred is presently (1984) working for Merit Stores in Bar[illegible]

[illegible]

bought from the Neerlandia Co-op store.



[illegible]

[illegible] dale School having closed for lack of a teacher. John wrote, "Later on that fall they put in a [illegible] still remember [illegible] driver."

John and Anna sold their homesteads to Klaas Piers in 1962. They moved into Hillcrest [illegible]

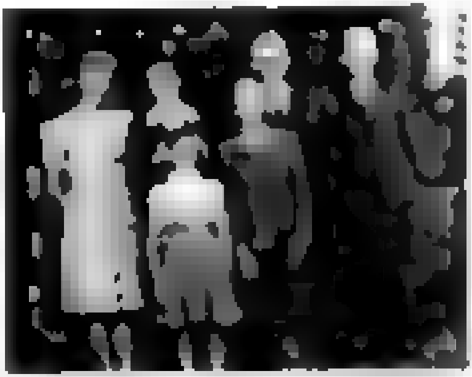
[illegible]

HARM AND GELSKE (TALSTRA) TEN HOVE

H. J. (Harm Jan) Ten Hove and his bride [illegible] on a farm in the Lacombe area. They were [illegible] Christian school. There they had their family [illegible] two girls Jean (1930), [illegible] (1931), [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] warmly received by various families [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

Jean remembers that in Neerlandia she was [illegible]

[illegible]

dark, unrecognizable objects to pass by on [illegible]

[illegible]

Despite all the happy times, the family left [illegible]

[illegible] 1977. His wife, at 86 years of age, is in Red Deer Nursing Home and still remembers happy times in Neerlandia. The four children are all [illegible]

Jean Buit

[illegible]

George Terpsma was born in [illegible] loaded with machinery. The bridge at [illegible]

Back: Annie holding Roy, John, George. Front: Wayne, Jim, Douglas. 1957

John (December 17, 1949), and James Lewis (February 11, 1953).

Annie was often bedridden because of varicose veins, ulcers, and phlebitis. Doctors advised George to move to a warmer climate because of what they thought was arthritis in his spine. So in 1955 the Terpsmas sold their farm and moved to the Okanagan Valley, B.C. There doctors found the real cause of George's problem, and he had spine surgery in 1957. Another son was born there in 1956. In 1959 the Terpsmas moved back to Alberta, to the Rocky Mountain House area, where their sixth son was born in 1962. He lived for only two days.

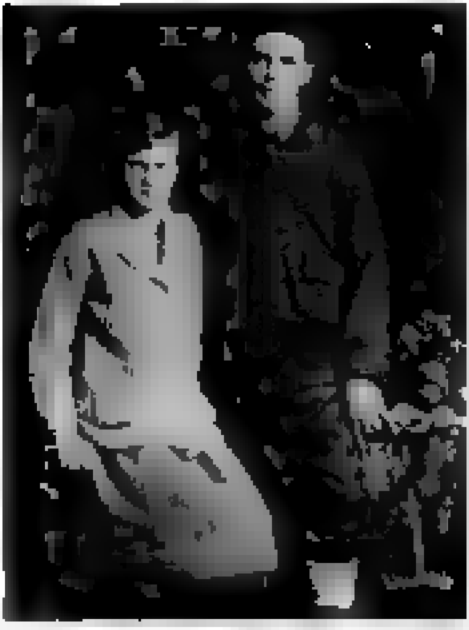
Their oldest son, Doug, was murdered August 23, 1983, by a shotgun blast to his chest. He and his family were living near Vernon, B.C. George and Annie live on a farm in Rocky Mountain House, where they raise horses.

Annie Terpsma

JOHN AND HARDA (LIEVERS) TERPSMA

John Terpsma immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1911 and filed on the NW 26-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911. Although he continued living with his parents on their homestead, he built a 16 by 24-foot log shack on his homestead in 1914. He also built a log barn, dug a well, and put up 1¼ mile of wire and rail fencing. He received the patent to the land in 1921. In 1931, he had cropped twenty-two acres on the quarter and owned fifteen cattle, five horses, and six hogs.

John Terpsma married Harda Lievers in June 1928 in Edmonton, as Neerlandia had no minister at that time. John had sold his homestead to Andries Wiersenga, so he and Harda lived in a tent on the Kouw homestead the first summer. That fall they moved to a log house on the SW 26-61-3-5. The next year, on July 20, 1929, John took up the NW 36-61-3-5 as a homestead. When he filed, he paid $125.00 for the improvements on it: a log shack, a well, an unfinished stable, three hundred fenceposts and twelve slashed acres. This homestead was the Terpsma home for the next twenty years.



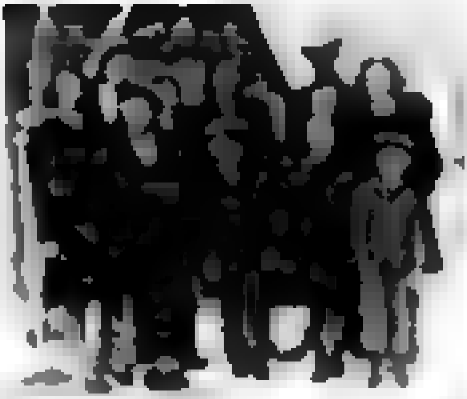
John and Harda's wedding photo.

John and Harda had eight children: **Denny** (Douwe), December 29, 1928; **Jennie** (Jantje), December 3, 1930; **Betty** (Betsje), November 1, 1934; **Tena**, January 19, 1936; **Harry** (Hendrik), July 9, 1937; **Katie** (Kaatje), January 25, 1940; **John** (Jan), March 2, 1941; and **George**, February 18, 1942. All except George were born at home with the help of midwife Petertje Schuurekamp. George was born in the Barrhead hospital. For Harda, sitting in a tiny log house with little children winter in and winter out, when there was almost seven months of snow, was almost unbearable. She often wished they [illegible]

[illegible] ries, and cranberries until all the bottles [illegible] full. After their third child was born, John bought [illegible] a gas washer, which was a blessing.

[illegible] during the winter, they would have to haul [illegible] the family, the wash, and the livestock. One [illegible] they melted snow each day for [illegible] cows and two horses as well as for the family. [illegible] than one hundred feet deep and nearly a running well. But it cost them one of their best milk [illegible]

John worked to prove up the land and [illegible]

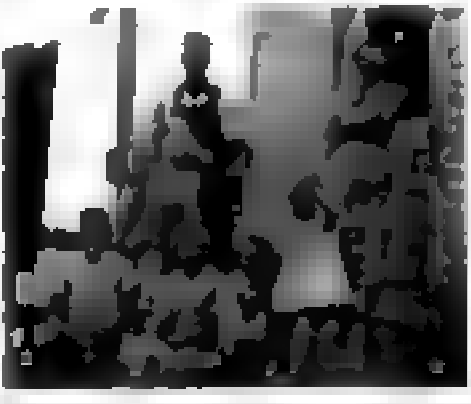


[illegible]

[illegible] New Westminster, B.C., with her brother John. [illegible]

NORMAN AND EILEEN (WIERENGA) [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

bert, born June 27, 1948; **Rosanne** born June 14, 1954; and **Florence** [illegible] born September [illegible] 1967. Florence was "called home" in her infancy; she died of crib death on January 28, 1968.

Norman and Elie worked hard together at their mixed farming operation, milking cows, raising and feeding hogs, and managing a small [illegible] operation. A second quarter, the NW [illegible] was purchased from Albert Mast[illegible] in 196[illegible]. The original log house on the homestead was taken down during the sixties and the logs were used in erecting a small cattle shelter which is still being used. The old log barn was taken down in the 1970s.

Betty married Walter VanderZyl on February 8, 1968 and they live in Edmonton. They have two children. David married [illegible] Sanderhurst on August 15, 1980 and they live in Abbotsford, B.C. They have five children. After Lawrence quit school, he stayed at home and worked on the farm with Norman. He married **Lucille Duker** [illegible] of Edmonton on June 18, 197[illegible] and lives on the homestead. Rosanne lives at home with Norman and Elie and works as a teller in the [illegible] Toronto-Dominion bank.

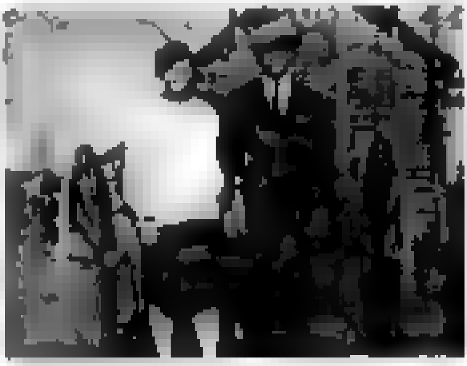
Norman, Lucille, Elie, Lawrence, Rosanne, 1984

In 1975 Norman and Elie built a new house on the homestead, which they still live. Norman retired in 1979, selling the farm to Lawrence. Lawrence and Lucille continue to farm, managing a hog farrow-to-finish and a cow-calf operation.

Norman Terpsma

ALBERT AND TENA (WIERENGA) TIEMSTRA

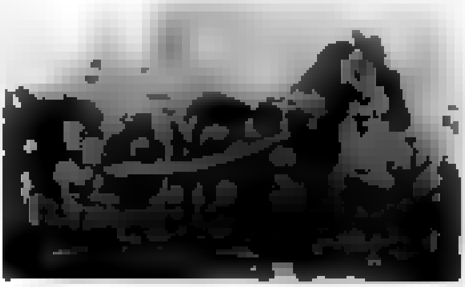
Albert Tiemstra married Tena Wierenga, daughter of **Hendrik** and **Hilje**, on March 1, 1931. They had two sons: **Simon** Albert, born January [illegible] 1934 and **Harold** Albert, born June 23, 1946. Albert took out the NW 23-61-3-5 as a homestead on August 5, 1926.



Courting Days: Albert and Tena at [illegible], 1929

After the wedding, Albert, Tena, 1931

Albert and his brothers, Gerben and Joe did a lot of road grading and snow plowing for the county in the 1940s and early 1950s. The county supplied the grader and the snowplow but the Tiemstras had to supply the tractor. It there had been a bad snowstorm the only way to get through was with two tractors pulling the [illegible] and one pushing.

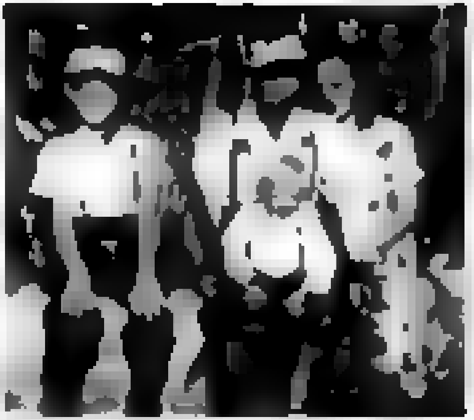


[illegible] Tiemstra out for a buggy ride

Albert was the [illegible] children to school [illegible] The bus was [illegible] in which the children stood. Each morning, Albert would begin the route by picking up children [illegible] Albert bought a more modern bus, a new truck that had a box with a roof and three windows [illegible] on each side [illegible] Albert [illegible] homemade benches [illegible] Albert used this bus until [illegible] when he [illegible]

From 1957 to 1967 Albert operated the county road grader. During the winter he sometimes worked around day and night to keep the roads [illegible]

[illegible] Albert Tiemstra



[illegible] Albert [illegible] August 1982

[illegible] and [illegible] continued to live in their house until 1980 and now lives in Golden Crest Manor in Barrhead.

[illegible] Tiemstra

CHARLES AND SADIE (TUININGA) TIEMSTRA

Charles (Tjeerd) Tiemstra was born in Bolsward, Friesland, the Netherlands. There he [illegible] grade. For a time he helped his father, Ulbe, on the farm. Then he [illegible] labourer in the Netherlands. His half brothers Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema were already in Neerlandia, so that was his destination. When Charles made up his mind to go to Canada, his brother, [illegible] and his father decided to go [illegible]

The [illegible] third class but the

[illegible] class passengers did not get tea and cookies in [illegible]

[illegible] started walking again. It was a hot day and [illegible]

[illegible] saw a log house, they would ask directions [illegible]

[illegible] Charles stayed at Jan Anema's that summer and [illegible]

dren. He worked for Jan, clearing land with an [illegible] road gang, regrading the road from Clyde to Barrhead. Their job was to pick the rocks and [illegible] and towels and slept on some hay in a big tent about nine or ten men to a tent. Frank Thompson of Mellowdale was the foreman and his wife Elsie did the cooking. She made all kinds of pie for dessert, which Charles and Ike feasted on. In the Netherlands they had been used to having mainly potatoes and brij. Work [illegible] to Neerlandia. They helped Jan and Siebren [illegible] the Shoal Creek. The following spring Charles [illegible] forty dollars a month. There he learned to drive [illegible] the winter of 1921-22. Shovelling coal was hard [illegible] could average five dollars a day, a very good [illegible] Little Brickyard. They rented a shack on [illegible] George Wing homestead (SE 27-61-3-5) for [illegible] had enough work on his farm clearing land. In the spring of 1923, he bought a bed, a cook [illegible] table. His meals were the bachelor's usual fare: raw sliced potatoes fried up in fat, fried eggs, pancakes, or bread with jam. He also bought dried apples or peaches in twenty-pound [illegible]

After spending the whole summer clearing, [illegible]arles went to work in the coal mine again for [illegible]

[illegible] With the help of Ben Leevers, he built a 20 by 3[illegible] foot barn. It had a hip roof which provided a loft [illegible] which hay could be stored. When winter came he left his horses with Siebren and went [illegible]

[illegible] break their legs unless they were shoed, since [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]ised seed drill with wooden wheels at a farm auction. It had levers that had to be pushed [illegible]

[illegible] He continued to clear and break land between seed time and harvest. In the summer of 1927 Bertus Bos helped him to clear and by the end of that summer he had eighty acres cleared.

Charles was a member of the local Christian [illegible] ciety also. She came on horseback and Charle[illegible] began accompanying her home after meetings [illegible]

[illegible] Friday afternoon (January 16, 1928) in the home of her parents, Rev. A. Selles of Edmon[illegible]

[illegible]

Albert [illegible]lbe, (May 31, 1929), C[illegible] [illegible] Clarence was born, Sadie had Hilje Wierenga

[illegible]

tea. In the early spring, Sadie gathered pig [illegible]

[illegible] derwear and many other things. Charles and [illegible]

[illegible] floors, all before coffee time. Susan arrived Oc [illegible]

[illegible] dren, Ernest (June 1, 1942), Lillian (February 7 1945), Edwin Lloyd (September 5, 1946) [illegible] eline (February 21, 1949), and Peter (July 23 [illegible]

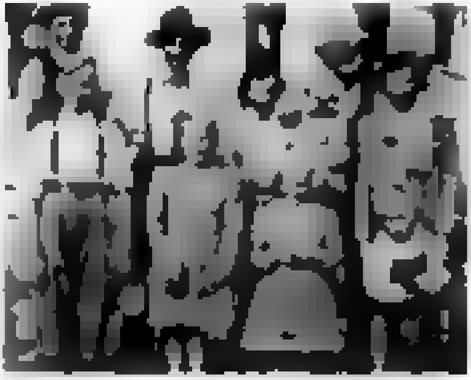
[illegible]

River for blueberry picking. With many good [illegible] ing would yield as many as thirty quarts of [illegible] for the family. In early September the [illegible] sauces and jellies from them

[illegible]

The [illegible] purchased their first radio [illegible] It [illegible] between [illegible] weather and prices of farm products, but was also a new means to entertainment. Some of the programs [illegible] who wanted to hear the hockey games and the [illegible]

Charles bought his first tractor in 1942. It [illegible] machine and Charles used it for many years.



[illegible]

About this time also, Charles bought his first car, a used Hupmobile, for forty dollars. It [illegible]

In 1944 Charles built a bigger house, of [illegible] had a basement it could be centrally heated by a furnace that burned wood and coal. That was a big improvement over the old wood heater.

The Tymstra family went through many good times but also through bad. [illegible] was fifteen, he was diagnosed as having an [illegible] but was very weak and could not do heavy [illegible] spondylitis and was diagnosed as having [illegible]

[illegible]

In the late 1940s Charles began poultry farming [illegible] with a Caterpillar tractor along the dirt roads [illegible] in the [illegible] farm. [illegible] volved to feed and water the birds, collect and [illegible]

In 1956 Charles and Sadie moved to Ed[illegible] helped on the farm and later found work in

[illegible] and [illegible]. In 1951 she married [illegible]

[illegible] had also graduated from the [illegible] Drug Mart [illegible].

Susan had attended school [illegible] grade [illegible] nursing aide in 1959. She found work in [illegible] whom she married October 18, 1963. They have

[illegible]

three children. The family lives in Edmonton [illegible]

[illegible] mechanic trade at Schultz Motors in Barrhead. In 1969 he married a widow, Irene Koot, who [illegible]

[illegible] company, Taylor, Pearson and Carson, until retirement in 1971. Both Charles and Sadie had worked hard during their lives. Retirement allowed them the freedom to take a trip to the Netherlands and many shorter ones to visit friends and family. But it did not mean retire [illegible]

[illegible] churches in Smithers and Edmonton. Sadie continued to do a lot of baking, knitting [illegible] tively healthy and continued upholstering un [illegible] reality in Charles and Sadie's lives. Their children and grandchildren were and are a source [illegible]

In January 1983 the Tiemstras celebrated their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. Then [illegible] day there. Charles died peacefully on January [illegible]

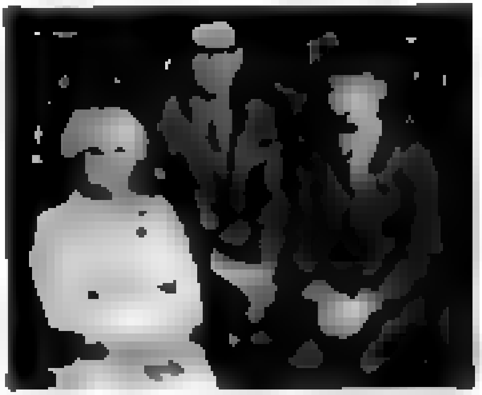
Dave Tiemstra
Sadie Tiemstra

GERBEN AND TENIE (WIERENGA)

[illegible]

[illegible] family in 1913. When he grew up, farming became his main occupation, although his natural ability in carpentry was also an asset.

Gerben married Tenie Wierenga, daughter [illegible] 1931, with Rev. H. Van Der Woude officiating [illegible] were conducted during the afternoon church [illegible] week. That first winter they lived in den Hartog's shack, which was on a quarter close to the [illegible] nearest neighbours, the Kannegieters. The [illegible] yard and they moved there. Gerben farmed with his father and brother Albert until his father retired; then he and Albert each got half the farm. Gerben built another house in 1947



[illegible]

In 1949 a son, John (born November 20, [illegible] brought into the family at the age of two [illegible] Reformed Church, where Gerben has served as [illegible]

[illegible]

GEORGE AND GEZINA (HUISKAMP)

[illegible]

[illegible] TOEBES

Gerrit Jan Toebes was born in Winterswijk, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on December 23, 1891. He emmigrated to Canada, the land of

[illegible]

[illegible] Edmonton.

Around that time the federal government [illegible] unity. But after digging a well and putting up [illegible] Dutch fellows worked as well.

In 1920, Gerrit wrote to his wife-to-be Gezina Fredrica Huiskamp (born February 24, 1888) from Borken, Germany, to come to Canada. They were married that same year. Also that year, on December 24, Gerrit became a nat[illegible] son, Henry, died in infancy. Next came Bill (William) Henry, born August 11, 1923; then Raymond Norman, born November 14, 1925 and lastly, Frederick George, born April 9 [illegible]

[illegible]

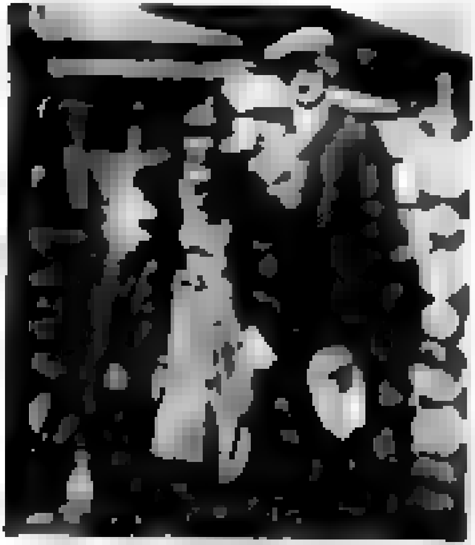
[illegible] years, but then in March 1929 moved to the homestead with the family. They stayed with the Schoonekamps at first, and later that year moved into a new 14 by 30-foot frame house [illegible] ninga. The house had a kitchen and living [illegible]

[illegible] the difficult years of the thirties.

George also owned horses which were used [illegible] for the ride home. The Toebes family had never owned an umbrella, and young Fred was fascinated with it. After the ride he got off the wagon and began to investigate how it worked [illegible] when Fred popped open the umbrella. This spooked the horses and they took off towards the gate, turned, and proceeded to run along

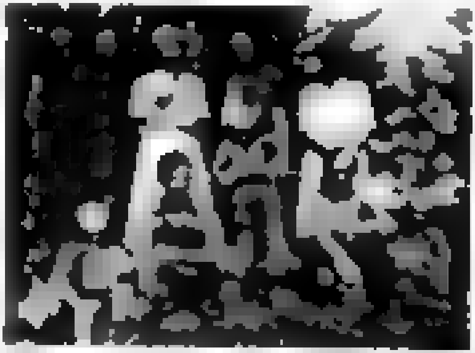
[illegible]

[illegible] family lived just north of the [illegible] was rather convenient since [illegible] of the boys to walk over with a pail of wheat and [illegible] to make bread and other things, including the wheat porridge the family ate for breakfast [illegible] ing the winter's supply of firewood for the house chopped up and piled along the fence



[illegible] c. 1930

Many people stopped at the Toebes home on their way north to Vega. Since it was about halfway, it was convenient to stop there to warm up and let the horses rest. Many of the [illegible] mation Day, no playing of pranks was allowed on Hallowe'en. George had many religious dis- [illegible] way home



[illegible]

Gezina suffered many years from arthritis. Norman and Fred helped her do the heavy housework since that was too difficult for her [illegible] onto the house, and also put in plumbing, run- [illegible] He often sang as he worked, so Gezina and the [illegible] way off.

In 1949 Norman left to study at [illegible]. He [illegible]

[illegible] he moved with his son Bill. George and Bill enjoyed gardening and had many beautiful [illegible]

George [illegible]

worked out stooking and root picking for farm[illegible] a flour sack containing the boxes of cards and the books he had for sale. Many people received birthday cards from Bill who, once he had been told, never forgot a birthdate. He [illegible] number of years. George died in 1972, and after [illegible]

[illegible]

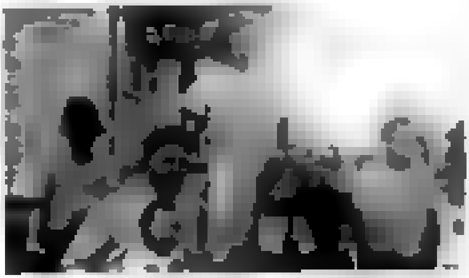
CECIL AND ANNIE (SCHOONEKAMP) TUININGA

Although Cecil and Annie have lived away from [illegible] 194[illegible] their [illegible] Both were born [illegible] shortly after with their respective parents. Both [illegible]

They were married in 194[illegible] and began farm[illegible] known then as the old [illegible] had bought it for one thousand dollars in 1937 or [illegible] all the farm buildings. The seven years spent on the farm [illegible] Henry [illegible] 1944 and Pearl November 6, 1945. Cecil directed choir and was church organist for eight years. The [illegible]

[illegible] years old, all total strangers. After that [illegible] God worked out the details. The family in Neerlandia was supportive of Cecil's efforts by [illegible]

After [illegible]



[illegible]

Williamsburg, Ontario, and Ladner and Telk. [illegible] were spent in the mcuntry: all of them [illegible] do.

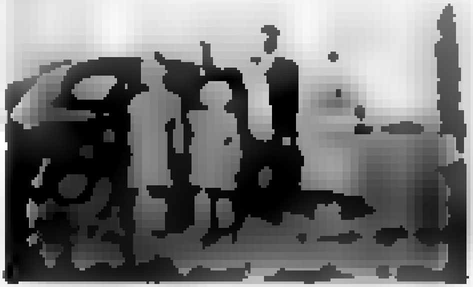
[illegible] prospered them.

Cecil Tuininga

JACK AND MARGARET (STURWOLD)

[illegible]

Jack Tuininga and Margaret Sturwold were [illegible] ily: **Kenneth** James (December 16, 1936), **Ruth** [illegible] 19, 1940), Iris **Lorraine** (April 4, 1945), and **Marilyn** Lois (June 21, 1951).



[illegible]

The Tuiningas farmed on the NW 20-61-3-5 [illegible] e Frieser of Vega in 1960. They have [illegible] Beatrice died October 29, 1953, and Lorraine died July 10, 1960.

Jack worked in real estate and mortgages [illegible]

Margaret Tuininga

JOE AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA)

[illegible] spent four months in the Barrhead hospital. When the doctor operated, he told Joe's dad that he had better get the undertaker because [illegible] to see him, and Joe asked his dad, "Why does everybody come to see me?" Joe's dad told him he might not live, but Joe said, "I won't die." After a long convalescence he recovered.

Joe married Sophie Wierenga on December 18, 1938. They received a wedding dowry of four cows and a pig from Joe's folks. When they got married, Joe went to thank the minister for [illegible] come and thank me, but that'll cost you $2.50." [illegible] which at that time had sixty acres open. This land was bought from Hendrik Kannegieter for [illegible] percent interest. They built a house on it which cost about $250.00. To build a barn they used lumber from Joe's father's old house. Joe [illegible]

Joe can recall the first litter of pigs from the [illegible]

The first year Joe was married, he used his dad's machinery. In 1939 he bought his own [illegible] bought [illegible] $250.00.

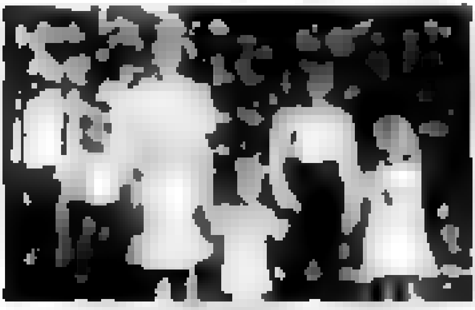
When Neerlandia built a new school, Joe and his brother Cecil bought the old two-room one and used it to build each of them a garage.

[illegible] carried no insurance. But they were thankful when the community came to their aid by re[illegible]

[illegible] have a thirty-two volt power plant to supplement the charge. They were also one of the [illegible]

[illegible] up that high, among them Joe's brother Cecil [illegible]

[illegible] found out, as the applause was terrific. Later [illegible] brothers Ike and Ekke. They used to perform programs at the church, sing for shut-ins and [illegible]



[illegible]

Joe and Sophie had a family of seven chil[illegible]

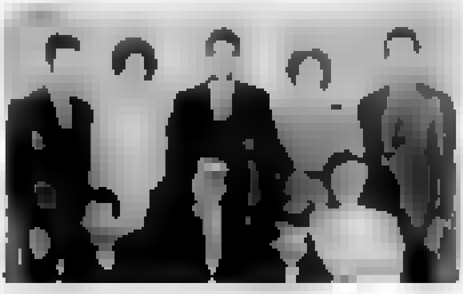
Clifford John followed Reta on July 1[illegible], 19[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] Dorinda born November 18, 1980; and Lance Joseph born June 10, 1983.

[illegible]

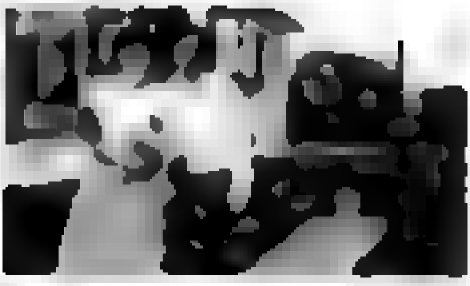
Four years later, on June 26, 1952, Cecil Her[illegible] [illegible]ved. Cecil worked as a welder for Hay[illegible] ward Steel. He married Marilyn Dukker of Edmonton on November 26, 1983, and they [illegible]

[illegible] March 23, 1983. They farm in Neerlandia.



[illegible]

[illegible] as far as he was concerned, any little clump of [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] land, which they farmed in part [illegible]

[illegible]

Joe Tuininga

[illegible]

[illegible] began when he bought a truck and started hauling freight from Neerlandia to Edmonton [illegible]

Because there was a lot of snow during the [illegible]

Pete married Tena Terpsma in 1927 but after a marriage of only eight months, she [illegible] to Edmonton with her family in 191[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Pete's brother Jack, who stayed with them for five years. Furthermore Omke and Mooike [illegible]

[illegible]

Pete and Tena had married during the De[illegible] were of more use to him on the farm. By 1933 [illegible] Sylvia, was born on December 18, 1933

The quarter on which the Tuininga lived [illegible] the narrows of Shoal Lake told Pete that the [illegible] tired of going through this timber to [illegible]

[illegible] business. It started like this: when Pete was still [illegible] broody hens and two clutches of eggs in payment. These Barred Rock hens and the result- [illegible] did you get those purebred hens?"

[illegible]

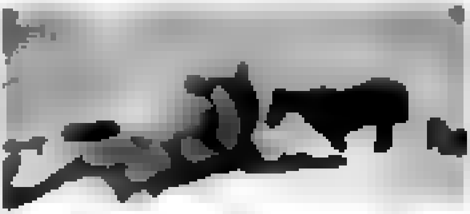
"Well," said the D.A., "if those are scrubs I'd like to see purebreds." He went on to advise Pete to contact the Provincial Hatchery and ask [illegible] sell hatching eggs. Pete took his advice, and that was the beginning of an involvement with [illegible] the hatchery in 1955 but continued in the com- [illegible]

[illegible] much chloroform. He was in the hospital for [illegible] days. When he was released Jack picked [illegible]

[illegible]

Roads in the forties were low and easily drifted in. One year Clarence and Pete Tuininga shovelled out the road from their homes to Henry Hiemstra's place, a distance of one mile [illegible] complete. A few days later another blizzard [illegible] other times the cars were left at Baker's Corner.

As the time for the 1940 Christmas concert drew near, Sylvia, who had been home from school for two weeks because of illness, begged her parents to take her, and they promised to do so. The roads were drifted so they set out [illegible] tirely useless.

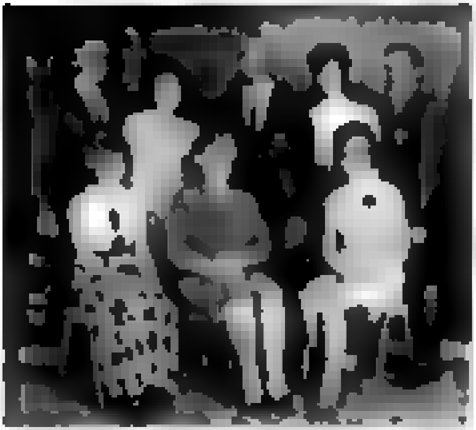

[illegible]

When the war began in 1939, sugar was [illegible] raised bees to produce honey. Tena baked [illegible] on cereal and in beverages. Friends and family received jars of honey from Tena, who always gave generously of whatever she had. Even today Pete would like to keep bees, but he has [illegible]

About thirty years ago a salesman from the Alberta Nursery at Bowden came to Neerlandia and sold Pete his first apple trees. Pete, who inherited the Tuininga love for plants, was soon [illegible] friends and relatives.

[illegible]

[illegible] children were born to the Tuininga family [illegible] that her parents began to call her Dot, a nickname [illegible] over her face. Sylvia quickly wiped her nose [illegible] wood Park. On August 26, 1959, Jean married James Olthuis, now of Toronto. Jim teaches at the Institute for Christian Studies. Jean is co- [illegible] delightful figures of people and animals.



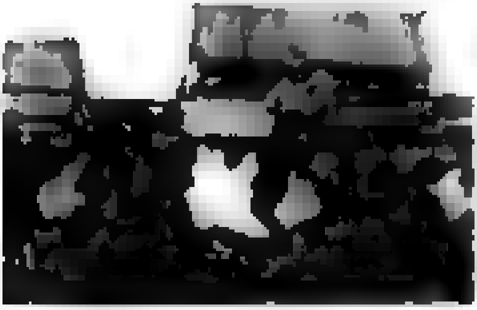
[illegible]

Pete and Tena are still living on the farm on [illegible] things have changed tremendously since 193[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] AND BERTHA (WIERENGA) TUININGA

In the summer of [illegible] sweet Wierenga family. In Neerlandia, on July [illegible] a boy, also thirteenth in the family, was born to the Klaas Tuininga family. They named him [illegible] dren were members of the same district and



Simon on the original homestead c. [illegible]

When Bertha was a girl: Bertha, [illegible] Jenny Wierenga [illegible]

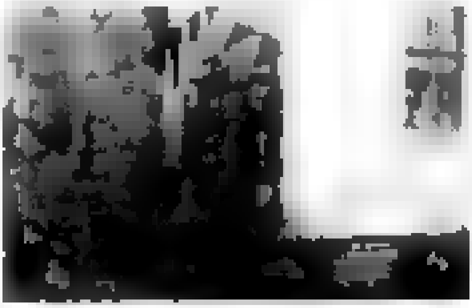
attended the same church and school in 1925, when he was six years old. Simon had to walk three-and-a-half miles to school along trails across country. On the way there he and his siblings usually passed the [illegible] or Menno Nanninga children, depending on which road they took. This situation improved for him when his parents moved to the NW 27-61-3-5, less than one mile from school. When the Wierengas arrived in Neerlandia, Bertha had to walk four miles to school, usually joining the Kippers children who lived one mile west of them. Later she had to walk this long distance back and forth to Young People's Society and to catechism. Matters improved for her when she started working for Mrs. Koning, the storekeeper's wife, and Jan Koning bought her a bike, the [illegible] new one in the distri[illegible]

Simon's [illegible] memories [illegible] when he was in the [illegible] age bracket are of the annual pilgrimage of the Indians [illegible] Ste. Anne [illegible] They [illegible] with covered wagons, followed by men on horseback and many dogs. They often camped across the road from the Tuiningas. When they left, Simon [illegible] to see if there were any arrowheads or spears lying around.

During these years Simon had his first space flight. He and his nephew Albert [illegible] climbed up a huge spruce tree and remained high in it while his brothers chopped it down. [illegible] if there was [illegible] injuries, but the space flight program was halted immediately.

Simon continued his studies at school and completed grade ten, which was unusual at that time. He then began what he considered the drudgery of farming: milking cows, [illegible] by hand and root picking. The only break was in the summer on hot Saturday afternoons [illegible] when many boys and some married men [illegible] at the [illegible] by the [illegible]

On January 8, 1942, Simon was called up by the government to report to the basic training camp at Camrose. For a young man who had never been on a train or bus and had never been in a barbershop, this was indeed a traumatic experience. [illegible] he was posted to the Queen's [illegible] at Moose [illegible] and later to the [illegible] Infantry Brigade Headquarters in Terrace, B.C. as a clerk. On January 4, 1944 he volunteered for training as air crew and was



Simon home on leave 1945

[illegible]

[illegible] meantime Simon had been courti [illegible]

so it was a happy day when Simon and Bertha [illegible]

bought scrap iron, much to the chagrin of his [illegible]

bargain over some old scrap, and his little son [illegible]

Simon had always been keenly interested in [illegible]

hanging full of frozen animals, tied from [illegible] wall to another above the kitchen heater. They [illegible]

and then Mr. and Mrs. Charles Baker, all [illegible]

hogs and six milk cows. The rest of the barn was [illegible]

first most of the work of gathering the eggs by [illegible]

the milk pails. Fortunately, business soon [illegible]

Also about this time the farm was [illegible] farmed so it could accomodate three hundred [illegible]

[illegible]

In 1961 the Tuiningas expanded by purchas [illegible]

sixties, Lazy S. T. Farms purchased a farm in [illegible]

[illegible] son, Bruce, was too young to manage it [illegible]

[illegible] Bruce David (February 24, 1953) married [illegible]

Members of the Christian Reformed Church [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] mittees and societies. Simon has served as an elder and has been a delegate to Classis and Synod. Simon and Bertha love to travel and [illegible]

[illegible]

HARM VAN DER WOUDE

Harm Van Der Woude was born February 16, 1876, in Niezyl, Groningen, the Nether [illegible] cepted a call to be home missionary in Edmon [illegible]

[illegible] he was here and Case Ingwersen wrote the following in his memoirs

[illegible] exalted themselves, such as sleepers in church. Then he was no respecter of persons. If it was [illegible] toward the consistory's bench and say, "If you don't stop that I will mention you by name." He [illegible]

[illegible] sometimes came to Neerlandia for three [illegible] a time. He boarded with the store [illegible] had. By nature he was very gentle which he [illegible]

[illegible] haystack close to the house. To prevent the hay [illegible] the evening the *Dominee* heard the crying o [illegible]

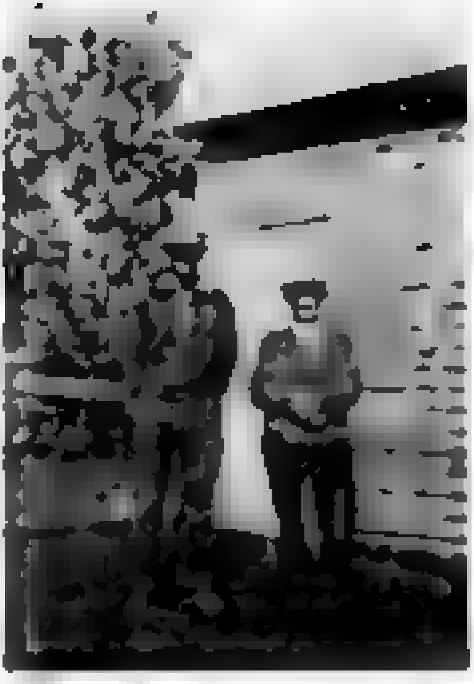
One time, during the winter, the *Dominee* [illegible] sleigh, of course. Of the team of horses, one was very fast and the other very lazy. Without [illegible] the whip, it was impossible to get the lazy [illegible]

[illegible]

along at a footpace. "That horse knows better than we [what is best]," said the *Dominee*."

Harm [illegible] to serve in Hoboken, New Jersey. In 1929 he accepted the call to be full-time minister at [illegible] across the road from the parsonage. On it he [illegible] raised a garden each year. Annie and Je[illegible] Schoonekamp would sometimes help him pick [illegible]

[illegible] whole congregation became his family. He [illegible] housekeeping. When Annie married, Harm [illegible] parsonage while she worked there. Mr [illegible]

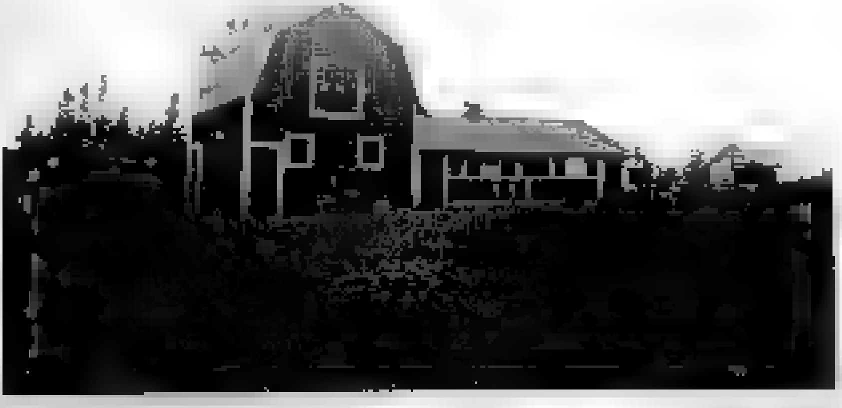


[illegible]

Harm enjoyed smoking cigars. He would [illegible] prepare his sermons in his head. At night, he [illegible]

Harm [illegible] church, and gave presents to them on special occasions. Harm also enjoyed visiting the [illegible]

[illegible] in Barrhead or in Edmonton. For instance, he took Hilligje Bos to Barrhead when she had to have her teeth pulled and also brought Janke



My barn and chicken coop, Neerlandia.

Harm, 1937.

Hiemstra to the hospital when she was sick with pleurisy (1934).

A friend of Rev. Van Der Woude's, Rev. E. Kooistra, who had known him since his student days wrote:

> He was a very ordinary person and deeply serious, with a sober and practical view of life. He was a man of prayer. He stayed away from all modern habits and he disliked it if we were too 'easy-fied'. He appreciated good humour but never have I heard him gossip or tell 'shady stories'.
>
> He felt much more at home in Neerlandia with the farmers than with the Amsterdammers, the "city bred" and the Dutch-American members of Hoboken. He was not forward and had a humble character and easy going nature. He was a Groninger with most of the good qualities of that people, among them a strong faith, honesty in dealing, uprightness in walk of life, knowledgeable in the Reformed doctrine. However, as a burden to himself and to others, he was too stiff and stubborn in his own chosen way.
>
> He preached what he believed and he believed what he preached. He walked with God, he was a man of prayer, he trusted with childlike simplicity in his Lord and Saviour. He was a good preacher, a faithful servant, and a warm friend. Loneliness, disappointments, and sufferings were his share too, especially the last years of his life.[1]

Harm suffered from diabetes and eventually he had problems with poor circulation in one foot. In February 1940 he informed the Neerlandia consistory that he was sick and would have to leave soon. He received honourable emeritus a year later and left Neerlandia in March 1942. He retired to Illinois where he had relatives. It became necessary to amputate his leg and he died February 4, 1950, as a result of the operation.

[1] Excerpts taken from an article written in Dutch in the March 10, 1950, issue of de Wachter.

JOHN AND SUSAN (ANEMA) VANEE

John (Jan) Lubbert Vanee was born April 14, 1903, in the province of Drenthe, the Nether-

[illegible]

John chose Alberta because of an advertise[illegible] southern [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

ust one month after John and Susie [illegible] married, as they were heading home [illegible] they were overtaken by a runaway [illegible] trampled by the horses. He was unconscious and taken to the Barrhead hospital. Dr [illegible] John slowly recovered. They were back [illegible]

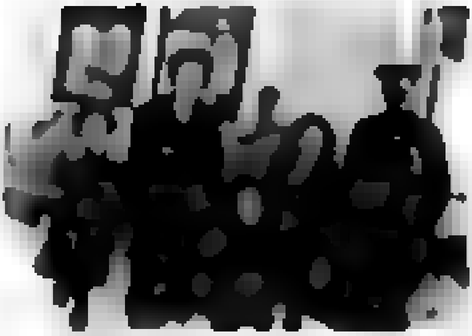
On June 4, 1934, John and Susie's first child [illegible]

[illegible] to church. They would [illegible] bike back home again.

By the year 1939 [illegible] car, which had a rumble seat in the back. The [illegible]

[illegible] il 25, 1941, a daughter, [illegible]

[illegible] burned, resulting in a month's stay in the Barr[illegible]



[illegible]

daughters. He also disliked the cold Alberta [illegible]

In the spring of 1946, John and Susan sold [illegible]

Frances Churchill Vetter

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Lake. Later they moved to Saskatchewan.

JOHN AND JOHANNA (INGWERSEN) VISSER

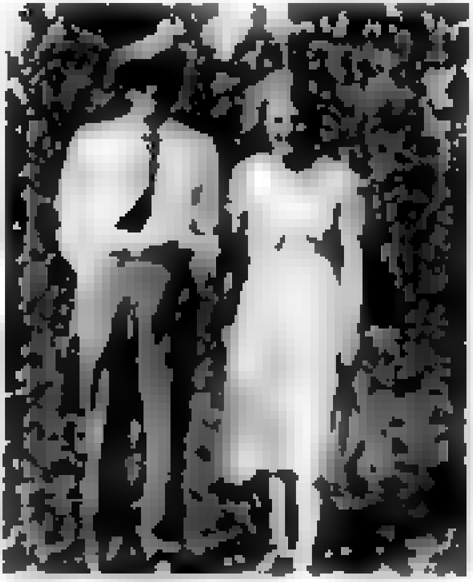
[illegible]

[illegible] quite young — John was 15 and Raymond was [illegible] but coming from a large family, work was quite natural to them. The location of their land [illegible]

[illegible] flavour. Froukje Anema, who [illegible] laundry.

By this time the pioneer days were pretty [illegible] creased, and now they also had to milk the cows, separate the milk, and feed the pigs, [illegible]

It was not all work for them though. Many [illegible] and milk and eggs were hardly worth ship[illegible] there was always plenty of eggs, butter, and cream. [illegible] breakfast cereal, or Johanna made it into brown bread.



[illegible]

After the Depression was over, farming became [illegible]. Tractors began to replace horses. [illegible] All he had to do was fill the tractor with gas and go to work.

When Raymond married Annie Tuininga in [illegible]

[illegible] a year after John and Johanna were married, they were blessed with the birth of a son. They named him George [illegible] In [illegible] they decided to adopt a baby girl. After writing to the adoption agency, they soon received word that a child was available. [illegible] named her Linda. [illegible] and George, who had ruled the roost for eight years, [illegible] and Johanna were happy they had taken that step.

[illegible] George [illegible]

John was always active in community activities, [illegible] as a member of the [illegible] Johanna kept [illegible] cleaning, and gardening. Her joy was flowers and [illegible] helping her [illegible]

As George became older he helped with the chores, and when he was 16 he quit school to take a more active part in farming. [illegible] Florence Baker [illegible] At that time John and George became equal partners [illegible]

[illegible] went to Dordt College, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in education. [illegible] with their three daughters.

As George and Florence's family grew up [illegible]

1977. This did not necessarily mean he sto[illegible]

hamlet of Neerlandia, built a house on one plot and subdivided and sold the rest. He also worked for Plains Western Gas Company obtaining easements. He enjoyed this job as it [illegible]

tend the shrubs and flowers which grace their yard.

Johanna Visser

[illegible]

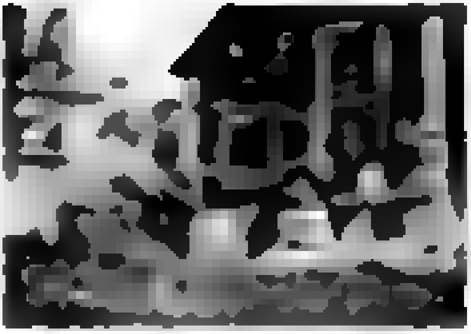
Raymond came to Neerlandia in 1926 when he was fourteen years old. He and his brother John made improvements on the SE 3-62-3-5 which had been filed on by their father. The quarter was split up with each brother getting [illegible]

Summers were spent picking roots and [illegible] or one dollar per day. For the first few winters [illegible] some livestock was purchased and that meant full-time baching in Neerlandia. A few dollars [illegible]

In the winter of 1926, Raymond worked at Bill Williams' lumber mill. He sawed lumber on [illegible] $380.00.

The lucky girl was Annie Tuininga. Her father, Klaas Tuininga, had given her thirty-five [illegible] pretty headband for seventy-five cents [illegible] the T. Eaton Company. A gold ring was five [illegible]

[illegible] was time to think about spring planting, so the [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] Wieringa for a Cockshutt with more power [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] bought land in Vega (W½ 9-63-3-5) in 1972 but [illegible]

[illegible] Hendrika Johanna on February 12, 1956 [illegible] they were married August 13, 1978.

Calvin and Rita moved to Vega in April 1979. [illegible] 14, 1979), Hannah Joy (December 19, 1980) and [illegible]

rents his land out and has some livestock. He loves hunting. Rita is involved with La Leche League in Barrhead and also loves to read and [illegible]

[illegible] He got the N½ 17-62-3-5 from his parents and put his money back into his land for brushing and breaking. He now farms full-time and [illegible] and have three daughters and a son.

[illegible] Barrhead high school. Sally had been born [illegible] Barrhead. [illegible] working for [illegible] Construction. Sally was working as

[illegible]

Back: [illegible]. Front: [illegible]

[illegible] continue to farm on NE 8-62-3-5. Their children are Raya Dawn (June 5, 1974), Gregory Dale [illegible]

[illegible] went into nursing. She worked at Vegreville, Coaldale, and Westlock. She married Garry Message in 1980 and they live on a farm in Pickardville with their one son. Valery con[illegible]

In 1977 Raymond and Annie moved to Barrhead. Since then Raymond has worked as custodian for Barrhead United Church and at [illegible] assist his sons. Annie worked for Preventive Social Services for five years. She no longer [illegible] The Vissers attend the Barrhead Christian Re[illegible] [illegible] and are happy to be healthy [illegible]

[illegible]

ANDRIES AND HENDRIKA (WERKMAN) [illegible]

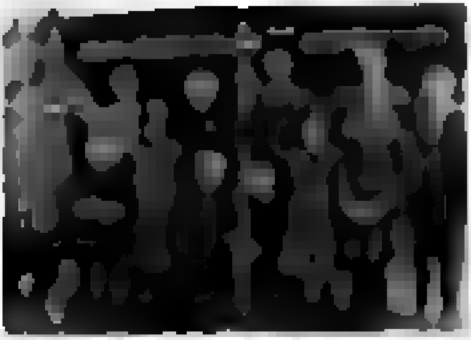
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Lammert and Hendrik also decided [illegible]

[illegible] Uithuizen. When they were ready to board the [illegible]

[illegible] enjoy anything since they were terribly seasick [illegible]



[illegible]

During that time Rev. Selles was the travel [illegible] decided to have a look. In October 1928 they [illegible] lands but when Siebren showed them the [illegible]

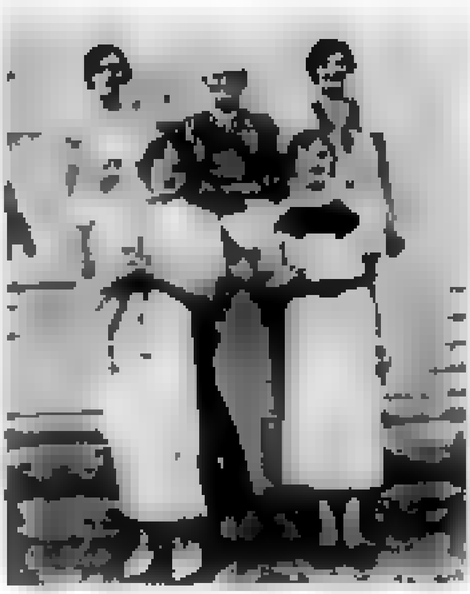
[illegible] telling of the very wet land and poor conditions [illegible]

[illegible] Terpsma. It had sixty acres cleared and a 24 by [illegible] and Trientje (March 28, 1910), who [illegible]

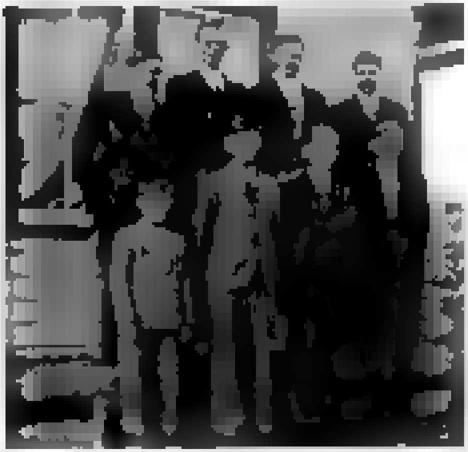
[illegible] er Lammert were in the Neerlandia Co-op, they [illegible] had seen, so two of his sisters promptly went to have a look at the strangers.

[illegible] to. They were plagued by bedbugs and when [illegible] 1929. A son, John (Jan), December 9 [illegible] (October 26, 1939)

Ben (Berend, July 2, 1912 [illegible] NE 26-61-3-5 as a homestead in 1931. In [illegible]



Back: Albertje, Hendrika, Tony. Front: Jennie holding Alie Sonnema, Sophie, Grietje, 1938



Back: Ben, Klaas, Herman, Andries. Front: Martin, Joe, Henry, Lambert, 1938

Herman, who was planning to move to Neerlandia. He later obtained the N½ and SW 23-61-5 to help his sons begin farming.

Andries served in consistory and also on the school and store boards. In 1950 Andries and Hendrika retired to Edmonton. The brothers, except Ben who also moved to Edmonton, farmed seven quarters cooperatively. Andries passed away April 29, 1952, due to cancer. Hendrika passed away August 26, 1955.

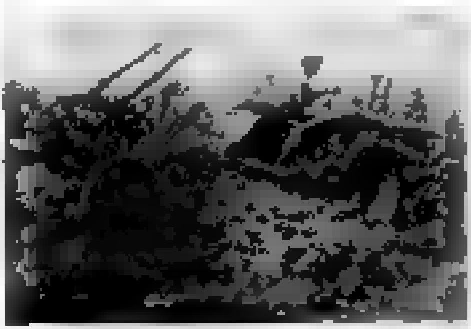
Klaas farmed for a number of years in Neerlandia, then moved to Lacombe to farm. He married Grace Swaanefeld and they have a family of ten children. Albertje married George Sonnema of Edmonton, and Trientje married Gerben Tiemstra. Ben is living in Neerlandia with his sister **Sophie** ([illegible], November 19, [illegible]) and her husband Joe Tuininga. **Jennie** (Jantje, February 2, 1915) lives in Edmonton with her husband John Olthuis. **Lambert** (May [illegible] 1920) married Elizabeth Bos and moved onto the homestead. **Henry** (Hendrik, November 24, 1921) married Rulie Wiegers. **Joe** (Johannes, October 23, 1922) married Hilda Peters, daughter of John and Elizabeth. Martin and his wife, Wilma Visser of Edmonton, moved onto the NW 23-61-5.

Wilma Wierenga

CLARENCE AND HELEN (EMMERZAEL) WIERENGA

Clarence Klaas Wierenga came to Tofield with his parents in 1928, but when they moved to Neerlandia, Clarence went to Edmonton. The Tofield butcher for whom he had been working helped him get a job in Burns packing plant. After two years there, Clarence went to Neerlandia where he filed on the NE 7-62-5 in July 1931.

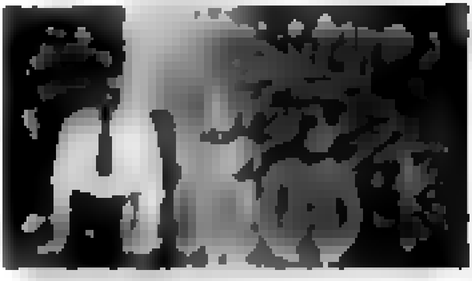
On June 11, 1942, Clarence married Helen Emmerzael. They lived in the one-room shack



Clarence breaking in the late 1930s.

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

born physically handicapped and lived in the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] on May 13, 1963. Three children were born to them but their oldest son, Randy, was killed in [illegible]

[illegible] Dorothy Walsh. They have three children but [illegible]

[illegible] with her two children on a farm in Bloomsbury [illegible]

In the spring of 1964, Clarence was [illegible] Barrhead for a few years but then moved back to the farm.

[illegible]

HENDRIK AND [illegible]

[illegible] Wierenga (January 26, 1886) and [illegible]

[illegible] December 16, 1974); **John** (Jan, June 6, [illegible] (Johannes, May 29, 1921); and **Lambert** (May 1924).

[illegible]

[illegible] knowing what was in store for them and what [illegible]

During the voyage, Hendrik was seasick [illegible] though, the trip was an adventure. They used to wander over the decks and investigate the [illegible]

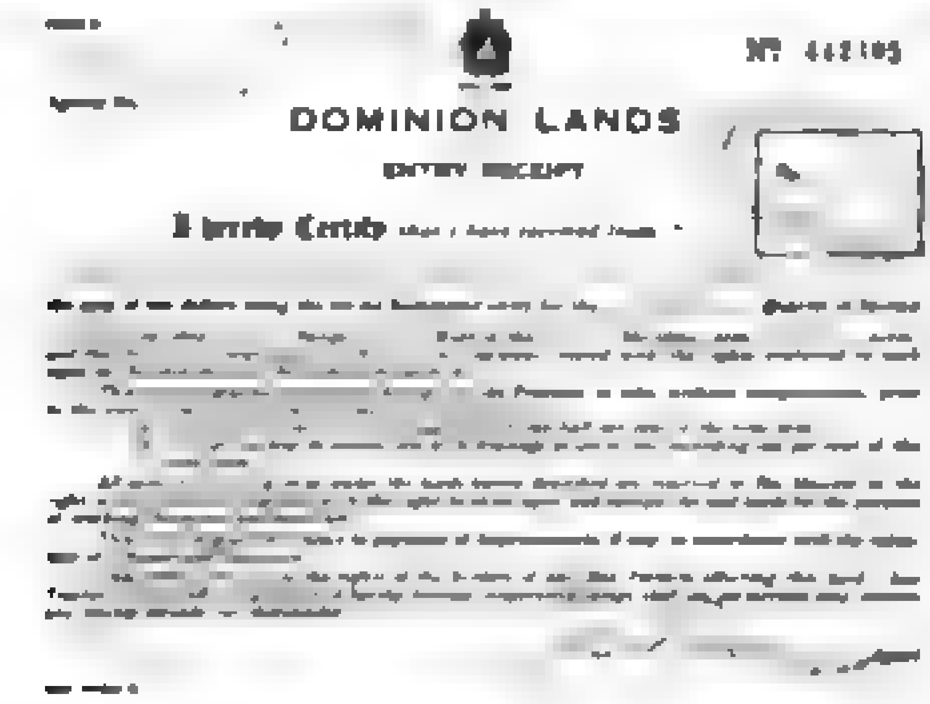
[illegible] Hendrika would say, "Look at those old *hutten* (huts) and that's what we will have to live in."

[illegible] women were discouraged. The families had [illegible] weeks before a place was found to live in [illegible]

[illegible]

Hendrik found work with farmers in the [illegible]

[illegible]



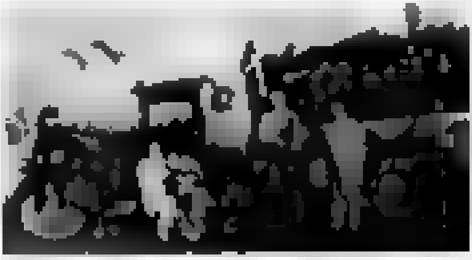
Nº 442103

DOMINION LANDS

ENTRY RECEIPT

I hereby Certify that I have received from moved into their house on the homestead. At first drinking water was taken from the creek but later several wells were dug using a shovel. The well was dug [illegible] feet deep. The dirt was lifted out with a rope and pail. Hendrik had a narrow escape while digging one well when the rope broke while the pail was lifting up. The pail [illegible] the well and a full pail of dirt just missing him. Another time he returned [illegible] digging a well and after [illegible] had [illegible] into the hole he had [illegible] found [illegible]. He was not sure [illegible] have been [illegible] or a dead one as the stench was almost unbearable.

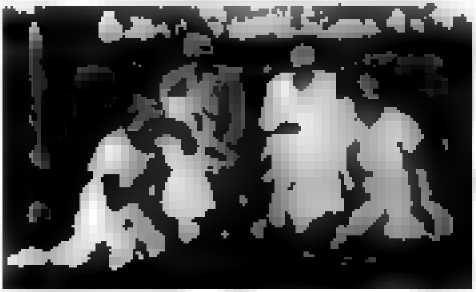
One time while clearing land Hendrik had an accident. He had [illegible] up the trees with a [illegible] which he [illegible] each tree [illegible] a team of horses to pull it [illegible] clearing the dirt away and chopping the [illegible]. While [illegible] the [illegible] around. The [illegible] his ribs and injured [illegible]. He managed to walk home [illegible] the pain and did not think it was [illegible] the doctor. Many of the trees that were cleared were used to make [illegible] which were not only used [illegible] but were also traded [illegible] farmers [illegible].



[illegible]

A quarter mile of corduroy road was built over a stretch of [illegible] homestead [illegible]. Hendrik [illegible] logs and [illegible]. Shoal Creek supplied the dirt to finish the road.

[illegible] married Albert [illegible] in 1931. Sophie began working for the Koning family, which she continued to do for about four years. Around that time Hendrik took the contract to clean the two-room school. He [illegible] helped clean while she was staying at [illegible]. [illegible] and Sophie married John Molodowich in 1936.



[illegible]

[illegible] 1938

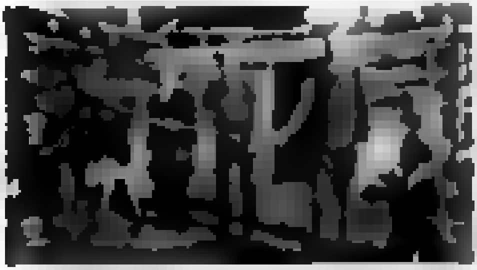
Hendrik made many of his own tools which he [illegible].

She was always busy scrubbing and cleaning as well as mending and patching clothes. For meals she [illegible] soup or potatoes [illegible] dinner [illegible].

[illegible]

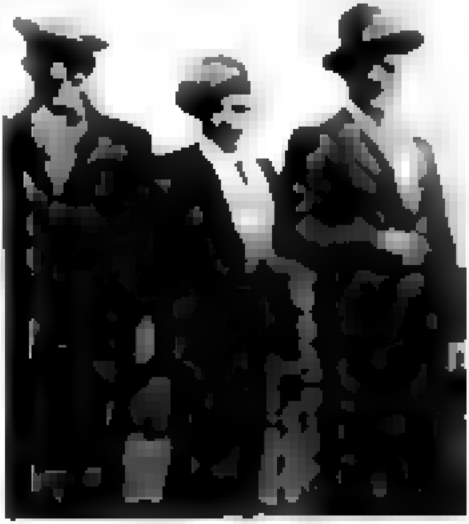
Hendrik bolted the cutter box to the sleigh [illegible]

[illegible] for long. So Hendrik figured he would fix that [illegible] on the roadway. The boar soon followed. An [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] of herself, one of her favourite pastimes was walking along the furrow behind the plow.

About 1940 a large stucco house had [illegible] built. In 1947 Joe married Grace Tuininga and [illegible]

[illegible] he, Hilje, and Johanna moved into a house which they had purchased at the Centre. Johanna later married John Kostelijk. Hendrik passed away March 22, 1954, at 68 years of age from a heart attack. Hilje moved into the Barrhead Nursing Home in 1974 and passed away September 17, 1975, at 86 years of age.

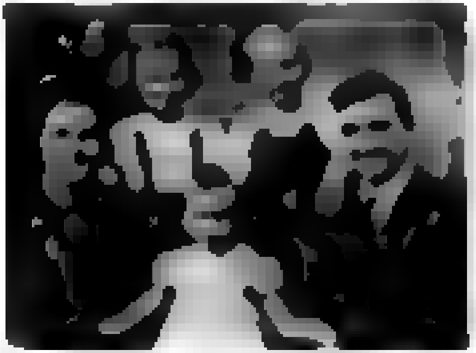
Lambert Wierenga

[illegible]

[illegible] Wisconsin, where Harriet, born April 10, 1916, was raised. In 1934 she married Herman, who [illegible]

[illegible] ter chance of owning land in northern Alberta.

Herman and Harriet arrived in Neerlandia with their children **Dixie** (Edigna, August 27, 1935), **Andrew** John (December 2, 1937), and [illegible]



Harriet, Dixie, Andrew, Herman, Gladys in front, c. [illegible]

Like most people in those days, they must [illegible] to in Wisconsin, but that did not worry her too much. She was young, had her little family about her and, because she believed things [illegible]

[illegible] born December 31, 1945. Since Barrhead [illegible]

[illegible] healthy in Neerlandia although their daughter [illegible]

[illegible] activities outside the home, they were [illegible] busy. Harriet remembers all the canning she [illegible] wood stove! The only thing Harriet was unable to learn was splitting wood [illegible] though all the other women seemed able to do [illegible]

With the increasing flow of immigration from the Netherlands, Herman became in [illegible] sible to manage both [illegible]

[illegible] man worked hard for the Immigration Society, believing that in this way he could make his contribution to society.

It was in the course of his work that God took Herman from this life. On July 3, 1954, he

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Lammert and Hendertje sold their [illegible]

the *burgemeester* and many others came to say [illegible]

(1905) and Hendrik (1906), who were staying [illegible]

again. After all, the agents had said, "You are [illegible]

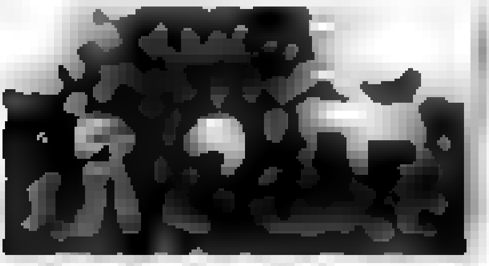
At Rotterdam Lammert and Hendertje and thirteen children boarded the *Rijndam*. After [illegible] days they landed in Halifax, where they [illegible]

changed — they were going to Tofield instead [illegible]

live in the train car for a few weeks. When [illegible] (August 9, 1903) got double pneumonia, the [illegible]

private nurse came to look after him. Some farmers from the area came and offered jobs to [illegible]

Ekke (March 17, 1915) and **Andrew** (Andreas, January 2, 1917) found light work in a coal mine. **Trientje** (March 29, 1902), **Grace** (Grietje, Au- [illegible] 1909), **Catherina** (Catrien, April 12, 1910), **Jan-Ben** (August 14, 1911), and **Johanna** (February 26, 1913) soon found work housekeeping.



[illegible]

House. He told them about the Dutch [illegible]

Lammert and Ekke worked on the [illegible]

homesteading life and never complained about [illegible] conditions. She fixed up the log house so [illegible]

princess.

Soon after Lammert came to [illegible] Henry Kippers gave him a piglet. After feedin[illegible] money which had been borrowed for the trip. The older Wierenga girls soon married: Grace to Oene Piers in 1930; Trientje to Klaas Tuininga Jr and Sophie to Henry Koppers Jr. in 1932; Catherina to Joe Holwerda in 1934; and Janken to Nick Vriend.

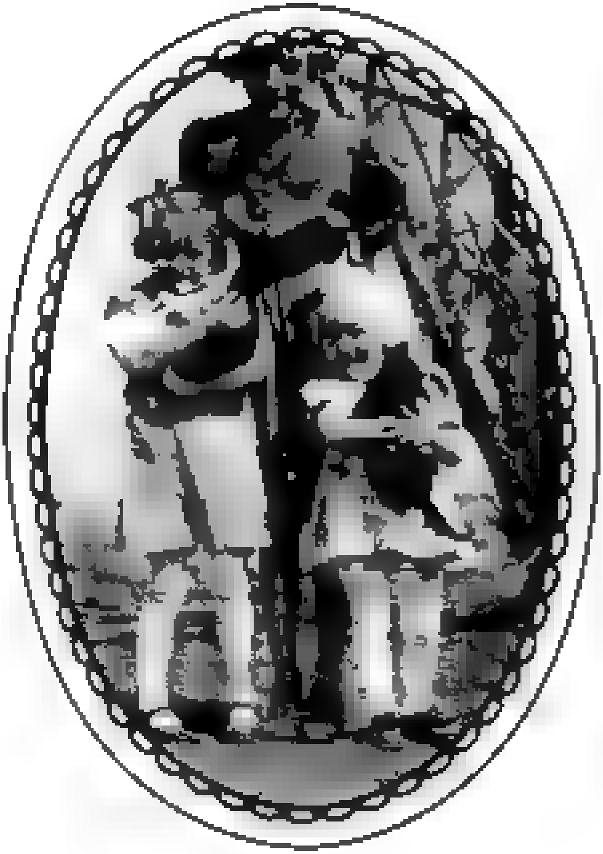
In the early forties a lumber house was built on the homestead. Hendertje died December 14, 1943. During the forties more of the Wierenga children married. Johanna married Joshua Rowaan in January 1941. In 1943 Jennie (Jantje, April 1, 1918) married Andy Elzinga, and Elle (Eeltje) Margaretha (July 4, 1924) married Norman Terpsma. **Bertha** (Lambertina) Hendrika (June 23, 1919) married Simon Tuininga in 1945. Andrew married Rene Janssen in November 1942, and Ekke married Egberdina Norden in July 1948.

He married Henny Bartels in 1951. They moved to Ontario, where he died in October 1956. **Hennie** (Hendrika, January 3, 1921) remained single and lives in B.C. with Catherina.

Lammert never felt at home in Canada. He was fifty-three years old when he came, and never mastered the English language. He went back to the "old country" twice and would have stayed there had it not been for his children living in Canada. He died August 4, 1962.

Wierenga Family

You know you're an old-timer if you can remember
— bamboo binder whips
a use for last year's catalogue
where Anema's corner is
when skidding meant dragging logs with a horse and not sliding sideways with your car on an icy patch
when an angry glare from Rev. van Der Woude could silence you.
when everyone wore their best clothes to the July First picnic
when playing cards was considered a sin
when the only recreation for dating couples was parking on a lonely road
the night the church burned down.
going to school barefoot
a slate as something to write on and not as a floor covering
when you had to sit through a reading of all of Psalm 119
— how cold the outhouse was in winter.
— threshing crews coming down the road and being able to identify the teams
— when you took piano lessons on the organ.
going to the creek on a class hike or for a wiener roast
the difference between a one-holer and a two-holer.
when horsepower meant how many horses you had.
when five children made a small family
what Rev. van Der Woude said, and quote him to prove a point.



1946-1984

1946-1984

Beginning in 1946 Neerlandia entered a new era. The Second World War was over and the soldiers were returning home, some with their European brides and others with the girls they had met and married during their training in B.C.

Then came the postwar immigrants from the Netherlands. Though many stayed for only a short time, several made Neerlandia their home.

The young people born in Neerlandia in the previous decades were also marrying and making their homes there. With the increased mobility of modern transportation, there was more communication with other Reformed churches. The young men of Neerlandia brought home their brides from Edmonton, Lacombe, and Nobleford. As other young people began attending colleges in the U.S.A., more bonds were formed and more young men and women began a new life in Neerlandia.

The experiences differ but together these are the people who help to make the community of Neerlandia. It is their stories which are told in this section.

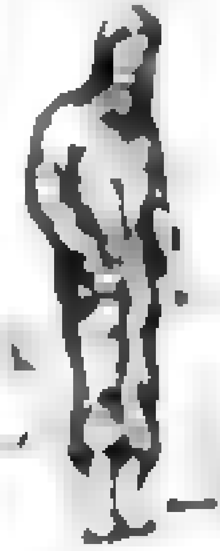
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] construed Neerlandia as being upside-down

[illegible]



[illegible]
him with the tractor shudder

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] parting gift and I was very touched by that

[illegible]

[illegible] sounds coming from the wall

[illegible]

This has been my experience to date and I find my life result-ing [illegible] Neerlandia. [illegible] the place [illegible] must be the place.

Sandra Oldham

CASE AND JENNIE (BROUWER) AARSEN

As a boy growing up in Holland, Richard Aarsen always [illegible] farmer. When in 1976 Richard [illegible] saw an ad for a [illegible] farm in Bloomsbury [illegible] decided [illegible] farming together. The home place in [illegible] was sold, their goods were packed, and the family [illegible] Case and Jennie and their children Richard, Jan, Brian and Corinne, set out for Bloomsbury.

Not having farmed on this scale before there was much to learn. Much was done "by the book" but the Aarsens also accepted advice from seasoned farmers of the Neerlandia community.

Although they lived in Bloomsbury, the Aarsen family attended church and school in Neerlandia and soon felt a part of that community.

Richard married Carolyne Dykstra of Edmonton on September [illegible]. [illegible] Carolyne had a romantic idea of farming but the realities of smelly manure and squealing pigs made her realize that it had disadvantages as well as advantages. Carolyne's education on the farm included learning to give pigs shots, clip their tails, and chase sows, as well as learning to cook just like mom.

The next year Case moved to Fort McMurray. A year later, after considering the good times and the bad, the Aarsens sold the farm. Jan and Richard took up carpentry. Then the Aarsen wanderlust struck and Jan was off for a one year sojourn in Israel, where he worked at the Neve Ammim moshav. [illegible] Jennie Aarsen moved to [illegible] taking Brian and Corinne with her.

Richard tried his hand at a number of things including an attempt at starting hog farming on a smaller scale, [illegible] by [illegible] and provincial boards, and doing carpentry work. In 19[illegible] Richard [illegible] began Aarsen Carpentry [illegible] Brian [illegible] Corinne Dahlseiden [illegible] married [illegible] Richard [illegible] three children: Jesse [illegible] 1979; Chevonne [illegible] Aug [illegible] and Ryan [illegible] February [illegible]

Back: Richard, Carolyne, Ryan. Front: Chevonne, Jesse. [illegible]

Jan, Carolyne, 1984

The Aamen wanderlust seems to be under control, both Richard and Carolyne and Jan have found life in the unique, Christian community of Neerlandia good and spiritually strengthening, as they give and receive the benefits which they in Christ possess.

Carolyne Aamen

STEVE AND TINE (BOUMA) ABDAY

Tine (Trijntje) Bouma was born in Jakarta on the island of Java in Indonesia on March 28, 1917. Her father Sijtse (December 6, 1886), was a missionary teacher on the island. In 1934 Sijtse, his wife Jantje (June 25, 1892), Tine, and three brothers returned to the Netherlands.

Steve Martin Abday was born July 28, 1920 at Saksenhill, Saskatchewan. He grew up on his father's farm with four brothers and six sisters. During the Second World War he joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He was sent overseas and served five years in the army as a mechanic and truck driver. He was one of the soldiers who liberated the Netherlands. Tine Bouma came to Canada in May 1947 where she married Steve in the United Church in Melville on July 30, 1947.

On September 4 they arrived in Neerlandia where Tine was to teach. The people of Neerlandia gave them a welcome shower of household items including fresh and canned fruit, vegetables, and meat. A pleasant surprise! They boarded at George Anema's, where George's sister Anna did the housekeeping and cooking.

Steve and Tine, 1947

John Van Riper, the school principal, and his family lived in a little shack which was the only teacherage in Neerlandia. But in November a larger white house was pulled in on skids and placed behind the shack. The Van Ripers moved into the "White House" and Steve and Tine into the shack. Tine sent a picture of the two houses to her parents, and her mother got the impression that Steve and Tine lived in the white house. She wrote back, "If I were you, I'd have that old little shack in front of my house broken down and removed." Tine did not write that the "old little shack" was their home.

The Abday's needed many things such as blankets, cutlery, and towels, which Tine's parents sent from the Netherlands. But they had a great laugh when one day they received a shoe box full of onions that Tine's dad had sent be-

[illegible]

The School Division had provided a Mc [illegible] the little teacherage. The drum heater in the living room always frightened Tine. When the [illegible] made Tine jump up in bed, asking Steve, [illegible]

A greenhorn has to learn so many thing[illegible] bedroom window open as she had in the Netherlands. "That is healthy," she said. Steve said, "Not in Canada," but she insisted. One [illegible] The window stayed closed until the sprin[illegible]

[illegible] ing her leg badly. The Abdays shared that little teacherage with numerous mice which ran over [illegible] ased to eat most of the [illegible]

[illegible] ing in the crew of John Ingwersen, and Tine started teaching forty-five pupils in grades four, five and six.

Some of Tine's grade six pupils were John [illegible] Baker, Tina Jorritsma, and Betty Terpsma. They [illegible] as "garter snakes in my desk drawer and bugs and a mouse in a bottle." The pupils were [illegible] prised when she let the garter snake glide around her arm, and threw the bugs and [illegible]

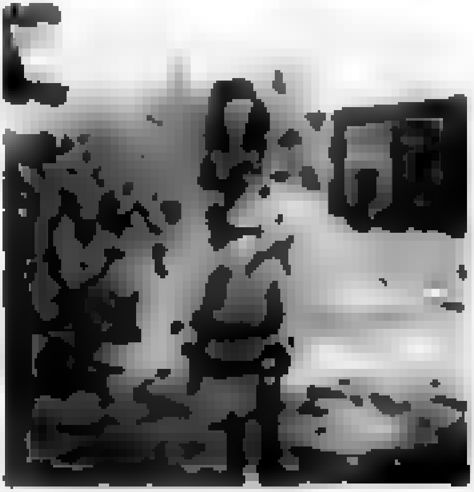
[illegible] the grade six boys asked in surprise. [illegible]

[illegible]

Tine's monthly salary was $92. Their store bill was about $40, and Tine paid $30 for their housekeeper, Anne Piers, a sister of Klaas Piers. So Abdays had $22 left for some extras.

In the spring Steve started working for [illegible]

When the baby was on the way into this [illegible]



[illegible]

In the fall Tine's parents wrote saying that [illegible] Canada. The Abdays were perplexed. This [illegible] lived in comfort! Moreover, the little teacherage could not hold all of them. The roof was so leaky that they could see the sky here and there through the rafters. Steve had fixed the roof as best he could, but in the winter it was still very cold. [illegible] sleep in the attic to make room for her parents.

Steve and [illegible] them [illegible] with [illegible] which contained furniture and other things for [illegible]. The day they [illegible] it had already rained heavily for two weeks and the roads were muddy and rutted. They had never seen anything [illegible].

In the meantime Steve had obtained the NE 17-61-3-5 through the Veteran's Homestead Lease. He paid Cor Hiemstra $2700 for improvements on it. Steve and Tine had bought Louis Nanninga's old house, but unfortunately the new house which was being built for Louis was not ready. In the winter [illegible] and the Bosmas moved into the drafty old Hiemstra house.

[illegible]

That winter [illegible] was very cold. Tine's father slept with his long johns wrapped around his head [illegible] and her mother [illegible] [illegible] After [illegible] brought them to [illegible] the train.

It was a sad farewell. Tine was never to see her father again. He passed away one and a half years later. Jim and John [illegible] half a year and then they went back [illegible]. In the spring the house [illegible] was pulled onto Abday's land and Steve and Tine moved in. A barn had already been moved there in the fall. Steve kept busy working on the [illegible] and [illegible] breaking some of the new land. Nights were short and working days were long for him. Tine had started teaching again [illegible] them [illegible] and keeping house when she was at school.

In the meantime Abdays bought pigs, horses, cows and chickens, and really began to farm. At night Tine helped clean the eggs and separate the milk, and in the morning she, along with the children of Klaas and Pete Tuininga, rode to school in Frank Visser's old truck, which came to Baker's Corner. To get to and from the corner she had to walk.

It was a [illegible] and the road was muddy in the spring. [illegible] walking difficult. [illegible] the road was [illegible] Steve had [illegible] the corner [illegible] Fisher's farm. When this happened Steve would wait for Tine at the corner, take her bag, and carry her home piggyback.

The Abdays also made an agreement with Klaas Tuininga: whenever possible, Klaas would get the students and [illegible] the corner with horse and buggy in the summer, and Steve in turn would get them with the sleigh and horses in the winter. Tine was very scared of the horses, especially when the Tuininga boys clapped their hands to make the horses go faster.

Steve and Tine liked living on the farm, and

[illegible]

would have stayed on had she not contracted [illegible]

1963 they sold the land to Simon Fisher. Steve then started to work for Dick Fisher, a Massey Ferguson dealer, and later went to SAIT and NAIT to obtain his Heavy Duty Mechanic License. Abdays bought a plot of land west of Neerlandia store and moved the house there [illegible]

[illegible] "old country". In 1968 Jantje was hospitalized as a result of a fall. She remained in the hospital [illegible]

[illegible] married in June 1981. Cedric is [illegible] on February 2, 1984. Steve will be [illegible]

GILBERT AND JEANNETTE (WIESE) BAKER

Gilbert Baker spent most of his childhood at [illegible] mond Baker, passed away when Gilbert was four so the family moved from the farm to the hamlet. Since the skating rink was only about [illegible] of time with his brother, John, at their uncle George Anema's place. When Gilbert was four [illegible]

In 1970 Gilbert married Jeannette Wegner (nee Wiese). Jeannette Winnifred was born December 14, 1943, in Herbert, Saskatchewan. When she was three years old the family moved southwest of Barrhead. She married Edward Wegner on July 7, 1962. They took over the [illegible] and were blessed with three children: Karl Edward, born April 6, 1963; Connie Jean, born June 21, 1966; and Timothy Todd, born November 14, 1969. Then on March 12, 1970, Edward [illegible] Jeannette were married. They were blessed with three more children: **Raymond Scott**, born January 26, 1972; **Kelly Gilbert**, born November 25, 1974, and **Brian Steven**, born April 15, 1979. Gilbert and Jeannette were also foster parents to ten children over a period of six years. The Wegner farm was bought from the estate by Gilbert and Jeannette in 1973 and they still live there.

Back: Carl, Gilbert. Middle: Raymond, Connie, Jeannette, Kelly, Timothy. Front: Brian. 1982.

Over the past years the Baker family has been involved in many activities. Gilbert had been a Boys Scout Club leader for five years. Tim, Raymond, and Kelly were also involved in the scouting groups. Through the scouts, Tim had the opportunity in 1981 to attend CJ (Canadian Jamboree 81), a worldwide jamboree held at Kananaskis Valley, near Calgary. Gilbert, Karl, Raymond, and Kelly are involved in hockey — Gilbert as coach and his sons as players. Karl is goalie for the Neerlandia Knights. Jeannette has taken advantage of several county courses and enjoys many handicrafts. Connie and Jeannette have also been involved in the Calvinette program of the Christian Reformed Church. Jeannette served for ten years as counsellor. Jeannette and Connie are both enrolled in the beauty culture program in the Barrhead Vocational School. Karl is employed at Champion Feeds in Barrhead.

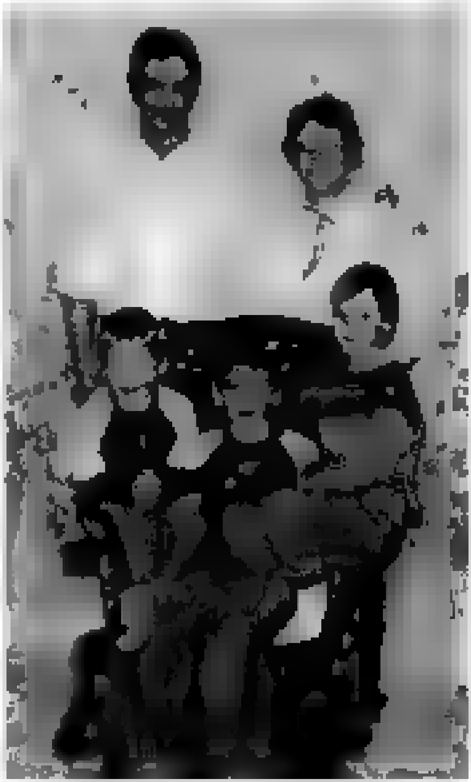
Jeannette Baker

JOHN AND LEONA (MAST) BAKKER

John was born June 25, 1956 in Edmonton, approximately two years after his parents had emigrated from the Netherlands. The family first lived in Namao and later moved to the Barrhead area.

Leona Mast spent most of her childhood years in Neerlandia. She met John at a Young Peoples' Rally held in Edmonton. They were married March 22, 1974.

John worked as a hired man for approximately eight years for farmers in the Neerlandia district — first for Case and Adrian Hamoen, then for Simon Tuininga, and finally for Simon Elgersma. After John had worked for Simon for two years, he and Simon went into partnership, calling themselves B & E Farms. Under this arrangement John and Leona bought the NW 16-62-3-5 in 1982 and put up a farrowing operation. The quarter they had purchased was all bush, so they had to do some clearing before they could build.



Back: John, Leona. Front: Jeffrey, Calvin, Ramona. 1984.

The Bakkers have three healthy children: **Calvin John** (November 22, 1974), **Ramona Lucille** (July 20, [illegible]) and **Jeffrey Dwayne** (May 29, [illegible]).

John and Leona both enjoy various hobbies. John enjoys hunting, fishing and trapping. Leona enjoys sewing and sports, and has recently begun taxidermy. The whole family enjoys living in the bush, where they often see wildlife.

Leona Bakker

HENRY AND JO (KRIKKE) BENDER

Jo (Johanna) Krikke was born in 1919 in Neerlandia. In 1933, when Jo was fourteen and had passed grade nine, she, like everyone else, quit school. A few years later grade ten was added to the school, so Jo went back to be taught by Mr. Ashley. Lulla Bos and Jo were the only grade ten students that year. Jo and her sister Gladys did the janitor work in the two-room school during that time.

After passing grade ten, Jo went to Sunnybank, Alberta. She and her friend, Annie Lievers, worked for room and board plus clothing on a farm there. While working, Jo also took grade eleven in the local school. On completing that grade, she came back home to take grade twelve by correspondence and private study. Her father, Kees, paid eight dollars for each of the four correspondence courses. After nurses' training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton, Jo became a registered nurse in 1943. After working hard to get through school, it was a pleasure to get a monthly paycheck.

Henry, Jo, David. 1978

Back: David, Debbie. Front: Trina, Dayna. 1983.

Jo was nursing in the Barrhead hospital when she met Henry Bender. Henry had been born May 24, 1908 in Winnipeg, Manitoba and came with his parents to Mellowdale in 1909. Henry later began farming the NW 34-60-3-5.

Henry and Jo were married February 13, 1952, and then settled on Henry's quarter. One son, David Carl, was born to them on November 21, 1952. Dave took his schooling in Barrhead. In 1966, he quit school to take up farming with his father. Dave married **Debbie Rae** of Edmonton on June 17, 1978. Two daughters, **Trina Danielle** (May 6, 1981) and **Dayna Shantelle** (September 22, 1982) have been born to Dave and Debbie.

Jo Bender

GERHARD AND WILHELMIEN (SCHUURMAN) BEYERS

The Beyers story begins in the Netherlands where Gerrit (Gerhard) was born September 1,

1928. He was raised on a farm just outside the [illegible] man border. In the early fifties the Canadian government was giving agricultural [illegible] [illegible] heard there was plenty of land in Canada, he [illegible]

[illegible] where he was greeted by Henk and Jean [illegible]

[illegible] Schuurman, in the Netherlands and the year that followed was a lonely one. In 1953 Wilhel[illegible] month (June 20, 1953), as the law required [illegible] and raised in Winterswijk and had enjoyed all [illegible] realized that it was not going to be easy for her [illegible]

[illegible] piglets. Wilhelmien helped raise them and got enough money for a sewing machine, but since [illegible]

[illegible] ber camps. This meant that Wilhelmien was alone for two-week stretches. Isolated from her family, she had long, lonely weeks. Letters [illegible]

Gerrit worked for several different farmers [illegible]

[illegible]

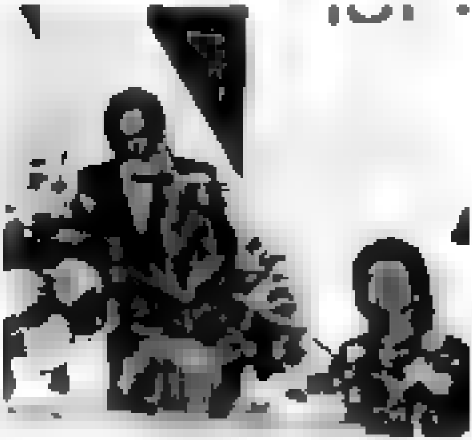
Elmona, arrived. In November 1956, Gerrit was offered a job with the Neerlandia Co-op for an [illegible] their condolences because of the poor accomodations. But it was all they could afford.

As a clerk in the Co-op, Gerrit worked under Bart Vander Wal and later under Mike VanderKeemel. On October 24, 1962, Gerald Lambert was born. One year later, Gerrit be[illegible]

[illegible] dreamed of while still in the Netherlands. God had other plans. The Beyers consider themselves richly blessed in their adopted country.

The Beyers' children no longer live in

[illegible] back to the Netherlands [illegible] Wilhelmien, Gerald [illegible]



[illegible] Wilhelmien [illegible]

Neerlandia. Shirley and her husband, John Van[illegible] live with their three children in [illegible]. John works as a [illegible] technician. Winnifred works as an assistant and is married to Ernie [illegible]. Ernie owns a backhoe operation in Edmonton. Gerald took business administration at NAIT. He is married to Cindy Burnside, who teaches the mentally handicapped. They are living in Edmonton.

Wilhelmien had a heart condition in the last years of her life. In March [illegible], she passed away after a short illness.

Gerrit Beyers

RALPH AND JOAN (OLTHUIS) BOS

It was a cold day in February [illegible] when the stork flew over the large [illegible] the farm of Bertus and Hilda Bos (NW [illegible]) and dropped a small bundle into the snowbank. Bertus and Hilda were delighted — it was a bright, blue-eyed baby boy, and they named him Ralph [illegible]. Ralph was the [illegible] in a line of [illegible] children in the Bos household.

During Ralph's youth he was active and inquisitive [illegible]. He and his [illegible] spent much of their time together and they often went out exploring the homestead. One day Ma Bos took the two of them out strawberry picking. En route to the strawberry patches they had to pass through a spruce windbreak. [illegible] the path, Ralph and Peter went running [illegible] among the trees. Unfortunately there was a low [illegible] hornet's nest. Ralph ran into it and a great commotion started. Ralph [illegible] the middle of the [illegible] hysterically, and Ma Bos had to rush in and grab him out. They all ran home where Ma dabbed the swelling stings with vinegar. This was [illegible] as the stings themselves. Needless to say, there were no strawberries to show for it all.

In another adventure, Ralph and Peter discovered an [illegible] nest [illegible] a few [illegible] dead [illegible]. They thought it would be fun to capture a young [illegible] and make a pet of it. They quickly gathered together some sticks for Peter to throw at the mother [illegible] while Ralph climbed the tree. Everything was going smoothly until Ralph was about three feet from the nest. Then pow, something hit him on the head and took his cap off. The mother [illegible] and got in a second attack. [illegible] Ralph [illegible] from the [illegible] marks on his scalp. Ralph came down the tree in a rush and the two ran home empty-handed.

During the winter Ralph's fun and imagination came alive at sawing time. Pa Bos would haul loads of wood out of the bush with his horses and sleigh. Henry Erickson from Vega [illegible] from the wood blocks. It was all fine when they [illegible]

[illegible]

When Ralph was eleven years old he began [illegible] drew Nanninga. In 1948, Andrew advised Ralph to file on some land, as there was some available in the Misty Ridge area. Andrew as[illegible] Elizabeth took up the quarter (NW 15-62-4-5) in 1949. The first year William Olthuis cleared ten acres of Ralph's land with his D6 [illegible]

Ralph began working in Edmonton at [illegible]ous jobs during the winter, living and working [illegible] found comfort on it.

Meanwhile, Joan Olt[illegible] Neerlandia. She has many fond memories of [illegible] they were also very good at chewing the spruce gum to a good chewing gum stage, which few of the other children could do. Thus they did [illegible] the telephone lines to see who could make [illegible]

Although Ralph and Joan had known each [illegible] Joan's sister Elsie was working in Edmonton, and when she came home she talked about her [illegible]

[illegible] Terpstra's farm sale (auction) on May 6, 1955 [illegible] evening. So began their two-year courtship [illegible] their marriage vows in Neerlandia Christian [illegible] reception followed in Neerlandia School gym [illegible] the storm. Ralph and Joan fled to Jasper where [illegible]

After the honeymoon, Ralph carried Joan [illegible] 1959. Ralph brought Joan to his homestead. Being a handy kind of guy, Ralph had [illegible] been furnished by a variety of articles purchased at auction sales. Ralph would [illegible] home with anything from fine bone china to a broken lamp and an old cupboard full of broken nests. When Joan questioned Ralph as to the value of paying money for a bunch of old chicken nests, she was soon informed that the cupboard contained some valuable oak boards which would be used for repair work on the furniture. After some investigation, Joan discovered that although they had been used as a hangout for chickens, all the parts of a buffet were still there. After hours of elbow grease, sandpaper and a bit of linseed oil, the "chicken nests" became a beautiful piece of furniture.

The farm, which overlooked the south of the Athabasca river, presented a spectacular view and was never a dull place. Often wildlife would wander around the yard or could be seen passing through the fields. The most frightening visitors were the bears. They would saunter around, sniffing the animals and, on one occasion, they tore sheets of plywood off the barn. The pigs and cows were set out to graze in a fenced-off area of the forest and often the pigs were attacked by bears and would return home with bloody scratches and gouges on their backs.

Living "up west" was a long drive from Grandma's house and the church, so in the winter of 1966, when the Plantinga farm (W½ 5-62-3-5) just two miles from the Neerlandia centre was posted for sale in the Neerlandia Co-op, Ralph and Joan took a great interest. There was much prayer and discussion in the Bos home as to whether they should try to purchase the farm. Finally it was decided that in order to live their lives and bring up the family in a way pleasing to God, they should choose the Plantinga farm. Although the homestead was often missed, there were no regrets about this decision.

After the family moved onto their new home Ralph went right to work fixing up the house and [illegible]. Throughout the years the little house had many renovations and additions. Today it is a comfortable home with white siding and bright blue shingles.

Ralph worked on road construction for the County of Barrhead and farmed the half section while Joan and the older children cleaned the Neerlandia school. This [illegible] proved to be very much of a strain on family life. In the fall of 1978, Ralph became ill with myasthenia gravis, a disease causing loss of muscle control and in Ralph's case badly affecting his vision. Although there is no known cure, the disease was in remission for five years. It is now increasingly limiting Ralph's activity again.

[illegible], Wendy, [illegible]

On May 16, 1958, Wendy Lee was born. She married Adnan [illegible] on August [illegible] and they live in Edmonton with their son. Adnan is part owner of Rainbow Eavestroughing.

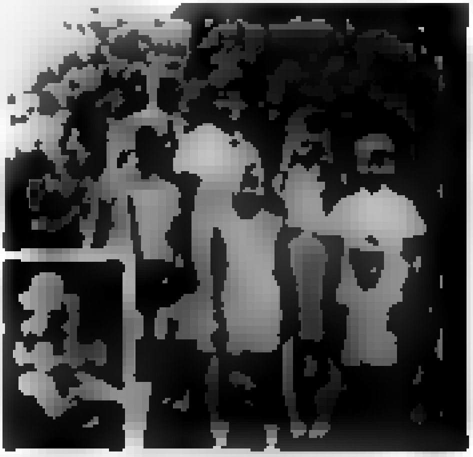
As the first snow fell on November 1, 1959,

[illegible] joined the Bos family [illegible] and has completed her fourth year as an [illegible].

In the new January [illegible] Sheldon was brought [illegible] the first family. [illegible] and [illegible] dad.

In the [illegible] made her appearance in the Bos family on March [illegible].

The summer of 19[illegible] is a time the Bos family will never forget. [illegible] On August [illegible] Sheldon Bertus joined the family.



[illegible]

On August 3, 1974, the Bos family experienced the happiness of the birth of Stephanie Jayne, who made the family complete.

Joan Bos

TEAKE DOUWE BULTSMA

Teake Douwe Bultsma was born on March [illegible] in [illegible], Friesland, the Netherlands. In [illegible] he married [illegible]. In [illegible] they immigrated to Canada and raised four children on a farm south of Bardett, Alberta. In 1965 his wife passed away. [illegible] to live with his daughter Grace Schuurman and her family. He resided [illegible] in the hamlet [illegible]. In [illegible] he passed away and was buried in Lethbridge. He is remembered by many for his habit of singing along with [illegible]. [illegible] northern Alberta [illegible]. A teacher once asked her pupils, "What are the signs of spring?"

She received the following replies:

"When the snow melts."

"When the robins come back."

And one [illegible] replied: "When Mr. Bultsma comes back."

Grace Schuurman

WILLIAM AND MARIA [illegible] DE BOER

In June 1951, the De Boer family left the Netherlands and boarded the Volendam for the voyage to Canada. [illegible] William, born [illegible]; Maria [illegible], born [illegible]ber 10, 1912 in Kinsumageest, Friesland; and the children, [illegible] Richard (Rindert), born in 1939, Ruby (Romkje), born in 1942; and John (Jan), born in 1948. Work for William was available in Coaldale, Alberta, with a [illegible] farmer who was sponsoring them. William, even though he had [illegible] a farm, was not a farmer at heart. In the Netherlands, he had worked for the government; he had decided to [illegible] as he disagreed with the post war government's [illegible] affairs.

The family arrived in Canada on June 26 and were soon aboard a train headed for Alberta. When they arrived in Winnipeg, however, they were informed that their sponsorship had been cancelled, and were directed to Edmonton. From there, they went to Pickardville where William got a job working on [illegible] farm. In March [illegible] their youngest child, Ann Marie, was born.

In June 1952, the De Boer family moved to Barrhead where William [illegible] Barrhead [illegible] for a few months. While there, he [illegible] of Neerlandia, who informed him of a position available at Neerlandia Co-op. William was appointed to fill the vacancy, taking over from [illegible].

[illegible] upstairs in the Co-op store building. Since they [illegible]

Three years after the De Boers' arrival, their [illegible] child had already moved to Edmonton [illegible] From 1959 to 1965, William was business admin[illegible]

Although the De Boers' stay in Neerlandia was brief, they will never forget that period of [illegible]

[illegible]

JOHN AND ALICE (LAM) DE GIER

John (Jacobus Johannes) De Gier was born in Waarder, South Holland, the Netherlands, on the 4th of November 1925, the second child in a family of four. After John trained in business [illegible] Utrecht. Through this work, he met Alice (Alie) [illegible]

John had served with the Netherlands Nav[illegible] homeland too small and overcrowded. In addi[illegible] 1953 John and Alice took their honeymoon on the [illegible]

After their arrival in Alberta, they worked in many small towns before settling in Neerlandia in 1963. Earlier that year, while working as a [illegible] Neerlandia. By now it was not just John and [illegible] after the other. There were now six children: Mary Jane (1954), Bert (Gysbertus, 1955), Eve[illegible]

[illegible]

The only place for them to live was in the [illegible] the stove fan on, because the store smelled [illegible] Somehow, they managed to get [illegible]

[illegible]

rescued the wash by straightening the mess out [illegible]

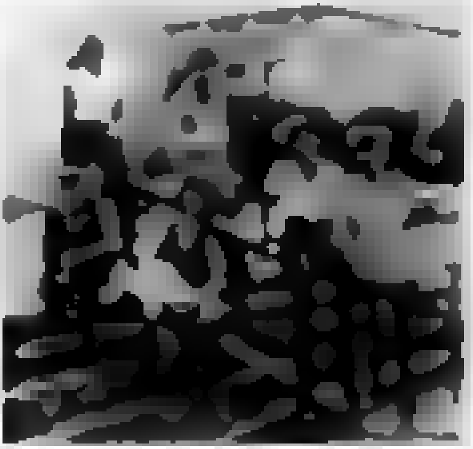
When Connie was four years old, her play- [illegible]

[illegible] open, so they went in. They found a jack [illegible] and proceeded to rip open a couple of bags of [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] could push John De Gier's rabbit coop right [illegible] with rabbits and all. The boys did not turn [illegible] bad after all, as today (1983) [illegible] teacher, one a deacon in the church, and [illegible] other a fine citizen and father of four.

Presently, John and Alice reside in Neerlandia with John still working at Neerlandia Co-op [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] ily around the hamlet, riding his bicycle in the [illegible] for miles on end. His physical fitness level would put a younger man to shame, as he has [illegible] keeping tasks, though she may be seen biking with John or busily involved in other communi- [illegible]

Mary-Jane is living in Edmonton, where she enjoys a hairdressing career. Bert has his own [illegible] works at Edmonton International Airport. Jeannette attends Reformed Bible College in [illegible] home economics at Edmonton Christian Hi- [illegible] Barrhead Recreation Department as a secre- [illegible]

[illegible]

SIMON AND HENRIETTA (TUNNINGA) DE [illegible]

[illegible] small village of Wim- [illegible] therlands. In 1946 th- [illegible]

[illegible]

But my, did that bed look inviting after a day's work!

[illegible]

tion Committee. Then in April, Siebren went to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Clarence Tuininga family, as they were Tom's closest neighbours. Many times Siebren rode with Jelle and Lambert Tuininga to Young People's meetings on Sunday night. A warm relationship started to grow between Henriette Tuininga and Siebren.

[illegible] gether. There were times when they had to [illegible] flooding. One spring Siebren carried Henny [illegible]

[illegible] couple lived in Edmonton where Siebren worked. In June 1956 Siebren became a Cana [illegible] citizen and officially had his name Canadianized to Simon. On September 26, 1956 their first child Christine [illegible] was born at the [illegible]

[illegible] arch 1957. They also bought a small one- [illegible]

[illegible] Tom farmed together. A bedroom [illegible]

[illegible] with high winds. That night Simon slept (or did [illegible] the cook stove. When his feet got cold he knew [illegible]

[illegible] gary Power.

On April 15, 1959, Simon and Henny were blessed with the births of twin boys, Clifford and Clayton, and the one bedroom was bursting at the seams. The de Groots learned that Joe and Sophie Tuininga had their home [illegible]

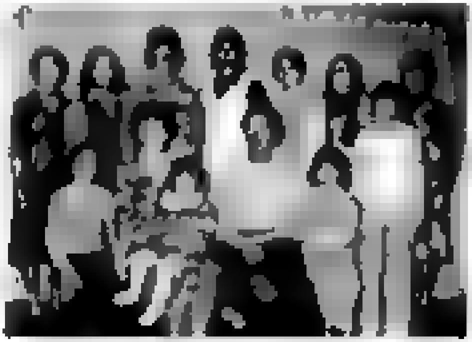
[illegible] (December 26, 1961), and Rita Arlene (February [illegible]

[illegible] ree more boys were added to the family Eugene Oliver (September 9, 1965), Jarvis [illegible]

[illegible] dren, the pains and trials of sleepless nights

[illegible]

were endured. When [illegible] disease [illegible] measles [illegible] French [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] diseases [illegible]



[illegible]

Carla [illegible] was born July [illegible], 1975. [illegible] had [illegible] presence was much enjoyed by her dad and [illegible].

All of the children attended the [illegible] School through grades one to ten. Then they went to the E[illegible] Christian High School for grades eleven and twelve.

After high school, [illegible] went to [illegible] [illegible] she married [illegible] [illegible] high school. [illegible] After [illegible] [illegible] with his wife, **Rita Boender**. Rita was born [illegible] [illegible] the first eighteen [illegible] of her life she lived on a dairy farm in the Ellerslie area. [illegible] education, Rita applied for a p[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the week [illegible] [illegible] always [illegible] After the week was over [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Rita again [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Rita and [illegible] on a dairy farm again. [illegible] A baby girl [illegible] was born to them December 3, 19[illegible].

[illegible]

Clifford attended Dordt College for [illegible] years to obtain a political science degree. He then worked for one year in Edmonton at Edmonton Potato Growers and is presently [illegible]

[illegible] Agriculture College but quit when he married [illegible]

[illegible] juvenile diabetes.

Emma took a one-year sewing program at NAIT to become a seamstress. She met Peter Den Oudsten, from Lacombe. They were married in November 1981 and have a flourishing pig farm. They have one son [illegible]

[illegible] diploma at Grant MacEwan. She is engaged to [illegible]

[illegible] together on the farm, milking cows and selling hogs. In 1966 a new cow barn was built and milking machines were introduced. In August 1980 the milk was put into a bulk tank and sold [illegible]

[illegible] started on his own. This left Simon to tend his hogs, calves and some beef animals. This lighter work load is enjoyed by Simon, as he is [illegible]

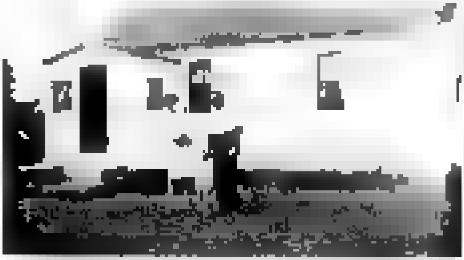
TOM AND IDA (TYMSTRA) DE GROOT

Tom (Thomas) De Groot was born January 16, 1919, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Ida (Itske) was born March 30, 1920 [illegible] Makkum, also in Friesland. They were married September 19, 1945. Two children were born to them in the Netherlands: **Arthur** (Auke) on November 7, 1946, and **Hilda** (Hiltje) on October 31, 1948.

Both Tom and Ida grew up on farms and felt a kinship to the land and the life of a farmer. But [illegible]

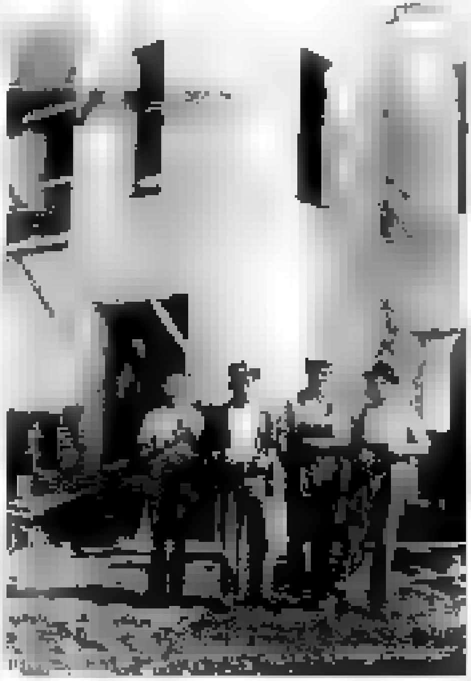
[illegible] The trip was great; the De Groots did [illegible]

[illegible] light on the cot, and Hilda tied in [illegible]

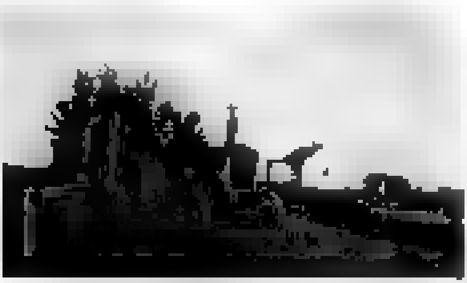


Gerben brought us to the store, where he had bought a little house for our family that was standing at the place where Marius old house now is.

For going to church we had the team of horses and the buggy. In the summer time this was nice to have a ride with horse and buggy. But when it was getting colder, we had warm stones in the grain box, with covers over the box. Between church and, lots of people invited us over for dinner, what we greatly appreciated.



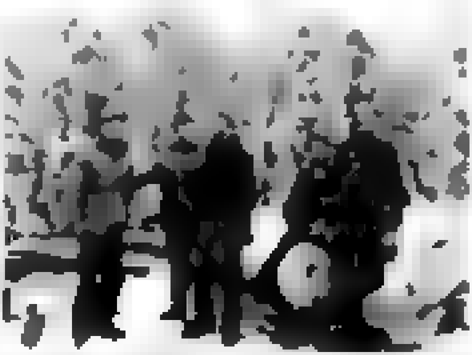
could start working, with helping to build a new Church in Neerlandia the old church was burned down in the Fall of 1948.



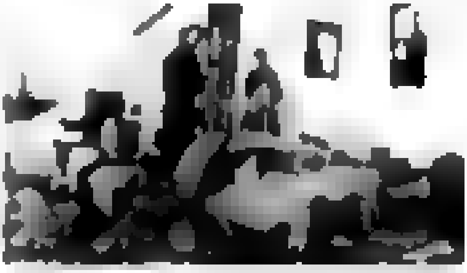
***In the spring of 1950 we came back to the store.** The first we did was to get a little house on skids and moved it to the NE 18-61-3-5. We got a old Mc Cormick tractor on steel wheels with a breaking plow, so that we were able to do some field work and also some breaking.*

The next picture you can see the threshing outfit in operation also the old school bus (truck) which Albert Twmstra was driving that time. At harvest time Frank Knoppers was doing it for Albert. There was Harold, Simon Albert and Tom on the load pitching bundles in the threshing machine.

[illegible]

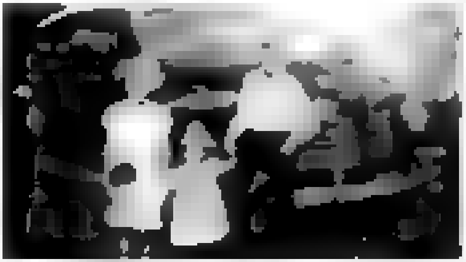


[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

More people means more food consumers so once in a while we have to butch a porkje.

In 1961 we decided to build a new house and in 1962 the first March we moved in. It was sure a big change for our family. This move had good results. On Canada day 1963, Patricia came to join our family.

The family start growing up and there came marriages in the family. Here is the whole family together at the wedding from Arthur in California August 1973. Tena, Arthur, Hilda, Ida, Tom, Patricia, Alice, Rose (1973).

Spring 1977 Tom start driving the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op till near the end of 1983. I was enjoying the job going round in the country seeing what all the farmers where doing.

Editors' note: Tom De Groot wrote the captions for his own pictures. With his permission we have written them exactly as he submitted them.

[redacted]
Abdays for a few years before marrying Klaas
[redacted]

After the harvest of 1950 Tom and Simon, along with several others, did some logging
[redacted]
bring Ida two barrels of water each week, because there was no well on the farm. The Klaas Gunninga family also provided Ida and the chil-
[redacted]
and they got stuck more than once with the
[redacted]
said that he would take Simon and Tom by
[redacted]
ber was made into a barn for cattle and pigs and some fencing was done. Winter came too
[redacted]
eaves.

The next winter Tom stayed home to care for
[redacted]
February 3, 1956 the De Groots rejoiced when

[redacted]
dian citizens. The same year Simon and Hemm
[redacted]
house was getting too small, so plans were
[redacted]
School at Abbotsford. He received his BA de-
[redacted]

[redacted]
JONG

Marten de Jong (born January 31, 1905, in Scharnegoutum, Friesland, the Netherlands) arrived in Canada for the first time in 1928. His first impression was that Canada was big and it was cold. Marten lived in Edmonton in a board
[redacted]
McGavin's. After a few years in Canada, Marten went back to Friesland and married Hilts

Terpstra, who had been born September 24 [illegible]

[illegible] n the Netherlands eight children were born [illegible] 1931), Winnie Nellie (January 15, 1933), Adrian Willy (July 30, 1934), Mike Douglas (August 9 [illegible] and Alan (September 30, 1939), and Pat Julian [illegible]

[illegible] the first time, and that's why they came back. They travelled on the boat *Tabinta*, which had once carried troops. As soon as they docked in Quebec they went to the train station for their three-day trip to Edmonton.

The train they travelled on had a steam engine and it was filthy. The de Jongs even found sand between their sandwiches. On Saturday the family arrived in Edmonton and took baths at the Immigration Office. The water instantly turned black, it took at least two baths just to get the dirt off. For the weekend they stayed at the George Visser and Frank Stikema homes.

[illegible] the family to Neerlandia and showed them their house which was located on his chicken farm. On September 1, Marten started to work for Pete on the farm.

The de Jongs were only in Neerlandia a few [illegible]s when there was a knock on the door, and [illegible] along. This was something that had never been done "back home."

It was quiet and roomy in Neerlandia compared to the noisy and crowded Netherlands [illegible] de Jongs found it hard to adjust to the change. The chickens, though, were unbearably noisy. Marten used to tell his children "all [illegible] anything". Chickens wearing glasses was another thing the family had to get used to. The chickens used to wear steel blinders so that they would be able to look straight ahead only [illegible]

The de Jong children would often see men [illegible]k celery, carrots, and corn out of the garden [illegible] stand how the men could do this and did not [illegible]

Marten recalls when his ninth child was [illegible] They had a car and could give Hilda a ride to the hospital in Barrhead. Arnold, one of the Hiemstra's sons, drove me back to our house to pick up my wife. This boy was nineteen years old and he was petrified that the baby was going to be born in the car. He had good reason to worry because our ninth child, Jenny Folkje [illegible] the hospital. For six weeks after Jenny was [illegible] but she survived and healed very nicely."

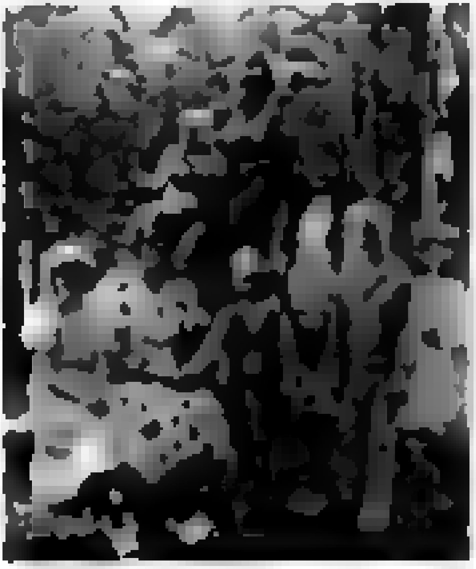
Winter came, and the de Jongs had only their Dutch bikes for transportation. One Sunday Winnie, Adrian, and Marten got out the bikes and started to bike to church in all the snow. When they were halfway there the Hiemstras stopped and gave them a ride [illegible] day the grader would plow the roads and on [illegible] again.

Marten was earning seventy-five dollars a month for a family of eleven people, but managed to save twenty dollars a month since they did not have to pay rent on the house. The de [illegible] cause Pete's daughter Grace was getting married and the young couple were going to live in de Jong's house. So the de Jongs packed up their things and moved to Edmonton. There Marten first worked in Alberta Bakery and soon afterward started his own bakery. Another daughter was born in Edmonton.

Marten de Jong

[illegible]

[illegible] DeVries was born in Barrhead Hospital on December 11, 1942. He went to school first in Neerlandia, then in Barrhead, and finally to the University of Alberta in Edmonton. After one year at university, he decided that was not the place for him. He returned to Neerlandia



[illegible]

[illegible] raise hogs and cattle.

They have been blessed with five healthy children: Beatrice May (June 22, 1968), Evelyn Rose (October 24, 1969), Larry Grant (October 23, 1972), Jason Edward (September 10, 1975) and Ryan James (November 13, 1979).

[illegible]

[illegible]

Terrence de Vries and Jenny L. Vaartstra [illegible] August 4, 1967 in the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. They began [illegible] Wendy (September 15, 1969), Robert Jay (April [illegible], 1971), Sandy Lee (June 2, 1972), and Beverly Jean (December 6, 1974) help on the mixed [illegible]

Jenny de Vries

[illegible]

[illegible] 1955, to immigrants from Utrecht, the Nether[illegible] School, Ed spent two years at Dordt College and four years at the Western College of Vet[illegible]

[illegible] courting Joanne Hulsman. Joanne had been born February 11, 1955 to immigrants from Overijssel, the Netherlands. After graduating [illegible]

Meanwhile, Ed had accepted a position with Long-Murl Veterinary Clinic of Barrhead [illegible] acquainted with a few Dutchmen.

When Joanne graduated as a registered [illegible] Ed and Joanne were married on November 28, 1980 and settled in a rented home in Bloomsb[illegible]

Since then, they have been blessed with [illegible] July 12, 1983. Ed became a full partner in the [illegible] joys his work and also loves sports. Joanne is [illegible] In 1984 they purchased an acreage on the NE [illegible]

[illegible]

WILLARD AND MARGARET (VELDHUISEN) DYKSTRA

Willard and Margaret Dykstra moved to Neerlandia in 1978, just a few weeks after they were married. Willard is originally from Owen [illegible]

[illegible] they came to Neerlandia to visit Liz Esselink, a relative of Margaret, and to see more of Alberta at the same time. Since they were impressed with the [illegible] and [illegible] they decided [illegible]. Willard found [illegible] company.

Willard, Margaret and their two sons, **Nathaniel** Nicholas (December 27, 1978) and **Theodore** Adriel (May 20, 1981), live on an [illegible] Lambert and [illegible].

Margaret holding Theodore, Willard holding Nathaniel [illegible]

BERT AND TJAMKE (MOES) ELGERSMA

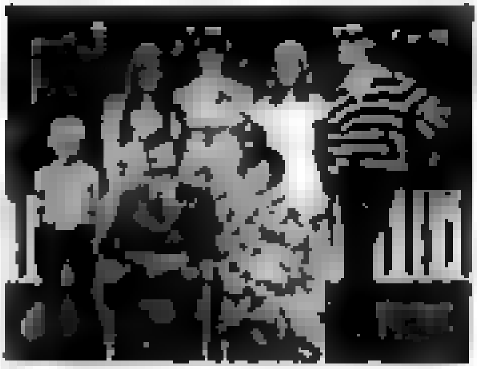
Bert (Bouke) Elgersma and Tjamke Moes were married on September 3, 1954, in Beverly Christian Reformed Church. At that time Bert and Tjamke were both working in Edmonton, Bert at Swift's Feed Mill and Tjamke at Hotel Macdonald.

Bert had bought the SE 33-61-3-5 from his [illegible]. After a few weeks [illegible] they came to Neerlandia to harvest the crop. Then they went back to the city to work until spring, when they returned to seed the crop. [illegible] year Bert and Tjamke made this biannual migration but in 1956, with a baby on the way, they decided to live full time in Neerlandia.

Since Bert's father, Anne, and his sister [illegible] were still living on the farm, the farm house was shared by the two families. When **Marsha** [illegible] Bert and Tjamke's first daughter was born on November [illegible], Anne began to realize that it was time for him to move [illegible]. Therefore he bought a little house into which he and Haitma moved in [illegible].

While working in Edmonton, Bert had studied [illegible] at the feed mill. After his return to the farm he used what he had learned [illegible] at all.

When Bert and Tjamke married, Bert's father was concerned that Tjamke, being a city girl, would not make a good wife for a farmer. [illegible] though she was at first [illegible] she could not distinguish wheat [illegible] barley [illegible] she proved to be an excellent helpmeet for Bert.



Bert, [illegible], [illegible], Anita, Marsha, Andrew, [illegible], Bert, Tjamke, [illegible]

Through the years more land was purchased. [illegible] **Anita**, who was born on January [illegible], grew up and became her dad's right hand man on the farm until her marriage on November 23, 1979, to Norman Spronk of Edmonton. They have two sons, A[illegible]

daughter, **Beatrice** Carol, was born on December 18, 1961. All of the girls are married. Marilyn married Don Plantinga, and Beatrice married Rick Visser. Both of them live in Neerlandia with their husbands.

After the three girls, the farm boys came along. **Andrew** Glenn, born on July 3, 1965, is now farming with Bert and is also raising his own hogs. **Rodney** Bert, who was born on November 28, 1970, also enjoys working on the farm.

Tjamke Elgersma

SIMON AND EVA (MAST) ELGERSMA

Simon Elgersma married Eva Mast on November [illegible], 1971. When Simon's father, Albert, retired in 197[illegible], Simon bought the farm from him. With his new bride, he began farming on the [illegible] farm. [illegible] mixed [illegible] hogs and cattle. Prices were poor for hogs when he first started out, but they gradually improved to provide to provide a comfortable living.

Simon enjoys working and keeps busy on the farm. Eva's favorite pursuits are gardening and other outdoor work. Simon and Eva have three children: **Nelson** Miles, born November 22, 1977; **Simone** Alexandra, born October [illegible], 1979; and **Vanessa** Antoinette, born April [illegible], 1982.

Eva Elgersma

Back: Simon, Eva. Front: Nelson, Simone, Vanessa, 1984.

PETER AND EVE [redacted]TSEN) EMMERZAEL

Piet was born, raised, and schooled in Neerlandia. At the age of twenty-one, in August 194[illegible], Pete was called into the army. He enlisted in active service with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (R.C.A.S.C.) in September 194[illegible]. In March 194[illegible], he was sent overseas to England for training and manoeuvres [illegible] his division until October 1943, when the R.C.A.S.C. were sent to Italy to help the American Eighth Army. In the beginning of 1945, they were sent to join the rest of the Canadians in the Netherlands. Soon after the war was over.

Pete 1944

While in the Netherlands, Pete met Eve Gerritsen. Eve (Evertje) was born in Arnhem on August [illegible], 192[illegible]. Eve and Pete's meeting occurred because her mother had agreed to do laundry for Pete and a friend. Pete and Eve became engaged in June 1945. Pete left the Netherlands in October 1945 and came back to Canada in December. He was discharged from the army in January 1946.

Eve

[illegible]

[illegible] Their oldest son, **Fred** (Frederick Leonard), [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] **Barbara** [illegible] **Bob** [illegible] **Marlene** [illegible]

[illegible]

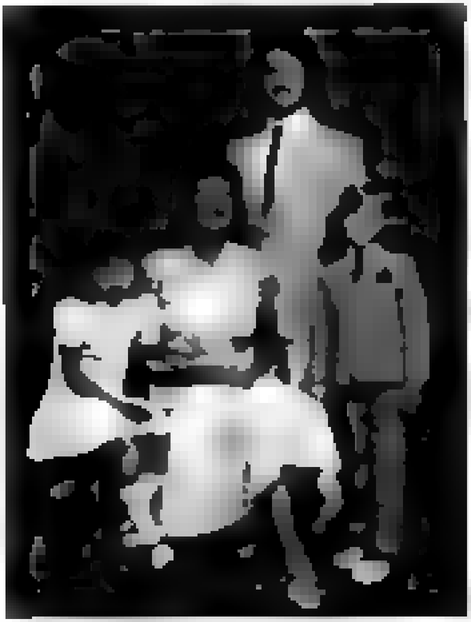
[illegible]

Pete [illegible]

EDMOND AND VIOLA (JANSSEN) FILLION

[illegible] Soon after being released from the army, Edmond met Viola Janssen. They were married [illegible] lowing summer, on August 10, 1977 **Kelly Guy** was born to them, and **Tammie Jo** came [illegible] hog operation on their acreage.

Viola Fillion



[illegible]

JOE AND HILDA (WIERENGA) FISHER

At seventeen years of age Joe Fisher started [illegible] from there for the Vega Mercantile store. Four years later, in 1967 Joe became truck driver for his cousin Ted Reitsma and bought the business [illegible]

Joe married Hilda Wierenga, eldest daughter of [illegible] Henry by the "book" in July [illegible]. Later in that year Hilda became treasurer of the Neerlandia Credit Union and did this work for 9½ years. The job was done at home and the starting salary was $50 a month. Joe and Hilda have three sons: **Mark** Jay (August 3, 1971), **Derek** Jonathan (March 30, 1973), and **Shawn** Jason (May 21, 1976). The family lives on an acreage on the NW 4-61-3-5.

Hilda Fisher

Back: Hilda, Joe. Front: Mark, Shawn, Derek. 1984.

WAYNE AND HENDRENE (WIERENGA) FISHER

Wayne Fisher helped his father, Cor Fisher, on the farm after he left school. He also drove truck for Joe Fisher Trucking, his brother's company. On October 7, 1972, Wayne married Hendrene Wierenga. They first lived in a mobile home on Cor Fisher's yard on the NW 10-61-3-5. Then in March 1979 Wayne took over the farm and the family moved into the farmhouse.

In March 1980 Wayne and Hendrene got a big surprise when they won a trip to Hawaii from the Westlock Massey Ferguson dealer. In his spare time Wayne likes to play hockey and go hunting, and Hendrene enjoys sewing. They have four children: **Tammy** Lyn (February 3, 1973), **Mona** Joy (August 4, 1975), **Brent** Cornell (May 26, 1977), and **Gregory** Wayne (September 2, 1979).

Wayne and Hendrene Fisher

Back: Tammy, Mona. Middle: Wayne, Hendrene. Front: Brent, Greg. 1983.

GERRIT AND HILDA (NANNINGA) GELDERMAN

Gerrit Gelderman and Hilda Nanninga were married on the cold, crisp, bright December 19, 1946. Before his marriage, Gerrit had worked with his dad, John Gelderman, on the farm, was a partner in the Dutch Mill, and also served in the Army. He was released from the Army on VE day (1945) and was glad to be home on the farm again. In 1946 the Gelderman family purchased the NE 2-62-3-5. This was to be Gerrit's farm. Hilda Nanninga worked in Neerlandia Co-op for three years previous to her marriage. The wages at that time were eighty dollars per month. She also played the organ in church and directed the church choir for a time.

Gerrit and Hilda's home life started out in the usual way. They bought all used furniture. A table and four chairs were purchased for eighteen dollars at a Shoal Creek auction. Gernt did not have to buy any machinery because [illegible]

[illegible] he farm. They are Audrey Hilda (May 25 1949); Ruth Grace (January 22, 1951); Martin ohn (May 27 1955); Jerry Gerrit August 26 1956); and Neil Henry (January 18, 1958)

In the summer of 1949 Gerrit began building a large two-storey hip roof barn. It would later house 800 laying hens. They also had close to [illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia Motors and moved their business to Neerlandia. They worked together at the Centre until 1962 when Fred moved back to Vega. The Gelderman family then moved to the [illegible]

[illegible] beside the Co-op. Fortunately the men [illegible]

[illegible] with babysitting. Audrey also worked for C P Mast on the switchboard and Ruth had [illegible] urday job in the Co-op.

[illegible] also was involved in the development [illegible] building of the local skating rink. Because he [illegible] contact person for a proposed curling rink, ask [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ful business. All [illegible] the job offer [illegible]

HENRY AND BETTY [redacted]

[redacted]

Henry John Gelderman, the youngest son of John and Reka Gelderman, was born on Sep [redacted]

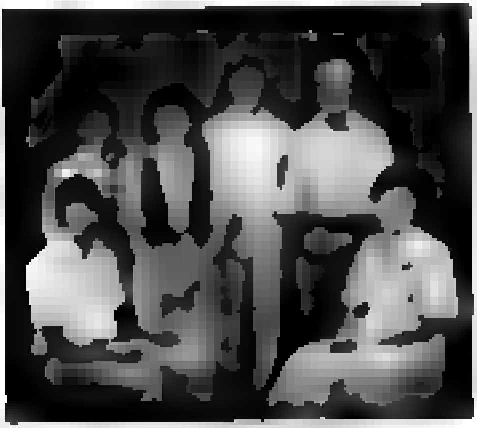
35-61-3-5), where they maintain a mixed farm. [redacted]

ture husband, Glenn Vander Lugt. On August 14, 1981, they were married and now live and [redacted]

Dale Wesley was born on July 12, 1962. Since August 1981, he has been employed by Paddle [redacted]

1965. He is currently working at home. Randy and his cousin, Howard Gelderman, won gold medals in the Alberta School Association Provincial Badminton finals. In 1982 they took [redacted]

hockey. Henry and Betty are loyal sports fans.



[redacted]

They are involved in other activities as well. Henry has served on community boards. Betty is well-known for her success in growing [redacted]

has given instruction in dried flower arranging and other crafts.

Henry and Betty are happy to be part of the community of Neerlandia. They are thankful to the Lord for his ever-present nearness and salvation for them and their family.

Betty Gelderman

HERMAN AND LULA [redacted]

[redacted]

Herman Gelderman wed Lula Krikke on her birthday, June 17, 1953. Prior to their wedding Lula had worked at the Neerlandia Co-op for [redacted]

came home with her just before a blizzard confined them to the farm for a month. During that month the doctor's book was the complete [redacted]

the U of A. She married Henry Sikkema of Ed [redacted]

Rosalie Lynn was born July 19, 1956, during a hot summer. Her birthday was always during the busy haying time. Not only was it rare that [redacted]

she received a BA degree in sociology. This led [redacted]

the Chicago area. She returned to Edmonton in 1980. Since then she has held a number of social service-related jobs.

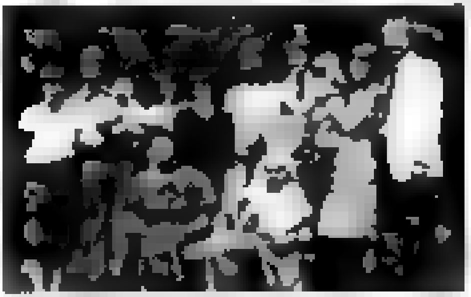
John William, his grandfathers' namesake, was born April 27, 1958. After working at car [redacted]

After their marriage John and Pat moved to [illegible] [illegible] the family [illegible] at [illegible] with their sons **Michael** John [illegible] and **Nicholas** [illegible] April [illegible] moved into their new house on the [illegible].

Wendell Allan, born April [illegible], aspired to become an Indian and pitch his teepee in the back of the field. He has since [illegible] his mind and became first a plumber and then tried his hand at carpentry.

[illegible] in the Indian tradition, when the [illegible] was born June 18, [illegible], her parents [illegible] the hospital window [illegible] the road. They soon changed her name from Running [illegible] to the more feminine **Karen** [illegible]. Karen is working toward an [illegible] degree.

Howard John, baby of the family, was born August 8, 1965. After a year at The King's



[illegible] John holding [illegible] Wendell [illegible] Howard [illegible]

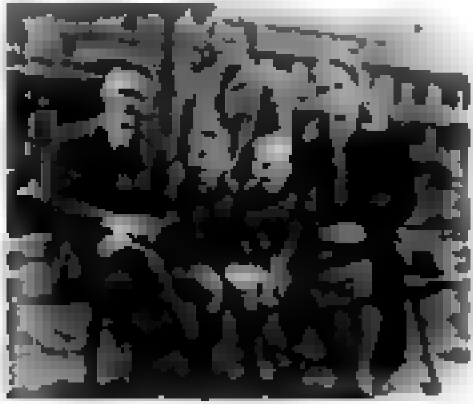
College he transferred to the U of A where he is working toward a degree in physical education.

In addition to raising their own family, [illegible] and [illegible] have made a home [illegible] children for periods of time from two months to one and a half years. They are thankful to their covenant God for His blessings, and hope and pray that they and their children will remain faithful to the Lord.

Alderman Family

ADRIAN AND EEF (VAN BOON) HAMOEN SR.

Adrian (Adrianus) Leendert Hamoen, born August 13, 1903, in Utrecht, Utrecht, the Netherlands, married Eef (Everdina) Van Boon from the same city on February 23, 1927. Eef had been born July 7, 1907. They had three children: Annie born November 19, 1929; **Adrian** Adrianus Leendert born March [illegible]; and **Kees** Cornelius born October [illegible]. Adrian owned a milk and milk products store in Utrecht but was bothered by government restrictions. Through a Reformed emigration society he heard that there was a Christian from Canada staying in Groningen. There the Hamoens met Andries Postma who told them about Neerlandia.



In [illegible] just before coming to Canada. Standing: Annie, [illegible]; Adrian Sr., Adrian, [illegible], Eef, 1948.

Adrian and Eef decided to move to Neerlandia and on April [illegible], 1948, they boarded the Kota [illegible] with their children. The Kota Inten, originally used for carrying troops, had been converted into an immigrant ship and did not make for an entirely enjoyable trip. At one point Adrian asked another man on the ship where he was headed. The man said, "Canada." That was logical, as was everyone else on the ship. The man thought that Adrian was headed for Neerlandia. His name was Dick [illegible].

After disembarking at Halifax on April 17, 1948, the family boarded a train for Edmonton. That trip was almost as bad as the one by boat. The immigrant trains were filthy and gave one the impression of being converted cattle liners. The trip was four days and three nights of jo-

[illegible] boarded the train for Barrhead [illegible]

[illegible] was take them to the Neerlandia Co-op to buy [illegible]

[illegible] family moved to Vega where they had bought [illegible]

[illegible] months Adrian Sr. and his sons were on [illegible]

On October 28, 1960, Adrian Sr. married Henrietta (Hendrikjen) Selles of Edmonton. Henrietta had been born January 11, 1905 in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. She was [illegible] three boys were already married.

In 1965 Adrian Jr. married Lies Pieffers. Kees married Dinie Vogelzang in 1967. Bill Selles [illegible] married to Gretchie Boomsma and they have [illegible]

[illegible] the farm. On April 5, 1978, Adrian Sr. died [illegible]

Lies Hamoen

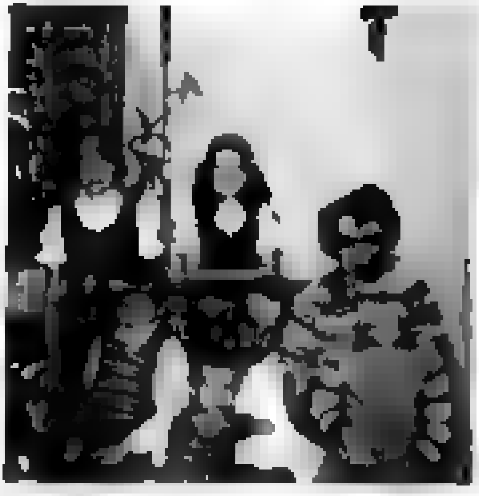
ADRIAN AND LIES (PIEFFERS) HAMOEN JR.

Adrian Hamoen and Lies Pieffers were mar[illegible] moon. Adrian and Lies settled down [illegible] added.

On April 5, 1967 the Lord blessed the mar[illegible]ta. Later that summer a bigger house was moved onto the place. It too needed renova[illegible]

March 17, 1971, was a special day because [illegible]

[illegible] own work and visiting Lies in The University [illegible]



Back: [illegible] Adrian, Loes. Front: [illegible] 1978

Hospital in Edmonton. Loes was having trouble with the pregnancy, but January 4, 1978 saw the birth of a healthy boy, **Ronald Keith**. On March 30, 1978 the family moved into their new home, leaving the old one to Loes' brother [illegible] and his wife, Christine, who had been living with them since November 1977. Christine had been looking after the Hamoen family while Loes was in the hospital.

[illegible] 1979 [illegible] took [illegible] unto Himself after a tractor accident at home. The Hamoen children attend the Covenant Canadian Reformed School in Neerlandia, where Loes teaches typing and supervises classes during their library periods.

Loes Hamoen

KEES AND DINIE (VOGELZANG) HAMOEN

On June 9, 1967 Kees Hamoen married Dinie (Geertruida) Vogelzang of Barrhead. She was born in [illegible] (Overijssel), the Netherlands on June 18, 1948 and immigrated with her parents to Edmonton in 1951. From there she moved to Rocky Mountain House, Fawcett and then to Barrhead.

Since the wedding was in June, the families had hopes of beautiful warm weather. Instead there was a regular snow storm in the morning. By afternoon everything was muddy. Even the suit of the officiating minister, Rev. [illegible] Pieters, had to be brushed off before the ceremony because it was caked with mud.

In March 1967 the building of a small house had been started on Kees' farm. It was finished on June 9. At the time of his marriage Kees was farming with his father in dairy and hogs. Kees and Dinie live on the NW 31-62-3-5 and also own the SW 31-62-3-5.

Back: [illegible] Adrian, [illegible] Elaine, Dinie, Darlene, Kees. Front: [illegible] 1982

In the next four years, **Elaine Rita** (May [illegible], 1968), **Adrian** Walter (April 26, 1969), **Joanne** Gail (July [illegible], 1970) and **Helena** Rosanne (December [illegible], 1971) were born. When **Marie** (born April 21, 1974) was born, the house became too small and three bedrooms were added. In 1976 **Kenneth Neil** (February 7) was born, and two years later **Darlene** Joyce (July 20, 1978) was added to this richly blessed family.

In 1977 the dairy cows were sold and Kees went into hog production. In 1977 he went into partnership with his brother Adrian. In 1979 a new house was built as the old one was bursting at the seams again. In 1982 Kees and Adrian dissolved the partnership except for the equipment, which they still share.

Dinie Hamoen

KARL AND TILLIE (ELGERSMA) KESTERMANN

Tillie Elgersma left Neerlandia in 1951 to go to the city of Edmonton. In the winter she did housework and in the summer she came home

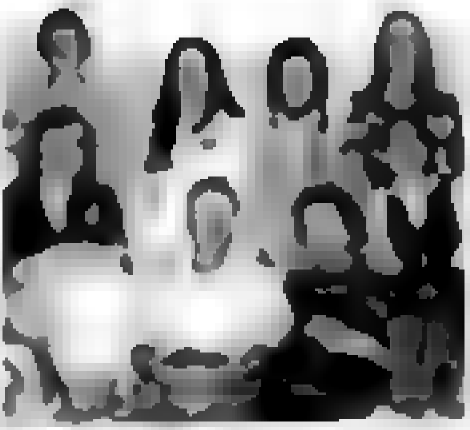
[illegible]

[illegible] HIEMSTRA

[illegible] Alberta, on June 24, 1953. Gerri had been born December 27, 1935. Arnold and Gerri have six [illegible]

Gwendolyn Joyce born July 3, 1955; **Jeannet Ma**[illegible]

Duane Lee born February 2, 1961.



[illegible]

Arnold and Gerri left Neerlandia in February 1968. They moved to Barrhead, where they could both get work and where the future looked better than on the farm. They live [illegible] small acreage eight miles north of Barrhead. Arnold drives truck for the Northern Alberta [illegible]

COR AND JENNIE (SEINEN) HIEMSTRA

[illegible] dia, joined the Canadian Army in April 1942 and left for England in June 1942. He [illegible] and was involved in the liberation of the Netherlands. Cor returned to Canada in Janu[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

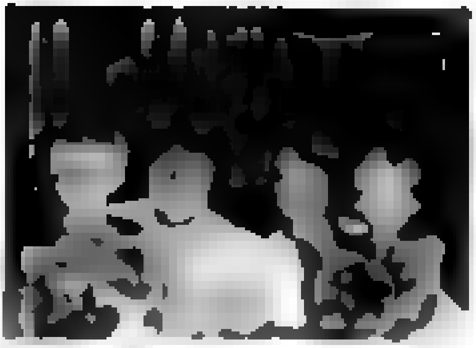
[illegible]y (Cornelius) Jakob Hiemstra, son of Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, married Grace Tuininga in December 1948. They first lived in a [illegible]

[illegible]

By this time there were two little Hiemstras. **Richard** Jacob had been born on June 30, 1949. He had been followed by **Bernard** Peter on [illegible] 28, 1963, the last of the boys, **Kevin** David, was [illegible]

In 1963 Corny and Grace and their family moved back to Edmonton. On December 3, [illegible]

[illegible] ried Grace van Dijken. Don worked at a variety of jobs until he and Grace purchased Bill Fisher [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] Cory born on September 25, 1978

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Ronald Henry was born May 13, 1956. He [illegible] N.W.T., where Ron is employed by Esso Re[illegible]

[illegible] married Pauline's sister Nancy on June 3, 1978. Doug and Nancy have four children. Doug is [illegible]

Kenneth Ellen was born February 22, 1959. On July 17, 1982 he married Geraldine Gosselin of Longlac, Ontario. They make their home at Swan Hills and are both employed by Esso Re[illegible]

[illegible]

Jacob James was born August 28, 1961. He married Wilma Selles of Barrhead on September 18, 1982. They have one daughter. Jacob is employed by Home Oil and they live in Swan Hills.

Beverly Jean was born January 18, 1963. She married Arley Currie of Swan Hills on May 19 [illegible]

[illegible]

Jessie Hiemstra

HAROLD AND NELLIE (DE BRUYN) [illegible]

[illegible] Christian Reformed Church. At the time, he [illegible] each one could have their own pastor; hence it [illegible]

[illegible]

Neerlandia consistory had graciously given [illegible]

[illegible] they travelled to northwest Iowa, where both [illegible]

[illegible]

One addition was made to their family dur[illegible] ing these years: a son, Timothy Jay (March 5 [illegible]

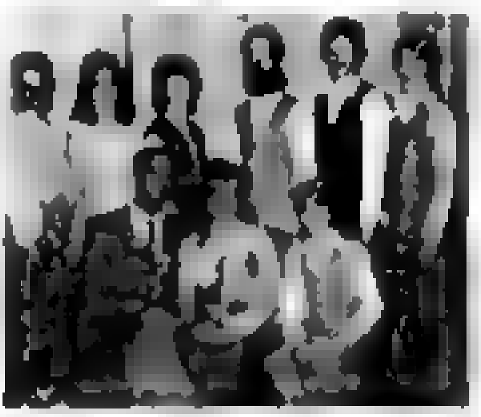
[illegible] Harold [illegible] Washington, their home.

Harold Hollander

WILFRED AND HILDA (PETERS) HOLWERDA

Wilfred Holwerda married Hilda Peters [illegible] and Campsie. From 1971-79 they lived in Neerlandia on the NE 36-61-3-5, where they [illegible]

The Lord blessed their marriage with [illegible] **Harold** [illegible] (September 19, 1957), **Carolyn** (September 2 [illegible] **Valerie** [illegible] ber 26, 1968), **Colin** (August 27, 1969), and **Randal** (March 3, 1973).



[illegible]

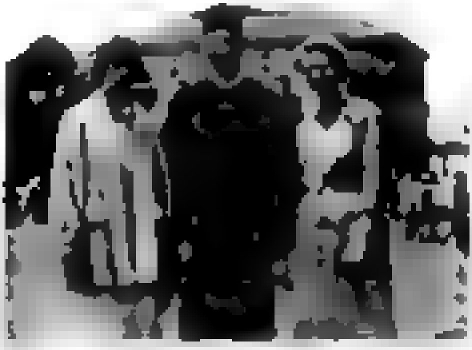
Wilfred has done many things in his life [illegible] father so son" and Wilfred, like his father, enjoys serving the public. He is presently working as a salesman in the agricultural field [illegible]

Harold married Jane Nijenhuis of Neerlandia [illegible]. They have [illegible] children: **Heather** (February 7, 1978), **Kevin** (February 3, 1980), **Clayton** (September 4, 1981), and **Charlotte** (May 4, 1983). Harold is presently working for Simon Tuininga. The three Holwerda girls are [illegible] They have [illegible]

Wilf Holwerda

HANS AND INA (BOOTH) INGWERSEN

When the Second World War began, Hans (Johannes, May 20, 1915) and Ina (December 8, [illegible] ship. He first scrubbed floors, then worked himself up until he became the ship's [illegible]



[illegible]

Hans was interested in returning to [illegible] John Ingwersen. Since John's Dutch name was also Johannes, it was decided to call cousin [illegible] pleting his studies, Hans became a college lec- [illegible]

[illegible]

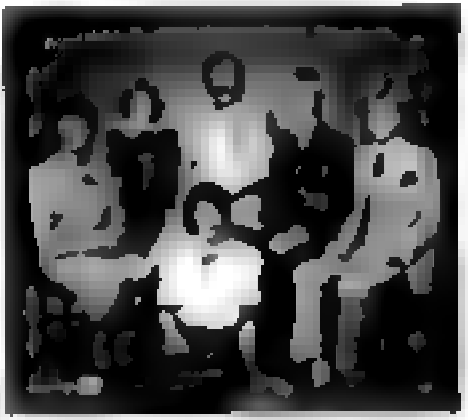
[illegible]

[illegible] small rented farm. Two years later they moved [illegible]

[illegible] 1946, in the small village of Silvakra, Sweden, where her family had a small farm. When she [illegible]

[illegible] Gert Johnny was born on February 4, 1967. Ralph Erik was born the following year on Jan [illegible] born on June 15, 1969. Another daughter, Anna [illegible]

[illegible] ticular western Canada, which held special interest for Gert. Two holidays were taken to Alberta to see if it would hold a good future for the children and for farming. Finally, on February 25, 1981, after two years of planning, the Jacobssons took most of their belongings and [illegible] nearby Scandia. Ulla got a job working in a [illegible] to drive around Alberta, [illegible] where they could settle down.



[illegible]

Upon coming to Neerlandia, they were ver[illegible]

[illegible] been a problem, the other way around, everything and everybody in Neerlandia has been [illegible]

[illegible]

BERT AND BERTHA (STRYDHORST) [illegible]

[illegible] Strydhorst were married in Neerlandia on June 10, 1966. They went to live on the old Jake

Witzke homesteaded in 19[illegible] on the NE [illegible]. The only things on the place were a few beat up [illegible] battered granary and a [illegible] building [illegible] the house which had been built [illegible] years previously by Grampa and Harry Janssen for Harry and Tine. Later the house had been bought and moved to its present location by Jake Witzke. Bert and Bertha had no windbreak except for a few small trees which were only [illegible] and [illegible] the hill on which the house stands must have been the [illegible]. There was no phone, gas or running water. The only convenience was electricity. The house was heated by a coal furnace.

On May [illegible] Brenda [illegible] was born. At the time the Janssens had an [illegible] well which put out one gallon of water every three minutes. On wash days Bertha spent hours hauling water to help speed things along [illegible] which was a rather [illegible] more hope of [illegible] of running water in the house.

In April 19[illegible] Bert took a half a day off to get some trees from [illegible] to plant on the [illegible]. Then in June of the same year Bert's brother [illegible] brought some [illegible] spruce trees and some small maples. The maples did well considering the [illegible] was [illegible] down and [illegible] of wheat per acre. What a joy to have a windbreak!

Norine Ruth was born August 2, 1969. The same year Bert built his first barn after trying unsuccessfully for three years to raise pigs in the [illegible] uninsulated shacks which "decorated" the yard. The barn was built with the help of neighbours who were paid one dollar an hour.

During some of these early winters, Bert and Bertha were [illegible] in for days at a time. On one occasion Bert packed water over the drifts to his neighbour [illegible] who had no well and whose [illegible] was unable to climb over the drifts [illegible] Bert's well to bring water home. [illegible] Christmas Bert and Bertha walked nearly a mile with the kids to a corner where [illegible] picked them up.

Verdell [illegible] was born [illegible] 197[illegible] and her diapers were washed at the same water [illegible]. [illegible] however, the pigs were [illegible] a new [illegible].

The great [illegible] happened in 197[illegible] when Bert and Bertha split up with [illegible] and [illegible] together. **Marlene** [illegible] was born [illegible] 1974.

Until 1975 the Janssens were hailed out many times but the worst came on July 27, 1975 when a bad hailstorm and a tornado [illegible] every bit of hay, grain and garden. The grain grew back and Bert made [illegible] of it. Much real damage was done to the buildings.

[illegible]

In January 1981, with the family growing, it became necessary to replace the [illegible] with a well drilled by Big Iron. What a blessing to have enough water. [illegible] **Jacqueline** [illegible] was born.

At the present time Bert and Bertha still live in the same house, though they have been renovating since they moved in. All of the other shacks have been replaced with good buildings. They farm the [illegible] quarter and milk thirty cows.

Bert and Bertha Janssen

JACK AND RUTH (SCHOENBROCK) JANSSEN

[illegible] where the municipal airport is now located. His [illegible] Janssens moved to Neerlandia.

[illegible]

Jack began school in Neerlandia when he [illegible]

but Jack dreamed of the time when tractors and trucks would take over the work done by horses.

In 1948 Jack's mother died. By this time, all Jack's brothers and sisters were married, so Jack [illegible] while the two men were baching that Jack met Ruth Schoenrock.

Ruth, born in Ponca, Nebraska, on March 15, 1931, had come with her parents to the Barrhead area in 1935. She came to Neerlandia in April 1949, just three days after writing her last [illegible] and four. She first met Jack at the local post [illegible] 31, 1951, and Ruth subsequently moved into the Janssen family home.

Jack's family had always been fond of animals, especially dogs. Ruth, on the other hand, viewed animals differently: she did not mistreat them but neither could she fuss over them. This sometimes caused some friction as Jack allowed the dogs in the house and Ruth desired otherwise. One day Jack's dad came home from [illegible] goat. Jack promptly named him Skipper and enjoyed his antics, but Ruth and the goat were [illegible] walked across the yard, chew off her flowers [illegible] greediness for chop doing him in. To this day Jack claims that the goat was deliberately locked [illegible]

Another thorn in Ruth's life was the old black cook stove. No matter how she stoked and poked and prodded, it simply would not [illegible] stove — that she simply did not know how to stoke it. What a happy day in her life when it [illegible]

[illegible] born September [illegible]

clouds gathered again and the crops were fla[illegible] [illegible] two tractors were put in front of the little pull-type combine. Everyone worked! Fred o[illegible] [illegible] truck and unloaded the grain with a shovel managing to keep up with the combine. Mean[illegible] [illegible] grain, an average of five bushels to the [illegible] requiring four people working five days! Even though prospects looked bleak, there was some [illegible]

[illegible]

One Farmer's Day on the way home from [illegible] River in the boat. Sena and Ruth (and the kids of course) were sent ahead by car to wait for them at the Fort Assiniboine bridge. They waited and waited, long after the expected arrival time, but no one appeared. [illegible] two men appeared, but not by boat. The water had been so shallow that the boat had to be dragged most of the way. Finally, they had beached the boat and then walked to a farmer's [illegible] Ruth hardly knew whether to be joyful or an[illegible]

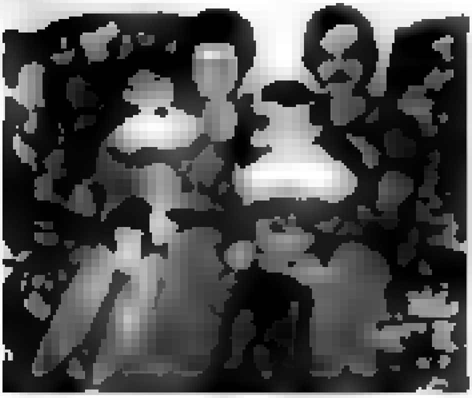
[illegible] 22, 1965. Jack's dad, by this time, had moved to [illegible] talking to them and listening to their problems [illegible] stories he told of pioneer days. Everyone felt a [illegible]

[illegible]

The passing of the years brought other [illegible] and worked for the Barrhead County, first as a spare bus driver and then as a regular driver. A few years later he fulfilled one of his dreams [illegible]

[illegible] B.C., where she met Myron Kellogg, whom [illegible] Dawn, was stillborn on February 28, 1976. She [illegible]

[illegible] 19, 1979, and Darcy Grant, born May 25 [illegible] Barrhead and Karen works in the Neerlandia Co-op store.



[illegible]

Virgil moved to Calgary after completing [illegible]

[illegible] are thankful to God for enabling them to be a part [illegible] together.

Ruth Janssen

ROELOF JANSSEN

On August 21, 1960, Roelof Janssen was born in Ter Aard, Drenthe, the Netherlands, the eleventh and youngest in his family. His father had a mixed farm.

One year, Dick Barendregt came from Canada [illegible] Teacher's College in Groningen. He and Joanne Visser planned to get married in Neerlandia [illegible] ding. He made arrangements to work and [illegible] Neerlandia and was pleased to discover that the Visser children spoke Dutch. The next day [illegible] shy when the driver came toward him. He [illegible] John Van Assen." Roelof was surprised and thought, "Maybe everybody still talks Dutch here." Later he heard that John had known he [illegible]

During that summer Roelof helped build [illegible] Neerlandia so much that, as soon as he was back in the Netherlands, he made short work of [illegible]

[illegible] throughout Alberta and was soon sold out. A trip to Ontario brought similar results. Because his records came from the Netherlands there [illegible]

He enjoys living in Neerlandia where [illegible]

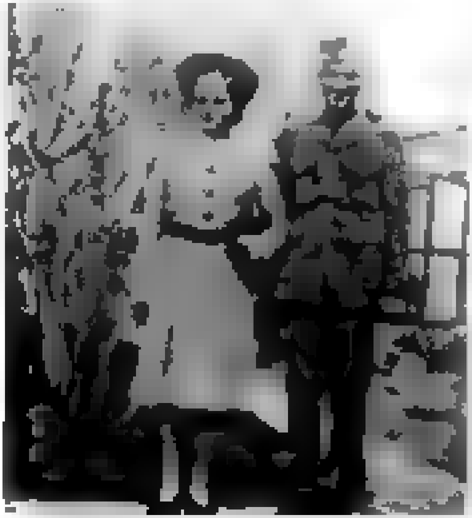
[illegible]

SAM AND ALICE (LIEVERS) KIFFIAK

[illegible]

a.m. to do the work. All the overalls and other dirty clothes had to be washed by hand with the water hauled from the well. Once a week fourteen loaves of bread had to be made and then baked in the wood-cook stove — hot weather or not. In the winter the men would be out in the bush logging or getting out firewood, so they were hungry and needed lunches each day.

The Levers home was always open to preacher and peddler alike. Alice can recall that except for one week, their guest room was once in constant use for a whole year. Mother Levers was noted for her hospitality, and all were welcome to her home. This was true even during the Depression years when the family had to struggle to make ends meet.



Alice, Sam c. 1942

In 1941 Rieka and Alice went to a Bible camp at Lac La Nonne, where Alice met the man of her life — Samuel [illegible] Kuffak. But it was during the war years and Sam still had four years to serve, so their courting was done by letter. When he was discharged, he took two years of study at Three Hills Bible College, Three Hills, Alberta. It was June 5, 1948, before Sam and Alice were married. They first lived in Neerlandia in the Levers homestead. Sam worked for Sam Hawry and John Molodowich driving a caterpillar tractor and brushing. Their oldest son, Gerald, was born December 18, 1949.

After about three years the family moved to Edmonton where Sam got work with Imperial Oil. After thirty-one years Sam is still working there. Another son was born in 1954.

Alice Kuffak

JOHN AND LUCY (POST) KIPPERS

John Kippers came to Neerlandia with his parents in [illegible] and also lived with them on NE [illegible]-62-3-5. Later he built a house there for himself, but he only lived in it for about one year before moving back to live with his parents. Batching was not an enjoyable way of life. In the 1940s when John's parents moved to the hamlet of Neerlandia, he would live with them during the winter months and on the farm in the summer.

In February 1948, Lucy Post came to Neerlandia. Lucy had been born August 2, 19[illegible], in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. She was distantly related to John and had been writing to him for some time. She came and never looked back. John and Lucy were married March 23, 1948, and that same year John bought NE [illegible] from his father.

From left: Lucy and John. Their chaperones, Mr. and Mrs. [illegible] 1948.

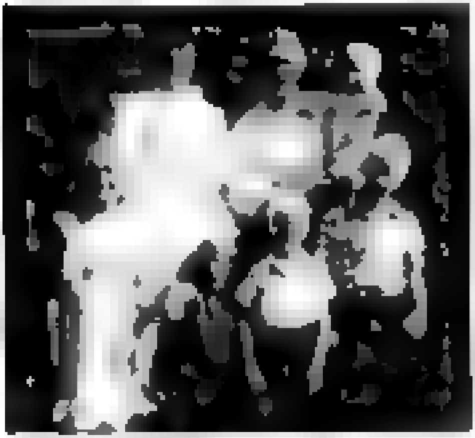
Until his marriage, John had bought farm machinery with his father and brothers, Henry and George. When his father retired the boys split up, each buying his own machinery.

John and Lucy were blessed with two children. Tena was born December 17, 1949, and John Henry arrived January 15, 1952.

Tena, Lucy, John Sr., John, [illegible]

After high school Tena took training for a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and then worked for three [illegible] [illegible] hospital. She married Bert Wieringa in [illegible].

John [illegible] married **Alida Van [illegible]** on April [illegible]. Alida was born March [illegible] in Amersfoort, [illegible] the Netherlands. She [illegible] most of her growing up years in [illegible]. [illegible] In 1975 John Jr. and Alida bought the [illegible] quarter [illegible] of land owned by his father. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible].



Alida, John and family

After retirement, John and Lucy continued to live on the farm and enjoyed themselves taking trips to the Netherlands and [illegible] [illegible] their relatives [illegible]. John passed away at the age of seventy [illegible]. Lucy enjoys good health and lives on John's farm.

Kappers Family

ARIE AND CECELIA (TIEMSTRA) KRIKKE

Arie Krikke was born at the home of his parents, William and Cornelia. He was very shy and scared when he began attending school. The first days were spent at the side of his sister's desk, who was in grade five. Mr. Ashley tolerated that for only so long, and then Arie received a paddling on the seat of his pants and was brought into the class of Miss Boer.

After nine years in school, Arie went into full time farming. Farming was a busy life, but there was always time for berry picking in the summer. That was where Arie met Cecelia Tiemstra in the blueberry patch. Arie kept his eye on Cecelia — he had long ago forgotten his shyness — and proposed marriage to her. They were married in a triple wedding ceremony in June [illegible] and made their home on the NW [illegible]. Later they purchased two quarters in the Shoal Creek area. In winter Arie enjoyed hunting, fishing and trapping, and used these means to supplement the farming income.

Back: Sherry, Cindy, Wendy, Arie, Fred, [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] c. 1976

[illegible]

in Barrhead: **Sheryl Aileen** (November 16 1954), **Christine** Mae (November 23, 1956), [illegible]

[illegible] 27 1961), **Warren** (also July 27 1961), and **Vernon** Arnold (June 19 1965).

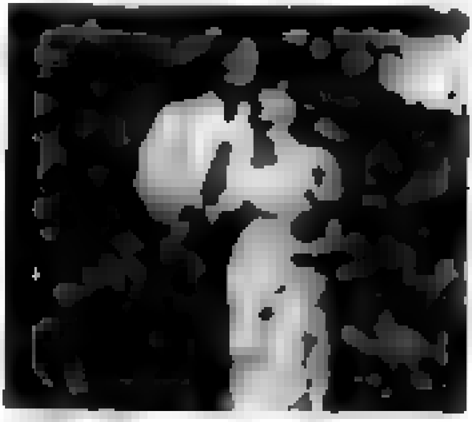
In 1974, Arie and Cecelia rented out their farm in Neerlandia and moved to Spruce Grove, where Arie had a job at Lilydale Broiler Farm. They sold their farm in 1979 and bought a home in Edmonton where they live today (1984).

Three of the children are married and all remain in Edmonton. Arie and Cecelia are doing janitorial work in the city.

Arie Krikke

RALPH AND RITA (GELDERMAN) KRIKKE

Ralph Krikke was born and raised on [illegible] completed, Ralph worked on his father's farm clearing, and breaking the land. He also [illegible] dia for fifty dollars a month, often working [illegible] a lease on the quarter next to it (SE 22-62-3-5), Ralph started farming on his own.



[illegible]

Rita Gelderman also worked at home after her education at school. She did housework in other homes in Neerlandia and Edmonton as well. On June 17 1953, Ralph and Rita were married and moved onto Ralph's farm. Dairy farming became the prime interest in their lives for many years though they added beef cattle as [illegible]

Six children were born to bless the Krikke home. **Kathleen** Joy, born October 16, 1954 be [illegible] in the Barrhead hospital. On April 25, 1956 [illegible] 1958. Trudy had various jobs as a clerk in stores and worked in a bank in Edmonton. She married Otto Schlosser in 1980, and they have one daughter. They now live on an acreage near Stony Plain. In 1961, on May 28, **Jocelyn Joan** [illegible] reside in Edmonton where Jocelyn works [illegible] added to the family on March 6, 1966. Though [illegible] Rita were pleased when a son, **Karlen** James [illegible]

Rita Krikke

[illegible]

started off, although her parents thought it [illegible]

[illegible] is father had trouble with asthma. Ryer [illegible] ton several winters, until he married Jorina on October 30, 1952. Ryer and Jorina then started farming on the SE 9-62-3-5, which his father had bought from Wouter Groothuis.

Born to the Krikkes on November 12, 1954 [illegible] their son **Richard** Clarence. After his [illegible]

Rosemarie Haltina was born April 18, 1958 and after her schooling had a year of university [illegible] ucer. On June 12, 1982, she married Albert Wiersenga. They live on a farm east of Barrhead.

Donald Andrew came along on June 2 [illegible] y) Jansma of Houston, B.C.

Then, on a very stormy day, February 18, 1965, **Darryl** John came upon the scene to enrich the Krikkes' lives still more. He also has [illegible] joy to the four Krikke children as well as their parents. On this day their dark-haired baby sister and daughter, **Annemarie** Joan, was born.

[illegible]

On July 5, 1982, after suffering from cancer [illegible] the Lord. He died having enjoyed almost thirty years of marriage and the many other blessings God had showered upon the Ryer Krikke family.

[illegible]

[illegible]

1949), was born to Gerben and Roelfke [illegible]

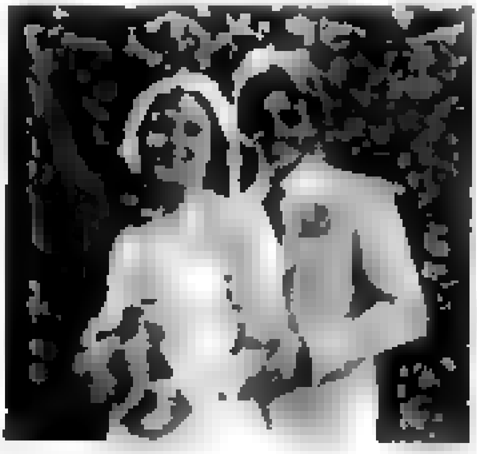
Roelfke passed away in 1982.

[illegible]

LANGEVELD

Claus (Nicholaus Antonius) Langeveld was born on July 7, 1952, in Amsterdam, North [illegible] throughout Canada. Before he left Ontario a [illegible] Claus did just that and the Van Beeks [illegible] who owned Neerlandia Transport. On July 1 1978, Claus took over the business from Case. Claus married June Janssen on June 12, 1981 and they now live on the N.W. 26-61-3-5 (1984)

Claus Langeveld



Arie, Claus

BEN AND MAUDE (FLINT) LIEVERS

Ben Lievers was born in 1923. His first recollections are of sleeping upstairs in the old [illegible] house on a [illegible] bunk with hay for a mattress. Ben was soon old enough to work on the farm. He had [illegible] milk before and after school and as he grew older there was bush to clear using an axe, a chain, and horses. He was [illegible] to leave school [illegible] he did not go [illegible] school.

In 1938, at the age of fifteen, Ben got a ride on the back of a truck to [illegible] for his first paying job. He arrived with fifty cents in his pocket at the dairy farm where he was to work. There he worked from 5:00 a.m. till 9:00 p.m. for fifty cents a day. He did not get home again for a year. He worked until the war broke out. Then [illegible] his brothers Bill and [illegible] were called up to serve. Ben came back to help farm the five-and-a-half quarters they had. Although farming was a busy life there was still time for fun. Once at threshing time a cowbell was tied to the threshing machine shaker and when the machine started the boss yelled "Whoa, there is a cow in the machine!" Ben stayed on the farm until the war was over.

When his brothers returned, Ben went back to Edmonton to work for [illegible] and [illegible] as [illegible]. [illegible] later he did threshing in the Neerlandia area for two years driving a Caterpillar tractor, first for John [illegible] and then for [illegible]. By that time he had a lease on the NW 5-62-3-5.

Ben, [illegible]

Ben married Maude Flint on August 30 1952. She had been born January 24, 1927 and grew up on a farm near Paradise Valley. Ben had bought the NW [illegible] from his dad and built a house there. He and Maude tried farming that land as well as that of Ben's brother John. In three and a half years they had been dried out, hailed out and [illegible] so in the spring of [illegible] they sold out and moved to Paradise Valley. During their stay in Neerlandia their two oldest children were born: Karen on November 15, 1953, and Janet on April 14, 1955.

Ben and Maude farmed in Paradise Valley but with the same lack of success. They sold the farm in 1959 and moved their house into the town. Ben bought a lumber yard and, combined with his carpentry, the business went well. Four more children were born to them. Maude taught school in Paradise Valley but had [illegible] carpentry part-time.

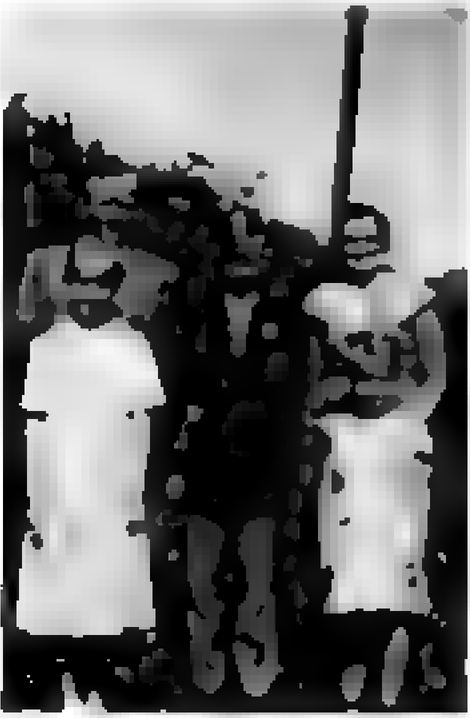
Maude Lievens

BILL AND GWEN [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] school in Neerlandia to grade five. He bought his father's second homestead, the [illegible] 32-61-3-5, and on it raised cattle and grain. He married Gwen Broadhead (born April 15, 1907) of Waseca, Saskatchewan, on June [illegible] 1946. They have three children: **Kenneth** was born April 24, 1947, **Kathleen** on November 13, 1949, [illegible] family moved to Vega, where they also farmed. They moved again, first to Highridge in 1962 [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

ALBERT AND ANN [illegible]

[illegible] bought the John Jerpama farm on [illegible] 36-61-3-5.

[illegible]

[illegible] getting soaked to the [illegible] flying around her ears.

[illegible] born November 9, 1956, and **Thelma Ann**, born [illegible]

[illegible] ing to Mom and Dad. One bright and sunny day they were at it again, but this time Dad was [illegible] got a good dunking in the barrel. That cured [illegible] children got older they had to help [illegible]

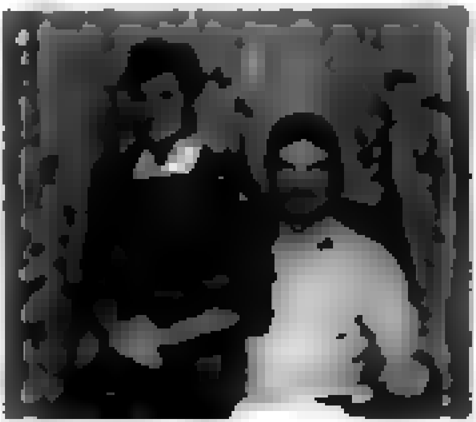
[illegible] remove cancerous growth, but the cancer was not arrested and in 1967 he passed away. Albert [illegible] With that security she could always go on.

As the girls were reaching their teens, the [illegible]

[illegible] being courted. Annie had been invited [illegible] ation. Then Fred would [illegible] airplane which he would land in either Norman Terpsma or John Visser [illegible] Annie and Fred moved with Albert and Thelma [illegible] bus. When the river was too high in summer, the basket could not always be used; then Fred had to fly Albert and Thelma across to catch the bus.

Eva married Simon Elgersma in 1971. Leona [illegible]

[illegible] ch they purchased from M[illegible] [illegible] 1984. Since her arrival [illegible] married Percy Ogden in January 1982.



[illegible]

On July 10, 1975, Annie and Fred had a baby [illegible]

Annie Dolka

CARL AND AGNES ([illegible]) MAST

Carl Peter Mast quit school after grade four [illegible] with the breaking plow. In 1928 he worked for the summer months in Nobleford. He earned forty-five dollars [illegible] just enough to pay off Rev [illegible]

money to buy false te[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia. The 1930s [illegible] id grasshoppers sent [illegible]

Carl and Agnes first lived in a little house [illegible]

Carl drove the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, first part-time and later full-time, for a total [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

CLARENCE AND GRACE (DOT) MAST

Clarence Mast was born in Neerlandia [illegible] Edmonton, and in 1926 the family returned to Neerlandia. Clarence remembers they lived in a chicken house which had some granaries added onto it for bedrooms. In the winter they [illegible]

Clarence spent most of his time outdoors

[illegible]

Grace (Grietje) was born December 23, 1921 [illegible]

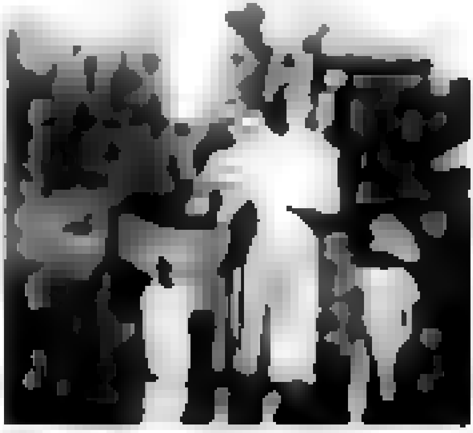
[illegible] piano lessons, gymnastic training, and dance [illegible]

[illegible] people today have drapes in their homes which [illegible]

[illegible] she told some of those wartime experiences.

Just when Grace thought things would improve, she met Clarence. They were [illegible]

[illegible] quilts, and sewing. [illegible] later converted to a garage



[illegible]

[illegible] with her knitting or other handicrafts by her [illegible] five children. Lydia (Aldia) Auwena was born

[illegible]

(Evelyn Diane) was born January 1, 1952. She [illegible] 1970. In 1956 Roselea Jean was born Februar [illegible] She lived only a short while and passed away July 28 of that year. She had cerebral palsy and spent most of her life in the hospital. On July 23, 1957, their last child was born, Don Clifford [illegible] in a highway accident on July 28, 1976.

[illegible] we finally did get the car out, so we all piled [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

JOE AND MARION (POSTMA) MAST

Joe (Johannes) Mast is the youngest of a family of eleven born to Albert and Everdina Mast. For the first six years of his schooling he and his brothers and sisters walked three miles [illegible] er Albert home with some groceries in fifteen minutes. During his last two years at school, Joe travelled in a covered truck.

After he finished school Joe stayed home [illegible] as the years went by. He lived and cared for his mother on the home place (SE 22-61-3-5) till 1962.

Marion (Maryke) Janke Postma, born March 21, 1938, immigrated with her family from [illegible] about nine months. Then a girlfriend who was going to the west to visit her sister for a year [illegible] The Royal Bank in Edmonton in 1961. She attended a Young People's rally in Neerlandia in May 1961, and there she met Joe. The following year, July 6, they were married.

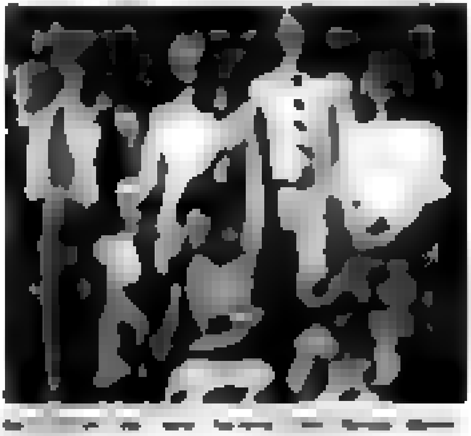
In the fall of that year Joe's brother Bill moved to Grande Prairie and sold his land (NE 33-62-4-5, SE 24-62-4-5) to Joe. The next spring Joe also bought Uncle Henry's land next to the [illegible]

On May 31, 1963, David Allen was born and was followed by Ronald William (July 12, 1964). Those years Joe and Marion worked hard. They put the boys in a box in the barn when they were milking. They fed steers, sows, and [illegible]

[illegible] ing made for a busy life but there was always "new life" in the spring: the sheep with their [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] for three weeks. It was haying time. Deacon Joe H. Wierenga put a notice in the bulletin that Joe [illegible] quarters and in one day put it up [illegible] haystack



[illegible]

In 1977 the Masts put up a dairy barn, they quit shipping cream and started shipping milk [illegible]

[illegible] preparation for the ministry. Ronald is farming with his dad, and set up a farrow-to-finish hog barn.

The Lord has blessed the Masts richly with a healthy family. Theirs is a busy but good life. They are thankful to be part of the Neerlandia [illegible]

JOHN AND HENNIE (VANDERMEULEN) MAST

John Mast was born and raised in Neerlandia. When he was old enough to leave the school bench he went to work on the family [illegible] gust 28, 1953, John married Hennie Vander[illegible] truck for Bill Bredo. In the fall of 1956 the Masts moved to the Gerrit Nanninga farm (NW [illegible] then they had two children, Allan (March 20 [illegible]

When John and Hennie first moved onto their farm, they lived in a two-room house and a granary. Later they bought a house and had it moved to their place. What a joy — no more [illegible] on December 12, 1960, Deanna came along. In 1963 a barn was bought and moved onto the farm. The shack became a garage and well house. In 1968 a large hog barn was built, and [illegible] burned the cow barn, the cattle shed, and the winter's supply of hay. But thanks to all their [illegible] hogs, which ran into the fire. The house had been completely emptied, and all its contents [illegible]

[illegible] Shortly after they had another fire. This time the fire was not as bad, but a lot of time was spent putting it out. The neighbours again [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] are married and have families of their own. John is driving school bus and works part-time [illegible]

PETE AND GLADYS (KRIKKE) MAST

Pete and Gladys were both born in Neerlan[illegible] attended school in Neerlandia [illegible] hospital six weeks.

Gladys worked in the Westlock hospital for [illegible] finally decided she could better do [illegible] to pay board and could save more. She [illegible]

[illegible] young men entered their house by prying open a window. They were, however, un[illegible] and put a piece of tin in front of it to keep out the cold March weather. When Pete and Gladys came home they immediately noticed the tin so began to check to find out what tricks had been played on them. They found that the pranks[illegible] "Must have been fun for them," Gladys sa[illegible]

Pete and Gladys lived on the SE 18-62-3-5, which Pete had bought from Dielemans. The house had been purchased from Gerben [illegible]

[illegible] out. That Saturday evening there was a bad [illegible] They never did get to church that Sunday. [illegible]

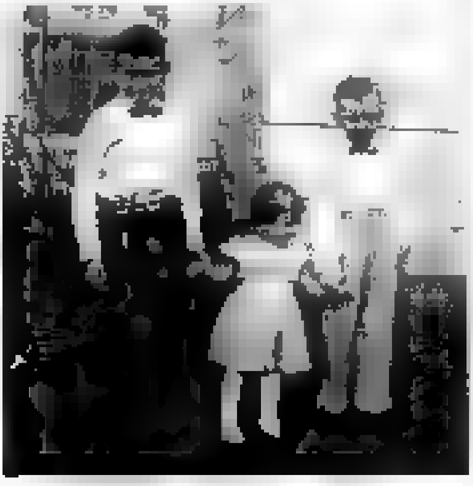
[illegible] sleigh. Most of the neighbours rode along. The [illegible]

The first years of their marriage Gladys helped Pete with the bundering. She drove the [illegible] driver," she said, "either I'd be too far from the grain or right on it. Pete would holler, and after a few hollers I'd hear him above the noise of our John Deere tractor. Pete would have fired me on the spot, but he didn't have much choice as he [illegible] ing they would put Maynard in a box on the [illegible] 1953).

[illegible] needed a winter coat, but Gladys had nothing

to make it from. She reluctantly decided that she would have to use one of her own for that purpose. Meanwhile Pete had gone to the store for groceries and the mail. When he came back he had a big box from California. It was full of clothes. There were clothes for everyone, and even a coat for Maynard. A friend, Cobie Leder, had sent them. Gladys always felt that this was God-sent.

A daughter, **Viola** Janeth, was born June 30, 1956. She was named after Gladys' mother Janna.



Maynard, Viola, Klaas, 1958

Pete used to cut hair for most of the neighbours. People just didn't think of going to the barber in those days. For awhile Pete was cutting hair for fifteen people. The Masts enjoyed the company too.

Ten years after their marriage, Pete and Gladys moved to Mellowdale and had to start all over. They bought the old Davis place on the SE 1-61-3-5. The first summer they were there, their old log barn burned down. Klaas and one of the neighbour's children had found a bee nest between the logs and decided to kill them by burning them. Their efforts were successful — they burned the barn as well. Pete bought an old barn for five hundred dollars with the help of some neighbours. Pete and Gladys were very thankful for that help. From then on things began to pick up for them.

Gladys, Pete, 1973.

Maynard married Nora Janssen on June 10, 1972. They are farming in Bloomsbury and have five children. Klaas is farming and living at home. Viola married Vern Mahar on July 27, 1978. They live on an acreage in Campsie with their two children.

Gladys Mast

HENRY AND GRACE (RUNIA) MEETSMA

Henry (Hendrik) Meetsma was born January 13, 1917, in Zandbulten, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1920 his family moved to Ter Apel, Groningen. Thus Henry mastered Fries as well as Grunings and, since his father owned a garage, he became an all-round mechanic.

Grace (Grietje), daughter of Arend and Pietje Runia, was born March 25, 1918, in Bolsward, Friesland. Henry and Grace were married in 1944. From then until the end of the war, they were in hiding in Blija, Friesland, because Henry had refused to register with the Germans as a military man. After the liberation Henry worked at a Chrysler garage in Leeuwarden. On the way to work in the morning he would meet Romke Stel on his way to his job at Ford, but Romke left for Canada in 1948.

[illegible] 2, 1947), and Pat (Pietje, April 2, 1950). When the family arrived in Canada, they found their sponsorship had been cancelled, so through [illegible]

Henry worked in several garages and through his work and the church, the Meet[illegible] people in Neerlandia. Their first visit to [illegible] Gerald and Arnold were in their teens, they [illegible] to Neerlandia for catechism and Young [illegible]

Grace's father came from the Netherlands for a visit in 1969. Arend had been a close friend to Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra, but they had [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Gelderman had been empty for a year-and-a [illegible] deliberation and with the mediation of Melk [illegible]

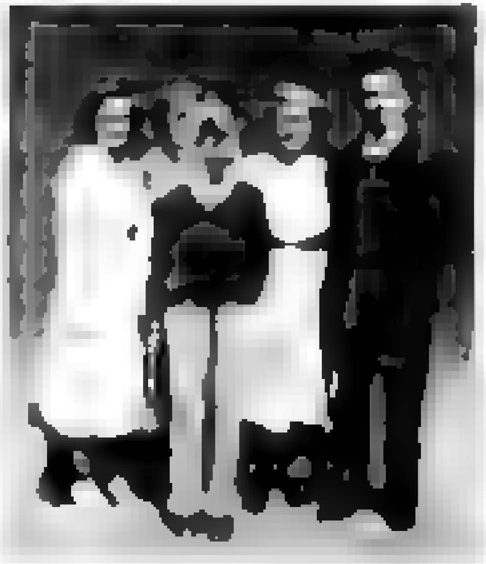
[illegible] time in Neerlandia stands out as something [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

World War II was over and Jim (Yneke) Mer[illegible] of Marrum, Friesland, the Netherlands began to wonder about the future of his family [illegible] townspeople, and Jim's brother John, who had left for Neerlandia in 1947, encouraged Jim to [illegible] Finally a decision was made: on June [illegible] 48, Jim, his wife Elizabeth (Lybbert), and their children, **Betty** (Elisabeth, March 27, 1932) [illegible] June 21, 1936), left for Canada aboard the *Kon* [illegible] They arrived in Quebec City on June [illegible] and boarded a train for Edmonton. From Edmonton they took a bus to Barrhead. There brother John greeted them and took them to [illegible]

Jim worked for Catherine till fall, when he, Elizabeth and Ray moved to Westlock where Jim and Elizabeth worked for a bachelor farmer. Their daughters, Betty and Hilde, stayed in Neerlandia and worked in the homes of families who needed help. On the Sundays that the [illegible] Supper, the Merkus family was brought to [illegible] three fingers of one hand in a sawing accident. This changed the course of his life. The Merkus [illegible] became janitor of the church. For six hundred dollars he bought a vacant house from Clarence Mast. Jim and Elizabeth bought a lot in the hamlet from Siebren Tiemstra. They dug a cellar by hand, repaired the cracks in the walls and repainted the house, gradually transforming it [illegible]



[illegible]

Soon the children found life partners. Betty [illegible] Eleanor Nanninga. In the meantime Jim and Elizabeth were busy with their own lives. As [illegible] many vegetables for herself and her daughters. In 1979 Jim and Elizabeth left Neerlandia for the [illegible] sary on May 28, 1981. In looking back, they see that the Lord has been faithful through the years and blessed their lives richly.

Betty [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] were married April 29 [illegible] April 13. Catherina was [illegible]

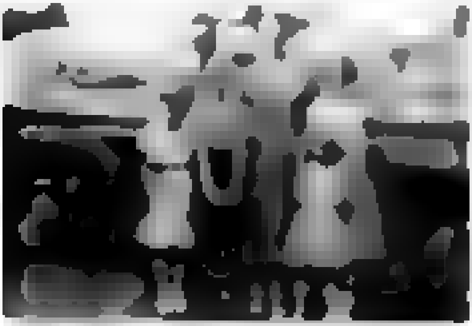
[illegible]

for food. Per person, they could get fifty or one [illegible] get twenty-five pounds of sugar [illegible] that amounted to one hundred pounds for the fam[illegible] hundred pounds of flour and more foodstuffs [illegible]

What a surprise the Ladies' Society of [illegible] horses to bring all the goodies [illegible]

[illegible] found work for John at Henry Bender's in [illegible] soaked and the roads were still very rough [illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia picked the Merkus family up [illegible] worship services held in an Angli[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] who picked roots all summer and also [illegible]

[illegible] Barrhead and the family moved there. Another daughter was born to them there. On Januar[illegible]

RAY AND ELEANOR (NANNINGA)

[illegible]

[illegible] best.

After several moves the family settled [illegible] that part of Neerlandia known as the Corner [illegible] tlement: should we or should we not play [illegible]

Against his father's wishes, Ray quit school [illegible] poultry inspector for the Alberta Department

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] two-room affair in Barrhead with [illegible] house out back. Eleanor also worked at the [illegible]

[illegible] Glen Allen, was born June 26, 1965.

[illegible] Merkus family settled down at the Summit [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Jane Heistad were married. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Eleanor Merkus

BERT AND JENNY (BOUWMAN) MICHAEL

After a courtship of three years, Bert Michael married Jenny Bouwman on June 13 1945. A new house was built on the Michael homestead (NE 4-62-3-5) by Bert and his father and Henry Bouwman. The old house was converted into a garage for the John Deere H trac tor, bought in 1942 from agent C. K. Matt and the 1935 [illegible] purchased in 1943.

Bert and Jenny were blessed with five children: **Herman** John, born April 26, 1946; **Annette** Elizabeth, born October 9, 1947; **Gerald** Albert, born September 22, 1949; **James** Peter, born September 1, 1952; and **Marwynn** Mildred, born July 28, 1956. Grandpa Michael lived with the family until he died in 1960.

Back: Bert, [illegible] holding James, Gerald, Jenny holding Marwynn. Front: Herman, Annette.

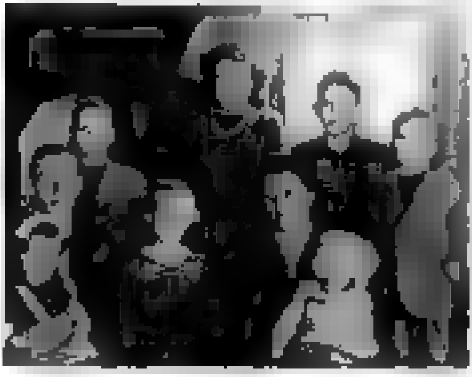
There was no room for expansion in Neerlandia, so Bert and Jenny sold the farm in 196[illegible] to Jacob Sturwold and bought three quarters in the Sunnybrook district. The Michael children all married and have families of their own. In 1973 Bert and Jenny had to sell the farm due to Bert's poor health and bought an acreage in Hazel Bluff where they still reside.

Jenny Bouwman

RALPH AND MARY (VAN HUIS) MOES

Ralph (Roelof) and Mary (Mietje) Moes had lived for some time in Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands, when they began to consider emigrating. Their daughters **Tjamke**, **Grace** (Grietje), **Ida** and **Mary** (Mietje), and sons **Hugo** (Huike), **Ben** (Bernardus), **Ron** (Roenke) and **Walter** (Wiegers), were still fairly young and Ralph and Mary wanted to provide a good future for their children as they grew older. They had been planning to go to Australia but after hearing many stories about Canada and realizing that life in Australia would not be so good, they changed plans to immigrate to Canada instead.

In March 1952 the Moes family left Rotterdam on the *Zuiderkruis*. From Holland to Halifax the traveling was rough due to a bad storm. All their children were seasick except the youngest daughter Mary who at that time was nineteen months old. She was in a little walker that rolled across the cabin with the wildness of the ocean. The captain would laugh watching her walking up and down the decks with her little wooden shoes on her tiny feet.



Ben, Tjamke, Hugo, Walter. Seated: Ida, Roelof, Grace, Mary, Mary, 1952

It was not a good trip but they made it, arriving in Neerlandia in March 1952 and living there for about three months. The Moes family's trip to Canada was sponsored by Dine Piers and their oldest daughter, Tjamke (June 27, 1934), who was seventeen, went to live and work at the Piers home. The Moes family did not like the way they were all separated and spread about in different places at first. Ralph, Mary and little Mary stayed at the minister's house. Grace and Ida joined Tjamke at the Piers' home and the four boys were split up, two at one place and two at another. Ralph worked in farmers' fields threshing and then went to work for Lucas Sturwold making lumber at a sawmill.

When there was no more work for Ralph he went to Edmonton to look for a job and a house for the family. Tjamke also went to work in Edmonton, and later married Bert Elgersma. When Ralph and Mary first moved to Edmon- [illegible] ...ed eight children was difficult when they had [illegible] people of Neerlandia provided them with plenty to eat, bringing them meat and other things [illegible]

[illegible] Edmonton. The children are all married and have families of their own.

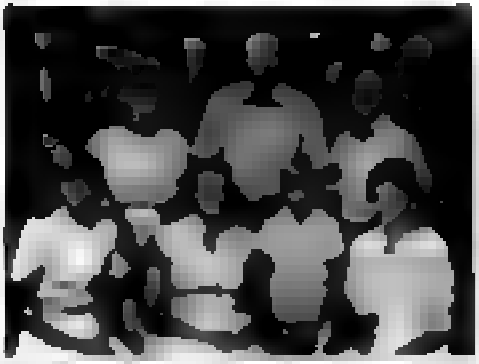
Mary Moes

ALVIN AND JOANNE (GELDERMAN)

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] broaden his horizon. At this time Alvin and Joanne had four children: Charlene Ann, born October 24, 1964; Beatrice Elaine, born May 28, 1966; Travis Jay, born June 5, 1967, and Jody [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] born.

The Nanningas maintain a mixed-farming operation with one unique facet — that of rais- [illegible] supply the chicks and Alvin and Joanne [illegible]

[illegible] the favourites. At the Alberta Summer [illegible] held annually, Alvin, Joanne, and Travis have won gold and silver medals in horseshoe. Travis placed fourth in the junior division at the Canadian Horseshoe Championships held in [illegible]

[illegible] ...ningas. They are happ[illegible] Neerlandia community.

Joanne Nanninga

[illegible]

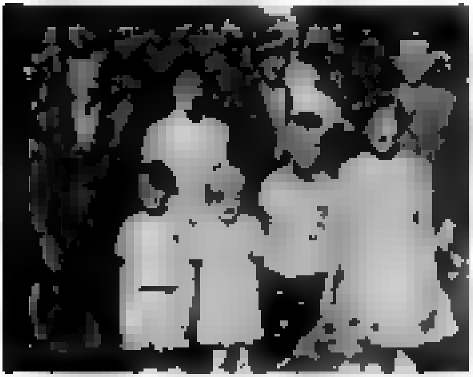
[illegible]

[illegible]

Ed and John loved playing by the creek [illegible]

Ed had fallen in. She went outside and could hear them calling for help. In some miraculous way John had caught hold of Ed's hand and held him until help came. There was not a lot of water in the creek at the time but unknown to the Nanningas, a hole about four feet deep had washed out at the point where Ed had fallen in. The boys had certainly learned their lesson; the next time Ed and John brought the cows in from the field, they did not stop to play on the bridge but, one behind the other keeping close to the centre of the bridge, dashed across.

Five more children were born to the Nanningas. Phyllis was born February [illegible]; Larry James on May 27, [illegible]; Ruby on February 13, 1959; Fern on December 1, 1960; and Bradley on October 2, 1963.



Back: John, Bertha, Bert with Bradley, Ed. Front: Ruby, Fern, Larry, Phyllis. 1966

Ed works as an electrician for Barrhead Electric. On September 23, 1971, he married Ingrid Ronaasen of Mellowdale. For one year they lived in Inuvik, N.W.T., where Ed had a job. Five children were born to them. On March 22, 1983, their three-year-old son, Nolan, was attacked by dogs. In spite of efforts to save him he died the next morning.

On June 15, 1974, John married Jean Wierenga. They are working with John's father on the farm and for many years lived in a trailer on the yard. In [illegible] they moved into the old farm house while Bert and Bertha moved into a new house a short distance away. John and Jean have four children: Amanda Jean, born April 25, 1976; Clinton John, born July 7, 1978; Willis John, born January 6, 1983; and Charlotte Jean born June 9, 1984.

Jean, Willis, John, Amanda, Clinton. 1983

After graduating from Dordt College with a major in biology, Phyllis worked as a laboratory assistant at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. A two-year course at N.A.I.T. enabled her to become a laboratory technician in Barrhead. Phyllis enjoys painting with oil and water colours in her spare time.

Larry married Trixie Wierenga, a sister to Jean, on July 9, [illegible]. They built a house and a hog barn on the [illegible] which Bert had purchased several years before. They have two children: Tara Ruth, born August [illegible], and Maria Beth, born July [illegible], 1984.

Ruby married Eugene Feenstra on May [illegible], 1979. Fern married Brad Wierenga on October [illegible], 1979.

Bert and Bertha's youngest son, Bradley, was born a "special child". At age seven he attended Winnifred Stewart School in Edmonton. He stayed at [illegible] during the week and came home on weekends. After one and a half years in Edmonton he attended the School of New Hope in Barrhead. In the sum-

[illegible]

mers he enjoyed the one week stay at the camp sponsored by Rehoboth. He participated in [illegible] River and won several awards. Bradley also enjoyed watching animals and birds of all kinds. He and the dogs were fond of each other and often went out hunting for mice, gophers and skunks. On August 18, 1980 Bradley went [illegible] he was hit and instantly killed by a gravel truck.

[illegible]

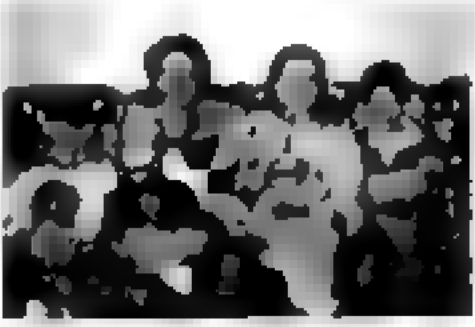
In March [illegible] 1980 the Nanningas [illegible] Through the past years the Nanninga family has enjoyed the sustaining [illegible] and the fellowship of the Neerlandia community.

Bertha Nanninga

BILL AND ANNETTE ([illegible]GERSMA) NANNINGA

Bill (William) Nanninga, son of Corny and Bertha [illegible] had trained as a [illegible] Nursing [illegible] at the University Hospital in Edmonton.

[illegible] then moved to Neerlandia and in [illegible] farmland purchased from Bill's father.



[illegible], Bill holding Margo, Annette holding [illegible], 1982

Bill has a mixed farming operation [illegible] Margo Renee (May [illegible]) and [illegible] (May 23, 1982).

Annette Nanninga

DENNIS AND PATRICIA (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

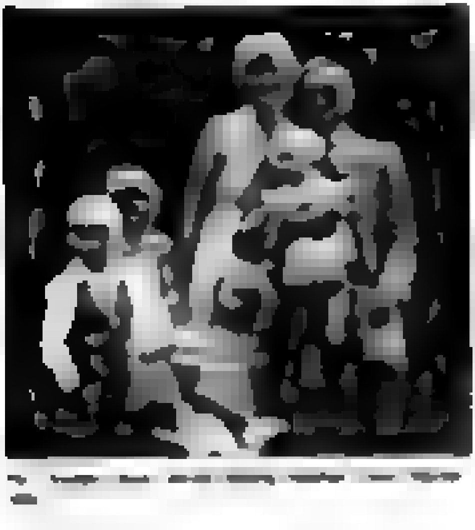
Dennis Nanninga was born January 9, 1947 to Corny and Sena Nanninga, and grew up in [illegible] head high school, he moved to Edmonton [illegible]

[illegible] were married June 6, 1969 in the First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. They continued living and working in Edmonton [illegible] the spring of 1970. Then, because Dennis wanted to farm, they moved back to Neerlandia to join Dennis' family in a mixed farming opera[illegible]

[illegible]

GERALD AND DORA (PLANTINGA) [illegible]

After graduating from the Barrhead high school, Gerald Nanninga moved to Edmonton [illegible]



[illegible] homesteaded by Gerald's grandfather, John [illegible]

Gerald and Dora's first child, [illegible] Ruth, [illegible]

[illegible]

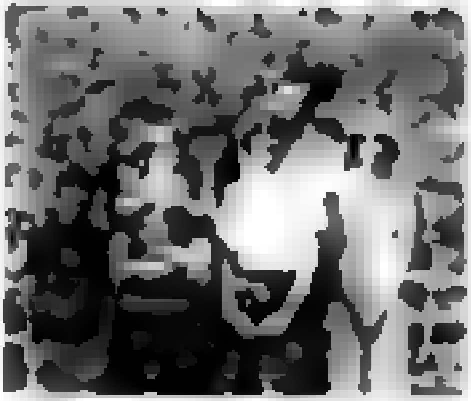
[illegible] ROSE (MAST) NANNINGA

[illegible] was born and raised in [illegible]

[illegible] p roof chicken barns built by Gerrit [illegible]

[illegible] in Barrhead. Finally two sons were born [illegible] on April 12, 1965, and Steve Allan, [illegible] December 5, 1967. The boys are still living at [illegible]

For the past several years Rose has worked [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] and arrow. In the fall he goes out guiding [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] bush, camping out overnight. On these trips they fish and take pictures of wildlife and [illegible]ery. Wintertime finds Henry busy in the bush [illegible]

[illegible]

MANNY AND LOIS (VAN DYKE)

[illegible]

[illegible] school meant wading through mud and water [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Barrhead. From 1954 to 1956 he attended Vermilion School of Agriculture (now Lakeland College) in the winters.

After that Manny worked in Red Deer and [illegible]

[illegible] Approximately 150 to 250 cases of eggs were [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia school in the thirties. Lois trained as a beautician at Marvel Hair Styling School. Manny and Lois were married July 8, 1960, and [ren]ted a little house from Marvin Nanninga [illegible] applied for a shop owner's license to open Lois' Beauty Salon in her home.

On June 9, 1962, Heather Joy came to bring [illegible] ton. Manny and Lois then moved to Edmonton, where Manny worked at several jobs before starting his own general construction business in 1968. They were blessed with four more children and now live near Edmonton.

[illegible]

RONALD AND HAZEL ([illegible])

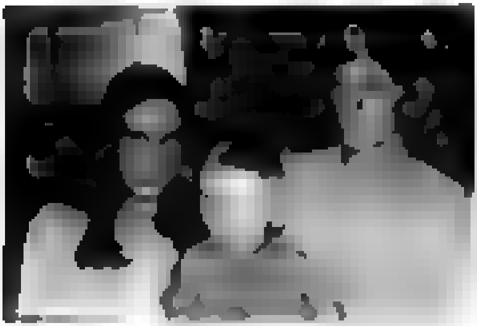
[illegible]

Ron and Hazel returned to Neerlandia in [illegible] a remedial reading program [illegible] when their first child was born and also giving [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] moved there. There they stayed for the nex[illegible]

The heavy snowfall made their first winter [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

HENDRIK AND DENA (VAN MAAREN) [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and again on April 11, 1952, for it was then that [illegible]

From then on, life centered around the boys [illegible]

[illegible]

After arrival in Halifax they embarked on a [illegible]

[illegible]

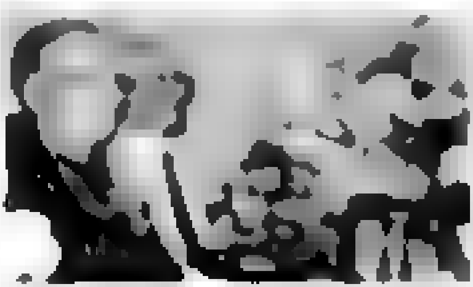
[illegible] he more the children of Israe[illegible] murmured.) They returned to Neerlandia, with [illegible]

[illegible]

II-62-4-5 from 'The Big Three' — George Ane [illegible]

[illegible] From there they travelled to church by horse and wagon, leaving at 8:30 a.m. in order to be [illegible] for the 10:00 service. For the next three or four years Henk had the cream haul. This entailed stopping at each farm on the road to pick up cans of cream and take them to the [illegible] to meet the truck at 9:00 a.m. Henk had to leave home at 7:00 a.m. During this time Henk [illegible]

On June 5, 1959, Henk married Elsie Olthuis and thus began a new chapter in the Navis [illegible]



[illegible]

independent till Mr Navis' death on May 12 [illegible] close to the Lord all their lives, were ready to go to live with Him.

Bill and Alice continue to live in Bremner. Four children were born to them. Their son [illegible] from lymphoma, a rapidly growing [illegible] This sad episode in their lives has served to bring the family closer to each other and to the [illegible]

Elsie Navis

HENK AND ELSIE (OLTHUIS) NAVIS

On June 5, 1959, Derk Hendrik and Elsie Olthuis were married in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Van Dyken was the officiating minister, and in the course of his [illegible] must have been good-natured cows. One wonders sometimes if milk production suffered [illegible] means of loud, albeit friendly, arguments dur[illegible]

[illegible]

At first Henk and Elsie had two tractors: an old steel-wheel-brute used only for breakin and an International WD 6. Sometimes both [illegible] other times cutting grain with tractor and binder had to be done. Lunch times were the most [illegible] that end, Elsie took up her education again by means of night courses, summer school, and correspondence, and finally achieved her Bachelor of Education degree in 1981. She continues to teach in Neerlandia Public School where she along with the rest of the staff, strives to [illegible] quarters of land he had by now acquired. Of these, only the home quarter had any land [illegible] Service Centre, where he became manager in 1982. Henk and Elsie built a house in the [illegible] eave the farm to (and desiring to help a [illegible] and Marilyn Plantinga, who began farming it in 1979. Henk and Elsie are pleased to see that Don is continuing to farm the land in a stewardly way. Henk is pleased too with his parents [illegible] Christian community where, though the winters are cold, the hearts of the people are warm.

Elsie Navis

CLARENCE AND ROSE (NANNINGA)

[illegible]

The Clarence Olthuis family history began June 9, 1965, when Clarence married Rose Nanninga and settled on the SE 14-62-3-5, better known as Sparky's. At first life went smoothly [illegible] structure on the farm, an old log hip roof barn [illegible]

After two-and-one-half years, Clarence and Rose moved to the NE 31-61-2-5. In the transi [illegible] from mobile home to house their son Kur [illegible] exhilarated by all the space, ran happily [illegible] added a finishing barn. From this venture he [illegible] broilers, Cornish hens, and other poultry.

Kurtis Alan, born June 15, 1966, was to fur [illegible] half a bottle of candy-coated pills. Even though [illegible] mained unconscious for two days. But within [illegible] days God had completely restored his health. Later that same summer Kurtis was bitten in his cheek by their pet dog and required [illegible] and dinghies as well as attending school, ca [illegible] sisters were awarded the "Baby-sitting [illegible] action, would hang around the big barns bein [illegible]

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home

Barbara, Wayne, Graham, Kurtis, Rose, Sandra, Randy, Clarence

quarter to Gert and Ulla Jacobsson. Clarence and Rose bought the NE 13-61-3-5, which had been Bill Dithus' homestead, from Clarence's dad, Bill. There they built a house and poultry barns near the creek that winds through the property.

Clarence is active in local affairs and in the larger community as both a director and delegate of Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and Lilydale Co-operative Poultry Processors.

Rose Dithus

ART AND HENNY (BULTENA) PETERS

As a young boy of six, Art Peters moved with his family to Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands. He grew up in the 1930s, when times were tough everywhere. At thirteen years of age he started working for farmers in the area, at a wage of nine cents an hour for a ten-hour day, six days a week. In 1946 he went to serve in the army, but was discharged eight months later for health reasons.

hockey. It was decided to do it the easy way with the tractor. This job was never completed because the tractor fell through the ice. What a mess! No one was injured, but the enthusiasm for hockey diminished for a while.

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home.

Henny (Hendertje) Bultena had been born on February 19, 1926, in Roodeschool, Groningen. Art and Henny were married in January 1948. In April of that year they made their honeymoon voyage aboard the Aquitania to Canada, hoping to make a new life for themselves and any offspring the Lord would choose to give them. They arrived in Edmonton on May 1 and spent their first night in the Immigration Hall.

The next day, a Sunday, they were met by their sponsor, Albert Tiemstra, and brought to Neerlandia. The summer of 1948, Art worked for Albert, who had built a little shack on his yard for the young couple. In the winter of 1949 the shack was moved to Albert's north place, the NE 7-61-3-5, where Art did some land clearing. In the summer of 1950 Art worked on the new Christian Reformed Church building, and after he helped Henry Kippers build a new barn to replace one that had burned down.

Henny and Art doing chores at A. Tiemstra's place, 1948

Art and Dick Feenstra bought Harry [illegible] place (SW 35-61-4-5) in 1950 and began farming together in 1951. Art moved his shack to his father's place and worked out wherever he could. In the meantime, he applied for his own homestead. In 1952 he obtained the NE 7-62-4-5. Once again he moved his little shack. Art farmed with Dick Feenstra until 1957, when he started in the dairy business with his family.

Art and Henny were blessed with five children: Henry (Hendrik), born on July 16, 1949; Jenny, born on September 2, 1952; Martin,

[illegible]

[illegible]

born on January 7, 1956: Anita, born on April [illegible]

Henry married Grace van Hulsen in 1975. Grace had been born in Groningen. Gro- [illegible] blessed with three children, Michelle Elizabeth [illegible]

[illegible] built on to several times, was finally replaced by [illegible]

Martin married Bernice Tuininga, youngest daughter of Simon and Bertha Tuininga. [illegible] on October 10, 1978; Curtis Dale, born on April [illegible]

Jenny lives in Langley, British Columbia, with her husband, Bert Koning, and their five boys. Anita married Jake Oussoren and they reside in Edmonton with their daughter and [illegible]

[illegible] work together with their father on the dairy farm. Henny, too, continues to be actively involved in the business. She has worked hard for many years alongside her husband and her sons to make the operation a viable one. She still milks the cows morning and night.

[illegible] ters and their crops are used for feeding the dairy herd. In 1979, they had a 2590 Harvestore system put up for haylage. This made the work easier for the men. But it paid off for the wives [illegible]

Art enjoys doing carpentry in his spare [illegible] Covenant Canadian Reformed School as well as in the basement of the parsonage.

Henry's interests include mechanics and [illegible]

[illegible] whom they trust, the families of Art and Henry [illegible]

Grace Peters

HENRY AND MARTJE (BANNINGA) [illegible]

[illegible]

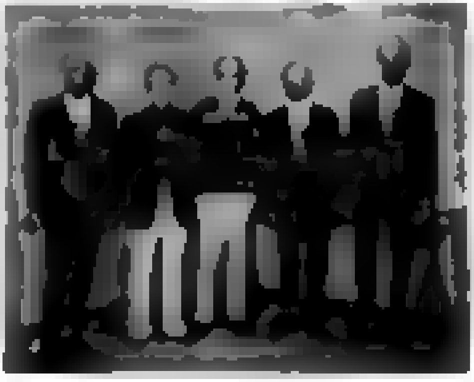
Hendrik (August 8, 1903) and Martje [illegible] Groningen, the Netherlands, and were married May 19, 1923. In 1928, in Uithuizen, there was a lot of talk about immigration. The Hendrik Peters family, along with the families [illegible] Germany illegally, and now Hendrik was considered a *staatsloze* (displaced person). Much [illegible]

Emigration to Canada, however, never left Hendrik's thoughts in the following years, so he set about getting the proper papers. Mean [illegible] children — seven girls and five boys. After World War II, when immigration was possible [illegible] (Jan, August 29, 1923) and Art (Ale, March [illegible] their oldest daughter, Corry (Kornelia, October 25, 1924), was being courted by Dick Froma [illegible] Uithuizermeeden, three couples were married [illegible] Martje, and the family, as well as Dick and Corry Froma, boarded the *Kota Inten* for Canada. After a long boat trip, they landed [illegible] and arrived in Neerlandia on April 23.

[illegible] later John had medical problems, so he was not [illegible] ment that he would not become a burden in the [illegible] They stayed for only two years before moving [illegible]

In the fall of 1948, Hendrik (Henry) bought [illegible] (Johannes), born January 15, 1932. Henry Jr. [illegible] worked in lumber camps.

In the Netherlands, Henry Sr. had been a [illegible] dian license. The first time he tried, he took along a minister from Edmonton to translate for him. But because the minister was unable to [illegible] wiring for power plants, so Fred was familiar with electrical terms. He translated for Henry, [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the years [illegible] Henry and Mar[illegible] [illegible] Martje [illegible] Vander Veen of Edmonton, and they raised twelve children. Joe married Fredrika Vogelzang. Tinnie (Trijntje), May 8, 1934) is the wife of Peter Stikema of Edmonton. They have [illegible] Neerlandia, and they moved to Edmonton after the family farm was sold to brother Joe. They had four children; one of them passed away. Aaje (March 4, 1937) and her husband Koos Duker of Edmonton, raised six children. Hilda (Hiltje, March 24, 1938) married Wilfred [illegible] and her husband, John Werkman, live with their four daughters in Edmonton while Pat (Pieterdina, March 22, 1942) and her husband Sid Oostenburg, with their three children live in Mission, B.C.

Martje Peters died March [illegible] married Jacoba Boonstra-DeBoer on May 10, 1974 and moved to Edmonton where he still lives (1984).

Henry Jr. owns the SW 2-62-4-5 and the NW 36-61-4-5, and rents the land out. He has done custom breaking with his Caterpillar bulldozer and now works at W. D. Forest Products. His favourite sport is hunting and he is well-known among local hunters for his imitations of moose calls.

Art Peters

JOE AND FREDRIKA (VOGELZANG) PETERS

Joe, the third son of Henry and Martje Peters, married Fredrika Vogelzang of Barrhead on August 31, 1962. Fredrika had been born on April 17, 1939, in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, and had immigrated with her [illegible] Joe Van Assen and bought the dairy farm (SW 6-62-3-5) from Joe's father and brothers in 1973.

Joe and Fredrika have five children: Harry (June 29, 1963), John (June 13, 1965), Marvin (July 25, 1967), Richard (July 2, 1971), and Rose (September 21, 1973). The family manages a dairy operation of about fifty milking cows and [illegible]

Joe Peters

JOHN JR. AND KAY (BAKER) PETERS

John bached with his father for quite a while before he got married, and was not too inter[illegible] time in making improvements on [illegible] the Peters homestead. They have one son, [illegible] Don, who farms with John.

After they got married, John and Kay [illegible]d on improving the farm. They had a well drilled and electric power put in. They [illegible] sow herd for their farrow-to-finish operation. They grow enough grain every year on their [illegible] half section land to feed their hogs, unless they get hailed out (as happened in 1983).

[illegible]

John suffered a heart attack in 1969 but, after [illegible] as road grader operator. Kay has worked at Neerlandia Co-op for about fourteen years. He

Roger

first six years full-time and the last eight years part-time.

Kay Peters

GERRIT AND LIES (SCHEELE) PIEFFERS

Gerrit (Gerhardus Philippus) Pieffers was born January 10, 1906, in Gouda, South Holland, the Netherlands. Lies (Elizabeth Catharina) Scheele was born March 15, 1908 in Axel, Zeeland. In 1927 Gerrit Pieffers was admitted to the *Theologische Hoogeschool* of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in Kampen, Overijssel. After having to interrupt his studies for a number of years, he passed his candidate examination in 1939, and was admitted to the ministry. On July 18, 1940, he was united in marriage to Lies in Zuilichem, Gelderland. Two daughters were born: Lies (Elizabeth Catharina) on December 8, 1941, and Tineke (Albertina) on March 9, 1943.

From 1943 to 1946, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bergentheim, Overijssel, where both he and his wife became deeply involved in the Resistance Movement. Gerrit spent three weeks in *Kamp Erica* (a work camp). He managed to escape and the Germans did not capture him again. Shortly before the liberation of the Netherlands in 1945, another daughter was born: Joke (Johanna).

From 1946 to 1952, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bussum, North Holland, with a two-year release from this congregation to serve as army chaplain in Indonesia. This was work he loved: working with the boys on the fields or wherever duty called. In Bussum a son was born on September 15, 1947: Henk (Hendrik).

In 1952 the Pieffers family boarded a plane for Canada. They arrived in Montreal, then went by train to Alberta, where Rev. Pieffers was installed as minister of the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale. After 1963 Gerrit suffered three strokes which left him unable to continue the work in Coaldale.

Yet God gave him work to do. Gerrit and Lies and Tineke moved to Neerlandia in 1966, into the parsonage. Tineke had had to undergo open heart surgery (as a result of rheumatic fever she had a damaged heart) in June 1965, and because of infection on the artificial valve six weeks later she could not take up the teaching position to which she was appointed. She had graduated in May 1965 from the U of A. Now she worked as substitute teacher for one year in Barrhead and Neerlandia.

Lies, Gerrit 1967

In Neerlandia Rev. Pieffers preached once a Sunday, gave catechism classes, made sick visits, and family visits. Although it often hurt him that he could not preach more often, he was very thankful he did not have to sit idle "twiddling his thumbs." How he used to be jealous of ministers, older than he, who could still fulfill all their duties. After a trip to the Netherlands in 1967, the first thing he said on his return was, "*Ik heb lekker een keer drie keer gepreekt*." (I nicely preached three times one Sunday.) On Sunday, March 24, 1968, Rev. Pieffers still led the worship service. On Thursday, March 28, God took him home.

[illegible] were to live with Adrian and Lies Hamoen after Gerrit's death. On March 20, 1969 the sad message was received that God had also [illegible] pital and there she died December 3, 1970.

On April 30, 1971, Henk married Christine Kippers, daughter of Henry and Sophie. They [illegible]

[illegible]

JOHN AND LUCILLE (TUININGA) PIERS

John Piers was born on October 17, 1936, the [illegible] ness reappeared the following summer. John [illegible]

[illegible] not least, milking cows by hand. Once, John who had just learned to milk, was proudly dis[illegible]

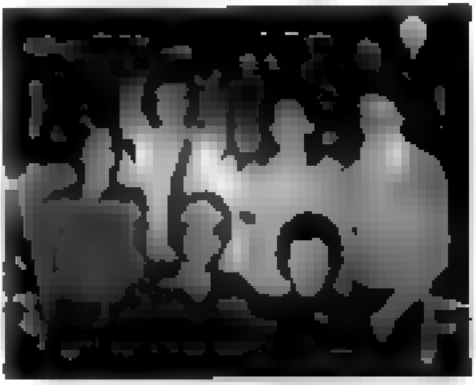
[illegible]

[illegible] squabbles, there was always a strong bond of [illegible]

[illegible] tended Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan [illegible]

[illegible]

John and Lucille's wedding day was a beau[illegible]


[illegible]

God blessed this union with four children: **Brian** John (January 18, 1965), **Crystal Joy** (April [illegible] 1967), **Kelly** Dean (July 18, 1969), and **[illegible]** Denise (January 13, 1972). Lucille is working as teacher's aide in Neerlandia Public School, where John continues as principal (1984).

John Piers

JAN AND ELIZABETH (STUIVE) PIERS KLAAS AND TILLY (ZUIDEMA) PIERS

[illegible] lands. Jan, born on August 16, 1894, and Elizabeth, born on July 22, 1893, were only renting anyway, and the fact that 200 people had applied to rent the land they left tells us a lot about the situation there at the time. Besides, Jan's brother Oene Piers was already living in Neerlandia. He said land was available and he would sponsor Jan and his family if they [illegible]

On April 26, 1948 Jan and Elizabeth left the [illegible] from Rotterdam and landed in Quebec City on May 6, 1948. From Quebec they traveled by [illegible]

[illegible] worked for Jack Tuininga, while Jan and his [illegible] also for Steve Ahday, taking care of Sydney [illegible]

In November 1948, having a job already secured, Klaas moved to Ladner, British Columbia [illegible] mixed farming. Jan took odd jobs until 1951 [illegible] gether.

Not so [illegible]

The same adventurous spirit that brought [illegible] and Tilly Zuidema were married in First Chris[illegible] that time: Annette Margaret (December 6, 1956 [illegible]

But Klaas still had Neerlandia on his mind, and when the family took a vacation in 1960 it [illegible] see the relatives and check whether perhaps there was a suitable farm for purchase.

[illegible] and bought the farm of John Tansowny on the [illegible]

[illegible] and they decided to have tea before getting [illegible] built. To their relief, the house [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] at Royal Alexandra Hospital [illegible] Alberta [illegible] enjoying a happy and healthy life in [illegible]da.

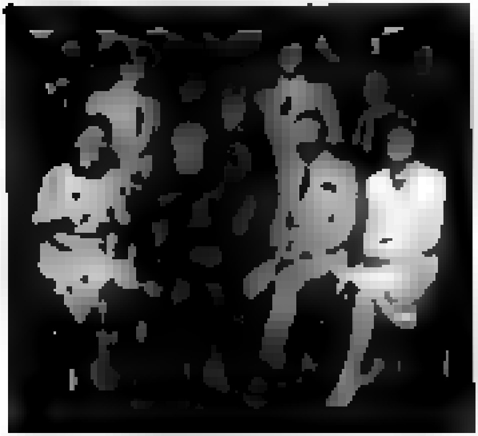
Klaas parents remain in Ladner and on May [illegible] wedding anniversary.

Klaas and Tilly Piers

PETER AND GRACE (VISSER) PIERS

Peter Piers and Grace Visser, second daughter [illegible]

They began farming on the S½ 26-61-3-5 formerly owned by George Terpsma, only a [illegible] Seven children, one of whom died in infancy [illegible]



[illegible]

Judy [illegible] born on September [illegible] [illegible] **Pam**[illegible]ela) Maureen born on February 4, 1962, lives in Edmonton and is a data co-ordinator in a credit union. **Greg** (Gregory) Scott, born on November [illegible] Beverly, born on November 2, 1965, is engaged to marry Bernie Tiemstra. **Keith** Nelson, born on July 19, 1969, and **Michelle** Andrea, born on August 2, 1971, make up the rest of the family.

Peter and Grace are thankful to God for His [illegible] blessings which he has given them.

Peter Piers

FRANK AND MARION (WIERENGA) RAYMENT

Arthur Frank Rayment was born on January [illegible] of English origin. They attended the Brethren Church. In 1977 Frank graduated from the Uni[illegible]

[illegible] long for Frank to shed his erroneous [illegible]

[illegible] Iowa, and The King's College in Edmonton. While attending Dordt College, Marion was [illegible]

In July 1982 Frank and Marion began to de[illegible] Meredith Renee. When Frank first arrived [illegible]

Marion holding Meredith, Frank, 1984

Neerlandia, he contemplated changing his name to Van Raymentsma, but he now feels as much at home as anyone with a Dutch surname.

Marion Rayment

ARTHUR AND HELEN (BOONSTRA) REITSMA

Art Reitsma attended school in Neerlandia from 1935 to 1945 and worked at home on the farm until 1950. He then moved to Edmonton until 1953, when he moved back home to farm on the NW 24-61-4-5.

Art married **Helen Boonstra** on April 6, 1955. Helen was born October 31, 1935, in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, the daughter of a mechanic. She came to the Barrhead area with her family when she was sixteen.

From this marriage came six children: **Arlene** Joyce, born March 10, 1956; **Brenda** Jean, born October 24, 1957; **Carolyn** Joan, born December 10, 1958; **Marie** Sandra, born September 1, 1961; **Jeffrey Arthur**, born October 22, 1963; and **Sherrilyn Wilma**, born October 6, 1966.

In 1968 the Reitsma family moved to Barrhead. Art trucked for Canadian Propane from 1968 to 1984 and now works as a school bus driver.

Art and Helen Reitsma

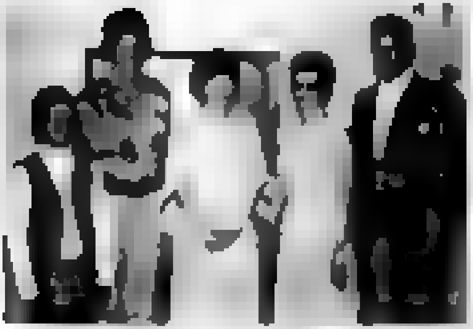
Back: Helen holding Sherrilyn, Art. Front: Marie, Jeff, Arlene, Brenda, Carolyn, 1967

TED AND CAROL (HOWIE) REITSMA

Ted (Theodore) Reitsma was born in Neerlandia on May 1, 1935. He lived there with his parents until 1956, when he left to work on railroad and pipeline construction jobs near Dawson Creek, British Columbia. On January 19, 1957, he married Carol Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Howie of Westlock. Carol had been born in Westlock on June 14, 1937, and lived there until her marriage.

In 1958 Ted and Carol moved to Neerlandia and purchased the trucking firm then owned by Art Fisher. They moved into the house on the NW 10-61-3-5, from where Art had operated his business.

Ted and Carol had three children. On July 2, 1959, **Deborah Hazel** was born. She was followed by **Gerald Edward** on October 17, 1961, and **Kenneth** Allen on June 17, 1965.



[illegible]

[illegible] hurt to return. In 1970 he sold his trucks to Joe Fisher and bought a motel in Dawson Creek. [illegible]

Ted [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the school with his brother. On the cold morn[illegible] at that time was a lot of money. When Shoal Creek School was closed down, Henry attended Neerlandia School. During that time he played on the Neerlandia Hockey Team.

[illegible]

On June 13, 1964, Henry married Erna [illegible] over the family farm. Henry and Erna have four

[illegible]

daughters: [illegible] Lynn [illegible] Donna [illegible] Kay, born on August 12, 1966; Cheryl Roxanne [illegible] Glorianne, born on December 30, 1972. The Roth family attends Bethel Pentecostal Church [illegible]

[illegible]

ALBERT AND CLARA (VISSER)

[illegible]

[illegible] and grew up there. Albert and [illegible]

[illegible]

[redacted]
Neerlandia team. Both he and Clara were members of the Choral Society, and Clara taught in Neerlandia School

The Schoonekamps lives on the Schoonekamp family farm on the NW 34-61-3-5. Before [redacted]

[redacted]
Fred set up Fred's Garage in Vega. Al[redacted]
Visser Sr

[redacted]

In 1967 the family seemed ready for a change. Since Fred was closing his business [redacted]
attending Dordt College, so it did not matter [redacted]

[redacted]
Dennis Vanninga. Their [redacted]
moved to Edmonton.

Albert first worked for two different automotive businesses, but now is co-owner of Woodacoon Automotives. Since 1967 Clara has been employed by The Edmonton Society for [redacted]
for two years and then she and Dennis were [redacted]

Clara Schoonekamp

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

suggested maybe I should go straight to bed [illegible]

The socializing part of Wilbert's teenage years was generally done around Neerlandia Corner. He played hockey and baseball and [illegible]

Wilbert met Willy (Wilhelmina) Vander Zouwen at his brother's wedding. He courted her for two years, and they were married February 26, 1960. Willy had been born in Soest [illegible] home place and Wilbert drove truck for Dick Fisher from Vega. They were blessed with five children: **John Winson** (April 9, 1961), **Hermina Theresa** (June 10, 1962), **Cynthia Rose** (August 13, 1963), **Hendrik Leonard Cornelius** (January 7, 1965), and **Laurianne May** (March 19, 1969).

In 1971 Wilbert and Willy decided to leave the farm. They moved to Medicine Hat and later to Redcliffe where they purchased a greenhouse. Wilbert also drove truck. They now live in Warburg and own a dairy farm.

ROMKE AND MARIA (WACHTENDONK)

[illegible]

Romke Stel was born on January 21, 1918, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. On November 21, 1942, he married Maria Petronella (Rie) Wachtendonk. Rie was born on [illegible] as foreman for a Ford dealer in Leeuwarden. The economy was poor in the Netherlands and [illegible] contacted the Christian Immigration Society and their names were put on a waiting list. In the meantime, Melle Elzinga had written his uncle, Peter Hania of Buitenpost, Friesland, to [illegible] be interested in coming to Canada. Peter Hania, who was a member of the Immigration Society, checked the waiting list and found the name of Romke Stel, who was well-known to [illegible] their three little boys, were sailing from Rotter[illegible] first birthday of their son, Marten. Sidney (Sij[illegible]ke) was four years old at the time. He was born on April 6, 1945, just before the war ended. Peter (Petrus), the middle son, had been born [illegible] with a bad throat infection. The little boys were taken to the hospital with their mother, but not [illegible] united and allowed to continue their journey.

Eighty-eight hours later, they landed in Ed[illegible] Melle, was waiting for them. With him was fieldman Herman Wierenga, who took the [illegible] Ford dealer in Barrhead, at $160 per month. The welcome that was put out for the Stels; all the Dutchies were by the bus station waiting for the new arrivals. How nice to be able to speak *Hollands* or *Fries* in this foreign land!

There was only a small group of Christian Reformed people in Barrhead. Church services [illegible] there were problems the Neerlandia consistory [illegible] Neerlandia church visited the group in Bar[illegible] with the money, but Rom needed a haircut. I said "I will do it" and started to cut. I never finished it. I cut it way too high on one side [illegible] disaster! But there came friends. Albert and

Mabel Elgersma. How they laughed [illegible] but A

[illegible]

Albert Elgersma came by [illegible] but not to have their cars repaired. The garage in Neerlandia was coming up for sale, they said, and would Rom be interested? Rom was indeed interested, but he did not have enough money to buy a garage. One evening soon after that, Bill and Albert came again, but this time with two [illegible] would "put up" the money. When the time [illegible] had tendered the same amount as Ed Visser. [illegible] dia garage which was renamed "Neerlandia Motors, prop. R. Stel."

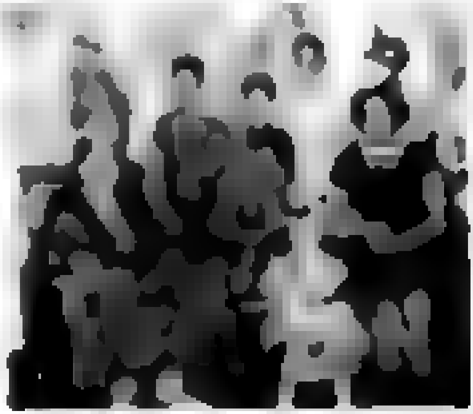
[illegible] family came, in the −52° F weather, the walls were iced up. Soon, though, the old wood stove [illegible]

[illegible] would ring? He would have to answer it and speak English. But he made it; there were sometimes mix-ups, but he made it! Rom remembers that one of the first things he had to [illegible] plied by this plant to the garage, store, church, parsonage, and a few houses. This did not [illegible] light plant, which Bert Norden hooked up [illegible] left sitting in the dark. Only when the consistory had a meeting was the plant kept going [illegible] lieved in overtime.

From the start, the garage got a lot of busi [illegible] a mechanic, he was followed by Gerrit van Dij

[illegible] Rom was now a sub-dealer for the Ford compa [illegible] John Deere dealer as well. He even did some trucking for awhile, with Simon [illegible]

[illegible] hockey players. Sid was an all-round sports [illegible]



[illegible]

So the years went by until 1960. In that [illegible] the Stels decided to sell the garage and move to Ontario. The garage was sold to Fred Toebes [illegible] rice of an old Massey combine which Rom had received as a trade-in. In Ontario, Rom worked for Beaver Lumber Company.

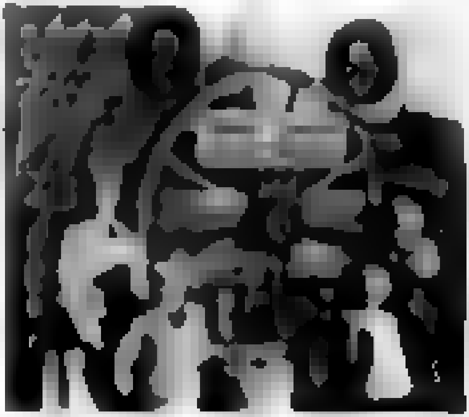
In 1978, after 18 years, they came back to [illegible]

ANDY AND DONNA (MAST)

Andrew was the twelfth child born into the [illegible] pit, but his father was heard to remark [illegible] U of A in 1965. Following graduation in 1969, he [illegible]

During 1967-69, hers was that friendl[illegible] p.m. to 7:00 a.m. She usually slept on the job (there was a cot next to the switchboard) since [illegible] hogs. Donna would be partially awakened by [illegible]

[illegible] on November 27, 1970, by Rev. P. Van Drun [illegible] Amanda Dawn (September 29, 1979) were born [illegible] Barrhead, following Andy and Donna's return [illegible]



Top: Andy, Donna, Melanie, Amanda, Erik, Shane, 1984

[illegible]

HENRY AND SANDRA (ELGERSMA)

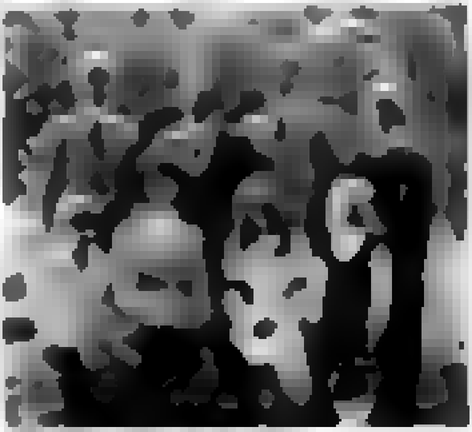
This chapter of history begins with the birth [illegible]

[illegible] they were thirteen and twelve years of age [illegible] though near to being downright dangerous [illegible] all the neighbour children.

The first few years of post-school life were spent at the home place, but it soon became evident that something would have to be done [illegible] work out so, in the winter of 1954-55, Henry and James found work in a lumber camp. The sawmill, owned by Pete Albreght, was located [illegible] home, wages were eighty-five cents per hour [illegible] deducted. They worked five-and-a-half time [illegible] car. Henry, James, and two Peters boys would spend about three-and-a-half hours on a Sunday evening travelling back to the lumber camp. This was at times an endurance test for [illegible] minus 40 mark [illegible] without considering the wind chill felt through the ill-fitting doors. Needless to say they always wore their parkas and felt boots on these excursions.

During the summer of 1955 Henry began [illegible] barns, and other buildings in the Neerlandia [illegible]

[illegible] year of 1961-62 working for Tine Abday, a school [illegible] the NW 21-62-3-5 from Melle Elzinga. Sandra's [illegible] farm, raising grain, hogs, and cattle [illegible] as it was for Henry, especially in the fall when [illegible] other try to remember until the next time, how [illegible] thinking that the most effective pull had to be [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

this long enough, a quick check in the rearview [illegible] truck was veering wildly from ditch to ditch finally coming to rest on its side in the field [illegible] Sandra jumped from her vehicle to meet Henry [illegible]

The years brought many changes, among [illegible] mouth." Having always enjoyed school, Gloria [illegible] off the day by missing the bus. Barry Allan was [illegible] of black hair. At his baptism, one young fellow in the pews whispered to his mom, "That baby has more hair than his dad!" It was not natural [illegible] tiny little girl with a mighty voice. After one [illegible] ressed her displeasure with the world, the [illegible]

[illegible]

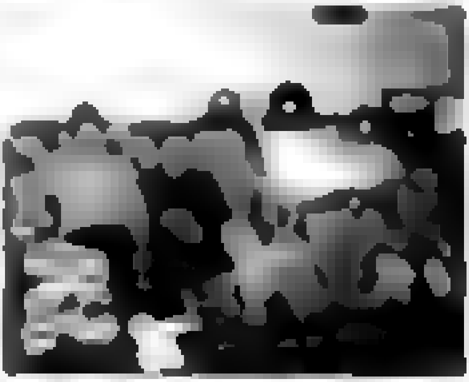
JAMES AND RETA (STUIWOLD)

Although James and Reta both grew up in Neerlandia, they did not make it their perma [illegible]

[illegible] a teacher, and taught for one year in each the [illegible]

[illegible] Dordt college for four years. After graduating [illegible]

[illegible] Church with Reta's uncle Rev. Jack Stulp of [illegible] they both taught. In the summers, James sold [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia and later transferred to Barrhead

In 1983, a hydraulic lift was put on the school bus to accommodate his wheelchair. Russell [illegible]

[illegible] parents, Lucas and Annie Sturwold. James [illegible]

[illegible]

After moving to Neerlandia both James and Reta have been happy to use their talents in [illegible] has served in the consistory.

Reta Strydhorst

JOHN AND GRACE (MEYERINK) STRYKER

[illegible] Grace (Geesje) Harmina Meyerink (born [illegible] 27, 1935) who was also from Hoogeveen. [illegible]

John was employed as a mechanic, but he quit his job and since the house was part of the [illegible] place to live. Thus the decision was made to emigrate to Canada. Strykers sailed on the [illegible] voyage was rough. The train trip from Halifax was even worse. Immigrants going to Win[illegible]

[illegible] sonage for twenty dollars per month plus janitorial help in the church.

When they were here for two weeks, John lit the furnace [illegible] downstairs and discovered a pipe from the furnace had rusted through and fallen off. She also discovered what a dusty road was like when it rained [illegible] she had put on low boots and was [illegible]

[illegible]

One day John had gone to Edmonton and Grace decided to empty the ashes from the [illegible] on the ashes because in no time there was a fire [illegible]

[illegible] But the weather suddenly turned warm. They tried to can the meat but didn't know how, so for a few days they ate meat like never before.

[illegible] Richard Dale was born September 16, 1959, and Audrey Douglas on July 8, 1961. Strykers learned the [illegible] promising job offer came from Red Deer and

[illegible]

JACOB AND TENA (GEINEN-BONNING)

[illegible]

[illegible] father's farm

[illegible] October 26, 1951, Lester Jacob was [illegible] the family was growing, the Sturwolds [illegible]

[illegible]

building a new house. In August 1966 they adopted Colleen Mae (born February 9, 1966) [illegible]

Tragedy came to the Sturwold family [illegible] hard days that followed.

In 1967, after Ray finished his schooling, he got a job in Edmonton. On May 10, 1968, Ray [illegible]

One of Jake's dreams was fulfilled when he [illegible] good ones for the Sturwolds, Jake thought it was time to leave after spending fifty-four years [illegible] ven years at Cargill Hogs. He is now enjoying [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] English language. He enjoyed school until [illegible] Bender of Mellowdale. This was a big change [illegible] threshing crew. When the weather was good [illegible] her marriage to Albert in [illegible]

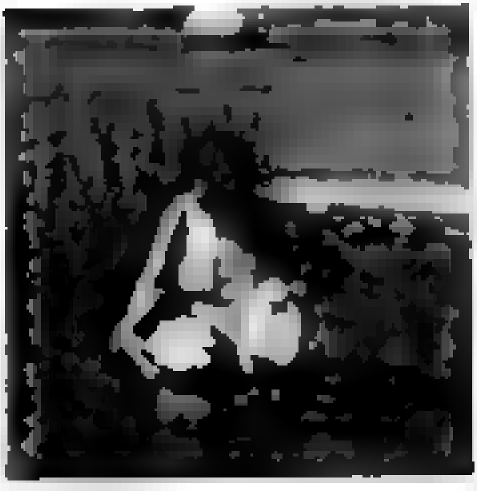
Engagement day

Albert and Betty's first home was an old twenty-four foot square chicken coop attached to the Barrhead Electric Hatchery. One morning after living in the chicken coop for five [illegible] Albert [illegible] through the floor of the bedroom. [illegible] supports and part of the floor had rotted [illegible] house across from the Barrhead [illegible]

[illegible] blessed with [illegible] Elizabeth [illegible] Lee August [illegible] Sharon [illegible] Eugene [illegible] Marianne [illegible] Pearl May [illegible] Barbara [illegible] and Phyllis Marie [illegible] November [illegible] and Arlene [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



Betty with [illegible]

[illegible]

children except Phyllis and Arlan attended [illegible]

uated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing. She married Arnold Nanninga. Charles graduated from NAIT in 1982 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Sharon also aduated from the Royal Alexandra School of rsing. On November 10, 1979, she married Chris Rottier. They farm in Fibroch and have three boys. Eugene graduated from the U of A with an engineering degree. He married Ruby [illegible]

graduated from the U of A in 1984 with a Bachelor of Education degree. Barb took one year of [illegible]

[illegible]

lives there, this was not to be. When it became [illegible]

Linguistics of Wycliffe Bible Translators at Nor [illegible]

them: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

Betty Tiemstra

CLARENCE AND ANN (STRYDHORST) [illegible]

[illegible]

Strydhorst on October 7, 1955. Both had been born and raised in Neerlandia.

Prior to their marriage, Clarence and Ann worked in Edmonton. During the winter of [illegible]

month per person.

After Clarence and Ann's marriage, they [illegible]

Clarence was out in the country blood testing chickens for pullorum so he was home only on [illegible]

house for forty-five dollars a month. They lived [illegible]

bert in the Barrhead Hatchery. Together they [illegible]

Clarence and Ann's first son, Philip Lawrence, was born January 23, 1957. That winter [illegible]

After testing chickens in the fall and work [illegible]

1958, onto the farm where Clarence had grown up (SE 27-61-3-5). Clarence had no interest [illegible] of money to buy the whole quarter plus machinery, so together he and Albert bought the [illegible] share to Clarence and Ann.

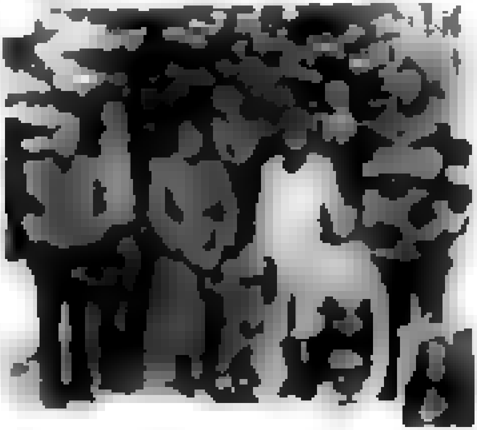
When Clarence and Ann moved onto the farm, they had no electricity, as the plant which the folks had used had given up. But they got [illegible] it was filled it ran over. Finally, after being soaked many times, part of the kitchen ceiling [illegible] dent.

Clarence and Ann were blessed with more children: **Roberts** Glen, December 18, 1959; **Bernard** Dean, March 10, 1963; **Kevin** Lee [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

After graduating from high school, Roberta attended Dordt College, where she met Ron Buel of Lacombe who was earning a degree in agriculture. On May [illegible], Ron and Roberta were married. They lived in Lacombe for one year before they went to Swaziland, Africa, for a three year volunteer term sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. There Ron worked on water projects while Roberta set up a library for a teacher training college and later did secretarial work for a doctor. Clarence, Ann, Kevin and Stephen visited them in Swaziland in March 1983.

Bernie, an apprentice at Paddle Plumbing, is engaged to marry Colleen Piers August 10, 1984. The other boys are still at home. Clarence and Ann are thankful to God for the good life He has given them in Neerlandia.

Clarence and Ann Tiemstra

SIMON AND DOROTHY (BAKER) TIEMSTRA

Simon Tiemstra married Dorothy Baker on March [illegible]. Simon and Dorothy farmed with Simon's parents until 1963, then bought the family farm, which consisted of four Tiemstra homesteads. From their marriage five children were born: **Albert** Simon, November 6, 1957; **Denise** Trudy, July 23, 1959; **Teresa** Charlene, May 3, 1964; **Craig** Simon, February 24, 1970; and **Melanie** Joy, March 15, 1975.

Standing: Denise, Simon, Teresa, Craig. Seated: Melanie, Dorothy, Albert

On March 14, 198[illegible], Albert married **Lori Mae Kistemaker** of Clinton, Mississippi, U.S.A. She had been born February 19, 1959, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She received her BA degree in education from Dordt College in 1980, then taught kindergarten in [illegible] for two years. Albert and Lori have one daughter, **Natasha** May, born July 22, 1983. They bought two quarters of land from Albert's parents and are now fourth-generation farmers on the Tiemstra land.

Lori holding Natasha, Albert 1983

Denise attended Dordt College for two years, then later received her BA degree in education from the U of A in 1982. On July 25, 198[illegible], Denise married Harry Ludwig of Edmonton. He is studying law and Denise is teaching at West Edmonton Christian School. Teresa is living in Westlock, working for the Westlock News.

Dorothy Tiemstra

FRED AND SENA (KONYNENBELT) TOEBES

When Fred Toebes was one year old, his family came to live in Neerlandia. During his early childhood years there were no neighbour boys his age, but that changed in 1938 when Lambertus Janssen bought the farm north of the Toebes homestead. Janssens moved in during the summer holidays. Their youngest son Jack was ten years old — exactly Fred's age — and he and Fred soon became very close friends [illegible] and his [illegible] books than Fred had ever dreamed of. The boys [illegible] the snow off the ice, they would skate on Kippers pond or on Baird Lake. Even today [illegible] years later Fred and his [illegible] and his wife [illegible] are the best of [illegible]

[illegible] schooling ended [illegible] when [illegible] grade [illegible] seemed [illegible] In 1948 he started [illegible] from the Chicago [illegible] This course lasted two years [illegible] during the winter. Fred [illegible] garage where he worked [illegible] Nebraska.

Fred attended a [illegible] camp [illegible] in the summer of 1949, and while there met a girl from [illegible]. They had a very good time at the [illegible] after going back to work Fred [illegible] she was again at the [illegible] looking better than ever. After that [illegible] had one real problem [illegible] hundred miles apart [illegible] three years of writing letters [illegible] week and visiting for two weeks each year, Fred finally married Sena (Gesina) Konynenbelt on June [illegible]. Sena had been born [illegible] in January [illegible] and grew up in [illegible]

[illegible] was very happy and things had never looked [illegible] farm [illegible] his dad [illegible] being a farm girl loved [illegible] gardening, and Fred had a job [illegible] garage [illegible] and determined [illegible] they had six

[illegible]

milk cows, three hundred laying hens, and a few large [illegible] brought an [illegible] Fred [illegible]

But [illegible] situation [illegible] long. In November [illegible] Fred contracted polio and was taken to the [illegible] hospital [illegible]. There he spent [illegible] weeks in isolation and was then transferred [illegible] hospital for rehabilitation. He was hospitalized for one hundred days. After much therapy he finally came home at the end of March [illegible] wearing a [illegible] to support his back and upper body and walking very carefully [illegible] Fred's dad came back [illegible] the farm and [illegible] house [illegible] every day.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Fred Toebes

CLIFFORD AND ANGELA (VANDER [illegible]

[illegible]

Some of Clifford Tuininga's earliest [illegible] through the opening in the ceiling of the living [illegible]

[illegible] also had a knack for getting spruce gum. How [illegible]

[illegible] pulled. One day while they were threshing, a cow ventured onto the field for the umpteenth [illegible] the bucket as it bounced.

Cliff started grade eleven in Barrhead [illegible] four days traded his books for a shovel, [illegible]

[illegible] but Clifford is not one of them. At one time he and some others went hunting in the Blueberry Mountain area. Clifford set off by himself, following a moose trail. He soon suspected that he was lost. When he checked his compass, he [illegible] with his rifle and his hunting partners soon [illegible]

In 1964 Cliff went to Dordt College as an adult student to study for the ministry. Latin proved to be too much for him to handle. [illegible]

[illegible] still had time for other things besides trucking [illegible] as a discussion leader. The conference, held in Red Deer, dealt with the relation of the Bible to [illegible]

Angela, born January 23, 1949, in Alkmaar, [illegible] ada with her parents and three older sisters in 1951. Her father was a painter. The weekend was the beginning of a budding romance [illegible] changed vows in Maranatha C.R.C. in Edmonton on December 21, 1968.

There was a cold spell of 40-50 below zero [illegible] with his dad and brother Andrew. Later they were joined by Alfred and Sidney and finally Cecil. After several years, the partnership was dissolved. Now on his own, Cliff has a farrow-to-finish hog operation with a few cows as a [illegible]

[illegible] Mae on April 10, 1971, Melissa on May 29, 1974, Joel Clifford on May 13, 1978; and Laura Joy born on May 10, 1980.

The Tuininga [illegible] grew, although it did have a few mishaps. In [illegible] Barrhead hospital in 1978 after twenty-seven per cent of her body was burned by hot water. [illegible] They are happily busy with their family, farming, and community.

Cliff and Angela Tuininga

[illegible]

[illegible]

The David Tuininga family history began on [illegible] friends, David and Andrew Tuininga. These young men seemed well on their way to becoming confirmed bachelors, so Jelle issued an invitation to them to come and see the many beautiful girls in Smithers. Although somewhat skeptical of Jelle's judgement in this regard, the two accepted the invitation. David's doubts vanished when he met Alida, and the rest is history.

Alida had been born in Smithers on June 1[illegible], 195[illegible], and after her schooling worked as a receptionist in Smithers General Hospital.

David, Alida, Jeremy, Julie, Marlene c. 1983

David and Alida's first home on the SW 20-61-3-5 was the farmhouse which Pete and Tena Tuininga had built in 1937. **Julie** Elizabeth, David and Alida's first child, was born on May 4, 1975. **Marlene** Grace was born on October 4, 1978, and **Jeremy** David on June 8, 1981.

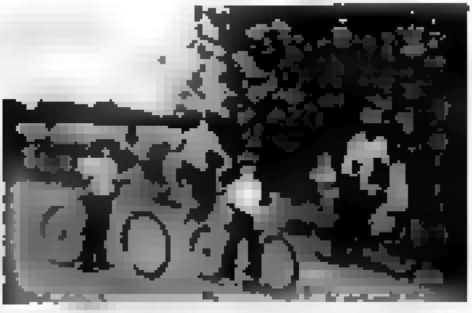
David and his father and brother own Kapeda Farms Ltd. They maintain a mixed farming operation producing eggs, grain and hogs.

David Tuininga

GORDON AND MARJORIE (HOLLINGA) TUININGA

Gordon Tuininga and Marjorie Hollinga met in Smithers, British Columbia, when Gordon went to visit his brother Jelle who was minister there at that time. Marjorie had been born in Smithers on July 3, 1953. During their courtship, Gordon worked as a trucker in Smithers, in order to be near Marjorie. After three months, he was eager to get back to farming. He preferred the flat open land in Neerlandia and being his own boss. In October 1972 Marjorie moved from her home in Smithers to a basement suite in Barrhead. There she worked at Barrhead Clinic till her marriage. Gordon and Marjorie were married in Smithers on July 20, 1973, and then moved into their mobile home on the Tuininga farm (SE 19-61-3-5).

The practice of describing location by means by means of north, south, east, or west was foreign to Marjorie. Having come from an area where no road was straight and most were named, she had learned to give directions only in terms of right or left. To this day, unless the road is very familiar, Marjorie would soon be lost if she were told "Go two miles east and one mile north."



A family outing: [illegible], Shannon, Marjorie, [illegible], Christy, Gordon, spring 1983

On January 14, 1975, Gordon and Marjorie's first baby, [illegible], was born. **[illegible]** Shane was born October 24, 1976. In October 1978 they moved into their new house which had been built that summer. Their second son, **Shannon** Dean, was born on November [illegible], 1979. They had a real surprise on December 15, 1981, when twin girls, each weighing about two and one half pounds, were born to them. After two months in an Edmonton hospital, the two tiny girls, **Christy** Lenore and **Corinna** Marie, were welcomed home. Gordon became more domesticated than he had ever been as he did his share of caring for them. Gordon and Marjorie feel that God has richly blessed them and their family.

Marjorie Tuininga

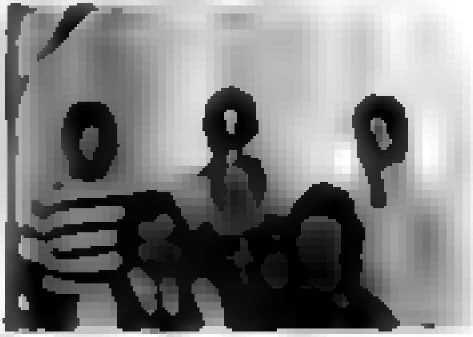
[illegible]

[illegible] tember 18, 1938. From the time he was a small [illegible]

[illegible] school and helped her parents on the farm [illegible]

[illegible] occupying their home. When a [illegible]

[illegible] Russell Kent, born on November 23, 1965; Jeffrey Dean, born on July 23, 1967; Colin Ward, born on January 30, 1969; and Murray Jay, born on June 11, 1976. The birth and rearing [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] planted, the yard landscaped, and hog barns erected. A small greenhouse was also built to provide flowers for the flowerbeds and to give [illegible]

Klaas and Esther's eldest sons have left home a second time to go to school; this time [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

On August 20, 1964, Lorne Tuininga and [illegible] Christian Reformed Church. They had built a house on NW 17-61-3-5. There was no previous farmstead on this land, so everything had to be [illegible] no trees on the place, so for the first few years it [illegible]

A daughter, Dawn Marie, was born to Lorne and Betty on September 21, 1965. Two years [illegible] berly Ann, was born [illegible] farm in a partnership.) With the three men [illegible] number of times she did attempt to help by [illegible] while he stood on the stoneboat to stook [illegible]

[illegible] twelve years in Neerlandia before she transferred to Barrhead, where she still works today.

[illegible]

[illegible] the Christian Farmers Federation, serving as provincial president for the past five years. He [illegible] King's College and has been president of the [illegible] an enthusiastic backpacker, and has done some hiking in Jasper and Yoho National Parks.

[illegible] and Betty thank the Lord for the many blessings of the past.

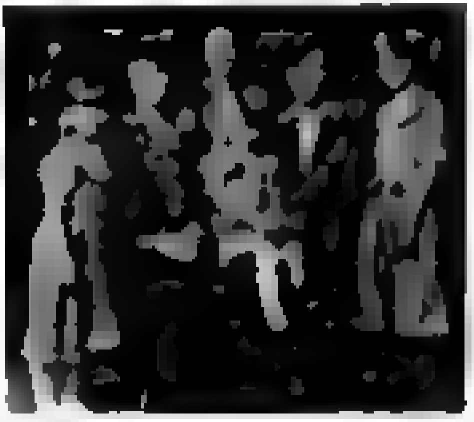
Betty Tuininga

SIDNEY AND SHIRLEY (JAECK) TUININGA

Sidney Tuininga lived in Neerlandia until he was in his teens. When he was in grade eleven he left school to go to work on his brother-in-[illegible]

[illegible] Shirley Mildred Jaeck. Shirley had been born [illegible] had come to live with her grandmother in Westlock in 1961. After Sid and Shirley were married, they continued to live in Edmonton where Shirley was working for the Public Trustee and [illegible]

[illegible] Sid and Shirley moved to the NW 30-61-2-5. Here they are raising a family of four daughters: [illegible] (February 14, 1974); Tiffany Lynn (November 26, 1976), and Sarah Jane (November 26, 1980).



[illegible]

[illegible]

Sid has been actively involved in sports [illegible] [illegible] sewing, and painting.

Sid T[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] at various places in Alberta and B.C.

In 1961 the Van Beek family was living [illegible] at Rowan's he was soon busy doing most of the [illegible]

[illegible] gle fellow and had no family here, several [illegible] enjoyed many activities with them and found [illegible]

Case quit working for Co Rowan in the [illegible] hogs and cattle. In the summer of 1966 Clifford Tuininga and he bought the trucking [illegible]

[illegible] homestead, which was owned by Shirley's father. In June 1972 they bought the Michael farm (NE 4-62-3-5) from Jake Sturwold. At [illegible]

They were blessed with five children: [illegible] 1968), Michael Scott (July 16, 1970), Darcy Brett (February 12, 1973), and Tamlee Grace (March 28, 1977).

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] iaps. In July 1972 Michael was run over by a riding lawn mower. He was rushed to Barrhead [illegible] leg was broken, and he was in a body cast for [illegible] their Lord for Michael's complete recovery. [illegible] spend more time at home with his family, and so in July 1977, after many years of trucking, he [illegible]

[illegible] welcome he received when he first came to Neerlandia. Case and Shirley's door is always [illegible] second home there.

Shirley Van Beek

MIKE AND HILDA (SCHOEMAKER) [illegible]

Mike (Machiel) Vanderkeemel was born Au [illegible] working family, he knew it would displease his [illegible] of Agriculture and Fisheries, but [illegible] tion rather than a farmer, he had trouble gettin [illegible] caretaker of a Vocation School in Chatham [illegible] secretary of the Co-op at the time, told Mike [illegible]

By this time Barb was the only child living at home. Mike writes, "We packed [illegible] nights they were here, the Vanderkeemels [illegible] They were also impressed many times by Northern Lights. "It was just like it came down [illegible] says Mike. Another difference was to hear the [illegible] elderly women in Neerlandia. [illegible] felt overwhelmed by [illegible] school gymnasium. Several men who had served the store as managers during the pre-joy of the day. Mike remembers that the gather [illegible]

[illegible] pany MacMillan Bloedel in Edmonton told Mike they were planning to clear the ward [illegible] At that time one of the farmers had plans [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Government for almost ten years. He retired in [illegible]

WILLIAM AND KOBIE (MAST) VANDER [illegible]

On a cold December night a 3½ pound baby girl was born into the Mast family. She was [illegible] the oven door of the wood stove to keep her warm. Kobie grew up in a large and lively family. She and her siblings got into plenty of mis[illegible]

In the springtime the nearby creek would [illegible] a few fallen logs. The children had been warned many times to be careful while crossing, but the Mast children considered it a chal[illegible] school. It was a good thing that it was a long [illegible] walking. For enjoyment, Kobie would go fishing with her dad and the boys. For lack of a [illegible]

Once, while gathering eggs, Kobie's mother [illegible] rying about the chickens, [illegible] chievious doings.

[illegible] often herded the cows down the road to bring them home for milking. On many occasions [illegible]

In 1948, Kobie went to Edmonton with [illegible] Barrhead hospital, then returned to Edmon[illegible] come home because her mother had fallen and broken a hip. After several months Kobie re[illegible] of William (Bill) Vander Leest.

Bill had been born in Aduard, Groningen

[redacted]

aboard the boat Samaria. His sponsor was a [redacted]

Bill worked there for three months.

He had known Henry Dieterman in the Netherlands and had trained to be a mechanic there. Stel and Dieterman, owners of Neerlandia Motors, asked Bill to come and work for [redacted] but he stayed only one year, boarding wi [redacted] where he worked as a mechanic.

On May 8, 1953, Kobie became Mrs. Vander [redacted] being held. Everyone had to go home early. [redacted] Edmonton where their first son, Paul, was born February 18, 1954. In 1955 the Vander Leest [redacted] Elaine, was born December 13, 1955. After one year they decided to move to Edmonton, where they raised their family of six. A truck accident claimed the life of their son Paul in 1981.

At present, Bill and Kobie are happily living on an acreage near Tofield. Bill is still employed [redacted]

[redacted]

LEWIS AND FRANCES (KAMSTEEG)

[redacted]

Lewis (Lieuwe, November 6, 1909) and Frances (Frookje, September 30, 1906) emigrated from Ryswyk, South Holland, the Netherlands, in 1948. With them came their family of four: John (Johannes, October 2, 1933), Hennie (Hendrika, May 26, 1936), Agatha (Gaatske, October 8, 1940), and Daniel (August 8, 1944). Lewis had a teaching position in the Neerlandia School.

The Vandermeulen children received some of their education in Neerlandia. Dan started grade one here and Agatha was put in the same [redacted] Pete Fisher, who taught her to drive tractor. Hennie wrote: "What a disaster that was. It was during harvest time that this took place. A quickie course — five minutes: 1. Here is the starter. 2. Here is the clutch. 3. Here is the brake. Nobody told me that you had to let go of the clutch real easy-like. I'm sure Pete can still feel his behind when he landed after sailing off the binder the first time we went out into the field. I even backed right onto the platform of the binder. Some people make very poor teachers and some people make even worse students."

Hennie later married John Mast of Neerlandia. In 1952 the Vandermeulens moved to Barrhead, where Lewis taught for one year. Frances [redacted] of his many hobbies, Lewis started growing [redacted]

[redacted]

SY AND WIES (VAN DER WOUDE)

[redacted]

Sy (Siebolt) Vander-Molen was born on [redacted] 1937, in Zandeweer, Groningen, the [redacted] his parents, two sisters and two brothers. They [redacted]

Sy and Wies were intested in farming — not [redacted] which became the Vander-Molens' permanent [redacted]

Back: Sidney, Wendy, Tracey. Middle: Rooney, Sy, Wilma. Front: Patty, Danna. 1983.

for the first four years, but after the initiation period it gave them a comfortable living.

While in Neerlandia two more children were born to the Vander-Molens: Patty Myra was born on July 12, 1976, and Danna Hope on September 4, 1980. Sy serves actively in many areas of the poultry industry which is the main enterprise of the Vander-Molen farm.

Sy Vander-Molen

GERRIT AND JOYCE (REITSMA) VAN DIJKEN

Gerrit van Dijken was born September 16, 1928, and spent his childhood years in Roodeschool, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was the fourth of eight children. In 1949-1950 Gerrit served with the Dutch Army in Indonesia. Upon his return to the Netherlands Gerrit saw very little opportunity for himself so when he saw an advertisement written by Herman Wierenga, Immigration Officer, in a local newspaper, he decided to write for information about Canada. On August 1951 Gerrit again boarded the Volendam, the same ship on which he had travelled to Indonesia. After ten days by boat and three days by train, Gerrit arrived in Edmonton, Alberta. He began work as a farmhand for the Andries Wierenga sons in Neerlandia. Later that same year he went to work for Neerlandia Motors and was employed there until 1959. He lived with the Della Baker family from 1951-1954.

On May 6, 1955, Gerrit married Joyce Reitsma. They lived first in the hamlet and then at Anema's Corner in George Anema's vacant house. In 1958 they purchased the Jim Lohman farm (SW 14-61-3-5) and moved there.

Glenn, Rose Anne, Joyce, Grace, Linda, Shirley, Gerrit, Jack. 1974

Gerrit and Joyce have six children. Their oldest daughter, Shirley Anne, was born on March 17, 1956, and in 1975 married Tony Wierenga. On July 9, 1957, Grace Karen was born and in 1975 married Don Gronstra.

Linda Joyce was born August 29, 1958, and in 1979 married Dennis West. They live in Barrhead and have one daughter. Linda is employed as a receptionist at the County of Barrhead office and Dennis is a truck driver for Kanhaul.

Their oldest son, Jack Ronald, was born December 7, 1960. From 1979 to 1981 Jack attended Lakeland College, Vermilion, and is a vocational agriculture graduate. In 1981 he received the Lakeland College Recreation Leadership award and also the Student of the Year award. Jack lives at home and is farming with his father.

On September 6, 1962, Glenn Jerry was

born and [illegible] married Barbara [illegible] Jessica [illegible] Barbara [illegible] farms with his father.

[illegible]

Their youngest daughter, Rose Anne, was born [illegible] and is working [illegible] the Netherlandia [illegible]

Gerrit van Dijken

PETER AND KATHRYN (BRINK) VAN DRUNEN

Peter Van Drunen was born in Sleeuwijk, North Brabant, the Netherlands, on June 27 [illegible] ry work, farm work, and trucking. One of these [illegible] and Kathryn was born in East Saugatuck, Michigan, on October 29, 1933. Pete and [illegible]

The next year on July 29, 1958, Mary was born. [illegible] Leonard was born November 24, 1959. Then they moved to Grand Rapids where Pete, having realized his call into the gospel ministry, had begun his education at Calvin College and Seminary. By [illegible] two more children had been added to the family: Lois, born October 8, 1961, and David, born June 13, 1964.

With diploma earned and a call letter accepted, the Van Drunens headed [illegible] Ocheyedan, Iowa, which was their home for the next four years. During this time Keith was born (June 20, 1967).

Pete felt the Lord was soon going to call him [illegible] from Neerlandia, he, realizing that they had [illegible] began packing.

[illegible] in Neerlandia and how far north it was, but on the initial move the Van Drunens did not experience it that way. The morning they left Iowa was one of the coldest mornings during the [illegible] keep warm in their Checker three-seated car even with blankets over them. But God was [illegible]

[illegible] looking through the house which was to be their home [illegible] their village friends. The Van Drunens also remember [illegible]

[illegible] bats that lived on the third storey of the parsonage and were always ready to entertain at night.

The Van Drunens remember:

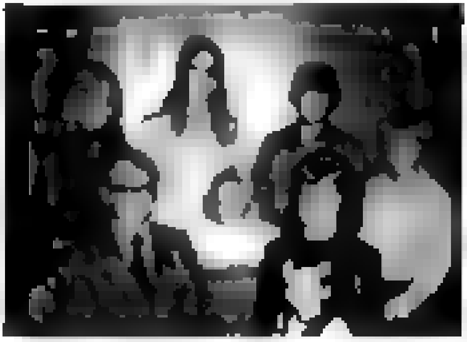
the long summer days and the short winter days the skating rink which all the kids missed when they left [illegible] than any other

the muddy road to Barrhead which was later paved

the natural gas that could be lit with a match and came out of the water faucet

the propane gas lines that would freeze up in the winter [illegible] and have to be thawed with a [illegible]

[illegible] that Neerlandia [illegible] them. They especially remember the things that were unusual — things that they never experienced before or afterwards any other place.



[illegible] Mark [illegible] Ruth Kathryn [illegible]

The Van Drunens small Neerlandia made a bit of a fuss when Mark was born February 23 1972. Pete and Kathryn were informed it had been many a year since a baby was born in the parsonage, and everyone thought it was a special occasion. Mark, of course, was oblivious to all this ado.

Peter and Kathryn left Neerlandia for [illegible] While there they adopted a little boy. In 1982 Pete and Kathryn accepted a call to a church in Delavan, Wisconsin. Kathryn has been [illegible] teaching [illegible] in the [illegible] school the last few years after obtaining a MA from Drake University.

Kathryn Van Drunen

ARIE AND TENNIE (STEYDHORST) VEENSTRA

Arie (Arend) Veenstra was born January 2 1931 in Kampen [illegible] the Netherlands. He immigrated from there in [illegible] arriving in Halifax in June [illegible]. Arie did not see any of his family again until [illegible] He was sponsored by his maternal aunt Lucy Kippers and her husband John [illegible] came to Canada with another [illegible] who later returned to the Netherlands.

When they arrived in Edmonton there was no one at the train station to pick them up [illegible] a new start in a strange country with a strange language [illegible] was [illegible] that no one would be coming so Arie found a [illegible] to take him to Neerlandia. The [illegible] had never heard of Neerlandia and they had to go into the [illegible] on a map. [illegible] Tennie [illegible] was taken on the way there [illegible] shortly showed up. He had gone to the waiting station.

Though Arie was born in a town, he was not [illegible] in the [illegible] he had worked for farmers on days off or before and after work. After coming to Neerlandia he worked for several farmers by the month and also spent a few winters in lumber camps.

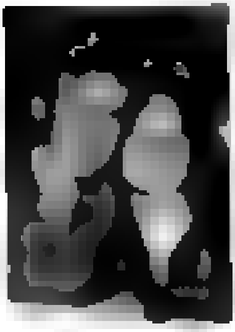
[illegible] December [illegible] children: Dorothy ([illegible]ber 22, 1954), Lambert (September 4, 1955), Angeline (October 1[illegible], 1957), Carolyn (March [illegible] 1961) and Henry (August [illegible] 1966)

Angeline, [illegible] holding Henry, Arie, Lambert, Carolyn, Dorothy, [illegible]

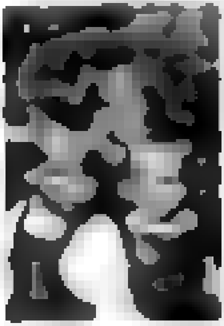
The first winter Arie and Jennie were [illegible] ded. Arie worked in Thachuk's lumber camp [illegible] coal range. On cold nights the water froze in [illegible] wheelbarrow, so Arie carried the manure out of [illegible]

[illegible] ton he again found work in the concrete busi [illegible]

[illegible] leenbank in the Netherlands. The Farm Credit Corporation would not lend Arie money for the purchase of one quarter, insisting that only one [illegible]



[illegible]



[illegible]

All the girls are on their own and have moved away from Neerlandia. Lambert married **Anne-Marie [illegible]** (December 16, 1959) of Edmonton on November 10, 1978. They have three sons: **Daniel** Bruce (November 22, 1979) [illegible] Concrete Finishing. Henry works with Arie on the farm.

Jennie Veenstra

ANDY AND FETTJE (VEENSTRA) [illegible]

Both Andy (Andries) and Fettje hail from [illegible] polders to have been constructed; Fettje was born on February 10, 1935 in Haulerwijk. Andy remembers when in 1945 the Germans bombed [illegible] dee, as they fled the oncoming Allied forces. This last, spiteful act by the Nazis resulted in almost instant flooding of many acres of farm [illegible] her parents and eight brothers and sisters. They spent ten days on the *Volendam* before they reached Canada. As the boat docked in Quebec harbour, immigration officials and oth [illegible] ish Columbia, two weeks after they had left the [illegible] in the Bulkley Valley, where Andy operated a sawmill. Their first child, Margaret, arrived on July 1, 1956. Later, the Viersens moved to the town of Smithers. Six other children were born: **Joanne** on August 31, 1958; **Stanley** on September 1, 1959; **Monica** on October 15, 1960; and **Teresa** on June 10, 1962; **Sharon** on February 3 [illegible] of Andy and Fettje's oldest daughter.

After Andy had worked many years for

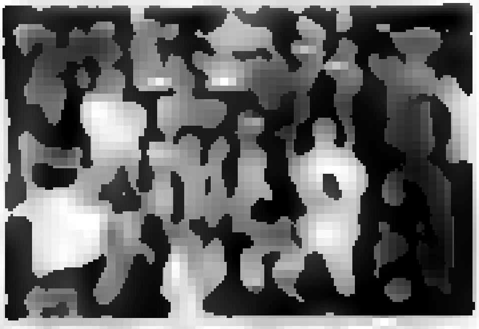
lumber companies and in the construction [illegible]

Smithers. Andy and Fetje had come from farm families in the Netherlands, and wanted their children to enjoy the benefits of farm life. Three more children swelled the Viersen ranks [illegible]

[illegible] and long winters combined to make it a difficult task. Knowing of the Dutch farming community in Alberta called Neerlandia, Andy began [illegible] close by, and the community was in the process of building a Reformed school. Although there [illegible] sens decided to move to this small, but growing [illegible]

[illegible] 36-61-3-5, NE 25-61-3-5). In the midst of all the [illegible] later, they left for their new home.

At first Andy and the children missed the [illegible] beautiful sunsets. Despite leaving behind family and friends in Smithers, Andy and Fettje have never regretted the move to Neerlandia. [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] families of their own. Joanne married Dick [illegible] and after briefly living in Neerlandia while working for Simon Tuininga, they moved to [illegible] tje's oldest son, married Irene Vander Burg [illegible]

ALLAN AND ELAINE (DIONNE) VISSER

[illegible]

On October 2, 1971, Allan married Elaine Dionne. Elaine had been born in Lac La Biche [illegible] where her father worked on road [illegible] real estate office. Candace Lynnette was born to Vissers on March 21, 1972, and on Novem[illegible]

[illegible] father's yard, but then rented Joe Fisher's house [illegible] business, Neerlandia Welding. He also enjoys [illegible] spectators at hockey and ball games.

El[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ng one of the oldest in a family of nine children, he had to help out on the family farm. He [illegible] the farm and family.

dia with his father and helped with the break [illegible]

[illegible] cuperate from an injury to his spine caused by a fall off a barn roof on which he had been working. After working for a time on various farms in southern Alberta, he returned to the U.S.A and took up residence there for several years.

[illegible] Company A, [illegible] Enginee[illegible] the grade of Staff Sergeant [illegible]

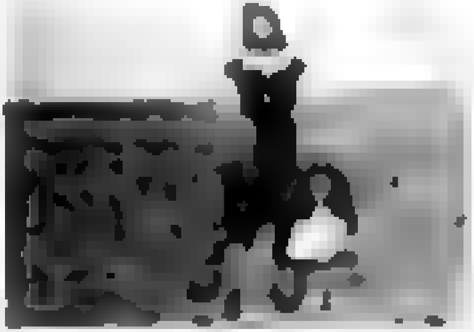
[illegible] Port Navy Diving School and after the war did deep sea salvage work for the Navy. On May 16 1945, in Germany, he was wounded in action and on September 24, 1945 he received honourable discharge from the service. In October 1946 Ed moved back to Neerlandia.

On December 27, 1946, Ed Visser and Tena Peters were united in marriage by a Justice of the Peace in Edmonton.

The Peters family had come to Neerlandia in 1928, and Tena's mother had passed away shortly after. When Tena was thirteen, it became [illegible] home helping to care for the family and doing the household chores. At seventeen she left home to work in Edmonton, Pibroch, and Westlock. She and her sister Della spent a winter and a summer cooking at the Garneau Mill northwest of Neerlandia.

Tena returned to help out at home for about three years before she met and married Ed. Ed and Tena took up permanent residence in [illegible] for the Neerlandia Co-op. Their first son, Allan Edward, was born June 5, 1948.

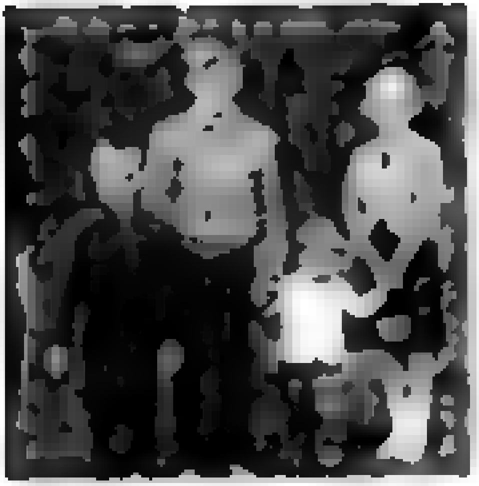
Ed decided to branch out on his own and in [illegible] and in November that same year the family [illegible]



[illegible]

Calvin John was born June 5, 1954, and on December 29, 1958, Terry Edward was born. The children attended school in Neerlandia and were involved in community activities. Ed [illegible]

The fifties and sixties were busy years for Ed and Tena. In the early 1950s Ed took several courses in mechanics and welding. He provided a number of services for the area: welding, blacksmithing, servicing, and me[illegible] cial grain tester for the community farmers for [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] row of Barrhead. They and their three children [illegible]

[illegible] shortly after their marriage on July 24, 1982 [illegible] Welch [illegible] has h[illegible] company, Terr Northern [illegible]

Tena is involved with the family, helping [illegible]

Bev Morrow

GEORGE AND FLORENCE (BAKER)

[illegible]

George and Florence were both born on [illegible] Later, when the Second World War was being [illegible]

Many of George's childhood [illegible] spent with his dog Sport, digging out groundhogs and roaming together in the bush [illegible] dle. In school, the good times included the [illegible] following grade nine, George continued self [illegible] courses through correspondence school and [illegible] tracked for several years.

[illegible]

George farmed with his dad after he left school. He married Florence Baker on July 25 1956, and they settled on the SE 3-62-3-5 [illegible]

[illegible] and nanny and an office job at a bank in Edmonton. She then worked at the Neerlandia [illegible]

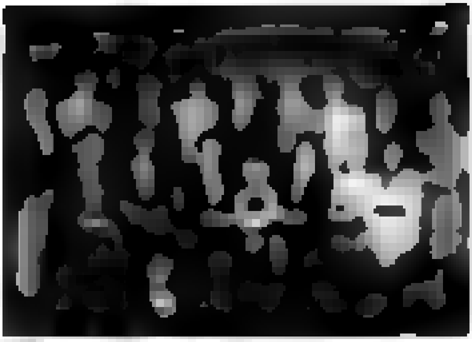
Florence loves music and at an early age began to play the organ in church. She has also [illegible]

George and Florence have been blessed with eight children John Bradley (May 14 1957), Debbie (Deborah) Mae (August 16, 1958) Wayne Vernon (January 4, 1960), Rick (Richard) [illegible] 1964), David George (July 17 1965), Scott Raymond (July 3, 1969), and Mark Nelson (September 6, 1972).

John and Wayne bought two quarters of [illegible] Joanne Vanden Brink of Surrey, B.C. on July 19, 1984. Joanne was born July 10, 1958, in Rocky Mountain House. After she attended Dordt [illegible]

Rick is farming full-time. He married Beatrice Elgersma on April 7, 1984. Kathy went to [illegible]

All of the boys are engaged in the farming operation, which includes hogs, laying hens, [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

George Visser

NEIL AND WINNY (VAN ANDEL) VRIEND

One of nine children in the Vriend family [illegible] the local public school for nine years, Neil [illegible] building and logging for five years. Deciding [illegible]

[illegible]

22 1959 Neil graduated from Calvin Seminary [illegible]

[illegible] (born December 6, 1960), Janice Ruth (born February 22, 1962), Christine Teresa (born Febru[illegible]

[illegible] suddenly passed away in Lacombe. and the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] College and The King's College, married Gary [illegible] in Neerlandia. A daughter, Miriam Joy, was born to Gary and Anita on August 7 1982, and [illegible]

[illegible]

The Vriend-Neerlandsa link was further solidified when Neil fulfilled his lifelong dream of building a house. After 20 years of talking [illegible]

[illegible] nd Winny is busy with Northern Light Singers (a young people's singing group she had [illegible] anized in 1974) as well as many other [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Veenstra whom he married in 1966. Linda was born in Hauwlerwyk, Friesland, the Netherlands, on May 6, 1940. She immigrated to Telk [illegible]

[illegible] British Columbia, and Edmonton, Alberta, he [illegible]

[illegible]

After renting a house for three years, the [illegible] times enroute to the new house. When Evert received a position as principal in Kitchener Ontario, the family moved there in 1981. The Vroons have five children: **David** (1969), **Danny** [illegible]

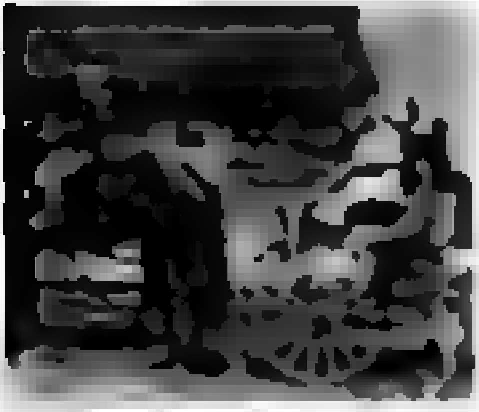
[illegible]

JAN AND ANJE (NORDEN) WERKMAN

Jan Werkman (May 4, 1902) and Anje Norden (July 28, 1904) of Uithuizen, Groningen the Netherlands, were married June 5, 1930. In 1950 they immigrated to Canada with their children, six sons and four daughters ranging [illegible] he Lethbridge area, where they found work [illegible]

In 1954 Jan moved his family back to the [illegible] only four of the children were still at home: **Jake** (May 7, 1942), **Reka** (June 9, 1943) [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] travelled the five miles back they were so stiff with cold that it took a long time to warm up again.

In 1965 illness forced Jan to retire from farm [illegible] moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton where Anje still lives. Jan passed away [illegible] in 1970. Jake had moved to Edmonton in 1958 [illegible] Vander Zyl. They and their five children live in Edmonton, where Harry works as a plumber.

Peter Werkman

PETE AND CAROL (TUNINGA) WERKMAN

[illegible] bought from his dad in 1968. They did some [illegible]

Life was a lot of fun then. Carol even had to learn to drive the combine. Everything went fine until they had to combine a newly-broken field that still had some roots on it. That combine sure picked up those roots; it even picked [illegible] much for Pete who hollered some not-too-pol [illegible] cozy little home with two tiny bedrooms and no plumbing facilities was rather crowded. So in 1975 — hog prices being good — Pete and [illegible] increased to a grand total of seven children. They are **Jason Dean** (April 7, 1971), **Shawn Patrick** (February 26, 1972), **Melanie Rae** (March 23, 1974), **Wesley Dale** (November 3, 1975), **Krista Leigh** (October 13, 1978), **Russell Grant** (December 7, 1981), and **Darcy Wade** (May 3, 1983). Everyone is in good health, and Pete and Carol see that they are blessed in [illegible]

EVERT AND HENRIETTA (KUIPER) [illegible]

On March 19, 1952, Evert and Henrietta Wever moved to Neerlandia onto their own farm on the SE 15-62-3-5, fulfilling a dream that Evert had had since he was a child. The realiza [illegible] December 9, 1913. Evert had been orphaned at an early age and raised by relatives. On November 20, 1939, he married Henrietta [illegible] same village on October 19, 1912. Since he di [illegible] begin farming in the Netherlands. Evert started [illegible] was born on May 4, 1940, **Henny** (Henderkien) [illegible]ember 27, 1942, **Amy** (Harmien) on May 9, 1945, and **Egbert** on February 15, 1947.

After World War II, Canada opened

[illegible]

June 19, 1949, they left the Netherlands aboard [illegible]

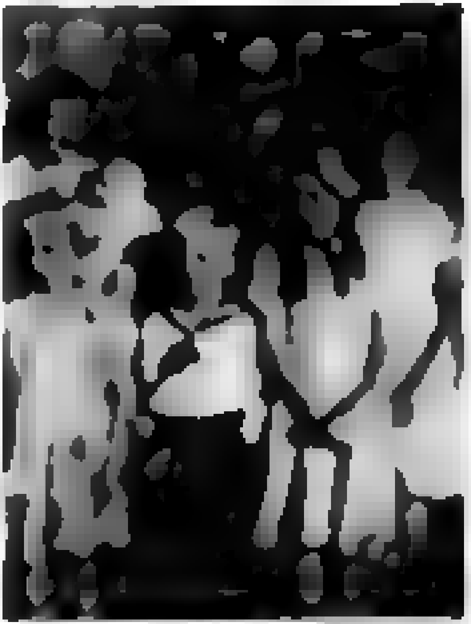
[illegible] old like his dream of becoming a [illegible]

[illegible] landowners, the dream was becoming [illegible] smoothly as in a dream. March 19, 1952, the day [illegible]

[illegible] ningas helped out, with Jennie Nanninga look [illegible]

[illegible] August [illegible] was born.

Henrietta had a hard time adjusting to life in Neerlandia. She missed electricity. [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] stayed warm only if the heater and the two [illegible]

[illegible] 320 acres of bush which Evert cleared as he [illegible] the children, and the livestock. The children all helped with the chores, which included feed [illegible]

[illegible] dren grew and finished school, they continued [illegible]

During the years in Canada, many cha[illegible]

[illegible] Anderson of the Glenreagh district and they [illegible] sons in Fort St. John, British Columbia. Bert obtained his mechanics license at NAIT in Edmonton. He owned and operated the Neerlandia garage during 1969 and 1970. He married [illegible] children and now reside in Red Deer, Alberta.

[illegible]

[illegible] 1982.

The Wever famil[illegible]

GEORGE AND HILLIE (BONTJES) [illegible]

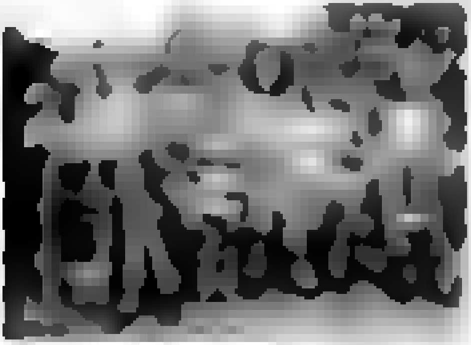
[illegible] ringen. Together they owned and operated a furniture, drapery, and flooring store. They be[illegible] upon them and they felt their children would [illegible] were encouraged to leave by Lemmert Wierenga of Neerlandia, father-in-law to Hillie's sister, who visited them in 1947. Lemmert [illegible]

In August 1948 they left Holland aboard the [illegible] with their six children: Rutie [illegible] (Lieske), aged 10; John (Jan, Henry), aged 8 [illegible] since he had suffered a badly broken leg in a [illegible] days, when she nearly froze her legs while [illegible]

Because of a disagreement with Mrs. Hol[illegible] Wiegers family packed their belongings [illegible] the Wiegers family moved to Edmonton, where [illegible] since it was only a couple of weeks until she was [illegible]

Eventually, George and Hillie Wiegers re[illegible] and Ru (Van Eerden) Wiegers, and Ann and [illegible]

Rutie Wierenga



[illegible]

HENRY AND RULIE (WIEGERS) WIERENGA

[illegible] Wierenga born in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] when he was six. Roelina (Rulie) Wiegers was born in Groningen, the Netherlands on February 14, 1929. She moved to Neerlandia with her parents in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] burned down.

Henry and Rulie on their engagement day, [illegible]

[illegible] years of marriage, Henry and Rulie [illegible] Andrew [illegible] Hilda [illegible] [illegible] Henderson [illegible] [illegible] Trinie (Teresa) Joan (February 7, 1956), Garry [illegible] Marian Rose (July 23, 1960), Wesley Glen (July 1, 1962), and [illegible]

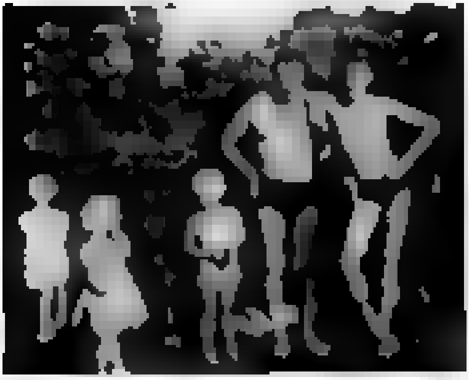
[illegible] Henry and Rulie moved onto the farm that Henry's dad had bought from Tom Wilson. Henry owned two [illegible] with his brothers Martin and Joe. Each man [illegible] with a Minneapolis [illegible]. Henry added to his land [illegible]

Rulie did not consider herself a farm wife in the sense of helping outside, but she kept busy inside. Rulie had taken three years of cooking [illegible] abilities. Besides running a household, Rulie did quite a bit of custom sewing for ladies of the [illegible]

[illegible] Henry and Rulie [illegible]

The Wierenga farm was situated on a hill [illegible] they found two-year-old Andrew wandering [illegible]

[illegible] people to identify Henry Wierenga as "Henry [illegible]

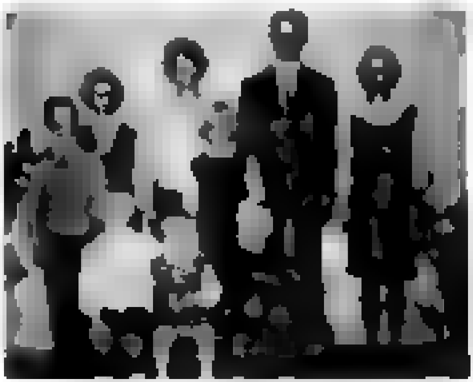


[illegible]

[illegible] wet and even [illegible] his underwear.

[illegible] younger ones would hide in the ditch holding [illegible] the other ditch where it was attached to a sack filled with straw [illegible] nights after Young People's, in the hope of attracting the young people. [illegible] had [illegible]

[illegible] flame of a propane hot-water tank and the fire quickly spread. [illegible] the garage. When the men arrived, they pulled the flaming back porch off the house with the tractor and quickly [illegible] the house in an attempt to put the fire out. In the [illegible] the porch was destroyed and the house [illegible] damaged [illegible] their new house.



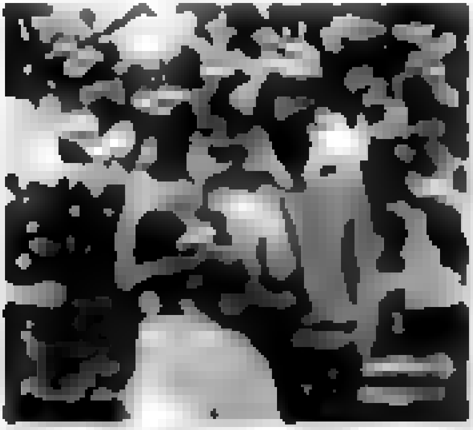
[illegible]

In 1970 Henry and Rubie's eldest daughter, Alida, married Joe Fisher, and in 1971 Andrew left to go to Dordt College. The next year [illegible] married John Nanninga. Trixie married John's brother [illegible]

On February 10, 1978, Andrew married [illegible] same yard as her parents. They have three children: Jennifer Jodel, born November 20, 1978; Andria Durene, born January 13, 1980; and Christopher [illegible]

[illegible] returned in [illegible] calling themselves Grand-West Farms. Later that year they purchased land in the Dapp area.

[illegible] On July 9, 1982, Garry married Janice Vriend [illegible] home south of the creek and sold the home place to Garry and Janice



[illegible]

[illegible]

Wierenga Family

HENRY AND LENA ([illegible]) WIERENGA

Henry William Wierenga, born and raised [illegible] High Prairie and did clearing and breaking for [illegible] he again moved to High Prairie — this time [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] was born July 31, 1947 and has five brothers [illegible]

On August 30, 1968, Lena married Henry. That fall Henry's dad persuaded them to move to Neerlandia and help out on the farm. Ne[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] hello. One day she received two kittens, one of which she kept in the house. Since she had no [illegible]

[illegible] gan to work at the Neerlandia Co-op in 1970 [illegible] shortly before her first child, Doreen Hilda, was born October 24, 1973. In 1973 they moved onto a small house on the yard by Henry's parents. In 1974 they bought a house from Ben [illegible] the process of moving into the house when [illegible] baby, Clarence Henry, born October 6, 1974.

In 1977 Henry and Lena decided to replace the sand floor in the basement with a cement [illegible] poured. Lena did not trust the arrangement but she was assured that it was safe enough. At [illegible] a.m. the next morning the Wierengas were awakened by a big crash followed by a [illegible]. Henry said "Don't even bother to look, I know what that was." To this day there are about one hundred dozen eggs under the Wierenga's basement floor. Fortunately, Lena's fruit jars did not break.

Back: Bryan, Henry, Lena. Front: Cameron, Duncan. 1980

In August 1975 Henry's dad passed away. This made a big difference to both Henry and Lena, but especially to Lena because he was both a father and a friend to her. Henry and Lena's third child, Bryan Ewald, was born August 26, 1978.

In addition to farming, Henry does some custom breaking. He is also active in the North Central Association for the Mentally Handicapped and has served as both a board member and volunteer worker.

Lena Wierenga

JOE AND HILDA (PETERS) WIERENGA

Joe A. Wierenga, son of Andries, had lived in Neerlandia for fifteen years when he was drafted into the army in 194[illegible]. After serving [illegible] three years he was discharged and returned to Neerlandia to farm with his parents. On November [illegible], 1948 Joe married Hilda Peters. They went to live on the [illegible] which he had bought from Andries [illegible].

Joe and Hilda have four children. Their first son, Terry (Anthony), was born June 13, 1950. He married Shirley van Aiken on March [illegible] 1975. At first they lived in Barrhead but in 197[illegible] they moved to the Shoal Creek area, where they farm. They have three children: Shane Anthony (March 23, 1976), Charlene Joy (August 20, 1978), and Cynthia Leanne (June 12, 1980). Shirley writes the "Neerlandia Notes" for the *Barrhead Leader*.

Shane, Terry, Charlene, Shirley, Cynthia. 1980

John, Joe and Hilda's second son, was born May [illegible] 195[illegible]. He and his wife [illegible] live in Edmonton where John is employed by [illegible] Construction [illegible].

Joe and Hilda's only daughter, Elaine, was born December [illegible] 1958. In February [illegible] 197[illegible] she married Fred Rau. They live with their two daughters in [illegible]. Fred is a carpenter and Elaine works at [illegible] Seasons Nursery.

Robert, the youngest son, was born May 31, 1962. He farms with his father.

Hilda Wierenga

JOE AND GRACE (TUININGA) WIERENGA

Joe Wierenga married Grace Tuininga on March [illegible] 194[illegible] [illegible] they [illegible] live on the [illegible]. They [illegible] home on their wedding night in a Model A Ford by Joe's brother Lambert.

The first three years Joe and Grace travelled with horse and buggy or sleigh. They had received as wedding gifts [illegible] dollars each and with the money he bought a buggy at a farm auction in Mellowdale. As he [illegible] he overheard someone say, "That fellow must have school children who will use the buggy to school."

[illegible]

short time and then sold it to John Molnda [illegible]

[illegible]

house was picked up and put on spruce [illegible]

[illegible]

the hole which would be the basement. Joe had boarded it up, but the cement had not been poured. Joe and Grace set up the furnace be [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] well. Not only was the water from the old well unfit to drink, but the well was also a lon[illegible] from the house. One day Grace was [illegible]

house with two pailfuls when her two dogs [illegible]

pails [illegible]

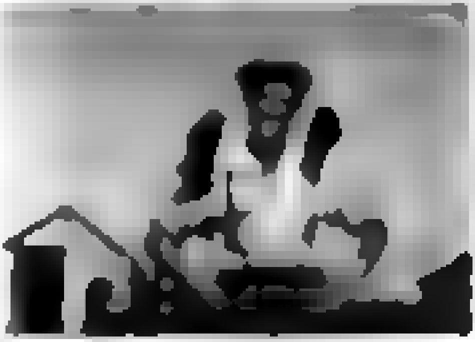
[illegible]

bush. They could not believe the great chorus [illegible]

[illegible] lighted to see the nests of blackbirds and [illegible]

[illegible]

scavengers and will eat whatever they can get. One year Joe and Grace kept a crow in the hen [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] pecked on it and killed it.

After obtaining a license from the wildlife officer, Joe and Grace started raising Canada geese. They had a suitable location for geese and at first the geese did very well. Joe [illegible]

than the pairs of geese with their new goslin[illegible] swimming in the pond. The wild geese hea[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] peacocks, guinea hens, and silkies (an exotic [illegible]

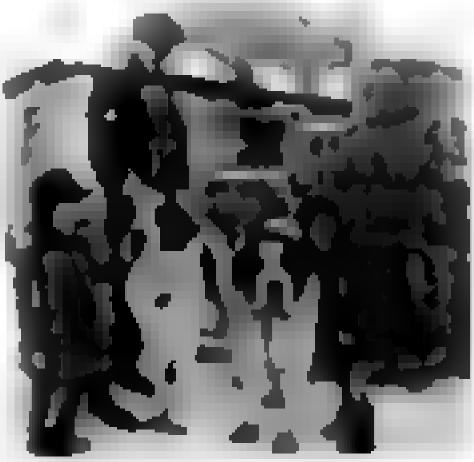
[illegible]

[illegible] They had two baby coyotes for a few weeks [illegible] were brought away. They have had a great vari[illegible]

[illegible] dog and the boys, on occasion, went to [illegible]

[illegible] started a fight with theirs. But no, eventually the crew came home. The delay had been caused by many little boys in the hamlet who wanted rides on the sleigh. That dog died on the operating table at the veterinary clinic. Many tears were shed by the boys for faithful [illegible]

God blessed Joe and Grace with six healthy children, and they are doubly blessed that they



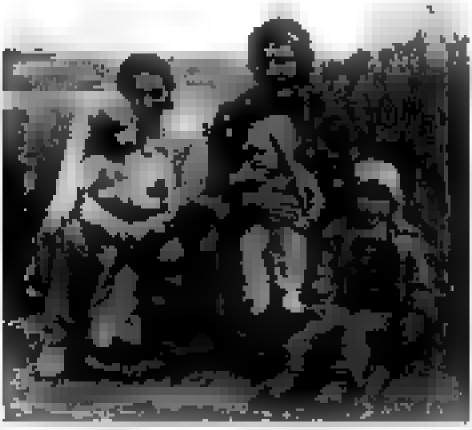
[illegible]

all married Christian partners. Their first child Shirley Darlene, was born January 7, 1948. She [illegible]

[illegible]

girl: **Eldon Troy**, born October 31, 1974; **Kent** Douglas, born January 10, 1977; and **Marlys Joy** born October [illegible] 1980. They farm on the NE 33-61-3-5.

[illegible] semesters at Dordt College. While at Dordt he [illegible] 30, 1951) whom he married July 27, 1979. Joy [illegible] teach in a Christian school there, and then came to Neerlandia where she taught for two years. Joy and Clayton have three children: **Amanda Gail**, born May 6, 1980; **Julian Clifford**, born December 5, 1981, and **Caleb Jay**, born January 20, 1984. They live in Vega on the SE 7-63-4-5.



Julian, Joy, Clayton holding Caleb, Amanda, 1984

The fourth Wierenga child, **Heather Irene**, was born November 21, 1955. She married Joe Baker. The family was completed with the birth of a pair of healthy twin boys, **Bruce Norman** and **Bradley Douglas**, born December 18, 1959. The birth of twins was a complete surprise and meant the Wierengas had to buy one more of everything.

Bruce married **Diane Elizabeth Dubbeldam** (February 19, 1957), formerly of Edmonton, on June 20, 1980. As a teenager Diane learned to weld, and worked in her dad's welding shop after school and during the summer holidays until she became a nurse. Bruce and Diane met at Rehoboth camp where they helped care for the mentally handicapped. Diane, a registered nurse, worked in The University and Royal Alexandra hospitals before she came to Neerlandia. She now works in Barrhead General Hospital. Bruce and Diane's son, **Benjamin Lee**, was born October 8, 1982. Bruce and Diane live in the Shoal Creek area on the SE 20-61-2-5.

Brad farms and has also spent several winters in the bush working for Jack Bozak (B & W Sawmill). He and his family presently live on the NW 3-62-3-5. Brad married Fern Nanninga on October 27, 1979. They have one son, **Daniel Allen**, born March 23, 1984. Fern worked in Neerlandia Co-op for several years before her marriage. Fern is as interested in hunting and trapping as Brad is. She helps with all aspects including setting traps and skinning the animals. Such is her dedication to the sport that she had allowed Brad to rest the gun on her shoulder to steady it for a good shot.

Bruce holding Benjamin, 1983. Inset: Diane, 1984

Fern, Brad, 1983

Daniel, 1984.

The Wierenga children have many happy memories of their life on the SW of 9. Their father often worked from dawn to dusk, but on Saturday evenings he quit working early and spent time with his family. The children remember this as a cosy time. There was something especially nice about having Dad in the house. Joe enjoyed the land and the crops. Many evenings were spent walking through

the fields with the team. He often returned from the field with his flat [illegible] full of ducks [illegible] eggs [illegible] under [illegible]

Joe [illegible] man [illegible] and respected [illegible] thoughtful approach [illegible] problems. He is a man of few words [illegible] but they are well chosen.

Grace worked just as hard as Joe, though her domain was the house and garden. [illegible] large garden [illegible] making soap [illegible] part in the farm work [illegible] the busy season. She [illegible] humour in almost every situation. She has a hearty laugh and relates humourous incidents with great gusto.

Through the years [illegible] have [illegible] Joe and Grace are concerned members of the church and community in which they live.

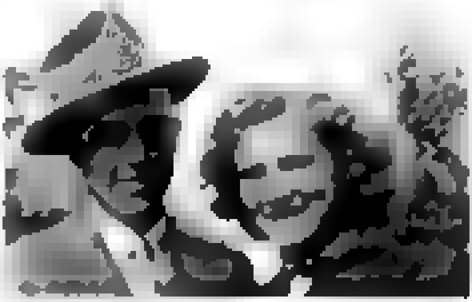
[illegible]

Joe and Grace have many wonderful memories of raising their family. There was never a dull moment [illegible] their home was a beehive of activity. A set of twins, with a million [illegible] made for many clotheslines full of clothes, much careful watching, and many a good laugh. [illegible] in the Wierenga [illegible] They [illegible] what they were [illegible] and were thankful [illegible] health. They have found Neerlandia a great place [illegible] and hope to spend their remaining years here.

Grace Wierenga

LAMBERT AND SOPHIE (ANEMA) WIERENGA

Lambert [illegible] Wierenga married Sophie Anema on June 24, 1949, in a double wedding with Sophie's sister Frances and [illegible] wedding [illegible] upstairs of the Neerlandia [illegible] the Christian Reformed Church burned down. Lambert and Sophie started farming with three milk cows, two horses, and a few pigs, one of which some pranksters [illegible] catch and put in their bed on their wedding night.

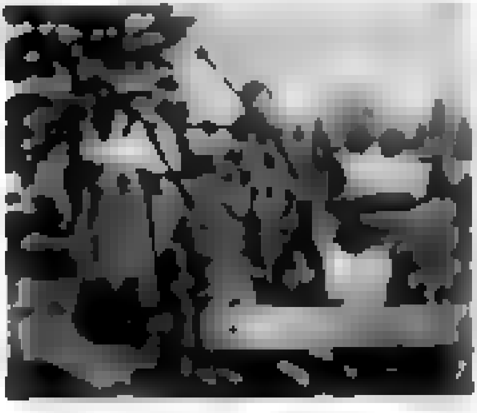


Lambert, Sophie, 1949

Lambert and Sophie began their married life on the SW 32-61-3-5, which Lambert had bought [illegible] the farm had been cleared except for about twenty acres which Lambert cleared with his self-made brush piler in front of the tractor. At the same time he purchased the NW 29-61-3-5, which was comprised mostly of heavy bush, and about two years later Sophie applied for a homestead (NE [illegible] to leave the car stranded on the road, buried to [illegible] gether with the two tractors and Albert's plow, [illegible]

[illegible] used for charging batteries as well. He [illegible]

[illegible] snowstorm episode, he constructed his [illegible] needed fixing was hauled [illegible] fortunately, the kitchen was [illegible]

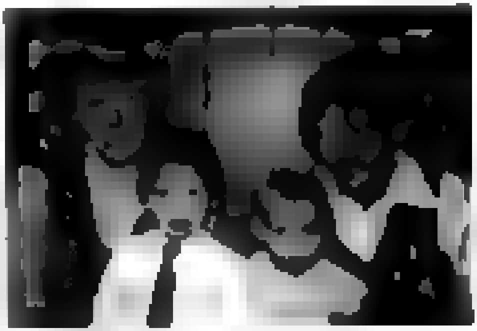


Harvey, Charlene on homemade tractor and trailer, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] **Charlene** [illegible] from high school in 1968, she moved to Edmonton. She is presently head teller at The Bank of [illegible]

The Wierenga's first son, **Harvey** George [illegible] and exploring nature. He still loves the out[illegible] volve around nature, including outdoor pho[illegible] cember 14, 1960, grew up in Vega. They have been blessed with two children, Trenton Nathan (July 4, 1980) and **Tammie** Lynn (Febru[illegible]



[illegible]

Lambert and Sophie's third child, **[illegible]** [illegible] doors as well. When her brothers went on their little hunting expeditions, she was right there. After graduating from high school, she com[illegible]

Next in the family came **Philip** John, born April 22, 1960. He was an adventurous little

[illegible]

Last but not least, Pearl Anne was born [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] male. In the spring of 1969 they made plans to raise a pair of two-week-old sparrow hawks [illegible] ride on the children's heads or shoulders, and fly to meet them as they came off the school bus. The little falcons were named Bonnie and [illegible] pare). As the weather grew colder that fall, they [illegible] was quite damp there. they died from a respira[illegible]

[illegible]

Sophie Wierenga

You know you're a **Neerlandian when:**

*you stay [illegible] at a friend's house

*you pass peppermints in church

*you can tell the relationship between any of the Nanningas, Tuiningas, or Wierengas

*you can answer all the questions of the Bible category in quiz games — but none of the entertainment ones

*you're not surprised when Rev. [illegible] forgets to have the offering taken during a church service

*you [illegible] instead pants

*you [illegible] animals instead of butchering them

*you are the same big as, the same old as, the same heavy as someone else — instead of the same size, the same age, and the same height

*you come at 8:15 p.m. to a meeting that starts at 8:00 p.m.

*you go across the road to the neighbours

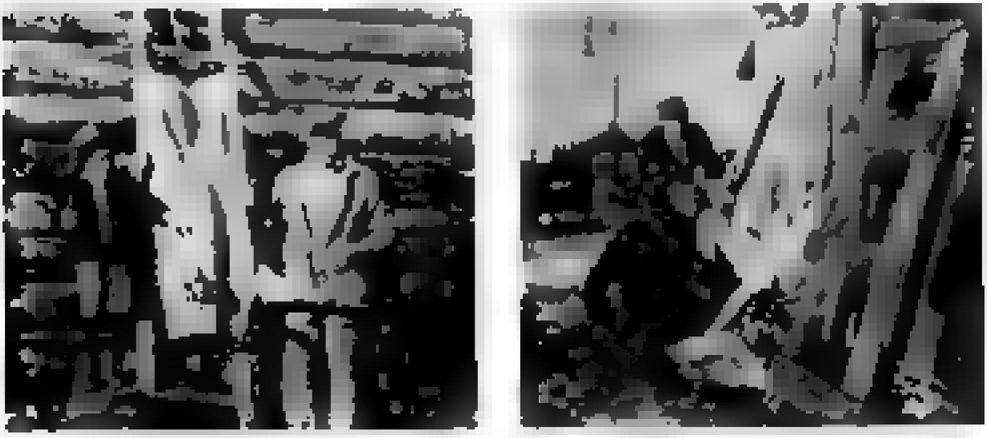
*you say, "Will those guys come in for coffee?"

*you hit the ditch on the way to the store and the news gets there before you do

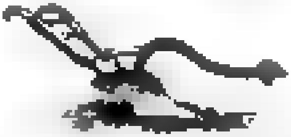
*you dial the wrong number, but talk for fifteen minutes anyway

*you say, "That sow, she has ten little pigs."

*in spite of all its faults, you still think Neerlandia is the best place in the world



Neerlandians butchered in pioneer days. They still butcher today. *Left: Jack [illegible], Peter Kampinga Sr. with his grandson Jack [illegible]. Right: [illegible].*



Friends and Neighbours

Frank de Jager pumping water

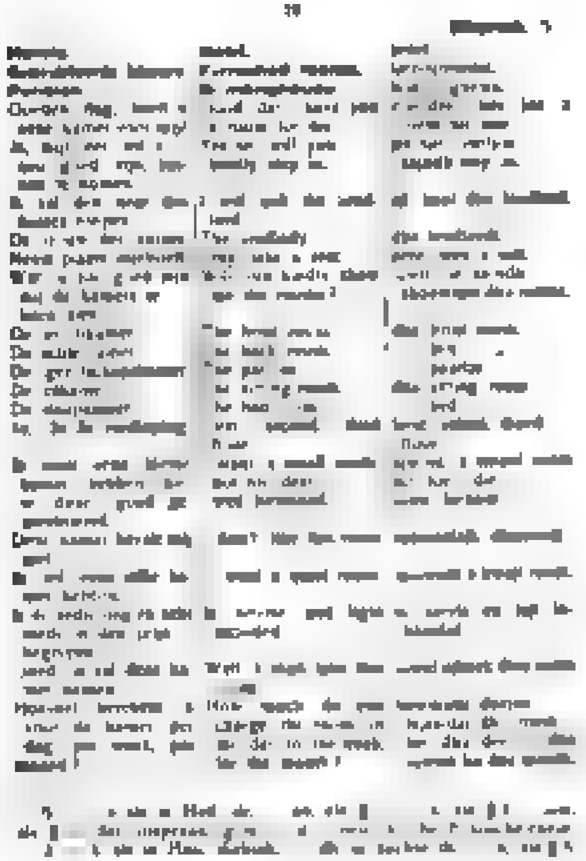
Johanna Ottegbers (centre) poses with her daughter Fetsefje Schoonekamp, her granddaughter Jennie Tuininga, and her great grandson Menno Tuininga, 1936. (Jenny sewed the outfit she is wearing.)

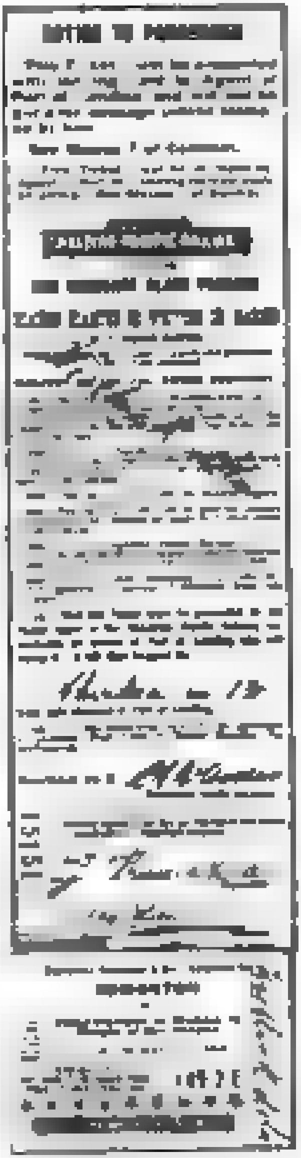
The Hendricks. They lived on the SE 21-62-3-5.

Back: Sadie Tuininga. Centre: Annie, Bertha, [illegible] Anna Tuininga. Seated: Tilla Tuinsma. Front: Grace Tuininga, Harry Schelly, c. 1924

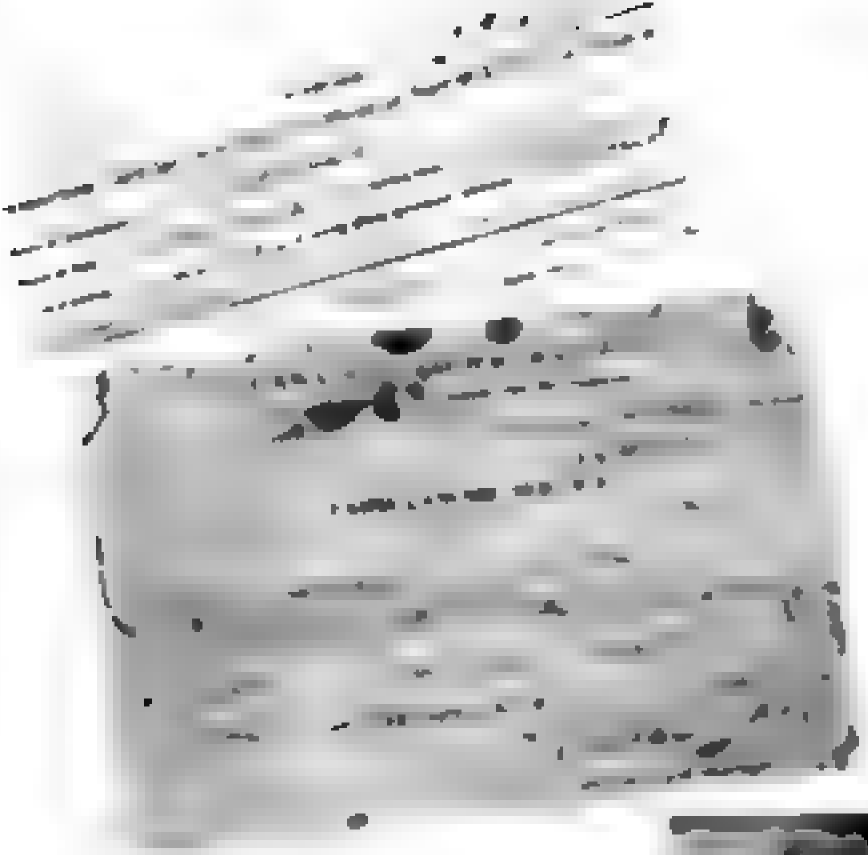
Albert Maat, son of Albert and Ferdina, with one of the family dogs, Spot, 1940s.

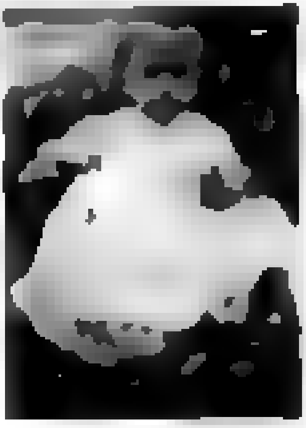
Coming to a New Land





Many documents were needed for emigration. On the right a picture of [illegible] [illegible] about 1920.

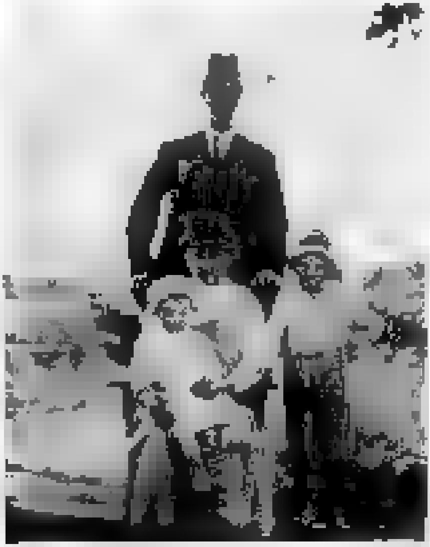




Photos were taken outside because cameras had no flash. Back: Lucas, wife, Pauline. Front: Jacob, Ralph, Margaret Brunsell, c. 1922

Anna Michael proudly holds her only child Bert 1917

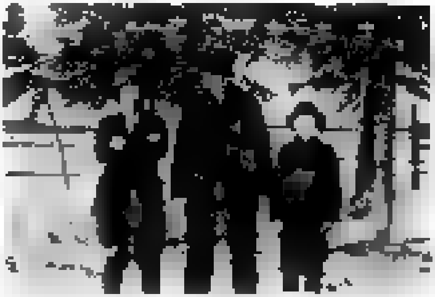
Nelly van Dalen babysitting Annie Emmerhoef at the picnic, c. 1917. How styles have changed!



All dressed up to have their picture taken. The Groothuis family: Wouter, Johanna holding Sena, Dick, 1921

Family Snapshots

Both boys and girls wore dresses when they were babies. Here Ruby Sturwold holds one of her children, early 1920s.



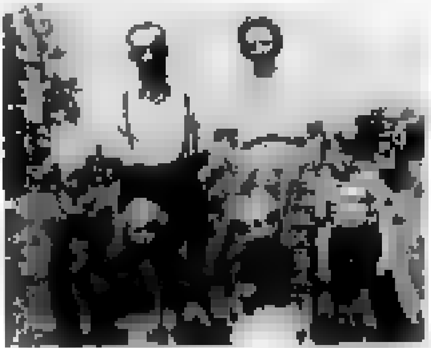
Three stalwart Kippers sons: John, Henry, Gerrit.

In 1928 Anne, Rose, and Jenny Schoonekamp posed with their only brother, Albert.

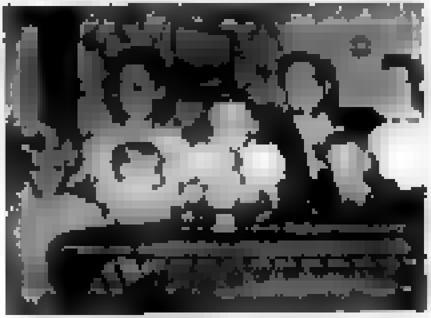
Soon after they arrived in Neerlandia, Bill Bouwman took this picture of his wife, Anne, and their three children Henry, Grace, and Ben. What a big smile, Ben!

On the way to catechism: Jenny and Andrew L. Wiersinga, ? Bertha Wiersinga, Dena Hovank, in Edmonton, c. 1930.

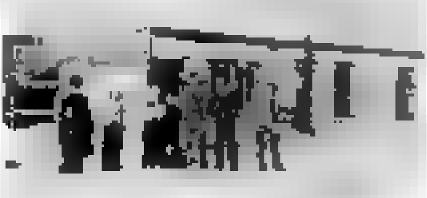
After the War was Over



Dirk and [illegible] Fromme with their children: Martha, Emma, Anne, and Jerry at a church picnic in 1954.



Bart and Joan [illegible] Wal came to [illegible] in 1955. Bart worked in the Co-op until they moved to California in 1960.



Some immigrant families lived in this house, which belonged to Catherine [illegible].

The immigrants had to rely on horsepower to get to church. Hank [illegible] and his parents ready to set out.

On Sundays the immigrants were invited out for a visit. The [illegible] and [illegible] families of [illegible] are visiting the [illegible] Wal family. Back: [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], Dirk and [illegible] Vander Waal, Alice Wal, Annie [illegible], [illegible], and Albert Wal Sr. Front: Little immigrants with wagon.

THIS IS NEERLANDIA

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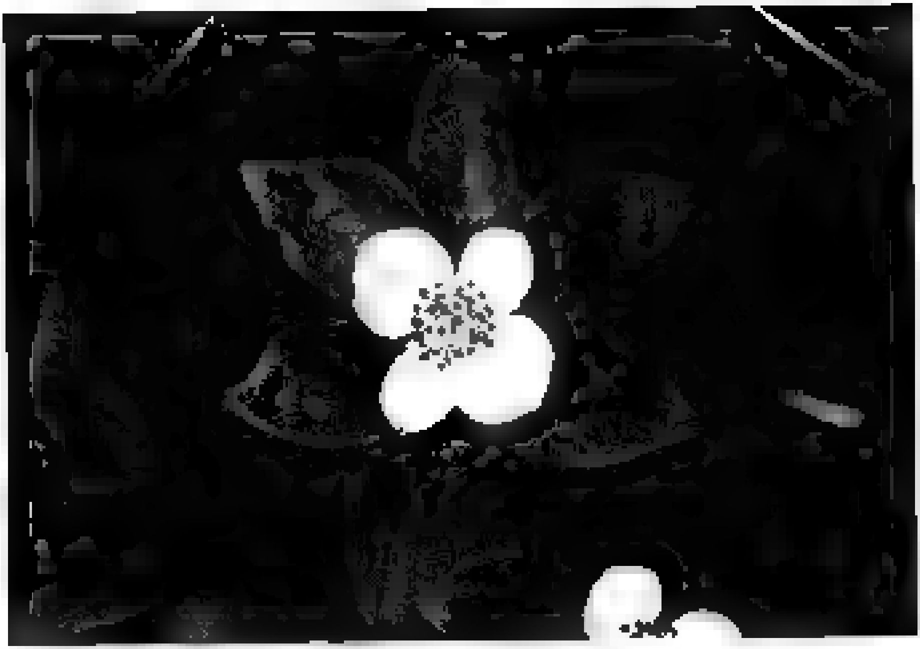

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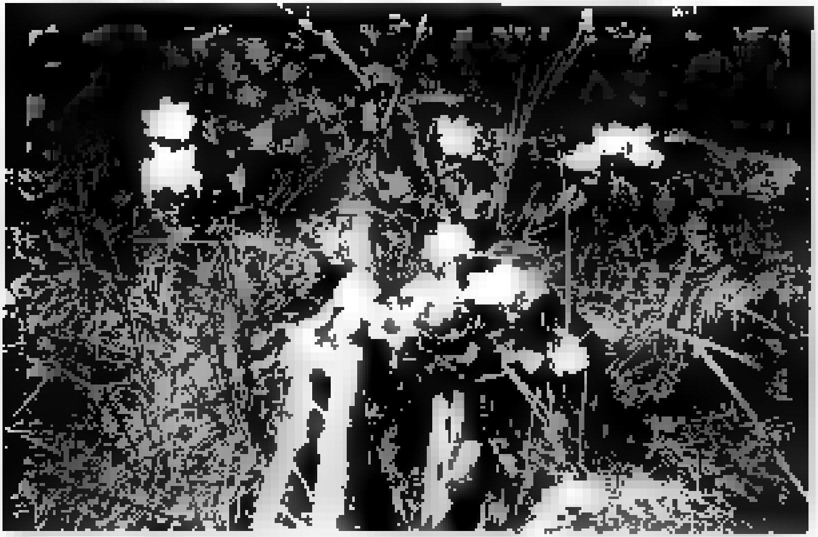

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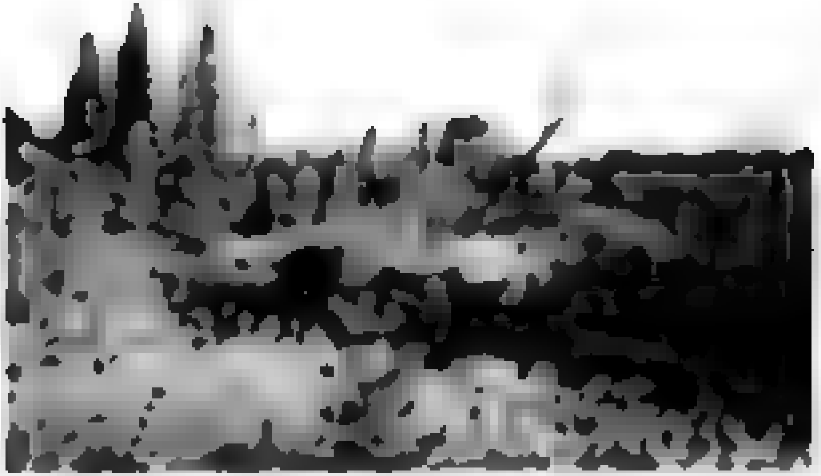

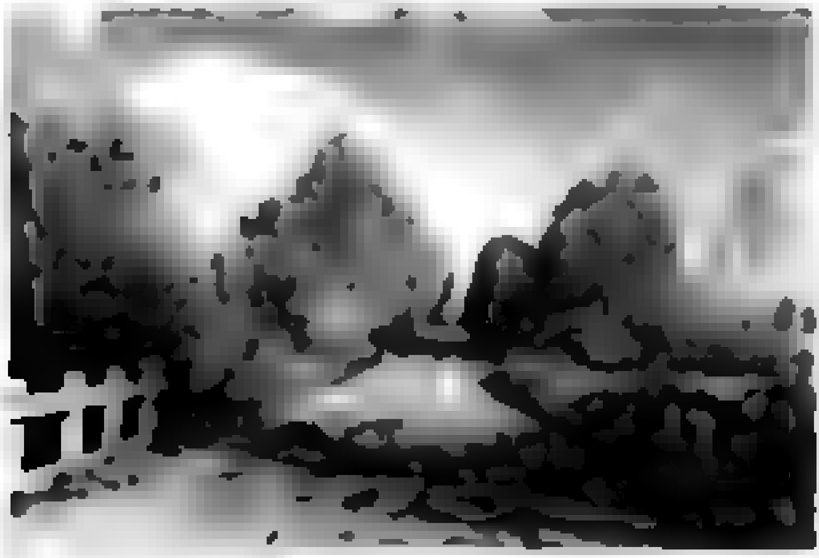

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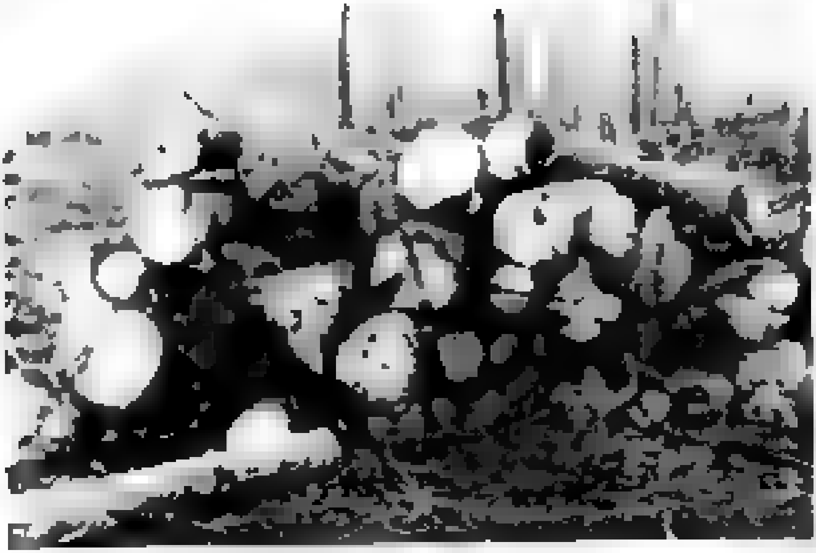

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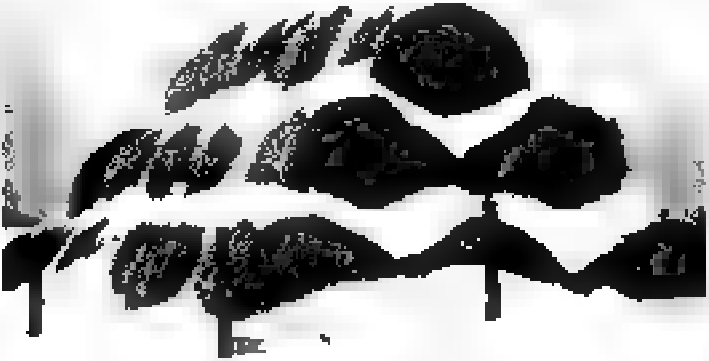

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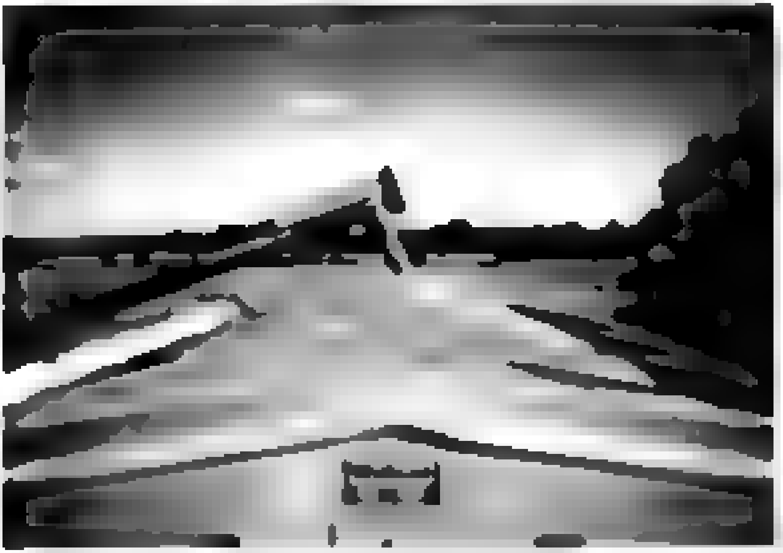


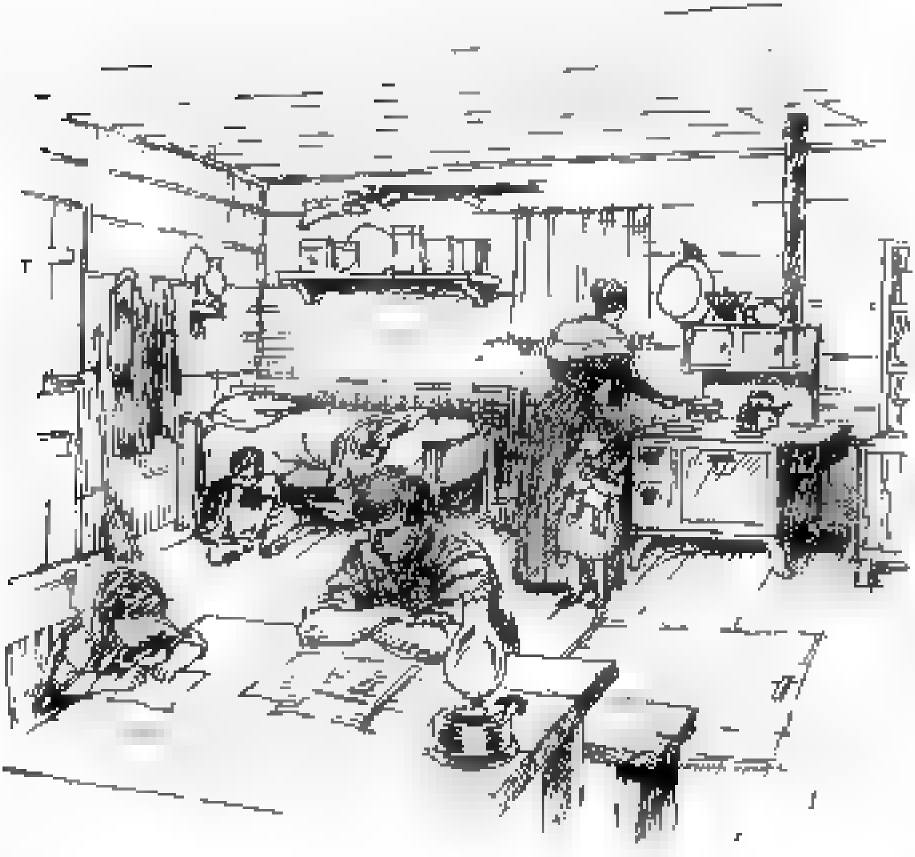
This is Neerlandia

A view of the hamlet Clarence Oltius
2. Hare in the woods Harvey Wierenga
3. Swallowtail butterfly
4. Bluebells (bell campanula) Harvey Wierenga
5. Garden spider web with morning dew Elsie Nauta
6. Highbush cranberry in fall
7. Black poplar loaded with seed
8. Buffaloberry Carol Baker
9. Robin's nest Jim Bosma
10. Prickly rose Bernice Fisher
Buttercups (marsh marigolds) Harvey Wierenga
12. Red squirrel
13. The settlers helper
14. Barley ready to harvest Diana Wierenga
15. Combining Shirley Wierenga
16. Ducks among the bulrushes Bernice Fisher
17. Poplar trees in winter Harvey Wierenga
18. Fall splendour Harvey Wierenga
19. Baled hay Alvina Dost
20. The bow of promise Shelley Bos
21. Mowing Harvey Wierenga
22. A narrow country road Elsie Nauta
23. A wooded pasture Alvina Dost
24. Golden glory canola Elsie Nauta
25. A harvested field Alvina Dost
26. Early winter along the creek Harvey Wierenga
27. Lumber in the making Henry Nanninga
28. Fall sky
29. Round bales stacked for winter Elsie Nauta
30. Bumper crop Elsa Stoening
31. Spraying pesticides by airplane Henry Nanninga
32. Oil painting by Jennie Oldenberg prior to 1917
Clarence Oltius

Part Three

Community Growth

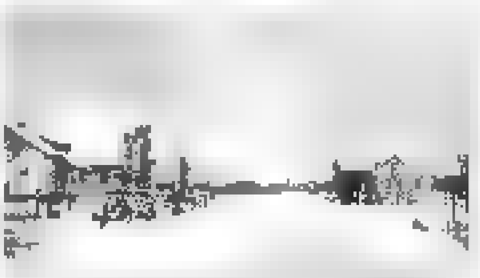
Daily Life



THE HAMLET

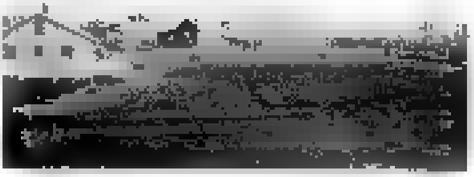
Neerlandia is a farming community but the hub of activity is the hamlet. Here, where church, school, garage, and store have long stood, each on one corner of a crossroads, much activity takes place. Most religious, educational, social, and business activities take place in the hamlet. It is in the hamlet that the people of Neerlandia meet and interact. To know the people of the district one must recognize the place of the hamlet in their lives. Its importance is illustrated by its nickname "The Centre".

Looking northeast c. 1925.

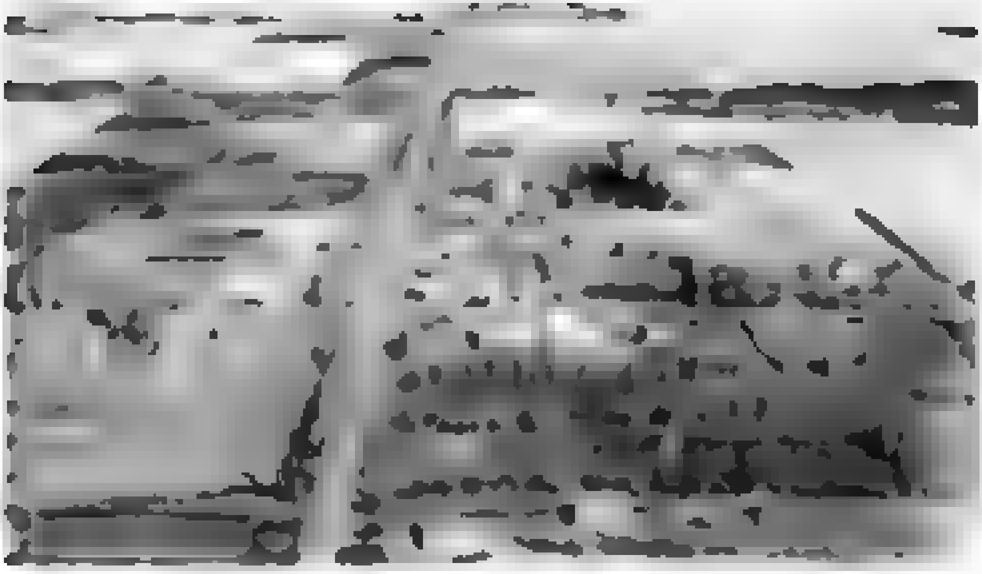

Looking west, early 1928.

The term "hamlet" is used throughout the prairie provinces to describe a small unincorporated rural community. Bill Olthuis, former county councillor, believes Neerlandia became a hamlet in the 1940s. Allan Charles, Barrhead County manager, states that Neerlandia probably became a hamlet by an order of the Minister.

As the settlement developed, the need for public and social services arose. They were located at the central area which is now called the hamlet of Neerlandia. Next the need for a residential area grew. These areas were provided by subdividing farm land adjacent to roadways. The subdivisions were described by metes and bounds and the residents were given a Certificate of Title. However some plots of land not served by a public access road were also entered in by private treaty and were described, for example, as one-half acre north of a specific point. This did not constitute a legal description so no title of ownership was possible. This was resolved with the assistance of the County of Barrhead and the co-operation of the title holders of the hamlet area. A replotting of the area and a legal survey were carried out in the early sixties. In the replotting, roadways and access were included. A more responsible procedure is now followed for subdividing land within the hamlet area since all plans must be approved by County and Provincial authorities.


Looking south, 1940s.

Wm. Olthuis



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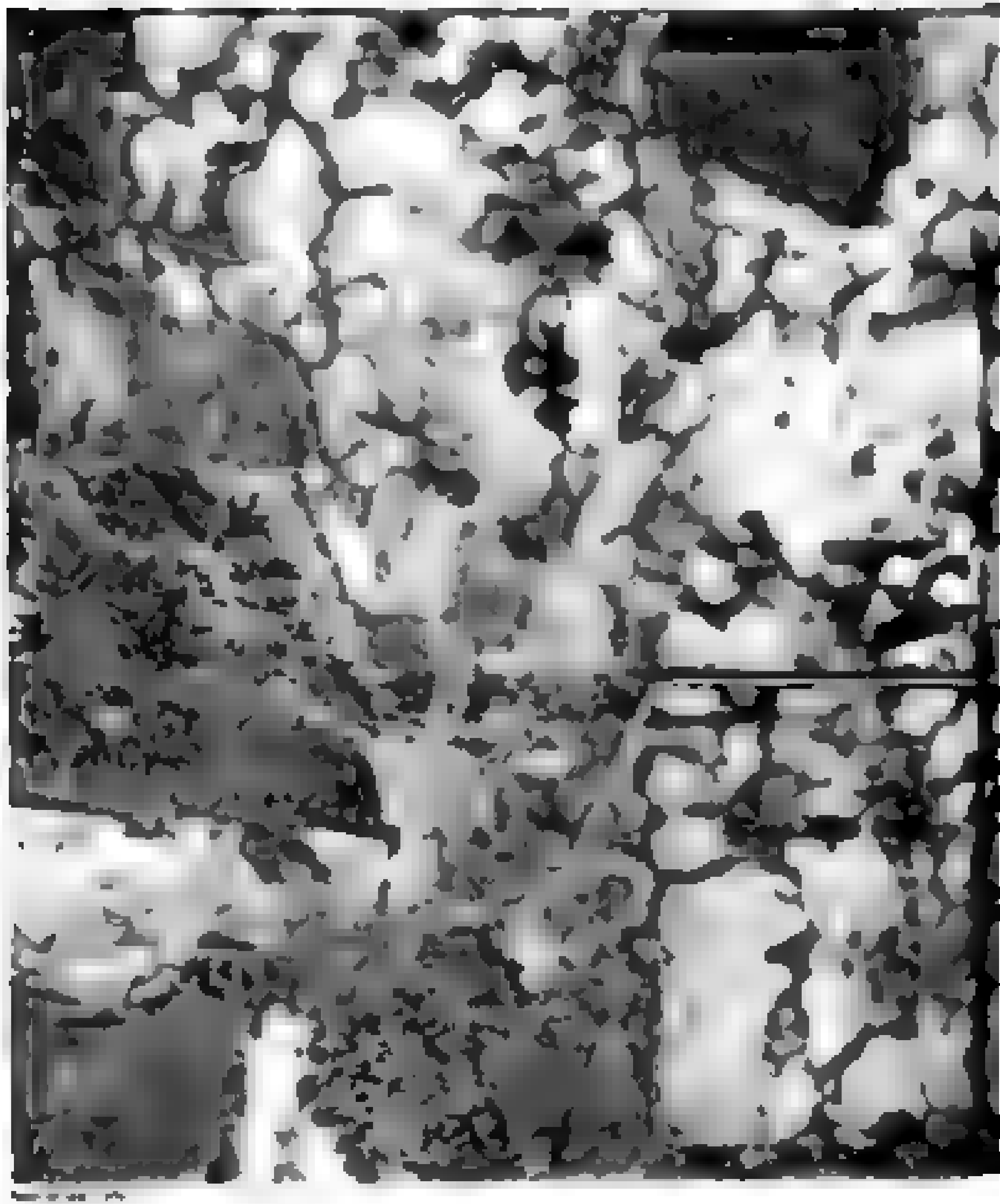
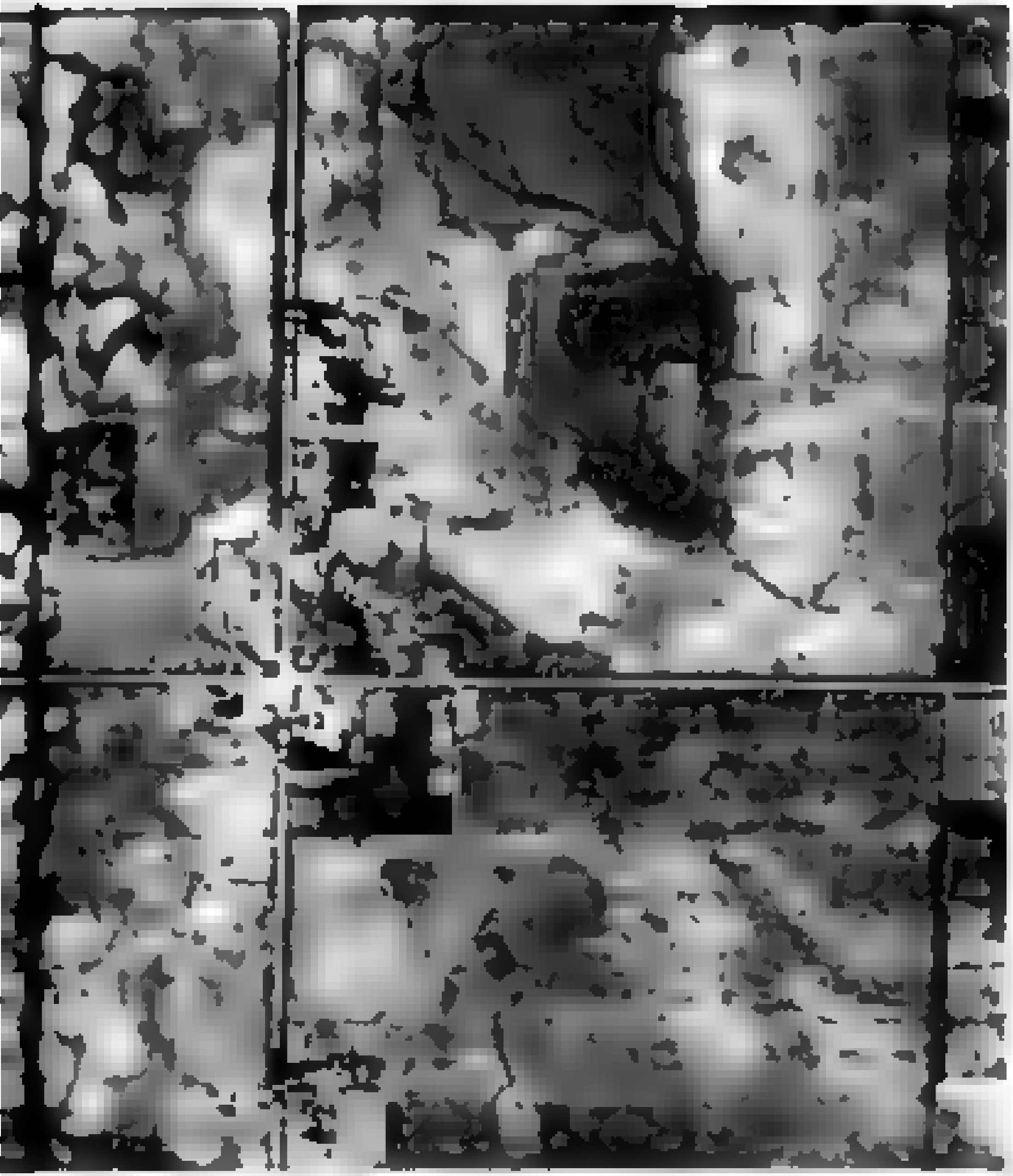
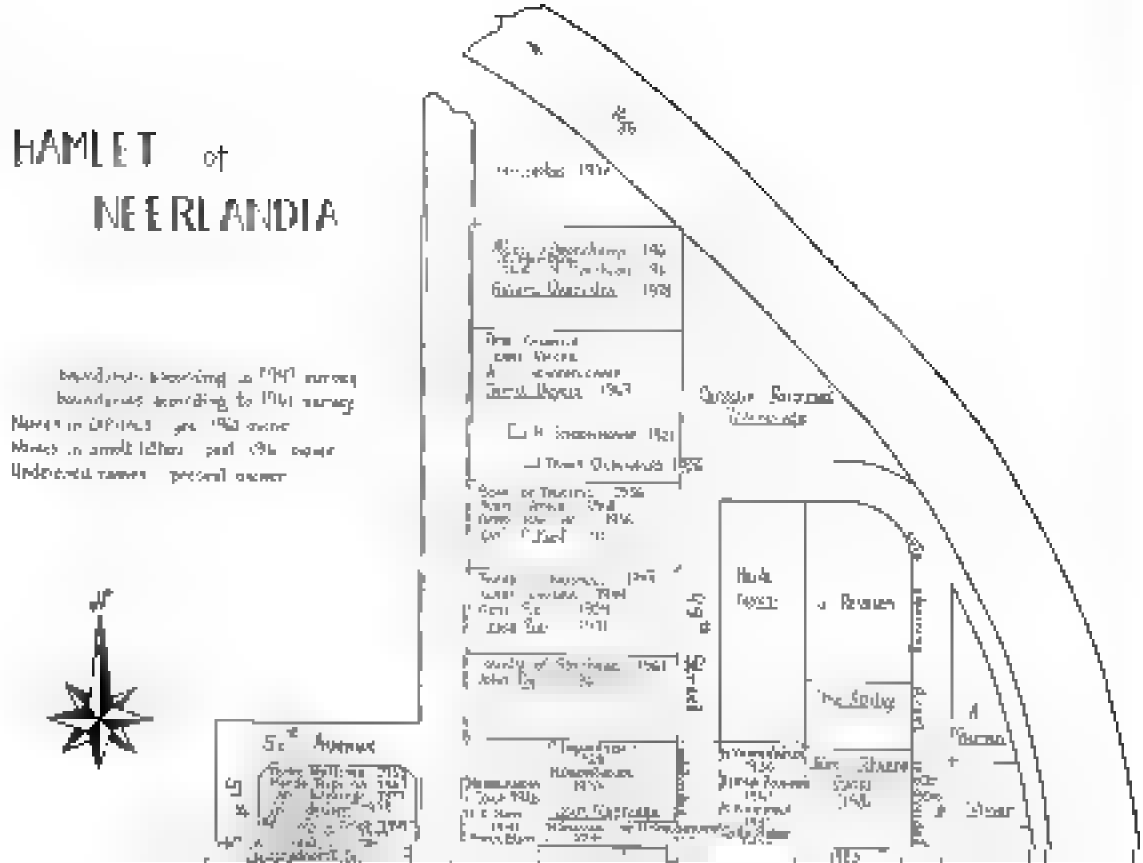


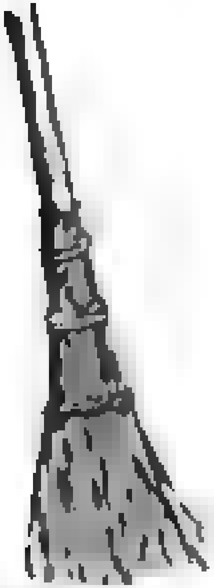



HAMLET of NEERLANDIA
Underlined names – present owner
49th Street
50th Avenue
51st
Hub
Store

50th A Avenue
Avenue
50th
Street
Reformed Church 1922
Reformed Church
1914
1941

FAMILY LIFE

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] uple of [illegible] a log cabin [illegible]

[illegible]

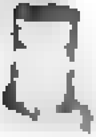
[illegible] is far from fresh bread.

What a chore to wash for the babe and all th[illegible]

[illegible] learned to bake bread! It was barely edible at first b[illegible]

[illegible] ow how to keep the food good [illegible] to eat so. We do have a garden [illegible]

[illegible] though and we are happy [illegible] ed. The men are busy every day chopping do[illegible]



[illegible] some advice about life here

[illegible] [illegible] will in the future

[illegible] had ever done that either. It is amazing how people have adjusted but it is not easy.

The children love the freedom, they are running wild [illegible]

[illegible]

We will try our best out here but do miss you all so very much and our very country [illegible] can hardly believe we are here.

[illegible]

[illegible] has been a long time waiting on your letter but it [illegible]

[illegible] we thought he would choke but [illegible]

[illegible] blankets in the morning

[illegible]

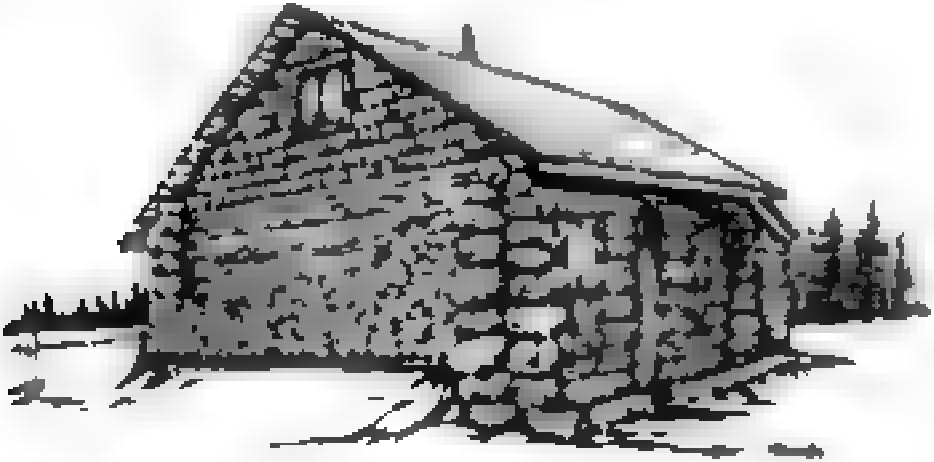
ARIE'S CABIN

Arie's log cabin was 14 by 20 by 8-feet high made of logs. The roof was made of [illegible]

FLOORS

"We had just a lumber floor [illegible]

[illegible]



FURNISHINGS

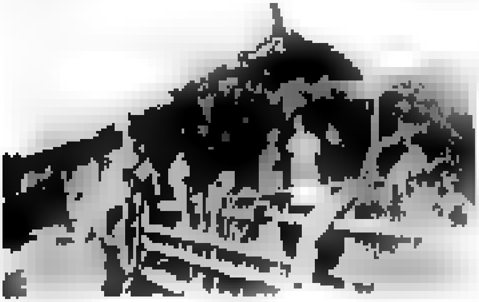
Ben [illegible] made much of the early furniture used by the settlers. Our beds were iron with wire springs; the mattresses made of heavy ticking stuffed with straw.

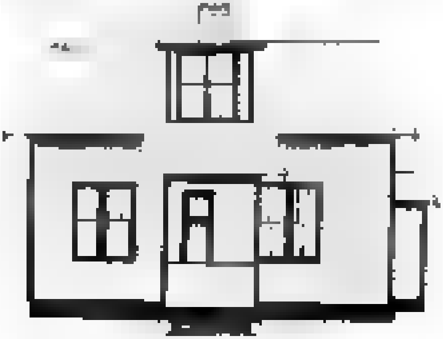
Our first sofa was a Winnipeg couch. This couch had a spring bottom with a double mattress on top, with a flounce hanging over the side. When it was pulled out it provided sleeping space for two, the double mattress becoming a single mattress.

Everything we purchased, with the exception of groceries, was obtained from the Eaton's or Simpson's catalogue.

My children have asked where we got enough money to buy food and clothing until such time as we were able to sell grain, eggs and cream. I don't really know, but we always had enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a roof over our heads.

Susie Vance





Arne Elgersma house.

BLESSING IN DISGUISE

The dugout cabin my dad made was really a blessing in disguise — we had no bedbugs. In his ignorance he had built the cabin of poplar logs so heavy we could lift them only four high. But bedbugs don't live in poplars — only in spruce. They're still around, you know. If you go to the bush and make a fire of spruce, you can smell them.

Gem Bozak

Kopps first house.

HAULING FIREWOOD

With empty sleighs the men would leave in the morning. A couple of axes and a crosscut saw were hooked to the back bunk. The driver would stand and balance himself on the front bunk and with the jingle of bells and the snort of horses they would be off in a trot. By the time the men arrived in the bush they were cold but when they began working they soon warmed up. All afternoon the men worked, getting the sleighs loaded with logs. By late afternoon they were ready to go.

The return trip took much longer. The horses would strain to get the load out of the bush and onto better trails. Once this was attained the progress was steady with the occasional stop for a rest. Those at home would be waiting with anticipation for their return. On cold winter evenings they could be heard long before they were seen. The creak and groan of the sleigh and the snorting of the horses would mingle with the complaining squeal of cold metal dragging over snow-packed roads.

SILVERWARE

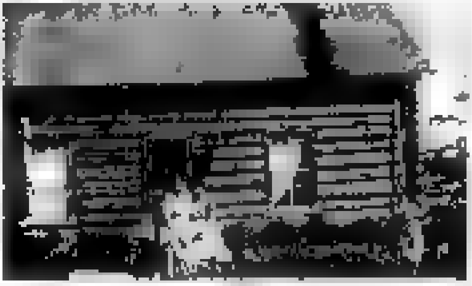
Mother wrapped the silverware in flannel and stuck it in between the logs so it wouldn't tarnish.

Gerry Bozak

ECRU CURTAINS

Nearly everyone had these ecru lace curtains, and they would fade white unevenly in the sunlight. To make them one colour we would soak them in coffee until the whole curtain was the same colour again.

Minnie Plantinga



Originally the Klaas Tuininga house. Bertha Wiersinga and Jennie Tuininga in front.

Clarence Tuininga house.

LITTLE ENEMIES

Here are some of the drawbacks of homesteading in the bush country of Alberta. First no roads, second too much bush and too many trees that had to be grubbed out by hand with an axe, too much water in the summer and too much snow in the winter and too cold — down to 50-below sometimes — and sometimes too hot in the summer and not to forget the mosquitoes and the pest they were to men and animals. There were mosquitoes in the morning and in the evening but as soon as the sun came out they retired till night and the bulldogs took over. They liked sunshine and the blood of animals. If you were working with oxen you would have to go home and put them in the barn because otherwise they would put their tails in the air and would go with the imple-

[illegible] would bite and hold on til they were satisfied. [illegible] guess that is the reason they were named bull flies; they looked like a bulldog. If they once have taken a bite they held on to it but they seldom attacked men. They were about the size of a bee. Then we had what the Indians called [illegible] see-ums [illegible] you could hardly see them because they were so small. They bit too and really were a pest. They would settle under you collar or under you cap and start to suck blood and the itch was awful. So was the swelling [illegible]

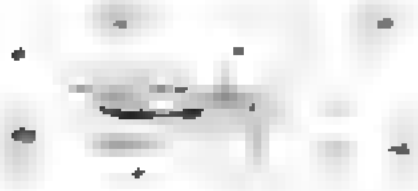
But I am glad to say I did not see a bull fly or a no-see-um for the last few years. The mosquitoes are still with us, but not as bad as in the [illegible]

MOSQUITOES

The mosquitoes were one [illegible]

If you could do your work with one hand the other was kept busy slapping the mosquitoes. And if you needed both hands for your work [illegible]

and maybe this time you did kill one. Somebody said ten would be out for the funeral! We did find out they did not like smoke [illegible] so we



[illegible]

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

From the time I could get around by myself I [illegible] always interested in trapping. I started out [illegible]

wrapped them around our feet for footwear [illegible]

[illegible] of Baird Lake. It was all wild timber [illegible] there wasn't a trail anywhere. I wasn't in the bush too far when I saw a lot of tracks and I was [illegible]

[illegible] to shoot him. I leaned backwards and steadied myself against a tree. I fired two shots and then [illegible]

falling with my horse and hurt my leg. I told my [illegible]

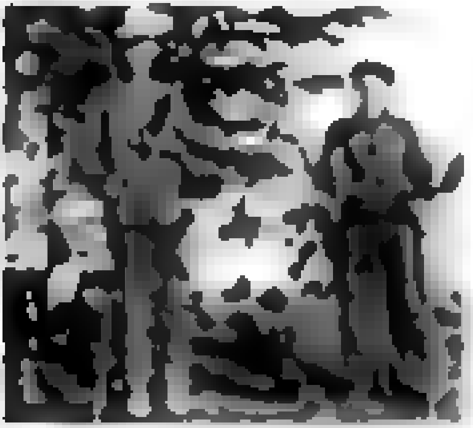
brought it home. You had to dress moose right [illegible] otherwise it would have the red-willow [illegible]

From there on I went hunting quite a lot. Bill Luevers and I went together. We had a [illegible]

wanted an animal we could tell them about [illegible]

We also trapped together [illegible] muskrats. The [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] akes The settlers used a variety of methods of [illegible] the farmers would go to Shoal Creek with their pitchforks and fork the fish out of the water [illegible] the water with the mouth facing upstream and the narrow end downstream, so that it would [illegible] them to find their way out

[illegible]

[illegible]

man and beast in the early days. There was not much land cleared of trees and bushes and [illegible] weather these damp watery places made excel [illegible] droves searching for some warm-blooded an [illegible] pests.

My dad would build a fire of dry wood and [illegible] the wet straw over it to make a smudge. This [illegible]

[illegible]

These bull flies usually appeared around [illegible] again. The trouble was that the bull flies al [illegible]

[illegible] could with their tails high in the air. They w [illegible] into the corral, trying to find a shady spot or [illegible] chicken-coop door would be open, but after a few trips around the building, no door opened up to her. The house door was closed too, but she kept running maybe some door would [illegible]

[illegible] like just the right-sized place to hide from the flies. She squeezed in as far as she could [illegible]

[illegible]

After looking over the situation dad decided the only solution was to take out the side wall of the outhouse, put a chain around the cow's neck and pull her out with a team of horses. Lucky it was a dry cow so she didn't have to be milked that day. However, the wall of the outhouse did have to be nailed back on and the floor had to be replaced.

[illegible]

MEAT

The meat that was eaten was mainly what was available in the bush. Moose and deer [illegible] steaders owe a lot to trappers, who would [illegible]

[illegible]

breakfast. Children dress by the heater, don't seem bothered [illegible]

when I'm home alone with the childre[n]

[illegible] ary 2 — Charlie left for the bush [illegible]

[illegible] we are getting milk out of them.

Very uneventful day.

[illegible]

[illegible] freeze up almost as fast [illegible]

[illegible]

us. [illegible] came back and we spent a nice evening [illegible]

[illegible] *[wo]uld have walked to a dentist had there been one. Will have to suffer through it; wrapped a warm cloth around my face [wh]ich gave some relief. Boys had to haul wood to the house for the fires. Both heater and stove are kept red hot* [illegible]

with all the snow being tracked in and the piles of firewood [illegible]

Wind has died down, but clear and [illegible]

must keep my composure for the childre[n] [illegible]

[J]anuary 2[illegible] — It's still clear and cold, but days are getting [illegible]

[illegible] playing with their father this afternoon. He likes to romp with them on the floor. Wish he could be home with us [illegible] but we do need the money he makes in the bush.

[illegible]

before he left, but it was really not enough. Had to make it do [illegible] the well is not very deep, and doesn't hold much [illegible]

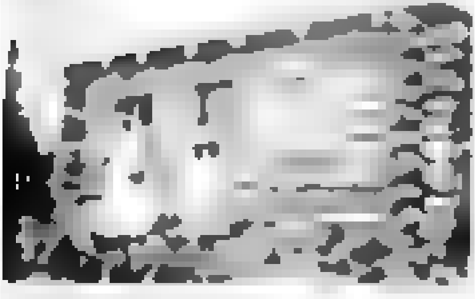
[illegible]

today, with bright sunshine [illegible]

we will get more snow.

Children are excited about going to school Monday. They are so tired of being cooped up in a small house for so [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

THIS IS THE LIFE

Everyone seemed to be happ [illegible] fencing the land; there was much to do and little time to worry about anything. I can still [illegible] between four walls, in a factory in the U.S.A. Here he was his own boss, out in the fresh air and had his own business. He was poor in material things, but rich in spirit. It was a close [illegible] each other to help build log houses and barns and also borrowed tools from each other. They could not make it alone.

Martin van der Heide

[illegible]

Albert Jan read his Bible [illegible] knew the Bible. He had an old Staten Bible [illegible] said, "This is funny. I can see better with [illegible] from Pa.

Ben Zoevers

[illegible]

[illegible] the leg and also in the head. His brother was killed. This was on the German border during [illegible]

TERRIBLE FRIGHT

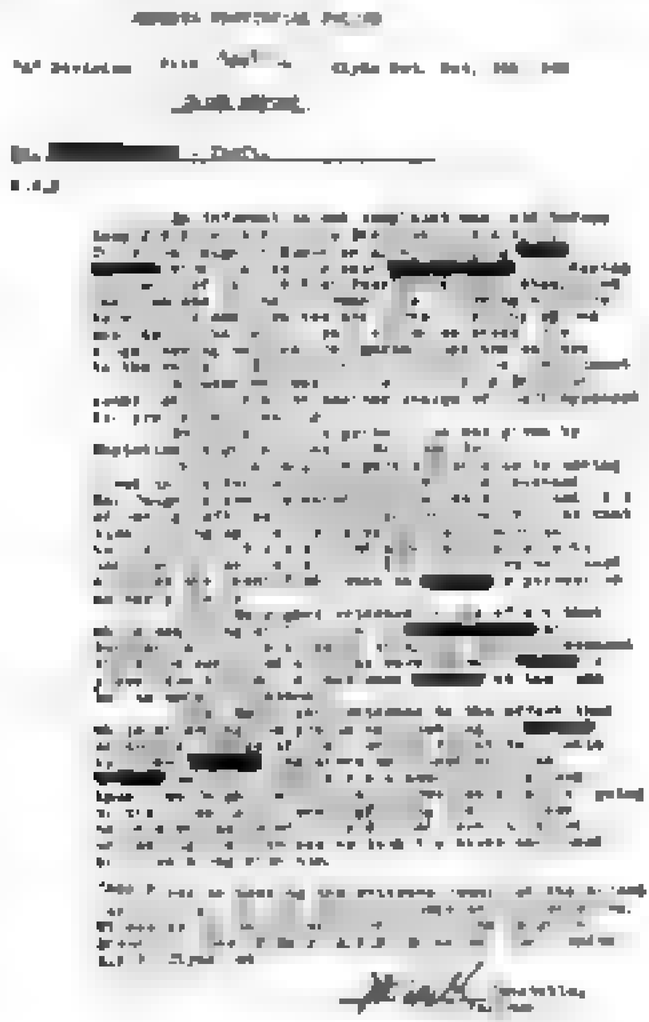
[illegible] fright one lady had. The story goes like this [illegible] be asked them, thought their daughter was [illegible] [illegible] One day while the parents were gone he went [illegible] teen-year-old brother to go with him. Then he killed them both.

[illegible]

the empty houses of those who had gone to [illegible]

Night came and in one of the pioneer homes, the chamber pot had not yet been emp[illegible]

Their mother scolded them. "Aw, what's the



matter with you? I'll do it!" and seizing the pot she bravely marched out. In moments she was back, shaking like a leaf. As she had stepped out the door a dark shape loomed in front of her. Thinking it was the killer she dashed back into the house. To her great relief, it was a friend who had arrived unnoticed.

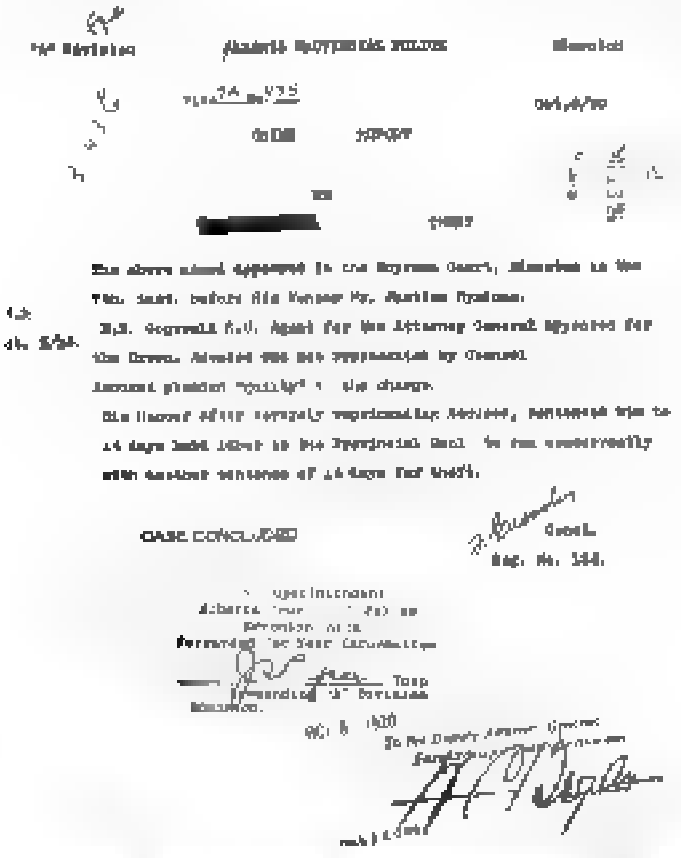
What about the lights? Later it was discovered that it was not the killer in the empty houses but a thief who was helping himself to their possessions while they were away.

LIGHTS IN THE NIGHT

My folks came here about seventy years ago. There wasn't much of anything here then just a lot of trees, swamp, and so on. The people really had to depend on each other because it was pretty hard to travel to any place to get supplies or help. Most people were poor too, we were all in the same boat, but everybody would help you when there was need. Sometimes things got just too tough though and a family would pack it in and go to Edmonton for the winter to make some money. They would leave everything but the essentials behind. Sometimes newcomers would live in one of these houses till they had time to build a shack or a house of their own.

The doors of these houses were never locked. There were no such things as locks and anyhow, who would take anything? Or so we thought.

At night, sometimes we would see a light or



"A" Division ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE [illegible]

File 24 No. 935 [illegible]

CRIME REPORT

RE

[redacted] THEFT

The above named appeared in the Supreme Court, [illegible] on the [illegible] before His Honour Mr. Justice [illegible].

[illegible] Agent for the Attorney General appeared for the Crown. Accused was not represented by Counsel.

Accused pleaded "Guilty" to the charge.

His Honour after severely reprimanding Accused, sentenced him to 14 days hard labour in the Provincial Gaol to run concurrently with another sentence of 14 days for theft.

CASE CONCLUDED

Const.
Reg. No. 144.

Superintendent
Alberta Provincial Police
Edmonton, Alta.
Forwarded for your information.

Insp.
Commanding "A" Division
Edmonton.

[illegible] Little did we know that one of our own community was looking through those houses and [illegible]

[illegible] belongings but no one knew [illegible] happened to them.

[illegible] before they could arrest him the thief escaped [illegible]

[illegible] When I was a kid I was excited over the idea that I had known a real live thief but now I just feel sorry for him and his poor wife, who had to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] got any more?

Ja, there's a couple out in the field [illegible]

[illegible] 'What do you have there? Did it come out of the Ark?' He says, 'I told you I'd come along [illegible] help you make a deal.' But Dad wouldn't have nothing of that.

"I make my own deals," he said. So that one horse, that balky one, he (Brunner) bought back later on. And the other one died after a few [illegible]

Gerrit Ingwersen

FIRES

1923-24 was a very dry year in northern Alberta. Everyone was warned to put out any [illegible] commissioner of oaths he was asked to accompany the ranger to the farmers who had fires burning on their property. A fine would be levied and, if it wasn't paid before a certain [illegible] the farmers and they would have to serve a jail [illegible]

[illegible] When due dates came along and no payments were made the authorities came and picked up [illegible] back in a cold room which wasn't very good for the health of one old farmer. The next day, with no explanation, the authorities told the farmers they could go back home.

Later Joe Holwerda set up a type of court [illegible]

Norman Terpsma

VAN DER WOUDE

There is no question that Rev. Van Der [illegible] needed [illegible] He had no eye for expansion of [illegible]

[illegible] changed his standpoint somewhat but by then however, it was too late

Case Ingwersen (memoirs)

HEIL HITLER

[illegible] certain us a lot. They were nice for young folks [illegible]

[illegible] took Kannegieter along [illegible] "Vega" store and [illegible] and he was [illegible] gon and he was standing there too. All of a sudden we passed Zittau [of Vega]. He [illegible]

[illegible] throw you out. Boy, I tell you, that surprised some people."

[illegible]

THE GOOD OLD FLOUR SACK

[illegible] us would have been clothed without it. The [illegible] made from flour sacks for him. The color was [illegible] Mother boiled the white clothes and a black felt cap was in the tub too, so the entire white wash turned a grayish-blue.

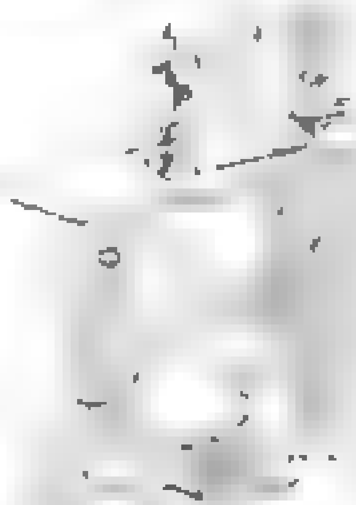
Carrie Olthuis

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT DRESS?

[illegible] These garments were sometimes taken apart [illegible] then, better than the outside. Many hours of work were done mending, patching, and mak [illegible]

The hand-me-downs we wore were handed down the line in the family until everyone from youngest to oldest had worn the garment or [illegible]

[illegible]



MAIL ORDER

Things were hard to come by because few [illegible] could afford. Painfully the list was gone over again to see which item could possibly be done without. One time shoes were ordered for me looked so forward to the arrival of the parcel [illegible]

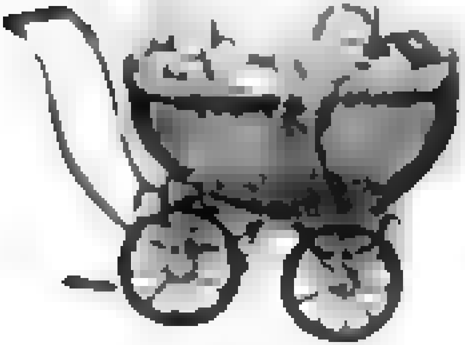
[illegible]ly I tried them on. Alas, they were too small. What was I to do? If I admitted that they were too small they would either go to my [illegible]

NEW SHOES

In the winter people wore grit bags for foot wear, which were quite warm and comfortable [illegible]

BELLY BANDS

The baby was bathed faithfully [illegible] morning no matter how cold it was. The [illegible]



[illegible] and strengthening the baby's back. The [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]ingle bob. The hair was covered [illegible] the top, the sides were [illegible]

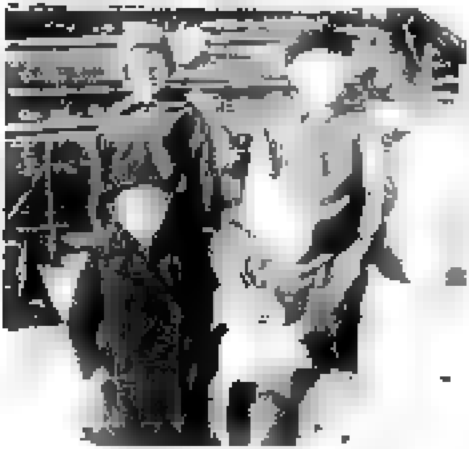
[illegible] well-knitted, black stockings [illegible]kings came out and then [illegible] wore [illegible]

[illegible]sh-coloured stockings made of lisle. These [illegible]ockings had a sheen to them and you could [illegible]y them in beige or grey. They cost about [illegible]

How we envied th[illegible] were hats not only to chur[illegible] Some people even though[illegible] shoes during the summer while many of [illegible]

[illegible]

Henry and Anna Michaux with baby Bert.

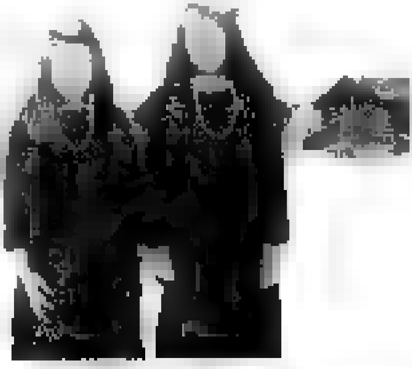


Bill, Bonnie, Flora, Henry, James

Bert and Anna Michaux.

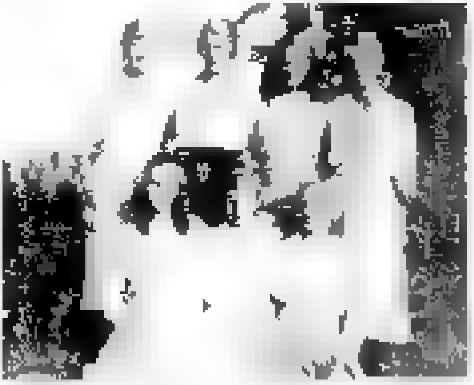
How do you like my winter coat? Lizzie Baron

Dressed for winter: Tena Terpstra



Johanna and Margaret Messelink, early 1920s.

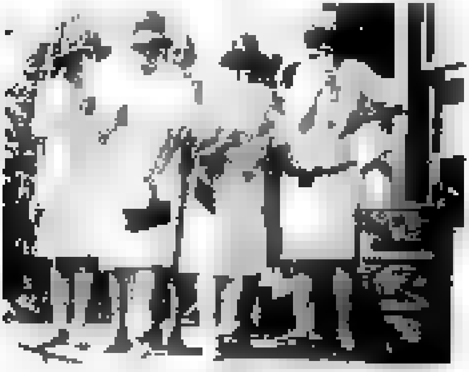
Sadie Hiteema



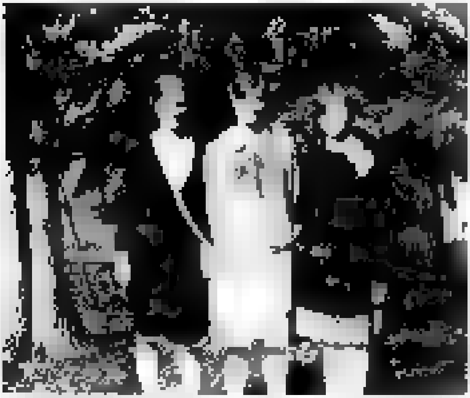
A Bevy of Beauties: Marda Luevers, Jennie Tuinenga, Della Anema, Pauline Shinagel. Front: Tena Terpstra, Clara Rusema, Gertie Kuyenga, c. 1924

The Roll'em girls of June 1925. How disgraceful, showing your bare knees! Jennie Fisher, second from right.

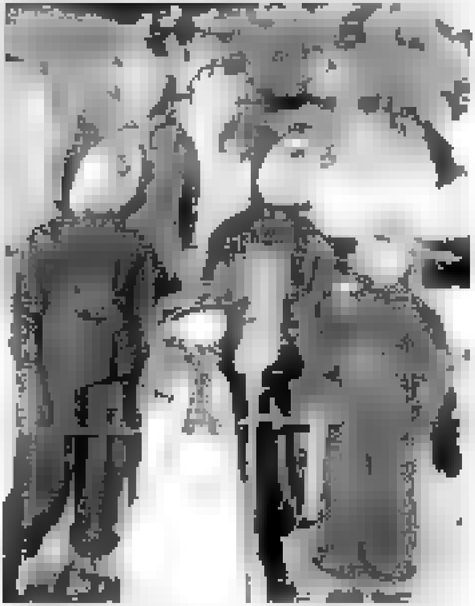
Neerlandia Girls. Kay Baker, Jennie Wierenga, Lula Stuiveld, Anne Schoonbeek, Bertha Wierenga (?), Annie Faber (?), Rose Schoonekamp (?), Anne Kippers. 1936



A refreshing drink. Johanna Massolink, Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Gladys Kippers. Front: Annie Ingwersen, Susie Anema, Margaret Massolink.



Sunday Best. Della, Tena, and Susie Anema. 1929

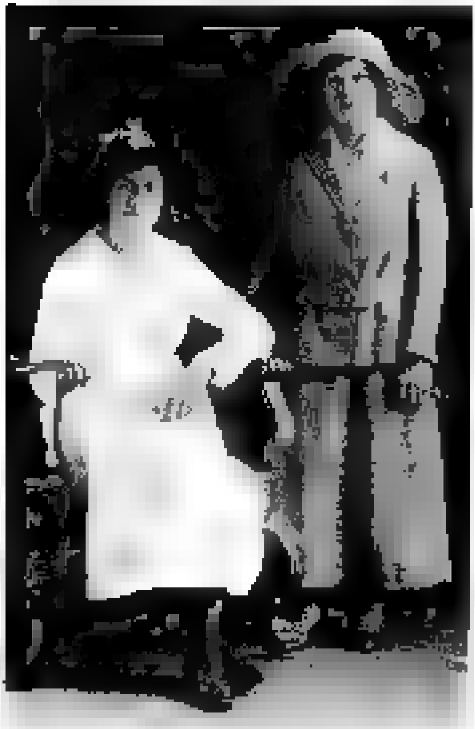


Snowsuits. Stanley Olthuis, Clara Didegbers, Elsie and Joan Olthuis.

Dressed in style. Jennie Tuininga.

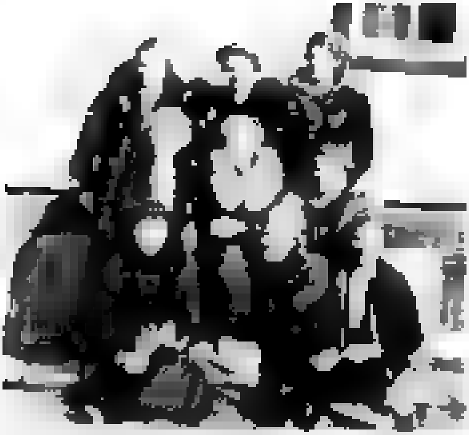
Sunday clothes. Gladys Struthers, Rieka Jonas, Jennie Schoonekamp Alice Brown, c. 1932

Modeling dresses made by Gladys. Gladys, Jennie, Alice Kippers

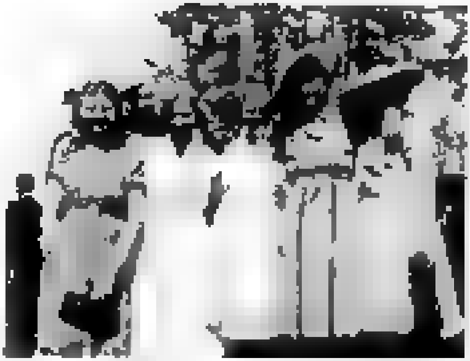


The latest fashion. ? Hansen, Flora Terpstra.

The Maats often wore breeches. Corry Ingwersen, Carl Maat strolling down Jasper Avenue, mid 1930s



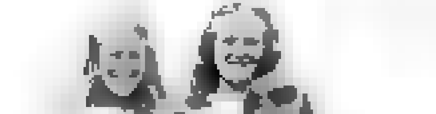
All ready for winter: Anne Emmelkamp, Alice [illegible], Rika Schoonekamp, Nellie [illegible], Helen [illegible], Anne Schoonekamp, Tena Hiemstra, Grace Tuininga, Anne Adema.

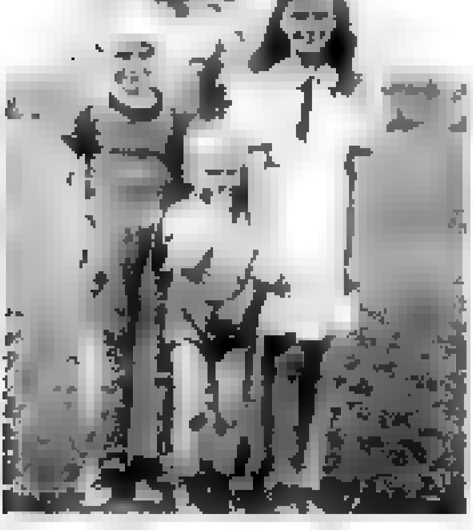


The latest style: fluffy fur-trimmed winter hats: Rena Jenssen, [illegible], Cora Tuininga, Anne Adema, Bertha Wieringa, Grace Tuininga.

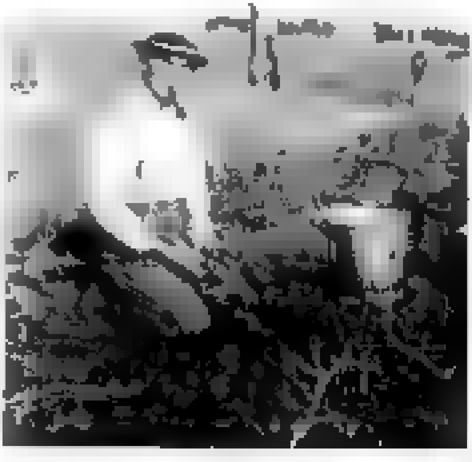
POTATOES AS BIG AS MARBLES

"The weather in those days was colder than it is now. It could be sixty-five degrees below zero sometimes for [illegible] weeks at a time. I remember temperatures of sixty-eight below zero. It got so cold at times that the thermometers broke. We couldn't raise potatoes for the first years because it would freeze every month. The potatoes that would grow were no bigger than marbles. As soon as the land was cleared and the wind could get through the temperatures started changing.





What children wore at home: Shirley, Elsie, Fred, Jack, Clarence, John, c. 1946



Digging potatoes. Douwe Terpstra

BEER

An old settler, who lived close to school in the 1920s, used to make beer out of hops. It wasn't that strong — yellow water, really. After he [illegible] some [illegible] he would ask: *Kan ik daar ook een stuiver voor hebben* (Could I have a nickel for that).

A QUICK SNACK

On bread baking day, Mother would pinch off pieces of the [illegible] from the dough and fry them in the frying pan, browning them on both sides. As soon as they were removed from the pan she would sprinkle them with sugar and we would gobble them up.

WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?

We always [illegible] eating, we were grateful for what we [illegible] [illegible] looking [illegible] like [illegible]. What we [illegible] like [illegible] make. We usually had potatoes and other vegetables such as carrots or turnips, but often no meat. So did we put butter on the potatoes? No way! We made buttermilk gravy. Here's how.

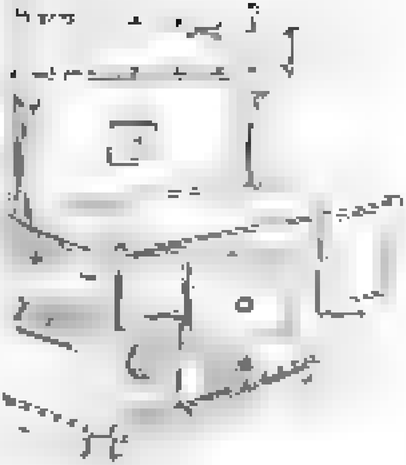
Put a heaping tablespoon of flour in the frying pan. Add a [illegible] and keep stirring [illegible] brown. Then put in, while stirring, boiling water to make the right consistency. It was good.

For dessert we ate *bruine pap*. This is made by adding a cup of [illegible] to a large pan of boiling milk. Mother always made the [illegible] the amount of milk [illegible] water to make up the required volume.

Rice was a Sunday treat served with cinnamon, butter and sugar, or with sweetened, thickened cranberry sauce.

Another [illegible] food was a mix of flour, water and salt which we called *pap*. To prepare this, place water in a pan and bring to a boil. Add salt and [illegible] flour until stiff. Serve with melted tallow and syrup.

To make [illegible], prepare a mixture of flour, baking powder, sugar, milk and salt. Place in a bag and boil for three or four hours. Serve with butter and syrup. This dough may also be placed in a greased dish and baked in the oven and served in the same way.



BUTTER AND CHEESE

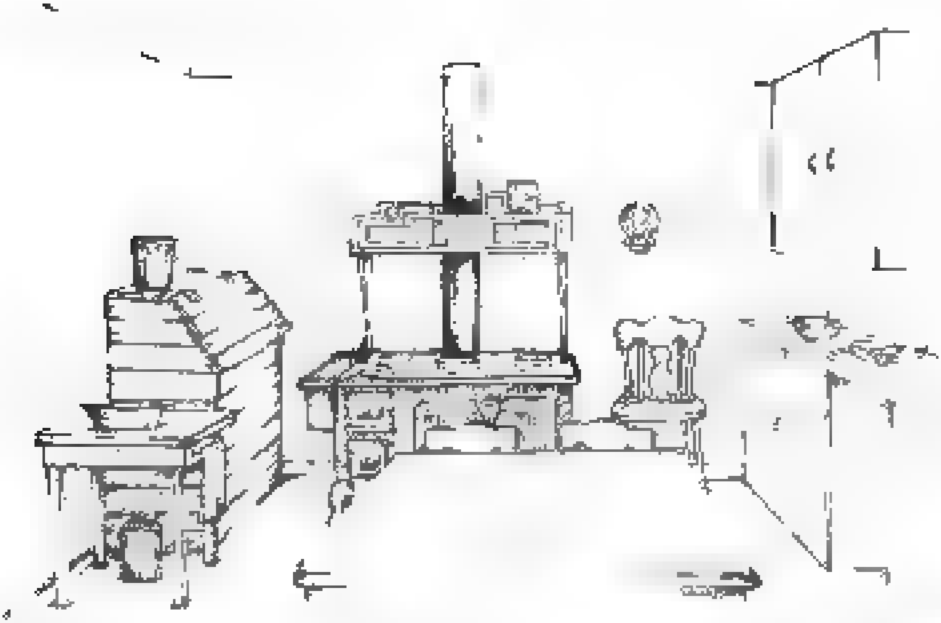
We always churned our own butter, but used it very sparingly, because we only had one [illegible] [illegible] which was a [illegible] and not very big. We also made our own cheese. We used Rennet tablets. We [illegible] this in warm milk and then the milk would separate from the whey. Then we would put it in a bag, mix in salt and [illegible] and press it to get all the whey out. We'd leave it stand till it was ready to eat, usually about a week.

Sadie Tiemstra

MAKING BUTTER

To make butter at home, [illegible] put some cream in a glass jar which has a lid with a hole in [illegible] [illegible] up and down. The [illegible] action separates the butter from the buttermilk if done long enough and with sufficient vigour. (The slower you go the longer it takes.)

The buttermilk, though it has very little food value in it, is also valued. Some of it we make into a pudding commonly known as *Karnemelkspap*, which is eaten with a good



deal of syrup making it quite delicious. The rest of the buttermilk is fed to the pigs and they just love it.

BUTCHERING HOGS

There were always some pigs butchered (borched) on the farm for the farmer's own use. The day usually started with the heating of a large drum of water over a wood fire. After the hog was killed and bled, the boiling water was used to scald loose the hair which was then scraped off. After butchering, the bacon slabs were placed in brine to be smoked later. Much of the meat was cut up and bottled, since the only freezer was the great outdoors. The head was sawn in half, cleaned, and boiled for making headcheese. The excess fat was rendered into various grades of lard, depending from which part of the carcass the fat trimmings were taken.

Andy Strydhorst

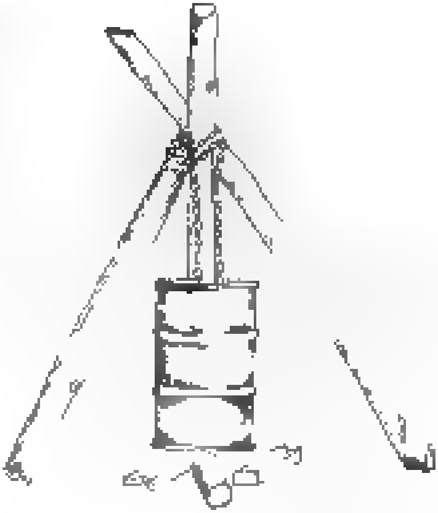
BACON

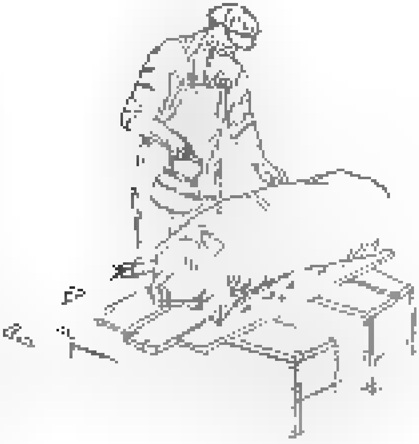
The bacon of fifty years ago was cured for preservation without refrigeration. The brine

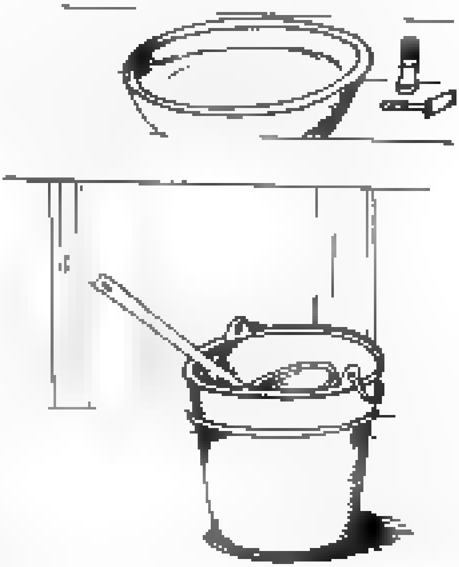
There was work to do. Butchering a hog.

was prepared by dissolving salt in water until the density was such that a raw potato would float on the brine. Bacon slabs were taken, placed in the brine, and kept there for about three weeks, producing a bacon which would be much too salty by today's standards. After curing, the bacon was hung in the smokehouse and smoked for about seven days. Smoke was produced by placing sawdust on a slow burning fire. Although sawdust from hardwoods would have been desirable, the sawdust from the woodpile (white or black poplar) was normally used.

Andy Strydhorst







LARD

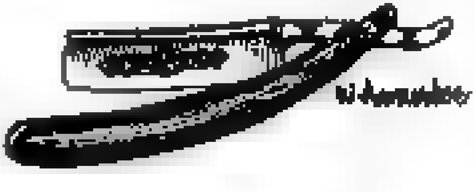
Rendering fat was done by grinding the fat, using a table-mounted hand-operated meat grinder and then heating it to a boil. The lard was then strained and allowed to cool. In the old days lard had many uses, from baking and soap making to sandwich spread. (It seems everyone had syrup and lard on their sandwiches to school.) The increased use of vegetable oils has greatly reduced the need for lard.

Andy Strydhorst

WATER SOFTENER

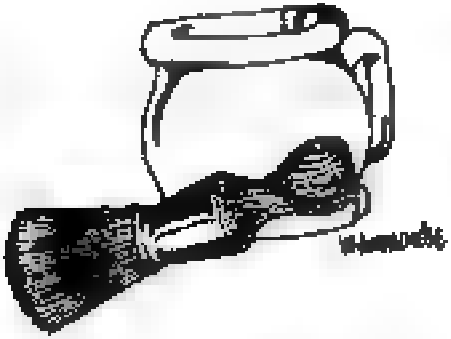
We had very shallow wells in those days. They were all hand dug and the water was mostly very hard. My mom used to make us carry the barrel full of water on Saturday nights. Then she would empty all the wood ashes in from the heater and cook stove. This made our water softer for doing the wash in.

Sadie Gemstra



WATER SUPPLY

We melted snow
with raisins in it
Boy did we haul a lot of snow in the house
For the wash



One year we did it for four cows, two horses, and for our family. We melted it all.

We had such a tank on the stove — a reservoir — and that would melt snow.

And as soon as the snow was down a little ways again you would put more snow on top. It would take pails and pails of snow to get it full.

We also had a boiler on all the time.

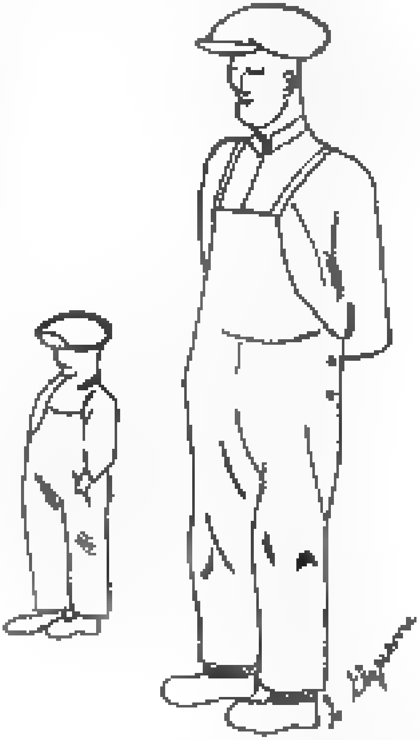
Later John built a little thing of bricks and made a bricklike furnace outside. We set the tub on there — that really helped. Later when we had three children we finally drilled a well. And we were rich.

SATURDAY NIGHT BATH

all in the same water
if there was water
in the bathtub standing by the stove
in front of the oven door

RAISING SUGAR BEETS

The Elzingas always had a large garden, and it always yielded abundantly. Having grown sugar beets in the "old country," they knew their value and therefore they had a good portion of their garden in sugar beets. During the winter evenings these sugar beets would be thoroughly cleaned and grated. This time-consuming work was done by Mabel and her father. A wash boiler-tub was done at a time. Next



mixing the grated sugar beets with water [illegible] strained. Thus juice was again brought to a boil [illegible]

Mabel Elgersma

COWS IN THE HOUSE

[illegible] house was open. After investigating, we found his cows standing in the bedroom — they had [illegible]

Once when someone left the cabin door [illegible]

Martin van der Hesk

[illegible]

[illegible] days, many cattle grazed wild in the district. Toward fall these cattle would gravitate to the [illegible] xtremely dry and frosty, and the cattle were des[illegible] heir owners, but many of these furbearing animals were shot and trapped, giving some [illegible] and trappers.

[illegible]

[illegible]

One of the first settlers went looking for his milk cows one morning. Because there were no [illegible] selves with swollen udders before he did.

[illegible]

FAITHFUL BESS

A farmer hitched up his horses to the sleigh [illegible]

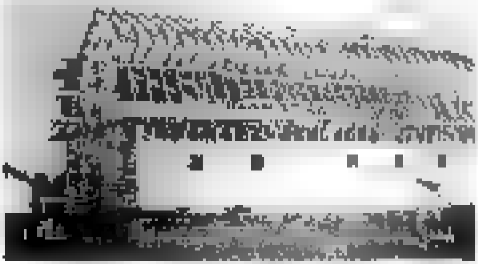
As the time approached to kill the animal the first farmer, who owned the cow said [illegible] and then shoot. A gunny sack was found and [illegible] proud of their able husbands. The children played well together and were proud of their [illegible]

The farmer again hitched up his tea [illegible]

[illegible]

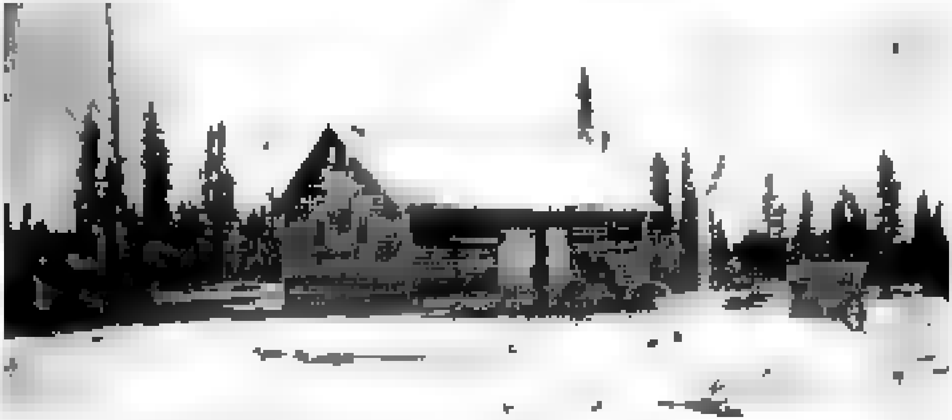
[illegible] horses and he was hauling stones to the [illegible] bundles of straw with him which he fed to the horses. So he took some of that straw and lit it [illegible] burnt the centre out of that wagon, leaving all [illegible]

BARNS



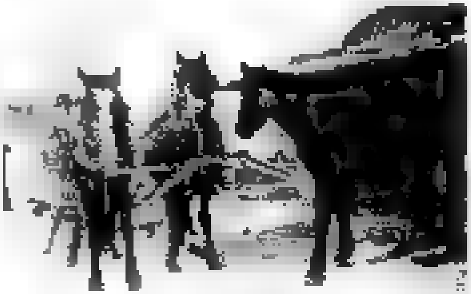
This barn built by Henry Kippers in late 1920s had stalls for ten horses and twenty-four cows

Neighbours helped Henry Schoonekamp build a log barn, c. 1934



"Dit is onze stal geheel links. (This is our stable on the left)" Jan Paas wrote

HORSES



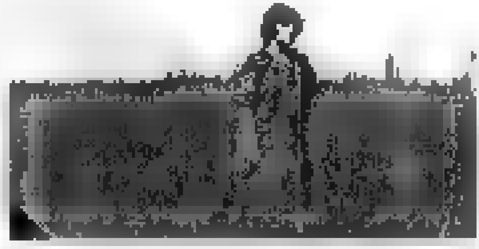
Everyone had horses — the Barons

The Maass, 1927

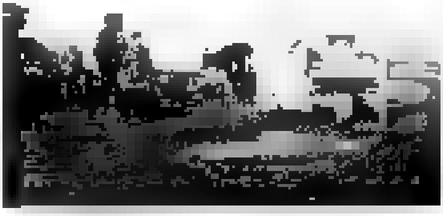
Lute Kniela poses with a horse.

And Grace Bos with a hardworking horse

ON THE FARM

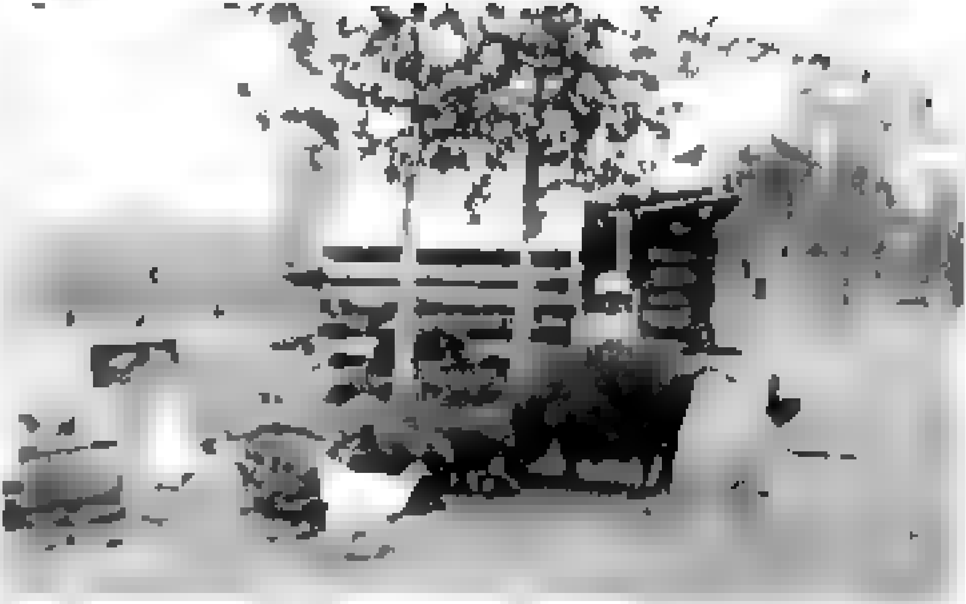


A good stand of hay. Ada Terpsma in the timothy. Note gate at right.



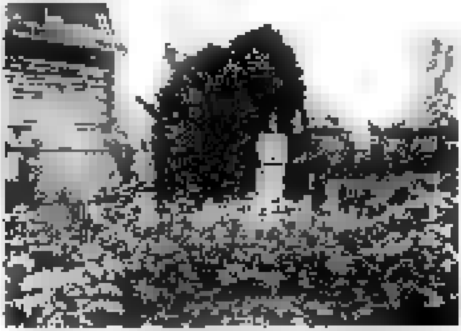
Baron homestead. Maggie and her children

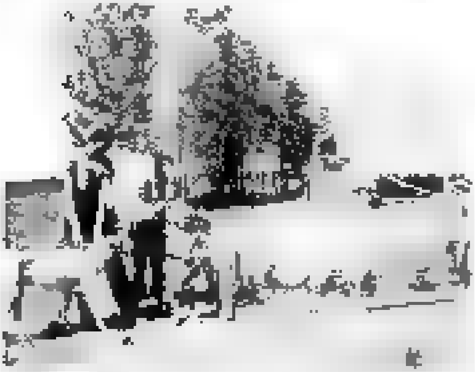
[illegible]

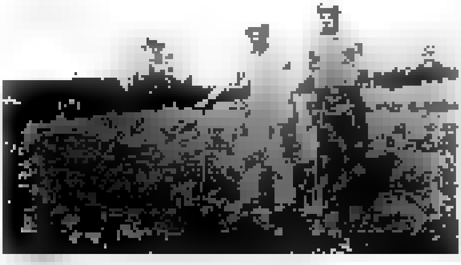


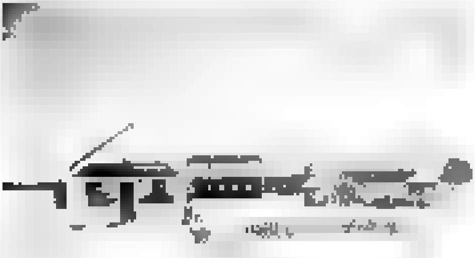
[illegible]

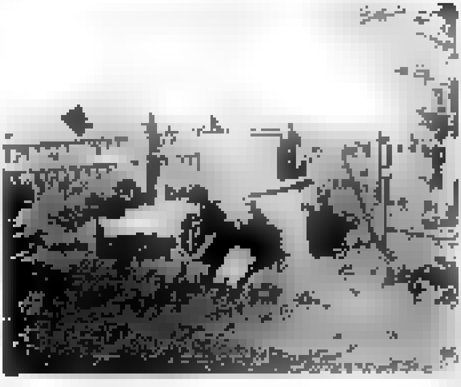
The chickens are fed by Ina Moat, 1929.

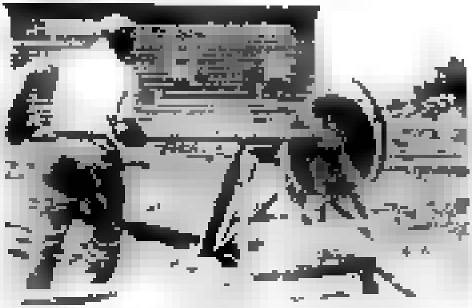

Admiring the Lewis' flower garden


Lolla, Ralph, Betty Bos admiring the chickens.


Digging potatoes, Gene and Peter Plate.


The Bill Bouwman farmyard, c. 1930

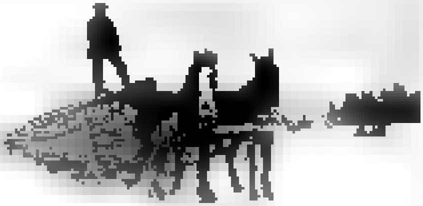

Dug well in background. Henry and Joanne Gellerman in front of a cold frame for growing vegetables, c. 1945



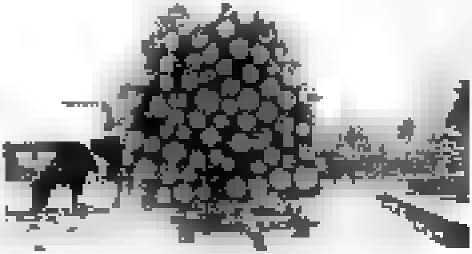
Harry Jansen sharpening fenceposts, 1948.

Time for lunch on a brush pile. Lucy and John Visser, Tena Prins, Raymond Visser.

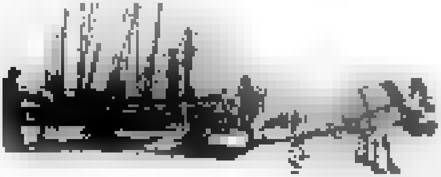
FIREWOOD



Hauling firewood was an important task. Hendrik Lievers 1935



Load after load was hauled. This load contains about eight cords of wood.

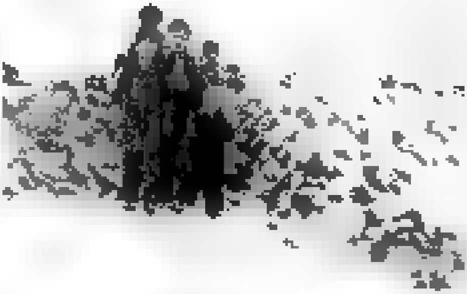


It had to be unloaded at home.

Sawed into lengths.

Chopped.   Bill Kinnee taking a break

And stacked neatly for winter. The Hendricks by their cabin



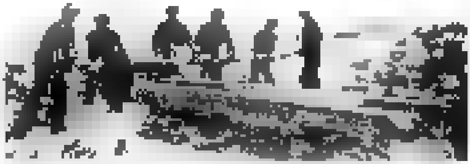
Not everyone stacked the wood neatly. Sandra, Andrew, Winsor, and Ann Elgersma.

As time went on, tractors were used for hauling. Lambert Wieringa with John and Hilda Molocovich in 1946

Sawing. Jack Janssen, Willy Toebes, Jan Plas.

And sawing. John De Vries, Clarence Mast, Jake Schuurman, Pete Mast, Ed [illegible], 1947

And splitting. Bill Hayes, 1958



And sawing wood. Drew, Cecil, and Joe Tuininga, Charles Tiemstra, Bob Howey, Pete Tuininga, 1963

HEALTH CARE [illegible]

[illegible] time. Local midwives took care of births (which [illegible]

[illegible]

REMEDY FOR SORE THROAT

[illegible] in wintertime because it was too cold

MUSTARD PLASTERS FOR CHEST COLDS

[illegible]

SICKNESS

[illegible] every family was sick in bed with the bad flu [illegible]

[illegible]

Sadie Tiemstra

BURNED

[illegible] the tub and got it all over her foot she was burned very badly. She did not go to a doctor [illegible]

Gladys Maas

VERBAL CUTS UP

[illegible]

John Ingwersen

BIRTH AND DEATH

[illegible]

HAPPY NEW YEAR

When we were small children in the 1930s, a nickel was a highly-prized possession. We had a bachelor neighbour, Rienk de Jager, who lived one-half mile from our home. This neighbour had a nephew staying with him for a time. This nephew came from the Netherlands and missed his little sister and brother, whom he had left behind. As a result my brother and I often got a lot of attention from [illegible]

One Old Year's Eve, he was down to visit and promised us that if we could wish him "Happy New Year" before he wished us this [illegible]

Next morning was a mild January first and we left in the dawn, carefully walking along [illegible]

[illegible]

Jehovah bless thee from above.

[illegible]

When I was a little child, the chills would go [illegible]

[illegible] since there was always pl[illegible] [illegible]gs around. For supper th[illegible]

[illegible]

of whomever had the honour of having a year extended to their life [illegible]

Johanna Visser

* * *

As soon as Dad had a barn built we got a few [illegible]

eaten the most eggs. Old Mrs. Nanninga had a [illegible]

the eggs in the boiler. Those boys would eat a [illegible]

[illegible]

very proud of it. On Sundays after church, he [illegible]

bury his suit in the ground for awhile to get rid of the smell.

In our times we all wore painted straw hats to church and you could smell the paint. They [illegible]

and I each got a new hat — one of these heavy things. It was a hot Sunday when we wore them [illegible]

got sick to my stomach just of the paint smell [illegible]

MEMORIES OF A PIONEER GIRL

[illegible]

father had been an engineer [illegible] a job as engineer in a box [illegible]

day and teach his children to "keep the Sabbath [illegible]

We moved to Neerlandia in 1917. I, being [illegible]

little houses. I also loved school. I learned the English language and to read and write in English, and I enjoyed drawing too. On the home [illegible]

foggy, no houses around, and I was so afraid [illegible]

gloomy. Dad and the boys soon built a larger [illegible]

[illegible] be eight gover [illegible]

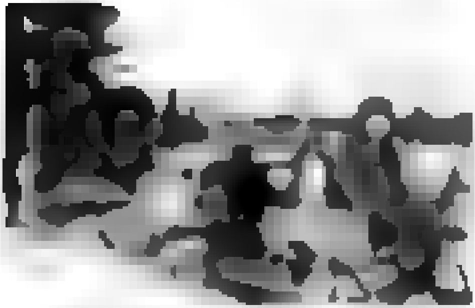
My brothers w [illegible]

[illegible] however, took them home, skinned them [illegible]

[illegible] Christian, in spite of hard struggles, and taugh [illegible]

[illegible] year Grace, my baby sister, got pneumonia. Mother and Dad had to take her b [illegible]

[illegible] stay home and keep the home fires burning. [illegible] did it cheerfully because [illegible] knew it had to be done, even though [illegible] loved school [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] us. I worked there from age twelve t [illegible] seventeen and hated it at first. I would be tired from the daily long walk to school. Howe [illegible]

[illegible] and bought a pair of shoes from Eat [illegible] catalogue for $1.45. I also bought a couple of yards of chambray from which I made my [illegible] dresses. I would also save for a straw hat [illegible]

[illegible] milk ued to the ba [illegible] road some would [illegible]

[illegible] lking to Bible Class on Saturday afternoons and to choir pract [illegible]

KLAAS AND JELLE

[illegible] on Sunday whether they went to church [illegible]

[illegible] hey and the neighbours all walked to church and Carrie can remember Joe Baker [illegible] rying baby Charlie all the way to be baptized.

MANNERS

[illegible]

... but he very likely had five bars for the money but the bad part of it was that when the ice cream was sold in the afternoon we didn't have any money.

On the return trip Katie Mesriger rode along. Joe Hulwenaa let her off at the gate and she said, "Thanks for the ride," and he said "You're welcome." I had never heard the expression before and never forgot it. No wonder Mr. Van Ark was trying to teach us homesteaders some manners. We had to say "No sir," "Yes sir," and "Mr." or "Mrs." [illegible] and it was no first names.

Carrie Wolthuis

OOPS! WAS THAT YOUR THUMB?

We had a very thrifty man in our neighborhood. In those days most men chewed plug tobacco and would pass it from one to another. When it was his turn he would hold his thumb on the plug to mark the size of bite they could take.

KEEPING TIME

The Bakers had a mantel clock, but it would sometimes be stopped because it had not been wound or was dusty. If it was dusty, Aaltje would find a chicken feather that was not too [illegible] and [illegible] would go along at the [illegible] at the back to clear the [illegible] works. But once the clock was running again there was no way of knowing what time it was. So Aaltje would often say to Minnie or George, "Run to the line a minute and see what time it is." The "line" was a three-wire fence that was near the house and ran north and south. They would estimate what time it was by checking the shadows made on the ground by the wires. When all three wires formed one shadow it was exactly 12:30 p.m.

Minnie Plantinga

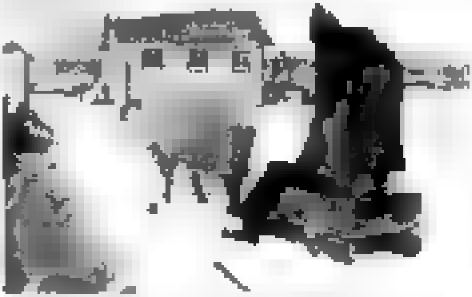
LEISURE

Joey and I had different likes and dislikes. Joey was a home lover; I was an outdoors type. I liked roaming the bush looking for flowers, birds' nests and berries. The only nests I destroyed were crows' nests. I could never get Joey to come along, but Lily came quite often.

We also liked trips to the sandhills to pick blueberries. We would start out at 4:00 a.m. with horses and wagon and get home around 6:00 p.m. with lots of berries. Everyone went except Mother. The [illegible] family usually went with us.

We girls always had braids (or pigtails, some called them). One day Joey and I [illegible] took the [illegible] and [illegible] Joey did a great job of [illegible] her hair. We thought she looked real pretty. Apparently Mother didn't.

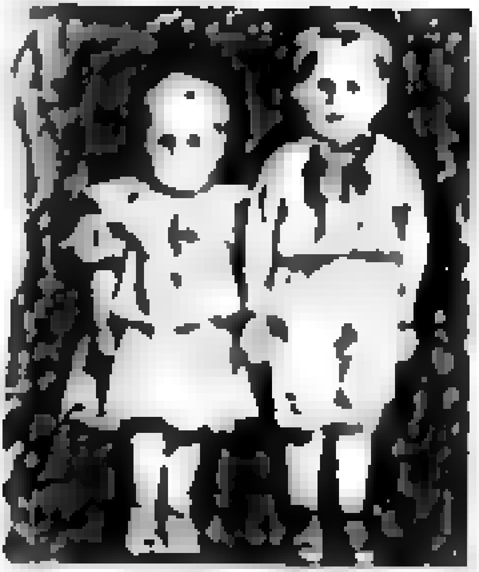
Gladys Mast



The [illegible] children going for a [illegible] ride

Fun at where Joe and Jr. Simon (left) and Grace (right) [illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible]

[illegible]



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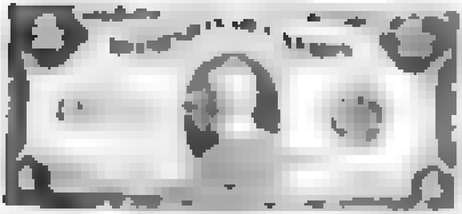

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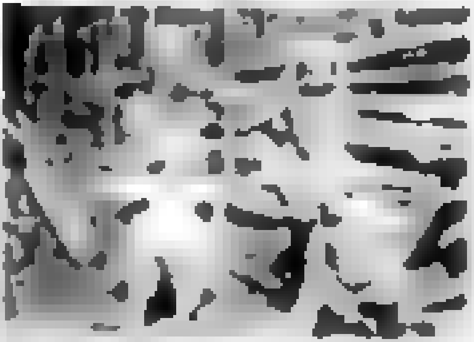


[illegible]

FIRE

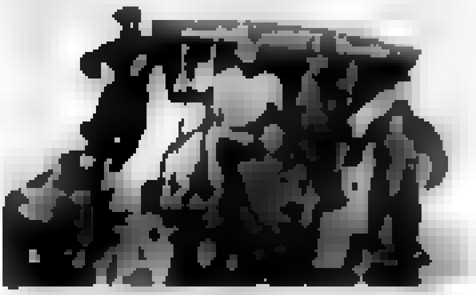
[illegible] hot when the weather was real cold. I well [illegible] night. Dad and my older brothers went to fight [illegible] well. One family had a fire start under the [illegible] and, no water being immediately available [illegible] special care and [illegible] do not know of any real bad [illegible]

[illegible]

ADDED INCOME

A number of our younger married men and some single men went to help harvest in the [illegible]

[illegible]



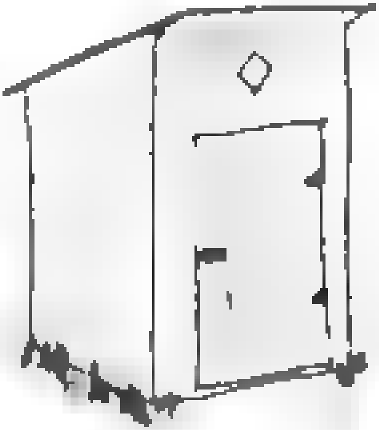
[illegible]

TRAVELLING SALESMEN

[illegible] doing my work cheerfully, singing as I did [illegible] plumbing, so the chamber pot was an essential item. Each day a trip had to be made to the outhouse to empty the pottie. On this day I was carrying it to the door [illegible] all the while singing [illegible]

A PIONEER OUTHOUSE

Near our log house was an outhouse that [illegible]



OUT TO THE OUTHOUSE

My dad had built a beautiful new outhouse. My three older sisters were quite grown-up, and my three younger sisters were growing up [illegible] fight about who was going to be next.

My parents had discussed this situation a [illegible] seemed to be a two-seater outhouse. It was really quite a respectable structure, made of [illegible]

[illegible] produces slabs. These were piled beside the mill and could be bought for two cents apiece. It was cheap material and was used for building [illegible] houses. The first layer was put on with the bark [illegible] door was made of one-inch boards, as were the floor and the seats.

It seemed to me that for some people out [illegible] thing like bathrooms are today. I remember that [illegible]

[illegible] back wall that I could peak through but, as it [illegible]

[illegible] Eaton's and Simpson's catalogues and last [illegible] Producer.

A favourite trick on Halloween night was to [illegible] axe to the pole and chop it down. This pro- [illegible]

[illegible]

BAD BOER BOYS

Jack and George Boer (nephews of Dad) [illegible] toilet. They would just open the upstairs window and do their thing. This normally would [illegible] were still wet in the morning. When Jack and [illegible] ized what was happening but they did not tell

They were concerned what the new cream grade would be. It turned out to be grade A much to their relief.

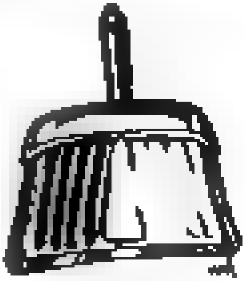
Henry Gelderman

Saturday night bath: Art and Roy in tub, Art observing, 1942

FARM WIFE'S DAY, MAY 1947

Monday, 5:00 a.m., the alarm clock lets out a loud ring to awaken us to another busy day. We must be up at 5 a.m. because there is so much work to do. We have cows to milk and the separator to turn the milk through, then the milk is brought back to the calves who are so eagerly awaiting their warm fresh milk. Now the barrel must be filled with water for the cows from our hand pumped well. The sun is shining brightly and the birds are singing and making nests in the many trees surrounding our new house. It is a beautiful spring day.

It is now 7:00 a.m. and time for breakfast. How fortunate our [illegible] now the stove is hot, the kettle is full with boiling water and we quickly have our breakfast ready. Our toast was slightly burnt this morning since the stove is hot. Better next time we hope. Now it is 8 a.m. and Joe goes out to feed the four horses and pump water for them. He also feeds and brings water to the hogs and cleans the barn. It is wash day and I start hauling water to heat on the stove. How fortunate that the reservoir on the stove has hot water so I can wash the dishes. Next I clean the separator which is very dirty because it was not washed on Sunday. I clean the milk pails and then run for more wood for the ever hungry stove. The wash water is warm, everything is going smoothly, already so much done and it's now 9:30 a.m. I haul the hot water to the washer, and run for more pails of cold water to rinse the clothes and extra water to boil the towels in. But alas! Try as I will I cannot start my gas washer. I run to Joe for help. I hesitate to ask him because he is busy sharpening his axe to chop trees down on a strip of land he hopes to farm the next year. He comes and tries his best. After a loud [illegible] and a few sputters it is humming along nicely. It is ten minutes to ten so I quickly make a cup of coffee. The stove is still hot and the coffee is perking in no time.



I continue with my wash. It is a beautiful morning and soon the wash is blowing gently on the line with the extra overalls hanging over a fence to dry.

It is already 11:30 a.m. How the morning has flown by. I must see what is left from Sunday to make a fast meal. There is not much left as we had company for a spot of Sunday but we will manage. [illegible] I find that someone is out there helping him and will also come for dinner. We share our meal but there's not bread on hand as Tuesday is my bread-baking day. I am thoroughly frustrated that I did not have a good meal for my guest.

It is now 1:45 p.m. Dinner is finished and time to go out to get more firewood and a pail of fresh water. Then drain the washer into pails and haul it outside, clean the washer and put it away. Now I must bring the slop to the hogs as my pails are full. I will check the sitting hens and the one turkey who is also sitting. It is pleasant out there. The birds continue their busy chatter and the cows and calves are sleep-ng in the warm sunshine but there is work to [illegible]

[illegible] borrow a plow to get a small piece of land ready [illegible]

potatoes. We work at this together and soon it is done. It is 4:15 p.m. and we have a cup of tea. How great things are going today Joe says he [illegible]

pails of fresh water to use for drinking and cooking. I then get more wood for the wood box to keep our stove content until next morn[illegible]

[illegible] which has been hanging in there to keep from getting sour I will make a pudding for supper [illegible]

We have our supper, then Joe goes out to milk the cows, and do the same chores as he [illegible] doors to the sitting hens and turkey

gather my wash from the fence and [illegible]

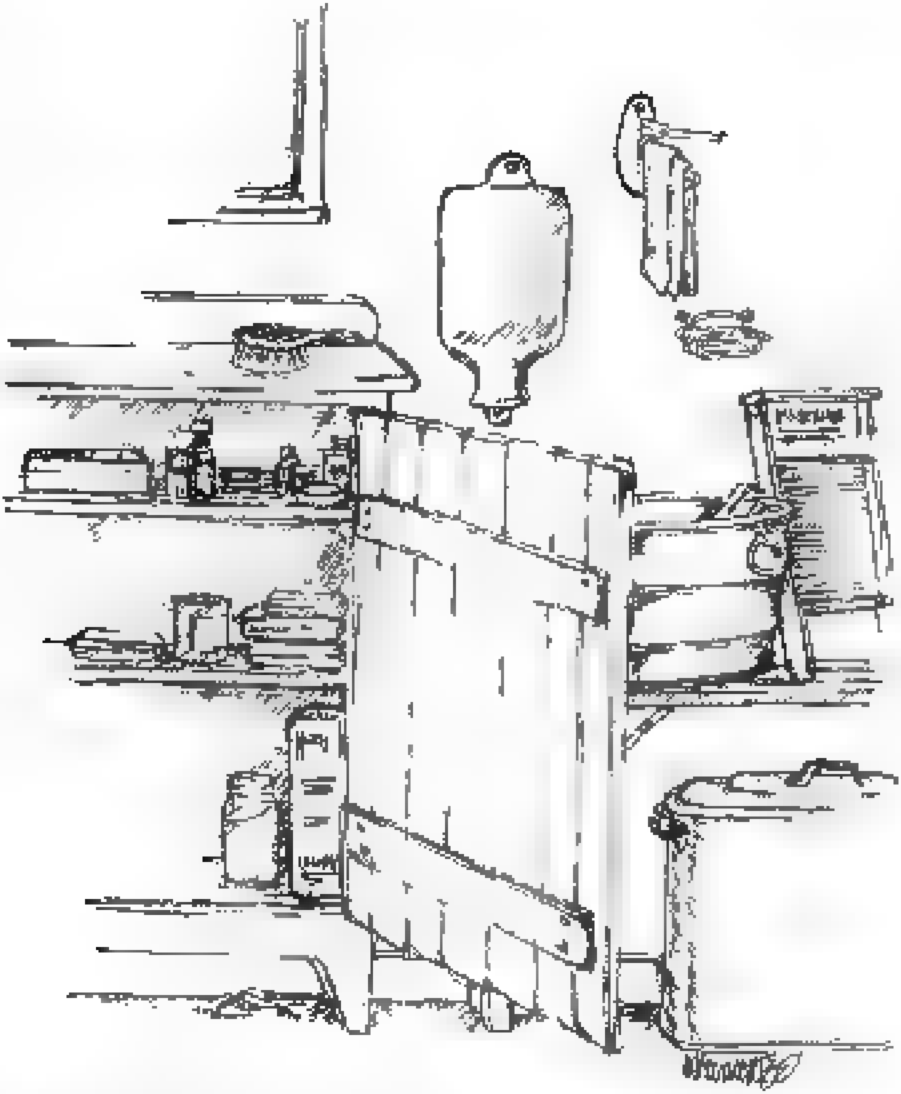
[illegible]

[illegible] passed through the kitchen on his way to the door. He hated to be late and, to his great relief [illegible] shoulder hung one of his wife's stockings — the result of his hasty passage through the kitchen [illegible]

WINTER FOR FARM WOMEN

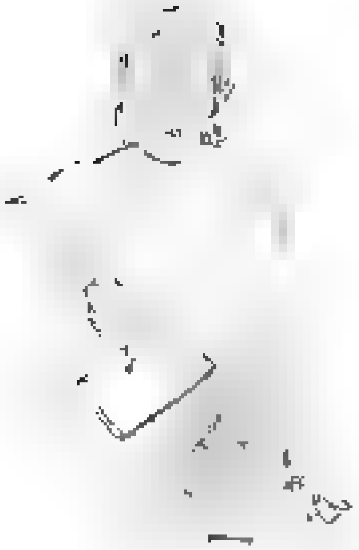
[illegible] ducking under clothes in the kitchen and front [illegible]

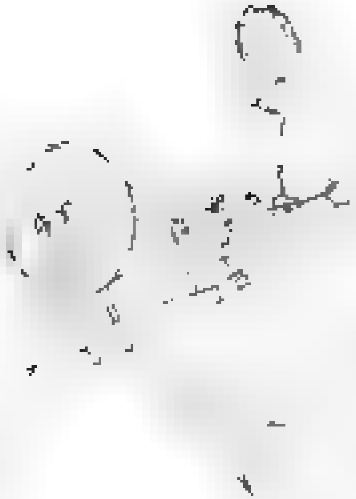
We also canned meat in the winter, as that [illegible]



• We used potatoes to make our own starch. The potatoes would be peeled and grated, then put on cookie sheets. Then the next day the starch would be settled under the potatoes. We lifted the potatoes off and the starch was put on paper to dry. We used this starch for clothes and for thickening pudding. It was a brownish colour, but worked well.

• Women made mats out of leftover stockings, socks, or dresses. They often spent many





hours knitting or doing embroidery. Many homes had embroidered flour sacks, pillowcases and aprons. These embroidered aprons were specially used only for Sundays.

Very few people had fresh eggs in the winter because the henhouses were cold and the [illegible] quit laying [illegible] preserve eggs. There was a solution available called water glass. In the summer when eggs were plentiful we would have several crocks in which we would dilute water glass with water. Then each day we [illegible] fresh eggs in until the solution [illegible] covered the eggs adequately. The crocks were put in the cellar and in the winter these eggs were great for baking or making scrambled eggs. They were not good for cooking as the shells were softened from the storage.

The evenings were long since few went out because of the difficulty in getting to other places. [illegible] people were [illegible] and young people [illegible] so the family was [illegible] together reading, knitting or playing checkers. Musical members of the family played the organ, mandolin or mouth organ.

WASH DAY

I remember the days when I was a young girl how wash day was one I never looked forward to. Monday morning started out with the task of going to the garage to get water for the wash. I never did master the art of starting the old pump engine with ease. On the [illegible] mornings it was especially [illegible]. If you ever started a gasoline pump engine you will know how hard it was for a young girl to get the engine going. I had to bend over and crank the engine with one hand while with the other hand I had to control the choke. The bit of holding my finger over the air intake of the carburetor always gave me a scary feeling and as a result I always pulled my finger away too soon and this made [illegible] hate all the more. Once I did get the engine going there was the trick of pulling my hand back quickly. I often had sore knuckles from being hit by the handle on the flywheel.

Once I got the pump engine going there was the task of carrying pails of water to the house for the huge pile of washing which had to be washed. Carrying two buckets of water at a time without sloshing it over myself took some

stiff. I often had my skirt and shoes well [illegible]

By the time the water was heated on the old wood stove it was time to challenge the old gas [illegible]

[illegible] it to start. By the time I finally got it going [illegible]

[illegible]

white articles whiter. Putting articles through [illegible]

[illegible] some water as they went through the wringer [illegible]

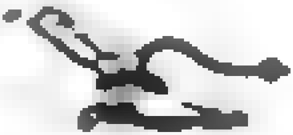
[illegible] when the pressure of going through the [illegible]

[illegible] se stiff legs. With fingers numb from the cold after prying off all those clothes [illegible]

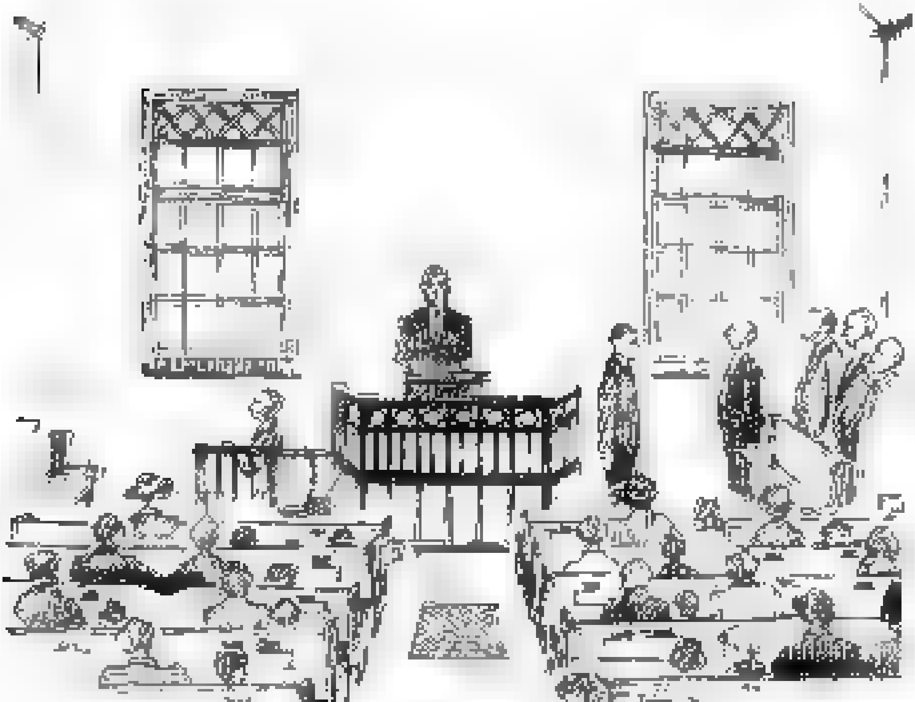
[illegible] articles had softened up they were draped over [illegible]

[illegible] and weary from the day's work the little kids [illegible]

[illegible] wash. The rewarding part of wash [illegible] those clean clothes and the fresh smell of the outdoors. Many a wash day today I am thankful [illegible]



Pulpit and Pew



members of the Neerlandia community there were other serious problems, especially severe economic hardship in the early years and the always painful problem of wayward youth. Yet God, who placed a candlestick in the woods of northern Alberta in 191[illegible], has blessed the church through the years.

* *

Building the Church

Most of the people here belonged to the Christian Reformed Church and one or two had been elders in the Edmonton Church. At first they read sermons when they came together in their homes on Sundays. I, not being a member, did and do not agree with all their teachings but attended the services up to the '30s because there was nothing else. We did not always agree, but worked together quite harmoniously — building the log church at first and, later, helping build the better buildings. So when the log church was built I did my part as a carpenter putting in the windows and doors, etc.

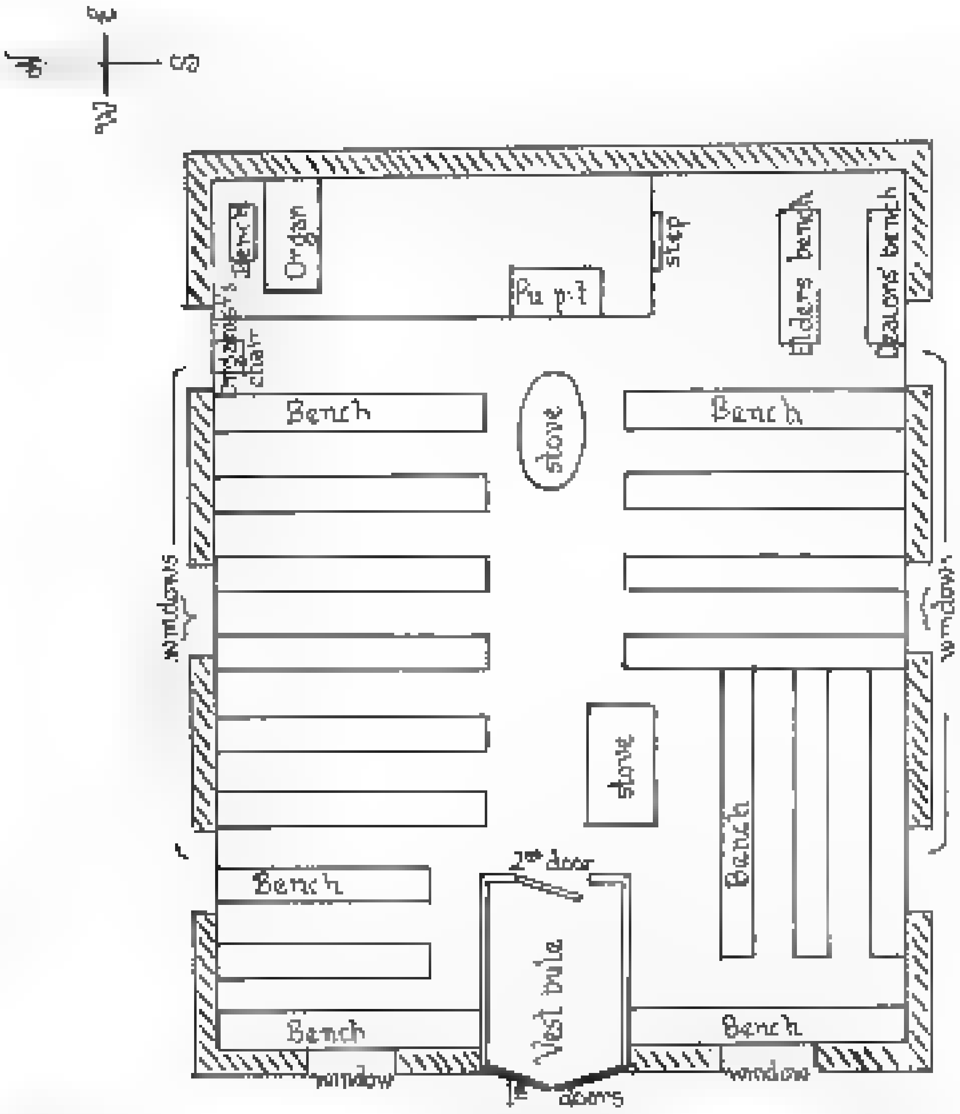
Ben [illegible] Sr.

* * *

Beginnings: A Log Church is Built and a Congregation is Organized

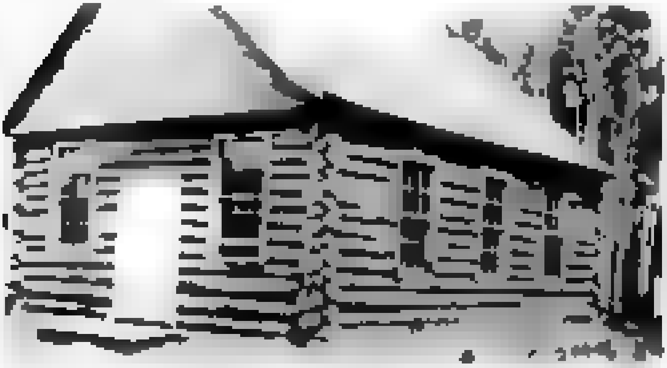
The pioneers who had started the community in the winter of 1911-1912 turned their attention to the matter of building a church in the winter of 1914-15. In the three year interval most of them, who had their church memberships in the First Edmonton Christian Reformed Church, gathered together to worship in each other's homes. John Anema's cabin, near the centre of the settlement, seems to have been the place for worship most of the time. In the winter of 1914-15, plans were drawn for the construction of a log church, and logs were cut from the Big Timber. They were loaded on sleighs and hauled by oxen north to Anema's corner and then one mile west to the location which had been chosen. A square piece of ground, ten acres, on the northwest corner of Renk de Jager's quarter (NW 34-61-3-5) had been donated for church property. A patent fee of ten dollars was paid to the provincial government.

Nearly all the men of the community helped with the building. Several good carpenters — Ben [illegible], Menne Nanninga, [illegible] Schuring, Jacob [illegible] — were among them and they made sure the job was done right. The logs were [illegible] and dovetailed together at the corners to keep them securely in place. A block and tackle was used to raise the logs to the higher levels. When all the logs were in place, diagonal braces were fastened across the top to keep the corners square. The roof was made of pole rafters covered by one-inch lumber with cedar shingles over that. Some of the old-timers say it was the only roof in Neerlandia at that time which did not leak. There were three large windows on the longer north and south sides and two on the west side. The doors, which were on the west side, sometimes did not shut very well and were therefore propped with a stick of wood. Another homesteader, William Swatfield, neither Dutch nor Christian Reformed, also helped with



Floor plan of the log church. The building was about thirty by twenty-four feet and seated approximately 108 people. At first the only stove was the one in the back of the church, but later another stove was placed near the front. For baptisms, a bowl of water was brought in. For the celebration of the Lord's Supper, two long tables were placed at the front of the church. Each July First the church benches were used outside for the picnic.

the church building. He made a [illegible] the making of small shingles on the [illegible] between the logs were [illegible] with moss to keep the wind out.



Log church built in [illegible]

At first the inside of the church was of bare logs, but several years later the walls were [illegible] with boards [illegible] building was [illegible] in place of the [illegible] for [illegible]. The [illegible] was [illegible] about twenty [illegible] and had a seating capacity of [illegible] people. There was a small [illegible] of the [illegible] for the minister [illegible] and [illegible] reading elder. The building was heated by a large wood burning stove near the back [illegible] near the [illegible] of the building. The total cost was about [illegible] hundred dollars, [illegible] hundred of which was [illegible] from the [illegible] Church [illegible]

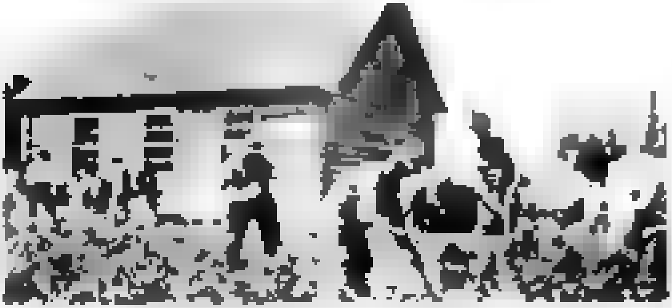
When the building was nearly completed, the settlers made a request [illegible] Classis [illegible] of the Christian Reformed Church that [illegible] congregation [illegible] The request was granted and Rev. [illegible] of [illegible] Washington and Rev. [illegible] of [illegible] Washington were appointed to assist the [illegible] Christian Reformed Church in organizing and establishing as Christian Reformed Church [illegible]

In May [illegible] the following memberships were transferred from [illegible]

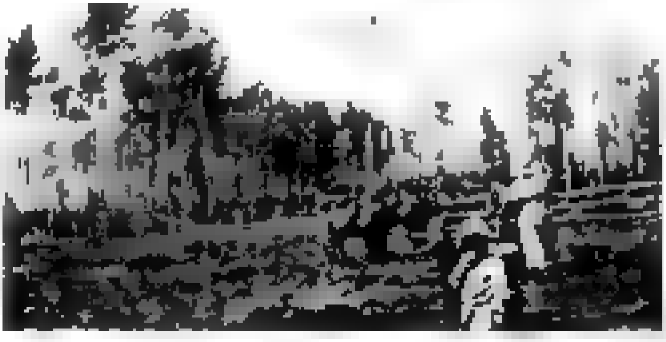
[illegible] with three children
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] with [illegible] children
[illegible]
[illegible] children
[illegible] with [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] with one child
[illegible]
[illegible] with three children
[illegible]
[illegible] with one [illegible]
[illegible] children
[illegible] with [illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible] children
[illegible]

Even though there were more settlers in Neerlandia, not all of them immediately requested membership transfers from Edmonton.



Clearing around church building, July



Clearing the church grounds

On Wednesday, June 2, 1915, the organizational meeting for the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church was held in the new log church which had not yet been completed. It was pouring rain, but since there was no way of letting people know if the meeting was cancelled, it was held anyhow. In spite of the weather, nearly all of the congregation was present at the event. Rev. [illegible] Jongbloed and deacon [illegible] had come from Edmonton the previous week to represent the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church for the occasion. Rev. Jongbloed chaired the meeting and [illegible] was asked to take minutes. Rev. Jongbloed explained that the two ministers from Washington were unable to be present so he had been asked to take charge of the organizing ceremony. At the time it was organized, the congregation was composed of seventeen families. There were thirty-three confessing members and forty-six baptized members, including Gerrit and Wilhelmina [illegible] and their three children, Hermina, William and Fredrik, of [illegible].

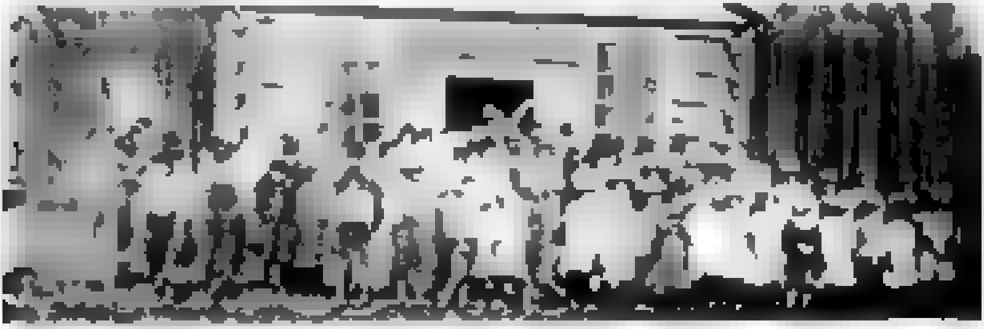
After Rev. Jongbloed declared the congregation organized, nomination of candidates for consistory took place. It was decided

to have three elders and [illegible] deacons. After nominations, there was a [illegible] the candidates [illegible] their names [illegible] Baker [illegible] as treasurer [illegible] Messer [illegible] as treasurer.

[illegible] held immediately after the [illegible] a baptismal font and an organ. It was decided not to get an [illegible] immediately because there was no money. At this meeting [illegible] who was from the [illegible] in the Netherlands, was accepted as a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The treasurer reported an income until that time of $278, which included $100 from the Church Help Fund. Expenses [illegible] of $[illegible].

The Formative Years 1915-1927

[illegible] the more administrative [illegible] ordering a book of sermons [illegible] from the Netherlands for use in the reading services and a set of catechism books for the young people in the congregation. After about eight months, [illegible] was hired as church custodian at $[illegible] per month,

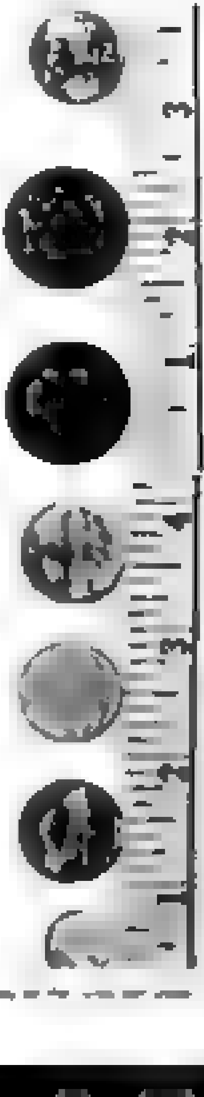


First congregation — 1915

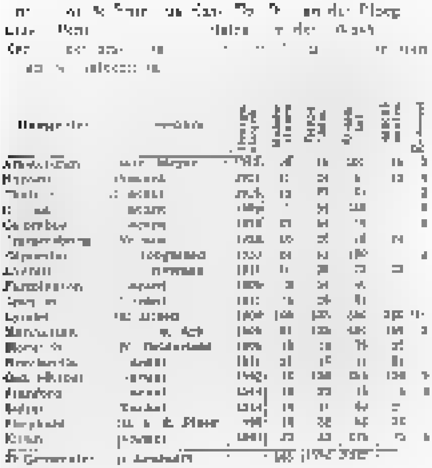
replacing Rienk de Jager who had to that time done the job free of charge. The church yard and cemetery were fenced [illegible] and Willem de [illegible] The consistory put an advertisement in [illegible] Christian Reformed Church in New Jersey.

There was much to be done and the consistory had to set priorities [illegible] When a complaint was heard about the poor singing during the services, the diagnosis was simple: there was no organ to lead the singing. [illegible] decided against purchasing an organ since there was not enough money. [illegible] a student [illegible] through [illegible] in 1925 and to have a room built onto the church to be used as a classroom. December [illegible] 1926 [illegible]

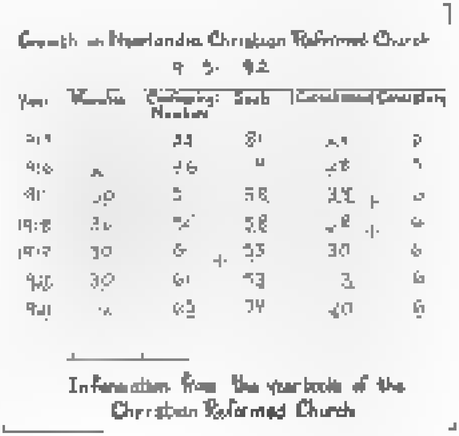
* * *



increase the *gezelligheid* through their presence." For a congregational meeting, members of the church assembled for a whole day. First the finances and goals of the church were discussed, then one or usually two essays were presented by various members and discussed at length. The essays had such inspirational titles as "Above the Stars" (Henry Kippers), "Our Love Response to God" (Douwe Terpstra), "Love Serves" (Tuininga), or "The Wellspring of Life" (Tuininga). The church seldom sent a delegate to the regular Classis meetings as was required, for lack of funds. They were usually held in Washington, but in 1917 Popko Schuring attended one such meeting held in Montana. In 1922 elder Jelle Tuininga also attended such a meeting.



Nederlandia church became a member of Classis Pacific. Page from Christian Reformed Church Yearbook, 1917



Growth in Nederlandia Christian Reformed Church

Information from the yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church

* * *

A Gold Watch

"I remember going to Sunday school. Henry Kippers was our teacher. He had a gold watch, and he would pull it out and say, 'If one of you can learn Psalm 119 by heart, you can have this watch.'"

Treasures

On December 26 we always had our Christmas party. Then the children got bags of candy and some little gift like a book or a pair of mitts. When we went to Sunday school, if we knew our text and Psalm verse we would get a card with a Bible picture on it. We saved them until we had enough, about ten, to get a Dutch psalmbook or a Bible. We treasured that. We had Sunday school before the afternoon service.

Gladys Struyfhoost

* * *

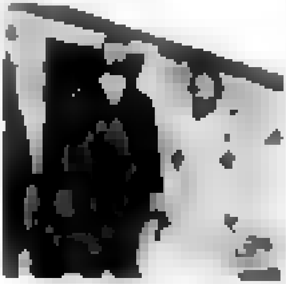
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Ellen Mathels

[illegible]



[illegible]

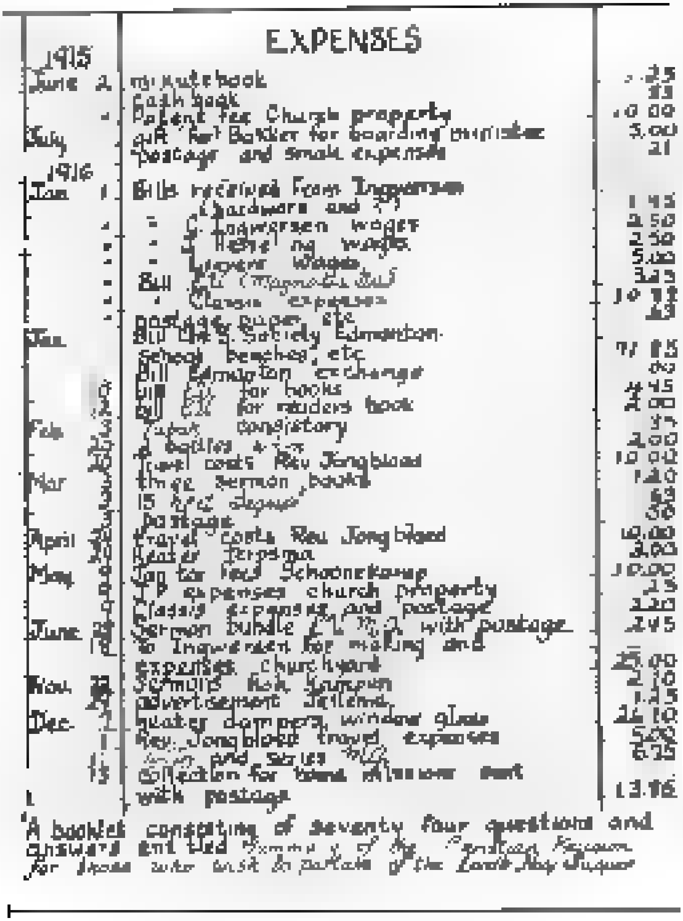
[illegible]

[illegible] Neerlandia: The reply was, [illegible] Beyond that lies Neerlandia."

[illegible]

Parsonage (to be built)	$1200
[illegible]	$ [illegible]
Salary	$1200
Miscellaneous Expenses	$ 400
Total	$3050

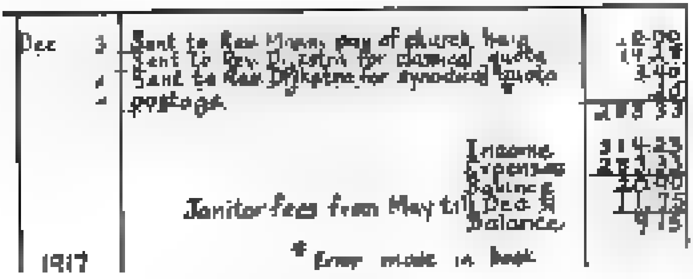
The [illegible]



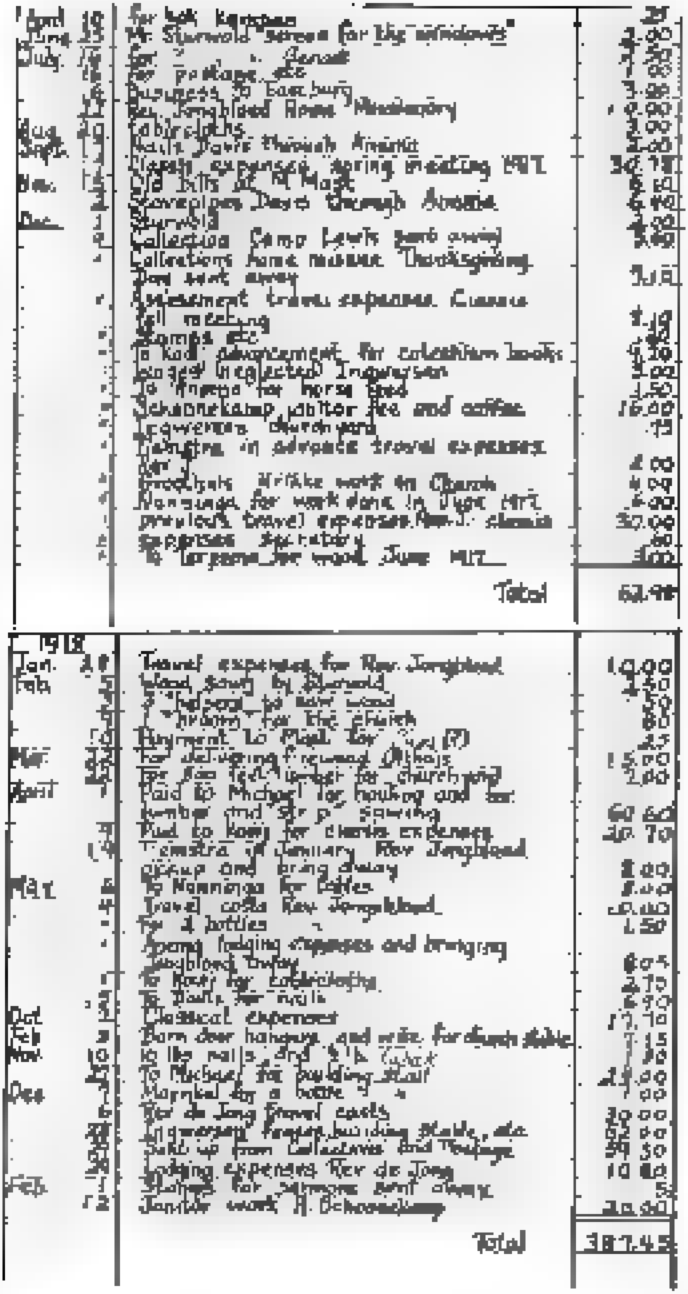
EXPENSES

1915			
June	2	minute book	.25
		cash book	.15
	"	Patent fee Church property	10.00
July	"	gift Rev Bakker for boarding minister	5.00
	"	postage and small expenses	.21
1916			
Jan	1	Bills received from Ingwersen (hardware and [illegible])	1.45
	"	" C. Ingwersen wages	2.50
	"	" [illegible] wages	2.50
	"	" [illegible] wages	5.00
	"	Bill [illegible] (Magnetic [illegible])	3.25
	"	" Classis expenses	10.[illegible]
	"	postage, paper, etc	.63
Jan		Bill the S. Society Edmonton. School benches, etc	71.85
		Bill Edmonton exchange	.00
	8	Bill [illegible] for books	4.45
	12	Bill [illegible] for readers book	2.00
Feb	3	[illegible] consistory	.35
	25	4 bottles wine	2.00
	20	Travel costs Rev Jongbloed	10.00
Mar	3	three sermon books	1.20
	3	15 [illegible]*	.63
	3	postage	.30
April	20	travel costs Rev Jongbloed	10.00
	20	heater Terpsma	2.00
May	9	Tax for Rev. Schoonekamp	10.00
	9	[illegible] expenses church property	.25
	9	Classis expenses and postage	2.20
June	28	Sermon bundle [illegible] with postage	2.45
	18	to Ingwersen for making and expenses churchyard	25.00
Nov	22	Sermons Rev. [illegible]	2.10
	22	advertisement [illegible]	1.25
Dec	1	heater dampers, window glass	26.10
	1	Rev. Jongbloed travel expenses	5.00
		[illegible] and stairs [illegible]	6.25
	13	collection for home mission sent with postage	13.16

*A booklet consisting of seventy four questions and answers entitled [illegible] for those who wish to partake of the Lord's Supper

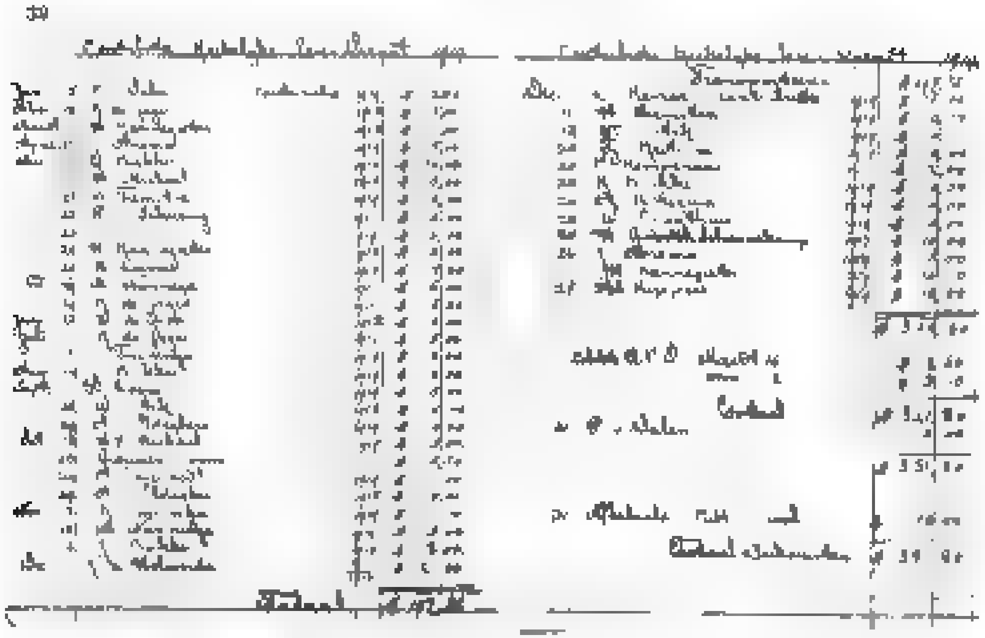


Dec	3	Sent to Rev [illegible] pay of church [illegible]	10.00
		Sent to Rev. D[illegible] for classical quota	14.2[illegible]
	"	Sent to Rev Dykstra for synodical quota	3.40
	"	postage	.10
			293.33
		Income	314.23
		Expenses	293.33
		Balance	20.90
		Janitor fees from May till Dec 31	11.75
		Balance	9.15
1917		* Error made in book	



April	19	For [illegible]	.25
June	25	Mr. Sturwold screen for the windows	2.00
July	16	For " " Benefit	2.50
	16	For postage etc	1.00
	16	Business to [illegible]burg	3.00
	22	Rev. Jongbloed Home Missionary	9.00
Aug	20	Tablecloths	3.00
Sept.	19	Nails Davis through Amerie	2.00
		Classis expenses spring meeting 1917	34.75
Nov.	15	Old bills at M Maat	5.50
	2	Stovepipes Davis through Amerie	6.40
Dec.	1	Sturwold	4.00
	9	Collection Camp Lewis sent away	3.00
		Collections home mission Thanksgiving Day sent away	9.15
		Assessment travel expenses Classis fall meeting	3.10
		Stamps etc	.40
		To Kool advertisement for catechism books	9.20
		Bogert (neglected) Ingwersen	3.00
		To Anema for horse feed	1.50
		Schoonekamp janitor fee and coffee	16.00
		Ingwersen churchyard	.75
		Tiemstra in advance travel expenses Rev J	2.00
		Brookhuis [illegible] work on Church	4.00
		Nonninga for work done in June 1917	6.00
		previous travel expenses Rev J. classis	30.00
		expenses secretary	.60
		To Terpsma for wood June 1917	3.00
		Total	62.98

1918			
Jan.	30	Travel expenses for Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
Feb	5	Wood sawn by Sturwold	4.50
	5	2 "helpers" to saw wood	.50
	9	2 "brooms" for the church	.80
	10	Payment to Maat for [illegible] (?)	.25
Mar.	22	For delivering firewood Dykhuis	15.00
	25	For [illegible] feet lumber for churchyard	2.00
April	7	Paid to Michael for hauling and for lumber and strip sawing	60.60
	9	Paid to Kool for classis expenses	20.70
	14	Tiemstra of January Rev Jongbloed pickup and bring away	2.00
May	6	To Nonninga for bottles	2.00
	4	Travel costs Rev Jongbloed	20.00
		For 2 bottles	1.50
		Anema lodging expenses and bringing Jongbloed away	6.05
		To Kool for tablecloths	2.75
	31	To Davis for nails	6.90
Oct	3	Classical expenses	17.70
Feb	2	Barn door hangers and wire for church stable	7.15
Nov.	10	to the nails and [illegible]	.80
	25	To Michael for building stall	25.00
Dec	7	Marnkel for a bottle	1.00
	6	Rev de Jong travel costs	30.00
	28	Ingwersen fence building stable, etc	62.00
	29	Sent up from collections and Thanksgiving	39.50
	30	Lodging expenses Rev de Jong	10.00
Feb.	1	Stamps for sermons sent away	.5
	12	Janitor work H. Schoonekamp	20.00
		Total	387.45

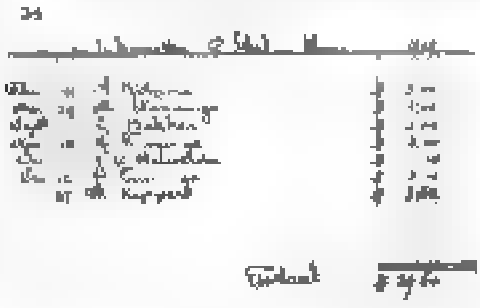


Page from the cash book of the church

Rev. and Mrs. Selles

Rev. H. Van Der Woude and Rev. A. Selles, whose duties were split 50-50 between Edmonton and Neerlandia.

The Neerlandia church could not afford to support a minister. Income for the church was meagre but a budget was always drawn up. Every family on the church's list was expected to give ten dollars per year to the church. This amount was often not collected. In 1920 there was some talk of increasing this amount to fifteen dollars but nothing came of it. The three dollar rent for the horse stalls was seldom collected, and by 1925 no one had yet paid a one-dollar fee to reserve a graveyard plot. School furniture, which had been



bought for the Christian School Society, was sold to the Public School Board, who were lax in paying their debt. An additional loan of one hundred dollars from the Church Help Fund came in 1915 but, four years later, only forty dollars had been repaid. The church's Benevolence Fund received donations, two from the Monarch Christian Reformed Church (fifteen dollars both times), and one from the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church (fifty dollars). Considering the financial circumstances of the settlers, though, this "poor fund" was probably taxed to the limit.

The situation was indeed bleak as the congregation met in 1918 for a special day of prayer because of the hard economic situation. Yet the people were committed to their ideals; through those early days of poverty the settlers remained undaunted in their goal to establish a strong church community.

* * *

WRONG DAY 1

One time, we were working with about six men, cutting a road through the bush. It was a Saturday. Then along came a bachelor homesteader, all dressed up in his Sunday best. We asked him where he was going. He replied, "To church — it's Sunday isn't it?" He was only one day out.

Martin van der Heide

* * *

WRONG DAY 2

In the pioneer days, when no one had radios or any other means of communication, it was often difficult to keep the days apart, everyday having the same activities. Families with children going to school did not have nearly as much trouble keeping days straight as those living alone did.

One day my father was on his way to church when he decided to call in on Reink de Jager, who lived alone a half mile from church. Much to father's surprise, Reink was busy cooking erwtensoep (his Saturday meal) and mending overalls. He always marked off the days on his calendar, but had forgotten to do so one day and now was one day out.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

The budget contributions were collected by stewards who visited each home to solicit the member's donation. In 1923, an envelope system was tried whereby people could put their contribution toward the budget in the collection bag once a month. This system was soon abandoned, however. The steward system was reintroduced and continued well into the thirties. Although some people paid their budget dues by pledging labour, the many payments listed for such tasks as fencing, building pews, cutting firewood, and the like lead one to conclude that volunteer labour was not prevalent. One member settled his debt with the church in a most unusual way: he told consistory that they could collect his unpaid quotas from a neighbour who owed him money.

As the turkeys were raised and the minister at [illegible] members [illegible] designate a [illegible] for the church [illegible] weight and give the money to the church [illegible] were dressed but [illegible] asked the members [illegible] keep them for another year [illegible] the people were [illegible] church builders.

[illegible] with an idea whereby people [illegible] and that seemed to have been the end of the matter.

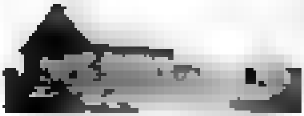
[illegible] the church was not [illegible] Netherlands [illegible] amounts that were [illegible] Washington.

*

Another Sunday a visiting minister from the United States was addressing the congregation. This man had the habit of walking [illegible] the side of the platform missed the edge and landed into the laps of the congregation members sitting below him.

[illegible] Bosma

Expenditures for the church in the first ten years were minimal. [illegible] dollars was spent improving the church interior [illegible] extension [illegible] hundred dollars was built on the south east of the church to accommodate the [illegible] that was flourishing. A regular expense was to reimburse elders who paid visits to the church members in [illegible] the church's major expense was paying for classical appointments



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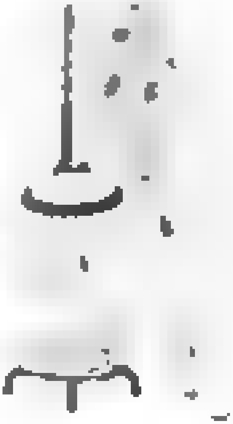


[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

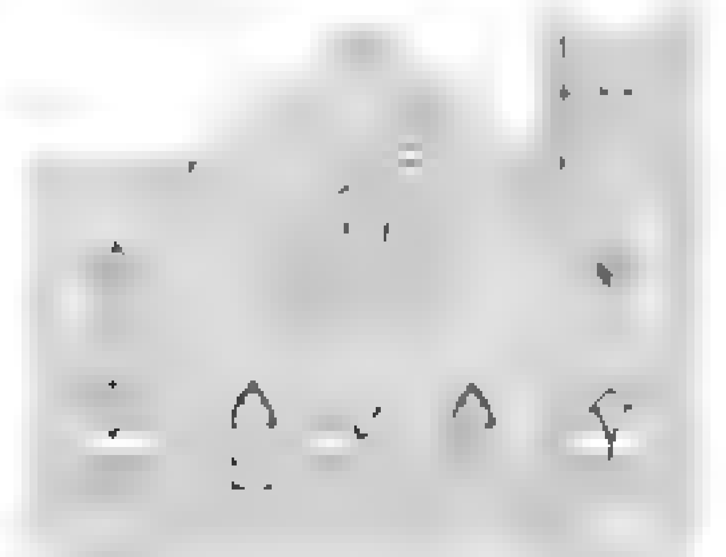
[illegible] 915-1927 the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church [illegible]

[illegible]

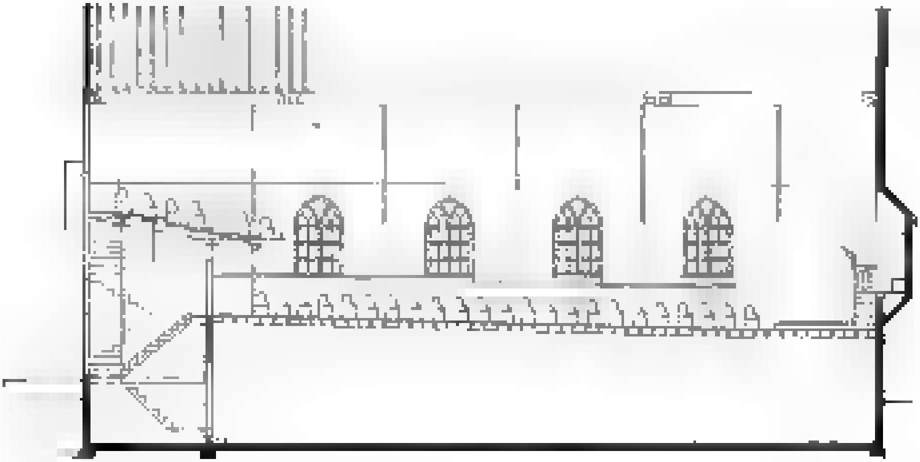
[illegible]

[illegible] congregation was hard-pressed to meet the [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible] sketch of first timber church, drawn by [illegible]



Preliminary sketch of interior of first lumber church drawn by Menne Nanninga.

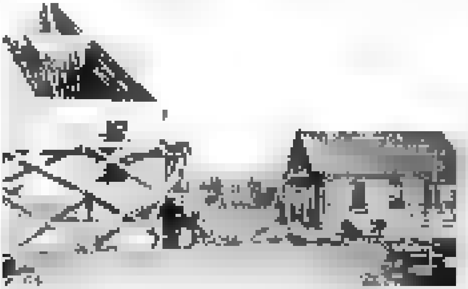
lars, and this was expected to generate the money for the church's budget of $3400 ($1600 of which was to be set aside for a future minister's salary).

The church was convinced it needed its own minister and was willing to sacrifice for it. Rev. A. Selles, writing in *The Banner* of February 1929 said, "A congregation which has been shepherdless for nearly fourteen years is in dire need of a pastor. There is no doubt in our mind that for that very reason the servant of the Lord who will answer the call saying 'I am coming over to help you' will be very much appreciated."[6] The parsonage and new church must be seen in this light, namely, as attractions for a pastor the church could call its own.

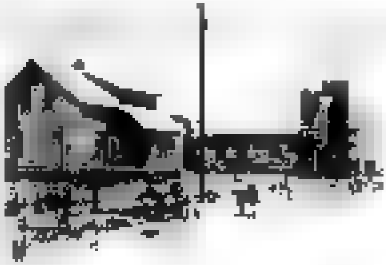
The parsonage was built first. Menne Nanninga and Jacob Olthuis directed the construction, much of which was done by volunteer labour. The parsonage was built east of the log church. It was about thirty-four by twenty-four feet in size, with a full basement, three bedrooms on the second storey, and a large living area on the main floor. By September of 1928 it was completed and two rooms were rented out to a teacher, Mr. Levy, for ten dollars per month.

The lumber church, completed in 1929, was a big undertaking. Aside from a few men who were paid for the work they did on the project (Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, Jerry Reitsma), nearly all the work was done on a volunteer basis by the congregation. The logs were hauled from the bush to lumber mills (bills were paid to Chileen, Fluet's, and Garneau's) to be sawn into the appropriate dimensions, then brought to the site. Gravel, hard to come by in those days, was hauled in the winter of 1927-28 from the 'Island' in Shoal Lake and supplemented with field stone from Neerlandia farms. At the site the larger stones were crushed with sledge

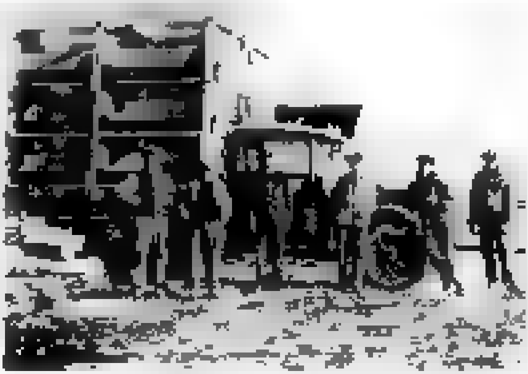
Building a new church. The foundation is laid



The rafters are up

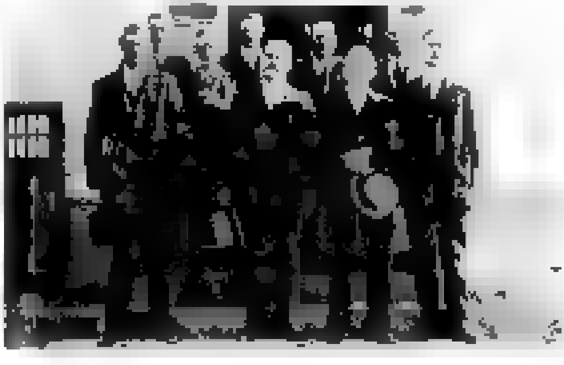


The roof is on



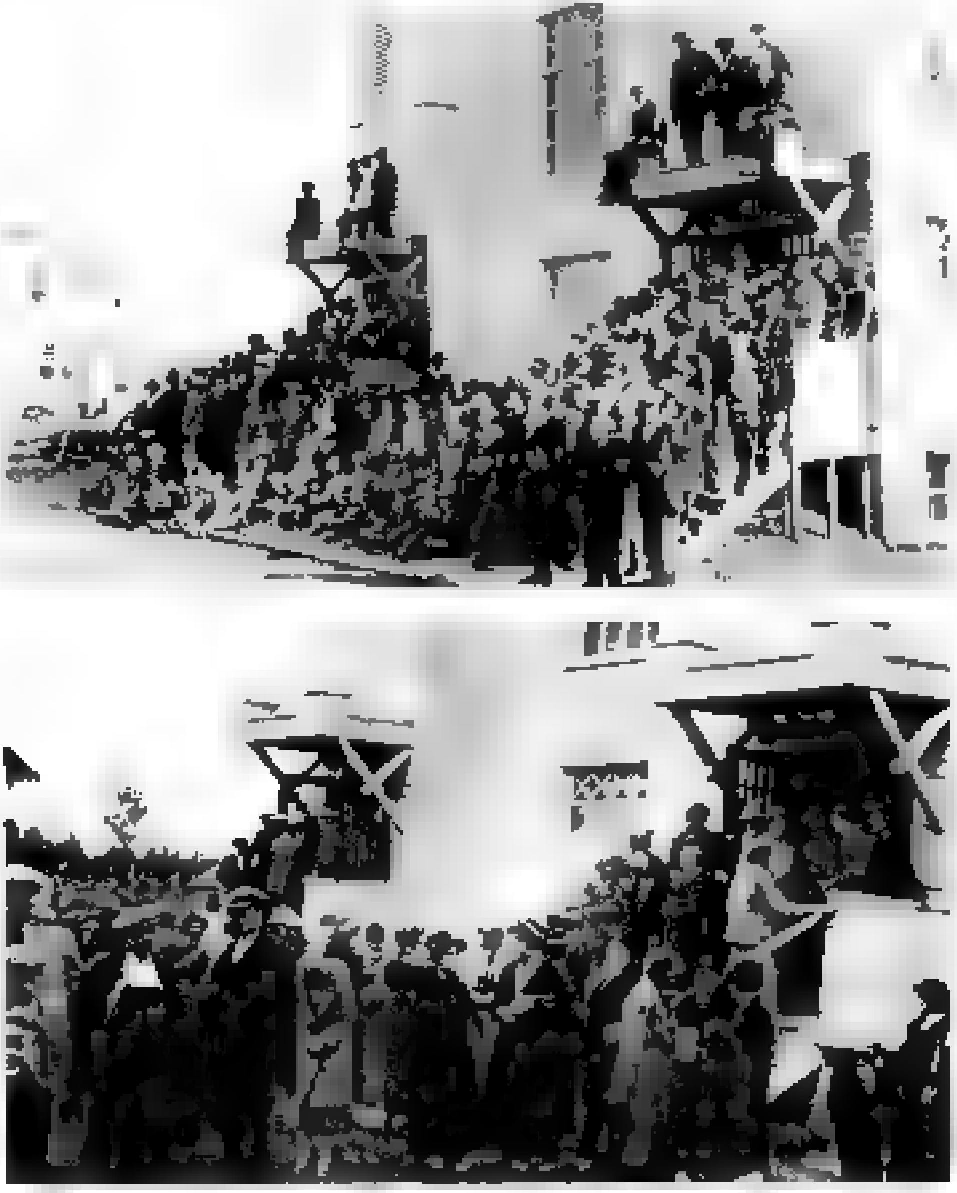
The benches arrive. George Tuinga, Johannes Peters, Corny Ingwersen, Ed Alsmaaga, Billy Quick, Gerrit Ingwersen

Dedication day



The consistory at the dedication of the church: Klaas Tuinenga, Hendrik Schoonekamp, Jelle Tuininga, John Aroma, Frank Bilkman, Tjerry Stiensted, Rev. Bult, Rev. Muller, Rev. Salins

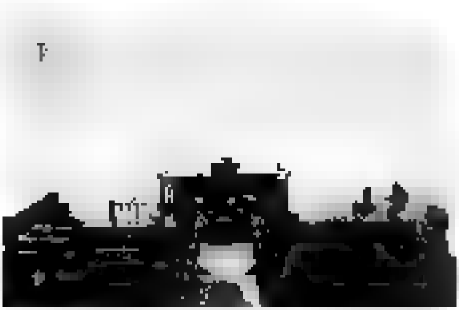
DEDICATION DAY



hammers and a crew of twenty-four worked all day mixing the cement with shovels and carrying it to the foundation forms. By the winter of 1928-29, the basement was complete and was used for regular worship services. Construction was continued on the upper floor. One generous Dutch plasterer, not a local, supplied plastering work for free, asking to be compensated only for his traveling costs. In May 1929, $1205.40 was owing on labour for carpentry work, but the consistory, always short of money, decided to pay at that time only those who needed it most.

The second church

Contrasted with the old log church, the new church looked impressive. Rev. A. Selles wrote in the March 15, 1929, issue of *The Banner* of the new church: "It exhibits the splendid taste of an architect. And the brethren at Neerlandia may be proud of having a brother in their midst who is chiefly responsible for the planning and construction of these buildings. We admire his painstaking patience in using all the help available. It is nothing less than a


All is ready

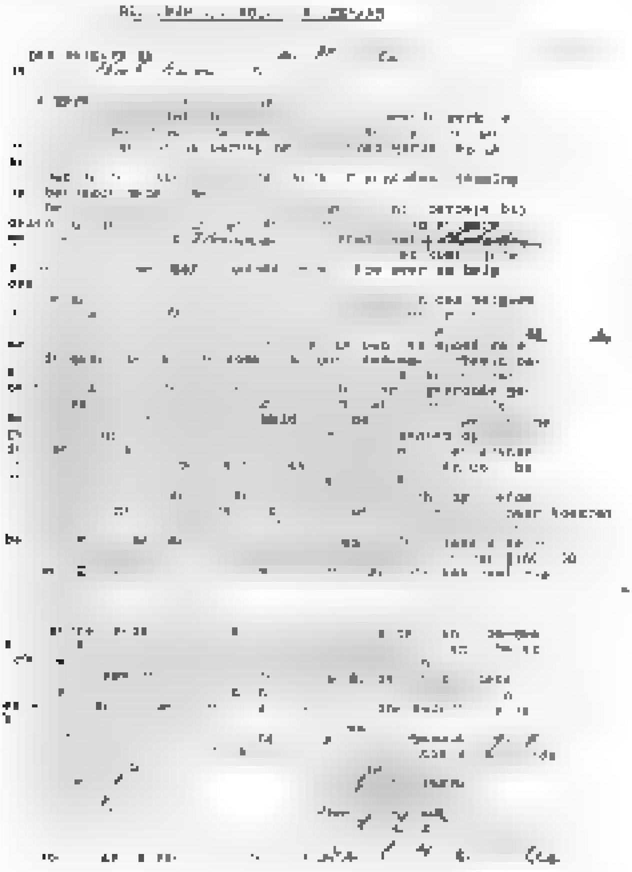
Rear view of church showing balcony. Joe and Gerrie Olthuis being shown the church by Hendrik Schoonekamp.

grand's desk to use the class of mechanics he used and still produce such splendid results.

The new church was dedicated on Monday, April 2, 1929. The old log church was torn down in the spring of 1929, even though some felt it should be preserved. The lumber from the roof was reused. Jerry Bedsma used some of it in building a cabin.

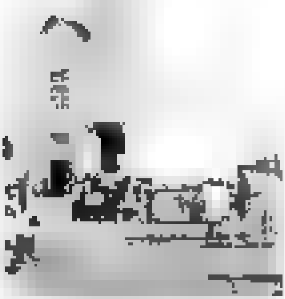
The consistory wasted no time calling a minister once permission had been granted by classis early in 1929. Three former guest ministers were placed on a trio for the congregation to decide on. They being Revs. [illegible], De Jong, and Van Der Woude. In March of that year Rev. Van Der Woude was given the call while he was serving a congregation in Hoboken, New Jersey. He accepted and was installed as Neerlandia's first full time pastor on June 23, 1929.

Rev. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Soon after he arrived (July 11, 1929) it was mentioned that his prayers were too long and



Call letter sent to Rev. Van Der Woude which includes an urgent request to [illegible]. Besides the salary the Rev. is also promised to be supplied with firewood.

Rev. Harm van Der Woude


The congregation after church

he was requested to see if it might be possible to shorten them. To emphasize the point of his sermons, the Rev. would say, "Ik herhaal het, ik herhaal het, en ik zeg het nog eens weer — I repeat it, I repeat it and I say it once again." Another quote he often warned the congregation with was "[illegible] worden [illegible] — [illegible] become money-eaters."

* *

Rev. H. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Once in 1925 when he was visiting Neerlandia, some men were working at the log church. Mr. Reitsma said to him, "Did you know Mrs. Mast died?"

"No. I'd better prepare a sermon then," was the reply. He walked around the log church three times, came back and said, "I've got the sermon ready!"

Jennie Reitsma

*

Rev. van Der Woude showed a tendency to promote social and cultural isolation from the surrounding communities, as part of being "in the world but not of it." He is quoted as having said "In isolation is our strength," from the Dutch theologian Groen van Prinsterer.

Church life flourished in those years. The Men's and Ladies' Societies, Young People's Society, Singing Society, and catechism classes served the peoples' social as well as spiritual needs. After a request by some members to start a Sunday School again (1930) the consistory ruled that if proper use was made of catechism classes, a Sunday School would be superfluous. The worship services changed very little, with occasional variations introduced such as having the consistory and other men stand during the prayers — it was considered more reverent — standing during certain songs, and organ playing before the worship service. The congregation had added two more members by 1934, and the labor and sexton expenses continued until at least 1936.

During those years there were a few minor disciplinary prob-

lems. In March 1929 complaints were received that the young people were fooling around during choir practice making singing impossible and on one occasion some of the young men returning from a day of hunting and trapping went directly to the church where a meeting was going to be held. While waiting there they amused themselves by shooting at a block of wood in the church basement. Brother Henry Kuppers brought the matter to the consistory to ask if this could be discouraged or stopped.

*

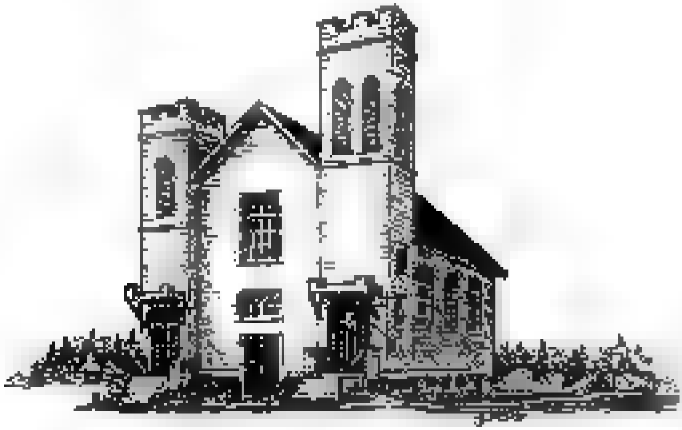
Shiny Tie Clip

Young men were wearing tie and pins or tie clips at that time. Rev. Jr. Van Der Woude preached and tried to keep the attention of his audience, but one teenager thought to polish his clip up some. This caught the eye of the preacher. Pausing for a few seconds he said, "Als u klaar is dan kunnen wij verder." (When you are ready then we will proceed.) After that we teenagers did not want the preacher's eye on us during the service.

L. Nanninga

* * *

Economically the times were hard for the church during those Depression years. The essay topic for the 1931 congregational meeting was by Henry Kuppers Sr. entitled, "The Current World Crisis and the Believer!" When Classis asked that the consistory fulfil its financial obligations re the Church Help Fund loan, the clerk wrote back saying that this was impossible in light of the circumstances. Rev. Van Der Woude was willing to take a $400 cut in pay in 1931. He said that since everyone else was receiving less it was only fair that



he should do. This seems to have been a lesson for him, and his salary was increased again in 19[illegible] to its previous level. The budget which stood at almost $[illegible] ($[illegible] per family) in 19[illegible] was reduced to $[illegible] ($[illegible] per family) in 19[illegible]. The budgets included subsidies from classis and collections.

By 1935 the congregation had grown to more than fifty families, an indication that, in [illegible] years, young [illegible] families [illegible] growing up. The essay topics at congregational meetings often dealt with child-related subjects: [illegible] (1937), [illegible] children (Lammert Wierenga 1938), [illegible] childrearing [illegible] table [illegible]. Though a few members left, the church was showing growth spiritually and numerically.

With some sadness Rev. van der Woude announced his retirement in 194[illegible], being 65 years of age. As he left the Neerlandia congregation [illegible] elsewhere, receiving an honourable emeritus, he could look back on his work, the Lord's work, in that northern Alberta community. He had been a good preacher and had provided firm leadership [illegible] the Neerlandia church had appreciated and benefited from.

*

Faith

One day two of the younger girls from the Lammert Wierenga family were walking home from school through the forest and they suddenly heard crackling of twigs and then a short way ahead of them they saw something jumping big and black. They were petrified: a bear! The girls were so scared they sat down on the nearest stump and thought they should pray. Their prayer began: "[illegible] bless this food!" They were young and only knew their mealtime prayer. Later someone asked, "Why were you girls praying for the bear to [illegible]?" Anyway, it turned out that it was not a bear but their own big, black dog hunting around in the bush.

Norman Terpstra

* * *

Besides teaching, the consistory also requested my services as organist in church twice a Sunday. As a token of appreciation I received an [illegible] Bible, beautifully inscribed by Mr. Ingwersen, which is still one of my prized possessions.

Grace Boer

*

1942 — to the present

In the forties the church grew numerically through natural increase as the first generation married and had children. Because of the isolationist stance there were no members received from surrounding communities. In fact some of the children reached their teens without realizing there were Christians in other areas. One member did suggest engaging in mission outreach to the [illegible] in the surrounding areas but this fell on deaf ears. Nevertheless the church building was soon too small for the con-

[illegible] in the shadow of van Der Woude.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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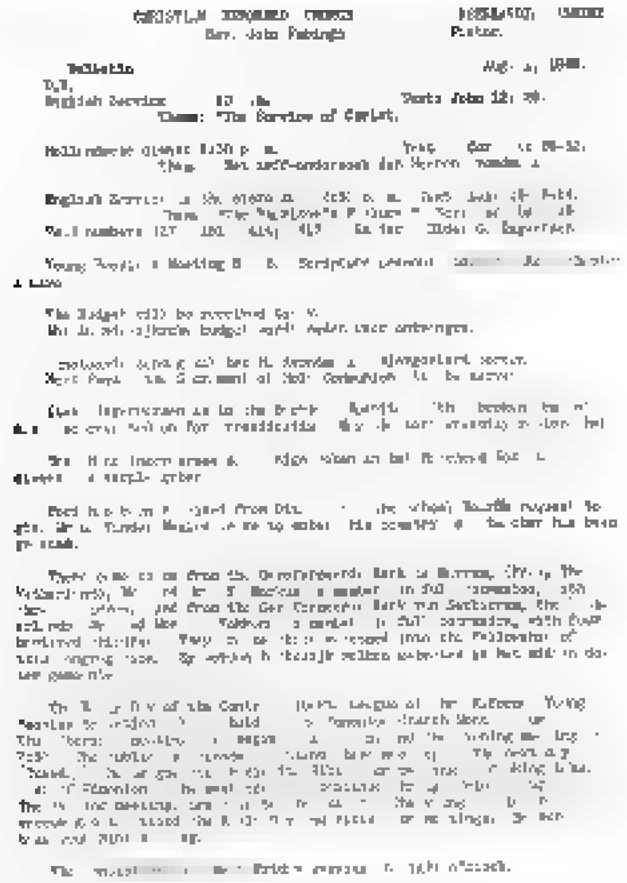


closer inspection, saw flames. He immediately went to the store to let store manager Frank Visser know, then rushed to C. K. Mast's. When the men got to the church, the whole basement was full of flames. Frank threw one or more fire extinguishers through a basement window, but that made no difference and the men soon realized that not much could be done to stop the fire, although they and others continued for a long time to haul water with buckets to douse the fire.

By then many people had come, including janitor Albert Mast. He had left his watch in the church — a keepsake from his father — and he wanted to get it. The bystanders tried to restrain him, but Albert insisted. He went inside and soon came out with the watch, suffering no more than singed hair and a scorched face.

Many of the people watching the burning church were crying.

but one old pioneer jokingly said that he was glad it was burning because the church had been too small anyhow. (With the recent influx of immigrants the church building had been crowded.)

Meanwhile, water was hauled from the store to keep the parsonage soaked down so it would not catch fire. The pump at the store could not keep up with the water that was needed, though, so some men came with a stoneboat loaded with containers of water. Later the garage and the store got hot as well. The Visser children were moved to Anema's place for safety. Water was also thrown on the garage and the store to keep them cool.

A firetruck had come from Barrhead, but by the time it came it was too late to do anything to the church building. Before midnight, the whole building had burnt down. All that was left standing above the smouldering ruins was the chimney, which still had smoke rising from the top like it often did. It reminded some young people of a popular song at the time, "The Smoke Goes Up the Chimney Just the Same."

The old organ and a few benches were the only things that had been rescued from the church. It was believed that overheating pipes in the furnace had been the cause of the fire.

* * *

The third church was built during a dry spring, with no rain till after the first of July. When rain finally came, everyone was so thankful that the boss gave the workers the day off.

* * *

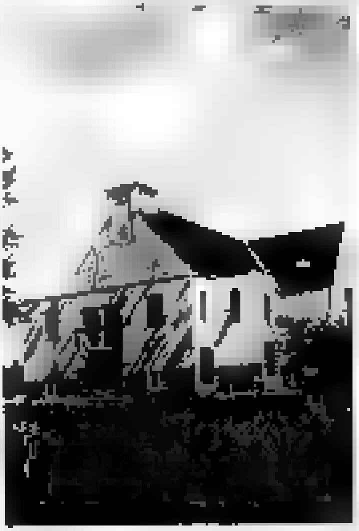
The church had been destroyed by fire in November 1948. Only a few things were saved. Plans were soon prepared, again by Menno Nanninga, for another larger building and before long work began on it. The church members pledged either time, money or loans to help finance the construction. Some of the Dutch immigrants who came to Neerlandia were hired to help as well. On June 28, 1950, the new building was dedicated. It was valued at ninety-six thousand dollars.

There were a few problems to solve regarding the church building and fixtures. The minutes of January 22, 1951 indicate a problem with the ventilation system: " ... The automatic ventilation on the church will not work as it has been installed. ... Sheet Metal Co. blames ... Electric and ... Electric blames them, but they now both blame the architect, and consequent (sic) is that the church is the loser."

The young people, however, had quietened down from the days when the second building was constructed. Still, there was a complaint: " ... some of the young people rubbed the dirt off their shoes on the walls in the basement."

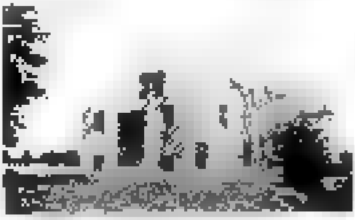
From 1948 to 1950 many Dutch immigrants came to Neerlandia and the Barrhead-Westlock area. As the nearest Christian Reformed Church, Neerlandia was responsible for the spiritual care of these immigrants. At first all the immigrants were brought to Neerlandia for Sunday church services. They were expected to pay two dollars per trip to the driver of the car that transported them. If

A NEW CHURCH

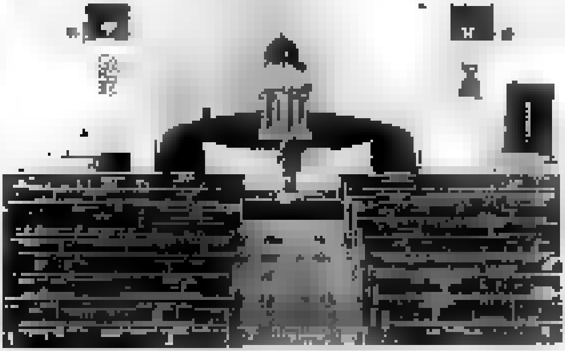


Construction progresses, 1948

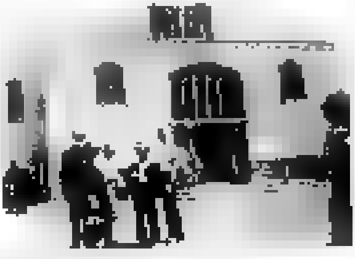
An imposing structure, outside



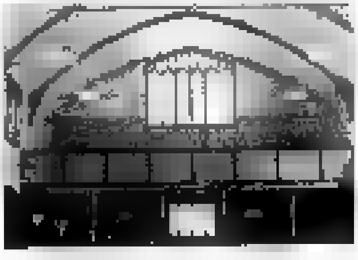
The third church under construction 1949.



And in [illegible] the pulpit.



The church is dedicated, 1950



The balcony, 1952.

[illegible]

[illegible]

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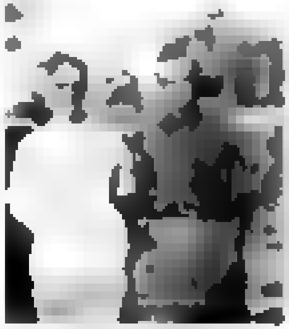
[illegible]

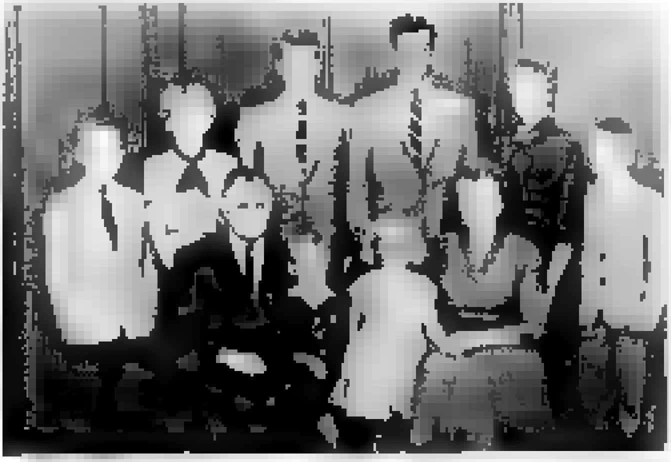


[illegible]

After a good sermon, February 1958

deal with the factions within the congregation and the church thrived under his tireless leadership. However in 1957 he accepted a call to Fort William, Ontario, and the congregation sadly bade him farewell.

After the Mulders left Rev. Harry Van Dyken accepted the call extended to him. He served the Neerlandia congregation from 1957-62. Rev. Van Dyken was well-versed in the doctrines of the Christian faith and taught them from the pulpit and in catechism and doctrine classes. As part of his teachings on the Christian life he emphasized the sinfulness of man. He stressed the covenant relationship between God and His people. Under his tutelage the members learned what it means to be Reformed. Rev. Van Dyken was followed by Rev. Harmen Hollander, who stayed in Neerlandia from 1962-66.



The Van Dykens. Back: Clifford, Marjorie, Arnold, Donald, Joanne, Curtis. Front: Harry, Gordon, Mary, Wilhelmina

After Rev. Hollander left Neerlandia was vacant until 1970 when Rev. Van Drunen accepted the call to serve the congregation. Rev. Van Drunen was a compassionate man. When Martin and Wilma Wierenga's little daughter Bernice was terminally ill with a brain tumour he frequently came to visit. On one occasion he took the fur cap he was wearing and flapping it as his hand held it out to her and said, "You are one of His (the Lord's) chicks."

During this period the ideas brought to Canada by the postwar immigrants became a source of friction in the congregation. Though the Kuyperians in the congregation had always promoted the idea that Christianity involved all areas of life, this was never widely accepted in Neerlandia. Immigrants and others formed the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (later called the AACS) based in Toronto. This association aggressively proclaimed the view that all of life is religion and that Christians must therefore show God's Lordship over every area of life.

[illegible] rose within the congregation. It was an unhappy time.

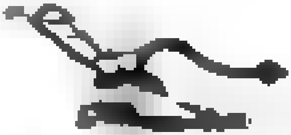
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] both projects were discontinued.

[illegible]

[illegible] From the church the members receive direction for [illegible] proclamation of God's Word.



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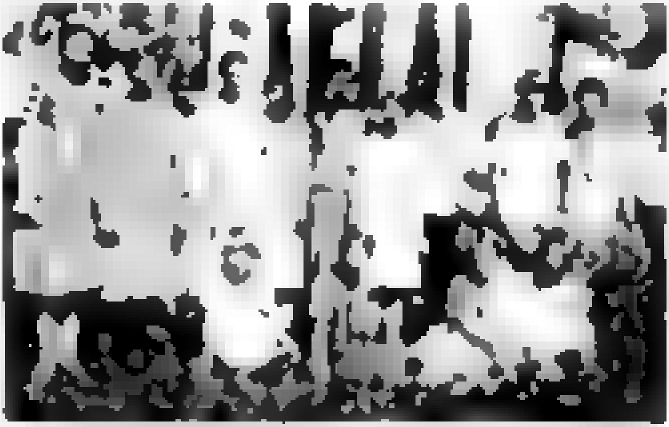
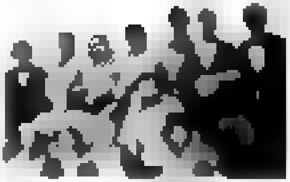


[illegible]

[illegible] young

There was a social as well as a study aspect to the Young [illegible]



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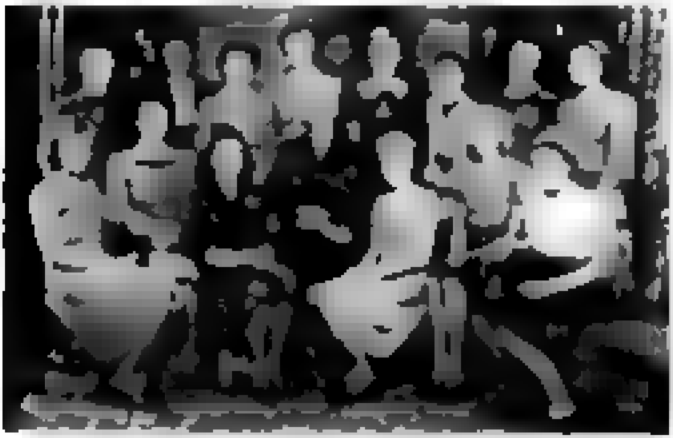


[illegible]

Though there have been many changes [illegible] Young People's [illegible] [illegible] leadership in the [illegible] up the years.

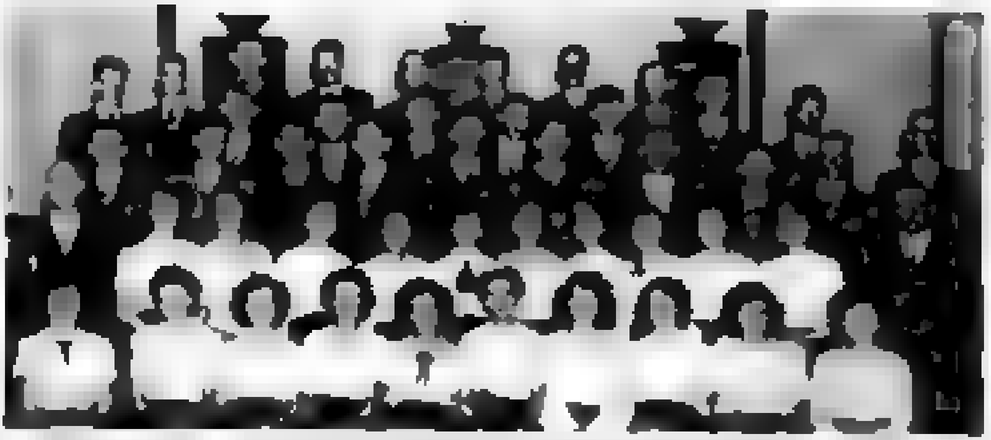
[illegible] workers were united and [illegible] [illegible] advantage [illegible].

[illegible]

Mrs. [illegible] at home in the parsonage 1947

According [illegible] the [illegible] denominational [illegible] a singing [illegible] during the services. [illegible] toward the presentation of [illegible] Christmas and Easter both in [illegible] and in hospitals, nursing homes and other [illegible]

Mrs. [illegible] program [illegible] women at each meeting. [illegible] though small in number [illegible] the community. The women hold a bazaar each year [illegible] the goods and refresh-



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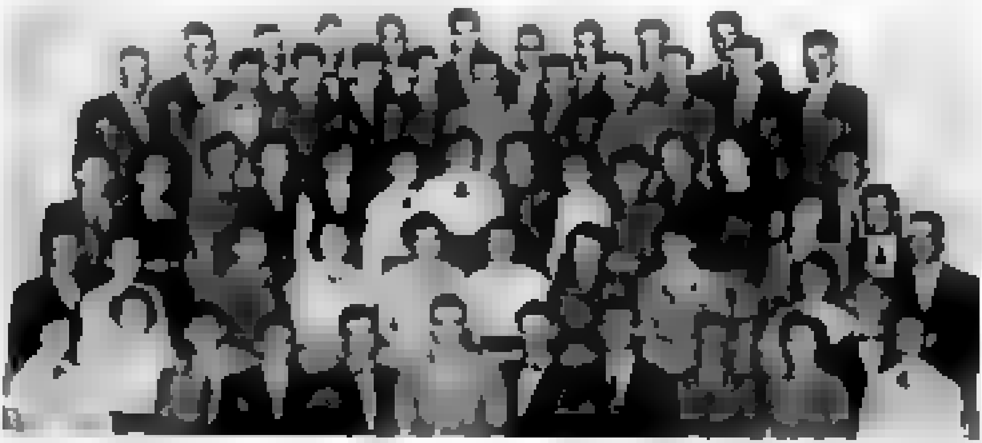


[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

ments and, of course, serving and cleaning up later. Quite a few donations are sent in by non-members too. With the proceeds of the sale the Society helps causes such as Rehoboth and The King's College, and helps to obtain items such as kitchen equipment for use in the church. In addition the women are faithful in visiting the Hillcrest Senior Citizens Home and the Barrhead Nursing Home every other week. They also visit the elderly and shut-ins in the community. Although they have had leadership from some of the ministers and their wives, the women have usually kept this society going by themselves. Through the years the members have changed, but the society remains faithful to the original purpose of Bible study and charitable work.

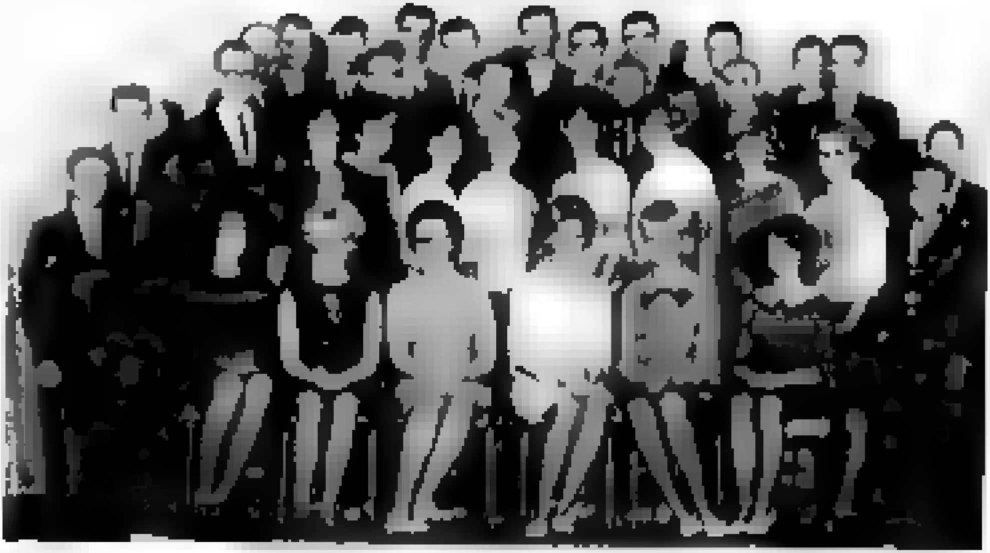
Young People's Society, 1957

Back Row: Henry Nanninga, Andrew Elgersma, Clifford Tuininga, Lambert Tuininga, George Strydhorst, Wilbert Scheuing, Ket Piers, John Tuininga, Peter Piers, Tony Fisher, Menno Nanninga, Alvin Nanninga

Third Row: Bert Piers, Lily Flamings, Rose Mast, Betty Fisher, Lucille Tuininga, Hilda Piers, Rosalie Nanninga, Marilyn Mast, Anne Tuininga, Joanne Gelderman, Edith Tuininga, Sandra Elgersma, Gerald Nanninga, Jack Olthuis

Second Row: Arnold van Dyken, Raymond Mectus, Judy Fisher, Joanne van Dyken, Elsie Olthuis, Mrs. van Dyken, Henry Piers, Don van Dyken, Johanna Nanninga, Henry Gelderman

Front: Jim Tuininga, Winifred Ingebrigtsen, Klaas Tuininga, Frans Wassink, John Strydhorst, Henry Strydhorst, Cornelia Kippers



Young People's Society

Back Row: Henry [illegible] Wierenga, Sidney [illegible], Ray [illegible], Henry Schuurman, [illegible]

Third Row: [illegible] Strydhorst, Tom [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] Strydhorst

Second Row: [illegible], Ray Hollander, [illegible] Hollander, Judy [illegible], Audrey Gelderman, Sharon [illegible], [illegible] Hollander, Edna Schuurman, Jennie Schuurman, Beverly [illegible], Jake Strydhorst

Front Row: Andrew Strydhorst, Sharon Hollander, Carol [illegible], Shirley Wierenga, [illegible], Betty Visser, Darlene Wierenga, Gordon Tuininga 1965-66

Memories From A Preacher's Kid

In September of 1946, Rev. and Mrs. John Rubingh came to Neerlandia with their teen age son Eugene. The pioneer days were long ended, but for this young transplanted Yankee it would still be an unforgettable adventure. My diary for September 7 says simply, "Came to Neerlandia," but the reality was far more astonishing for this sheltered son of the parsonage. The road was incredibly bad. I have since travelled the mountains of Sierra Leone also. Still, the road to Neerlandia that year was terrible. Every few miles we stopped to scrape the mud from the windshield to see if there was any hope of making it. Mother trembled to think to which outpost of the earth she was being gathered by her foolhardy husband, though in the end she had as much pluck as he.

The days of that autumn are stark in my memory, for the timid city kid was being hammered into shape. The young people painted the basement of the church that fall, and some muscled young buck named Elgersma painted me with [illegible]. Mother took one look at me and said, "You're not going back there." But I knew I had to go back, no matter what. Dad came down from the study and agreed with me, and I went back and painted with all

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

across the canopy of sky, the lonely howl of a crazy coyote. I remember how we laughed at the story of the Ukrainian neighbor who said to John Gelderman, "You horse me, I post-fence you," and they had a deal.

But those images have not yet caught the heart of it. In Neerlandia, in the 40's, the vision that drove the pioneers was still alive and vibrant. The depth of their faith they translated into action, and built a community known all around as founded in the name of Christ the King. The steel of their commitment was still flowing into their sons and daughters. Their hope in the future was still invincible then. There still was sod unturned, land as uncleared as when their fathers first crossed the Pembina. With those strong links to the past, and with that optimism about the future, there was a strong sense of self-identity. People in Neerlandia knew who they were. I could not have described it then, but I see it now: they knew who they were. At their hearts' core they were the people of God. They had staked everything on that commitment. It had given them a past and a hope.

The decades have rolled on, and I am told that while the externals have changed, in its essences Neerlandia is still as it was then. The steel is tempered now and the landscape a little softer, but in Neerlandia the sense of self-identity is yet clear: the coming of the Kingdom of God drives them on. And that, at last, is the heart of it.

Eugene Rubingh

Our Plight in Vacancy

Some three years ago, to the shock of us all,
There came from the east for our pastor a call
To do home-mission work, an extension of church,
Which call he accepted, and left us in the lurch.

Then just two weeks later our old church burned down,
And only its ruins were left in our town.
Yes, it was insured, but not near high enough,
With the present-day prices we pay for new stuff.

But plans for a new church were very soon made,
Pledges accepted, which of course, would be paid.
Our services now were held in the Hall,
But space there was lacking to seat them all.

So our group was divided, some went to the school,
Half English, half Dutch was kept as the rule.
Thus now we all worshipped and each did his part,
Though divided in body we were still one at heart.

This meant that the elders four sermons must read,
Plus two more in Barrhead, where one had to lead.
Besides this there were several classes to teach,
While none of the elders had learned how to preach.

Add all this together, there was work here to do,
And none was excused, for not even the flu.
Time marched on apace, and good sermons grew few
To read to the audience who sat in the pew.

The calls we extended to men of sound mind,
Were politely acknowledged but firmly declined.

We called, yes we called, from the east to the west
Some young and some old who had been through the test
And so two years passed and no minister came,
And the answers we got were always the same
They took their full time; their reply mostly late
We acknowledge your call, yes, your need there is great
"We hope very soon one will heed to your call
But I must decline," said another one, "that is all"
The past it was gloomy, the future not bright
But give up? no, not we, we'd keep on with the fight
So time went apace, our new church was complete
With room in abundance, for each one a seat
Although this new building was fair to behold
It could not entice the right man to our fold
Those men of Jerusalem, all of them so right
Although we prayed, pleaded and beseeched with our might
We called old and young, we called big and small
Had a few more years gone by we would have called them all
But now at last we can rejoice, for one our call has heard
To lead us in God's pastures green, and preach to us His Word
God grant him grace to labour here, and give him strength and life
And happiness while here with us, both to him and his wife
And may we all with one accord remember them in prayer
Rejoice with them when all is well, and in their burdens share
Now let us praise and bless our Lord for His great goodness wrought
Who after all these years of wait this man to us has brought
So magnify His holy name, His goodness faileth never
Preachers may come and they may go but God's Church goes on forever

Gerrit Ingwersen
Excerpts from poem read by [illegible] at the welcome party for Rev. [illegible] Meester [illegible]

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF NEERLANDIA

The year 1949 saw the beginning of a new stream of immigrants to Neerlandia. Amongst these people were members of the Vrijgemaakt Kerk in the Netherlands. In Neerlandia they joined the Christian Reformed Church but that was not to last too long.

The Christian Reformed Church had correspondence with the Synodical Kerk in the Netherlands and did not want to get involved in the trouble in the Netherlands. But they would not accept ministers from the Vrijgemaakt Kerk in their pulpits. Many in Neerlandia were well aware of recent developments in the Netherlands and, after talking to the new immigrants, some became very dissatisfied with the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church.

A number of times Lammert Wierenga wrote in *De Wachter* pertaining to the struggle in the Netherlands against synodical hierarchy. Their protests went to the consistory and classis but to no avail. Eventually in March, Lammert Wierenga, Ike Wierenga and [illegible] sent a letter to the General Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in [illegible] requesting them to ask both church groups in the Netherlands to present their views as to the reasons for separate church existence and [illegible] one group which had suspended and deposed and the other which [illegible] themselves. In the meantime a number became members of the Canadian Reformed Church [illegible] others wanted to wait for the answer of synod. A few days after the answer came: Synod had decided not to accede to their request.

"Grounds:

a. [illegible] judgement over these churches.

b. [illegible] adjudicate these church [illegible] for the purpose [illegible]

c. [illegible] present their [illegible]

In August [illegible] they sent a letter and an Act of Liberation to all the members of the Christian Reformed Church stating their reasons for liberating themselves. In summary form these reasons were, following the order of the grounds Synod gave:

A. The Christian Reformed Church [illegible] does not want to judge [illegible] the [illegible]

B. [illegible] Christian Reformed Church [illegible]

C. [illegible] the Christian Reformed Church has [illegible] correspondence with the [illegible]

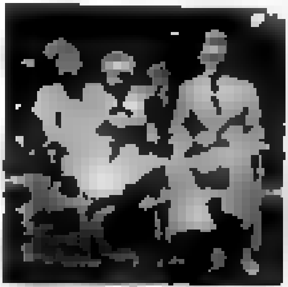
A Canadian Reformed Church was instituted in Neerlandia on August [illegible] under the leadership of [illegible] Barrhead [illegible] Peters and [illegible] were installed as elders and [illegible] as deacons. At that time there were about [illegible] members. A year later the membership had [illegible] eight.

After [illegible] ministers had declined the congregation of Neerlandia [illegible] Rev. [illegible] accepted the call and he was installed on November [illegible]. At first the morning services were held in the school [illegible] a piece of property had been bought on which the first parsonage was situated. An old school building was bought in [illegible] and moved to the church property in [illegible]. The following year Rev. [illegible] accepted a call to [illegible] and Neerlandia was once again without a minister.

In [illegible] the church in Barrhead was instituted and an agreement was made to call a minister together. In May [illegible] the Rev. and Mrs. [illegible] came to Neerlandia as emeritus. From then on he was able to serve Neerlandia for [illegible] years until he died in [illegible].

Early in [illegible] the congregation decided to build a new church building, and on December [illegible] the official opening was celebrated, although there was no minister in Neerlandia. [illegible] candidate [illegible] who accepted the call [illegible] a call to [illegible] and moved there the following year.

After Rev. [illegible] left, the congregation had its ups and downs in [illegible] membership numbers. Many ministers and candidates were called, but they all declined the calls [illegible] preaching



Rev. and Mrs. [illegible]

engagements were shared with Barrhead until Rev. Tiggelaar was installed as minister of Barrhead in December 1981, then he came to Neerlandia for a service two Sundays every month and also taught catechism at school.

On Christmas Day, 1982, the joyful news was received that the Rev. A. de Jager of Anna Paulowna-Enkhuizen, the Netherlands, had accepted a call to Neerlandia.

At the present time (1984) membership of the church of Neerlandia stands at 227 members. Plans are underway for a new building since the church building is too small.

Lies Hamoen

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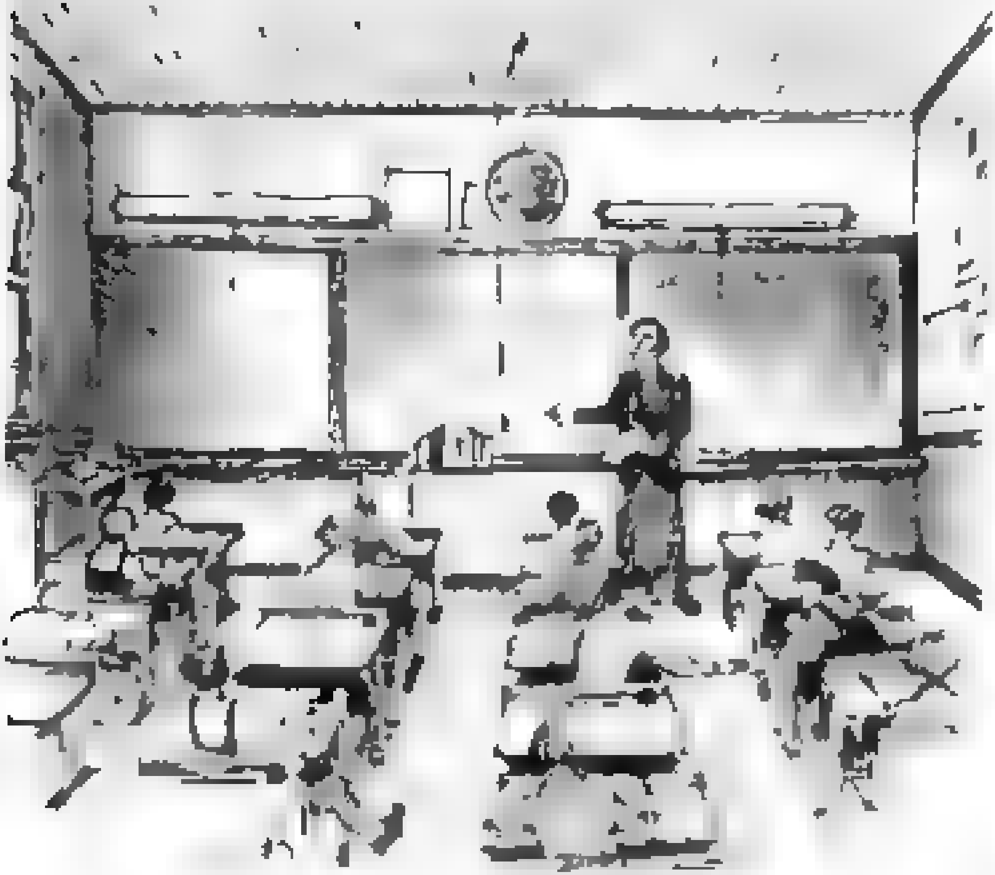
[1] J. Van Dam, "Neerlandia 25 Years" Clarion, Vol. 24, No. 17, August 23, 1975.

Slates and Syrup Pails



EDUCATION

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

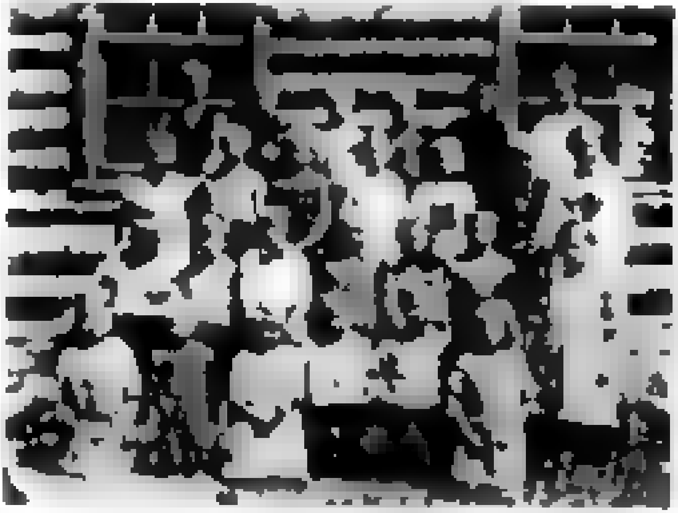
were asked if they [illegible] "Don't [illegible] were afraid and they said "We afraid [illegible]"

We had a meeting [illegible] government [illegible] & [illegible] here [illegible] made in [illegible] of the [illegible] before they were [illegible] though they should write a [illegible] on [illegible] the [illegible]

[illegible] at the meeting [illegible] death knell for a [illegible] school in [illegible]

Norman Ferguson

Before [illegible] the parents [illegible] Helen [illegible] this being [illegible] English and she had [illegible] she [illegible] she taught reading [illegible] arithmetic and [illegible] efforts [illegible]



[illegible]

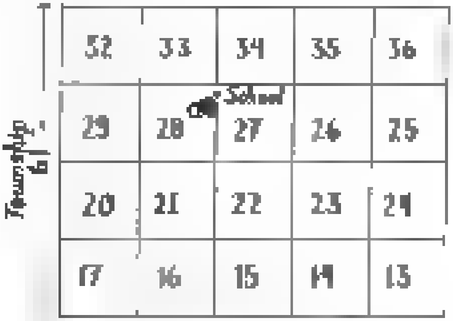
In her classroom Helen [illegible] taught grades one through four. These include [illegible] wearing a hat with a [illegible] on the [illegible] Bennings [illegible] must have been [illegible] White [illegible] the Bennings and White families received [illegible] *were getting too big for their britches." In spite of mischievous boys, Helen Kooy enjoyed her work and taught for about two years. The parents were glad their children were receiving some education in the English language.*

* * *

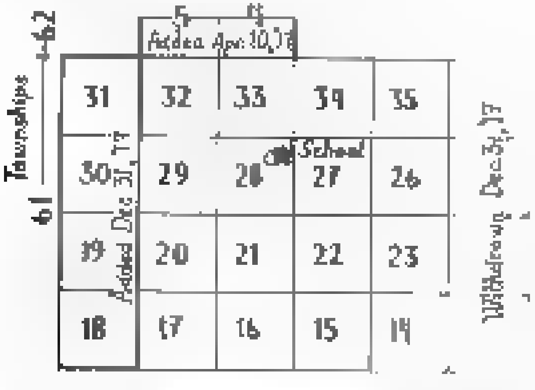
Though the attempt to establish a Christian school had been defeated, the efforts to provide Christian education had not stopped. The settlers hoped to staff a public school with Christian teachers. The committee formed earlier had contacted the government requesting permission to form a school district. To be eligible for the formation of a school district, at least four adults and at least eight children between the ages of five and sixteen had to be

SHOAL CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT #3960

as of March 5, 1917



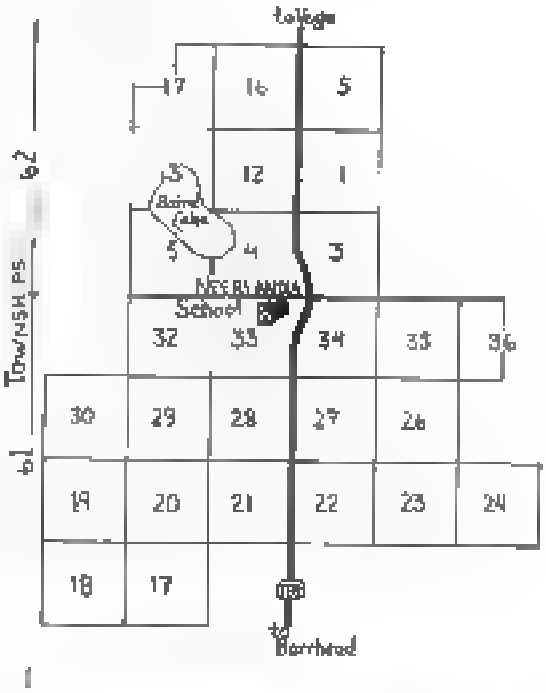
as of December 31, 1917



residing in the proposed area. A petition could then be sent to the provincial government, which would respond by sending a copy of the School Ordinance specifying the steps to follow. The first requirement was the selection of a school committee composed of three members. They in turn had to set up a public meeting at which residents would vote on setting up a school district in their area. The required procedure was duly followed in Neerlandia with the result that the Shoal Creek School District #3460 was formed March 5, 1917. The number indicates that this was the 3460th school district formed in Alberta. No records remain to indicate why the name Shoal Creek was chosen but presumably it was taken from the nearby creek of the same name.

Though the Shoal Creek School District was a public organization, its members were Christians. This was demonstrated in the practice of opening each meeting by seeking God's help in prayer

NEERLANDIA SCHOOL DISTRICT #3460
as of November 23, 1949

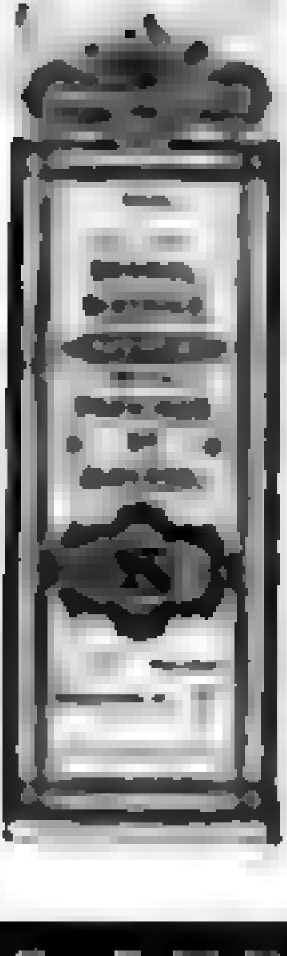


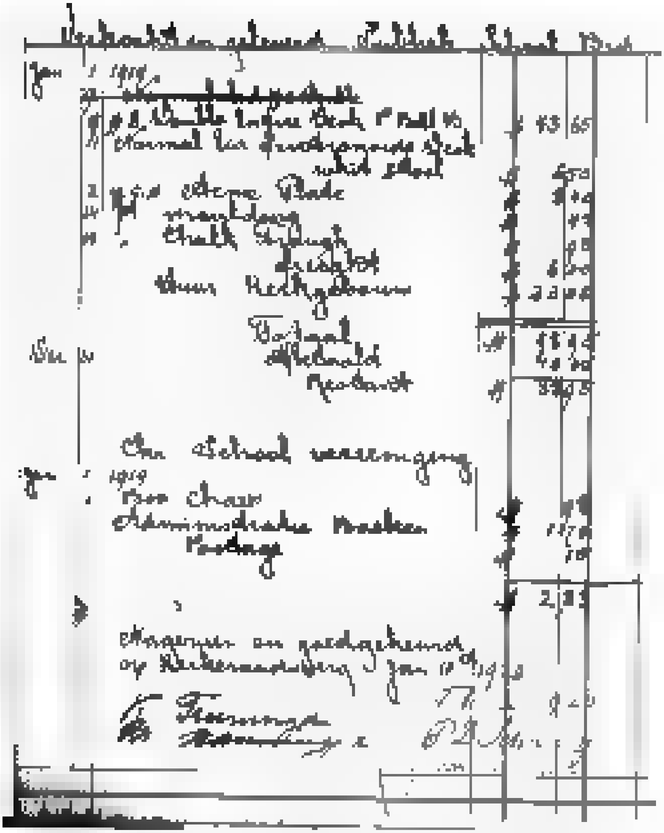
[illegible] cupied lands at the same time

[illegible]

[illegible] *for example* did thus until November 1947 [illegible]

[illegible]

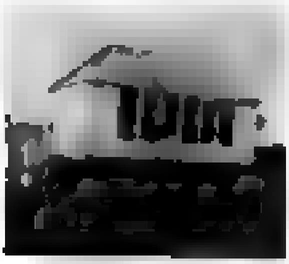




beaverboard or other material around the lower interior walls, but the cost of from $31 to $92 for various materials was considered prohibitive so they settled for colouring the walls dark with kalsomine and staining the floors. By June 1919 the school building, with the exception of a heater, was ready.

During the building process the trustees had been anticipating a visit from the school inspector who, they hoped, would advise them on heating, obtaining a special grant, and other related matters. In September 1919 the long awaited visit took place with the inspector approving all that had been done. He did, however, recommend the following equipment:

a standing numeral frame
an 18" hanging globe
a map from N. America and Canada
2 visitor's chairs
a basin and towels
a thermometer
window shades



[illegible]

[illegible] small sized seats
penholders and busy work
[illegible] and hangers
a teacher's desk and chair

The board agreed to get these all except the last two items which they said would be ordered when finances permitted.

At the same time the trustees attempted to comply with the department regulations which stated that the grounds should be fenced [illegible]. The fence was to be made of two strands of smooth wire topped with one strand of barbed wire. [illegible] submitted the only tender which was broken down as follows:

$[illegible] for digging a well
$[illegible] for [illegible]
$[illegible] for fencing

The caretaking contract was awarded to William [illegible] at a rate of $[illegible] per month. For this sum he was expected to do the following:

1. Sweep the floors every afternoon with the doors and windows open.
2. In the morning dust the benches and light the fire. The room was to be ready one half hour before [illegible].
3. Wash the blackboards every Saturday.
4. Wash the floors every fortnight.
5. Clean the windows.

And so schooling under the conditions set out by the Department could begin.

Walking to school four miles every day
Seldom would we get a ride — there just was no way
[illegible]
And all walk together [illegible] a treat
We named [illegible]
Because there we [illegible] under a spruce tree
It must've been hard [illegible] parents I'm sure
But the memories that linger shall always endure
As we walked to school and saw birds' nests with young,
The frogs in the ponds, the spider webs as they hung,
The [illegible] we found and the [illegible] of rain
Those memories I'm sure will always remain

excerpt from a poem by Annie [illegible]

In 1923 the name of the Shoal Creek School District was officially changed to the [illegible] School District [illegible]. The name change [illegible] was made [illegible] for the school [illegible]

Financing the District

Finances, the [illegible] by which a school system operates. No matter how highly education is regarded [illegible] it is next to impossible [illegible]. For the pioneers in the Shoal Creek School

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

(Minutes of May 26, 1918.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The financial status of the people had not improved by 1924, so at the annual meeting on January 5, at which thirty-one ratepayers were present, Henry Koppers Sr. moved that to avoid the increase in taxes, the school should be open for eight months only, with the teachers engaged for such a term and not for a whole year. The ensuing discussion over the relative importance of education in a time of financial difficulty led to such a vigorous exchange of views that the chairman was obliged to close the meeting. Ten days later another meeting was called at which Henry Koppers Sr., Ben Geevers, and Jacob Olthuis, representing twenty-two ratepayers, presented a modified proposal to the board. They proposed that the principal be engaged for ten months at a salary of one thousand dollars, and another teacher for six months at a lower rate of pay. The trustees did not deal directly with the proposal but suggested that this group of ratepayers ask for financial aid if the ratepayers could not pay the higher taxes. The board decided to support this course of action. The delegation agreed to approach the Department, but asked for a written statement that the board would make no unnecessary expenditures before the department replied. This the board refused to do, stating that their word of honour should be good enough. No agreement was reached.

Nevertheless, the trustees were not heartless men. They, too, were pioneers; they, too, were short of money and they realized that there was a limit to what could be asked of the people. The minutes of February 12, 1924 state: The board decided that where it is felt those arrears were the result not of unwillingness but of financial distress, not to take any drastic steps. Efforts were made to keep the taxes and expenditures as low as possible. When calling for tenders for

* *

Sometimes during schooltime we would run out of water. Then Jim Ritsema and I would be sent to Emmie Lee's to get more. We would take the funny papers with us and sit down along the way to read them.

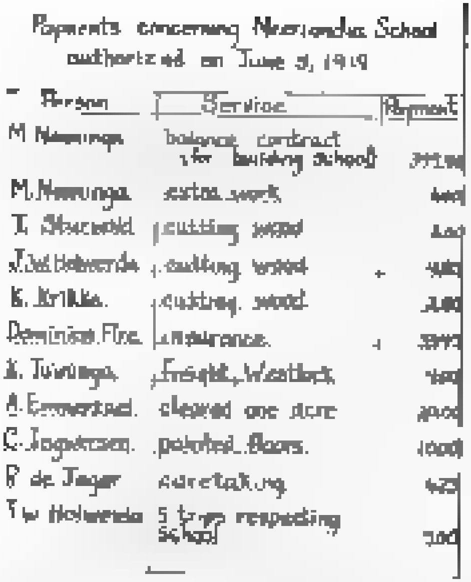
Wm. Olthuis

* * *

We had very little sports equipment at school. Van Ark tried to teach us business and to collect money for the needed equipment at the same time. I was the treasurer and we all had to collect money. Jim Ritsema and I went collecting together. We had one horse between the two of us and took turns riding it. We started out together — Jim riding and I walking. When Jim got a half mile down the road he dismounted, tied the horse and continued on foot. When I reached the horse I untied it and rode on half a mile passing Jim in the process. We continued this way till we were finished and pleased with our ingenuity, I might add. Finally everyone had given to me the money they had collected and I reported to Mr. Van Ark. With the money he bought sports equipment — a basketball for the girls and some baseball gloves for the boys.

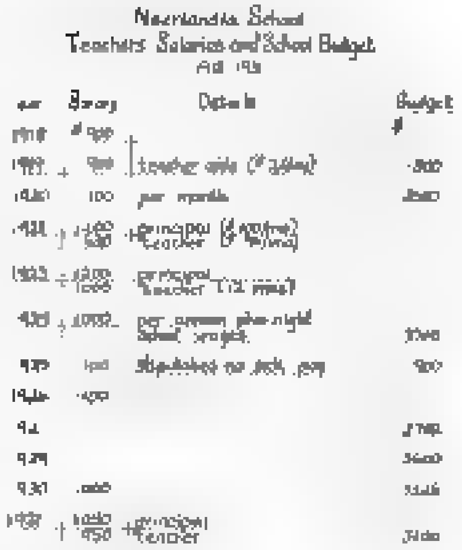
Wm. Olthuis

* *



Payments concerning Neerlandia School
authorized on June 5, 1919

Person	Service	Payment
M. Nanninga	balance contract for building school	[illegible]
M. Nanninga	extra work	[illegible]
T. [illegible]	cutting wood	[illegible]
J. [illegible] Holwerda	cutting wood	[illegible]
K. Krikke	cutting wood	[illegible]
Dominion Fire	insurance	[illegible]
K. Tuininga	freight, Westlock	[illegible]
A. [illegible]	cleared one acre	[illegible]
C. Jorgensen	painted floors	[illegible]
P. de Jager	caretaking	[illegible]
T. [illegible] Holwerda	5 trips respecting school	[illegible]



Neerlandia School
Teachers Salaries and School Budget
[illegible]

Year	Salary	Details	Budget
[illegible]	$900		$
[illegible]	900	teacher only ([illegible])	[illegible]
[illegible]	100	per month	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible] [illegible]	principal ([illegible]) teacher ([illegible])	
[illegible]	[illegible] [illegible]	principal teacher ([illegible])	
[illegible]	[illegible]	per annum plus night school project	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]		
[illegible]			[illegible]
[illegible]			[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible] 950	principal teacher	[illegible]

fencing, maintenance or other projects. If no tender was considered low enough the board attempted to have the work done more economically by day labour. On occasion they asked for volunteer labour.

A look at some budgets is quite instructive. During the 1919-1931 period the budgets ranged from $1600 to $3400. The largest single expenditure was for teachers' salaries. Another expenditure was the janitor's salary which went from $4.75 a month in 1919 to $10 per month in 1930. Some expenditures such as one of twenty five cents to Andrew Nanninga for delivering books from Westlock were minimal. Fencing the school yard was paid at a rate of thirty cents per hour. In 1924 Pete Tuininga got a contract of $2[illegible] for supplying the school with fourteen cords of dry tamarack firewood. Not large amounts, but difficult to pay when tax revenue was inadequate.

* * *

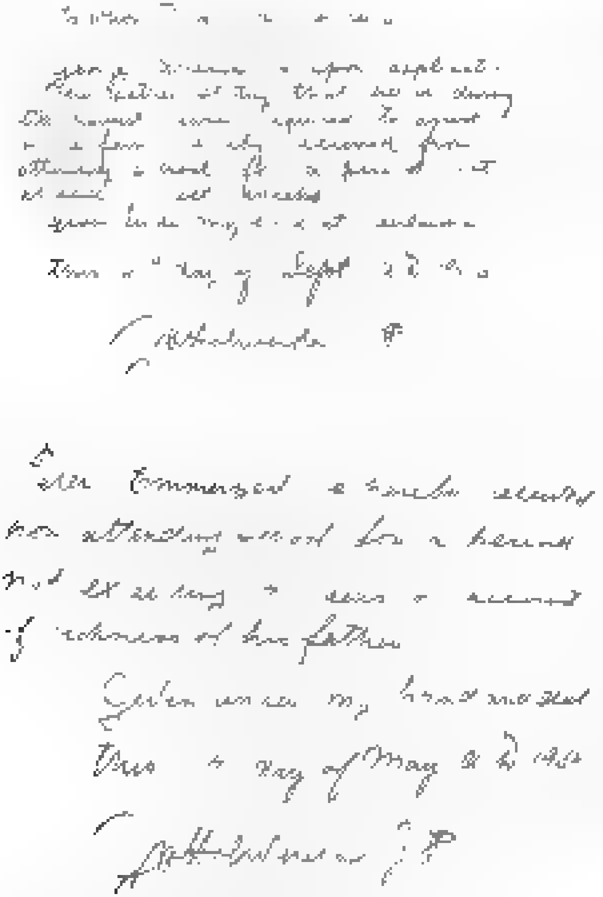
A Little Bird

Mr. McKitrick thought it was a good day to take the class on a nature walk. At the outset he instructed the students that as soon as they heard his whistle it was time to return to school. Taking advantage of a situation, brother George said, "Oh, there goes a rabbit," so all the boys ran into the bush, supposedly after the rabbit, and weren't seen for the rest of the day.

The next day Mr. McKitrick asked, "Didn't you hear my whistle?" George said, "Ja, but we thought it was a little bird."

Alice Visser

* * *



Children were often needed to help at home. Joe Holwerda, in his capacity as Justice of the Peace, gave the necessary permission.

The concern over tax rates and collection of them continued to occupy the minds of both trustees and ratepayers. In 1922, by means of section 7 of the School Assessment Act, the government of Alberta changed from a flat rate per acre to an assessed value as basis for taxation. The Neerlandia School District # 3460 considered various methods of valuation before settling on a sliding scale with the highest assessment on lands nearest the school. This was never put into effect. Less than one month later, May 19, 1923, it was changed to a valuation, also on a sliding scale, according to the number of acres under cultivation with the highest being $600 for [illegible] no asset to collect

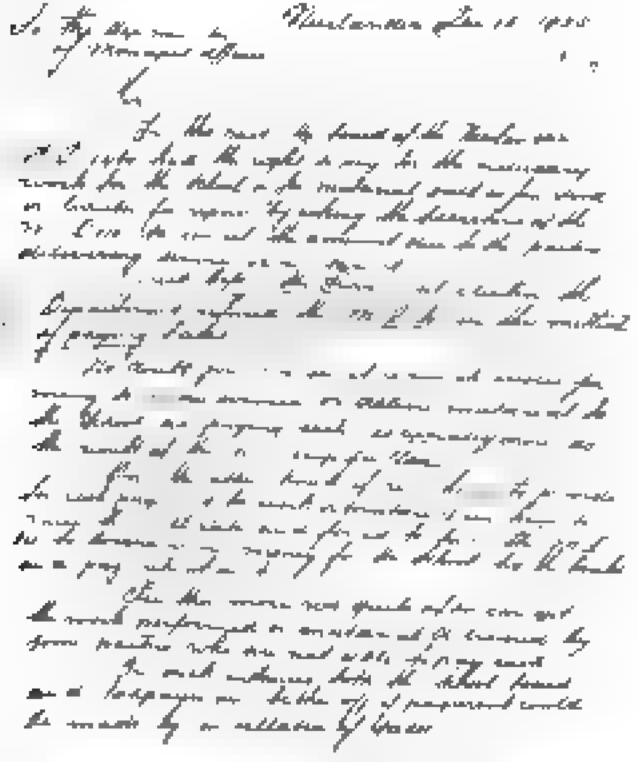
[illegible]

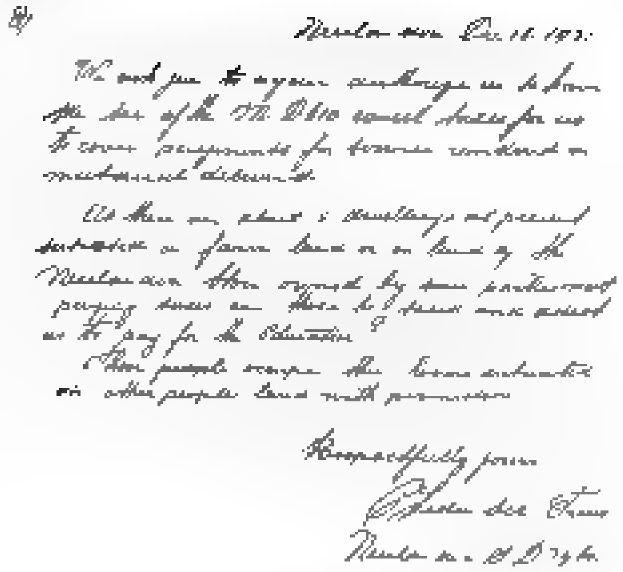
John [illegible]

[illegible]

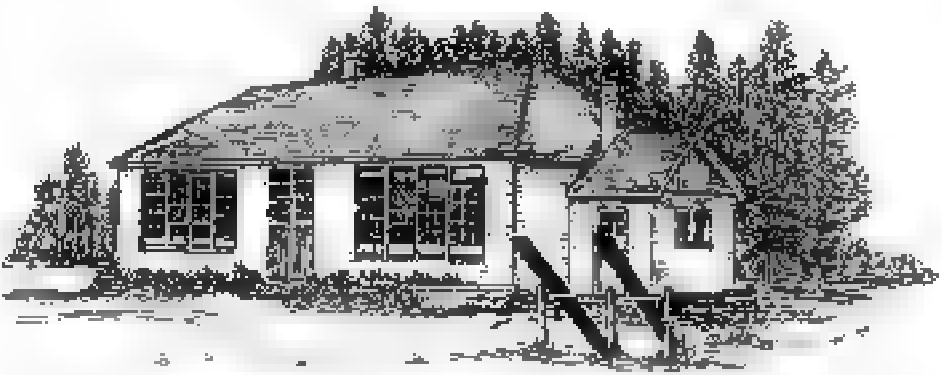
instead of deducting it from his tax debt. Of course the board did not agree. He subsequently paid his tax in full, albeit in installments. The collection of tax arrears was an unpleasant task for the trustees of the school district. Unknown to them, the end of this task was at hand.

In 1928 the Shoal Creek Municipality was formed with Neerlandia School District #3460 falling within its boundaries. The school district now requisitioned the municipality for the money it needed. Using that figure the municipality determined the mill rate for the Neerlandia district, collected the taxes, and turned the money over to the school board. On occasion, when the taxes were not collected in time, the school district was compelled to take out a loan to meet expenses until the money came in. With the onset of the Depression, it became increasingly difficult to collect taxes, not only in the Shoal Creek Municipality, but all over Alberta. To facilitate tax collection, the UFA government passed the Tax and Rate Collection Act in 1931. With that act, all responsibility and authority for taxes passed from the school districts to the municipalities, no doubt producing a sigh of relief on the part of many trustees. That, however, signalled the beginning of the end for the autonomy of the school districts.





In 1936 the Social Credit government enacted legislation making provision for large administrative units for schools. In 1939 the province of Alberta was divided into several large divisions. On January 3, 1939, the Neerlandia School District #3460 was included in the Pembina School Division #37 and Subdivision #5. Trustees were elected from each area included in the new Division. Car. K. Mast was elected as representative from Neerlandia, a position



[illegible]

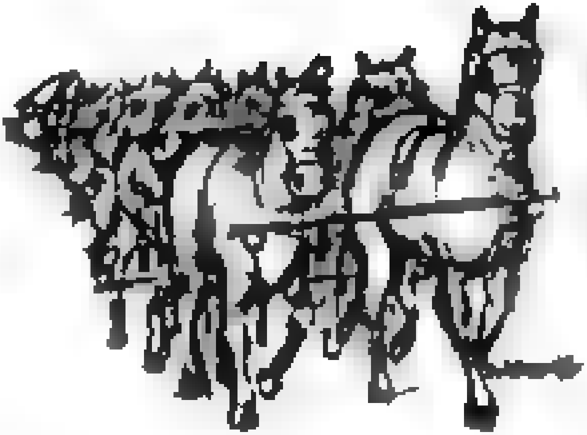
The School Building and Grounds

[illegible]

[illegible] means of four double swinging doors [illegible]

[illegible]

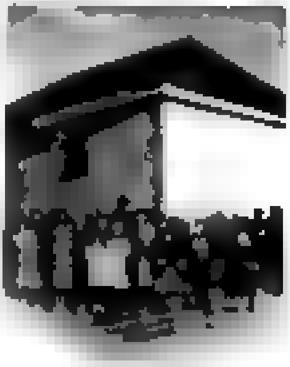
[illegible]



hitched to the school in a long line and, under the direction of the teamsters, began the three-quarter-mile [illegible] north. [illegible] natural [illegible] it was difficult to synchronize the teams to all pull at once, and after the school was moved a short way the teamsters gave up. They did manage to pull it partway off the road to make [illegible] passable. And there, at the side of the road, school was conducted for about two months. It was a time of trouble [illegible] school ground, the children had to [illegible] in the [illegible]. How happy they were when, at last, [illegible] was hired to [illegible] to move the school with a stationary engine and a donkey. Horses moved the donkey into place, the donkey winched the school ahead, then the horses moved the donkey again. This procedure was repeated until the school building arrived at the new site. Once again the work of moving and fixing up the school was commenced. A new well was dug and a new [illegible] erected. But some of the same problems resurfaced — the major one being lack of space.

By September 1919 the board of trustees, then composed of Henry Hoppe, [illegible] Remmers and [illegible] Hermann, decided the time was [illegible] to build an addition. Mr. [illegible] Shead, inspector of schools for Alberta and present at a ratepayers meeting, explained the benefits in grants and education which would be derived from better facilities. The ratepayers agreed by a vote of twenty one out of twenty four.

As before, Henry Remmers drew up the plans for the construction. He said this was not [illegible] the building program. Debentures were not available to the [illegible] In order to finance the construction, taxes were raised three dollars per quarter section and the work was done by day labour. Henry Remmers as foreman received sixty cents per hour. For some unexplained reason there was a difference in the hourly rate other workers received — some were paid forty five cents and the rest received only thirty



School parked on side of road, 1919

Children sitting on donkey engine during break five cents. Ratepayers who were in arrears in taxes donated labour or hauled materials, thus reducing their tax debt and enabling the school to be built with a smaller cash outlay. In this cooperative manner the addition of one room was made to one end of the school.

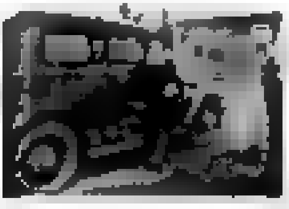
Upon its completion, the two-room school with its separate cloakrooms for girls and boys, and the large round heater in each room, was ready to endow girls and boys for many more years of education. Each room had four multipaned windows, which on occasion fell victim to various student aimed projectiles. Generally grades one through four were in the 'little' room while grades five through eight were in the 'big' room. The division of grades between the rooms varied from year to year according to enrollment. Even with the two-room school, enrollments of 35-45 students per room were common.

The school was banked up to conserve heat. Two room school c. 1920.

Back: Anna Tuininga, Margaret Sturwold, Pete Schoonekamp, Carrie Maat, Carrie Olthuis, Pete van Ark, Annie Lievens, Alice Kappers, Johanna Ingwersen, Alice Olthuis

Middle: Bertha Ingwersen, Fieke Lievens, Johanna Moussault, Jennie Schoonekamp, Eva Olthuis, Lily Moussault

Front: Harry Lievens, Bert Michael, George Peppema, Bill Lievens, Simon Fisher, Andrew Warringa, [illegible], Ab Moussault, Cor Fisher, Case Tuininga



School nurse, Miss Meyer.

* * *

One incident I recall happened in or about 1930. Brother George Olthuis was tall and skinny and each year seemed to grow another few inches. Each time he was weighed by the school nurse he brought home a note saying he was quite underweight. After a few years of this and probably getting teased a bit about it, he decided he'd had enough. Next time the school nurse came back, George filled both his pockets with rocks — that should take care of

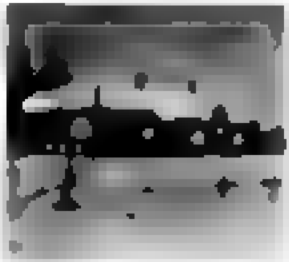
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ratepayers contributed one hundred dollars each [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

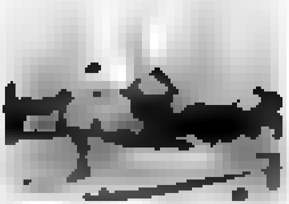
[illegible]

[illegible]

to play during inclement weather

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

for the extra janitorial work that had to be done. Various societies also held their meetings in the school. One teacher complained to the board that the building was left in disorder following these meetings. The leaders of the societies were admonished to leave the building in good condition, but the teacher and janitor were to be held responsible for any damage that resulted from leaving the doors unlocked.

Many people held the unenviable position of janitor over the years. Willem de Groot was the first janitor. During his tenure it was decided to have the students dust the desks, rather than giving him a raise. That practice does not seem to have lasted very long. In 1925 Dina Messelink became janitor, with her wages to be deducted from her tax arrears. She refused to light the stove in the winter months so in 1926 the job was given jointly to her and Henry Schoonekamp at ten dollars per month. In 1929 the Anemas became janitors. Susie wrote, "Della and I were the school janitors for some years. We would arrive early on the winter mornings to start the heater, using kindling cut the night before and shavings which we brought from home each morning."

It took a lot of firewood to keep the school warm. Dina Abday with her class 1920.

The Henry Bouwman family also served as janitors. They too found it to be a lot of work. Jenny wrote about some of the tasks that had to be done:

"Wood was piled to the ceiling in the cloakroom every evening. Sometimes the blackboards had to be wiped and each day the floor had to be swept. On rainy days there was so much mud that the janitors had to shovel it out of the door. Three times a year — at Christmas, Easter and in the summer — the whole school was scrubbed down. The floors had to be mopped and then oiled with linseed oil to keep down the dust. Each day, two pailfuls of water had to be carried from the store and poured into a big crock. It had a tap on the bottom, but there was also a dipper because the tap was too slow to allow everyone time to get a drink when they came in from the playground. Every child had his own white enamel cup which was hung on the coat nail in the cloakroom. If the water ran out during the day the principal would send one of the boys to the store to fetch another pail of water."

When the three-room school was built in the 1940s, the work load was increased. The cleaning took so long that on short winter days Meindert Boersma had to go around with a lantern in order to complete his daily work. In recognition of the difficulties thus created, the local school board asked that electricity be installed in the school. The task of stoking the wood and coal-burning furnaces of the three-room school also fell to Meindert Boersma. It is too bad that he was not permitted to experience the pleasure of the easier task of caring for the school when the oil furnace was installed. Instead Carl P. Mast and Jim Merkus were hired at that time.

As of 1969 Joan and Ralph Bos have been the janitors of Neerlandia school. Though their equipment includes some electrical tools such as a vacuum cleaner, the bulk of the work must still be done by manual labour.

The Struggle For Christian Education

> "Even though Neerlandia is called a public school, it is a Christian school for many reasons. First of all the students have believing parents who want their kids to have a Christ-centered education. Second, the teachers are all Christians, and third, everything is taught from a Christian perspective. We believe and are taught that God created and upholds the universe and not that man is the king of creation. Man's task is to take care of the world and that task has been given to him by God. These are some of the ways Christian schools differ from public ones. Also we are taught Bible Study which is absent in public schools. Neerlandia can be called a Christian Public School."
>
> Gloria Strydhorst
> Grade Nine, 1980

The heartfelt desire on the part of the pioneers to obey the Lord in the matter of providing Christian training in the area of education is a theme woven through the history of education in Neerlandia. Not everyone agreed with this need and not everyone was agreed on how this could best be achieved, but the struggle continued.

In setting up the Shoal Creek School District rather than an independent Christian school one of the deciding factors, no doubt, was the trustees' awareness of the powers vested in them. By virtue of the School Ordinance Act they were enabled to engage teachers of their choice, provided the teachers were qualified, and to dismiss them if they proved unsatisfactory. To the trustees, the source of money for operating the district and the particular type of classroom building used were not crucial matters. But who was to teach their children? That was the heart of the matter. Education is only as good as the teacher who stands in front of the class. With the power to control that aspect of education, most of the pioneers were satisfied for the time being. A Christian School Association had been formed but remained in existence only until 1919, when it turned its affairs over to Shoal Creek School District #3460.

From the outset, the trustees attempted to obtain Christian teachers. Although exactly what was expected of the teacher in regard to Christian education was not spelled out in the minutes of the meetings, the desire is recorded repeatedly:

> "The board decided to place an ad in de Wachter and the Calvinist for the purpose of getting a teacher of Reformed religion." July 26, 1918
>
> [illegible] Feenstra [illegible] W. Schoorda [illegible] asked to see Mr. Muller if he can supply us with a teacher of Christian faith." February [illegible] 1919
>
> "Decided to advertise as soon as possible in the Christian Journal." March [illegible] 1921
>
> Trustee Klaas Tuininga deemed it advisable to write the Department of Education [illegible] to give the department a clear idea of what kind of a teacher is wanted in this settlement and why. The Chairman (J. H. Holwerda) claimed the officials in the Department knew all that.
>
> "The board agrees that a teacher who professes to be a Christian must be secured." March [illegible] 1921
>
> [illegible] to advise the Department to send a Christian teacher (Protestant) as no other need apply." April 16, 1921

The concern for Christian teaching was sometimes expressed in a negative way. On January 1, 1926,

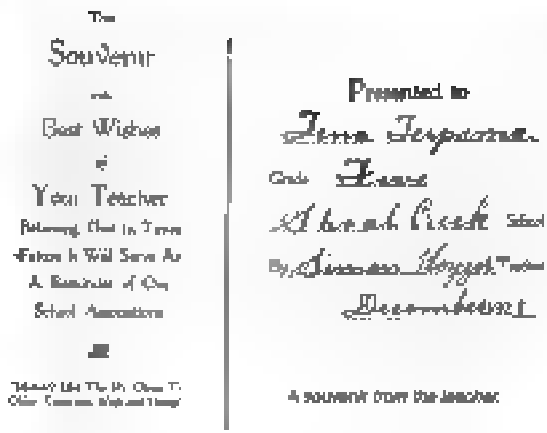
> "Mr. Kiptees pointed out to the board that he would like to see a better education along Christian lines than what was given by [illegible]. The board as a whole was of the same opinion."

At times the board involved itself more closely with what was being done. For example the minutes of November 27, 1931, read in part as follows:

> "Chairman was instructed to visit the school and see if the (Christmas) program would be carried out as much as possible according to our Christian point of view."

The efforts to acquire Christian teachers did not always meet with success. To obtain even minimally qualified teachers was difficult. In the years from 1905, when Alberta became a province, to the 1920s, there was a shortage of teachers. During that time three types of certificates were available to teachers, the majority of those issued being second-class certificates which required the candidate to have passed grade 11 and to have had four months of professional training. Because of the influx of settlers into the new province, the number of teachers could not keep up with the growing number of students. The government, therefore, instituted a policy of issuing provisional certificates (permits) to allow a person without any professional training to manage a classroom for a limited period of time. So great was the need from 1914-1918, when many men were serving in the armed forces, that 3434 permits were issued, an average of 687 per year. To this problem was added the fact that Neerlandia was ninety-five miles from Edmonton over rutted roads and trails, through swamps and across rivers, and one can appreciate the difficulty of getting teachers to come.

There were severe problems in staffing the school. After Helen Koot left, trustees attempted to get a teacher from the neighbourhood. J. A. Heath, a retired Baptist minister who had filed in the area, agreed to teach. He began teaching on October 16, 1918, but by November 23 of the same year there was such widespread dissatisfaction with his teaching that a special meeting was called to discuss the matter. In view of the fact that he was ineligible for a permit, the


The
Souvenir
with
Best Wishes
of
Your Teacher
Believing That In Future
Years It Will Serve As
A Reminder of Our
School Associations

Presented to
Trina Terpstra
Grade Four
Shoal Creek School
By Simon Keyzer Teacher
December 1921

A souvenir from the teacher.

chairman and secretary were "invited" to tell him to stop teaching immediately.

In the meantime the board had been corresponding with Simon Keyzer who was studying for the ministry in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Though he had indicated that he intended to complete his training, he came to Neerlandia in June 1919 and stayed until the end of August 1921. For thirteen months he taught as a permit teacher, but then he obtained his certificate. His strong point, according to former students, was music.

> One writes: "We sang at the start of the day, before recess, after lunch, after recess and before going home. Our reading, writing, and arithmetic suffered badly but we sang well."
>
> Another said: "He taught us our hymns — there's something to be said for that."

As was often the case in those days, finances and overcrowding were a problem. In September 1919, with ten more pupils enrolling, it was impossible for one teacher to handle the teaching load. But the weak financial position of the community made it impossible to hire another teacher. Once again, compromise was required. Jenny Tuininga, a local girl, was hired as an assistant at the rate of two dollars per day.

Financial disputes also had a way of intruding into school affairs, although it is often difficult to determine whether the disputes were the cause or result of dissatisfaction. By way of example, Simon Keyzer first expressed himself as so satisfied with his position that in May 1920 he asked the board to build him a house, suggesting that he intended to take up permanent residence. Yet by September 1921 he had left Neerlandia following a dispute over wages and a complaint about not receiving the support of the parents.

You Can't Get Blood From a Stone

When Mr. van Ark was teaching here the school was right across the road from Willem de Groot's place. The teacher told us older boys we had to dig trees out of the bush and plant them around the school during noon hour. We didn't fancy this idea too much since noon time was our only time to play. But we dug some trees out anyhow and put them in a wheelbarrow. Then we decided to pretend that the wheelbarrow was too heavy for us to move.

Mr. van Ark said that Bill Wilthuis and I had to go to Mr. de Groot's and get a piece of rope to tie to the front of the wheelbarrow. Then some boys could pull and some could push. At least this stalled things for a little time. So off went Bill and I to de Groot's place.

I said to Bill, "You do the talking because he doesn't understand English and you speak the same dialect of Dutch as he does." So when we got there Bill did the talking. De Groot looked none too pleased when we asked him for a piece of rope. He said, "Ik heb even min touw als een kikvors veren heeft." (I have no more rope than a frog has feathers). So we left with no rope, but we did end up planting the trees.

Norman Terpstra

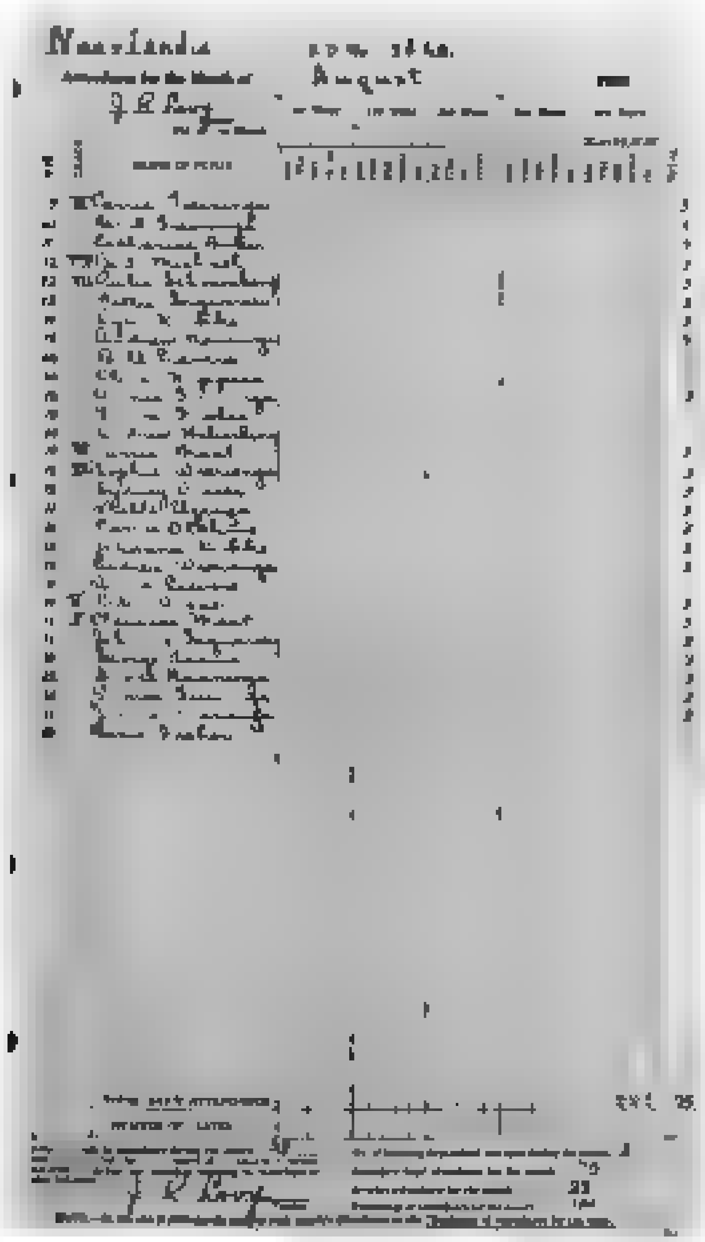
* *

The struggle to get Christian teachers continued. William van Ark, a settler and member of the board of trustees, had been instructing some of the boys in night classes under one provision of the School Act. He enjoyed this task so, with the encouragement of some of the parents, he decided to become a teacher. On April 1921 the board passed a resolution to request the Department of Education to give him a permit. This was done. Mr. van Ark began to teach and to prepare for certification. By March 30, 1923 the board made the following resolution:

> And whereas Mr. Van Ark according to the inspector's report will be a very capable teacher fully qualified, be it therefore resolved to engage Mr. Van Ark as principal teacher for our school, Neerlandia, from first of May to the 31st of December for a salary of $1200.

Once again the Neerlandia students had a qualified Christian teacher until he left in 1925.

During this time the school operated sometimes with one teacher and sometimes with two. Another Neerlandian, Carl K. Mast, decided to pursue teaching as a career and in December 1925 asked the school board's cooperation in getting a permit. Because he had not completed grade eleven, the board, in keeping with its policy of providing quality education, denied his request. Undaunted, he enrolled in Alberta College. Meanwhile, with World War I over, men were returning to the teaching force and, with the shortage of other jobs, more males were attracted to teaching as a career. As a result, the number of permits given dropped from 456 in 1923 to 65 in 1925, and only 5 in 1926. It was with sadness therefore that Carl K. Mast reported to the board on April 16, 1926 that because of the great number of qualified teachers, he was unable to obtain a permit. This did not end his involvement with



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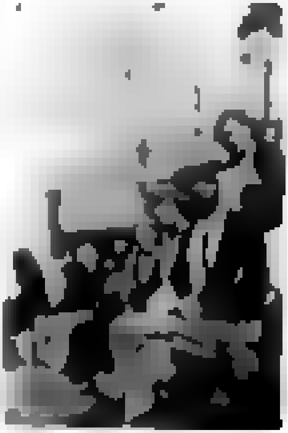

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] miles. Tod Reitsma

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] grade one from 1947 until her retirement in 1979.

[illegible]

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[illegible]
Neerlandia for four years

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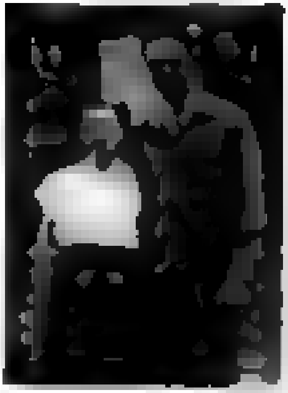


[illegible]

[illegible]
attend the public school in Neerlandia

[illegible]
Some quotes from the minutes follow

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] been once again to settle for a public school

[illegible] regard to the trustee

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

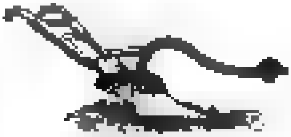
Being a member of the Christian Reformed Church was an asset in seeking a position as a teacher in Neerlandia. Votes recorded on two occasions in the minutes of the local board regarding which teachers would be recommended to the Barrhead School Division indicate most votes going to the two teachers who were members of the Christian Reformed Church, with the third teacher, also a Christian but of a different denomination, being rated third.

Even when the teachers were all of the same faith, the board supervised their teaching by means of board member visits to the classroom. Records of such visits usually speak favourably of what was observed, with special mention of discipline and the teaching or singing of songs or hymns and closing the day with prayer.

Unavoidably, hard feelings resulted from misunderstandings between teachers who were not of the Christian faith and the community leaders. Such teachers could not understand why they were not acceptable to the community and on occasion were deeply hurt by the efforts to replace them with those who would teach Christianly. If only they could have been made to understand!

In the matter of hiring teachers, the County of Barrhead No. 11 always co-operated with the local Christian school board. Though the local board could act only in an advisory capacity, it was granted the right to advertise for, interview and recommend candidates for vacancies in the Neerlandia school. Though the final decision remained with the Superintendent of Schools, the recommendations of the local board have invariably been implemented.

The Alberta School Curriculum is taught in the Neerlandia school, but the perspective of the courses is Christian. Through the years, parents and teachers gained insight into the meaning of Christian education. Every subject is permeated with the knowledge that God is Lord of life, and each is studied in view of its relationship to the God-given norms and laws which hold for creation. In short, the desire of Neerlandia's pioneers has been fulfilled beyond their imaginings. Neerlandia School provides Christian education under the auspices of the public school system.



FOOTNOTES

John C. Charyk, The Little White School House, p. 3

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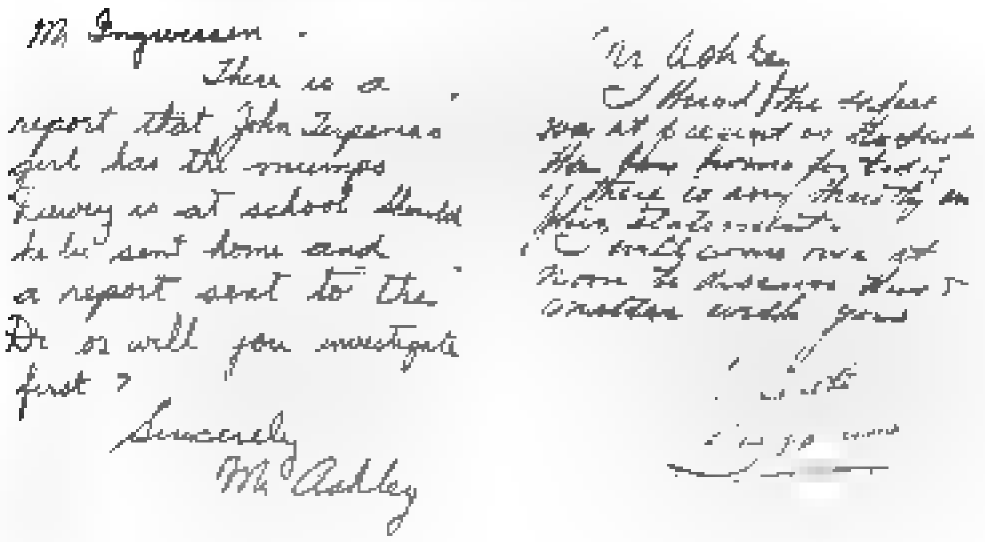
Minutes of the Christian School Society



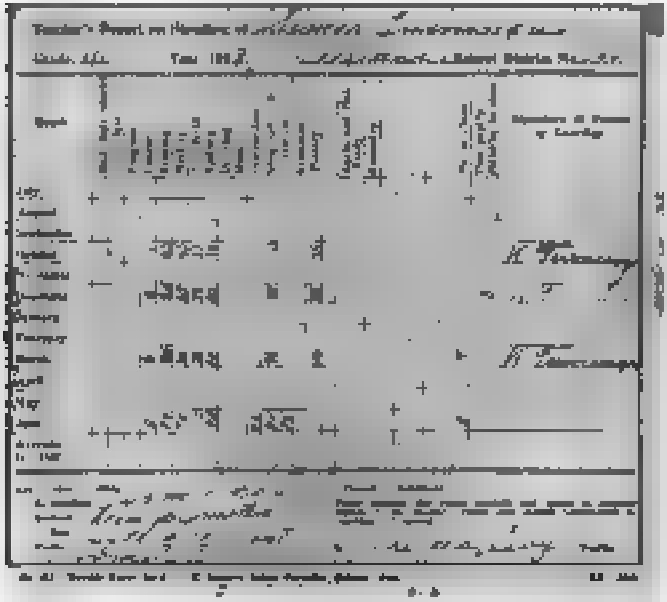
Mr Ingvesson -
There is a report that John Ingvesons girl has the mumps. Everey is at school. Should he be sent home and a report sent to the Dr or will you investigate first?
Sincerely
Mr Ashley

Mr Ashley
I heard the teacher was at a [illegible] on [illegible] then [illegible] for [illegible] if there is any [illegible] in [illegible].
I will come over at noon to discuss this matter with you

The local school board was expected to solve all sorts of problems.

Reminiscences of Neerlandia 1923

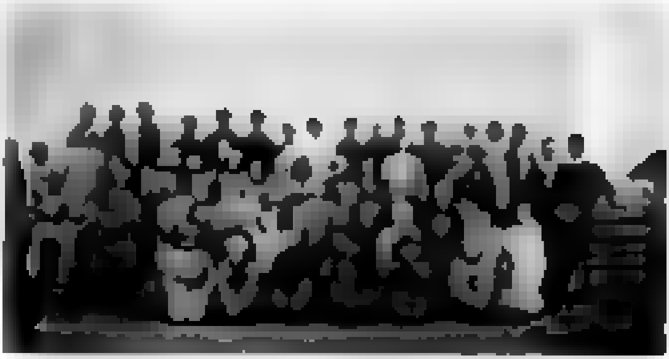
When I graduated from the Edmonton Normal School (Highlands) in the spring of 1923, Dr. Donalda Dickie, one of the professors, asked me if I would accept the position as a primary teacher in the Neerlandia School (grades one to four). Bill van Ark was the principal (grades five to eight). It was with delight that I accepted this position. I travelled from Edmonton to Neerlandia by truck over very bad roads. The truck driver stopped at various places to deliver freight. My boarding place was with Bill and Manna van Ark and their two lovely children, Wim and Zus.

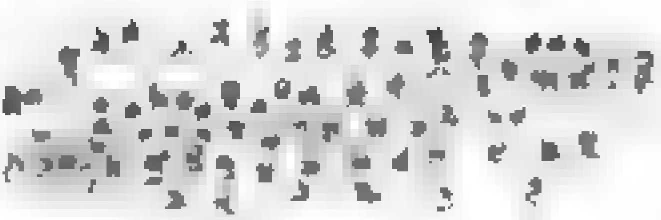


When school opened on May 1, 1923, the two rooms were filled with children. My room was filled to capacity with about thirty five students and a large stove. The settlement was young then, I think about ten years old. The new little beginners couldn't speak English, having always spoken in Dutch at home. However, all the children were as eager to learn as I was to teach them. We got busy and worked. There was no fooling around and I don't recall any disciplinary problems. They were well-behaved children and had been told by their parents "to do as teacher said." One little beginner stands out vividly in my mind. He was George Dijkhuis, a small slender child bewildered by where he was. To top everything off there was no desk for him. Well, we improvised a desk which we hoped was comfortable and all summer long we took care of George.

There was no teacher's desk so the school board had one made for me. Ben Lievers did the work. I remember it being piled high

[illegible]





[illegible]

Teaching Fifty Years Ago

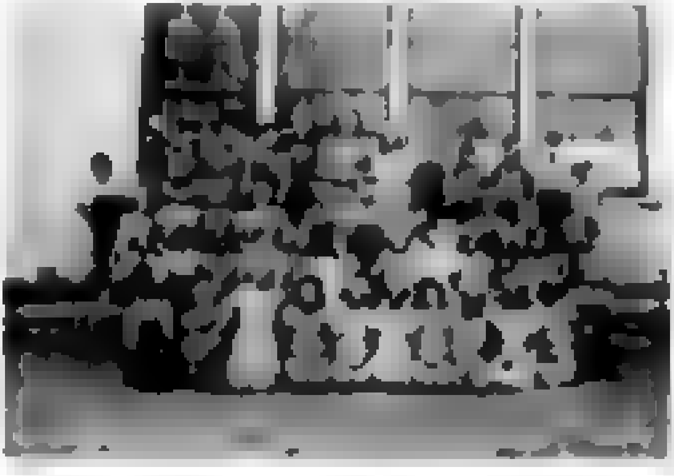
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Jean (Rae) Winkleman

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

It was quite a change!

[illegible]

[illegible] rsma, did his best to have the stove piping hot

[illegible]

[illegible] home with my family for four years

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Clara ([illegible]) [illegible]

A Job in [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

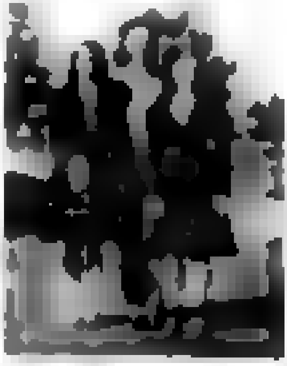
[illegible]

[illegible]

Alberta ([illegible]) Cole

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

A severe teacher shortage prevailed at the time, so it [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] standstill.

[illegible]

[illegible] innovations have come and gone, but I have no desire to [illegible]

Ruth Jansen

[illegible] in Newlandia

[illegible]

winter days. The rooms were heated by two large black stoves which required constant effort to keep going.

In 19[illegible] I was able to come back and begin my teaching career. Additional small schools had been brought in; this was the beginning of consolidation of school districts. Big yellow buses became a part of everyday life as children came to school from quite a distance.

To add to the excitement of schooling, I spent a lot of time working on a rhythm band with the children. It required a great deal of patience, persistence and long suffering, but we did succeed in playing for concerts. Christmas concerts were important to the community.

The noon hour lunchtime conversations were inspiring and profound. "Mother's homemade bread is at least seven times better than the hopeless store bread." "I don't complain about my bread." "Eat what your mother made for you." "That cracked wheat bread has a lot more power than those hopeless little [illegible]."

All those little people have grown up. I see that they have done well for themselves. With God at the center of their lives they will continue to be a blessing to their church and community. I am thankful to those students for being a part of my teaching career.

Magdalena [illegible]

Teaching in 1923

A school day started at 9:00 a.m. First recess was from 10:30 to 10:45 a.m. Noon hour was from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m., and afternoon recess was from 2:15 to 2:30 p.m. Dismissal was at 4:00 p.m. During lunch hour and often at recess, games were supervised by the teacher in the yard.

School was always opened with the Lord's Prayer, saluting the flag, and singing a song or two.

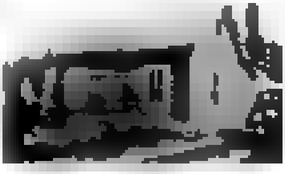
We had very few teaching aids but we did have a good course of study to guide us and to know what we should expect from each pupil at the end of his grade.

The three "R's" of course were stressed. That reading, writing and arithmetic were carefully taught was shown [illegible] and all work was corrected by the teacher; then the child corrected his mistakes. There were no workbooks.

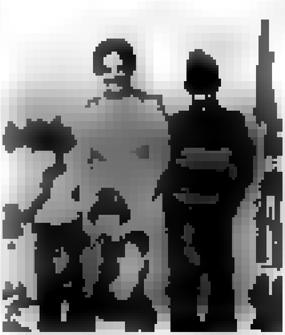
History, geography and agriculture were important subjects. Great care was given to mapmaking with surface features and printing clearly shown.

English composition — stressing paragraph structure and choice of words — was given much attention. Formal grammar was taught. Writing was stressed. The teacher would go on the blackboard and the children carefully followed instructions. There was no printing in any grade. Cursive style was taught from the beginning grade one wrote in full space. Penmanship was marked for legibility, line qualities and uniformity of movement.

Elementary science was also taught. Children gathered, mounted and named plant selections. They learned to recognize birds and to write a life history of a robin, sparrow, hawk or other bird.



The parsonage, 19[illegible]



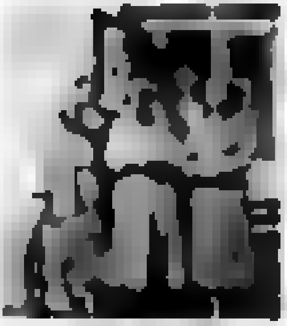
[illegible] with her [illegible] Harold and [illegible]

[illegible]

and others

[illegible]

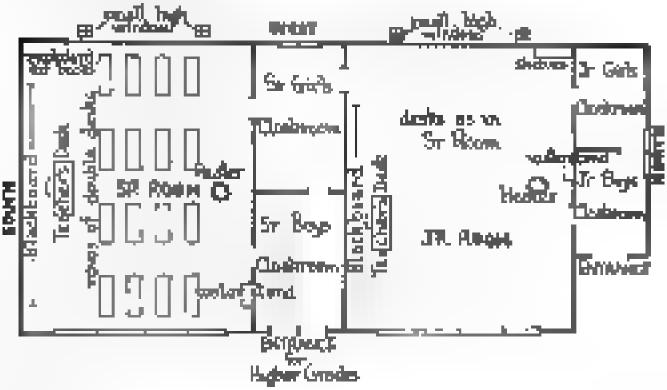
[illegible]



[illegible]

so for us it was not an ordeal as it was for some who had to walk five miles in bitter cold or pouring rain.

We found the walk fun: in the early spring after a thaw there were the beautiful snowdrifts; in the summer the soft earth was just perfect for our bare feet as were the puddles after a rain; in the autumn the lovely scenery delighted even a child's heart. The winter was worse since so many did not have warm clothes, especially footwear. Many a tear was shed because of aching cold feet or frostbitten hands.



Our schoolhouse was divided into two parts. Grades one to five were taught by a lady teacher and grades five to eight by the principal. The rooms were divided by a hall which again was divided by the girls and boys cloakroom. In the cloakroom closest to the door we usually had a wood box and a water pail with a dipper from which everyone — sick or healthy, dirty or clean — drank.

The grade one to five room also had a cloakroom, a wood box, and a water pail and dipper. It was the janitor's job to get a clean pail of water every morning, but the boys in grade seven and eight got fresh water if the pail would be emptied during the day.

The school was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Regardless of how we fed the stove it usually took until noon to get every corner of the room warm in winter. We usually brought our lunch pails into the schoolroom and put them next to the stove as the majority of lunches were frozen on the way to school. I don't think the lineup of syrup and lard pails added to the beauty of the school, but no one had anything nicer so this was just a part of our school life.

In the summer we were already very warm by noon and were allowed to go outside to eat our lunch. We then sat on the north side of the school or on the north side of the huge woodpile, which was all split ready for winter.

Lunches were poor in those days. We always had homemade bread, homemade butter, and homemade cheese. That cheese was

[illegible]

[illegible] others enjoying freedom

[illegible]

from their older sisters. It is hard to believe that all the girls wore dresses. Many must have been torn in sports or while climbing fences.

This is the way I remember school days. We were not protected like the children are now, being picked up by bus and going into a warm school. We did not have beautiful sports equipment or lovely clothes. We did not have the modern lunches, which would have made our mouths water. But we did have fun and felt secure in our way of life. Our parents were home when we came home from school, and were there to listen to our problems. We had playtime and worktime at school and home. So it is with pleasant memories that I can look at my days in the little white schoolhouse.

Grace Wierenga

• • •

Education: Before and After School

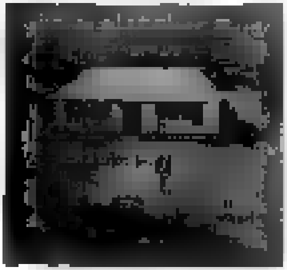
My formal schooling began in 1934 at the old two-room school in Neerlandia. I can still picture my teacher sitting at her desk with glasses perched on the end of her nose and looking at us over the top of her glasses with eyes that could see right through us.

I have many fond memories of my school years, and the education I received in those years has certainly served me well in later life. We walked to and from school every day and that extended our education beyond regular school hours by two or three hours each day. On the way to and from school we studied frogs and tadpoles, bees and wasps, hawks and owls, and whatever animals and birds were around in the various seasons of the year.

We also received many lessons in human behaviour or misbehaviour. I vividly recall one lesson I received from Ruby, our neighbour girl, who was six years older than I was. Ruby had two sisters, Thelma, who was my age, and Janet, who was one year younger. We always walked to school together carrying our lunches in lard pails or syrup pails. One day Thelma came to school with a brand-new, brightly-painted, square lunch kit of which she was very proud. On the way home, as a prank and maybe even from a bit of jealousy, I took Thelma's new lunch kit and threw it as far as I could into three feet of snow along the road. When Ruby caught me I received the worst beating I had ever had, and went the rest of the way home with several painful lumps on my head, and with a very sore tailbone from a sharp boot at the rear. When I got home, I didn't even get one bit of sympathy and got sent right back to the neighbours to apologize before supper. That really hurt, and I never forgot that lesson.

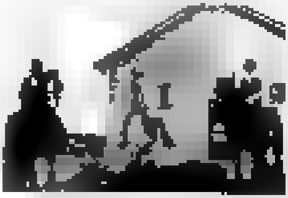
Fred Toebes

• • •



The school.

Some walked. Elsie, Shirley, Joan, and Jack Dirkus.



Horseback was a common form of transportation. Annie Schoonekamp, Jean Rae, Jennie Schoonekamp.

EDUCATION: AS THE KIDS SAW IT

• • •

School lunches

Four slices of steamed cracked wheat bread
Butter or bacon fat
Fillings
    smoked moose meat (real good)
    fried thick-sliced bacon (real good)
    fresh raspberries (soggy)

Winter lunches were better as we could have roast meat sandwiches. Keeping meat in summertime was impossible. We sometimes ground the wheat in a coffee grinder. It took a long time to grind enough flour to make two loaves of bread about 20" long. It was baked slowly in a long roasting pan with a greased board in the centre. It took about three hours to bake (real good).

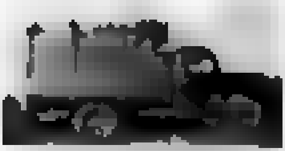
Gerd Bozak

• • •

With Mr. Fisher's arrival, the real learning began. He felt our education had been sadly lacking up to that time and introduced us to history, geography, and grammar. He would knock on our heads and say, "You Dutch cheeses," indicating we were not too bright.

Susie Vanee

• • •



[illegible]

We went to school until we were either fifteen or had passed grade eight [illegible]

[illegible]

◆

My mother felt we should learn to read and write [illegible] and myself in our house.

[illegible]

◆

The bull [illegible] in the school used to have about a hundred [illegible] the only good bull fly was a dead one

[illegible]

◆

[illegible]

When [illegible] and Andrew [illegible] were schoolboys [illegible] holiday out of it at least

[illegible]

◆

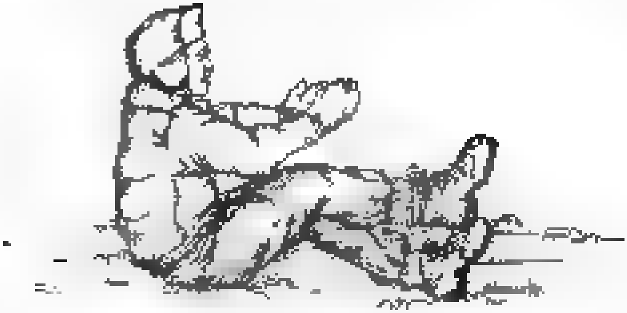
[illegible]

[illegible] were always the highlight [illegible]

[illegible]

◆

After school there was the two mile walk home. [illegible]



middle of our slide and cover it over with snow. About fifteen minutes later Cor Leder came along. He slid neatly into the hole — and two-and-a-half feet of water. That was the end of our slide for that year.

Fred Toebes

* *

Walking Home From School

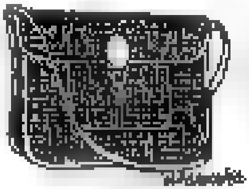
Kids miss a lot riding those smelly school buses. They are so shut-off from nature. Sure, it's fast and efficient, a lot warmer in winter and cooler in summer, but still they miss a lot.

We saw little piles of wild rose hip skins where some chipmunk had sat on an old stump or fallen tree to eat them. And we often watched these bright-eyed little creatures nibbling at their food or flicking their tails and scampering away.

Burning nettles were the test of every child's bravery. Dare to grab it firmly and avoid a burn, or tentatively touch it and feel as if your hand was on fire. Is that true? It passed for gospel when we were kids.

We learned about the plants. Snake berries were poisonous, as was purple pea vine. The white pea vine was okay, though, and we ate it every spring. In fall we imitated the chipmunks and gathered rose hips. The difference was that we ate the skins and only the skins.

We walked home in groups. Usually we walked companionably but sometimes we got into mischief. When Simon Groot sold his house to Frank Kowalchuk, a few of us entered the house after school was out and tore wallpaper off the walls. Little vandals at work. Sometimes we had disagreements with the Terpsma kids and then we had to watch out because they had the most formidable weapons school kids possessed — lard or syrup lunch pails. They could pack a terrific wallop. We poor Olthuis girls had only cloth schoolbags with which to retaliate.

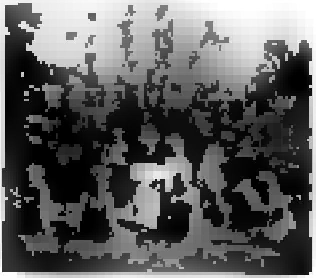


You've heard of motorcycle gangs — well, we had the Nanninga bicycle gang. The Nanninga boys and George Visser could make life miserable for us by parking their bikes across the road and refusing to let us pass. Florence Baker loved to visit her Aunt Tena but dreaded these confrontations so sometimes she would cut across the fields to avoid them. Not learning from our own experiences, we would pick on someone even more defenceless. How cruel one can be.

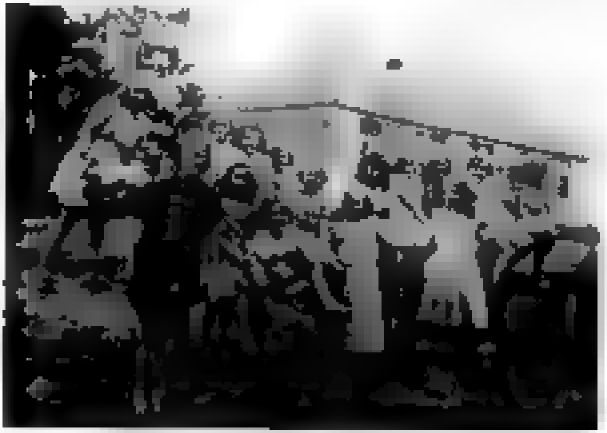
Another thing kids miss today is walking home on the snow drifts. The roads are under [illegible] and it seems there is less snow but in our day it was often possible to walk most of the way home on the drifts. After a blizzard we would carefully test the drifts before committing ourselves to the heady experience of walking on top of the world. Sadly, being the heaviest of the group, I experienced this glorious feeling less often than the others. I would take a few steps on the firmest drifts, then fall through and have to flounder back to the road. On one occasion my brother Jack, about six years old, fell through to his armpits. My sisters and I tried to dig him up, but we were not making much headway when the Terpstra contingent appeared. Here was salvation, we thought. But it must have been one of our feuding periods because they refused to help. After they passed, we continued hopelessly digging amid tears, and finally freed him.

Another great pastime, when walking to and from school, was to kick a horse turd all the way to school. When we got to school we would carefully nudge it up against the school wall for safe-keeping till it could be kicked home again once the school day was over. How can riding a bus compare with this?

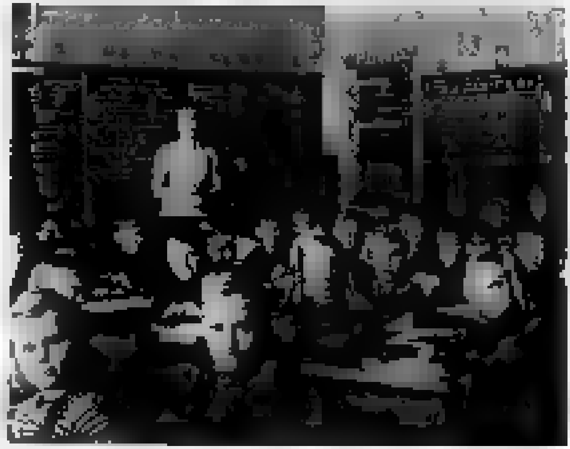
AT SCHOOL



Come and play house. Some of the 1949 grade 3 and 4 class.

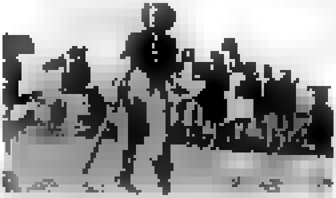


These were the [illegible]. Front: Jennie Terpstra, Alice [illegible], Florence Baker, Betty Terpstra, [illegible] Tena [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], Mary [illegible], Jennie [illegible], [illegible], Gladys [illegible], Anna [illegible]. 1942-43



Of course there was work too: Clara Visser with class, 1945.

Harold Ashley, Janet Sturwold, Lula Krikke.



And sports days: Thelma Sturwold at bat.

And school picnics.

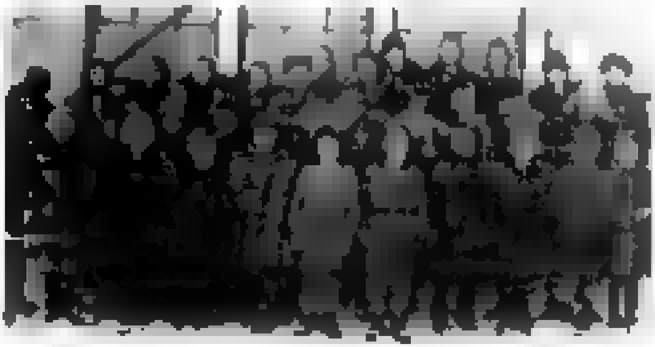
Back: Ada Krikke, Harry Reitsma, Ben Bouwman, Cor Hiemstra, Annie Leder, Hilda Peters, Kobus Meet

Third: Fred Tanasiuk, Walter Tanasiuk, Harold Ashley, Gerrit Lievers

Second: Clarence Tiemstra, Ben Leder, Arthur Reitsma, Arnold Hiemstra, Albert Tiemstra, Fred Toebes, Katie Olsemen, Jane Koning, Julius Elgersma, Betty Koning

Front: Sophia Aukema, Thelma Sturwold, Lula Krikke, Gerda Hiemstra, Jane Dekker, Janet Sturwold, Violet Tillotson, Alice Meet, Hazel Tanasiuk.

SCHOOL CLASSES



Back Row: Joe [illegible] Mary [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] George [illegible] Susie [illegible]

Third Row: [illegible] George [illegible] John [illegible]

Second Row: [illegible] Grace [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Annie [illegible]

Front Row: [illegible] George [illegible] John [illegible] Ethel [illegible] 1922

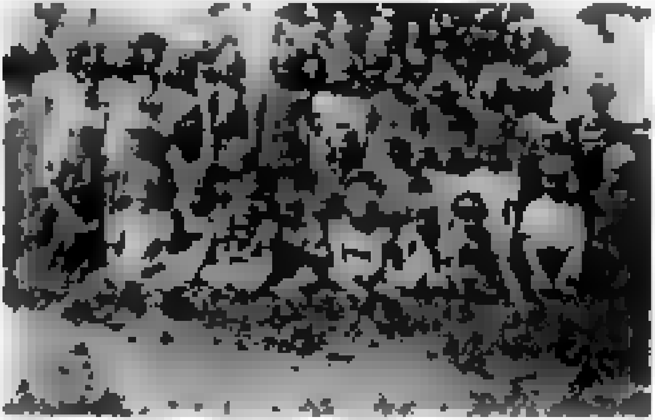
Back Row: Margaret [illegible] Louise [illegible] [illegible]

Middle: [illegible] Grace [illegible] Thelma [illegible] Anna [illegible]

Standing Front: Harvey [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Seated: [illegible] Clifford [illegible]

Seated: [illegible] Ed [illegible] 1948-4

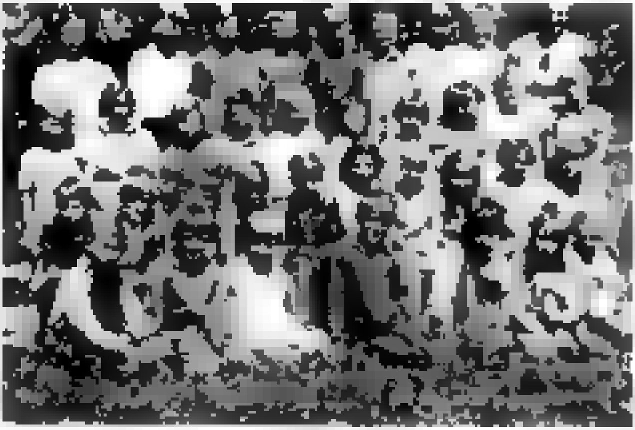


Back: [illegible] Herman [illegible] John [illegible]

Third Row: [illegible]

Second Row: [illegible] Bertha [illegible]

Seated: Gladys [illegible] [illegible] Beatrice [illegible] [illegible] Roy Fisher



Back: Hilda Peters, John Jewers, Harry Ratsma, Luc Hiemstra, Norman Toebes, Arie Kikkert, Annie Lieder, Jane Koning, Grace Bolt.

Third Row: Fred Tanaway, Fred Toebes, Juliana Eggesma, Alice Gelderman, Aukje Negenman, Elizabeth Koning, Thelma Sturwold.

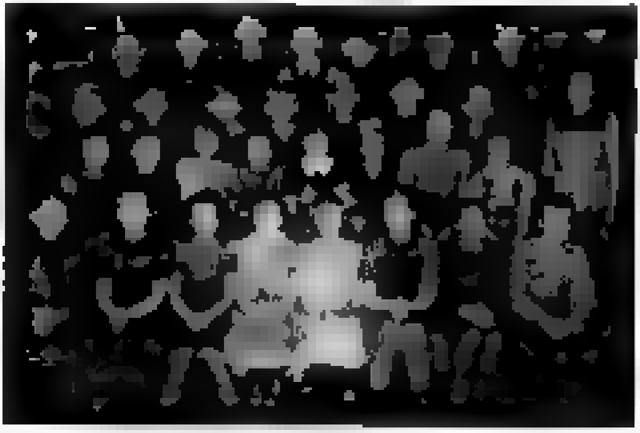
Second Row: Dewey Terpstra, Albert Knoke, Ed Jonkman, Jan Jonkers, Walter Salsbury, Violet Feburton, Janet Sturwold, Theresa Terpstra, Gertrude Hiemstra, Jane Olderman.

Front: Arnold Hiemstra, Art Ratsma, [illegible] [illegible], Martin Nanninga, Gerrit Jewers, Jennie Terpstra, [illegible] Mast.

Back: Dan Johnson, Jim Nanninga, George Vander Meer, Simon Terpstra, Jack Tribus, Julius Eggesma.

Middle: Bertha Struyfhorst, [illegible] Doornet, Alice Struyfhorst, Jean Fisher, Alie Jongsma.

Front: Minnie Knoke, [illegible] Kritter, Rose Nanninga, Judy Fisher, Shirley Ashley, 1954-55.



Grades Three and Four

Back: [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], John Struyfhorst, Gilbert Baker, Andrew Eggesma, George Struyfhorst, Sam Dubout, [illegible] [illegible].

Third Row: [illegible] Visser, Henry Koopers, Alvin Nanninga, Tony Fisher, Steve Pearlings, Jake Baker, Ken Peers, Hulf Schoneman, teacher.

Second Row: Joanne Gelderman, Betty Fisher, Eva Pearlings, Ruby [illegible], Marilyn Moer, Verna Rowaan, Johanna Peers, Winnifred Nyhamer.

Front: Wilfred Nanninga, Dorothy Baker, Anna Nanninga, Grace Mae Fowle, [illegible] [illegible], Sandra Eggesma, Rose Knoke, Adrian Nieman, 1950-51.

The Teachers' Strike of October 1, 1971

[illegible]

The cross-examination by lawyer VandenBrink proved interesting in that all the witnesses had difficulty in relating how teaching during a strike was in itself unprofessional conduct. Mr. VandenBrink eventually introduced as evidence a clause contained in the memorandum of agreement signed by trustee and teacher representatives on October [illegible] ending the strike, which stated that no punitive action would be taken by either party against any person for conduct or statements made during the strike. The hearing was adjourned for lunch at this point.

Immediately after the hearing reconvened in the afternoon, the ATA lawyer, [illegible], stated that in view of the clause contained in the memorandum of agreement the ATA was withdrawing the charges of unprofessional conduct and the hearing was adjourned. The ATA had unwittingly contracted itself out of the right to discipline. Although the teachers were happy that the charges of unprofessional conduct were dropped, they did believe that there would have been advantages in having a decision rendered as to whether the ATA's disciplinary powers [illegible] extend to its trade union activities. Later a brief was prepared by the teachers and presented to the Alberta government requesting an amendment to the Teaching Profession Act to prevent a recurrence of the events surrounding the strike of October [illegible]. No action was forthcoming.

The teachers received moral and financial support from the community. All legal expenses were paid by the Neerlandia community under the auspices of the Christian School Society.

COVENANT CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL

On January [illegible], the Canadian Reformed Church began operating a Saturday school under the guidance of Rev. [illegible] Van Dam, the minister at that time. A Saturday school society had been set up. For three hours every Saturday morning the students were taught Bible study, church history and catechism. But the parents thought this was not enough: the children should be taught according to God's Word in all subjects, science as well as social studies, Bible study as well as world history, and they believed this was not being done in the public school.

On March [illegible], the Rev. M. C. Werkman was requested by the consistory of Neerlandia to speak on the topic "Why Reformed Education?" At that time a school society was set up and given the mandate to look into ways and means of opening a new school. A board consisting of [illegible] Jansen, [illegible], [illegible], Pete Werkman and Bert Wierenga was elected.

The Society was incorporated on April [illegible] and was registered as a charitable organization on May [illegible]. In April [illegible] a building committee was appointed to look into the acquisition of land and cost of a building. In June [illegible] an education committee was appointed and met with some teachers who were on holidays in the area to find out more about educational matters.

Meanwhile, the Building Committee was looking for building sites, but due to government policy on prime agricultural land the first application was turned down, as was the appeal to that dec

[illegible]

[illegible] English, or Afrikaans), there was never a dull moment

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] head and Edmonton were present

[illegible]

[illegible]

Typing classes were started in February 1979, taught by Lisa [illegible]

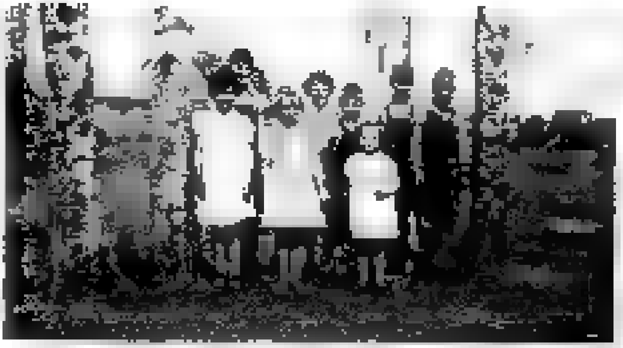
photo chemistry, Dutch, woodworking, and needlework. Some of these courses are taught by teachers, while others are taught by volunteers from the society. The janitorial and secretarial work is also done by volunteers. Two buses driven by volunteer drivers are on the road each school day.

The school is funded entirely by the members of the school society and donations. Every year the school board, when preparing the budget, sets up the fees which are required to run the school. These fees are in three categories: families with children attending school; families with children not attending school; pensioners and singles. Fund-raising activities by groups in the society are for items that are not budgeted for, such as audio-visual, science, and sports equipment.

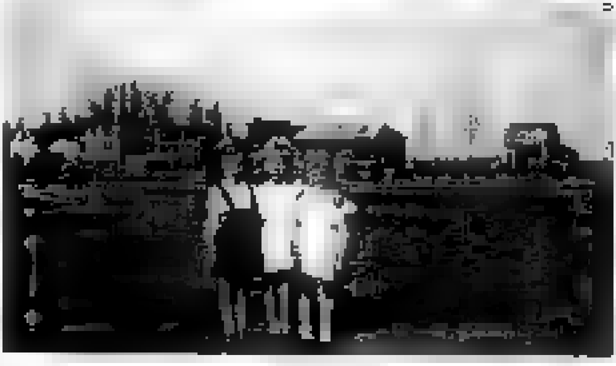
Peter Van Assen and Sharon Viersen were the first grade twelve graduates of the school, graduating in June 1982.

Lies Hauwen

Back: Rita Speers, Elsie Ashley, Hilda, Harold Ashley, Rose Koning. Front: Bert Ladu, Ken Ashley, Betty Koning, c. 1930



Unknown to his mother, Ted Reitsma invited some friends to come home with him after school to celebrate his birthday: Henry Tuininga, Arthur Reitsma, Sytse Tuininga, Grace P. Tuininga, Ted Joyce and Bill Reitsma, Henry Miedema, 1941



Marilyn Maat, Doreen Vanea, Dorothy Baker. (Note C. K.'s oil shed and Rev. Van Der Woude's barn in background.)

From Forest to Furrow

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

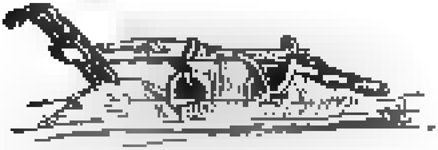
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Blackie and nuzzled her. Having tied Bessie up, I thought I'd better clean the barn. It wasn't too dirty as the only animals we have are Tom, Bessie, and her calf, but I like to keep things clean. After that I went home for supper. Janna had prepared a big dish of brown beans with some fried salt pork. With it we had the usual homemade bread and plenty of freshly churned butter. It was a hearty meal and satisfied even the most hungry eater which, of course, was Jan. We had our usual devotions, giving thanks for all the good things we had again received.

After supper Betje went out to milk the cow; she can do it as good as me. The other girls had to wash dishes. Jan went outside to play and get away from his teasing sisters. I told Janna to come outside with me and enjoy the beautiful evening. I got a few blocks to sit on, took out my favourite plug and together we talked about our life in Canada. She wasn't so sure it was all that good, but I said: "Wait a few years and you'll see fields of golden grain blowing in the breeze. I hope to have a few acres already this year."



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] season of May.

[illegible] He is good, and his love endures forever."

[illegible]

[illegible]

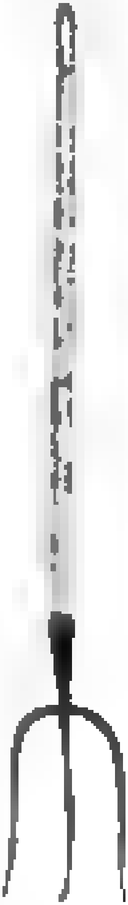
[illegible]

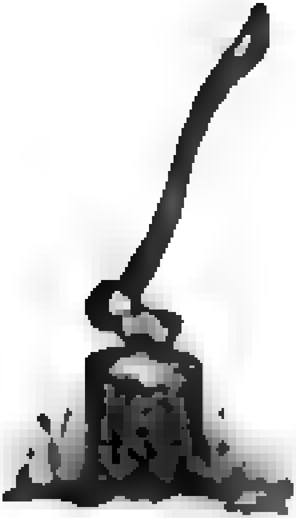
[illegible]

[illegible] with the potatoes.

[illegible] to ship.

[illegible]





[illegible]

[illegible] milk cows would again produce

[illegible] tightly around their legs to protect them

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

I continue to work until noon and am anxious to have my noon meal.

Our neighbour lady, Anna, came while I was in the bush, and brought a small variety of food. Her oldest son has come home from the lumber camp and had bought food before coming home. Martin also has brought more fresh milk. Truly we are feasting today.

The sun seems warmer after dinner, and I head out to cut more trees. Our little ones are enjoying themselves and the older ones are helping Tena prepare a place for a garden. Martin has potatoes and peas and carrot seed for us to plant. We are excited about the coming summer. Our four older children can now go to school and are radiantly happy to be free to enjoy a normal life again.

We bought a cow which will have a calf in June, so we will have our own milk. We do not have to pay for the cow until harvest. Martin said we could buy a few hens from him, so after supper I will go with the family to get the hens as Tena and the children are eager to get out for a drive.

Surely, God has provided for us, and now we look forward with new hope to the coming year of 1920.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER 1930

[illegible]

[illegible] will make it hard to find my cows

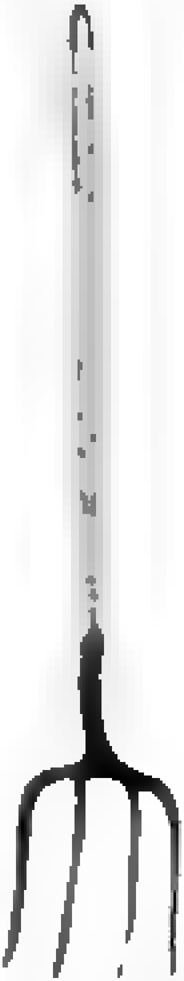
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



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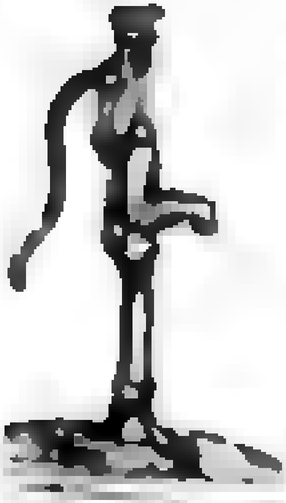


[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ing again and this will give her a break

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

down with a brush. How I wish I could give them a generous helping of oats for all their hard work.

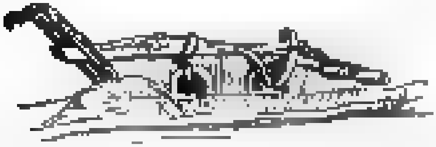
Mina has the cows home and supper all made. I quickly tie the cows to the rail fence to be sure they won't go away while we have supper. Mina says our supper will be pancakes again. I don't mind as I am hungry and now that we have a few eggs the pancakes are actually quite tasty. We also have stewed rhubarb from our own plants, so our supper is great.

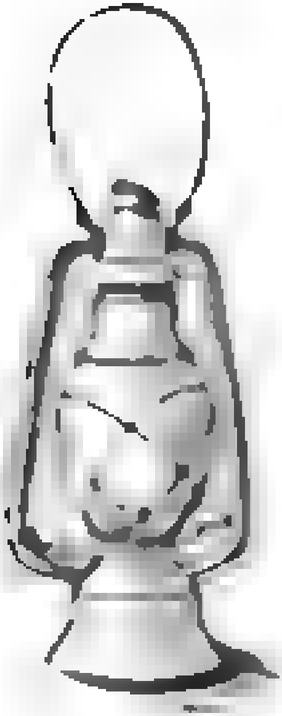
I first wash up, as I am sweaty and dusty. We had rain last week and I can wash in rainwater. We do have a well but the water is hard so every bit of rainwater is used for our washing.

We relax after supper for about half an hour and then go out to milk the cows. Because of improper pasture and hay, the cows have not produced as they could, but with summer coming this will improve. We are only getting a three-dollar weekly cream cheque, and with summer coming it will be hard to get a good grade since we have to haul it five miles before it gets to the truck that will take it to town. However, it's a way to make a living and so I cheerfully head out to milk. Again I give the skim milk to the calves and piglets. Tonight I have only a pail-and-a-half so don't have enough for the sow. With skim milk and green grass the piglets should do quite well. Even though it's late, I still go for water from the well to fill the trough for my animals so I can get an earlier start tomorrow morning.

Mina has her work done too, so we go for a walk along the bush, looking for small spruce as they are the best trees to make rails for a holding pen for the cattle. We enjoy our walk since there are still no mosquitoes or flies and the air is so warm.

The sun is setting now. It has been a busy day. We are tired, but as we approach our little home, our little log barn, and our contented animals, we feel rich and dream about the future, which looks hopeful to a young married couple in a new land.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER 19[illegible]

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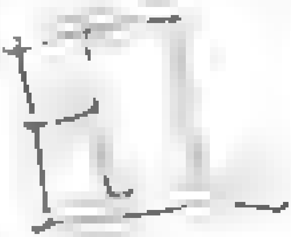
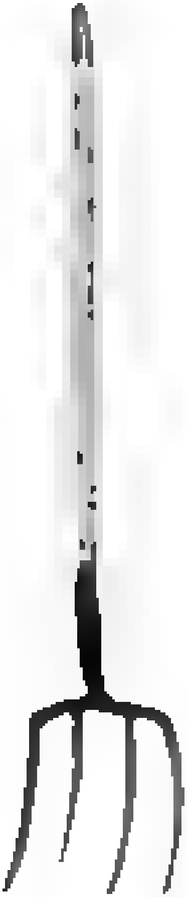




However, I will have to walk behind my harrows, but then, that's only a few miles when you do some every day. It would sure be nice to have a harrow cart but a new one costs over twenty dollars so I'll just have to wait with buying a luxury item like that till I have more money.

I get home for supper at seven o'clock, but before eating I unharness and water my horses. After the horses are watered I turn them loose in the pasture. The first thing they do is roll on their backs in a nice dusty spot near the yard to clean the sweat and grime off their bodies. After spending some time rolling back and forth they give themselves a good shaking before they go out to graze.

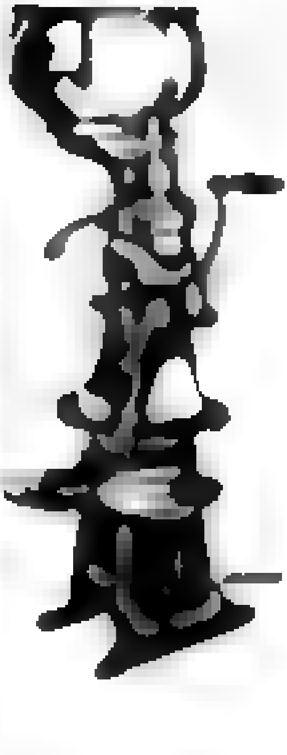
We eat supper together as a family and tonight we have potatoes with meat and gravy and also some brown beans which we grew in the garden last year. That's one thing about living on a farm, you don't have to buy many groceries if you grow a good sized garden. For meat we always butcher an old cow in the early part of the winter and we bottle a good supply for the next summer. We put about half the meat in an old granary behind the house where it stays frozen until spring. Whatever we don't have eaten by the time the spring thaw comes is also bottled, that's cheaper again. I hear some of the more well-to-do farmers in Neerlandia now butcher either a steer or a heifer to eat, but I suppose for the next few years at least we'll butcher a cow. That old lame heifer and the other red one that has an occasional mastitis problem are not such good milkers so we will probably eat them in the next few years.

It's almost eight o'clock by the time we finish supper. At suppertime we do not rush; we always read the Bible and have time to discuss what we read. But with the long daylight we have now I decide to check some fields of the breaking that I seeded last week. After the breaking is seeded it's a good idea to pick roots as there are always some sticking up and after driving them all summer they are rather hard on the binder knives.

I come back home at about 9:30 p.m. so I can relax and have a cup of coffee before going to bed at ten o'clock. It's 5:00 a.m. before you know it.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1930

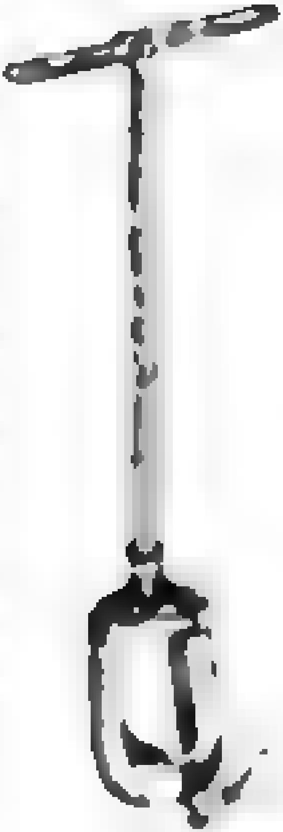
[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] The road to Burghead is pretty good — at least it has [illegible]

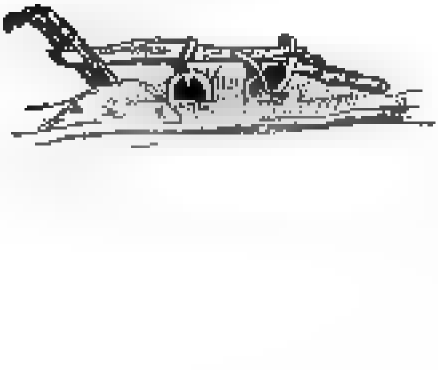
[illegible]



every summer we pick strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons and blueberries to can in one quart bottles. These berries all grow wild and have a special good flavour to them.

With supper completed we get the cows from the pasture. It is milking time again. The cows have to be milked twice a day and it is better to space the time between milkings equal to get the most milk from the cows. After milking we give them some sweet clover bundles because there is not much grass growing in the pasture yet. The milk is put through the cream separator and the squealing pigs get some more skim milk along with barley chop. We grow mostly barley as do most farmers in Neerlandia. The fields have too much wild oats in them so Oli barley as well as some other early varieties are grown too, in hopes that it will be ripe before the wild oats are. We have no way of controlling wild oats other than summer fallow to grow them out. The wheat and oats are grown on the cleaner fields such as new breaking or summer fallow.

With the chores done, we relax and have a cup of tea before going to bed for the night. It has been another busy day so the bed will feel good.



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] change the herd's whole production performance.

[illegible]

[illegible] the local feed mill, has eighteen percent protein.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

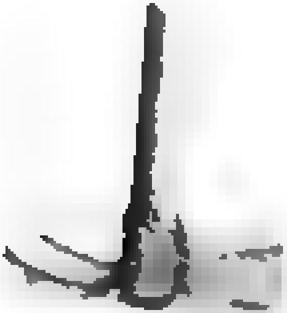
[illegible]

one week ago anhydrous ammonia was applied at the rate of eighty pounds of actual Nitrogen per acre. Next the seed grain is augered into the truck. In the field the fertilizer and seed grain is put into the drill with hydraulically run drill fills. John is seeding Leduc barley at one and one-half bushels per acre with a twenty-four-foot double-disc press drill pulled at 6.5 mph with a 140 horsepower tractor. Seeding started at 4:00 p.m.

Supper is brought out to the field at 6:30 p.m. The whole family, even Oma, enjoys "eating out". After the lawn chairs are set out and grace is said, they eat a supper of lasagne, salad, and buns, and yogurt for dessert. John is happy that the chores were done and that their oldest daughter (who picked the shortest straw) has milked the cow. The kids were still excited that Neerlandia won a trophy at the track meet. Before the supper dishes are packed up and everyone is back in the car, John is already busy seeding.

At 11:00 p.m. the piece is seeded and John is very tired and looking forward to bed. A quick bath is taken and the day is ended with a prayer of thanks and also a promise to Anne that tomorrow will not be as long.

Hans Ingwersen, Herman Gelderman, Gerrit Ingwersen, Albert Tuinstra, John Ingwersen, Pete Emmerzael, Dewey Terpstra, Norman Jansen



AGRICULTURE

1912-1969

The pioneers who arrived in [illegible] in the [illegible] and decade of the [illegible] hoped [illegible] make a better life for themselves and their children [illegible] their own land and [illegible] for their children [illegible] than they themselves had [illegible] It [illegible] mattered not that it would be a struggle. They believed it would be worth it and so they set about farming.

Farming [illegible] the wilderness was a difficult task. The first [illegible] was [illegible] water [illegible] the [illegible] A [illegible] hole [illegible] dug and [illegible] with water. The homesteaders preferred land that had a large enough open area where a [illegible] could be [illegible] and where [illegible] garden [illegible] There [illegible] were [illegible] to remove the trees and the ground was [illegible] with a [illegible] the [illegible] garden [illegible] the gardens [illegible] and other [illegible] were made of small saplings set upright and as close together as possible.

* *

Muskeg Holes

Muskeg holes were [illegible] for water. To make a muskeg hole the farmer [illegible] dug a hole in the [illegible] in the fall. The holes had to be [illegible] first [illegible] the top of the hole [illegible] There [illegible] the cattle [illegible] the hole. After water had been [illegible] the hole [illegible] again [illegible] the holes [illegible] were [illegible] dry. The [illegible] in the summer.

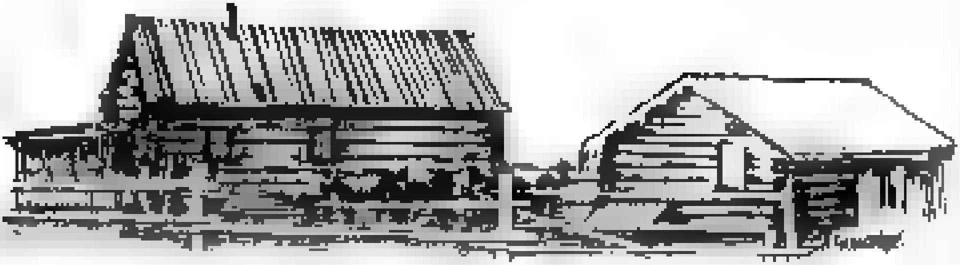
When [illegible] to take the cattle to the muskeg holes [illegible] had been [illegible] half [illegible] the [illegible] horse [illegible] head [illegible] a [illegible] in the [illegible] taking [illegible]

The muskeg holes were about one half mile [illegible] and when [illegible] got there [illegible] the horse [illegible] the horse [illegible] up the water [illegible] the horse.

In the [illegible] the muskeg hole [illegible] a square hole with a [illegible] that muskeg hole all [illegible]

Norman Ferguson

* * *



The Dutch settlers worked hard to provide feed for their animals. At the end of June they would help each other cut the grass which grew along creeks or near lakes. With a scythe they would attempt to maintain an easy rhythm so they would not tire easily. This was a skill that carpenters, army captains and others had not acquired in the old country. No doubt they were glad to stop from time to time to sharpen the scythe with a whetstone.

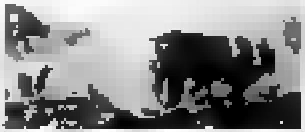
Haying

In the summer hay had to be made. There were meadows here and there along the creeks and lakes. One had to ask the government for permission and, for a small amount of money, one could harvest it. Mowing machines could not be used (neither did we own one) because there were many branches and so forth lying in the grass. I cut some hay with a scythe, like we used to do in Friesland, but here the ground was not smooth; it was rough and full of brush. On one patch we mowed the grass was up to a man's height. It took us a long time to put up a small stack of hay, but time was cheap in those days.

Marten van der Heide

The main job, however, was to clear the land. Often the whole family would be involved in this back-breaking work and neighbours helped each other too. All the trees had to be cut down by axe. First brush and small trees were cut down at ground level and piled up to dry. Then the larger trees were chopped down — usually four or five feet above the ground. The roots at the base of the tree were cut, and then the stump was pulled out by oxen. A block and tackle was sometimes used for very large trees. If time was not important the homesteader would simply cut the roots on one side of large trees and wait for a strong wind to blow them down. These large trees were cut into smaller sections and pulled by oxen to the piles in preparation for burning.

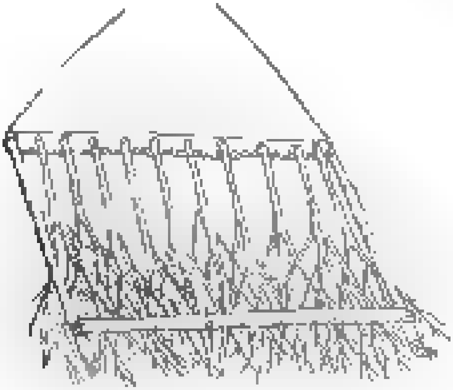
After the piles of wood were burned, the stumps and roots that



Working with a breaking plow.
Hendrik Schoonekamp

were still in the ground had to be pulled out. This was sometimes done with a root hook — a C-shaped piece of iron that was hooked onto a stump and pulled by oxen. Finally the land was ready for breaking. Some of the first breaking was done with a walking plow pulled by two oxen. Once the land was plowed the remaining roots were picked, piled, and burned. Finally the land was harrowed in preparation for seeding.

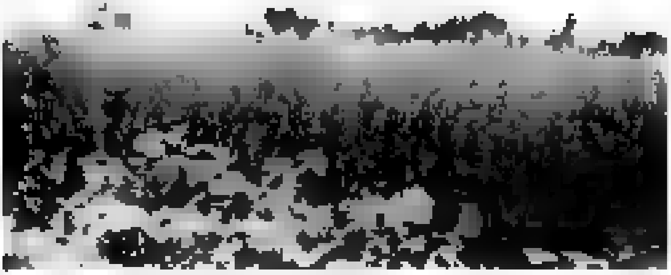
Since the homesteaders had little money or equipment they made harrows by attaching willow brush to a pole and dragging this over the land. Seed obtained from other established farmers to the south was broadcast by hand and worked into the ground using the harrow. Some very small parcels of land were ready for seeding by 1913. Oats was planted, since it provided feed for the oxen and could be used as green feed if a frost came before it was ripe. In the early years frost occurred almost every month, but once the land was opened up the frost-free period became longer.



Homemade willow-branch harrows. One man stood on the cross member to apply pressure to the springy brush. A horse or an ox pulled the contraption across the field.

Since clearing was difficult work most pioneers cleared the lightly-wooded areas first and left the heavy bush till the last. The result was a network of small cleared patches scattered throughout a quarter. The homesteader cut trails through the bush to get to his cleared patches and bring his grain home. The grain was cut with a scythe. Some scythes were fitted with a cradle that gathered the grain into bunches. Each bunch was then tied together with stalks of grain to form a bundle. When dry, the grain was threshed with a flail.

Oxen were the main source of power for the farming operation



A good crop of oats

The ox was considered reliable but slow. Good oxen were powerful animals and, if a homesteader was patient, they would work well. During the hot weather when the flies were out, however, it was not unusual for the oxen to head for water and stay there, ignoring the rage of the owner.

* * *

Rienk's oxen

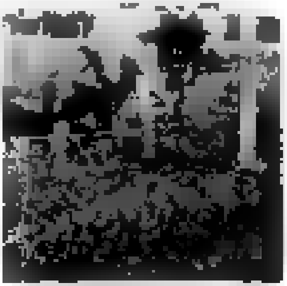
I borrowed Rienk's oxen once to haul some hay. As I was going along I met a neighbour. He said, "I thought, that is Rienk's oxen team coming and it is really moving ... how is that? The driver has no stick and is standing on the wagon, how is that possible? Oh now I see." I was standing with my one foot on the hay fork so that if the oxen were too slow they would come in contact with the tines of the fork and this was the reason they were travelling faster than ever before.

Ben Lievers

* * *

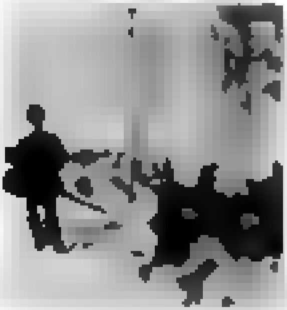
Progress was slow. Many of the pioneers were not farmers and even those who were found it difficult to provide for their families in the wilderness. Many of the men went out working — to the prairies for the harvest, to the logging camps, the coal mines, or to Edmonton during the winter months. While the men were away the women and children did the chores. They would feed and water the cattle. The animals were led or driven to a creek, slough, or lake and a hole would be chopped in the ice. Most homesteaders had a cow that needed milking and this also was part of the chores that had to be done.

When the men returned they often found that things had changed on the homestead. On at least one occasion a baby had died while the father was away. The women, especially, were homesick for their homes across the sea. But they did not go back. For some there was no choice but they trusted that God, with whose guidance they had made the decision to move, would care for them in the new land. The early settlers helped each other — though some were not very ambitious and others not very likeable — out of need and out of a sense of Christian community.



Cows were milked outdoors.

These settlers were resourceful people who produced their



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[illegible]

[illegible]

worked hard, scrimped, and saved in order to pay back the loan did not appreciate the way that other farmers were taking long on their debt.

The government, though, continued its efforts to help the settlers and keep the population [illegible] in the district. The bureau's efforts to [illegible] new animals to be bred and in this way improve their own herds.

* *

In connection with the government effort, the Neerlandia Agricultural Society was set up. The main function of this society was to hold a yearly fair where the home-breeders could enter displays of herds, vegetables, grain and livestock. These displays were set up in the log church. In 1928 Ben Lievers wrote Jacob Otthuis that nine animals were exhibited at the fair. Usually the Department of Agriculture showed a purebred bull and/or a team of good horses at the fair to make the people aware of the quality of animals available. The society was officially dissolved in [illegible] due to lack of activity.

* * *

The provincial government also passed a bill to lend seed grain to the [illegible] in Neerlandia. [illegible] these were [illegible] since [illegible] the bank [illegible] the Neerlandia farmers because most did not have any taxable income.

*

Winter of [illegible]

Livestock suffered not only during that winter but also in the years when the drought supply of cattle feed was inadequate. At the end of the [illegible] were lying down and unable to get up [illegible] then [illegible] to keep the animal in a standing position. Then the problem was to get the beast moving towards water or whatever food was available. Many times an animal could be encouraged to use its own strength by [illegible] its tail, slapping and cursing it and generally prodding it out of its [illegible] and then getting it on the move again. This was a real [illegible].

Carrie Grout

*

1920-1930

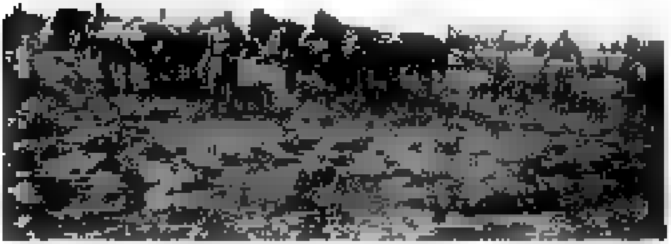
When the winter of 1919-1920 ended, many farmers, especially the recent arrivals, were in desperate straits. Others such as the [illegible], Nanninga and Jonkers had been better prepared for the winter. They had been in Neerlandia for a number of years and knew better how to manage the land and the animals. Then too, they were farmers and knew enough to keep a few pigs to provide meat and lard. In spite of their difficulties they believed that there was a good future in Neerlandia. They started the twenties with determination and hope and, little by little, things did improve.

Prize-winning [illegible] at the [illegible] and [illegible]

Before 1920, a livestock dealer had already travelled around the area buying the pioneers' oxen. The pioneers bought horses to replace them and used them for farming and transportation. Even though some tractors made an appearance as early as 1925, most fieldwork was done by horses.

To operate a productive farm with horses meant working long hours, and careful treatment of the animals was essential. If a horse was treated well it would be able to do a lot of work. To have a well-matched, healthy team became the goal of every homesteader. These horses were not merely beasts of burden, but were considered almost part of the family.

The horse was faster than the ox. When eight horses were connected to a breaking plow, three to four acres could be broken in one day. The plows had a steel beam, but farmers soon found that a specially-built breaking plow with a large, solid oak beam was stronger and more flexible. This plow was also a single-bottom plow, meaning it had only one share, but the addition of a coulter enabled it to do a much better job. It was not necessary to remove all the stumps and roots before breaking, as the coulter could cut through most of them. This meant that root picking was done after the breaking and not before, as was the case with the walking plow and oxen.

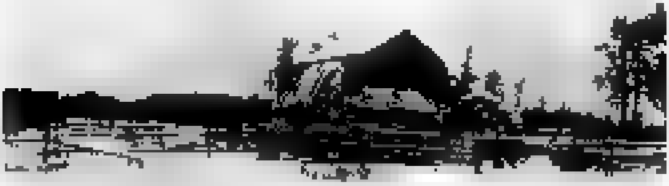


Breaking with horses. Andy and Ike Nenniga.

By the early 1920s many farmers had several acres under cultivation. This too needed preparation and other implements

Plowing on the Cabe Ingvarsen farm.

were used. A farmer could plow about three acres a day with two horses pulling a walking plow. Later a gangplow, which had two bottoms, became popular. It was pulled by four or five horses and had a seat for the farmer. Other implements such as discs, drills, binders, and harrows were added. As cultivated acreage increased more grain was produced and the farmer began to market some. Teams of horses hauled grain into Westlock. The land was beginning to provide a good living.



The Olthuis barn in winter

The 1920s were a period of growth in different areas. Better barns were built and more milk cows were obtained. The cream was put in cans and shipped to market. Because skim milk was a valuable source of food for hogs, farmers began to keep more hogs.

Hog raising in the early 1920s was rather limited and only a sow or two was kept in the barn with the cows. Later, as straw stacks became common, the farmer kept several sows and a number of feeders confined by a fence. The straw stacks provided shelter for them.

Another small source of income was eggs. The chickens that were kept scrounged for themselves. During the winter they would sit huddled together for warmth in the barn. When spring arrived the chickens looked for nesting spots. Some were left to produce chicks, but if this could be delayed for a while, some eggs could be gathered and sold or traded for supplies.

There were, however, still many problems such as frost, wet weather, and insects. Sloughs, potholes, and low areas were commonplace and the wet conditions resulted in hordes of mosquitoes which were such terrible pests that many farmers kept smudges going most of the summer in barnyards and near the house in an effort to keep them away. Homemade remedies such as salves, oils, and protective coverings were also used in an attempt to find relief from mosquitoes. The insects were also a problem for the livestock. When a farmer was breaking land, he was forced to keep up a steady pace because if he stopped the horses would step over the traces while trying to rid themselves of the insects.

* * *

The Plague of Insects

Most years during the warm summer the insect plague was almost unbearable, especially in wet weather. In wet years mos-

quitoes, sand flies, bull flies, and blackflies were the worst. At night we had to keep smudges. Some of these mosquitoes carried encephalitis (sleeping sickness), a disease of the brain. Many horses died from this dread disease. The diseased animals lay around listlessly. For the horses we had ear covers made of cloth and nose baskets made of wire screen. For ourselves we had [illegible] sugar bags with eyeholes, covering our head and neck. For the hands we wore gloves. So it was no picnic for the men either.

Cor Fisher

* * *

Rabbits, Rabbits, Rabbits

***Rabbits**, rabbits, rabbits and more. Every seven years or so the rabbit population would explode to astronomical proportions. Come fall and winter they would eat small evergreen brush, grain left on haystacks. Seen some stacks 16' wide and 30-40-50 feet long chewed up from all sides till they tipped over and if the farmer did not get the rest out that would be destroyed also. In the spring of those years they would get a disease called tularaemia, a disease of small animals, possibly after they were bitten by diseased mosquitoes which would wipe them practically out. If we saw a rabbit the next summer it would be almost a miracle so deadly was this disease. The first symptoms of this was blood blisters on the ears. The last time we had an epidemic like the one described was in the early fifties. Before that it was every so many years almost like clock work seven years or eight.*

Ben Lievers

* * *

Fire could also be a problem. It was necessary to burn trees and muskeg land (peat soil) but sometimes it burned too deep and caused land loss. One particularly dry year (1924) a lot of topsoil was lost because of fire.

There was plenty of work for the farmers too. Since livestock were kept indoors during the winter, barns needed cleaning. At times the horses were kept in cold shelters where the manure would freeze and build up behind them. In some of these shelters there was little room between the roof and the horses' backs by the time spring arrived. In the new barns, however, the manure had to be removed at least every other day. Sometimes it was forked out of the door or window and left on a pile till summer. The best solution, if the weather was not too cold, was to spread it on the fields immediately.

To move the manure the farmers used a stoneboat. Later a wheelbarrow was also used to move manure out of the barn, either onto a pile or onto the stoneboat. In the late twenties, manure spreaders began to lighten the job.

* * *

Not only was the stoneboat used to clean barns or move loads around, but it was also used for transportation. With one or two horses in front, it was kind of a poor-man's sleigh. As it did not have a tongue or pole to control it, the driver had to be careful not to stop the horses too fast lest the stoneboat slide into the back of the horses' legs. In the summer, when a stoneboat did not slide so easily, a *farmer would sometimes cool a frisky team down by hooking it to the stoneboat and going to a soft field. He would give the team free rein and encourage the horses to gallop. It did not take long before they were well behaved.*

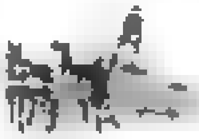
This same method would sometimes be used to break a horse to the harness. This important job was often done in the spring. Two or three year-old horses were usually the ones trained. The first step was to halter-break the animals. A collar would be put on and the young horse would be teamed with a well broken and reliable horse. Unless the horse was particularly rebellious, it soon learned what was expected of it.

* * *

The construction of fences required a lot of work and farmers, to their dismay, found that fence posts made of spruce or poplar soon rotted away. Tamarack was found to be much better and hauling tamarack fence posts and firewood from the low areas became a winter project.

When it was necessary to go to the bush, a few farmers would get together early in the morning, each with his team of horses and a bob sleigh. They would take along their lunch since they would be away the whole day.

Straight trees, about four to six inches in diameter, were cut down with a crosscut saw. They were then limbed, topped, and cut into twelve to fourteen foot lengths. The posts were loaded with the bottom end of the tree to the front and the thin end to the back of the sleigh. If the load was large it was bound together by a chain wrapped loosely around the logs. A gap was left in the centre of the load and after the chain was in place more posts were placed on top of the chain to tighten it.



Gradually mechanization took place. Tractors were first used in Neerlandia about the mid-twenties. In about 1925 Raymond Baker bought a tractor and Simon Tiemstra bought one shortly afterward. Raymond Baker's was a one-cylinder 15-25 horsepower International Titan, powered by distillate, a fuel with an octane rating between gas and diesel. These first tractors were used only for stationary power, because they were too difficult to handle in the field.

About the same time, Simon Tiemstra and Klaas Tuininga Sr. purchased a portable threshing machine with a ten horsepower stationary gas motor and ten inch cylinder. Before this time the grain had been put in stacks and stored until November or December, when a thresher from another community would come.

When Tiemstra and Tuininga arrived at a farm, threshing began. One man threw a bundle from the stack onto the platform where another cut the twine and fed the machine half a bundle at a time. The straw came out on a conveyor at the other end and another man stacked it using a fork. The grain came out of a spout and was bagged and carried to a shed or granary where it was stored. The men charged a fee for each sack of grain threshed.

Coffee Grinder

[illegible] brought their own [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

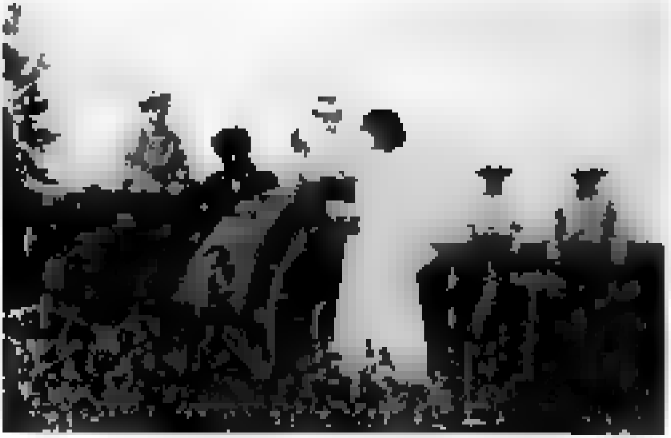
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



Planting on the Hendrik Wierenga farm: Lambert, Clarence, Johanna, Tena, Joe, Hendrik.

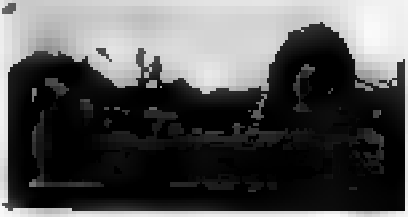
sometimes resorted to the use of dynamite or stumping powder. The powder would be tamped well under the stump and a fuse inserted. Then one would light the fuse and run. If done properly the stump would split and pieces would fly into the air. One farmer made a practice of doing this on the first of July. He thought picnics were a waste of time and with every boom he could prove he was working.

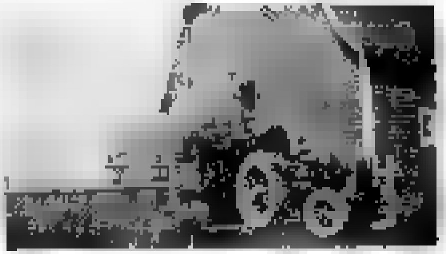
With the construction of the Pembina Valley Railway to Barrhead in 1927, the farmers no longer had to deliver grain to Westlock. Along with the railway came the elevators, and the Alberta Wheat Pool opened in Barrhead in 1928. Many farmers joined the Pool because they hoped through co-operation to gain some strength in the marketplace. Others were afraid of the power of the large co-operatives. Though Neerlandia farmers had always worked together, usually harmoniously, many of them were not certain that membership in co-operatives such as the Pool was compatible with their Christian principles. The concept of pools, co-operatives, and unions was a hotly-debated issue whenever farmers got together.

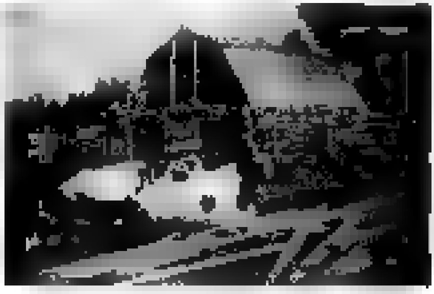
There were trucking services to Neerlandia by this time, so when a farmer had livestock to ship he would sometimes haul them by wagon or drive them to a central location where the animals would be loaded on a truck for shipment to Edmonton.

The years 1920-1930 were a time of growth. Prices for grain and livestock were such that the Neerlandia farmer was making financial progress. It seemed that the pioneers were justified in their choice of a new home. Life was becoming easier. Mechanization made it possible to crop land more quickly and thus allowed more time for family life.

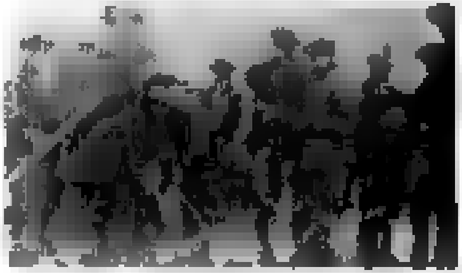
FARM SCENES

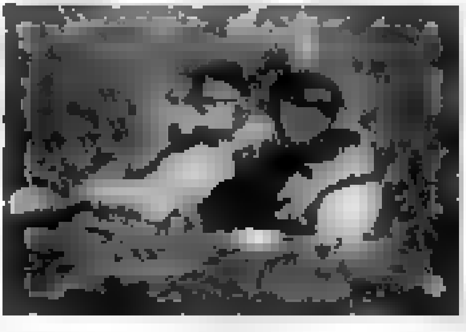




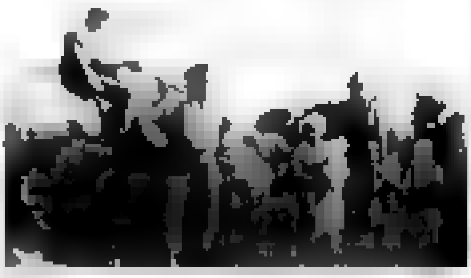


FOOD: AN IMPORTANT PART OF FARM LIFE

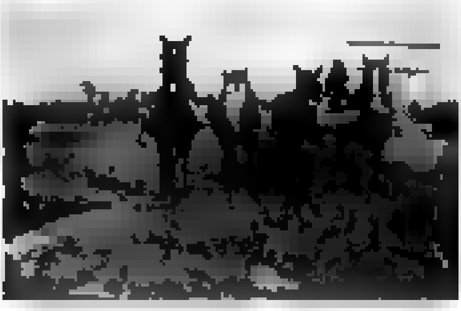




CUTTING

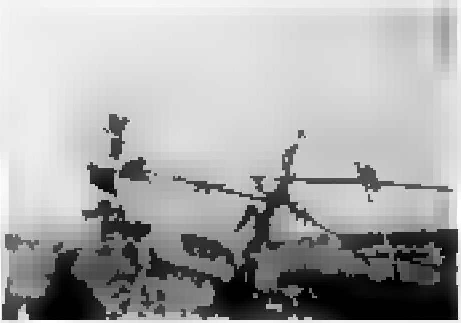


Grain was cut using a horsedrawn binder. George Anema, John Peters Sr., Frances and John Anema, c. 1938.

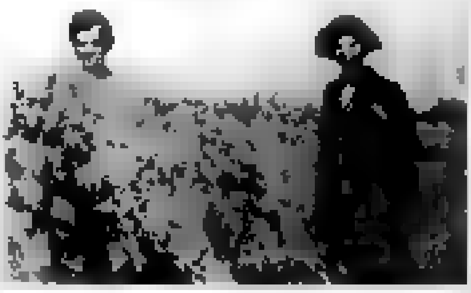


Four horses were hitched to the binder. An early snowfall has flattened the crop.

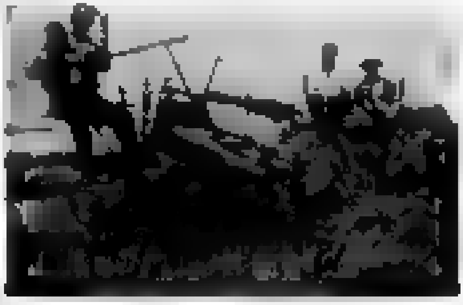
The binder put the grain into bundles. John and John Peters Sr., c. 1937.



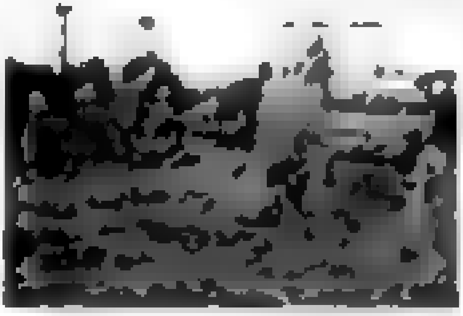
A whip on the end of a long bamboo handle stood upright within easy reach of the driver. Peter Ramaker Sr., c. 1930.



After cutting, the grain had to be stooked. Delia and Susie Anema spent many hours stooking.



Later tractors replaced the horses. The Rossen brothers: Bo on binder, Joe and Albert on tractor.



[illegible]

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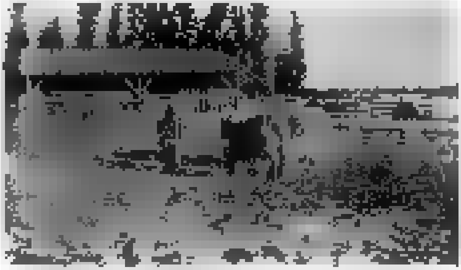
CONSTRUCTION

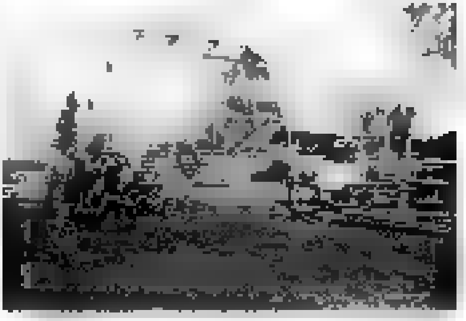
Granary.



Sheep shed with slab roof.

Note gate.

Geldermann's horse barn



Hope stationary engine – moved by horses to do threshing in early days and eradicate them from the land. For years farmers tried to control them by handpicking, but it proved to be a losing battle. Since these weed seeds can be dormant for many years, control by cultivation was impossible. Wild oats was becoming a problem since it also had delayed germination.

Other problem weeds were sow thistle and Canada thistle. They tended to grow in patches and farmers tried to control them by summer fallowing, by handpicking and by cutting down any patches in the crops with a scythe. A common chore for children was picking weeds in the crops.

Despite all of these setbacks and difficulties, as the 1930s came to an end, farmers in Neerlandia were thankful they were able to survive. Though money was scarce they always had food on the table. Even the economic situation was improving slowly by the end of that period. Tractors were again coming out of hiding. Several makes and models were available, but the John Deere D and the Oliver 70 were most popular in Neerlandia. Heated debates over the relative merits of the various tractors and even pulling contests were held once farmers started to buy these tractors.

* * *

Harvesttime Down on the Farm

Harvesttime was a very special time on the farm. It was the season when farmers would take in the crop which they planted in the spring and which through the blessing of the Lord produced forty, sixty or one hundred fold. The first homesteaders used a scythe and flail for harvesting, but after some years binders and threshing machines were used.

Cutting

The first binders to arrive in Neerlandia were rather small (having a 6 or 8 foot cutting bar), were ground driven, and had to be pulled by horses. The most amazing thing about these machines, however, was that they could tie the bundles (sheaves) automatically by using twine and a simple and little gadget called a knotter. What an amazing little mechanism it is when it works, but what a pain in the neck it is when it gets out of adjustment. These binders also had a bundle carrier which could carry five to eight bundles and then these bundles could all be dumped together. This allowed the farmer to rake the bundles in rows, which made it much easier for the stookers and later for picking up for threshing.

Being ground driven means the binder was operated via a chain from the bull wheel (large wheel with cleats) and this turned only when the binder was pulled forward. As soon as the binder stopped moving forward the whole business would stop operating. If the binder was plugged or needed adjustment the farmer could operate the machine for a bit by hand via a crank. It was far from ideal but infinitely better than nothing. If the crop was standing upright everything usually went reasonably well, but watch out if the crop was badly lodged (flat). Then you could sometimes see a cloud of "blue smoke" rising from the farmer-operator. The knife would plug up, the canvases would stop and the bundles looked like balls of hay. Sometimes a whole field would be cut from one direction if the

crop was all lying in one direction. This made it somewhat easier to pick up and cut, but it took a long time to finish a field.

[illegible]

Stooking

[illegible] the crop was only the first step in the harvest [illegible]

[illegible] the first week the fingers were well [illegible] and the arm muscles hard as nails.

Threshing

When all the stooking was done, the work of threshing could

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

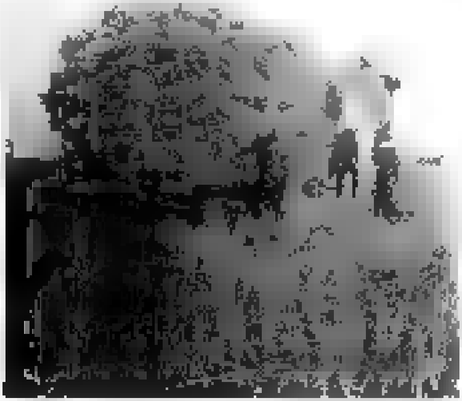
[illegible] to be witnessed.

The Homemaker

[illegible]

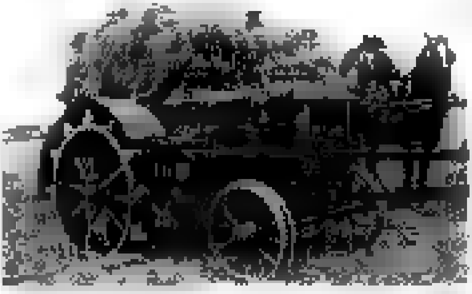
THRESHING

Ready to start. Ingvaldson — Anema crew.



Loading in the field, c. 1954. Note field pitcher who went from man to man helping load the racks.

Straw came out of the blower to form a straw pile. Grain came out of another pipe and went into a granary.

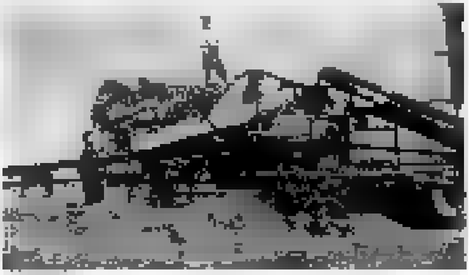


Some farmers had matched teams of horses. This team belonged to Joe Bruk who threshed with the Heberlings.

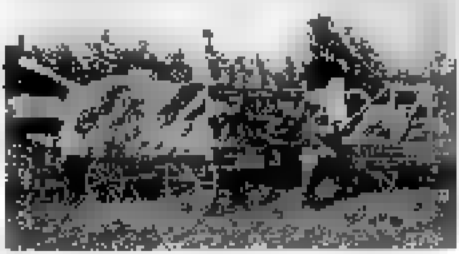
Belts and pulleys, chains and cog wheels. What a racket! Henry Peters smiles amid the noise.

The belt had to be lined up with the tractor. John Roth pitching bundles.

Time out for lunch. Threshing at Albert Mast's farm.

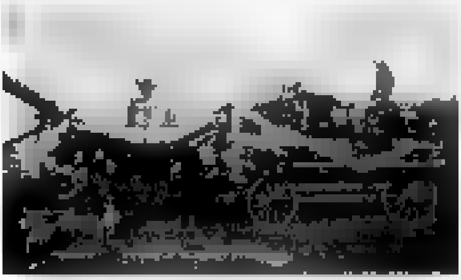


Do you want some lunch? [illegible] at the Mast's!



The women try their hand at pitching bundles while the men eat. Bert Elgersma on the ground.

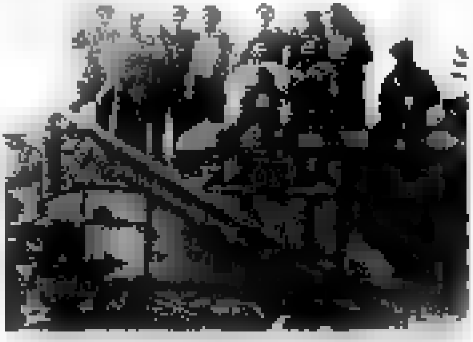
Wentje and Clarence Tuininga surveying the harvest scene, Jim on stack.



Threshing took place on every farm. This is at the [illegible] in the early 1940s.

Pete Visser is working hard to keep the threshing machine busy.

It was easier to have a rack on each side of the feeder.



Time to celebrate: the harvest is in the bin. c. 1937. Is that beer they're drinking? Bill Olthuis, Bill Sajema, Albert Elgersma, Andrew Wieringa, ?, George Olthuis, Lucas Stuiveld. Seated: Case Tuininga, Raymond Visser, John Stuiveld.

dinner ready by 12 noon. By that time the men were starting again and were looking forward to a feast. [illegible] with spuds, meat and vegetables enough to feed an army [illegible] good measure each man [illegible] about [illegible] dessert. The ladies of the house [illegible] had to clean up and wash all the dirty dishes, prepare another [illegible] lunch and [illegible] then rush home and prepare supper for her family while tending [illegible] and [illegible] for the next day. How they managed to get [illegible] done and usually right on time is something [illegible]

Lambert [illegible]

* *

Threshing

The second year of our threshing run [illegible] at John Ingerman's, Albert Schoenecamp and [illegible] that [illegible] the same old topic [illegible] at the supper table made the evening rather dull. He thought [illegible] could be remedied with the addition of a keg of beer. He [illegible] with [illegible] when the [illegible] and this was accepted as [illegible] place in his [illegible]. The price was eight dollars and the keg had to be returned when empty. The [illegible] had the suspicion that we had something other than water to drink before we came in for supper [illegible] about the keg [illegible] on the [illegible] also help [illegible] the [illegible] that when the keg was tapped before supper it opened up an entirely different and very interesting aspect for discussion at the supper table and it did not diminish the appetite for food in the least.

Also, have to admit that when we tapped the keg again after supper it was [illegible] that we would never have imbibed [illegible]

[illegible] we had been threshing at [illegible] Ingerman's place and [illegible] had made sure the keg had [illegible] had room in his barn [illegible] horses so [illegible] were stabled and fed before we had our supper. After supper we tapped the keg and made our way to the barn to hitch our teams to the wagons and go home for the night.

In the barn some interesting and big discussions developed. As we talked about feats of strength and [illegible] we [illegible] the [illegible] legs of our horse Max. In a [illegible] his [illegible] hind quarters, put his arms around her legs and [illegible] lifted her hind end up so her hind feet were off the barn floor. Max was a full grown horse and was quite [illegible] of the [illegible] had happened [illegible] with what [illegible] done.

Now you have to know that John Ingerman [illegible] could not be [illegible] and he was [illegible]. He said [illegible] horse, that's nothing [illegible] lift a whole horse. [illegible] immediately said, "Well, then we'll have to see."

John got under there [illegible] on his hands and feet. Charlie weighed in excess of 250 pounds and I didn't believe he *could do it. John heaved up his back. Charlie gave a grunt and his back feet left the barn floor.*

We told John. John only lifted his back end. So he moved over a bit to the front of the horse and heaved up again. And lo and behold, all four of Charlie's feet left the barn floor. John had done the impossible again.

George Aneme

* * *

Turkey In The Straw

How many of you remember straw stacks? They were wonderful places to play. When threshing was finished we couldn't wait to climb the straw stack and slide down. Dad always strictly warned us not to play on the stacks till they were three days old. That would give them a chance to settle and be safer for us.

One time though, the temptation was too great. Wilf, Jean, Jack and I climbed up and slid down a fresh stack. To our horror, when we reached the bottom Jack was nowhere to be seen. Frantically we dug in the area we had last seen him. Finally he emerged crying, with a wide open mouth full of straw. What a relief to find he was still alive. We learned the value of heeding Dad's rules that day. But naturally we breathed not a word of this event to him.

Elsie Navis

* *

1940-1949

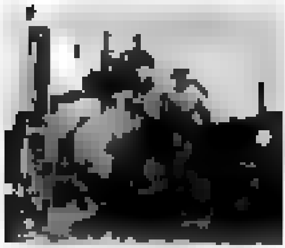
The men who farmed Neerlandia in the forties took seriously God's command to till the ground. They believed that in response to God they had to prepare the land well, keep it weed free, and produce good crops and herds. They worked hard to achieve this end. Changes on the agricultural scene in the 1940s enabled them to succeed. The financial return to farmers increased dramatically as a result of the wartime demand for farm produce.

Nevertheless, the local people had many shortages to cope with. It was difficult to get new tractors and farm machinery in the early forties because the manufacture of instruments of war had a higher priority than the manufacturing of farm machinery. The metal shortages were also evident in the fact that barbed wire at this time was much thinner and more difficult to work with. It was especially troublesome to reuse because it could not be rolled up easily. Gasoline was also rationed, although there was always a good supply for agricultural purposes. During this time farmers had their own fanning mills to remove weed seeds from the grain. Seed grain was treated with formaldehyde in an effort to control smut.

The major change in farming practices was the use of the Caterpillar tractor for clearing land. These large machines eliminated much of the back-breaking work and enabled larger areas of land to be opened up for farming in much less time. The sight of these monsters moving their way through the bush with trees falling like tenpins before them was a major event for everyone. The roar of their motors would carry for miles and people would soon know who was clearing their land. Along with the cats came bigger breaking plows and heavier disks, and the country was opened up. Fires were everywhere and smoke was thick as farmers burned

the windrows to get more land into production and take advantage of the better prices for grain and livestock. For those who had been unable to pay their way during the depression, this was a wonderful time.

As early as 1940 tractors with lights and starters became available. By 1946 the first tractors with hydraulics were for sale. These features made tractors easier to handle, more versatile, and useful for longer hours.



Combining on the Albert Flemans farm

Combines too were becoming more popular in the 1940s, making the cutting and harvesting of grain faster and easier. No longer did long hours have to be spent stooking, loading, and hauling the grain to the threshing machine. The combine brought with it a new set of problems, however. Fields were often too rough for effective combining. The many roots on recently-cleared land were often picked up with the swath and caused breakdowns. Most of the combines were pull-type and often got stuck in the soft spots. Once the grain was swathed it took a long time to dry because fields were small and often sheltered by bush. Then too, combines left the straw in the field and this posed another problem because most of the other field machinery was not capable of working the straw into the ground. To overcome this problem many farmers burned the straw. Farmers at this time either did not know that burning robbed the soil of much-needed nutrients and fibre or they simply accepted the lesser of the two evils. Nevertheless, combines were seen as an improvement over the cutting, stooking, and threshing method and more farmers purchased them.

With the end of the war and the stabilizing of prices, the 1940s was one of the better periods for agriculture. It was in these years that Neerlandia farmers became more prosperous and well-established.

* * *

Unemployed

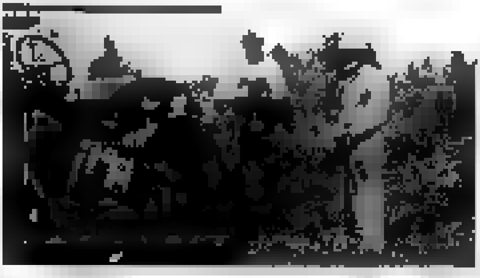
The thanks the faithful horse received. During the latter years of the war many farmers with tractors let their horses run wild and they began breaking into granaries. One horse was so smart he would back up to a full granary and let fly with his hoofs, knocking a hole into the granary. The grain would pour out in the deep snow. Then about fifteen or twenty horses would come to feed and trample the grain into the snow. Many of the horses would get to water and the grain in the stomach would start swelling, bursting the stomach. With a little imagination, you can understand the terrible pain the animals suffered. Some of these animals were shot for their own good because they became pests. The unemployed, without work, a life of boredom. No fault of their own, but of the times and the system, who then refused to start from the bottom and work up to become efficient workers.

Cor Fisher

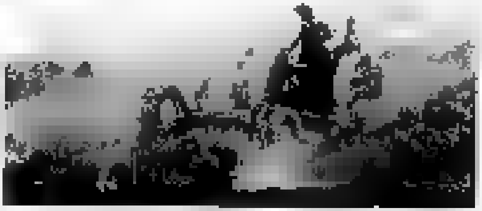
* * *

STEEL-WHEELED TRACTORS

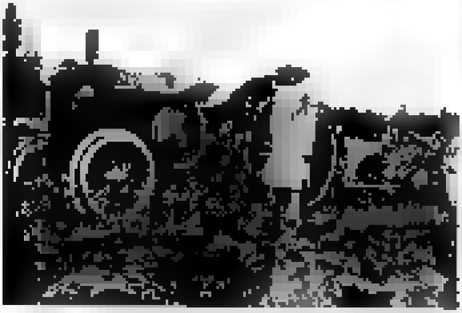
A furrow laid bare. Gerrit Kippers.



Andy Nieuwenga and Clarence Roseman clearing land, 1944.

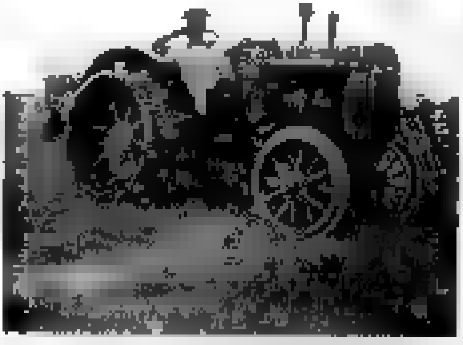


Lambert H. Wierenga breaking, 1944



Ira Mast and the John Deere – note flywheel used to start tractor.

Steel-wheeled tractors were still in use in the 1950s. Henry, Henry and Art Peters, Lambert H. Wierenga on tractor.

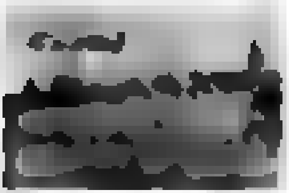


Clarence Mast posing with his Oliver 60, 1928. Note the crank for starting the tractor

Crushing grain. Hije, John, Joe Wierenga. 1937

[illegible]

[illegible] concerned about weeds in their fields. Many farmers [illegible] ling to healthier and faster-growing animals [illegible]



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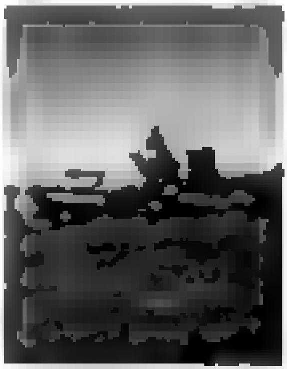

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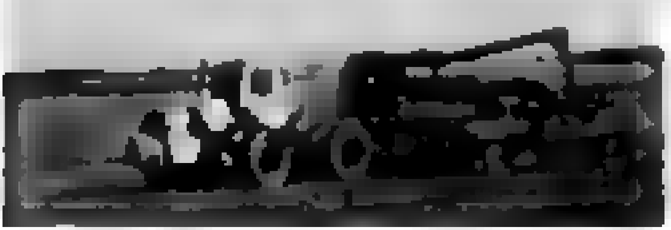


[illegible]

[illegible]

the farmers in the Neerlandia area went into the hog industry and hog barns began to be built all over the countryside. The Neerlandia area has become one of the most intensive hog-raising areas in the province of Alberta. Some farmers still do mixed farming — a combination of hogs, cattle and grain.

Due to the complexity of farming, farm organizations came into existence. The National Farmers Union had been in existence for many years but few Neerlandia farmers joined. More felt comfortable with Unifarm when it was formed and some joined it.

The Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta had its beginning in Neerlandia in 1971, and a provincial organization was formed in 1974. The purpose of this organization is to present a Christian position in regard to agricultural issues and to attempt to apply the biblical principles of stewardship and justice to farming. Many Neerlandia farmers joined this organization. Their intent was to farm in accord with the land — that is, in a way that conserves the environment while producing food and maintaining an economically feasible unit.

Neerlandia continued to grow in size as many farmers bought land in surrounding districts. Bumper crops, good markets, and good prices all combined to contribute to the increasing prosperity of the Neerlandia community. Inflation began to be a major concern but the way to beat that, it seemed, was to borrow money and build barns or buy land. More land was also being cleared and the low lands were being drained.

By the 1980s farmers were able to operate farms many times the size of their forefathers' farms. The pioneers faced the problems of survival in a new land and the development of the land for agricultural purposes; their descendants have to face such questions as whether bigger is necessarily better, what place the use of chemicals has in farming, and what should be made of technological developments.

Cattle

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

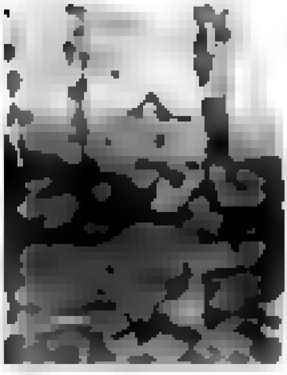
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] plow, "Easy, [illegible]. Easy [illegible]

A few years have gone by

[illegible]



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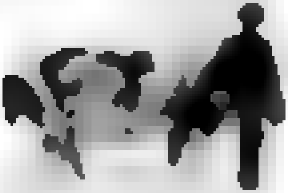


[illegible]

[illegible]

Now years have gone by.
I've got my own little boy

[illegible]

Edmonton

[illegible]

They are heavier in the hind quarters than in the front and are used for production of milk, although they would still grace the farmer's table when their usefulness as milk producers was over.)

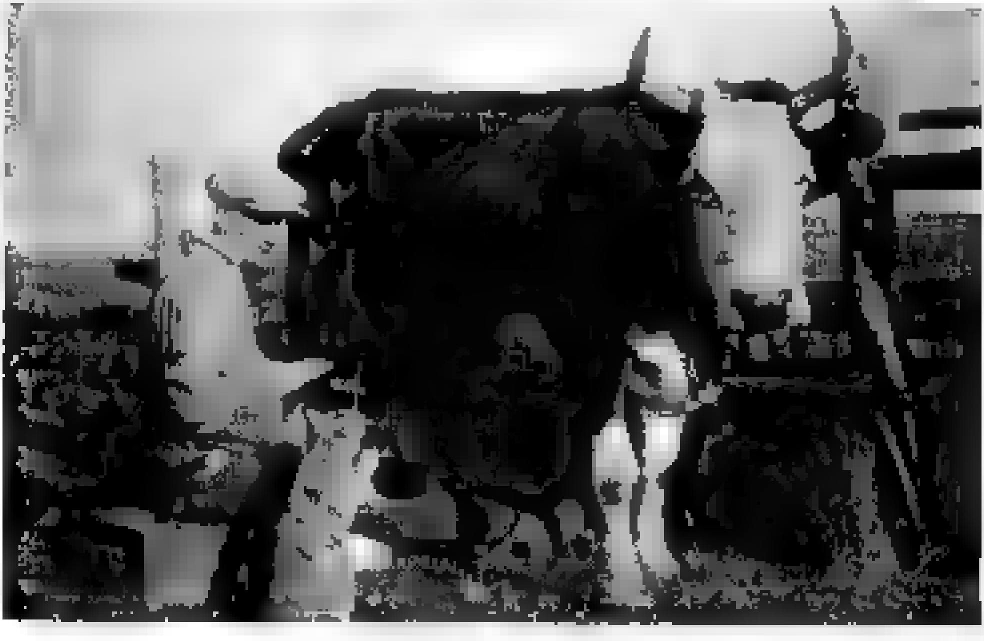
Farmers did not take their sick cows to a veterinarian — it was too far and they also could not afford it. If cows got bloated, some farmers would treat them with coal oil; a bottleful was given internally. The milk from the cow's next milking, though, could not be used since it tasted like coal oil. Serious cases of bloat were treated by punchuring the cow's stomach with a trocar.

Feeding time 1940s.

During the thirties farmland continued to be cleared, but most of it was used for growing grain, and farmers did not have much tame pasture. Cows grazed in the bush pastures or along sloughs, but sometimes there was not much grass to be found. One farmer would sometimes remark to another that he wondered whether a neighbour's cattle were lying down because they were resting after having had their fill of grass or if they had become tired looking for it!

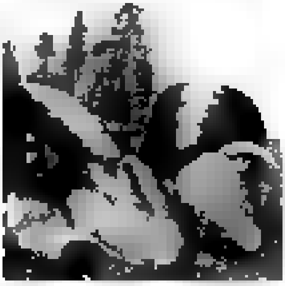
More years have gone by
My son has his own little boy

Although mixed farming had been the norm, towards the late forties a slow trend towards specialization developed. There had been many changes in animal, crop, and manure handling. Some farmers were no longer dependant on the cream cheque to make ends meet. Farmers realized that there were advantages to having only one or two types of farming.



Henry Mast was probably the first to specialize in purebred Herefords, a type of beef cattle. Beef cattle are chunky and square-looking, with their weight spread evenly between the front and back quarters, mostly along the backbone. Henry began with a herd of about twelve cows with calves in 1945 and had increased it to about one hundred head two years later when, due to health reasons, he had to sell. The Masts exhibited their cattle and sold breeding stock. In the summer, the cattle were pastured and brought home for the night. In the winter, they were fed hay, grain, and chop.

Herefords.



Henry Mast and his prize-winning Herefords.

Artificial Insemination (A.I.), the Bull on Wheels, was introduced in 1957, resulting in a radical change in animal husbandry. The Vega Artificial Insemination Breeding Association, a cooperative of the surrounding farmers, was established at that time. Each member paid a ten-dollar membership fee. Albert Janssen was hired as A.I. technician. A farmer could now have his cows bred to select bulls to improve his herd in one or more specified areas. The first year mostly dairy cows were serviced. In 1961, Bob Janssen took over from his father and became the A.I. technician. In 1963, the cooperative was dissolved and Bob set up the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association. At that time, seventy-five percent of all the A.I. service was performed on dairy cows. This changed the following year, when semen from exotic European breeds became available, although semen from the Netherlands could not be imported until about 1980 as the Dutch cattle had hoof-and-mouth disease.

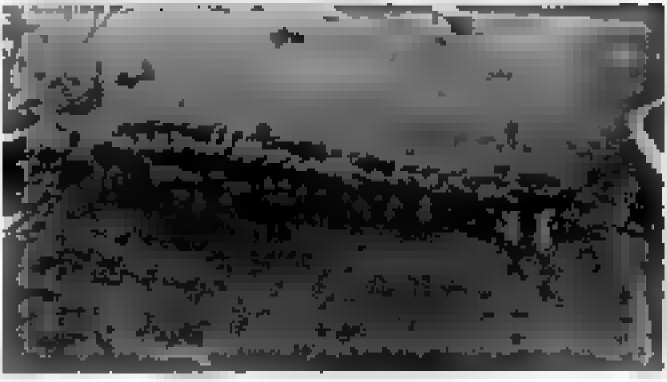
But Neerlandia farmers were a progressive group. They saw the advantages of doing their own A.I. They were always around the animals and thus could inseminate their cows at the optimal times rather than waiting for the A.I. technician who might not be available. After 1976, when the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association was dissolved, most farmers either kept a bull or did their own A.I.

A recent advancement in the cattle industry is embryo transplanting (ET). Embryos from one or two select cows are transplanted non-surgically into recipient cows. Case Van Beek began using this method in 1987 to improve his Simmental herd, averaging ten live offspring per select cow. At first he rented Barrhead Veterinary Clinic for the transplanting, done by an ET technician, but now select cows plus several recipients are taken to Nanton.

For the dairy farmers, a major change occurred after the creamery in Barrhead was overhauled around 1967 to include the processing of skim milk powder as well as butter. Except for those living along the mail route (their cream was picked up by the mailman and delivered to Barrhead), the cream was still being shipped in cans to Edmonton by truck. With the conversion of the Barrhead NADP plant, however, farmers could start shipping fluid milk. Many did not do so immediately, however, since it took a large initial investment to convert to a fluid milk operation. Art Peters was one of the first in the area to ship fluid milk (1968–69). After converting to fluid milk, the dairyman no longer had the skim milk by-product from separating the cream, so he could phase out his hogs and specialize in dairy farming.

Over the past years, the average dairy cow's milk production has increased considerably due to better feeding and careful breeding. In 1940, a cow's average production per lactation would be 8,000 pounds milk and 280 pounds butterfat. By 1960 it rose to 10,000 pounds milk and 360 pounds butterfat. By the 1980s, it increased to 14,000 pounds milk and 540 pounds butterfat. Among Neerlandia farmers, the Frisian Holstein is the most popular milk cow.

The beef industry initially included primarily Herefords and Black Angus, now some farmers have Charolais and Simmental (maternal breeds). The calves of the former are smaller and weaned at 400 to 450 pounds, the latter are larger and weaned at 700 to 800



Cattle-feeding time on the [illegible] Al Wierenga farm.

pounds because the cows are also good milk producers. Holstein steers are also raised for beef, mainly by the dairymen.

Neerlandia farmers who keep cattle have specialized into dairy or beef. The beef farmers generally have mixed farms, raising grain and hogs besides, whereas fluid milk is the main source of income for dairy farmers. Today only a few farmers keep an individual cow to serve as the family's source of milk.

The Pound

Pound: an official government means to deal with stray animals, a fenced-off area on a Pound Keeper's property where stray animals were brought when they had been making a nuisance of themselves by going onto prohibited property.

During the pioneer years, livestock were free to roam the bush or follow the creeks to find grazing areas to their liking. But, unknown to the livestock owners, the Domestic Animals Act of 1920 and 1923 changed that. The Act required municipalities to have bylaws prohibiting animals from running at large. It seems, however, that the Neerlandia area had no such restrictions until 1929.

In November 1929, when Neerlandia was part of the M.D. of Shoal Creek, the Domestic Animals Act was passed by the Council as a by-law and Councillor Joseph Baker appointed Henry Kippers Sr. as Pound Keeper on the NE 16-62-3-5. As a result of the by-law, Neerlandia animals were now restricted. Most male animals were not to run at large or to enter another person's property. Where the property was surrounded by a lawful fence, no animal was to trespass and if other than the owner's animals were found within that fenced-off area, these animals could be brought to the nearest Pound.

The fence, however, had to meet certain regulations. For example, if made with rails or boards it could not be more than eighteen inches from the ground, it had to have posts not more than twelve feet apart, and the number of rails or boards could not be less than four. A wire fence had to have at least three strands on posts not more than sixteen-and-one-half feet apart. There were more regulations: the fence had to be eight feet away from grain crops and twenty feet away from haystacks. There were a few variations but the message was clear — make a good fence!

There was also a provision for the protection of animals from dogs. If a dog was off its owner's property and was "pursuing, worrying or destroying cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, or poultry," it could be killed.

After an animal was impounded, the owner could redeem the animal by paying the Pound Keeper for expenses. The amounts that could be charged had been stipulated in 1923 as follows (they were revised from time to time):

For capturing a male animal and bringing it to the Pound	$2.00
To the Pound Keeper for each day that he kept a:	
Stallion, bull, jack, or boar	$1.00
Ram or he goat	$ .35
Horse, mule, donkey, cattle, or swine	$ .50
Sheep or goat	$ .20
Goose	$ .10
Other expenses:	
For notifying owner	$ [illegible]
For giving notice to the Department at Edmonton	$ .25
For each mile travelled	$ .10
For all notices	$1.00

The maximum to be charged for one animal was twenty dollars except in the case of male animals.

Failure to comply with the ordinance by unlawfully taking animals from the Pound could result in a maximum fine of one-hundred dollars. If a male animal had been removed, there was the possibility of a thirty-day imprisonment instead of the fine.

In August 1933, when Joseph Holwerda was councillor, Chris Leder was appointed Pound Keeper on the SE 4-62-3-5. As Chris Leder discovered, being a Pound Keeper was fraught with problems. He wrote the following letter on September 3, 1936, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs:

> Sir:
>
> On August 31, 1936, a bull was delivered to the pound kept by me and as the owner was unknown to the party delivering the said bull, I posted a notice as required by the Domestic Animals Act. The next day the owner asked me how he could redeem his bull as he had no money. I advised him the only way according to the act was by getting two sureties as provided in the Sect. 18 of the Domestic Animals Act.
>
> The owner of the bull went to the party who delivered the said bull to the pound and secured a written statement that he would not claim the $5.00 allowed under the Act. As I was not at home being away stooking at a neighbour's place he gave this statement to my wife and took possession of his bull without permission and without paying the fees due.
>
> Please advise me on a few questions:
>
> Can I or any pound keeper release any animals impounded without receiving the fees due as set forth in the Domestic Animals Act?
>
> If a pound keeper releases any animals without receiving the fees due, will he commit a breach of the Domestic Animals Act and to be liable to be prosecuted for such action?
>
> If any person takes possession of any animal or animals impounded without permission of the pound keeper and without making payment of the fees due is he committing an act against the Domestic Animals Act and is he liable to be prosecuted?

Should a pound keeper take action in a case like this or could he let the matter go?

Are there any amendments made in the Act after 1932? If so would you supply me with a copy of the amendments and oblige me.

Respectfully yours,
(sgd) pound keeper
Neerlandia
Municipal District 651

It is not known what reply Chris Leder received.

In June 1946, Henry Kuppers was appointed by Fred Casavant as Pound Keeper on the NW 16-62-5 and remained such until 1955, when Neerlandia became part of the M.D. of Barrhead. In 1956, Joe Tuininga was appointed Pound Keeper by Bill Olthuis. The Pound was then located on the SE 28-61-3-5.

One of the animals brought to that Pound, a 600-pound Hereford steer, was never redeemed. After Joe posted a number of advertisements and a period of time had elapsed, the animal was sold. With the funds, expenses against the animal were paid and the balance was given to the general fund of the Barrhead municipality, since the owner remained anonymous.

Joe remained Pound Keeper until May 1976, when the Alberta government passed a new Stray Animals Act, which made provisions for an inspector to be in charge of stray animals within each County.

* * *

Loose Cattle

The neighbour's cattle would be in my crop every day. I had warned him and even milked his cows, but his bulls never cared. So finally I got fed up with it. I walked the cows, about forty of them, to the Pound at Chris Leder's, but the bull refused to go so we put him on a wagon and brought him there. My neighbour was furious — he figured I would get the money he had to pay to get them back. I don't know how he finally did get the cattle back.

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Stuck in the Muck

One thing most homesteaders looked for when they settled this area was the availability of a good water source for their livestock. A creek or small lake served this purpose. Having a small lake or body of water on your land, however, could create some problems since your cattle could get stuck or even drown in them. This problem still exists to a small degree to this day. Most of the local lakes have muskeg all around the edges with virtually no bottom to it. Horses usually were smart enough to stay away from the soft ground but cows seemed to want to see how close they could get. The danger was usually the greatest in the spring since the cattle were longing for some green grass, and the first green shoots usually emerge around the lakes. The cattle would keep going closer to the water's edge as they looked for these new shoots, and then they would break through the frost and down they went. They usually managed to keep their heads above the water but if they remained in the cold water too long they would die of pneumonia.

Mostly, however, there was no way they could get out themselves so they needed help. A horse was quickly harnessed and backed as close to the cow as possible. A chain was then tied around the neck of the submerged cow and to the singletree attached to the harness on the horse. The horse would drag the animal until she was once again safe on firm ground. Planks were often needed for farmers to walk on so they could get close enough to the animal to get a chain on it. The reason you attached the chain to the animal's neck was that this usually was the only part of her body that was above the water. Their necks are pretty tough though and I can't ever recall hurting the animal this way. I can recall one spring when in the 1930s six of our milk cows failed to come home for milking. As there was a lot of brush around at that time we spent a considerable time looking for them. I happened to walk down to the lake located on the western outskirts of the farm and there were the six heads sticking out of the water. Ben [illegible] ropes [illegible] some pulling that day. If my memory is correct all six cows survived this ordeal without any adverse effects. After that we generally tried to keep our cattle away from the lake until all the frost was completely out of the ground.

Lambert Tuininga

Horses

After using oxen for the first five years, many of the farmers changed to horses. Some of the early settlers had horses called broncos which were wild horses that came from the west. They were generally small, standing thirteen to fourteen hands high, although some were taller. The Nanninga and [illegible] brothers often broke horses for others in the area. The horses were used for transportation as well as for fieldwork in summer and to haul firewood in winter. They were thin and always looked tired. In the summer when they could graze, they would put on some weight. In the summer the animals would also be fed the wild hay that grew and the oats they raised for green feed. The green grain would be cut and stooked, then left to dry. Later it was stacked and the whole bundle was fed to the livestock.

Some suggest that the early settlers bought light horses, weighing around twelve hundred pounds, because the ground was so soft and wet in the early days. Heavier horses would get bogged down in it. After about five or six years the surroundings got more solid and the farmers figured they should have heavier horses. In any case, in the early twenties a man called Texas Johnson, who travelled around with a Belgian stallion, brought it to Neerlandia to breed the mares. From this cross between the light mares and the heavier stallion they raised some fine workhorses, bigger and sturdier than the mares they were from.

Ray Wharton of Shoal Creek had a registered Percheron stallion and for some years his hired hand, Mr. [illegible], peddled his stud. He travelled through the district with Wharton's stallion once every week for a few months, stopping at farms to see if the farmers wanted any mares bred to his horse. The fee was two dollars at the time of service and five dollars when the mare

[illegible]

There was also a big roan Belgian standing at stud in the [illegible] weighed more than a ton

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the grain was supposedly slowed down

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Today there are three groups of horses — draft, saddle and pony. Draft horses are heavy muscular animals, developed for doing heavy work. Saddle horses are lighter than draft horses and used for lighter work where the horse must move quickly, and for pleasure riding. Ponies are the smallest and are generally ridden by children.

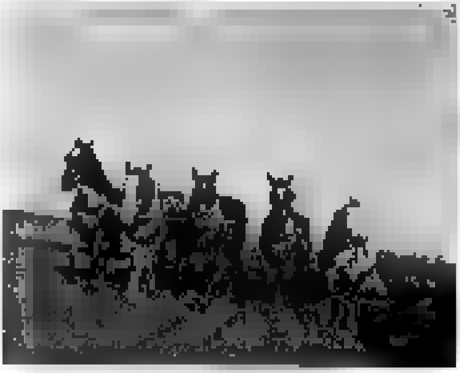
Work horses are no longer used in Neerlandia. The only horses kept are ponies and saddle horses, and these are used solely for recreational riding — a far cry from the pioneer days.

HORSES ON THE FARM

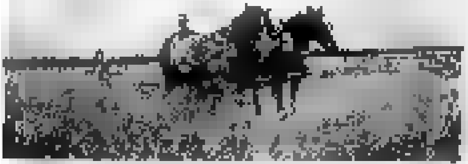
Horses were used for plowing, 1937.

Seeding. Hendrik Jan ter Horst.

Rene Kooy cutting hay with mower. Ben Lieverse with scythe. 1920s.

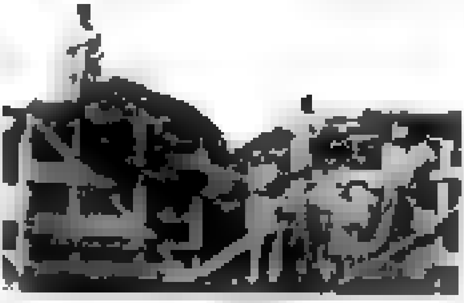


Harrowing. Hendrik Kannegieter. 1930s.



Mowing grass. Hendrik Kannegieter.

Raking hay, Henry Michael, 1920s.



Taking hay bundles to the stack, 1930s.

Hogs

Remember the days when new born piglets were brought to the house in a box, perhaps an old egg crate, and placed by the cook stove to dry off and warm up? And remember how the runt of the litter was taken over by the children to be nursed on a baby bottle? Or perhaps you remember that ornery sow that would not budge until the family dog sank his teeth into her rump and the time your dad had to spend sewing her up again. And remember how, after spending all that time and energy to lock her up, you would find the gate to her pen ripped apart and the old girl in the straw stack with her new litter. Those were the good old days.

This Little Piggie Stayed Home

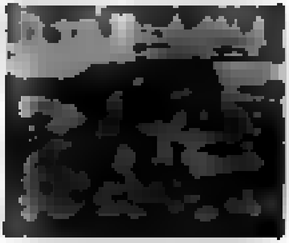
During the first years of the settlement, no one in Neerlandia kept a hog. It seems that around 1917 a few farmers such as Willem de Groot, Roelof de Jager and John Terpsma began raising hogs. John had a sizeable herd of 40. The pigs were probably fed crushed wheat or barley, along with the contents of the household slop pail. Around 1925, when farmers began shipping cream, the pigs were fed and given skim milk that was available on the farm. During the twenties, nearly every farmer began raising hogs, since the arrangement worked very well for anyone who shipped cream.

These first hogs were likely mixes of the red Duroc or mainly black Berkshire breeds, called lard-type hogs because they have such a large amount of fat. They were usually very heavy, and since they had short legs, their bodies were close to the ground. These kind of hogs were favoured by the pioneers because the fat would be used for cooking and baking. The fat of the intestines and the stomach was used for making soap and some women also used the lard for soap-making. At least once a year, usually in the fall, one of the oldest sows was butchered for the family's use.

◆

Bad Day for Hogs

One Neerlandia pioneer was fixing his fence so that his pigs would not get into the garden. Even though a pig jumped over the fence. "Guess I'll put another rail on," thought the young farmer [illegible] that day as a result of his hot temper.



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] another tug to squeeze through, any [illegible] for market.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Results

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] gradual change to cr [illegible]
cross-breeds as pure [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] a started pullet operator

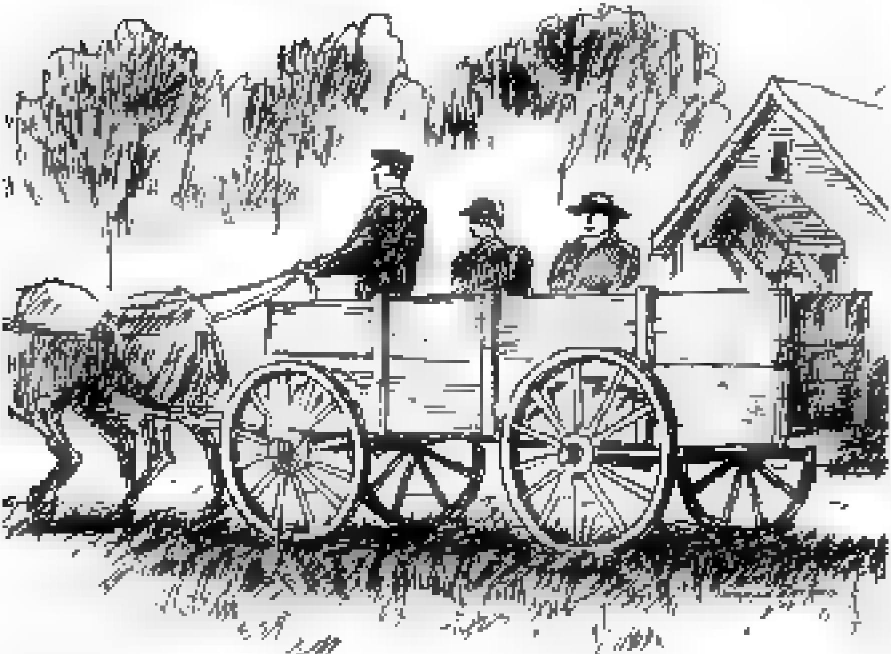
[illegible]

[illegible]

one thousand birds but has to feed them by hand and clean the droppings out with a fork.

All segments of the poultry industry are controlled by provincial marketing boards and only farmers who have a quota can keep flocks. Imported heavy-cross birds are used for the broiler trade although there are still some light-heavy crosses (dual-purpose birds) in the country. Besides these domestic birds there are some wild prairie chickens and ruffled grouse and many Hungarian partridges in the area.

Trails and Travel



TRANSPORTATION

Dutch Settlement

Before families from the Netherlands established the farming settlement of Neerlandia in 1912, the area was an isolated wilderness. Transportation routes were poor and water saturated the uncleared land. These harsh realities did not prevent the Dutch settlers from recognizing the potential of the area. Their devotion to Christian values and belief in the Calvinist work ethic contributed to the success of the agricultural industry in the district. Today, model farms and a strong Dutch-Canadian community are the results of their efforts.

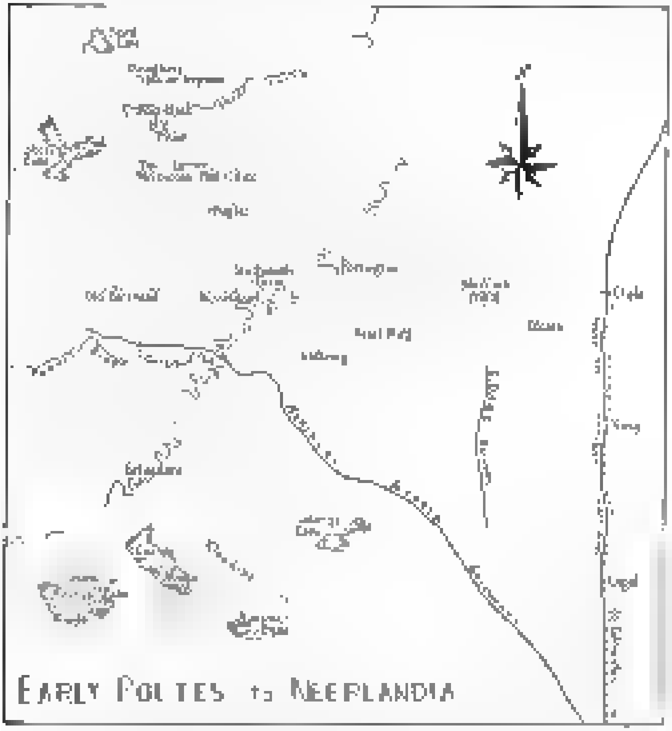
If one is travelling west down Highway 18, about six miles past Freedom, he is likely to miss this sign marking an historic site. Another half-mile farther west is a sign indicating that the approach road to Neerlandia, Secondary Highway #769 N., is coming up on the right. Within fifteen minutes, having driven on smooth pavement through rolling countryside, the traveller will have reached the Dutch settlement, an effortless and pleasant drive making it difficult to imagine that at one time coming to Neerlandia was an arduous journey.

Homesteaders.

During the spring of 1912 three Dutch immigrant families left Edmonton for Township 62, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian. They were Jan and Johanna Oldegbers with their son John, Koop P. and Minke Mast with their son Henry, and Douwe and Beltje Terpsma with five of their children: Florence, Ada, Arthur, Tena, and Norman. It took them approximately two to three weeks to cover the distance of ninety miles. There were many reasons why this journey took so long to complete. First of all, the means of transportation necessitated a slow pace. The families travelled with ox-drawn wagons and the men were inexperienced in handling or driving these animals. The oxen were bought in anticipation of the trip as the people, while they were in the city, went about on foot.

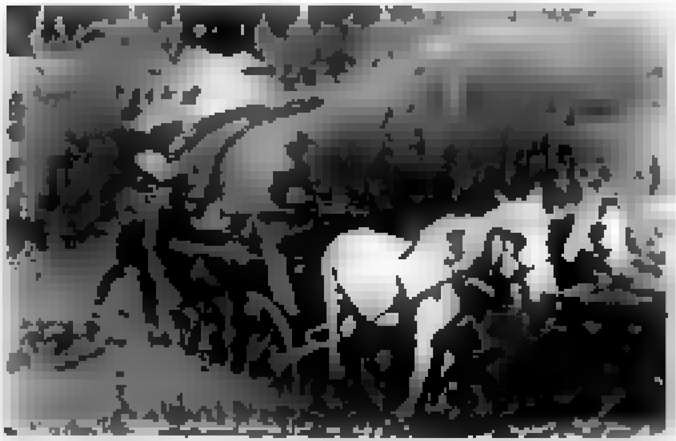
The Jan Oldegbers family and the Koop P. Mast family travelled together to their homesteads. At first John Anema and Simon Tiemstra accompanied them with horse teams. However, it soon

proved impossible to use the horses as they sank into the mud up to their bellies. The two men left the group and returned to Edmonton with the horses. Jan then purchased an ox and a bull to pull his wagon and the group travelled on with two ox-drawn wagons. It is believed that they followed the Klondike Trail from Edmonton in a northwesterly direction through Belvedere and continued on the Trail in a northerly direction until they reached Township 60, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian. Upon leaving the Klondike Trail they would have gone in a northeasterly direction, probably entering Township 61 through Section 3. This assumption as to their route is based on the likelihood that they travelled basically the same route as the surveyor of Township 62, Allan Findlay, in 1911. He reports going north on a road from the Mellowdale Post Office, which was located at the NE 22-60-3-5. If followed, this road would run into the trail beside which these first three families had their cabins.



Douwe Terpsma and his family took a different route to their homestead. They took the St. Albert Trail north from Edmonton and then continued on the main road north all the way to Clyde. They were only as far as Morinville, however, when they encountered muddy roads. After reaching Clyde they headed west over rough roads and trails through Edison, Rossington, and Dusseldorf. A short distance from Dusseldorf they headed north through the Naples district and then, going in a northwesterly direction, entered township 61 through the Big Timber southeast of [illegible].[5]

The trip for all three families was a nightmare. The trails were winding, going through bush country with sloughs and creeks with no bridges, and on the trail itself were mud holes and fallen trees. Travelling as they did in the spring, the way was more difficult as they had to go through or around the mud holes, sloughs, and creeks, rather than pass over them with a sleigh, as was possible in the winter season. Unfortunately rain, mud, snow and spring run-off made crossing the Pembina River a hazardous undertaking. All the obstacles encountered meant time spent in unloading the wagons, pulling them through the sloughs, mud holes or creeks and then reloading them again. It has been recounted that the [illegible] group used a [illegible] with teams to get a single wagon at a time through the sloughs. Often furniture or trunks would be left behind at a farm or in a shack along the way and most of these possessions were never retrieved.



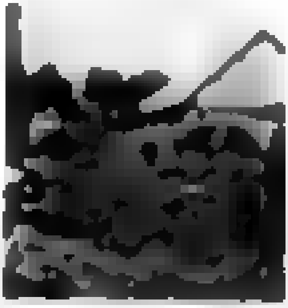
Stuck on the trail

In order to lighten the load the women and children, who may normally have had the privilege of riding on the wagons, would have had to walk through the deep muddy places. Imagine the women holding their skirts up in a vain attempt to keep them from getting soaked and caked with mud. Shoes and stockings were doubtless soggy and wet and because of this perhaps the children were allowed to go barefoot at times. In addition the swarms of mosquitoes and other insects made things miserable for man and beast. No regular stopping places are mentioned in connection with those who made this first trip to Neerlandia. It can be presumed that they slept either outside, perhaps under the wagons, and maybe the women and children in them, or in empty and abandoned barns or

[illegible]

whose harder tasks were yet ahead

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Florence (Terpoma) Baker

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] across Jasper Avenue. At first there were [illegible] entering the water. Once through the teamster would have to goad them on scrambling up the opposite bank. Some people would get off the wagons and across on foot and then the team and wagon would struggle across without the additional load. A few settlers would have to remain on board the wagon while it crossed. Ben Sievers recalled his family's first crossing of [illegible] Creek. Alice Sievers was sitting on the wagon with her baby and asked, "Where is the bridge?"

"There!" replied Sievers and pointed to a log lying across. "We have to go through the creek."

"Oh, let me off!" she replied.

"Can you walk over that log with your baby on your arm?"

"No, No!"

"Then sit tight and hold on!"

Fortunately they went through without any mishap. Later the creek banks were sloped and a timber bridge was put in. This bridge consisted of two logs about ten feet apart laid across from bank to bank with additional logs fastened on top of them. Often the creek would flood in the spring and be completely impassable.

* * *

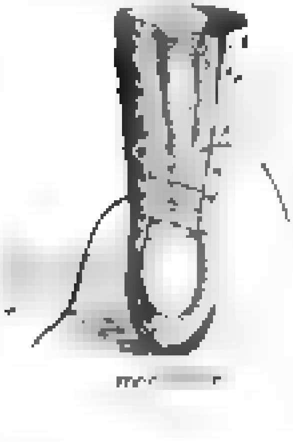
Shoes, Boots, and Rubbers

In the pioneer days of [illegible] the winters were usually cold with lots of snow. Homes having only one board floors were cold so most families wore felt shoes. In the fall the children got warm footwear, usually moccasins with low rubbers to cover them. If the snow was dry only moccasins were worn — generally with two pairs of socks or stockings and felt insoles in them. If it was mild weather rubbers were worn over them. Many also wore felt shoes with low rubbers over them. Sometimes shoe pacs were worn. They were of a harder leather and since they had a double sole sewn to the bottom could be worn without rubbers. Rubber boots were usually worn in the spring (and all winter by some people), but were not warm.

Later felt socks with low rubbers came into use and also buckled and lined cloth overshoes to wear over dress shoes. Some people wore several pairs of socks and only low rubbers with felt soles in them.

* * *

[illegible] moccasin



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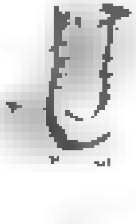

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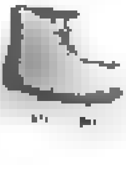


[illegible]

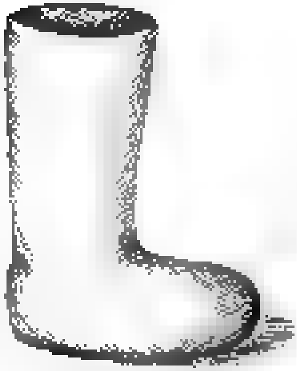
* * *

Footwear

In the early years of the settlement many families could not afford footwear for all family members year-round. Out of necessity the children went barefoot from summer until the first frost. The children who had to travel daily to school on foot would often get blisters on their feet. The footwear available was made of leather, canvas, felt or rubber. Sunday shoes were a real luxury and these black patent leather shoes worn by the girls were generally received through boxes of goods from the Red Cross or The Salvation Army. Wooden shoes, which were worn in the homeland of the Netherlands, were uncommon as the proper type of wood for their construction was not available in the area.

* * *

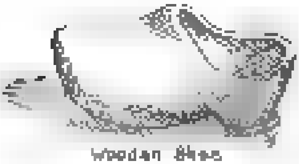
gum boot



felt boot

over boot

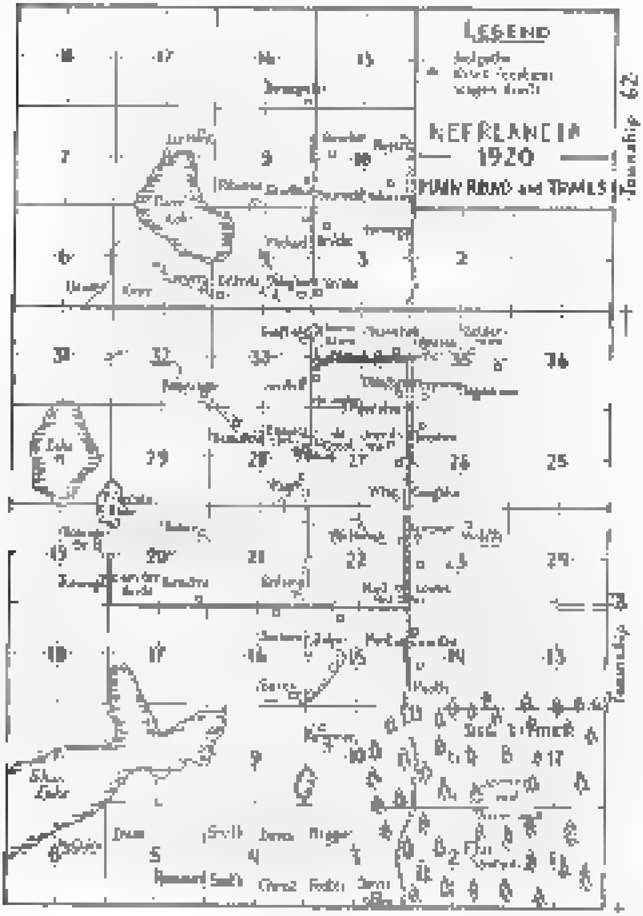
felt boot



wooden shoe

Rubber

The original surveys of the land show road allowances every mile north and south and every two miles east and west. A road allowance was sixty-six feet in width but Jasper Avenue and the other early roads were only about twenty feet wide, with about ten feet of dirt down the centre. These roads or trails were meant for one-way traffic. Through the joint efforts of the settlers a roadway would first be cleared of bush with axes, then the stumps would be grubbed, and finally the trees would be burned off. Roots at the base of the trees would be removed, but their lateral roots and also those from trees beside the roadway would be left and occasionally cause problems. The roots would become exposed on the roadway when ruts formed around them, causing the wagons to jolt when passing



over the top of them. This is the hard work involved in making a rough road and the other [illegible] the homesteaders had [illegible] There were also a few [illegible] people [illegible] three miles to the northeast corner of NE 34 [illegible] and there was [illegible] a mile to the northwest corner of NW 34 [illegible] This was also the [illegible] Road [illegible] the church was built in the northwest [illegible] road [illegible] it was decided not to put the road through [illegible] the [illegible] half mile north because of the [illegible] on the NW 34-61.

There was also a short trail from the [illegible] to the NE 35-61 where the school was built [illegible] There was a wagon road which [illegible] these were the main [illegible] used by the homesteaders [illegible]

[illegible] were mostly rough trails [illegible] quarters and [illegible] through wherever the [illegible] Jasper Avenue along the southern edge [illegible] the school at the NE 28-61.

* * *

A good illustration of what could happen when [illegible] in the early [illegible] through the [illegible] his wife, again.

* * *

When the [illegible] Road was built [illegible] a mile south of the [illegible] donated four acres of their land for the road [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] give the road some elevation

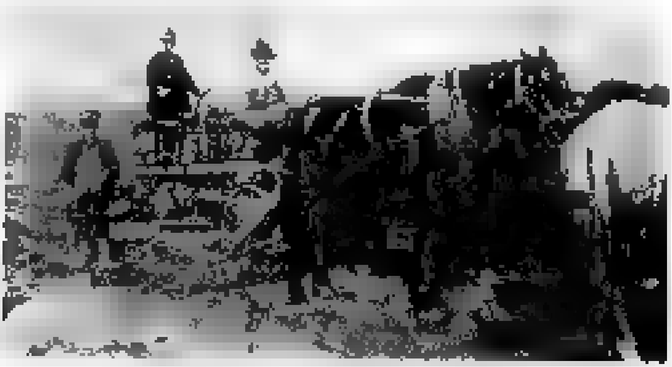
[illegible]

[illegible]

hour earlier than regular starting time. Jacob hitched his team to the straight pull and sat down on the seat and waited patiently. When John Anema, who usually drove a straight pull team, arrived he was quite surprised to see Jacob sitting in his seat. Soon anger overtook the feelings of surprise and it took Holwerda about an hour to straighten things out and begin the grading.

Leaning wheel grader. Sophia Anema, Joe Holwerda on grader, c. 1920

Often a scraper, which was similar in appearance to a big scoop shovel with two handles and pulled by two horses, would be used to fill the mud holes. This scraper with two handles was called a slip and could move one-half of a yard of dirt at a time. A scraper with a single handle and pulled by four horses was called a fresno. Dirt would be scraped into the bucket from the ditch or a field and dumped into the hole.



Leaning wheel grader.

A road drag was used periodically to smooth the ruts created by wet conditions. A drag was made of timbers and had a blade attached to it. The blade could be angled a bit with levers. The grader, which was shared with other areas in the district, was not always available and the road drag was used as a substitute. It could be operated by one man with a team of horses, which made it easier

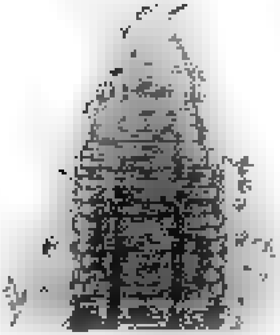
and more convenient to use than a grader when the need arose. Many different men operated the drag, as maintaining the roads was a community effort. The men and horses who worked on the roads were paid by the province's Public Works Department.

Grading was done when the roads were dry; the grader was not used to push snow. In the winter some people would make their own snowplows or the snow would just be packed down with use. Due to all the bush, drifting was not a problem. In relation to road conditions the presence of frost for six months of the year was a blessing, as it eliminated the problem of travelling through mud. In spite of these early efforts toward road improvement, the going was still rough and slow. A good illustration of this was the fact that it would take the Tiemstras an hour-and-a-half to get to church from their home — a distance of three-and-one-half miles.

State of roads early spring.

[illegible] E. Brown Provincial Archives of Alberta

A lot of the roads or trails went through muskeg and swampy ground with poor drainage. Corduroy roads were constructed in these areas. During the winter sixteen to eighteen-foot poplar or tamarack logs, four to ten inches in diameter, were cut and hauled to the road site. They were laid side by side crosswise on the road and the following summer the logs would be covered with dirt using the scraper. These corduroy roads would be about sixteen feet wide so that two wagons could pass each other.



At first the corduroy made a firm roadbed, looked quite impressive, and could hold heavy vehicles. But the ground all around was usually wet in the spring and summer due to the continuous problem of poor drainage and heavy bush, and even the v-shaped ditches would be filled with water. With such conditions it was natural that the logs on the road would gush up and down when the wagons and horses would go over them. The corduroy was not bad when crossed on foot, but was hard on horses and also on the passengers in the wagons. Riding on the corduroy could be likened to being in a churn, and if the wagon hit a big pole a passenger could be bumped right off the wagon. Women who were pregnant es-

pecially felt the discomfort of being jostled and bumped about while riding on these roads, and would often remain home towards the end of their terms.

After several years some of the logs would rot, causing a hole in the corduroy. When a wagon wheel sank into one of these holes it would be firmly stuck and the corduroy would have to be repaired. There was one stretch of corduroy, along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 to the southeast of 21-61-2-5, which was not covered with dirt and for years was left bare. This was due to the lack of government funds for road improvements. Because of general hard times, many found it difficult to pay their taxes. As a result some farmers paid their land taxes by deducting their road work hours from their tax bill.

[illegible] Provincial Archives of Alberta

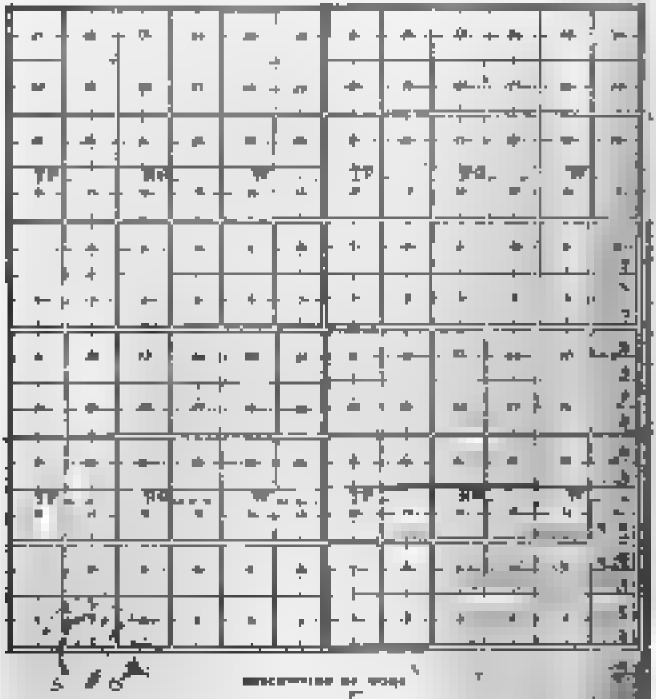
Corduroy roads

Joe Holwerda would call meetings during L.I.D. years to hear suggestions for road improvements for the upcoming year. The farmers would then lobby for the roads which they thought important. At one such meeting it was pointed out that the above-mentioned stretch of corduroy should be covered. Holwerda said: "Yes, that corduroy should be covered this year." Ben Sievers reportedly responded by saying: "A child knows that, but will it be covered?" It was no doubt difficult for Holwerda to decide what was always the fair thing to do for all concerned. Being a bachelor, it was known that Holwerda enjoyed visiting those farmers who had daughters. It was a fact that a lot of work was done on the east-west road which ran north of sections fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen in Township 61. This road led to the farm of Klaas Tuininga, who had seven daughters.

[illegible] and [illegible]

LOCATION OF WORK

[illegible]



DESCRIPTION OF WORK

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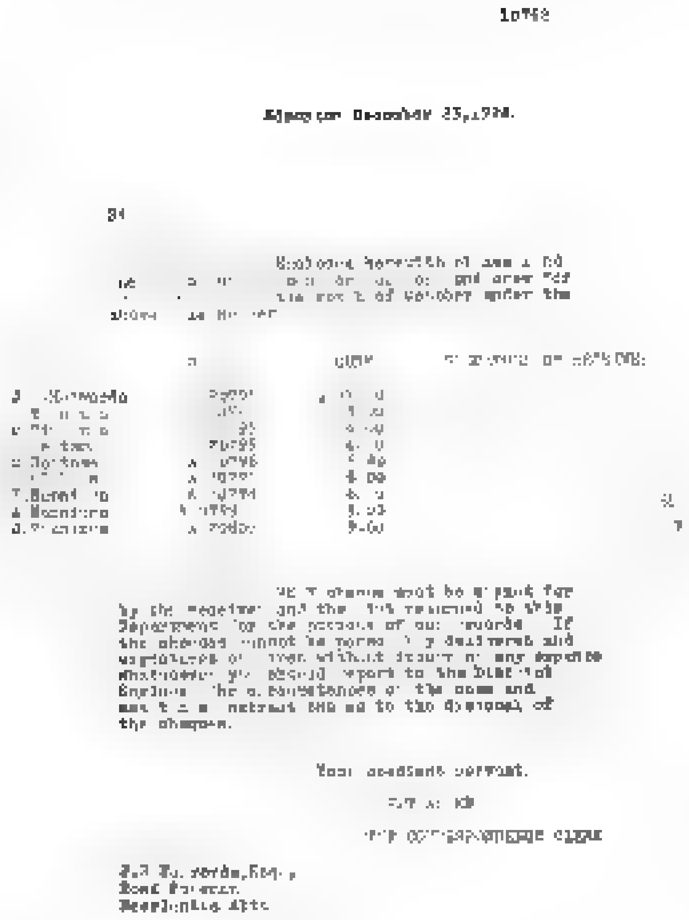


Pay List

Edmonton, August 19th, 1926.

Sir:

I am enclosing cheques for yourself and crew covering work done during the month of June 21st to July 17th under the above file numbers:

Name	Cheque No.	Amount	Signature of Receiver
J. W Holwerda	57447	$104.00	
J. Olthuis	57448	10.80	
W. Olthuis	57449	50.80	
W. Lievers	57450	25.65	
B. Lievers	57451	24.75	

V Vrikke (sic)	57452	14.85
A Nanninga	57453	33.70
H Schoonekamp	57454	9.80
A Emmerzael	57455	34.65
L Sturwold	57456	29.70
C O. Anderson	57457	14.85
O. Bonstrom	57458	14.85
J. Brand	57459	8. 0
I Howey	57460	27.40
W Gelderman	5746.	00
E Reitsma	57462	16.00
S Howey	57463	19.80
G Tiemstra	57464	19.80
A Tiemstra	57465	9.60
J Reitsma	57466	90
H. Hiemstra	57467	22.05
H. Kippers	57468	2[illegible] 60
W Olthuis	57469	33.60
C Ingwerson (sic)	57470	2.50

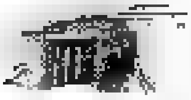
Every cheque should be signed for by the receiver and the list returned to this Department for the purpose of our records. If however, any of the above cheques cannot be personally delivered within ten days, and without entailing extra expense the cheques should be returned to this Department along with the list.

Your obedient servant,
W. T. Aiken
Chief Correspondence Clerk

J. W. Hofwerda, Esq.
Road Foreman,
Neerlandia, Alberta

* * *

Another method of solving the problem of washouts in the low areas was the construction of culverts made of tamarack. First the men hired for the job would go to the bush to cut down the logs needed and drag them with horses to the roadside. Then they would dig a square trench across the road. Next, the two sides of the trench would be lined with logs which were nailed together and then braced. Crosspieces were attached to the top which would be covered again with logs. Finally a slip pulled by two horses was used to cover the logs with dirt. The culverts would be of varying sizes depending on the size of the washout. These culverts would sometimes be of little help. They froze up tight during the winter and then during the spring break-up the water would run across the road on either side of the culverts rather than through them. These places caused a problem for anyone travelling with a loaded wagon because the wagon was bound to get stuck against the culverts.



Pole culvert.

By about 1920 the majority of the settlers had switched from oxen to the use of horses for work and travel. They were ridden bareback or with a saddle, and pulled the various wagons. Around 1918 a livestock dealer travelled through the area and bought up some of the oxen for the slaughterhouse. The settlers in turn bought horses. Case Ingwersen sold all his cows in trade for a narrow-rimmed wagon and a team of horses. This was considered an improvement since horses have a higher level of intelligence than oxen and moved along at a faster pace. As with the oxen however, the Dutchmen were inexperienced in handling the horses. At the time there was a higher demand than supply of good farm raised horses. As a result a lot of horses would be shipped in from the prairies and border towns such as [illegible] and Sweetgrass and then would be sold at local auctions. The men from Neerlandia generally bought their horses at auctions in Barrhead or Westlock.

* *

Some Horse

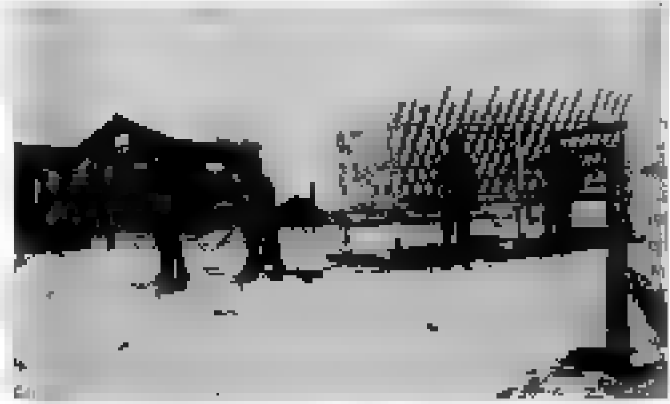
Bill Olthuis, in a conversation with Albert M. Mast Sr., suggested that one horse was able to maneuver better than another in muddy conditions. Albert agreed, "You know that white mare I had. That horse could walk through a plate of soup without touching the bottom."

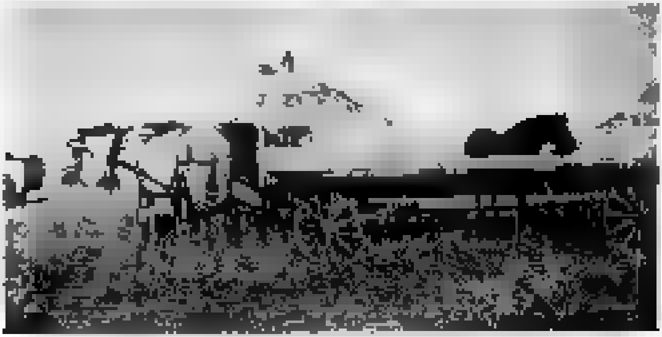
* * *

The horses bought at the auction sales were generally smaller than a farm raised horse, were quite young, and were not broken to any type of work. A horse that appeared quiet at a sale often would later prove to be quite frisky. Some of these horses broke very well and others gave their owners more pain and grief than they were worth. They would kick and bite, and strike out with their front hooves in case that a person would find it difficult to get out of the way in time. One man had his pipe knocked from his mouth by a flying front hoof. Henry Mulder reportedly harnessed his horses through a barn window for fear of being kicked and Ben Gievers would call on his neighbour Jacob Olthuis to harness his green-broke team. Some individuals no doubt felt that the earlier major means of transportation, shank's mare — that is on foot, had its advantages. In all fairness to the horses, it should be noted that a bad horse's behavior may have been a reaction to an irritation which the farmer was unaware of because of his inexperience. Perhaps it was a collar that did not fit properly, or the horse had sore shoulders and was required to pull a load which was too heavy for him. Flying insects also troubled the horses. In bright weather and in the mornings the sandflies would be quite bothersome. In the evenings and in cloudy weather it would be the mosquitoes. If it was a sunny day the bull flies would appear. Bill Olthuis recalls that one night his horses walked around his cabin all night. They wanted to come in to escape the mosquitoes. Sometimes horses would seek refuge in abandoned buildings to get away from the flies. Once it happened that two of [illegible] horses wandered onto [illegible] land (SE 28-61-3-5) and into an empty house there. The door shut behind them and they could not get out. A few days later they were found dead by [illegible]. At other times a horse would be found alive in an abandoned house. After tramping around inside for a while it would weaken the floor and fall through into the dirt cellar. When found such a horse would be helped out and the owner would be relieved to have his horse back safe and sound. In spite of such occurrences and other mentioned problems, horses were invaluable to the settlers. They played a major role in the development of Neerlandia. Their endless work helped to build the roads and clear the land. In addition they hauled feed and firewood, skidded logs and brought them to the mill, and transported the grain and produce to market.

There were a variety of horse-drawn vehicles used in Neerlandia from about 1918 until the early 1950s. The most frequently utilized was the farm wagon. Primarily it was used for hauling feed, produce, grain, and whatever else a farmer needed brought from one place to another. If the wagon was employed to haul grain, extra boards would be fastened to the top of the wagon box. This six to twelve-inch extension would enable the box to hold about sixty-four bushels of grain. The entire wagon box could be removed and a purchased grain tank, which had sides that flared at the top over the wagon's wheels, could be placed on the frame. If the grain was hauled in the winter, which was the easiest time to travel, the grain tank was placed on a bobsleigh and was pulled by a team of two or four horses. The grain tank could hold up to one hundred and fifty bushels of grain, which would be hauled to Westlock or, in later years, to Barrhead. The local farmers reportedly were a bit envious

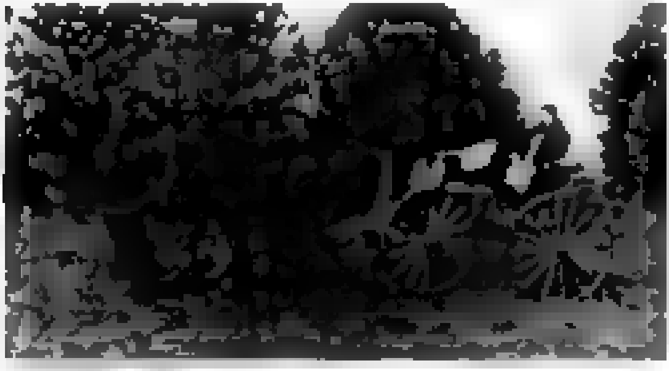
Grain wagon


Hay rack


Bundle rack

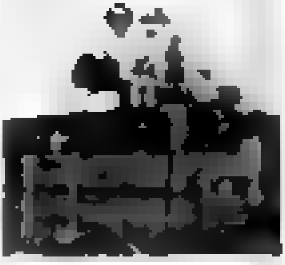
at [illegible] Weight, a [illegible]dale farmer, who in 1914 had a huge grain tank capable of holding approximately two hundred and fifty bushels. During harvest the wagon box was removed and the wagon [illegible] with a hay rack with which the bundles [illegible] could be [illegible]. The wagon frame could also be fitted with a hay rack. The wagon's seat was built in such a way that its right side had a built in spring [illegible] and did not [illegible] as much when the wagon was bumping along. Sometimes the wagon's single seat had a big flat spring beneath it. The seat could hold three people and if there were more in the family they sat in the box behind.

Eventually a few families acquired buggies or democrats to ride in. A buggy had a frame on springs and had a single seat. A democrat had a frame on springs but had a longer box than a buggy and had two seats. The back seat could be removed leaving a bigger space in the back for carrying more people or other things. The [illegible] family had a large democrat like a stagecoach which had three seats in it. None of the buggies or democrats used in [illegible] were covered and so the settlers had to protect themselves from the elements in whatever way they could.

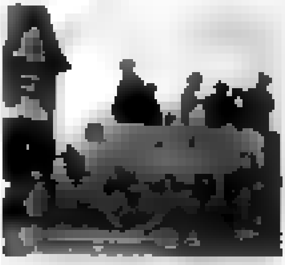


[illegible]

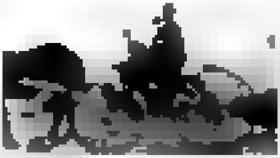
In the winter the wagon box was removed from its wheeled frame and was placed on runners for going through the snow. These sleighs which had box runners were called bobsleighs and had all the uses of the farm wagon. Cutters, which were about half of the size of a bobsleigh, were also used. Whereas bobsleighs were bought, cutters were often homemade. Lighter built cutters were drawn by one horse and larger and heavier sleighs were drawn by two horses. The advantage of a cutter over a bobsleigh was that it was small and [illegible] with a high back and front to break the cold winds. In the winter many people would put a large stone in the oven of the wood stove on Saturday night [illegible] going to church on Sunday. By Sunday morning the stone would be quite hot and would then be wrapped in a blanket and placed in the cutter. The family would wrap a large blanket around themselves and the stone. They would be kept fairly comfortable with the heat from the stone even in very cold weather.



Wagon seat



Going to church by wagon — [illegible] family, Henry and [illegible], [illegible]



Buggy

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

A large [illegible] thirty doubl [illegible]

[illegible]

What Horse?

[illegible] *horse, we need it again.'*

[illegible] *ophalen (I come to pick up the horse.)"*

[illegible]

"Ja," he said, "Wel, ik had geen gebruik voor hem meer. (Well, I didn't need him anymore.)"

I can tell you I was really angry but Dad said, "No, never mind. We don't know nothing about it. Let it go." Then I thought I would ask about the cutter, because I had built that myself.

"We used that for firewood," was the reply.

Sometime later he came over and asked, "Heb je ook nog stro? (Do you still have straw?)"

Dad said, "Wel, je hoeft toch geen hooi voor een dood paard. (You certainly don't need hay for a dead horse.)"

"Nee," he said, "Maar wel voor een levenden koe. (No, but you do for a live cow.)"

Gerrit Ingwersen

* *

Runaway Horses

In the early days in Neerlandia, the people would ride to church in a buggy or cutter. One Sunday after church, my dad hitched his horses to the cutter. This cutter had two seats. George, my youngest brother, was with Dad in the front seat. Mrs. A. Wierenga quite often rode with us. So Mother Terpsma and Mrs. Wierenga were in the back seat. They had gone but a short distance when Gerben and Trientje Tiemstra caught up to them also travelling in a cutter. They had a sleigh bell on the harness of the horse. This bell seemed to frighten my dad's horses and they took off at high speed. The idea of getting out of the cutter as quick as they could seemed to strike both ladies at the same time — both of them rolled out of the sleigh — one on either side. When Gerben saw this he stopped until my dad could control his horses.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Another Runaway Team

Ekke Wierenga and his sisters went blueberry picking years ago. When they got close to the Athabasca River going down a hill, the horses bolted. Wierenga said to his sisters, "Remain seated, I will control them when we get down the hill." But one of his sisters, Johanna, doubted this and feared they might land in the river so she jumped overboard and while she was doing this her dress hooked on a nail. This ripped her dress from top to bottom. After having this pinned up, they went berry picking.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

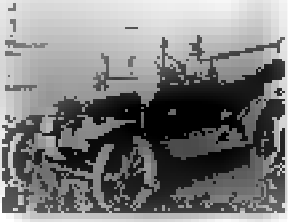
A well-trained horse or team of horses hitched to a cutter or sleigh needed very little attention. They would jog along at a steady pace and if they met another sleigh they would pass of their own accord and then go back into the traffic lane. Often a team would be given free rein, enabling the driver to cover himself with his blanket. The horses would stop when they reached home. On one cold night Norman Terpsma gave his team free rein as he snuggled down in his blanket for a sleep. Norman awoke with a start to find himself on a neighbour's yard. The horses had lost their direction

[illegible] causing the wagon to jar against it

[illegible]

[illegible]

brother Bill would have to go with his team and pull John's truck through a mud hole just south of Jasper Avenue. Bill would then go cross-country and pull John through another mud hole just west of Naples Road on Highway 18. This was typical of conditions that existed for almost twenty more years. Fred Toebes, whose parents homesteaded the NW 10-62-3-5, recalls living alongside the main road from Neerlandia to Vega in the early 1930s. "The road at that time was no more than a dirt trail, which had been plowed up and levelled a bit by using a drag pulled by horses. This road served very well for horse-drawn traffic, but when the first cars and trucks came into the country these dirt roads presented many problems. I remember well one really bad mud hole just a little north of our gate, in which every vehicle would get stuck. Whenever I heard a car or truck coming down the road I would run to this mud hole and hide in the bush and watch all the action. With poles cut from the roadside trees and with much pushing and prying, the vehicles would be freed and on their way. I would then return home and wait for the next vehicle to come along. From some of these encounters, I picked up a whole new vocabulary which I was forbidden to use, even on the dog."

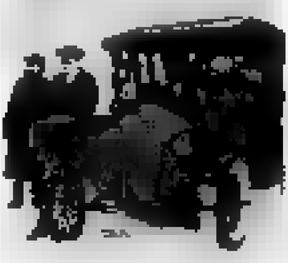


Hendrik and Willemina ter Horst

A2483 Provincial Archives of Alberta

Scenes like this were common in wet weather 1930s. Note ear bonnets worn by the horses to give them some protection from the sandflies which would swarm in and around their ears. The coverings were sewn from flour sacks and enclosed each ear in a cloth sheath.

Due to the combination of rough roads and the poor quality of the tires, which tended to bruise easily, there were many flat tires. Fortunately the first cars were provided with tire repair kits. Other needed repairs were usually makeshift and reflected the ingenuity of the car owner. Other deterrents to buying a car were the cost factor and the unavailability of fuel. Some of the first car owners would try to run their cars on coal oil when they could not get gas. When the Depression years came all these problems were accentuated. Few could afford to run their cars and some would set them on blocks in their yard.



Joe Bohrer, Ed Waasç, c. 1928.

As in earlier hard times, many found it difficult to pay their taxes. With a decrease in revenue the Municipal District of Shoal Creek #610, which had been formed in 1928, could not afford all the road improvements needed. Even the councillors, who were responsible for road conditions, had a cut in pay. However, soon after the election of the first councillor for the Neerlandia area, Joseph Baker, the M.D. purchased a horse-drawn grader solely for use in his division. This grader proved to be a wise investment as it was put to good public and private use for over twenty-five years.

Leaning wheel grader pulled by tractor, 1944

By 1924 the Co-op store had moved to the southwest of the NW 34-61-3-5, directly across from the church and kitty corner to the school, and this area became known as the Centre of Neerlandia. The Centre was the new heart of the community but Jasper Avenue, one mile to the east, had continued to serve as the main route into and out of Neerlandia. This was because of the obstacle of the bare corduroy which went south along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 and the existence of a small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. The people who lived south and southwest had to go east to Jasper Avenue and then west again a mile on the Church Road to reach the Centre. To travel to Barrhead everyone had to go south on Jasper Avenue up to Davis Corner, then west for one mile, and link up with the road running south through Mellowdale to Old Barrhead corner. Two major road projects, which provided a direct north-south road from Neerlandia to Old Barrhead, were undertaken during the early years of M.D. #610. The bare corduroy south of the Centre was covered sometime around 1928 and a corduroy-based road was built in 1930 around the lake. Since travel was slow the new main road meant considerable savings in travel time. It became known as the Neerlandia Road.

* * *

Was the Sermon Just Too Long?

In those days nobody seemed to know anything about anti-freeze. In the winter when it was cold we used to put hot water in the radiator to get it started and keep it from freezing. When we'd get to church we would throw a blanket over the radiator to keep it warm a little longer. Halfway through the sermon the minister used to give up a number of the psalm to sing so everybody who had a car outside could go out to run their car awhile to warm them up. Otherwise the car would be frozen by the time we'd come out after the sermon. [illegible] we did that for a few years until there were some brands of antifreeze coming on the market. No more missing part of the sermon then.

Sadie Tiemstra

* * *

Van Der Woude's Car

Van Der Woude had a used car, an [illegible] Ford, and it was using quite a bit of oil. Pete [illegible] of the [illegible] Siebren Tiemstra had a [illegible] Van Der Woude. I'll overhaul that car for you [illegible] and Van Der Woude paid him. And that very afternoon he said to me,

"Gerrit," he says, "You want to come along with me? We are going for a ride." "I want to try out the car," I says.

"Okay, sure."

"We'll go around the block," he says. "All the way to Raymond Baker [illegible] Avenue and back to the store. This time you drive," he says to me. "And I had never driven a car." "Makes no difference," he says. "You drive." So I got in there. We started out; it was in the wintertime and in low gear we moved along. And as soon as I shifted into [illegible] it stalled. [illegible] "[illegible] clutch," he says. "That must be something that he didn't get back. All right, we'll keep going." We kept going and we never got [illegible] to him.

"How are we ever going to get up the hill by [illegible] creek there once we get down over that bridge?"

"I don't know," he says, "I don't know. Maybe we'll have to get somebody to pull us up." And then we got down there. We tried to get up the hill. In low gear we stalled. So finally I said to him,

"What is that here sitting there, that little stick sitting right here?"

"Oh," he says, "That's emergency brake. Is it on?" I says.

"I don't know." So he pushed it [illegible] and away we went up the hill [illegible]. We had him in high gear [illegible] we had to open the windows already for the smell in the car.

Gerrit Ingwersen

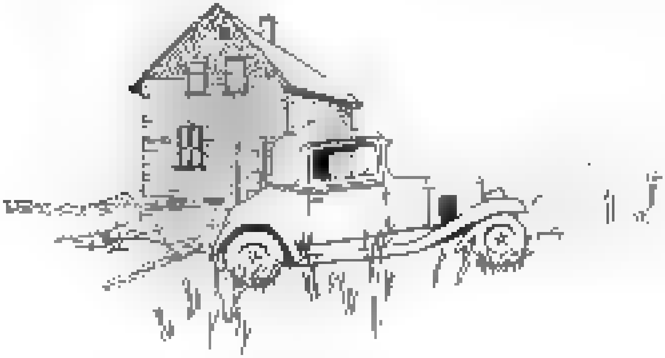
*

In the early 1920s [illegible] Koppers owned a [illegible]. It ran well, but it had one bad habit. The roads were rough and bumpy and the muffler would break off [illegible] the carburetor and then a fire would start. [illegible] he would jump out while [illegible] throw sand on the fire to extinguish the flames. That did the trick, but then the sand would have to be cleaned out again before they could proceed.

* * *

[illegible] in his car

In the late thirties a few families acquired cars but the road conditions and the cost and maintenance of the cars were still a problem. After World War II, a lot of improvements and developments occurred. In February 1943 the Municipal District of Westlock #562 was formed and Neerlandia was included in this new district. A motorized grader owned by this municipality was used occasionally to grade the main roads in Neerlandia. Steel-wheeled tractors came into use and doubtless dug up the roads with their steel lugs, undoing the work of the grader. Cars, which had been scarce during the war, became available for purchase and, as well, more people were able to afford them. Gas could now be conveniently procured by the barrel in Neerlandia at C. K. Mast's.



1934 coupe.

The majority of post-war Dutch immigrants, however, still relied on horse and wagon for their transportation. The horses would shy away from approaching cars or would jump sideways when passed. Norman Terpsma experienced this one winter day. He was bringing John Roth, who lived at the SW 15-61-3-5, home on the sleigh when a car passed them on the main road. It had snowed a lot the day before and the road had since been plowed out, leaving the surface quite slippery. As the car passed it spooked one of the horses and away they went, as fast as the horses could carry them. Since the road was slippery there was no way Norman could rein them in to a stop. He pulled on one line and drove the horses into the loose snow at the edge of the road. One horse fell in the process, causing the snaps to break and also the yoke. The horse which had caused the runaway pulled the sleigh on top of the fallen animal. The bobsleigh came to a stop on top of the fallen horse. This horse struggled underneath the sleigh causing Norman and John to bob up and down in the box. Norman got out of the box and managed to catch the runaway horse by its bridle. After some maneuvering he was able to get the runaway horse to pull the sleigh off the fallen animal. To his surprise the horse under the sleigh was all right. John, a bit shaken by the harrowing experience, kept saying "Crazy horses! Crazy horses!" Fortunately they did make it safely home.

In 1944 the Neerlandia Co-op had made a request to the provincial government for eleven-and-one-half miles of gravel from Old Barrhead corner to the store. Some years later pit run, which was coarse sand mixed with stone, was obtained from natural sand pits located in northeast Neerlandia and put on the main road. The sand pits were in section 7 of 62-3-5 and sections 6 and 7 of 62-2-5. The cost of the application of the pit run was to be shared three ways. The provincial government was to pay one-third, the municipal district one-third, and the farmers one-third. The farmers were to pay on a sliding scale in relation to their proximity to the road. The store contributed twenty-five dollars towards the cost in 1949 but it is not known if the other monies were collected from the farmers. Only the main road received this special treatment and it was a significant first attempt at making an all-weather road.

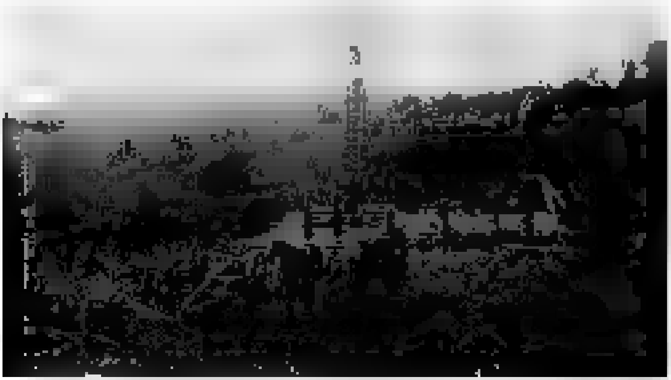
To protect this road surface and other roads in the area, road bans came into effect by a municipal act. Bans were placed on trucks and tractors when road conditions were such that the weight would damage the road surfaces. During the bans farmers would haul their produce by wagons, which were not affected by the bans, or by half-loaded half-ton trucks to Old Barrhead. The freight trucks would meet them at Old Barrhead corner and haul the produce to market.

* * *

On the way home the gravelled roads were rough and the mud roads were muddy. I helped the truck driver to unload freight and put his chains on when he hit the mud holes.

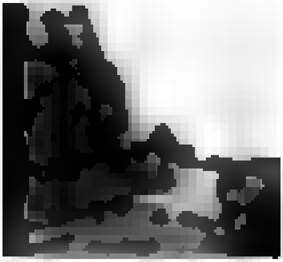
Ted Reitsma
Grade 5

* * *



Bridge being built over Shoal Creek, c. 1928.

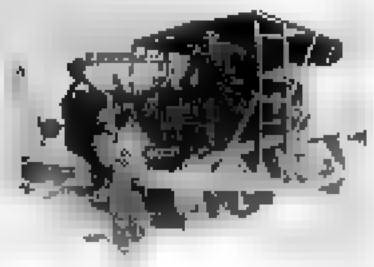
Progress could also be seen in the construction of bridges crossing Shoal Creek. The creek at the SE 16-61-3-5 had a wooden bridge which had been constructed in 1928. This bridge eventually rotted and was replaced by a cement culvert. In the spring of 1948 the creek flooded and this culvert was washed away. A rowboat had

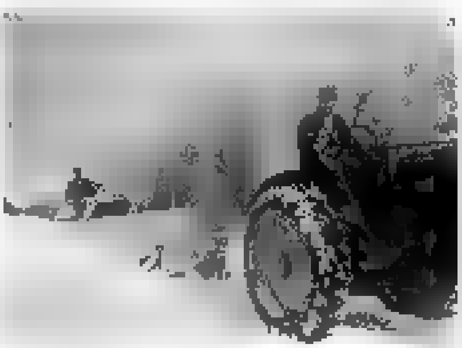


1959. Under the County form of government there were seven divisions instead of the former five. From 1959-80 Olthuis continued to represent the Neerlandia and Vega communities as a County Councillor for Division 7. After twenty-five years of service William Olthuis retired and Albert Elgersma was elected to the Council. Elgersma is presently serving his second term as Councillor for Division 7.

* * *

The Neerlandia Road from Mellowdale north to the hamlet was surveyed in 1956 for widening to a total width of eighty-two-and-one-half feet, as measured between property line boundaries. Around 1958 Bill Olthuis, the councillor for the Neerlandia and Vega areas, proposed the building of a road on the road allowance through the small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. With a view to future road development, it was decided that it would be a waste of money to further improve the road around the lake since eventually the main road would be straightened. The first step in this project was to blast one-quarter of a mile west of the road allowance in the northwest corner of the lake so that the lake would drain into Shoal Lake. Dynamite sticks were placed fifteen inches apart in a single row for about one-quarter of a mile. The end stick, which had a fuse placed in it, was detonated. As a result of the ground's vibration, the whole area blew up at once, producing a sheet of black dirt. The water eventually drained out of the lake and that winter a roadway was laid by putting down a base of over 87,000 log feet for a distance of one-quarter of a mile. The black poplar logs used in building the base had been banned for plywood use and the municipality was able to purchase the culled logs at a nominal cost. The Spady brothers, who had supplied the logs, brought them to the road site. The logs were laid on the ice, then covered with dirt that winter and with an additional eighteen inches of dirt the following summer. Enough dirt was built up around the logs to insure that their ends

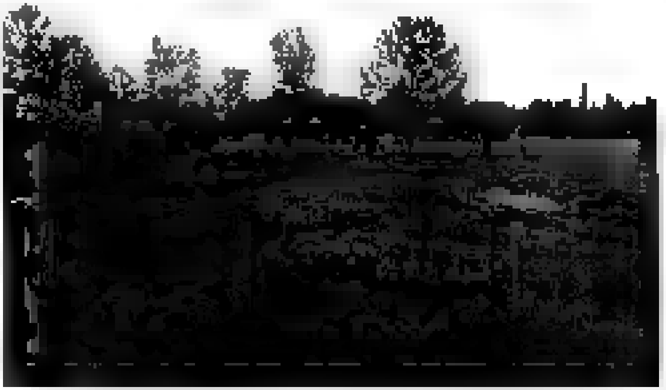

Snowplowing, 1948.


Homemade snowplow.

Blowout of the silt at the northwest corner of the small lake.

would be covered to prevent them from rotting. At first a four-foot wooden culvert was placed underneath the roadbed because there was concern that if a steel one was put in right away it might sink into the mud. The roadbed remained firm and was later gravelled.

Former road around lake, looking south



Former road around lake looking east from new highway ([illegible] Road)

As time passed, surrounding roads in the community were gradually built up, soft places were filled in, and ditches were sloped and deepened. In addition road allowances and forced roads were straightened out. These roads, when first built, had followed routes which curved around sloughs and over high ground. Additional roads, which were not surveyed road allowances, were opened up. This was done to eliminate the inconvenience for some farmers who had to travel quite a distance out of their way on existing roads to get to their homes. Due to increased traffic, some of the roads were widened to make an average top of twenty-four feet. By the mid-fifties cars and trucks were the primary modes of transportation. A few of the young people also began to acquire their own vehicles and one could then find more than one car on a

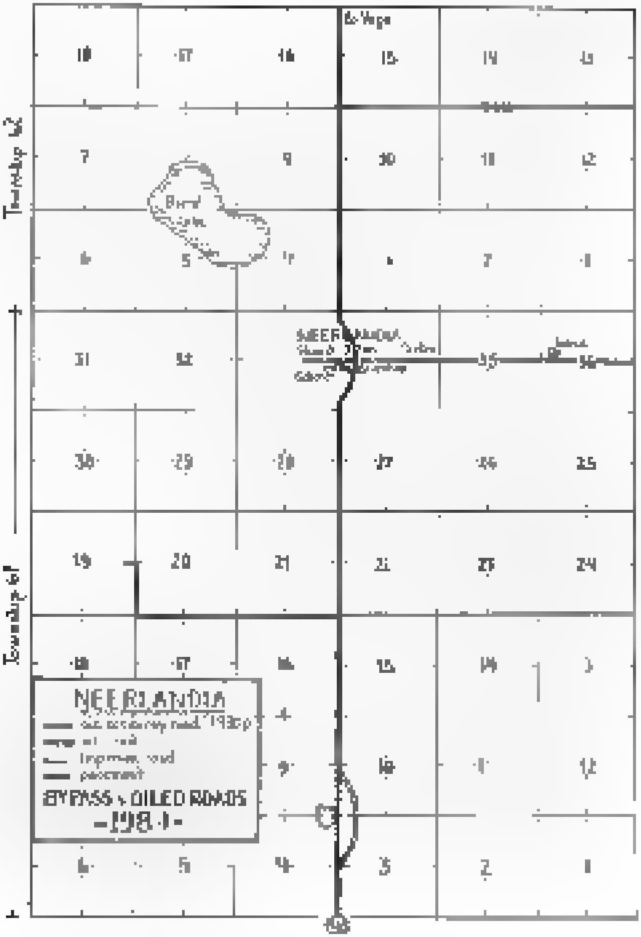
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ing and efficient motorized equipment

[illegible] projects were undertaken

[illegible]

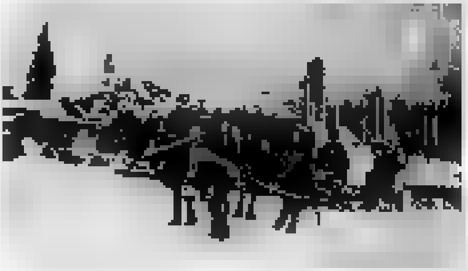


for $1.80 per gallon. Since oiled roads need to be re-oiled every two years, the cost weighed against the benefits is too great.

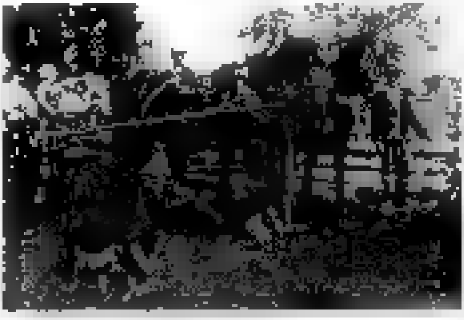
The second major road project was undertaken in 1972-75. The main road running from Old Barrhead north to the post office in Vega was built up and widened to a total width of 132 feet with a twenty-six-foot wide top. In addition a bypass was built around the hamlet of Neerlandia. To accommodate these improvements it was necessary to purchase additional right-of-ways for the roadway. At first the idea of a bypass for the hamlet seemed ridiculous to some people. The reasons for its construction were valid, however. The main concern was safety. The bypass would decrease the flow of traffic through the Centre and particularly beside the school grounds. The roadway was built in three phases from 1972-75. The road was also covered in three stages: first it was gravelled, then oiled, and finally, in 1976, paved. The Neerlandia Road was and is now officially known as Secondary Road #769. It continues to provide a smooth all-weather route, free of dust and mud holes, into and out of Neerlandia. This project had been anticipated in 1966 as part of the proposed provincial secondary road system. Another secondary road is in the process of being built through the area. This is Secondary Road #661 which runs east from the Athabasca River, south through Vega, east along sections 15, 14, and 13 in Township 62-3-5, then continues east through the province.

The progress and development of the roads and transportation in Neerlandia has followed the general progression of the community as a whole. Initially one found a pioneer settlement, where trails or roads were the vital link in communication and transportation for the few settlers who travelled on foot or by horse or ox-drawn wagon. In the present, one sees an agricultural-based community with increasing mobility and diversity. The roads serve the needs of its residents to travel by car, pickup truck, farm truck, or with farm machinery within the community, to transport farm products outside of the area, and to pursue other interests and jobs outside of Neerlandia.

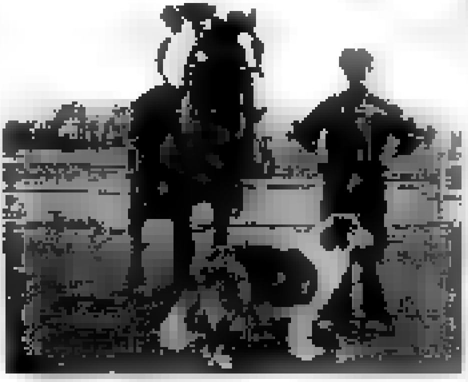
OXEN TO AIRCRAFT



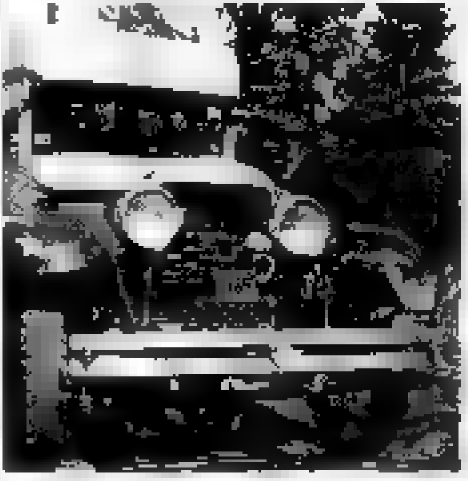
Ready to leave with Flip and Flirt. Maurice Groothuis with his son Dick who would say, "Flip is mine ox."



Horses used by the Ben Lievers family



Riding home from field



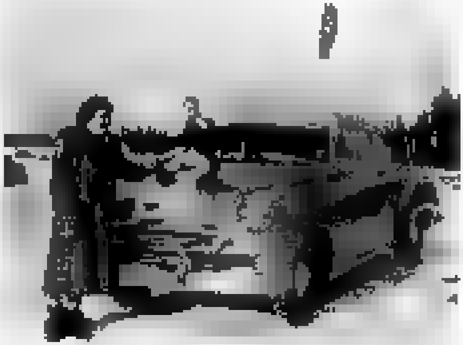
Billy Quick's bus.

Heading for Peace River Country, 1938. Hendrik Lievers family.

1928 Model A Ford. Clarence Meet holding Alida, 1947

Chevy. Joe A. Wieringa's first car. 1947.

C. K. Kast, Marilyn, and the car



1950 Chevrolet car. Sophie and Darlene Wieringa, 1952.

Jack Janssen and his airplane. 1960

Co-operation and Enterprise

THE NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Since 1912 when the first families arrived in Neerlandia, the very poor conditions they found themselves in made it necessary for them to help one another. They co-operated in the building of their cabins, a place of worship, and a school, as well as in the clearing and breaking of land. So it was not strange that they decided to co-operate in establishing a store to supply the articles needed in daily living.

At first the basic necessities of life were obtained in Westlock, Dusseldorf, or at the Davis store in Mellowdale. From 1914 on Albert Mast Sr. provided some very basic supplies as well. A private store was operated by Peter Kampnar from 1917 till the opening of the settlers' co-operative store. Ted Reitsma wrote:

"Getting some groceries in 1912-14 was another heavy chore, as the nearest store was in Mellowdale. For some this was a round trip of more than twenty miles. This was mostly done on foot or with oxen, and was more than a day's journey. Many of the first settlers carried eighty pounds on their backs, plodding along bush trails and fording creeks. This situation improved, when in 1915 Mr. A. Mast opened a store serving the settlers for a couple of years. When he closed Mr. Kampnar opened a store on the north bank of Shoal Creek. This store operated until 1920 when the settlers started their own co-op store."

* * *

The first years the store was seven miles to the south and it was a problem to get in the supplies because Westlock, the nearest railway station, was thirty-five miles away. Sometimes we were weeks without coal oil for our lamps or without sugar, etc.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Bull Fur

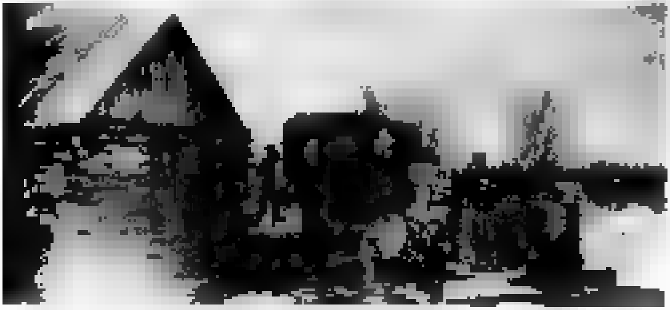
Many Dutch pioneers bought their groceries at the Davis store in Mellowdale. They could also bring cream, which Davis shipped to Swift's in Westlock. Fur dealers would come to Davis' store once or twice a year, so pelts could be bought there too. Notices were often put up in the store, and one Dutch settler posted the following sign: "BULL FUR FOR SALE"

*

Some of the settlers said that if Kampnar had kept his prices at a reasonable level no thought of starting a co-op would have occurred. This assessment of the situation is probably not fair to Peter Kampnar. Though the evidence suggests that the prices were on the high side, it must also be stated that many of the settlers did not pay their bills, forcing him to charge more to be able to stay in business. It appears that in most cases the settlers were too poor to pay him. For the first ten years there was in most instances simply no money. Eventually Pete Kampnar found it impossible to continue and closed his doors.

In the meantime a group of Neerlandians met with the intent of starting a co-op store. It is difficult to establish the exact date that the Neerlandia Co-op began. The incorporation document states

June 31, 1922, but other evidence indicates that the Co-op was actually in operation before that date. Ted Reitsma, a former president, is quoted above as stating that the store began in 1920. Clarence Tuininga, another former president, stated in a taped interview, "The Co-op was incorporated in 1922 but, really, it started a year or two before that." In addition, according to oral tradition, the first year's receipts were three hundred dollars. The documents show the receipts for 1922 to be $1392.16. Furthermore, the Neerlandia Co-op was a cream-testing station for the Enterprise Dairy, which was in operation only from 1918 to May 6, 1922. If the store had not been in operation before its incorporation date (July 31, 1922), this would not have been possible. Final confirmation comes from the original share book. The first entry was made on May 20, 1921. Several other entries were made on June 12, 1921. One must conclude then that the Co-op was in the planning stages in 1920, in business in 1921, and incorporated in 1922.



First store.

Memorandum of Association

We, G. Baker, A. Ritsema, K. Krikke, H. Lievers, M. Nanninga, P. D. Schuring, H. Hiemstra, K. Tuininga, J. W. Gelderman, J. Tuininga, J. W. Holwerda, D. Terpsma, S. Tolte, O. Bonstrom, C. Ingwersen, J. Anema, W. Krikke, H. Kannegieter, R. de Jager, Mrs. E. Messelink, W. Groothuis, B. Lievers, T. Sturwold, Olthuis, P. Louwes, S. Tiemstra, W. van Ark, Mrs. C. P. Maat, H. Michaels and J. Oldegbers do hereby express our desire to form an Association under the provisions of the Co-operative Associations Act.

The corporate name of the association to be The Neerlandia Co-operative Association Limited and the objects for which the association is formed are

(a) To deal in hardware, twine, lumber, building materials, coal, machinery, and generally any and all commodities required or used by farmers;

(b) To carry on the business of marketing and selling livestock and farm produce of any description;

(c) To engage in the business of general Merchant;

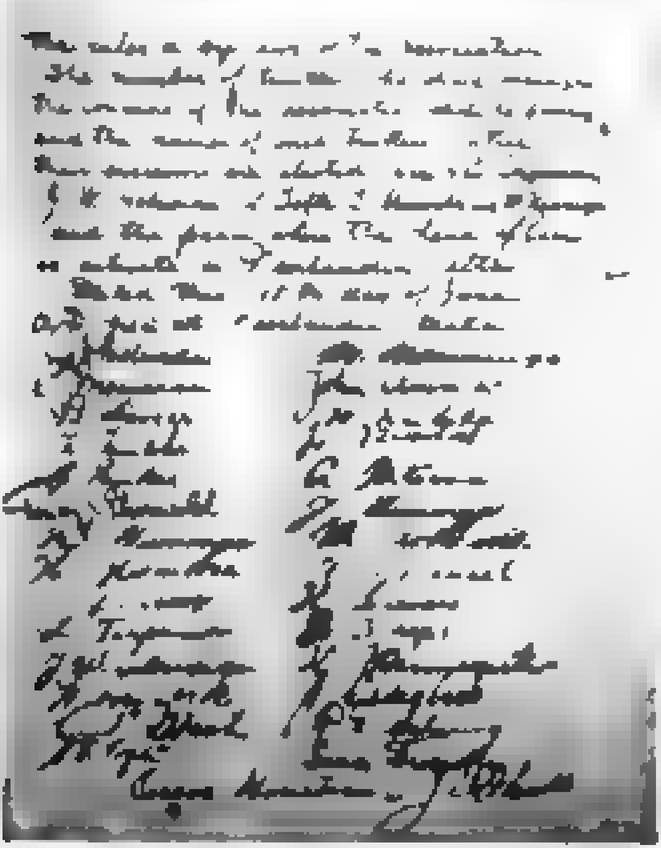
(d) To act as agents for any persons, firms or corporations engaged in the business of fire, life or hail insurance, or the business of loans and investments;

(e) To hold, buy, sell or otherwise deal in real estate or other property.

(f) To carry on any other cooperative business or businesses which may seem to the association capable of being carried on in connection with the above, or calculated directly or indirectly to render profitable or enhance the value of the association's property or rights for the time being.

(g) Generally do such acts and deeds, including the borrowing of money from any person, firm or corporation, with or without giving security therefor, as shall be deemed to be necessary in carrying on the business of the association. The number of shares is to be unlimited and the capital is to consist of shares of twenty-five dollars ($25.00) each, or of such other amount as shall from time to time be determined by the by-laws of the association.

The number of trustees who shall manage the concerns of the association shall be five and the names of such trustees until they



Signatures

[illegible] are elected [illegible] Ingebretsen [illegible] [illegible] the place where the head office is situated [illegible]

Dated this 15th day of June A. D. 1922 at Neerlandia, Alta.

The store began on a very small scale and very little funds were needed. [illegible] the first [illegible] the Neerlandia [illegible] share No. 1 and is signed [illegible] the first page of the share book.

The share book is large and each shareholder is allotted one page [illegible] membership [illegible] and most importantly, paid money on the line.

The entry of May [illegible] was reached.

[illegible] began by paying $[illegible] in June 1921 [illegible] share was paid in [illegible] in November [illegible]

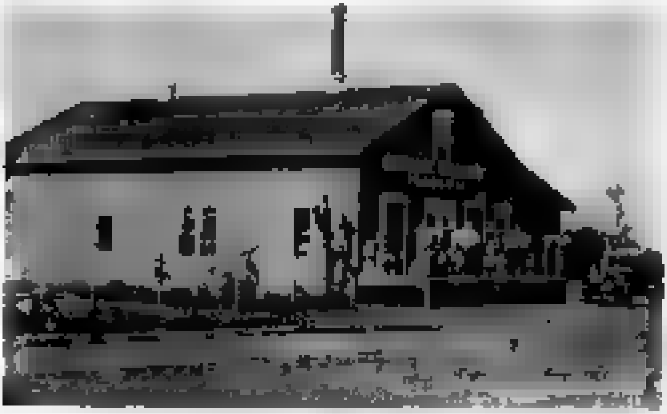
Of the [illegible] people who [illegible] in the share book [illegible] Three people [illegible] and the organization of companies.

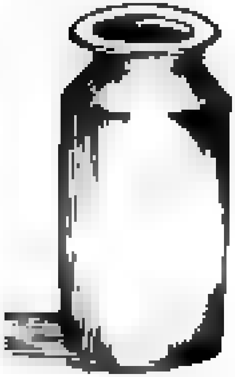
Throughout the early years [illegible] to lend money to the association [illegible] the indebtedness of the association [illegible] were higher than a few hundred dollars [illegible] on a regular basis. Though [illegible] lent the association $450.00

The [illegible] store [illegible] building [illegible] the NE [illegible] the homestead [illegible] the shareholders

was to have a store that would be open one day a week. Case Ingwersen wrote that there were no applications for secretary-manager of the store so he was talked into accepting this position since it was felt he had the most experience. At about the same time the Co-op received an unexpected bonus when the government made a policy that allowed for the testing of cream in small communities. Case Ingwersen went to Edmonton to learn how to test cream and had to pass an exam to obtain a license. According to the 1921 annual report of the Dairy Commissioner of Alberta, 334 licenses were issued to operators of cream stations, of which Neerlandia was one.

Items such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco were sold in the store. On the wall opposite the door were some shelves on which were such items as tallow and kerosene. By a small window next to the door was a small table and on it was the Babcock cream tester.


Westlock Creamery



At nine o'clock each Monday morning the farmers would arrive by horse and wagon with cans of cream. A full can weighed eighty pounds, but most cans were not full. From each can a sample was taken and put in a numbered test tube. It took time to test the cream since it had to be heated to 40 degrees. In the interval the customers could be served. Once their needs were met it was time to test the cream for fat content by adding acid to the warm cream and spinning it in a centrifuge. Four settlers took turns hauling the cream to Westlock and from there it was hauled to Edmonton by train. The payment for the cream was made by cheque, but whether the dairy made them out to the Co-op or to the producer is not known.

* * *

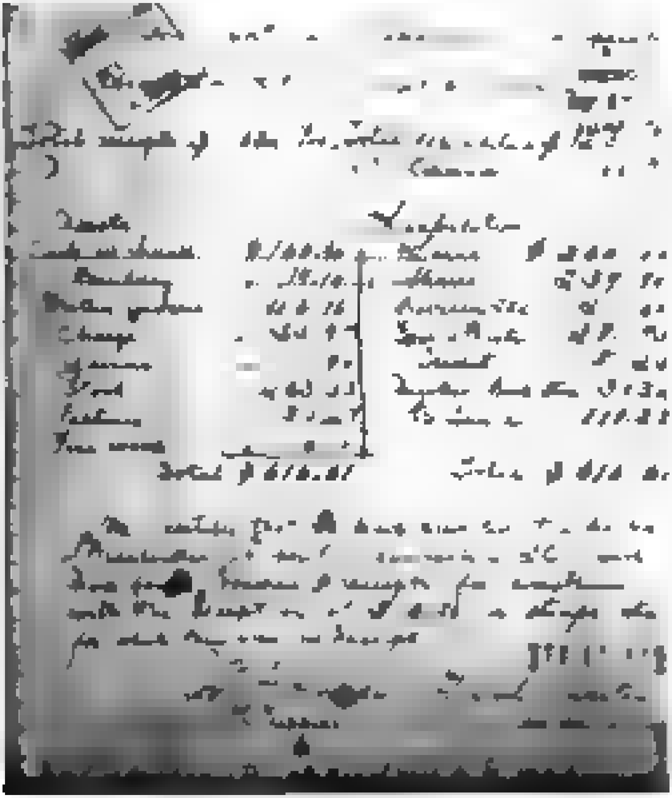
No Money — No Bread

Once a young boy came to the store and stood in line at the counter. "What's next?" asked the manager. The young boy asked for two loaves of bread. The manager had instructions from the board that if an account ran so high and was not paid then any purchases had to be paid for with cash. The manager said to the boy, "Tell your [illegible] no money." "No," said the boy, "I can't given bread." (Then no bread!) said the manager. "Who's next?"

In order to be a viable operation it was necessary at first to sell only for cash. Ingebrigt [illegible] The storekeeper had to be hardened to deal with the poor households as orders were orders and he could not give credit. She sometimes went crying to Mrs. [illegible] complaining about the fellow who refused to sell her supplies.

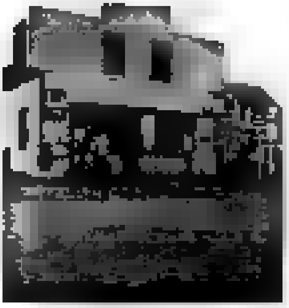
Shortly after the store began it became necessary to open on Fridays as well as Mondays. With these arrangements it was time to go into a bigger store. Ingebrigt [illegible] the [illegible] of the cooperative it was decided to start a real store and begin [illegible] business [illegible] In the fall of 19[illegible] a lumber store was built where the church [illegible] was [illegible] already standing. Now the romance of the first years was gone. The [illegible] was terminated and all cream was sent directly to Edmonton. The association bought two acres of the NW [illegible] 5 and constructed the new building there.

[illegible] girls at the store



Auditor's report.

The financial statement of 1922 listed the receipts as $1392.16. The next year, 1923, business increased dramatically to $6433.30, an indication the association had "started" a real store and gotten into business 100%. In 1922 the value of the building was listed at $19.10. In 1923 the building's stated value was $25.00 and not until 1934 was it listed at $500.00.


As business increased it was necessary to expand the store building.

Only one person looked after the store till 1932, though from time to time some part-time help was required. Case Ingwersen's daughter Anne began by helping in 1926.

The store was expected to be opened whenever a customer called. This could be any time of the day or night, and if Ingwersen was not there they would go to his house to get him. The store handled all items needed by the settlers in those early years. Some of the items such as molasses, which came in a barrel, would be sold by bulk. Flour came in one-hundred pound bags. All items were on shelves behind a counter. Customers would give a list of items needed to the manager or clerk who would fill the order. Sometimes goods would be in short supply so the manager would tell the customer that he could have only a limited number of the item, and that he had to leave some for others. A large heater that required constant stoking supplied the heat in the winter and men gathered around it to visit.

Store and Case Ingwersen residence.

* * *

Next Week — Next Week

Mr. Ingwersen, manager of the Co-op store in the late 1920s, stood behind the counter serving the farmers. A couple of gentlemen had been standing in line waiting and when their turn came they asked for certain merchandise they needed. If it was not in stock, which happened quite frequently, Mr. Ingwersen would reply, "Not in stock. Next week!" One of these gentleman said he worked in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. and he said the birds would sit in the trees and sing "Next week, next week." The manager replied, "Zoo, zingen die het ook?" (So, do they sing that too?) A chorus of laughter erupted from the other gentleman and other onlookers.

* * *

NEERLANDIA CO OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD.

Ingwersen resigned as manager of the store in 1933. He had given twelve years of service and said his desire was to go back to his original intention, which was to farm. He also said the constant pressure of dealing with the public was wearing him down.

The board was often made up of strong-willed people who, with the best of intentions, were determined to get their way. Thus controversy occurred within the board. Because people were so poor they watched every penny. Serving people under these circumstances was sometimes difficult. The weights were not always believed to be true nor the figures correct. At some point the change to giving credit had been made and collecting bills was also difficult. These same circumstances contributed to the tension between board and manager.

In the early years there was a five-member board who represented the shareholders. They were chosen at an annual meeting which was held in March. The store's financial year was from January through December. At the annual meeting of March 6, 1940, the members decided to increase the board members from five to seven. Originally the tenure of office was two years but, at the

[illegible]

[illegible] whose value at the time was $55.94)

[illegible]

Dear Sir:

[illegible]

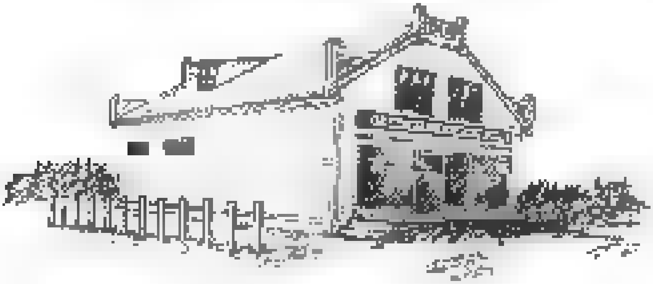
Yours truly,

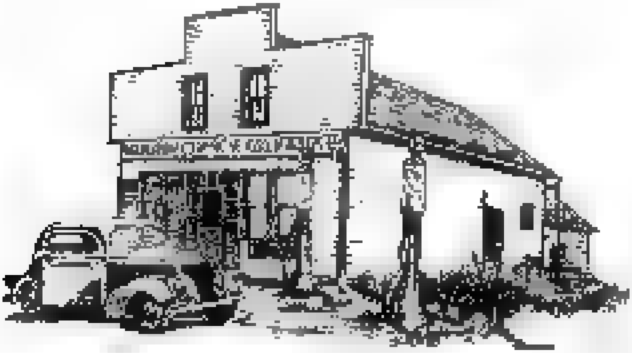
[illegible]

bers in the Co-op. In a time when the world's economy was in a state of turmoil, the decision to forge ahead was made.

Already in 1934 a building fund was established. One third of the dividends allotted to each member from the profit on his purchases was put aside annually. After three years the fund totalled $1,241.01. The amount of each contribution was recorded and credited to the member's share record in 1938. Additional funds were raised by borrowing from many of the members. Even a few suppliers lent money to the Co-op during this period. The building project was begun in 1937 and completed in 1938.

Almost ready for use.





The total cost of the store was $12,073.25. It was a magnificent structure. It was well built under the supervision of Jerry Reitsma and Menne Nanninga. The roof was sturdily-built with many braces and rafters. Not only did this store have a much larger floor area than the old one, it also boasted a community hall on the second floor. In 1939 an additional $302.05 was spent on such items as finishing the hall, changing the fire escape, and levelling the ground in front of the store. For many years the store hall served as the gathering place for many functions, including the annual store meetings, wedding receptions, bazaars, educational films, and even moving pictures sponsored by machinery dealers. After the

An awning kept the sun out

church building had burned down in 1946, worship services were also held in the hall. Chairs provided seating on the front part of the hall, but the back had two rows of bleachers. The high back rows were the favourite benches of the young men in the community.

* * *

Those that remember those days also remember the murals that decorated the hall. Drawn with colour pencil on tentest panels by Annie Nanninga, they depicted community life — people walking down the road, trucks in front of the store, and church and school activities. In 1984 one panel of this mural has survived in rather poor shape.

* * *

Additional fixtures were purchased in 1940 at a cost of $546.33. One major item was a McKaskey register, a sort of filing cabinet designed to hold bills. A National cash register was purchased the next year and supplemented rather than replaced the McKaskey. Other fixtures purchased included a safe, three scales, an adding machine, a typewriter, and a duplicating machine. In addition to these items, filing cabinets, chairs, tables, and various other items were purchased. Five Coleman lamps were purchased for light. The store had become a modern and up-to-date business.

Neerlandia Cooperative Association
Business Turnover and Profit

Year	Business Turnover	Profit
1922	1,39216.	16040
1923	6436.30	237.66
1924	9,303.63	40.87
1925	13,229.68	13103
1926	15,395.58	28171
1927	21,09942	907.68
1928	24,750.89	71956
1929	30,795.43	21731
1934	27,685.98	51002
1937	46199.81	1,909.56
1941	60,29094	1,855.07
1945	8574296	106083

* * *

At the present time only one type of share is held by the members. When the Co-op began, the intent was to have shares of twenty-five dollar amounts and each share was kept separate since they were accumulated through dividends on the shareholder's purchases. Here are some letters indicating what happened when the records became confused.

Mr. H. Klopers Sr.

Enclosed I send to you share No 143 to be transferred from [illegible] Nanninga to C. Nanninga.

Mrs. G. Nanninga said that she wants a new M. Nanninga's share made out in G. Nanninga's name, instead of in M. Nanninga's. But M. Nanninga is not getting any new shares, he has more than 6.

If M. Nanninga wants to transfer a share to G. Nanninga, he will have to bring a share in and ask the Board. G. Nanninga should be a shareholder if possible. Hilda says she will bring one of her father's shares to you tomorrow.

Johnman had a share when he left, and this share was claimed by P. Johnman during Jim's absence. The Board decided to allow P. Johnman to be the shareholder, as it has been made out in P. Johnman's name originally.

P. Johnman had the share transferred to Jan Ee on December 19, 1940. Johnman always was the shareholder. Ingwersen put down P. Johnman, but this was an error. Now the question arises, Jim Johnman is the shareholder, but how about Jan van Ee, who has now $39.69. Jim Johnman still has his share. Van Ee has a share too.

Mrs. D. Baker
Edmonton
12028 96 street

March 12, 1945

Dear Madam,

I discovered that Mr. D. Terpsma had already sent in his Ordinary Share No 8 and his Redeemable shares A and B. Sorry that I put you to extra trouble.

Our enclosed cheque pays for	ordinary share 8	25
	Redeemable share A	.69
	Redeemable share B	17.23
	Interest on share 1944	1.25
		$56.69

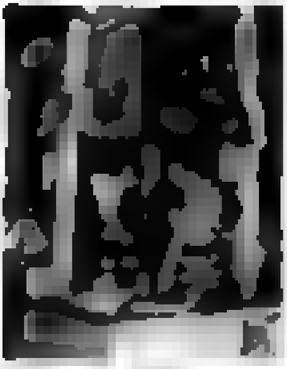
Mr. D. Terpsma still holds	Redeemable share C	9.67
	Redeemable share D	8.37
	Redeemable share E	10
		[illegible]
and the balance on his ordinary shares of		8.37
		[illegible]

The Redeemable shares C D and E are not redeemed yet. On the next Board meeting I intend to ask the Board of directors whether the $8.37 balance on Ordinary shares can be paid out.

Yours truly
Koning

After twelve years of faithful service Jan Koning left for Houston, B.C. in 1945. He had purchased his own store there. The board then hired H. J. Ten Hove as the manager and Aubrey Ashley as full-time bookkeeper — a task he had been doing on a part-time basis since 1942. H. J. Ten Hove resigned after three months because his ideas about operating the business did not coincide with the board's ideas.

Frank Visser was hired as manager in 1945. Aubrey Ashley took over this position in 1950, and he also retained the job as book-



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Geer was hired as bookkeeper

[illegible]

[illegible]

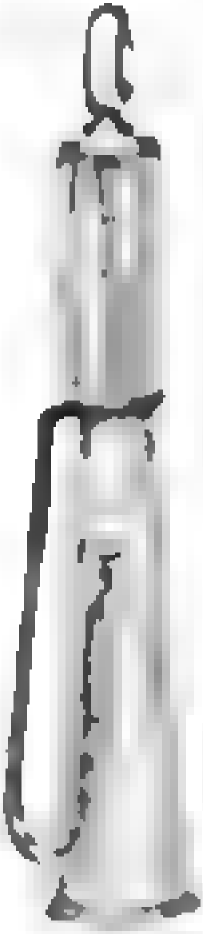
[illegible] returned his old pair of shoes

[illegible]

[illegible] constructed to serve the needs of both businesses

[illegible]

[illegible]



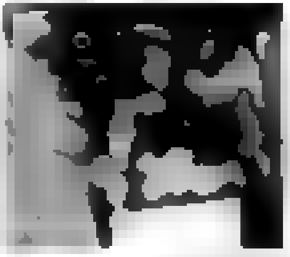
[illegible] were shown. "John Deere Days" shown by Carl K [illegible] the comedies were prohibited [illegible]

[illegible] question was debated over the years but motions to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



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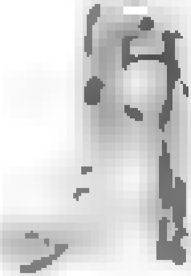
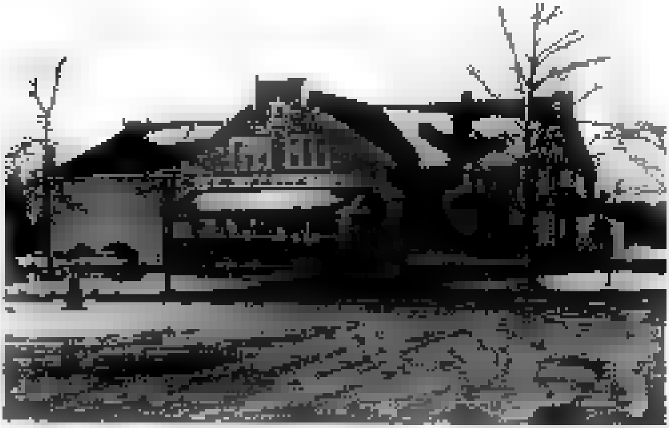


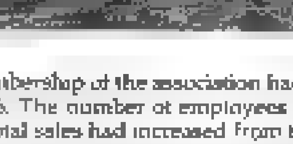
ness and historical significance. The addition doubled the floor space, enabling the Co-op to offer its customers a wide variety of products. As one visitor said, the Neerlandia Co-op is "the Safeway of the north."



The "Safeway of the North," 1984

By 1984 the membership of the association had increased from the original 25 to 316. The number of employees had grown from one to sixteen and total sales had increased from three hundred to over five million in 1984. If the trademark of the Co-op has been its policy of granting credit, the payment of dividends is its benchmark of success. For years it has declared dividends on the purchases made by its members and these dividends have been applied to the members' shares. They have not remained only as shares however; from 1973 to 1983 $830,195.66 has been returned to the shareholders.

Throughout the years many people have been involved in the Neerlandia Co-op as staff members or as board members. With the customers they have contributed to the welfare and success of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association.



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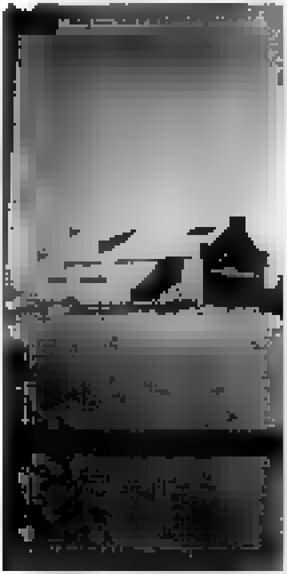
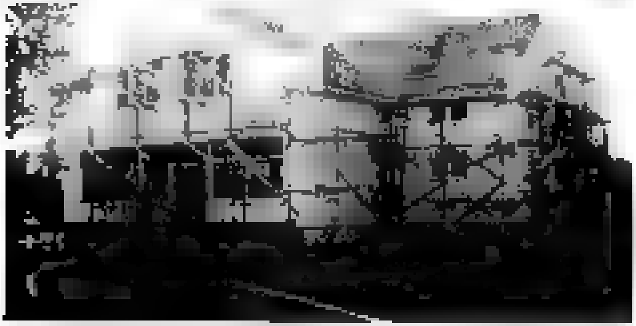




[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

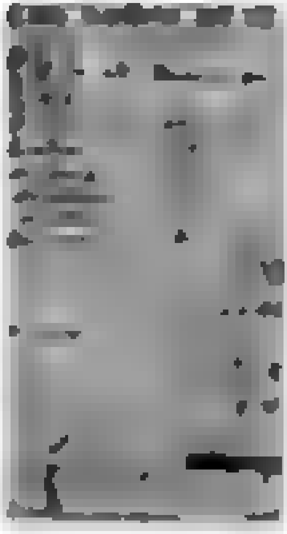
[illegible]

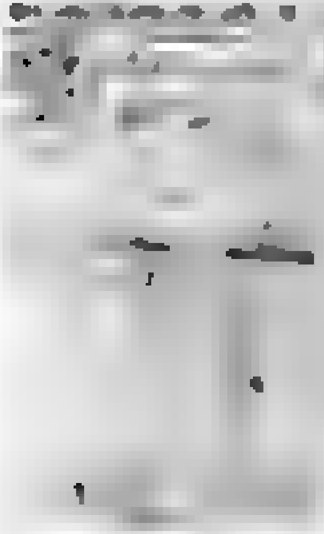
[illegible]

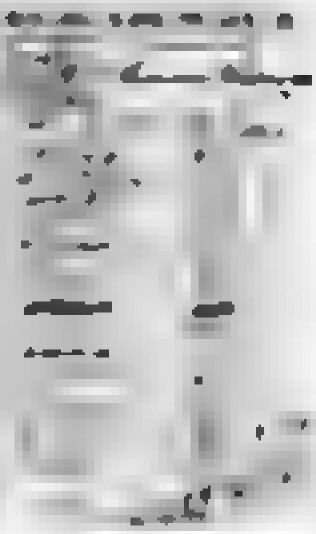
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] along the hills.







[illegible] picked up at this time

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

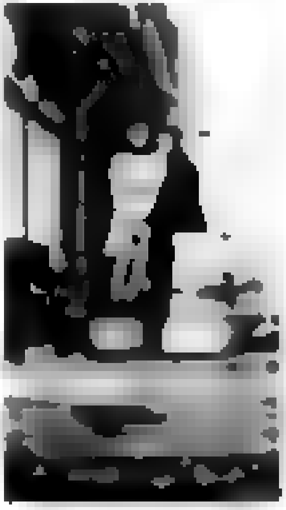
[illegible] sugar than he could get

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



Sophie Anena and one of the special customers. Lambert Wanga

[illegible]

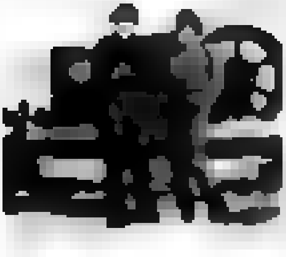
Sophie (Antona, Wironga

BUSINESS ENDEAVOURS

[illegible]

[illegible] for which he had the necessary tools or skills

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

George Toebes was an all-round handyman. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Carl was an agent for auto and fire insurance and sold hunting [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] wrong. (Remember Albert?)

Gerrit Ingwersen

Blacksmithing

[illegible]

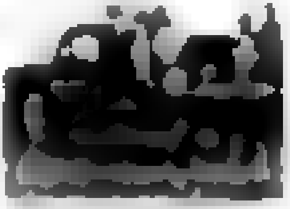
[illegible]

[illegible]

Neerlandia Welding and Repair

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Sam Hawey brushpiling, 1940.

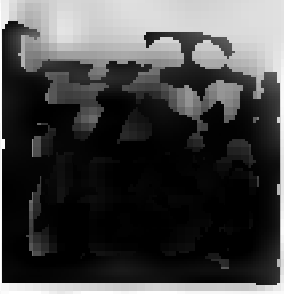
Land Clearing

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



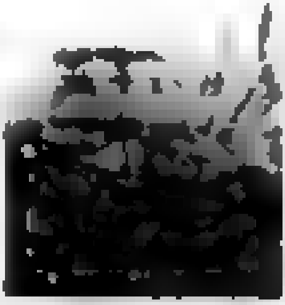
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] clean up farmyards.



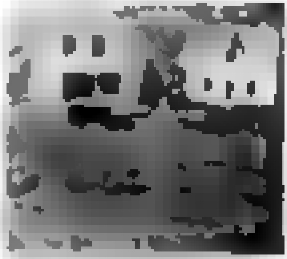
[illegible]

Service Garages

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible] garage and house

[illegible]

[illegible] shop for business

[illegible]

[illegible] how to do the repairs themselves

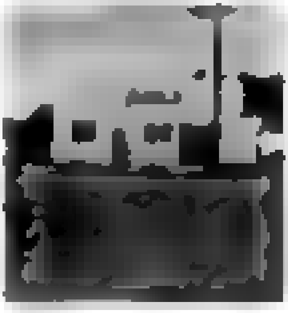
[illegible]

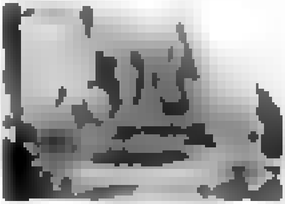
[illegible]

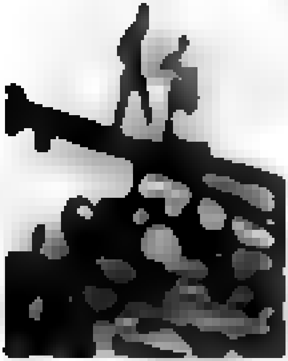
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]







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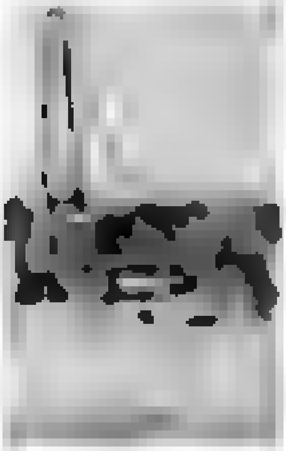


[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Wyngaarden from the Westlock area drilled the first [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] lucky you had a well and if not you had a dry hole

[illegible] taken to the muskeg to be watered

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

protest from my mother

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

that thing should run on Sunday?"

[illegible]

engine

George Ansa

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

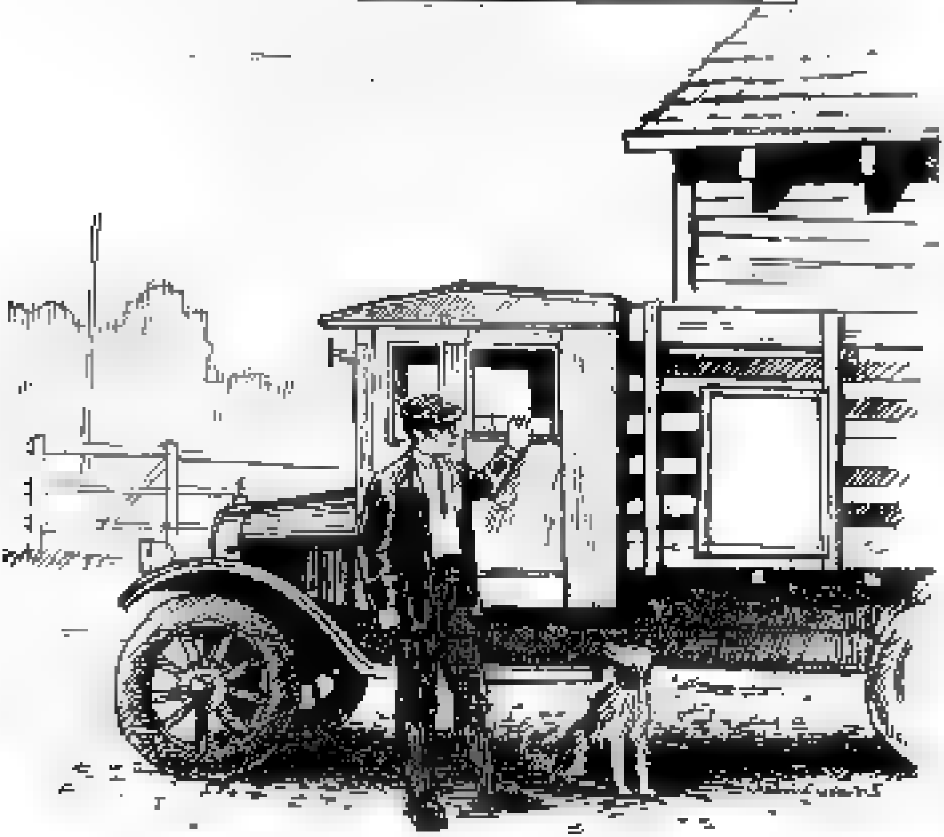
[illegible]

[illegible]

The closure of the Credit Union was difficult to [illegible]

[illegible]

The Freight Haul



FREIGHT-HAULING

When the first settlers came to Townships 61 and 62 in 1912, the freight went all one way — north. Whatever the settlers thought they would need within the next year was carried with them. If they ran out of anything or had forgotten anything, their only hope was that someone could lend the needed item until it became possible to get to a store. There was no freight whatever going out of the area because scarcely an acre of ground was under cultivation and there was not an animal for sale; the eggs laid by the few hens on the homesteads were eaten by the family or put under a hen to hatch.

Whenever anyone went to the store at Mellowdale or, more rarely, to Dusseldorf, Westlock, or Clyde, he would carry lists of items needed by other members of the community. The estimated amount of money was given to the traveller so he would be able to purchase the items. If the cost was less or greater than the money given, an adjustment would be made upon his return.

After a few years farmers were producing enough eggs, cream, and butter to enable them to sell or trade some of the produce. Because so few farmers had horses, the trip to market was often made on foot with the produce carried in a sack slung over the man's shoulder. On his return trip he carried, in the same fashion, the goods that he had bought. Most of the items carried in this way were groceries or small items needed on the farm. But sometimes the farmer returned home with a struggling pig in the sack. Albert Mast Sr., who had a small store, carried some of the stock for his store in this laborious way.

* * *

Pigs

(1927) Deanne and John went to Rossington and bought two weaner pigs, maybe forty or fifty pounds. They each carried a pig in a bag slung over their shoulder. They had no grain to feed the hogs yet in those years, so fed them potato peels and rabbit meat.

Norman Terpstra

* * *

Gradually, as more settlers came to Neerlandia and as more land was cleared, the amount of freight going out of the area increased to the point that it became necessary to make regular trips to Westlock to deliver cream. The Dutch settlers set up a schedule whereby each week one producer took his turn delivering the cream. Then indeed, he became an errand boy for the whole community as everyone gave him their *briefjes* and money. This practice lasted until the Neerlandia Co-op was established in 1920-1922.

Arie Emmerzael, Henry Kannegieter, Ben Lievers, and Albert Ritsema were then hired by the Co-op to haul supplies by wagon from Westlock to Neerlandia once a month. They went in turn each week, leaving Neerlandia one day with cream and eggs and returning the next with supplies for the Co-op.

Teamster

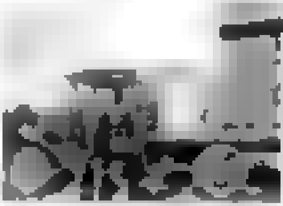
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Moot and John Olthuis both trucked as well.

[illegible]



[illegible]

Henry and Ina Maat with the Speedwagon, 1926.

The Olthuis truck with Frank de Jager, Sadie Tuininga, and two boys

small]. The truckers seldom had a full load to haul — perhaps a dozen cans of cream or the same number of hogs. If there were cattle to haul, they would simply be combined with a load of hogs with no partitions to separate or protect the animals from each other. The trucks themselves were small. John Olthuis drove a 1922 Ford one-ton truck which his father had purchased for $1200.00. On a good week he would have a full load of about twenty hogs, picked up in ones or twos at the farms. On arrival in Edmonton he would go to either Burns or Gainer's because there he could make the best deal for his clients. Gas was not available in Neerlandia. John Olthuis purchased gas and had his truck serviced at Smith's Garage in Westlock.

In September or October 1923 the contract for hauling the Co-op's freight was awarded to John at ninety cents per hundredweight. He charged one dollar per hundredweight for livestock hauling. In addition to freight, John carried passengers for a round-

[illegible]

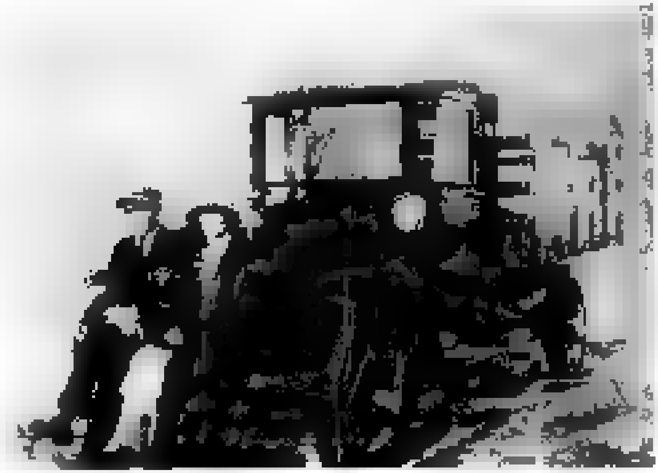
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

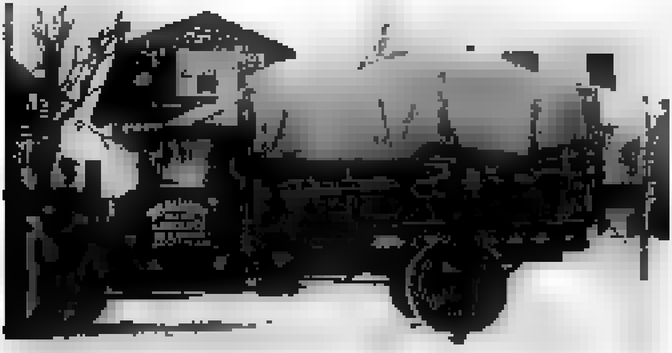
turned out to be another winter with a lot of snow. The roads were often drifted in, necessitating travel over the fields. On one occasion Pete and drivers from the surrounding districts got together to open up the road to Edmonton. It took them two days and the resulting track over road and through field was so rough that several trucks got broken springs.



Giving trucking a try, Pete and Tena Tuininga

At that time the road from Neerlandia to Barrhead had bush on both sides and did not drift in. One of Pete's customers could not understand why the truck service was so slow and why, sometimes, the truck did not run at all. Pete invited him to go along on a trip. When they reached one of the rough spots the poor passenger bounced up and down like a cork. His head hit the ceiling of the cab — a wooden frame, thinly covered with cloth and not at all gentle on a bobbing head. "*Dit is wat*" [This is terrible!] exclaimed the shaken man.

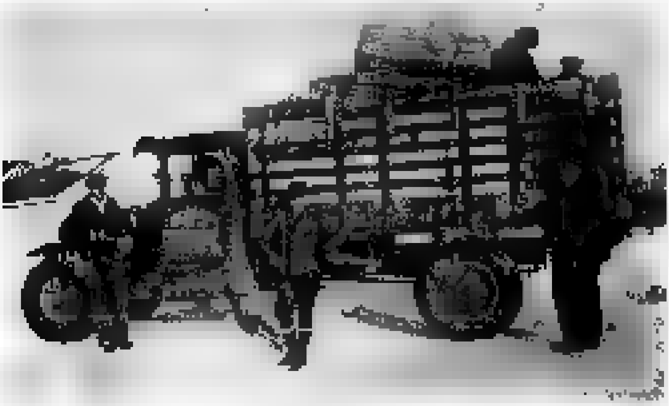
Pete Tuininga sold his truck in 1927 to Kees Stoové who, after trucking for a short time, sold the business to Billy Quick. Billy Quick was based in Edmonton. He would leave from there on Mondays with groceries and other supplies, stopping at Westlock, Rossington, Freedom, Naples, and Mellowdale before reaching Neerlandia. On Tuesdays he would return to Edmonton carrying cream in five and eight-gallon cans. Some of the cream went to the Burn's Creamery in Westlock and the rest to the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool in Edmonton. On Thursdays Billy returned the empty cans to the farmers at their gates. He also hauled hogs and cattle, most of which went to Gainer's packing plant in South Edmonton. Some of the farmers brought their stock to the Centre but many of the animals were picked up on the farms — one pig here, two or three there. The pigs were usually kept in a pig yard and had to be chased until they were caught. Then, because there were no loading chutes, the pigs had to be lifted onto the truck.



Billy Quick with his truck in Edmonton.

While in Neerlandia Billy stayed at the Schoonekamp home. Rubie (Schoonekamp) Nanninga remembers:

> "Mr. Quick was a small man, probably about five feet eight inches tall, and not heavy-built. He had a quiet, soft voice. When he came to our place it was often late in the evening. We would make supper for him and his helper. He had a garage built on our yard and in it we placed a cot on which he slept. There was a wood heater in the garage and, when the weather was cold, we would start a fire in it in the afternoon so it would be warm when Billy arrived. Billy ate with the family, paying twenty-five cents a meal. Billy carried the cream cheques and money in a leather pouch secured to his belt."

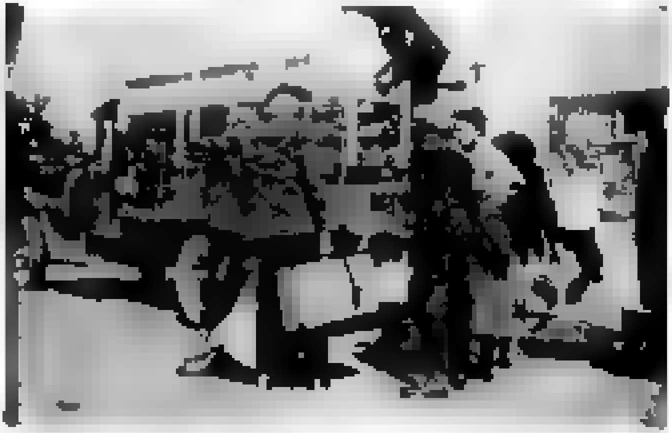


Lou Reyse, Charlie and Billy Quick.

The truck often functioned as a bus, carrying passengers to and from Edmonton for a small fee. When the Elzinga family came from the Netherlands, they came to Neerlandia with Billy Quick. A trip by truck took a long time. Anna (Elzinga) Schuring remembers:

> "We left Edmonton right after breakfast. Mother and Mabel sat in the front with Mr. Quick. The rest of us rode on the back, sitting on cream cans or standing because you know what happens when you sit on cream cans. We stopped many times along the way — St. Albert, Morinville and I don't know where all. Every

time the truck stopped we stood up to stretch our legs and my brother Pete would ask Mother "Are we entering any English yet?" At 8:00 p.m. we finally arrived at Simon Tiemstra's place. Mrs. Tiemstra said it was dark. [illegible] have still to go anymore [illegible] miles [illegible] and there were many stops to drop off cream and I don't know what time we arrived at Schoenmakers's. By then time had no meaning for us anymore.

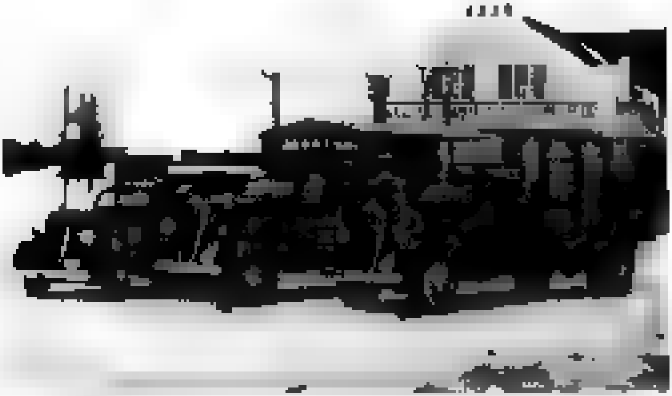


Neerlandia farmers heading for the Harvest.

The amount of freight being hauled in and out of Neerlandia increased steadily since there were not only more people living in the area but more land was under cultivation and numbers of cattle and hogs were increasing. Road conditions were also improving. Billy Quick first hired John Elzinga, then Lodewijk Reyse, and finally Dick Fisher to help him. Billy's son Charley also helped. He was one of the drivers when, with two trucks, they took the Lammert Wierenga family to Neerlandia. Nevertheless, during Billy's career the Depression began. Many of his freight charges were paid in chicken, vegetables, or jars of fresh cream. Because the prices for hogs and cattle were so low he often hauled them for next to nothing, thereby making next to nothing on a round-trip.

Because of ill health, Billy Quick sold his business to Dick Fisher. Dick had driven for Billy from 1932 to 1934. Then he bought a used Reo truck and went into business for himself. When he bought Billy's business he hired his brother Art to drive for him. In 1936 Dick took his brother Art in as a partner; they named the business Fisher Brothers' Trucking.

The Fisher brothers began trucking at an advantageous time. Taking over Billy Quick's business meant that the Fishers also got the contract for the Co-op's freight. This contract was important to a trucker because it meant that he was guaranteed return freight. In addition, by the mid thirties, the Alberta Livestock Co-op (ALC) established a monopoly in the area. With the co-operation of the local truckers the area was divided into the following zones: Branders got Vega, Wengerbers — Bloomsbury, Propetas — Naples, and Fishers — Neerlandia. This arrangement was a benefit to the truckers because then they were assured of hauling livestock for



Fisher Bros. truck with Co-op clerks [illegible] and Art Fisher, [illegible] School [illegible], 1939.

A.C. members. The increased need for farm produce during World War II was a benefit as well. It not only meant increased freight but it also enabled them to get a badly-needed truck. In 1944 the Fishers were unable to buy a truck since there were none available. But because of the wartime demand for dairy products, the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool obtained a special permit for them to buy an army truck (in the traditional army green colour).

The roads were not always in good enough condition for the larger trucks the Fishers now owned so, often, a one-ton truck was used to pick up the stock and take it to the main road, where it was transferred to one of the larger trucks. Several farmers were hired by the Fishers to haul cream from every corner of Neerlandia and deliver it, every Monday morning, to a Fisher Brothers' truck which would be parked on the side of the road between the store and the school. One by one the men on the cream haul would arrive in their wagons or trucks, back up to the big truck, and transfer their loads.

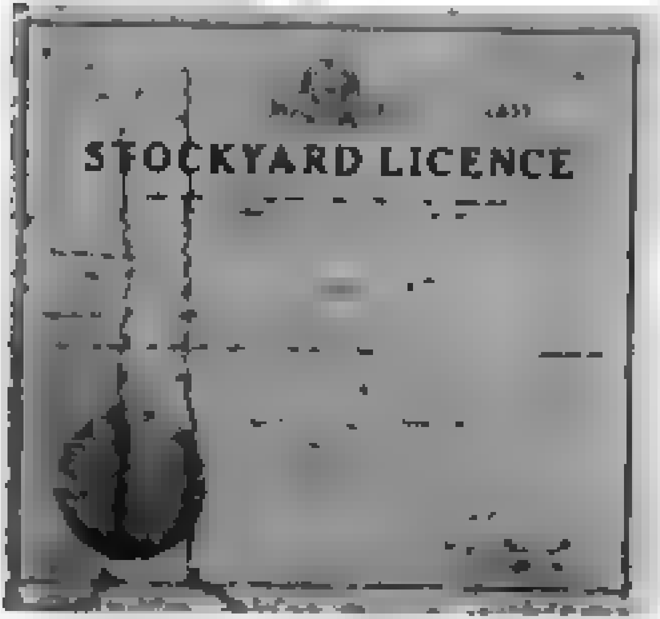
The Fisher brothers divided the work. Art hauled livestock and Dick hauled eggs and cream. Dick also hauled the store freight and one load of hogs a week. They both hauled grain. In addition Art and Dick usually employed one spare driver. Because depot fees were high the Fishers went from place to place in Edmonton picking up freight. Perishable items were picked up at the United Truck Depot. This method of handling freight took a lot of time, so the Fishers would stay overnight at the New Edmonton Hotel where they had a standing reservation. The Fisher brothers received the produce cheques at the packing plant and cashed them at an Edmonton bank. They would then deduct the freight charges and, upon their return home, give the remaining cash to the producers. Payment for cream was often placed in the cream cans and given to the farmers in this way.

One of the problems the truckers faced was the livestock smell which tended to permeate the groceries. To minimize the problem, the trucks were washed after unloading the livestock at the packing plant.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



STOCKYARD LICENCE

[illegible] get the best price for his clients

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] not a thing of the past

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 1980. It was discontinued completely

[illegible]

[illegible]

Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

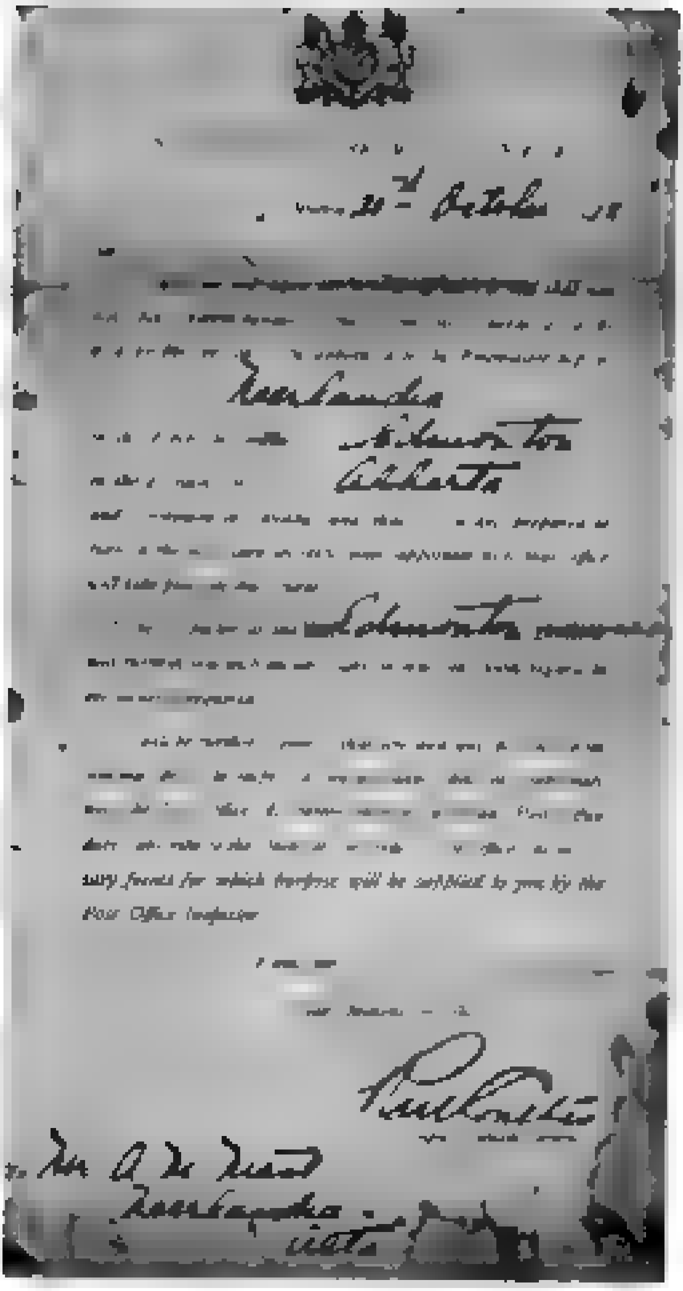
Post Office

[illegible]

[illegible]

found a day or many days later

Mail



[illegible] 20th October 18

[illegible]

[illegible]

Edmonton

Alberta

[illegible]

Edmonton [illegible]

[illegible] sary forms for which purpose will be supplied to you by the Post Office Inspector.

I am, [illegible]

Your obedient servant,

[illegible]

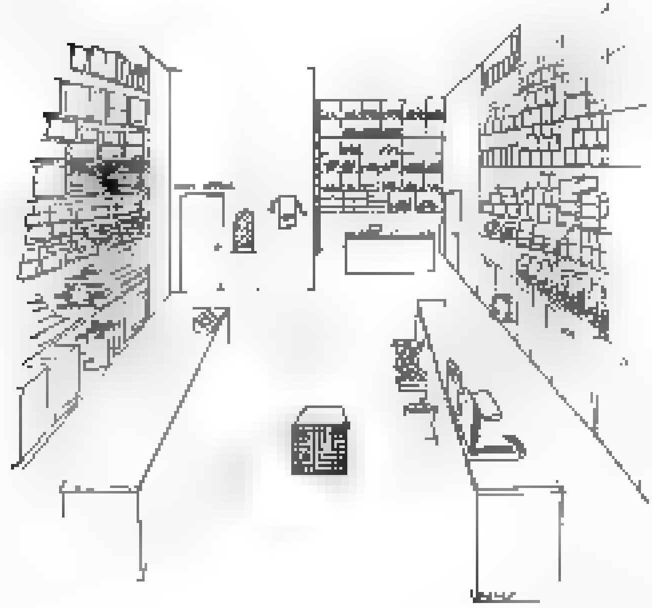
To Mr. A. [illegible]

[illegible]

Neerlandia Post Office was in a log cabin at the south end of the settlement, four miles south of our homestead. We took turns getting it; I one week and someone further on the next. This is how it was done. I would get it one week for the neighbours west of the Post Office and deliver it to a farmhouse for the north part of the settlement. One from the north would take it from there and deliver it around to his neighbours or to a central farm where they could get it. That way we only had to go every third or fourth week to the Post Office for mail.

Ben Laevers

In 1923 the Mast family moved to Edmonton. This resulted in the Neerlandia Post Office being moved to the local store on the NW 34-61-3-5. This proved to be a convenience for the settlers, since the weekly mail trip could be combined with shopping for groceries and farm supplies. From then on the post office became an integral part of the local store. At that time there were forty-two names on the mailing list.



Ordinarily the store manager would have assumed postmaster duties, but one requirement for the position was Canadian citizenship. Case Ingwersen, who was not yet a citizen, could not hold the position. Instead William van Ark, a local schoolteacher, became

postal agent. Apparently by the month of April [illegible] Case Ingwersen received his citizenship papers and took over the post office duties.

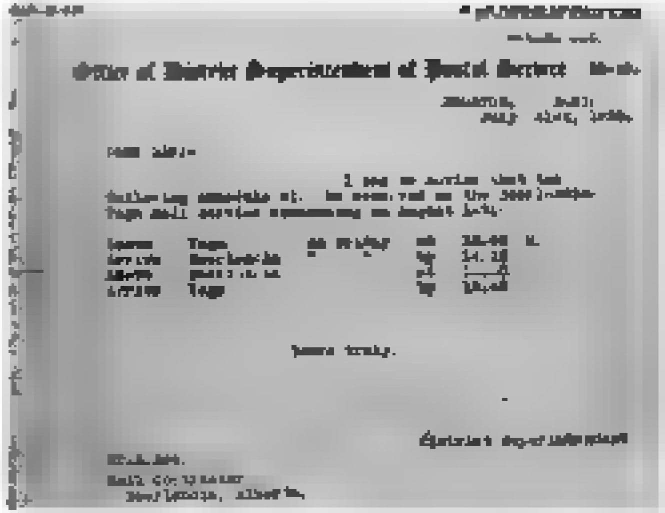
Case Ingwersen on the [illegible] [illegible]

Case Ingwersen was not only store manager and postal agent; he also [illegible] mail for a number of years. Hauling mail had its share of hardships, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] began to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the trails [illegible] [illegible] through the [illegible] [illegible] were spooked. Whatever the cause of the runaway, the result was that Case was thrown from his wagon and suffered broken bones which gave him a limp [illegible].

Though the post office was now in the store, the visiting with friends [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the post office [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] began to be operated by [illegible] [illegible].

Some of these mail carriers [illegible] [illegible] who carried mail by horse for [illegible] years [illegible]. During this time Case Ingwersen served as postal agent and in April [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] assumed the position.

When Pete [illegible] assumed the responsibility of mail carrier he added a bit more speed to the service since he drove a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the R.C.M.P. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] their job was to check the mechanical condition of [illegible] and make [illegible] Pete used a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] something like this [illegible] being stopped by the R.C.M.P.



For this service [illegible] was paid $85.00 per annum.

Pete's reply was, "You can't stop the Royal Mail." "We only want to check your brakes," said the RCMP. This seemed a reasonable request, so Pete invited the officer aboard his tractor and said he would comply with the request. When, after going some distance, Pete did not apply the brakes, the RCMP wanted to know why. Pete replied, "I am waiting for the order to stop." So the officer said, "Stop." It was the word the mail carrier was waiting for and, without hesitation, he hit the brakes. The tractor stopped but the police officer did not. He ended up straddled across the tractor hood.

+

A Trip to Remember

When I was eight years old and my brother Norman was ten years old, we had the excitement of a trip to Barrhead with the mail carrier Mr. Pete Hoomakker. He was using an old Dodge car that was cut down and remodeled to form a small truck. With this he hauled mail and cream cans to Barrhead once a week from Vega, Neerlandia, and Mellowdale.

By the time he arrived at our place Mr. Hooldakker already had two other passengers in the front seat so we had to ride in the back with the mail and cream cans. After our last stop at Mellowdale, the canvas tarp was put over and tied down because it started to rain. The roads in 1936 being what they were, it took quite some time to get from Mellowdale to Barrhead. On top of this, the tied-down tarp trapped a good portion of smoky exhaust fumes, so by the time we got to the creamery in Barrhead my brother and I were awfully sick.

After unloading at the creamery we were dropped off at the livery barn where we spent the afternoon lying on a pile of hay and

wondering if we had been left there for good. Finally, in the late afternoon, Mr. [illegible] returned for us, bringing with him a bag of the best tasting doughnuts we had ever had, fresh from the bakery. Then we got back into the truck and went to the post office to pick up the mail bags. The train had come in late so the mail was not all sorted yet and we had to wait till the mail bags were ready. Finally, by late evening, we started for home.

The rain had stopped but the roads were terrible. After going about two miles, the truck was stalled with a dead battery. After getting a push start from another vehicle we turned around and headed back into town for generator repairs. After these repairs we proceeded on our trip home without any further problems. We arrived home late that night, tired and hungry but happy with the experiences we had that day. The things that really made an impression was seeing the steamers, the grain elevators, and the first-ever steam train. All in all, a very good day.

Fred Toebes

* *

Progress was again evident when Lenus Eriksen became the next mail carrier. He used a Ford truck which kept the mail dry and clean. He was employed for approximately ten years, from 1938 to 1948. How long Johann Wagner was employed as mail carrier is not known for sure but it was probably until 1962 when William Jansen began carrying mail on the same route in 1962. Bill said that in 1967 the [illegible] Post Office closed down and the rural route boxes came into existence. His route was then changed, adding a circuit through Shoal Creek and Lenore. Bill carried mail for a total of seventeen years. In 1979 Bill retired and Len Keith was hired for the job.

* *

For a number of years the mail was brought in by horse and buggy. The carriers usually lived in Vega and picked up the outgoing mail at noon and took it to the post office in the town. On their return trip they were to arrive approximately at 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. One of these carriers would sometimes have a little too much to drink and he arrived anywhere between 4 p.m. and midnight. He often had great difficulty standing up on his feet when he arrived. Jan K[illegible] was not at all pleased with this kind of service. People were greatly frustrated by this also. They would come for the mail from all directions, on bike or walking, or by horse and wagon and many times had to return the next day as it had been too late to sort the mail. The carrier was eventually replaced by a reliable man with a truck. It was a good time for socializing when people gathered together waiting for the mail to come in.

* *

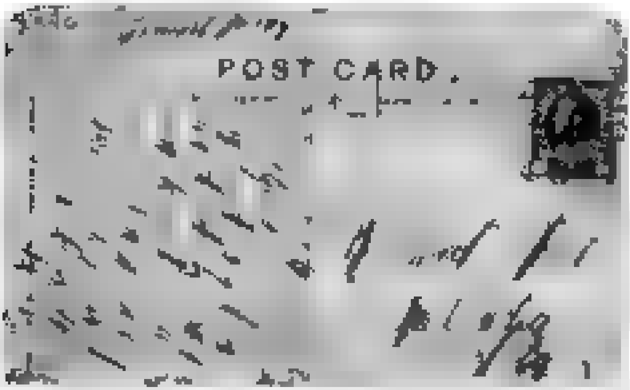
It became evident in 1953 that the store manager had become too busy with business affairs of the store and post office so on January 1, 1954 the post office duties were given to the bookkeeper.

Aubrey Ashley. Apparently during this period, individual lock boxes were installed in the post office. There was no longer any need to wait for the mail; just insert the key in the slot, turn it, and remove the mail from the box. Many still continued the practice of standing around and talking to friends when they got the mail. When Aubrey Ashley retired as postal agent in May 1957, [illegible] Piers, a local farmer, was assigned the responsibility of postal agent. Ber[illegible] Vander Wal, the new bookkeeper, was unable to qualify for the position because he was not a Canadian citizen.

On November 1, 1965, John De [illegible], the Co-op bookkeeper, became post master. John said that mail service was increased to twice weekly in 1963, mail days being Tuesday and Friday.

By the early seventies Canada Post complied with increasing demands on the service and Neerlandia residents could enjoy mail service each working day of the week. At one time mail came to Neerlandia even on Saturdays, but that practice was short-lived.

The pioneers have witnessed increases in the frequency and efficiency in the postal service. However, the one constant that has been retained is the habit of visiting with friends and neighbours on mail day.



Telephone

The Neerlandia area had its first government phone in 1919 in Elizabeth Melsome's residence on the NE 22-61-3-5. Tom Wilson, the foreman of the Chisholm Logging Camp, was instrumental in bringing it in because he needed it for his business. "Business" calls became social contacts, and wedding bells soon rang for Tom Wilson and Elizabeth Melsome.

This phone, though previously called Shoal Creek, later had its name changed to Tipperary because the Shoal Creek Store, which had been built, was getting a phone and appropriated the name.

The luxury of a quick phone call to a neighbour was unheard of. As one settler recalled, "Who was there to phone? No one else had a phone — besides who could afford it?" Only calls of pressing need were made to the doctor in Westlock when there was severe illness. Occasionally the minister would be called to perform a marriage, baptism, or funeral.

* * *

Hello Sweetheart

Mr. Kampnar had a government phone. To use it one had to turn the handle on the side of the box and speak into a horn in the front. Many people travelling through, such as Frenchmen from Legal, would make use of the phone.

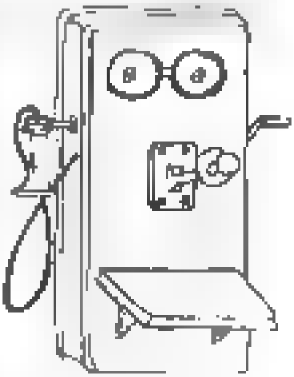
When Rev. Jongbloed was visiting the Neerlandia congregation, he would often make a call to Edmonton from Kampnar's. Once the operator was on the line he would say, "Hello Sweetheart, I want to speak to my wife." He would talk to his wife for five to ten minutes, finding out how she and the children were doing.

Ida Reitsma

* * *

When Peter Kampnar came and homesteaded on the NW 23-61-3-5, across the road from the Wilsons, he soon built a store and had a phone installed. There is a record of a 1922 AGT work order to move the telephone office from the store to his residence. Soon illness forced the Kampnars to move away. By this time the community had constructed a Co-op store in the hamlet; a phone was installed there, and, as a matter of convenience, the store manager Case Ingwersen became the AGT agent in 1925. Jan Koning became agent in 1935 and later the Neerlandia Co-op was named agent (1945). These were toll phones. The store building, which was constructed in 1936, had the phone enclosed in a booth. Below the phone box attached to it was the switchboard which contained three or four holes. Plugs which dangled on the ends of cords had to be plugged into the hole to connect the parties who wished to conduct a telephone conversation.

During this time there was also a small switchboard in the Neerlandia Store to service the line to Vega. This line had previously been erected about 1937 by Julius Boman, the owner of the Vega Store. By the mid forties the Vega Garage also joined the line.



[illegible]

I had the privilege of working with Mr. Ashley in [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] from the line

Each of the fifteen subscribers could hear the ring [illegible] every other subscriber [illegible] between. The most complicated ring was Ed Visser's, one long, two short, and one long. To call another person on the line it was necessary to turn the handle or crank on the side of the phone in the appropriate pattern.

* * *

Emergency Ring

One advantage of the old mutual phone system was the emergency ring. When there was a fire at Clarence Wiersenga's they just gave that one long ring, and everybody dropped what they were doing and rushed to the fire. We formed a bucket brigade and got the fire out too.

One man was so excited when his garage was on fire that he just rang the emergency ring and hollered, "Fire!" and then hung up, leaving everyone to wonder where the fire was. We peered out of our windows, but snow was falling and we could see only a little way. Eventually someone found out where the fire was and we all went there. By that time it was too late, though, and the garage burned to the ground.

* * *

In the meantime Bart vander Wal, the Neerlandia Store manager, found having the switchboard in the store very annoying. He confronted Carl Mast with a job proposal. After being approved by AGT, Carl and Agnes Mast had the switchboard moved to their residence on February 6, 1957. There were just four phones north of Neerlandia at that time.

It appears that Dick Fisher, Jack Janssen, and the Vega store and garage were the ones with phones but the line was so poor that it was "hard to say what was on the other end of it." In many cases electric fence insulators were used and it was strung with bare wire. The line went through trees along the road and when they rubbed against the wire on windy days it was impossible to hear what was being said.

* * *

Jack Janssen had bought an old phone from C. K. Mast. One day when Fred Toebes came to visit they decided to hook it up. The existing telephone pole was on the opposite side of the road. Fred and Jack realized that a wire attached to the pole and strung across the road would not be high enough for the traffic to pass underneath. They quickly solved the dilemma by attaching an insulator to a 2 x 4 and nailing that alongside the pole as high as they could reach. They completed the hookup by using electrical wire and were the proud possessors of a working phone. After a year or two Jack received a phone call from Edmonton. "What's your number?" they demanded.

"I have none," Jack replied. "I just did my own hookup. It's three rings I guess."

"Oh," was the answer. Subsequently Jack got a number (97), but was never charged for the use of the service.

* * *

A meeting was held February 13, 1958, to organize the Vega Mutual Telephone Company (VMTC) and to discuss the possibilities of rebuilding the badly-dilapidated Neerlandia-Vega line. With forty-eight people present and eager to start, a board of directors were elected. Harry Branden, Jake Sturwold, Pleun Rylaarsdam, Ralph Neuman, Fred Toebes (president), and Peter Koch (secretary-treasurer) were elected. All those interested deposited ten dollars as a down payment on their share of the line.

Work began and AGT was contacted with the intended list of subscribers. A permit for cutting timber for the poles was obtained and the municipality was approached for approval and proper placement of poles. Every subscriber was to "bare his share of the line cost of material including clearing of his own share of the brush."

By August 1958 a public meeting was called and twenty-three subscribers requested a phone and a total of eighteen miles were to be covered.

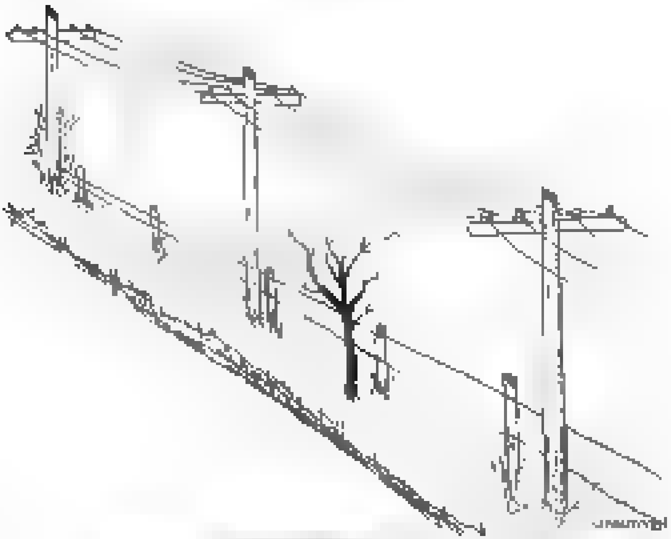
The problem of other parties listening in on telephone conversations had to be dealt with by the board of directors. The ultimate threat was disconnection. At one meeting a director had "positive proof" (he had seen it with his own eyes) of a guilty party and action had to be taken.

* * *

Then there is the temptation to listen in. One day my mother, while talking on the phone, said that she had too many beans and wished she knew of someone who could use them. About half an hour later, someone (on the same party line) phoned and said, "You wouldn't have any extra beans would you?"

Coincidence?!

* * *



[illegible]

[illegible] he never did get that message straight.

* *

It was hard for people to get used to seeing the [illegible] something he had never done.

* *

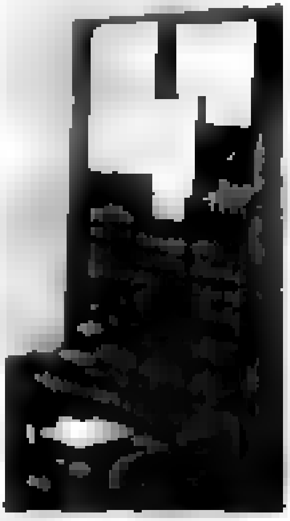
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] poles to count, all for the wage of one dollar per hour.

[illegible]

[illegible]



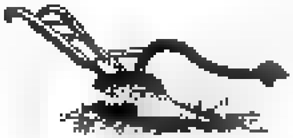
[illegible]

The Mases had enjoyed their work, especially for the social contact it provided. In the early days they made two trips in one day to Pleun Rylaarsdam through pouring rain and muddy roads. Two separate long distance calls had come in about deaths in the Rylaarsdam family.

In 1962 the Mellowdale-Neerlandia Mutual converted to dial phones. By this time there were about fifty subscribers per line, so five lines with eleven subscribers per line were installed. Calling someone became much simpler but the entrance of the dial phone meant the exit of the emergency ring. No longer was it possible to alert 14-15 neighbours at once.

Seven years later the AGT put in buried cable and the phones were changed to only four parties on a line and only two of the rings would be heard in any home. What a relief it was to not have to listen to all those rings. (And it was still possible, for those so inclined, to listen in on the phone.)

The rural telephone — what an exasperating, wonderful thing it was. How frustrating to try and get Central to find out that the rings might get through but the voices not. You could hear Carl say, "Number please" but no amount of shouting would make the voices carry through. Because of progress the lines were put underground but we miss our friendly operators. They know where the fire was, where one might be reached if an urgent call came through, who just had a baby or was sick, or who had hung up as one dashed to the phone. Progress yes, but in many ways the old rural phone gave personalized service that is missing today.



Working in the Bush

LOGGING AND LUMBERING

Logging and lumbering played an important part in the life of the Neerlandia pioneers. Though farming was the main concern the lumber industry was important for two reasons. First, there was a need for lumber to construct almost everything on the homestead: homes and many furnishings, barns, granaries, hay racks, grain boxes, and all outbuildings were made with lumber. Second, the jobs created by the lumbering industry provided much-needed cash for the pioneers to sustain and build up the homestead into a profitable venture.

One of the first sawmills in the area was Clemes and Fluet's sawmill which was set up in 1912 about three miles northeast of (old) Barrhead. In 1919 Fluet bought the other half share and moved the mill to Mellowdale. Many of the trees logged for the mill were from the Big Timber. Siebren Tiemstra and Tjibbe Reitsma were among the men who worked at the sawmill, which operated in Mellowdale until the late 1930s.

Cookhouse crew at Fluet's Sawmill. Dave Tuininga, fourth from right.

Lumber was seldom purchased in the 1920s. Often men would cut logs on their own land and bring them to a lumber mill. Later a portable mill would move around the country. The owner and operator of the mill would take half of the lumber sawed as payment and the farmer-logger would get the other half. Everyone seemed pleased with this arrangement. During these years much of the lumber was used rough.

There were also several logging camps in the area in the pioneer days; the best known of these is Chisholm. It was known locally as Chisholm Mills or Chisholm Logging Company and began logging in this area in 1927. The Chisholm logging camps were located along the Athabasca River anywhere from southwest of Fort Assiniboine to directly west of Neerlandia, and several places northwest of Neerlandia including Horseshoe Bend and Mayker Flats in Vega. Many Neerlandia men worked for the Chisholm Lumber Company.

Tom Wilson was hired by Chisholm as foreman, since he had previously done similar work in Minnesota. Tom knew the bush and was an excellent foreman. His job began in the summer, cruising the timber. He checked the thickest patches, the most accessible areas, the size of the trees and their proximity to the river. All the timber harvested was spruce, since birch and poplar are too heavy to float.

* * *

Lost in the Woods

One of the first settlers intended to go to the sawmill about five or six miles south of his homestead. He left early in the morning. His wife had made a lunch for him to eat on the way. So he started off going south along the Klondike Trail. He walked for a long time and he thought, "I must be getting near to the sawmill. I better have my lunch first." So he sat down on a big log and ate his lunch, then started off again. Soon he saw a log cabin and said to himself, "I better ask how far it is to the mill." When he came near the cabin he saw some little huts with young chickens in them, and he said to himself, "Them huts are just like ours." He knocked at the door of the cabin and his wife opened it and he stared at her and she at him. He said, "How did you come here?" She said, "You are back again?" Then he understood that he was home again and had never been to the sawmill, maybe never off his homestead. He was lucky to be home again.

Ben Lievers

* * *

One young Neerlandia fellow was going to work for Chisholm one winter. Before he left, his father warned him, "Remember when you get a job, you don't work for any cheaper than anybody else. You have to get at least nineteen dollars a month." So the young fellow went to camp. When he started working he asked Tom Wilson, "What do you pay?"

"Twenty-five dollars a month," was the reply.

"Won't work for that," declared the young man. "I want nineteen dollars!"

"You want nineteen dollars — why?"

"Because that's what my Dad said, nineteen dollars, no less."

"Okay," Tom said, "You want nineteen dollars, you get nineteen dollars!" When the young fellow came home after a month, his Dad asked him,

"Hoe gaat het, jong (How did it go?)"

"O good. The others all got twenty-five dollars, but I'm the only one who got nineteen."

* * *

There are many stories about Tom Wilson. One concerns Tom and his boss Mr. MacMillan. Tom, with a bobsled cutter and his

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] sake of the grub. It was superb.

[illegible]

[illegible]

The logging was begun on a large [illegible] by the river. In the bush, trees were felled by two men [illegible] saw. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

* * *

A log [illegible] was a tripod affair made of logs with one pulley on top and one down near the base and a cable going through them.

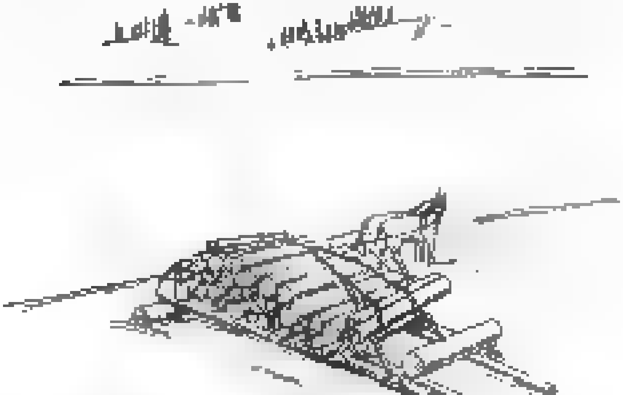
A team of horses pulling on the one end of the cable would pull three or four logs about fifteen to twenty feet up in the air, right onto a huge sleigh. There would be one man on the load with a cant-hook, receiving the logs. When the logs were high enough, he would signal to the man driving the team of horses, who would stop the team and make them back up a few steps. The man on the load would then loosen the cable and the whole process would start over again. They would make huge loads ten to twelve feet high. A small thirty-horsepower Caterpillar would pull the load through the bush along well-cleared trails to a central area close to a hill which went down to the river. Here there would be more loads and as many as six would be tied together and a larger Caterpillar tractor would go behind these loads to hold them back from going too fast down the hill and onto the ice of the river. There would also be a man with a bucket of sand on each front runner of the front sleigh. They would throw sand in front of the sleigh tracks to keep the loads from going too fast. But even then the Cat would backfire trying to hold back that enormous amount of weight.

John Ingwersen

* * *

The icing of the ruts was done at night when the crew was resting. Water was hauled from the river, poured in the ruts, and left to freeze overnight. Sam Howey and Ike Nasuanga did some of this work together in the 1930s. The "road monkey" had the job of keeping the ice road clean and free from horse dung, tree limbs, and other debris. One of the men who had this job was Arie Emmerzael.

Once on the sleigh, the logs were taken to the riverside. Here they were unloaded from the sleigh onto a bigger skid way and the piles were staked. a notched pole was placed in front of the first logs to hold them back. These big piles of logs called decks were at least twenty feet high and up to two hundred feet long.



Piling decks at the river

* * *

[illegible]

John Ingversen

*

[illegible]

[illegible]

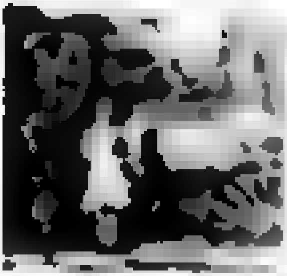
[illegible]

[illegible]

Each man was expected to work one or two hours per day with

[illegible]

"You can't eat wood."



Steam engine at [illegible] mill [illegible]

[illegible]

too careful and fire would start in the woods. Then a number of men of the settlement would be called upon to, under the direction of the fire ranger, fight the fire. To do this trenches were dug all around the burning area, deep enough so that the uninflammable clay was reached. But woe betide if the rain held off and a wind arose. Then the whole surrounding country was covered in smoke for days. The sun was darkened until the greatly longed-for rain descended and man and beast could breathe again.

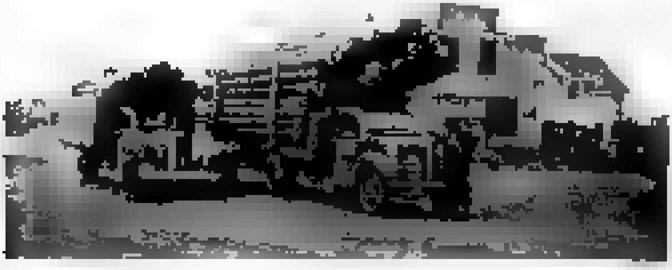
This burning naturally cost the government a lot on wages but, on the other hand, it helped the settlers to subsist during the first years. This continued until the government adopted another course and sold the stands of trees and sawmills sprang up. This again gave employment while it also helped the farmers obtain cheap wood for building houses and stables.

Case Ingwersen (memoirs)

* * *

Horseshoe Bend Sub-Contract

In 1923, Ben Sievers, Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis and John Terpsma made a sub-contract with Chisholm to log a small area near Horseshoe Bend. Andy and Ike Nanninga and Bill and John Olthuis were part of the crew and Tena Terpsma and Johanna Sievers were the cooks. The operation was begun by building a log shack and a barn on an island in the Athabasca River. The married men went home each Saturday evening, while the single men took turns staying at camp. One weekend when they were nearly finished, it was Andy's turn to stay. But he had a girlfriend and did not stay out that weekend either. When the crew returned Monday morning, they discovered the shack and barn had been ransacked and burnt down. Nothing was left — no tools or clothing or feed for the horses — so the partners made a deal with Tom Wilson to stay at the Chisholm Camp until they had finished their contract.



Hauling logs.

* * *

One winter four of us took a contract with the Chisholm Logging Co. Ltd. to cut logs along the Athabasca River. We built a

[illegible] *lumbering. In later years, we used that experience* [illegible]

Ben Lievers

Dutch Mill

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] stove, one table, and a few benches for storage.

There was already a road into the area, as the Lockwood [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] it. Later they purchased a Coutts mill for about [illegible]

[illegible] burnt or left to rot in piles

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] logging across the Athabasca

[illegible] certain people

John Peters cooked for a short time in the fall of 1943, but soon Rutie Nanninga took over. Her husband, Andrew, worked on the crew and they had baby Mark along too. With them came the family cow to provide milk for them and the crew. Later that year Cor took his wife, Sena, and one-year-old daughter, Reatta, to the camp. Rutie and Sena shared the honour of cooking for the crew. The next year, 1944, Andrew and Rutie did not return but Gerrit Ingwersen had moved his family to the camp, so his wife, Grace, took her turn at cooking. Annie Anema and Bertha Gelderman worked together another winter as cooks. One winter Rita Gelderman worked as cook's helper.

Visiting the Dutch Mill. Fred Toxbey, Hilda Nanninga, Grace [illegible], Bertha Gelderman, Cobie Leder.

One day Gerrit saw some moose tracks in the snow and that was just what he needed to get out his rifle and follow the trail. He was an excellent hunter and the crew enjoyed those moose steaks!

The help was all hired locally and the wages were three dollars a day plus room and board. The Dutch Mill is fondly remembered by many who worked there. Cor Hiemstra, Jim Joritsma, Herman Gelderman, Ryer Knikke, Albert Mast, Cor Leder, John Peters, Albert Schoonekamp, Dewey Terpsma, Albert Termstra, John van Ee, Lambert A. Wierenga, and Henry A. Wierenga were part of the crew at various times. They were almost like one big family. Gerrit Ingwersen must have been the father, for it was he who said grace at mealtimes and gave needed encouragement to the hired help. The women often packed the little ones snugly in a small sleigh and took them for walks in the bush or on the frozen river. It was a time of fun and fellowship.

The hours of work for the crew were from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After supper, the men were usually free to do as they wished. They talked of Model A cars and guns, sharpened saws, and told jokes.

* * *

A farmer and his son went out to cut wood with a crosscut saw. While they were sawing, an Indian trapper came along. He stood behind the father for a while, watching. The trapper suddenly

kicked the father in the seat of his pants and said, "If the boy wants him now — let him have it."

*

On occasion they held a haircutting session with different men acting as barbers. They sat on big blocks of wood around a forty-five gallon gas drum which had been converted to a wood heater. Bedtime was 9:30 or 10:30 p.m. and the bunks were crudely made out of rough lumber. The mattress was timothy hay and over that was an army blanket. Pillows were provided and more blankets for a covering. Long johns were worn to bed, and socks were often kept on to keep the feet warm. All wet mitts and clothes were hung on the inside clothesline near the heater. The men all used leather mitts with home knitted woollen mittens inside, which provided the needed flexibility combined with warmth.

Someone had to stay on weekends to feed the horses and milk the cow and, more often than not, George [illegible] was picked because he was the one partner who was unattached.

By the spring of 1948 the leased area was completely logged out. The whole area was cleaned up and even the log buildings were taken apart and sawn up. The [illegible] mill was sold that same fall. The partners never did get rich or even make much money, but they had a nice bit of lumber and had gained a lot of experience.

* * *

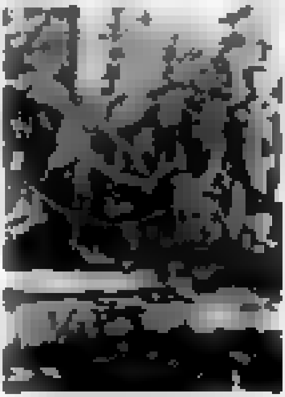
Beginning in 1948, power saws were introduced to the loggers in this area. The first power saws were heavy, clumsy, and awkward, and weighed approximately thirty pounds. They had to be operated by two men and were much faster than the crosscut saw which they eventually replaced. A tree could be sawed down in one minute flat. Each bush worker wanted one.

* *

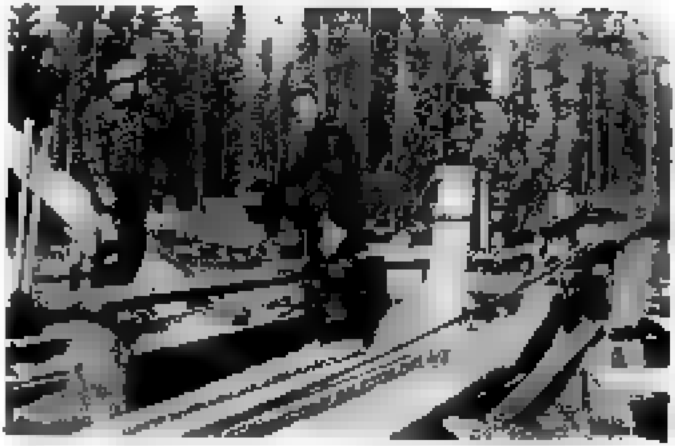
In the winter of 1949, John Ingwersen and Bill [illegible] cut spruce logs on 36-61-4-5, six miles west of Neerlandia. They obtained a permit from the Department of Lands and Forests. The cost was approximately three dollars per one thousand board feet of lumber.

They built a little shack and stayed there with their four man crew. The crew was Archie [illegible], [illegible], Aeke Flantinga, and Henry Bosman, who was the cook. They worked there most of the winter of 1949-1950. The lumber was sawed on the site by a portable homemade mill created by Bill and John. Most of this lumber was for farm use.

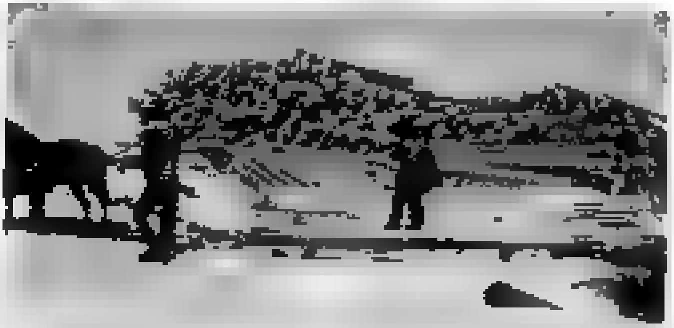
Working in the lumber camps continued to play a part in the lives of many men from Neerlandia. Even after World War II several worked for [illegible] or Imperial Lumber in the [illegible] area or in the area now known as Judy Creek. These workers were mainly immigrants who had decided to farm in Neerlandia but needed some extra cash to get a start. [illegible] Frank Baarda, Gerrit Bevers, Tom and Simon De Jong, Henk [illegible], Pete and [illegible]



[illegible] logs out of the bush. [illegible]



Sawing lumber: Bill Olthuis, Ben Bouwman, John Ingwersen, Aebe Pieninga



Hauling lumber: Norman Toebes driving horses.

Working in the bush: George Visser, Clarence Tiemstra, Simon de Groot, Frank Hessels, Dave Tiemstra, Ralph Bos, 1951-52.

Selles, and Arie Veenstra were among those who supplemented their incomes in this fashion. The wages at that time (early 1950s) were from fifty-five to sixty-five cents an hour, with $1.50 charge per day for room and board.

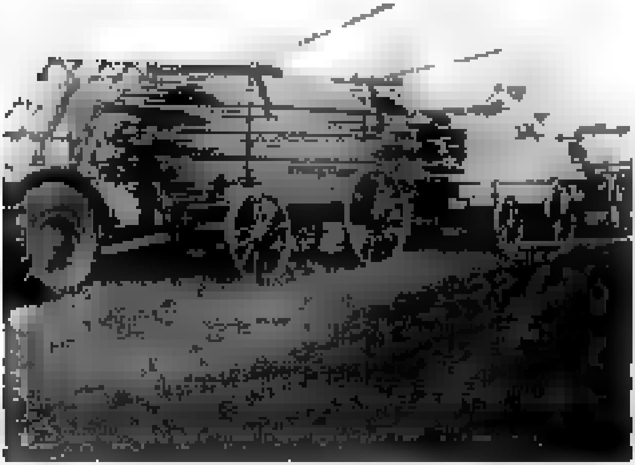
Accommodations in Thachuk's camp. Henk Nevis, Case Selles.

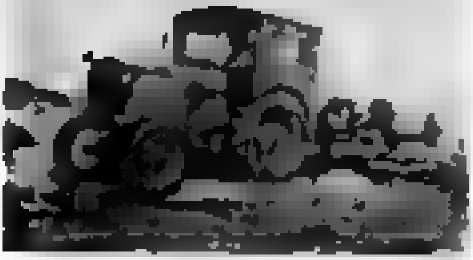
* * *

One year I and the rest of the crew, Simon and Tom De Groot and Bert Nanninga, sawed logs in the sand hills north of Vega. We had found a patch of about 100,000 board feet of lumber three miles from the end of the trail through sand hills and swamp. We did all the logging and sawing before Christmas. A trucker was going to haul the lumber out, but late in March the snow was melting and the lumber was still there. So with four men, two tractors, and sleighs we started hauling the lumber out to the end of the trail, for in the summer there would be no chance to get in there since there was a lot of swamp and if it was left the chances of it going up in smoke were quite real. We went in on a Wednesday and worked straight through day and night, managing to finish Saturday evening. That summer we took a planer in to plane the lumber and then hauled it home. A few years later we sawed logs north of Timeu (1953), and then in the sand hills north of Vega again (1954).

John Ingwersen

* * *


Bringing lumber home from the mill. Note the poles extending from the top of each load. These poles were twisted in the chain to keep the load tight.



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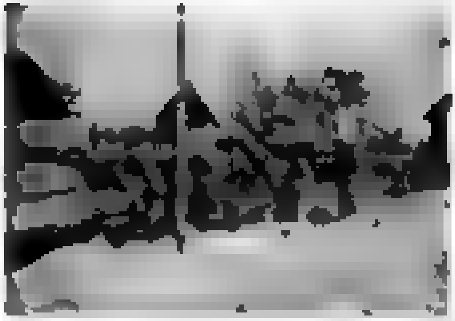


[illegible]

Logging and lumbering have seen dramatic changes since the early days of crosscut saw and horse. Today trees are felled with power saws, bucked into lengths and skidded to the landing with a machine called a skidder. There the logs are limbed and topped again with power saws. Then they are decked into piles to be picked up later with huge front-end loaders. They are loaded on large truck decks usually pulled by Kenworth or Mack tractors and hauled to the sawmill site.

At the sawmill the logs are cut into lengths ranging from twelve to sixteen feet with an electric cut-up saw. The lengths are then run through more saws to make the lumber. The saws are operated by push buttons with very little manual work involved and are powered by electricity and air hydraulics. Then the lumber is cut, is edged, trimmed and piled. All refuse goes on a conveyor up a chute to a burner.

Some men from Neerlandia still work in bush camps today. Some of them work on a contract basis and others are paid an hourly wage which varies [illegible] an hour. The [illegible] compared to hand logging, with [illegible] and meals provided.

When Work is Done

Social Life

[illegible]

Harda Terpsma: "I'll tell you one thing. We [illegible]

Suzy Vanee: "Joe Holwerda used to take us out too on sleigh rides."

Harda: "Yes, he did, and so we had a social life, and then like I said we had a choir. I always went to choir. John and I both. My brother Bill [illegible]

Gerrit Ingwersen: "Our social life was really [illegible] family. Once someone had a heifer calf and it [illegible] and so has got a heifer calf! Hooray! T[illegible]

[illegible] Corry and I, milking the cows. We didn't know [illegible] that noise coming from?' We opened the door looked outside, and here was a whole string of [illegible]

Annie Nannunga: "You could hear them come a half mile already."

Gerrit: "And they brought everything along for the party. They brought food and coffee an everything was there. We had a wonderful [illegible]

[illegible] kinds of stories on paper, on great big card board papers. He was really good at reciting [illegible]

[illegible] ob. Blindfolded. That was a game. We'd hold [illegible] blindfolded. And then if he was a man he [illegible]

Harda: "She'd say 'peep' or something like [illegible] wrong woman, and hug the wrong woman!"

When a family went to visit a neighbour they sometimes would stay an entire day

[illegible]

They used to feed the men too
All kinds of lunch
— And we had a picnic

[illegible]

The place where the church was built was heavy poplar bush and it was suggested to clear

the ground on the first of July, the national [illegible] axe, saw, shovel, and oxen, and the women [illegible] work. The young men started to chop the trees [illegible] pulled these stumps out with the oxen. The [illegible] mothers and discussion of politics or religion among the men. One thing was missing in Neerlandia — country dances, because the [illegible] sinful.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] can remember these were Henry Kippers Sr., Siebren Tiemstra, and Dina Messelink. Popko Schuring was also musical and liked singing so he helped with the songs; perhaps others did too. The day usually started at 11:00 a.m. The Christmas story was told, and the children were asked questions about it.

[illegible] companied by John Gelderman on the organ [illegible] la Anema, Tena Terpsma, and Gertie Tuininga.

For us children the highlight was the food [illegible] kettles of hot cocoa, sandwiches, cakes, and cookies, which many of us didn't get very [illegible]

[illegible] it grew dark about that time. Before de[illegible] parting, the children each got a bag of candy [illegible] plaque with a text on it to hang on the wall.

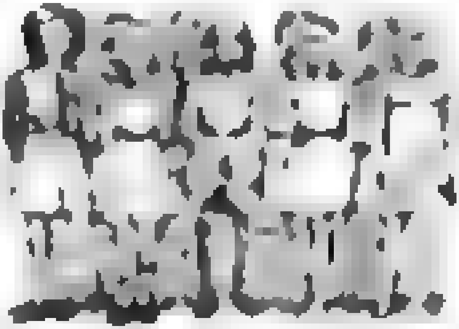
The Dominion Day picnic was also looked forward to with anticipation. Several weeks be[illegible] school and picnics.

[illegible]

[illegible] legged relay, and sack race. Also high an broad jump. I can't recall any other games but [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



they'd have recitations, and after the program was over we would all get a reading book and some candies. Boy, we were happy!

Sadie Tiemstra

CONTESTS

On the First of July in 1914 they held an obstacle race for the men. They put up things along the course to hinder the men and one of the obstacles was a raised rail that they had to jump over. As Albert Mast was running in the race his foot hooked behind the rail and he fell and broke his leg.

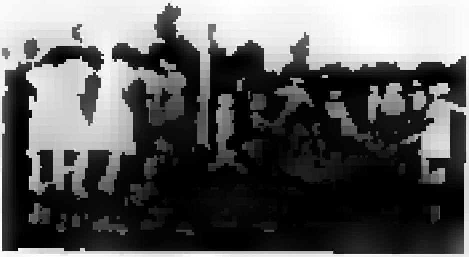
In another contest two men would sit astride a smooth log which was high enough off the ground that they couldn't touch it with their feet. They had to cross their legs underneath to keep their balance. Each man had a sack filled with straw that he tried to hit his opponent with to get him unbalanced and make him fall off.

Norman Terpsma

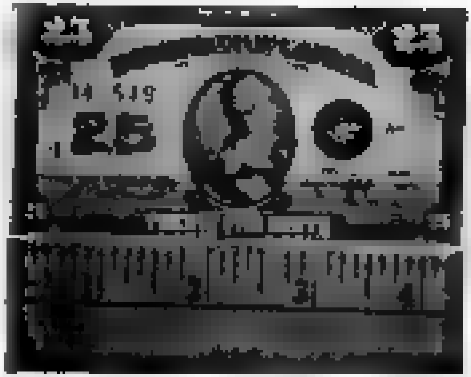
LET'S GO OUT TO THE PICNIC

When picnic day rolled around on July First everyone would come out with wagon loads of kids and also older ones because on picnic day we were called in to school to listen to a short speech by a school board member, usually about patriotism. I don't think too many listened to the speech, because what they all were waiting for was the dime that was handed out after the speech. Most people were so poor that a lot of the children got only the dime which was handed out. I think this money was donated by the co-op store, as was also the prize money for races etc. Before the picnic could officially start the flag had to be hoisted on the flagpole. There was a flagpole on the school ground about twenty-five feet high. A rope had to be put through a pulley on top, this was usually done by one of the Henry Sievers boys as they were good at shimmying up a slippery pole. For their efforts they would also get a dime. The reward was later increased to twenty-five cents.

After this the races started — straight races, three-legged races, sack races, wheelbarrow races. Then jumping — high jumping and broad jumping. This all took up several hours. In the afternoon there would be ball games — schoolgirls against the older girls not going to school. The same with the boys. They would play against the young men but that proved impractical as the young men were far superior



Putting up the flag on July First.



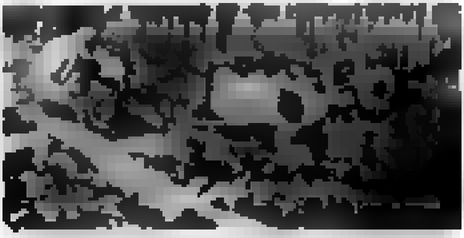
A 1923 twenty-five cent [illegible] could be used to buy the chocolate bars.

PRIZE MONEY

When I was a lad we didn't have much money to spend at the [illegible]. One of the older [illegible] who had [illegible] gave me his prize money to use for treats. I sure appreciated that. I think it was ten cents worth. I bought a package of gum and a lollipop with it and I still had some cents left over.

[illegible]

JULY 1st — A HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR



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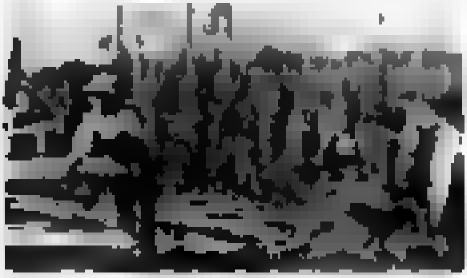

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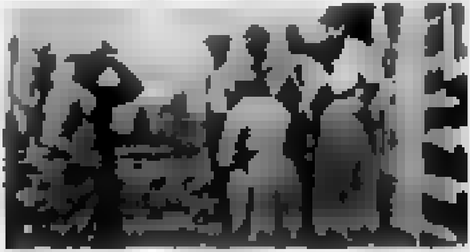

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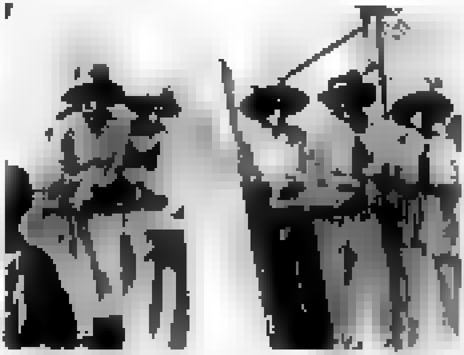
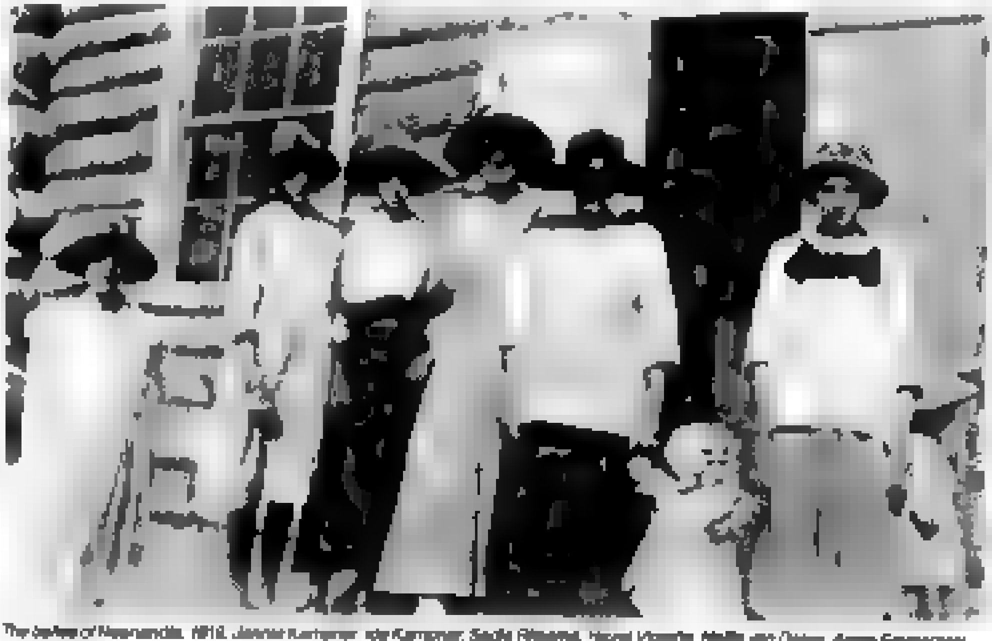


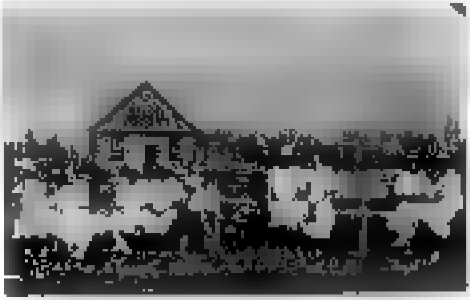
Some souvenirs: Gerben Tempelman, Ida Kampinga, Jennie Tuininga, Sadie Ritsema, Bertha and Ida Kampinga, 1919

Refreshments were enjoyed under an improvised awning, 1919

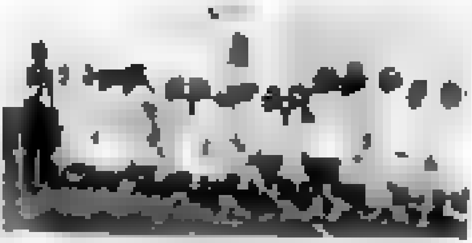


The ladies of Neerlandia, 1918. Jennie Kampinga, Ida Kampinga, Sadie Ritsema, Hazel Visser, Nellie van Dalen, Anna Emmelkamp, Jennie Tuininga.

Some years later, it became a day of socializing. Men came dressed in their Sunday best. 1. John Oldeghers, 2. Dave Tuinenga, 3. Douwe Terpsma, 4. Henk de Jager 5. Hendrik Lievers, 6. Klaas Kuiken, 7. John Louws, 8. Joe Holwerda, 9. Foppe Schuring, 10. C. K. Meu, 11. Albert Rosema, 12. Hendrik Schoonekamp, 13. Pete Louws, 14. Jan Anema, 15. Toney Sturwold, 16. Gase Nijenhuis, 17. Jacob Oldhuis, 18. Hendrik Kippers, 19. Wouter Groothuis, 20. Ben Lievers, 21. Willem van Ark



The women also had time to relax.



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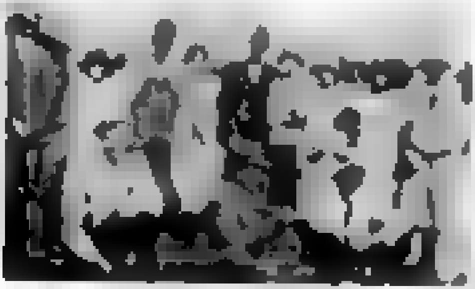

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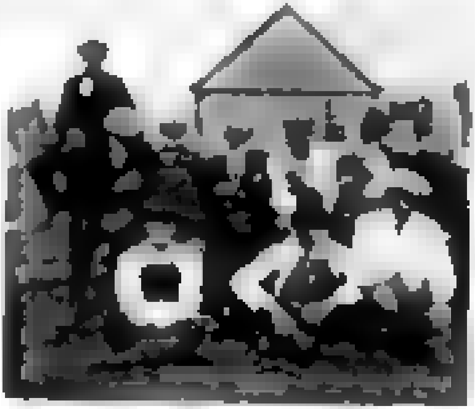
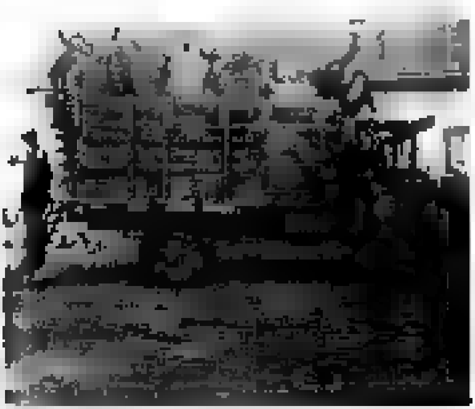


[illegible]

[illegible]

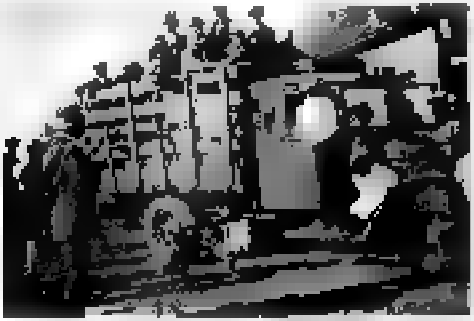
July 1929. Everyone dressed in their Sunday best for the picnic. Carrie Tuininga in a light gray suit with old rose scarf. Her silk hat with a straw brim is also old rose. Annie Ingwersen in a pink dress with old rose flower and hat. Susie Anema in a medium-blue twill coat with embroidery. Her hat is also old rose — the fashionable colour that year. Their stockings are peach — also a new colour. Ina Mast in black dress and stockings. Back Row: Andy Nanninga, Jack Tuininga.



Sometimes the young people of Edmonton came for the day. Homeward bound, July 1930. Back of truck: Billy Dutch. Front: John Elzinga.

Everyone came. Foreground: Minnie Wiersma, Anne and Alice Elzinga. 1929

Posing at the picnic. Back: Rev. Van Der Woude, Sophie H. Wieringa, Sophie A. Wieringa, Jennie Schoonekamp, Tena Anema, John Peters. Front: ? Annie Ingwersen, Grace Nanninga, Johanna Wieringa, Mabel Elzinga, Eva Olthuis. July 1 1933.



Other years the Neerlandia young people went to Edmonton.

BLUEBERRY PICKING

That was a real excursion too every year, to go blueberry picking.
Oh, yeah, that was a picnic.
That was the time of our lives!

CROSSING THE FERRY

August is nearing the end; our garden produce is all canned and on a beautiful display in our cellar, and now the great event of the year is here: blueberry picking.

George said tomorrow would be a good day to go as the grain was stooked and the threshing would not be until next week. Excitement filled our little home as we gathered up syrup pails for picking and milk pails to empty our full pails into until everything is filled. This year, we hear, the blueberries are big and plentiful.

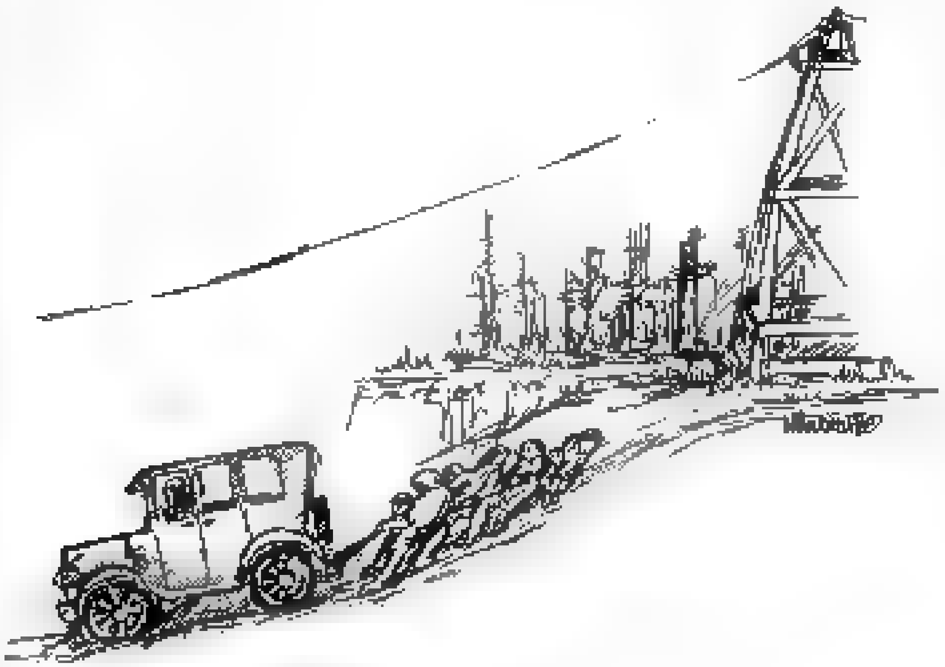
Next morning the sun rises in golden splendour and we hurry to do our morning chores, get lunch ready for the day, and we are off. Our oldest two look dejected as they have to stay home with the baby and do the evening chores.

It's a ten-mile drive. We pick up our two friends and try to hurry along. Our car lags a bit this morning. Perhaps the oil needs changing.

Before we know it we are heading towards the last part of the trip. We can see the sand hills. There is a face at every window of the car to behold the autumn beauty.

But suddenly we are at the top of a steep hill, and a large sign says "Test your brakes." George puts all his weight on the brakes but finds out he has no brakes. We scream in fright and before we know it we are going down the hill at great speed, gaining momentum. We become very quiet awaiting our doom.

George hangs on to the wheel and we safely reach the bottom. Everyone settles down to again enjoy the scenery, which is now even more beautiful as the river comes into view. Hurrah! We arrived just in time — the ferry is



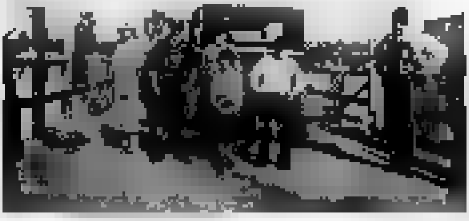
waiting. But there are two signs now: "Enter at your own risk." and "Test your brakes." What brakes? We all get out and think. We have two ropes but they are only short. Nevertheless we work with what we have. We put the car in neutral gear and it starts rolling. We — me, our friends and four children — hang on to the ropes and rear bumper while the old Ford is going faster. We dig our heels into the sand but the car is still moving. Finally, after what seemed a terrifying experience, we get the old car stopped and it stands proudly on the ferry.

We all again enjoy the scenery and can laugh about our great adventure. We will deal with the huge hills waiting on the other side of the river when we arrive there.

The name of the driver in the above incident was changed to protect his identity.

BLUEBERRY PICKING

Going blueberry picking was a day's outing. Della Ametta, Jennie Fisher, Tena Ametta, Susie Ametta, Charlie Fontaine, Carrie Tsavaga, c. 1926.

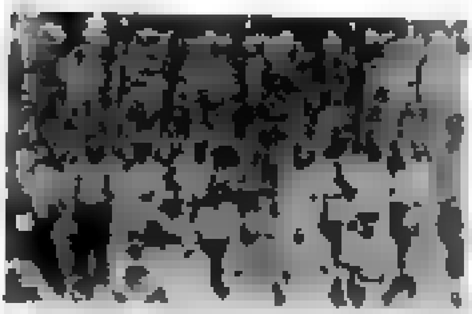


Crossing on the Vega ferry, c. 1939. Katherine, Hendrik, Jan and Ed Lievers, Violet and Frank Dickson. Jimmy Fowler was the ferryman.

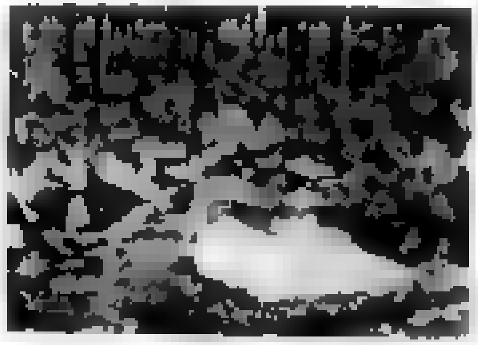
The best picking was across the Athabasca River in the sand hills. The Henry Kappock family on the ferry, 1930s.

[illegible]

Some families went together. The [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] families, [illegible]



The [illegible] [illegible] out on a [illegible] outing, c. [illegible]



Another picnic

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Brother Pete had a girlfriend who lived about four-and-a-half miles away and he mostly walked that distance through the bush [illegible]

Joe Tuininga

[illegible]

John, Sid and Peter Visser were in Neerlan [illegible]

[illegible] un was available. It was a .22. After each of the [illegible] ur had taken several shots, they found the target area pretty well perforated. Reitze and John did not seem to mind the holes in the granary wall, in fact it might help to air the [illegible]

suits, harnesses, and other items hanging on the inside wall of the granary. The Visser brothers suggested that the suits could be mended, but [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ception and have a little liquor at the party, [illegible]

[illegible] took the axe and smashed the bottle.

Joe Tuininga

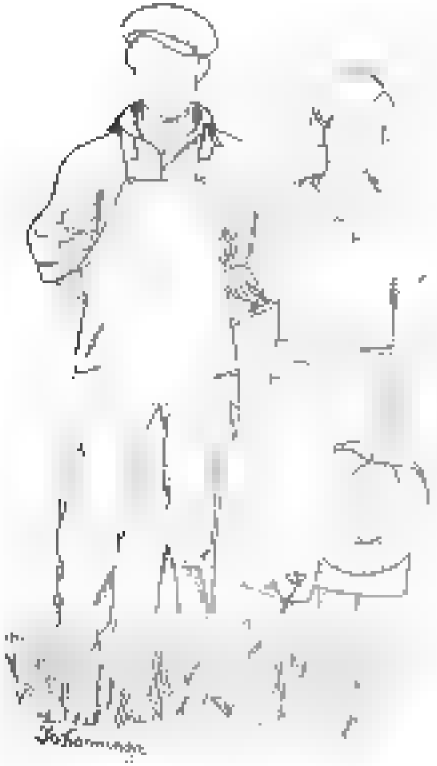
[illegible]

[illegible] sub-zero weather. We also had a basketbal [illegible]

PAIRING OFF

The distant community-centre was four to five miles away, which most of the time was travelled shank's mare as the horses had been [illegible] almost set. After that the boys and girls would pair off — the boy taking the girl home if he had the strength or ambition to do so. I remember he had to walk back home yet.

Cor Fisher



Sweethearts

FEATS OF STRENGTH

"In the 1930s us young fellows would have contests to see who was the strongest. "There was a huge stone on Ingwersen's yard and we would take turns trying to lift it. The other fellows would lay flat on the ground trying to see if there was a glimpse of light coming through underneath the stone. Some guys like John Wierenga or Jake Sturwold could wiggle it, but I think John Ingwersen was the only one that could lift that stone.

Another contest had to be done at the Co-op. The Co-op had a flat scale with a weigh beam on high. We used to squat on the scale and put our hands underneath the frame. Then we would apply pressure to see who could make the scale go the highest."

New Year's 1915

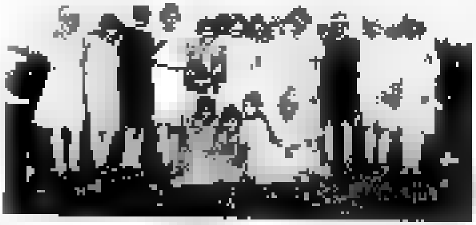
On New Year's Day we (Lubbe and I) invited all the bachelors in the settlement to a party. There were eight of us. We celebrated until midnight eating, joking, singing, and shooting firearms into the air.

Tjibbe Reitsma

A Bet

"One of my non-Dutch neighbours went to a dance out west of Neerlandia and after he came back, he was married. Some of us surrounding farmers were invited to his place for a bit of a celebration one night that week. Ike and Louis Kanninga and I made a five-dollar bet there with another neighbour, who was Polish, that he could not do the same thing — come back with a wife after a weekend. The neighbour borrowed my horse and Ike's buggy and left on Saturday. He came back on Monday or Tuesday with a wife. He owed one dollar for the horse and one dollar for the buggy, so we each had to pay him a dollar.

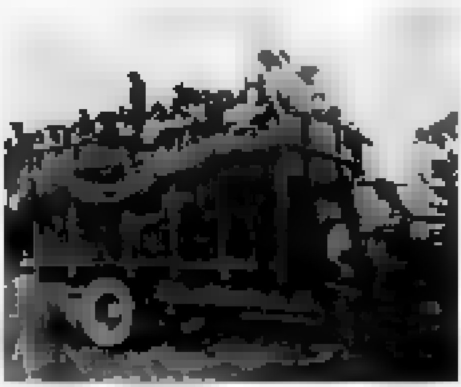
John Schuring



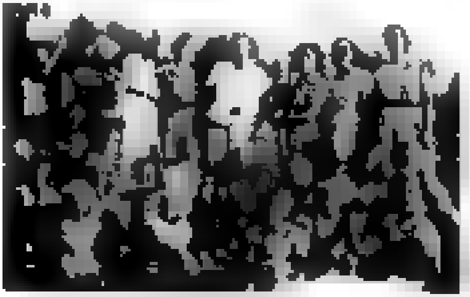
This picture was taken on July First, c. 1930. Notice the head-bands the girls used to keep their hair in place while playing ball. Margaret Sturwold, Johanna Ingwersen, Lola Sturwold, Eva Ostvig, Alice Brown, Annie Tuininga, Annie Schoonekamp, Sophie A. Wierenga, Catherine A. Wierenga, Jenny A. Wierenga, Cor H. Hiemstra, Carrie Mast, Aliza and Jenny Kuipers. Seated: Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Jenny Schoonekamp, Susie Anema.

TO THE LAKE

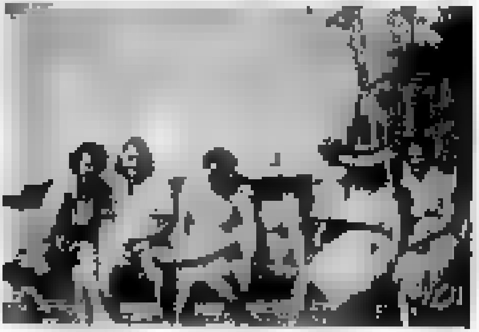
John Tamsma took the young people to the river for a day c. 1921. [illegible] on right: Charlie Tamsma, Joe [illegible], Bertha [illegible] [illegible] Santa [illegible] behind her, Simon [illegible], Frank Violette, John Tamsma. Foreground: Hazel Violette, Bob van Dalen [illegible] the Tamsma.



In later years, Billy [illegible] or the Fisher Brothers took people to the spot. Going to picnic at Lac la Nonne, c. 1930.



Several families made an annual trip to Lac La Nonne. Among them were the [illegible], Cor Fisher, William [illegible], Aubrey Ashley, [illegible], Art Fisher, and John [illegible] families.



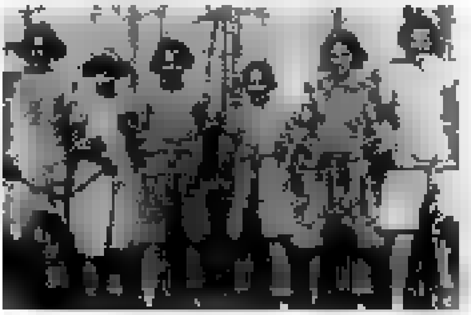
Cooling their feet: Elsie Ashley, Tena Nanninga, Rose Ingwersen, Carrie Olthuis, Anita and Grace Ingwersen, Liz Faber, c. 1942.

Farmer's Day outing at Clyde Lake, 1958. Some people took offence that women and men went swimming together in the same lake. Peter Fisher, Albert Schoonekamp and Steve Abuby families.

Bathing beauties, c. 1942. Tena Nanninga, Carrie Olthuis.

FRIENDS AND FAMILIES SOCIALIZE

Many men or women formed quartets and sang at programs: Rits Kruke, Fred Toebes, Herman Gelderman, Ralph Kruke, Peter Plere.



Sophie Anema's party, c. 1941: Katie and Jane Dieleman, Clara Oldeboers, Sophie Anema, Thelma Stumeld, Betty Koning

The Girls club had a party before Trientje Wierenga got married, 1932.

Of course, there were birthday parties. At the Messelinks, 1924: Minnie Lievers, Susie Anema holding Frances, Albert Messelink, Anna Schoonekamp, Trena Anema, Jo Ingwersen, Lily and Jo Messelink, Jenny Schoonekamp, Anna Anema.

Lambert and Martin Wierenga, 1937

Hendrik Schoonekamp, Siebren Tiemstra, George Toebes in front of Schoonekamps, 1920s.

Back: Anna Bouwman, Ryke Pieterje, and Annie Schoonekamp. Front: Bill Toebes, Albert Schoonekamp.

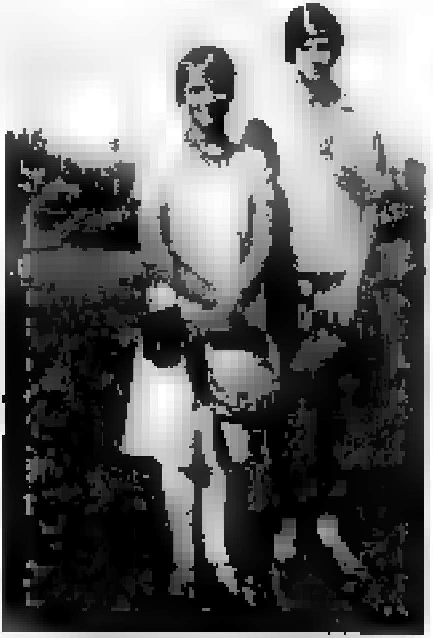
Hendrik Wierenga, Simon Tiemstra, Johanna Wierenga, c. 1939.

Dorothy Baker, Patricia Boersma, Marilyn Mast.

Joe and Stewart Plantinga c. 1938

Won't Sandra be jealous?

Auction sale at Klaas [illegible] St. 1943



Susie Anema, Margaret Meesdink

Lula and Margaret Sturwold.

At [illegible] dale 1928. Dena and Susie Anema, Carrie Tuinings, Rena Anema, Annie Tuinings.

At one time the Neerlandia area teemed with wildlife. Beaver, moose, lynx, rabbit, mus [illegible] settlers arrived this had already begun to change.

There were no beaver, mink, or fox, and few lynx in the area. They had undoubtedly been trapped to extinction for delivery of their pelts to the fur trading forts. Beaver dams and [illegible]

Buffalo skulls and buffalo horns were found from time to time when the settlers were clearing the land, but there were no buffalo. Hunters occasionally came upon bleached elk antlers, but the only report of the presence of [illegible]

At one time woodland caribou could be seen in the area, but by the time the Dutch [illegible]

Other animals were still abundant in the early 1900s. Most plentiful were three rodents [illegible] throughout the townships and fell victim to the [illegible]

Though no beaver remained in the [illegible] weasel, so attractive in its winter coat of white [illegible] Neerlandia with its many swampy areas was [illegible] land, the habitat began to change and so did the [illegible] provided more suitable homes for deer, th [illegible] moose, a shy animal, retreated from humans to [illegible] Coyotes, rabbits, and squirrels quickly adapted [illegible] vironment for them. As pasture and hayfields [illegible] w, the area was invaded by gophers, which [illegible]

Rabbits became a great pest one winter during the 1930s. Toward dusk on the short [illegible] bush and head for the haystacks. The farmers set up snares to catch them. As soon as the [illegible] them; then they would reset the snares. No [illegible] 1950s, and since the introduction of pheasants [illegible]

Except for mice, no wild animals are plen [illegible]

relation to, among other things, the number of [illegible]

unable to combine their crops. The swaths in [illegible]

Because of the limited numbers of wild animals in the area, one thrills to the sight on [illegible]

and pastures. The song of the coyotes in the evening is enjoyed by many.

INSECT REPELLENT

When the Scott boys went hunting through the bush, they wore cheesecloth over their hats down to their shoulders.

Norman Terpsma

HUNTING STORIES

This happened about two miles north of us [illegible]

found nothing in it and forgot about it for a few days. One morning he found the bear in it, so [illegible]

friends there from Edmonton staying for a few days. "You ladies want to see a bear? He's in a trap." "Yes. Is he dead?" "Yes, he stinks! As [illegible]

and two ladies — and they found the bear dead with a load of logs on his neck swollen up and smelling. The men started to take the logs off one by one, and when the last log came off the bear started to roar "Rrrr !" The women started to run and the men laughed and held their sides — the air came out of the bear's swollen stomach and that had made the noise.

Ben Lievers

[illegible] to get lost in the bush. One trapper said he [illegible]

[illegible] ay and hang his watch on a tree, then go the next day and pick it up. He came up to our place one day from his trap line and told us he had [illegible]

north along the surveyor's line, west again till [illegible]

there and follow the blazed trap line." My neighbour and I found the bear meat and car [illegible]

[illegible] ey find out what had happened to us? Worry. [illegible]

Ben Lievers

[illegible] experience with one of these lynx. She did not [illegible]

lock the chickens in the coop and barred the door and told the neighbour women, "You better lock up your chickens. I had a strange ani [illegible]

[illegible] rs, the chickens were running around and the barred door was open. The rooster was gone and we never saw him again. When I came home that night I was told the story and I [illegible]

with a stick. "If he does not get a chicken he [illegible]

[illegible] The next morning [illegible] lynx was sitting in front of the chicken coop waiting for his breakfast. I went out the back door to a neighbour's for a rifle and told Mother [illegible] out. Not long afterwards I heard a call from the house, "There he is!" I grabbed the rifle and took a shot at him but missed and had only one bullet left. So I ran after him to get a close shot at [illegible] in the skin, so I must have hit him in his open mouth. His fur was worth more than the chick[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

My neighbour and I were going into the bush [illegible] there was about an inch of fresh snow. "A skunk — where did it go?" "Here in this hole let's go back home for a [illegible] awhile we could see his tail. Jacob said, "Hold the shovel. I will get him," and he took ahold of the tail and pulled him out of the hole and hit him over the head with a stick but not before the beast could use his defense and Jacob got the full spray of it. I nearly fell over but Jacob [illegible]

[illegible]

A district trapper shot a bull moose for a [illegible] had a record set of antlers well over seventy in[illegible] [illegible] bet that head is in his den.

[illegible]

[illegible]

"Joe Holwerda was the game warden and one time we were hunting and Joe was going to [illegible] tell you, old Joe, he sweated. That very night he took them heads and he drowned them in the

[illegible]

lake, by where he was living. "Boy, if this ever comes out," he says, "I'm in for it."

[illegible]

[illegible]

ANOTHER BEAR HUNT

One November day Gerrit Ingwersen, Bill and John Olthuis, and Jack Tuininga were hunting northwest of Baird Lake. Their base for the day was a cabin on Fred Olthuis' homestead. They left the horses and sleigh there and then split up in [illegible] pairs. [illegible] of the men found a bear's den with a bear in it. They shot and killed the bear and then returned to the cabin. With a team of horses and a sleigh, the four men returned to get the bear. By this time it was getting dark so they lit a fire in front of the den. Bill was about to enter the den to pull the dead bear out when suddenly they noticed a movement inside the den. Jack pulled Bill back. It seemed that another bullet was needed to finish the bear off. While one of the men held a lantern, another [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] lights. Anyway, the bear was shot. When no further sounds were heard from the cave the men ventured in to drag the animal out. To their surprise they discovered three bears: a mother and two spring cubs. The men loaded the bears up and went to the Case Ingwersen house. There in the porch they sat skinning the cubs, [illegible] them from one to another and celebrating their success with some of Mrs. Ingwersen's dandelion wine. They were soon feeling pretty good, and it wasn't because they were such great hunters.

FISHING

There is one topic where the truth has been stretched to the breaking point, so I will stay on the straight and narrow. In the early years when very little land was cleared, the lakes and creeks held their level [illegible] in spring, summer and in a heavy rain season. But today in the spring, a small runoff lasts a few days, [illegible] a lot of silt from the farmland, plus pollution from [illegible], septic tanks and drains. This was unknown in the early years. In the spring of [illegible] there was a heavy runoff which lasted practically all summer, and thousands of fish were in the creek and lake, where they had spawned. During March of 1939, after the first thaw, the spawn came out of the lake by the millions. There were some fish eight to twelve pounds in weight. Hundreds of pounds were caught, canned and pickled in vinegar. Most of them, however, spoiled.

On a November day in [illegible] a lot of pike [illegible] were going downstream from [illegible] Lake to the [illegible] River [illegible]. These fish were between four to six pounds in weight. In one hour I caught twenty-six of these, which was only a small part of what passed me. The following spring, [illegible] all the potholes in the creek were full of dead fish of every kind: pike, suckers, mud [illegible], trout, ling, white fish, perch, plus every kind of fish that lives in the Athabasca watershed.

Shoal Lake is too shallow to winter fish in most years. The oxygen level gets too low in the winter. One part per million is minimum for pike, which can survive on the least amount of oxygen. Other fish require more. This kill is the worst I have seen but I have seen other losses like this a few times. It was a pitiful sight. Many enjoyable hours were spent in and by the old creek in the early days, even if we had to steal the time to do so.

Cor Fisher

A rare occasion when fish came up the creek between [illegible] Pieterse's and Raymond Baker's farms, early in the spring. The men pitched the fish out with pitchforks since they were that plentiful! Early [illegible]

THOSE KRIKKE KIDS!

Bert liked to do some squirrel trapping on Uncle Bill's place across the road from us. Then one day he went to check his traps and they were all closed. This happened a few times. We got the idea Bert Michael was doing this. So one night after school on our way to Clara's birthday we saw his trapping trail so we followed it and put a stick in his traps. A few days later he came down and told us how somebody had done this. He figured the [illegible] girls did this. We never said a word. Don't know if he ever found out. Hope he never reads the book.

Gladys Mast

HUNTING AT HOME

One morning I had the barn door open as I was milking, and I spied a big buck deer crossing the field south of the house and going onto dad's homestead. The deer was big, no fooling, so I said to Grace, "You know, I'm going after this buck after breakfast." Earlier I had lent my rifle to my brother-in-law Bert, but he had returned it. I had asked him, "Is it loaded?"

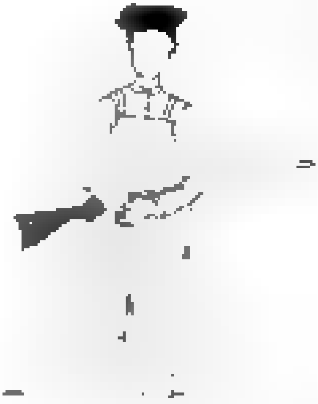
"You bet, the magazine is full," Bert had said.

"Fine," I thought. "I don't have to check, full is full." I took off after that deer and had just crossed the road allowance when I saw what looked like a bunch of sticks poking out of the snow. I walked on a little further but still could not see any more, so I raised my rifle and fired a shot where I thought the head should be. One of the sticks went flying and the buck jumped up like a shot and came straight for me. I pumped another bullet into the barrel and pulled the trigger but it only said, "Click." I tried again and got the same result. The gun was empty and this buck kept coming in big bounds. I was right in the open and the only defense I had was an empty rifle. Would you believe it — the buck stopped dead about ten feet away, neck arched and eyes rolling. We stared at each other for a while, then with one big leap the buck was off. What a relief — that fellow could have made mincemeat of me! I did get the buck a few days later. I could tell it was the same one because he had one antler broken off.

Gerrit Ingwersen

PLENTY OF WILDLIFE

In the fall we would often leave at 3:00 p.m.



and be home at six with a two-hundred-pound [illegible]

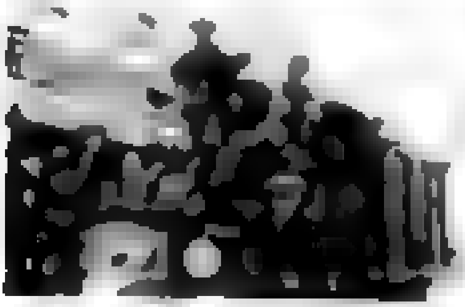
When stooked grain was left in the field there [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

George Baker and Bertus Bos were hunting partners. Bertus usually wore a heavy parka [illegible] when they were out hunting in the Swan Hills [illegible] through the trees, it appeared to be a [illegible] grizzly whistled back — it was Bertus! A short while later they were heading back to the cabin [illegible] Then George ran ahead to start a fire and make some tea while Bertus walked the rest of the [illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]

A HUNTING TRIP

[illegible] November day in 1938, Ge[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

One September, a hungry hunter shot a fat, [illegible] deer out of season. Coming close to the [illegible] "Yes," he said, pointing. "Somewhere in that direction." So they hunted for a while but could find nothing. "Sure tasted good," he bragged after[illegible]

[illegible]

FORBIDDEN TERRITORY

[illegible] land into forbidden territory — Dieleman's [illegible] rook" (Look, John, a big crow) Sure enou[illegible] [illegible] in a hurry. We followed the creek back but continued on beyond your yard. Old Dieleman followed us as far as the yard, but when he couldn't find us there he went back. When we [illegible] that no harm had been done.

John Peters

BEAR OR BOAR

[illegible] ing several parallel gashes on its side, indicating [illegible] dead pig as bait, a hunt was staged. Numerous [illegible] hours, but the beast made good his escape. Hearing all that shooting, Albert Krikke said he thought the Russians were coming.

NEERLANDIA ATHLETICS
OR
WINNING IS WHAT COUNTS

[illegible] value. This view was based on a Bible passage [illegible]

[illegible] ing sports were always engaged in to some [illegible] however, met with at best a lukewarm reception [illegible]

The first reason for their opposition was [illegible] similated into the broader community. Gradually, however, this stand was eroded to such a [illegible]

[illegible] athletic events took place on Sunday. The peo[illegible]

[illegible] recognized the need for recreational activities [illegible] tion and competitive sports and some question the value of competitive sports, especially as it [illegible] less, as the need for physical labour diminished, there was an increasing emphasis on [illegible] and comp[illegible]

Football

By the early twenties the school children were learning to play football. William van Ark coached a girls' team that made at least one trip [illegible] pected to school with enthusiasm—

"Kyiii k-yee k-yikkety fiin
Come out of your shells and watch us win:
We're wild, we're woolly
We're chuck full of zip
Neerlandia public school [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] hand, however, the enthusiasm turned to con[illegible]

[illegible] lingwoman was rather upset when he saw the [illegible] opposing team. Rev. Van Der Woude's reaction was quite different, however. When some concerned people came up to him and asked, "Did [illegible]

During the thirties, fastball was played on [illegible] ...ctors also came to watch, among them [illegible] ...in fastball, the calibre of play improved by [illegible] Vega and Mellowdale. The young men of the [illegible] team that came to play in Neerlandia. The city slickers had little trouble winning the games [illegible] to Edmonton travelling on the back of father's [illegible] memorable game played that July First [illegible]

Fastball continued as a favourite sport for [illegible] feature. When the Lacombe, Edmonton, and Neerlandia churches held Young People's [illegible]

...ough interest in fastball declined in the [illegible]

Hockey

[illegible] ...ith little skating ability but lots of enthusiasm Neerlandia teams were regularly defeated the [illegible] these men — Jake Sturwold, Albert Schoonekamp, Frank Visser — a better team gradually [illegible] Edmonton church team. The rivalry became [illegible] little to do with brotherly love. When two [illegible]

All of the practice by the school boys on the [illegible] hockey league was in existence and the team [illegible] play hockey in such a league?" Rev. Mulder [illegible] league.

Tim Berger and John Ingwersen provided [illegible]

About 1960, the rural hockey league disbanded because hockey seemed to lose some [illegible] of interest was the influence of Rev. Van Dyken who was opposed to competition with other

[illegible]

communities. The more capable players (if the parents permitted) joined the Barrhead team.

The Neerlandia Flyers joined the Barrhead [illegible] best of both teams, who had formed one te[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] pete in a commercial league. In 1984 the [illegible]

Whether they win or lose, Neerlandia expects their players to play their best and [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] In the late forties, a group of men often got [illegible] in the summer and challenge each [illegible] the Alberta Provincial Championships, placin [illegible]

Games, where he and his partner won a gold medal in mixed doubles in 1983. Travis Van [illegible]

Canadian Championships

Curling

With the declining interest in hockey during the 1960s, some men took up curling. Two [illegible]

[illegible]

In 1972 a badminton club, consisting of five [illegible]

Golf

Golf has been a popular summer sport for [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] an intercounty league and play for recreation rather than competition

The Neerlandia School has introduced badminton into its sports program. Out of this has come a number of excellent players. Of those [illegible]

Randy and Howard Gelderman (1982 and 1983) and Simon Strydhorst and Steve Vriend [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

For recreation there was not much [illegible]

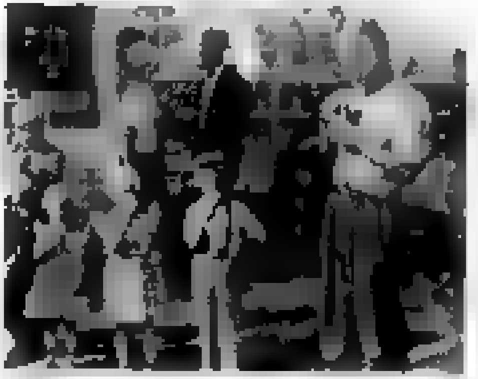
[illegible] sports-minded. In grades seven an [illegible]

PICNIC DAY

Baseball games were played and everyone watched, [illegible]

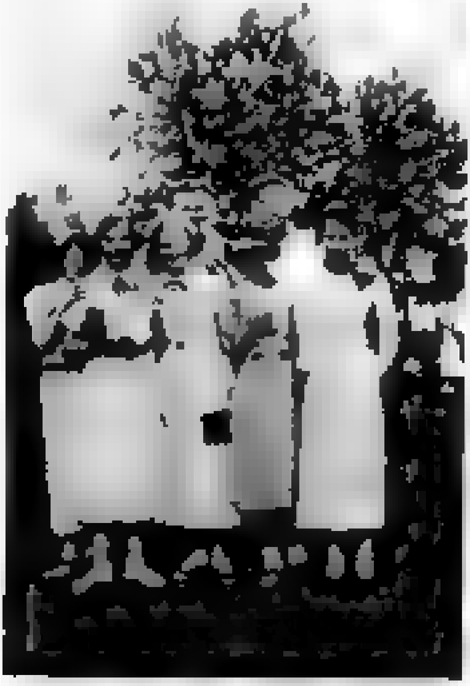
Or [illegible] races

There were also races such as the sack race

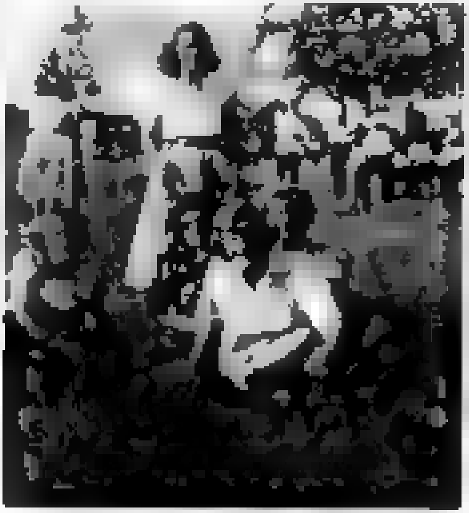


Children enjoyed the [illegible]. Hendrena, Hilda, Andrew, Henry Wierenga

No money left for treats. Back: Flora Offringa, Manny Har-[illegible] Smithy and Ida Offringa. Front: Marian [illegible] be-hind George R. [illegible]



Dirk Peters, Anne Angma, Grace Tuininga, [illegible] Father Piet-[illegible] Tuininga, John Wieringa, Rose Ingersen, 1937



Relaxing at the picnic: Ann Smythorst, Florence Baker (stand-ing), Olive Egarema, Edie Offringa, Dena Wieringa.

[illegible]

In the sixties even a few teams were formed [illegible]

We even sawed forty-four thousand feet of lumber for a curling rink one winter. All volunteer labour, except everyone's hours were kept track of in case it did not go through. That [illegible] hockey that the committee in charge decided it was not worth starting with a curling rink also [illegible]

John Ingwersen

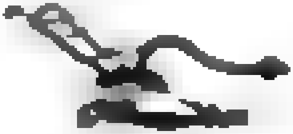
[illegible]

[illegible] the older men had never played before. One of them hit the ball and ran to the pitcher instead of first base, another hit a home run and ran all [illegible] again, [illegible] went again to first base

Later in the forties there were quite a few married men who had played a lot of ball and they were challenged by the young men who [illegible]

There was much good feeling on those pic[illegible] picnics a few years ago and it was nice to see the same tradition still being carried on

[illegible]



CONCLUSION

[illegible] and long when [illegible] against the [illegible] years [illegible] has [illegible] communities [illegible] quarter [illegible]

[illegible] the pioneers [illegible] in poverty [illegible]

In many ways things [illegible] but there is one [illegible] The pioneers [illegible] a place where [illegible] through [illegible] communities.

In a time when many [illegible] have disappeared [illegible] has remained [illegible] the grace [illegible] blessing on succeeding generations [illegible] will remain.

APPENDICES

Nieuwlande has a future 992
The Settlement or the Nucleus
2. The Nieuwlande Funeral Association 995
3. Glossary 999
Glossary of abbreviations
4. Dutch Glossary 1001
5. Map of the Netherlands 1003
6. Township maps 1004
7. World War II Veterans 1008
8. Teachers 1009

[illegible]

[illegible] the soundness of these principles [illegible]

[illegible]

nobody can at this time: that depends on factors [illegible]

[illegible]

Edam in south Saskatchewan [illegible]

[illegible] Monarch, in southern Alberta; the last [illegible]

[illegible]

The Neerlandia settlers wanted to plant a [illegible]

Netherlands. They wanted to regulate the co- [illegible]

the bond among the settlers would stay as close as possible. They knew how difficult it was to preserve unity between people coming from different places of the Netherlands — people with strong, differing characters and with different opinions. They believed and still believe [illegible]

together to train the youth, they run the least risk to lose their unity and that through unity [illegible]

places, went backwards or disappeared through the course of the years? If one Dutch [illegible]

[illegible] am not the only one making this judge- [illegible]

Washington, who stayed about four weeks among the settlers in Neerlandia, wrote in *de Wachter* of 15 September 1923, as follows [illegible]

[illegible] age. In the entire settlement, I met only one [illegible]

Netherlands. Otherwise, no one longed to re- [illegible]

immigrating to the United States. They would like to see the community enlarged by more [illegible]

[illegible] and sup-port

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ished with the goal of working [illegible] still exists. A common faith seems to be a firm basis whereupon people of different character, temperaments, and talents can work together [illegible]

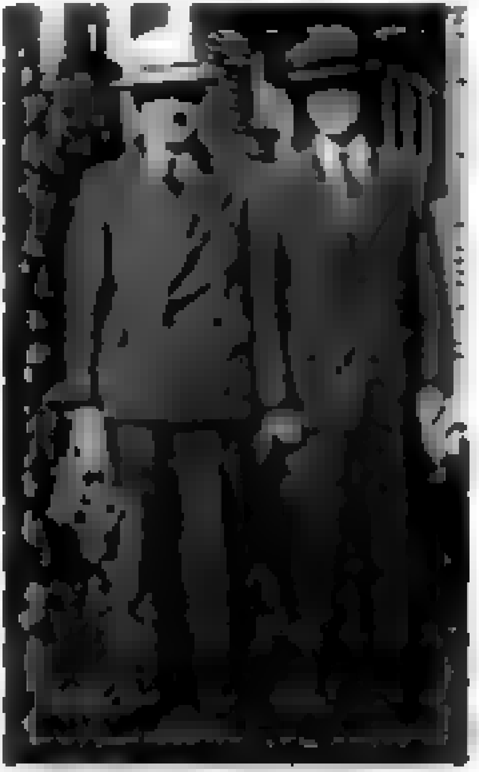
[illegible]

[In the early years] They kept some check [illegible] there were no bridges. In the winter this was an [illegible]

One of the pioneers, who during the most [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] with the help of a stoneboat levelling out the [illegible] come from the vicinity of Bolsward [Friesland] without a penny in his pocket. He had some help, had worked hard, and still had to work



[illegible]

hard, but could now say that he had fifty hec [illegible] some machinery, and no debt. He was more [illegible] looks good this year."

I would have liked to stay there for a few days.

The atmosphere was so different from that in which we daily live [in the Netherlands]. In [illegible] versation a feeling of increased dependence upon the Lord: it wasn't overly pious or put on but we understood that "the Lord willing" and "we hope" were realities among the settlers.

I believe that this settlement, which has a favourable climate and the so-called 'Indian summer' — soft sunny weather after a few cold October days, has a good future.

Colonies like Neerlandia, although they are [illegible] become the nucleus from where not only church, but also our rich Calvinistic lifestyle may testify to the Canadian people.

[illegible]

Dutch Settlers Achieve Successful Co-Operative Enterprise In Northland

Store and [illegible]

Centre Operate In Bush Country

AN EXCEPTION

[illegible]

The Neerlandia Funeral Association (1983)

The birth of a new community was followed [illegible] Jager donated ten acres of land to be used for [illegible] few people bought plots [illegible] a caretaker

Koop Mast, who died in 1915, was the first to [illegible]

All of the coffins in the early days [illegible] ground was hard and dry as in summer or [illegible] was considered improper to use machines [illegible] of a deceased person was prepared by the fam [illegible]

[illegible] The cost of a funeral at that time was about three hundred dollars

[illegible] history of the CRC until the Neerlandia Cemetery and Funeral Society was organized in 1956 [illegible] had been the first person responsible for recording the deaths and placement of graves in [illegible] the recording were Henry Bouwman, Jim Mer [illegible] tinga, and treasurer Henry Kippers Sr. At this time the membership fee was four dollars plus one dollar for administration (treasurer's fees) [illegible] imately $175.00. The treasurer was paid fifty dollars annually for his services.

In February 1983 the society became known [illegible] the cost of a standard funeral, depending on the age of the applicant. In 1983 the approx [illegible] our Christian duty in the light of Galatians 6:2 'Bear ye one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.'" Constitution [illegible]

Although there was no official association to [illegible] the time of the earliest settlers as they dealt with one another in the time of bereavement.

ANEMA'S CORNER: the point one mile east of [illegible]

lived for many years, beginning in 1913 [illegible]

clean, or otherwise care for them

Young men often bached on their home [illegible]

BAKER'S CORNER: a crossroads two-and one-half miles south of Neerlandia hamlet

The Raymond Baker family lived at this [illegible]

[illegible] king on the editorial policy [illegible]

Siebren Tuinstra's farm: a forested area un [illegible]

townships of and ... some years ... Dutchmen arrived

BLOOMERS: Underpants for women and [illegible]

[illegible] broke

GREEN-BROKE: the state of a horse that has received very basic training and is likely to [illegible]

[illegible] for ministers of the Christian Reformed [illegible]

They think the difference is obvious [illegible]

[illegible] when anyone descended to its gloomy depths lantern or flashlight in hand [illegible]

When chickens were kept outside they could, at times, be seen scurrying for shelter as a hawk flew overhead [illegible] for the night [illegible]

[illegible] materials used. Chinking was usually done to [illegible]

CONFESSION OF FAITH: publicly professin [illegible]

At this time one assumes the rights and [illegible] Reformed churches. Most young people make [illegible]

CLASSICAL APPOINTMENT: an obligation [illegible]

THE CORNER: see CENTRE

[illegible] unbleached coarse meal; a nutritious and tasty [illegible]

[illegible] take a shortcut to get from point A to point B [illegible] school, it usually took longer to get from A to B using the shortcut than going by the road. The [illegible] woods in order to estimate the amount of tim[illegible] [illegible]

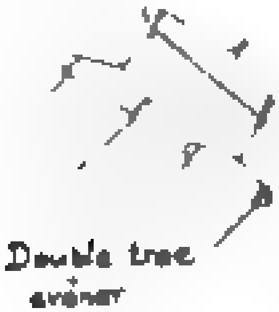
DAY [illegible]: [illegible]

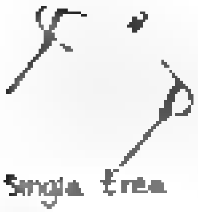
DOCTOR'S BOOK: the most important book [illegible] dent thought that he suffered from most of the [illegible]

DORDT COLLEGE: [illegible]

[illegible]: [illegible]

EVENER: [illegible] single trees and double trees used [illegible] hitch [illegible] or more horses to a vehicle or implement





[illegible]: [illegible] between the fender and [illegible]

FRONT ROOM: [illegible] term for what is now [illegible]

FLINCH: a card game, one of the few card games approved of by the leaders of the church

[illegible] made their own [illegible]

GAS (ORANGE AND PURPLE): gasoline for vehicles

Purple gas has colouring added to differen[illegible] from the more expensive orange gas [illegible]

HARVEST (the harvest): harvesttime on the prairies

[illegible] men went to the harvest [illegible]

HOUSE VISITATION [illegible]: [illegible] spiritual condition

KING'S COLLEGE (The King's College): the [illegible] institutions favoured by members of the [illegible]

MAIN ROAD: the road from Neerlandia hamlet southward to Highway 18

MANGER FEVER: an ailment caused by look[illegible]

ON TIME: a colloquialism for buying on the installment plan, as in "We bought the sewing [illegible]

PATENT: to obtain title to a quarter section of land that was originally acquired as a homestead

PLUG: chewing tobacco; a flat block of tobacco leaves with the stems removed and with [illegible]

Men would bite a piece off a plug and com[illegible] or dog in the eye. A conversation would be punctuated with a "p-t-t-t-t" as the men would expel the juice generated by chewing. Most of the [illegible] frowned upon any sporting being done in the [illegible]

[illegible]

The term was used interchangeably with Harvest [illegible]

[illegible] Homestead Act preparatory to obtaining title to a quarter section of land

SEPARATOR: 1. a machine used to separate grain from the stalks, also known as a thresh[illegible]

The first one in Neerlandia, owned by Klaas [illegible] the Coffee Grinder

2. a machine [illegible] narrow top spout, while the heavier skim milk poured out of the wider lower spout

This task was usually reserved for children [illegible]

[illegible] of dynamite

SULKY PLOW: a one-bottom plow

SUMMER COMPLAINT: a form of dysentery.

TIME AUCTION: the original "buy now, pay [illegible]

[illegible] moved out the only way they could dispose of their belongings was by selling the items with [illegible]

The buyers would write out and sign IOUs and [illegible]

[illegible] college in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., one of four [illegible]

Graduates of Trinity consider themselves superior to the graduates of Dordt!

TRIO: a list of three ministers from which one [illegible] put up a duo, only two ministers

VACANT CHURCH: not an empty church [illegible]

[illegible]

WALKING PLOW: a single-bottom plow [illegible] walked behind guiding the plow

WORLD (the world): a Biblical term used to refer to that which is not Christian

[illegible] that anyone and anything outside [illegible] was of the world.

Glossary of Abbreviations

AGT: Alberta Government Telephones
B Ed: Bachelor of Education
BA: Bachelor of Arts
CLAC: Christian Labour Association of Canada
CPJ: Citizens for Public Justice
CPR: Canadian Pacific Railways
CRC: Christian Reformed Church
DA: District Agriculturalist
NAIT: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Edmonton
RBC: Reformed Bible College (formerly called [illegible]
[illegible]
RCAF: Royal Canadian Air Force
[illegible]
[illegible]ogy, Calgary
U of A: University of Alberta

Dutch Glossary

[illegible]
Hervormde Kerk to protest against its "apostasy."

Members of the Afscheiding strain [illegible]

[illegible]

BOEREN: farmers

BRIEFJE: note with written list of groceries and [illegible]

[illegible]

and pearl barley.

BURGEMEESTER: mayor

CHRISTELIJKE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN: churches formed in 1892 as a result of a union between those of the *Afscheiding* and those of the *Doleantie*.

A large majority of the members of these churches were middle or lower class.

DE WACHTER: a Dutch language newspaper [illegible] *Wachter* took [illegible] States.

DESSO TAFELKLEED: a thick rug-like table [illegible] Dutch home along with the short white lace curtains in every window, the ornaments on every available space of shelf or ledge, and the Delft blue china in the cabinet.

DIK: 1. fat, as in fat people
2. thick, as in thick soup
3. big, as in big drops

DOLEANTIE: a movement led by Abraham [illegible] Kuyper stressed the importance of a personal Christian life, but also believed that Christians should be active in "every sphere of life."

[illegible]

[illegible] green peas; cooked with pig's feet, ham bone [illegible]

FRIES: an odd language spoken by the inhabit[illegible]

[illegible]

GEBAKJES: rich pastries containing a variety of fillings, usually topped with whipping cream, traditionally served at celebrations.

[illegible]

GEZELLIGHEID: a type of atmosphere in a home — a word impossible to explain to a non[illegible] short of describing the way *gezelligheid* makes one feel relaxed and 'at home' when having a [illegible]

[illegible]

GRONINGERS: the inhabitants of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands.

Friesen consider *Groningers* to be stubborn and boorish.

[illegible] hundred cents

HEIT: Frisian word for father

HOLLANDS: the national language of the Netherlands.

[illegible]

This visit was made yearly to assure the spir[illegible]

[illegible]

2. Christmas celebration

KLOMPEN: wooden shoes

[illegible] immigrants when they first came to Canada

KOEK: cake, usually loaf cake
LIJST: list
MEM: Frisian word for mother.
MOEKE: *Gronings* for mother.
MOOIKE: *Fries* for aunt
NEDERLANDSE HERVORMDE KERK: state church of the Netherlands which was formed in the late sixteenth century as a result of the Protestant Reformation.

Generally, members of the higher classes attended the *Hervormde Kerk*.

OLIEBOLLEN: deep-fried dumplings made with raisins and currants, eaten dipped in powdered sugar, traditionally made on New Year's Eve and served on New Year's Day.
OMA: grandmother.
OMKE: *Fries* for uncle.
OOM: uncle
OPA: grandfather.
OPOE: grandmother
PAKE: Frisian word for grandfather
PAP: porridge; sometimes refers to pudding.

In earlier days, *pap* was the only food eaten for breakfast, with or without sugar, depending on the circumstances of the family.

PET: cap
PRUIMPIE: the mixture resulting after tobacco has been chewed; every so often the juices have to be spit out.

Chewing *pruimpies* was indulged in by many Neerlandia old-timers, usually the men.

PSALMBOEKEN: songbooks originally containing only Psalms; later *gezangen* (hymns) were added.

A general rule of thumb was that the more *gezangen* that could be found in its *Psalmboek* the more 'liberal' the church.

PSALMEN: Psalms.
SCHANDALIG: scandalous, shameful.
SIGAREN: cigars.
STADHUIS: townhall

Every marriage in the Netherlands must be solemnized in the *Stadhuis*. The couple may, following that, have a service in church.

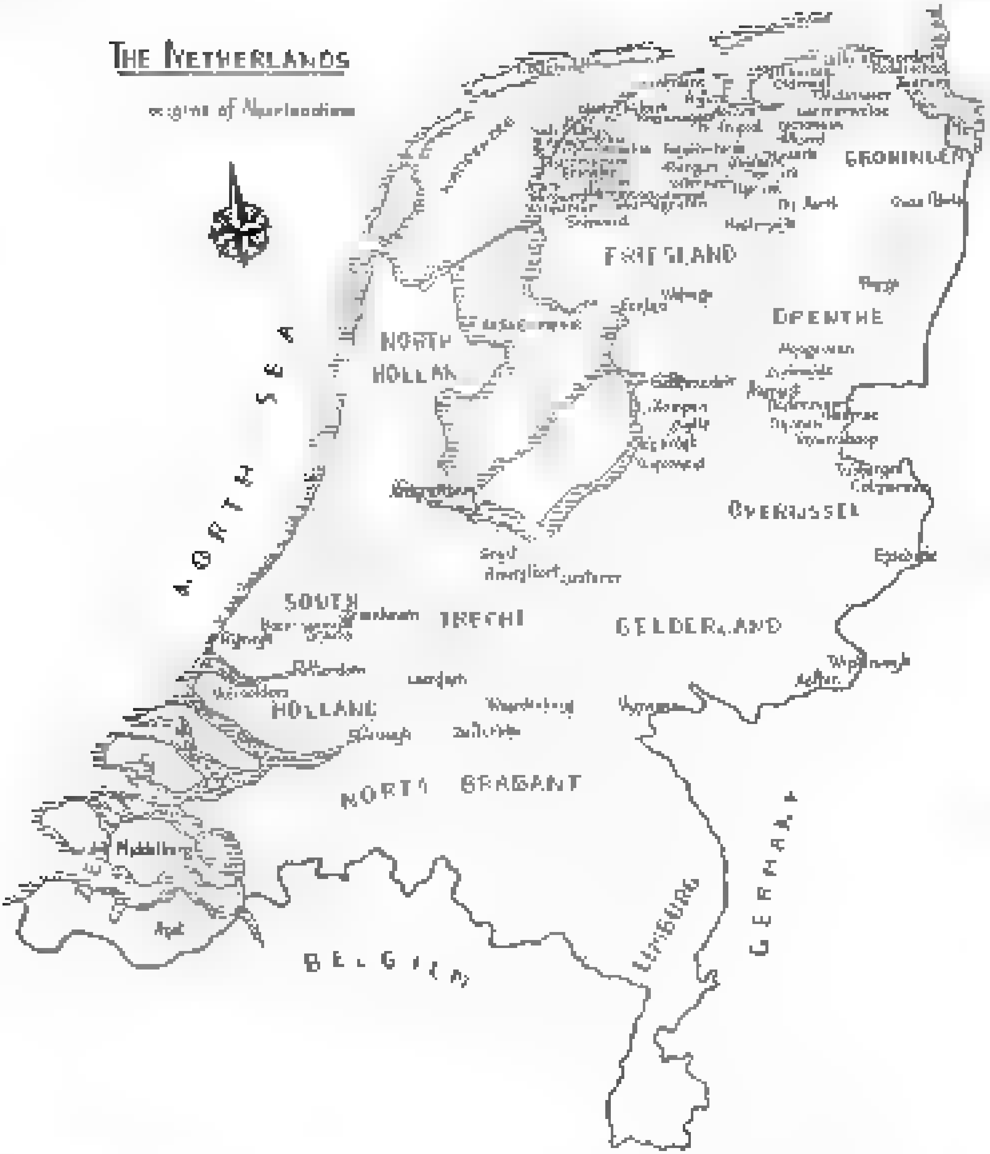
STATEN BIJBEL: a version of the Bible published in the Netherlands in 1637; used in the Netherlands for many years before more recent translations became available.

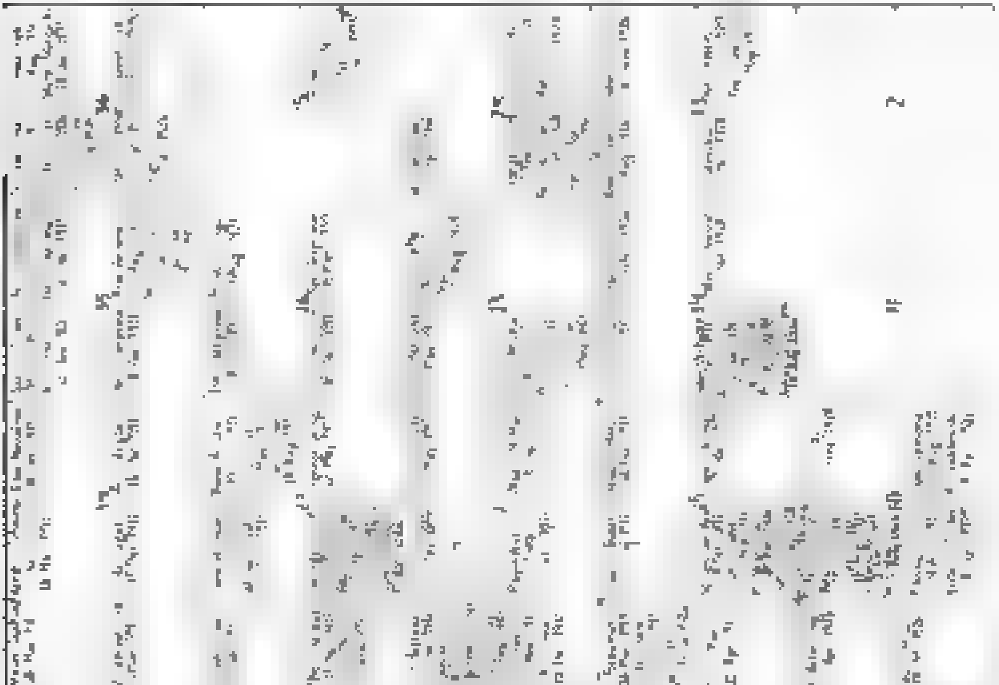
Often a *Staten Bijbel* was a big, heavy book passed from generation to generation. Births and deaths of all family members were carefully recorded in the front of the *Staten Bijbel*.

STOEP: 1. steps, as in "There were four steps up to the door." 2. a porch
STUIVER: form of Dutch currency worth one cent
TABAK: tobacco
TANTE: aunt
VOORZANGER: the leader of the singing in the congregation.

The *voorzanger* would sound the note on which everyone was to begin singing.

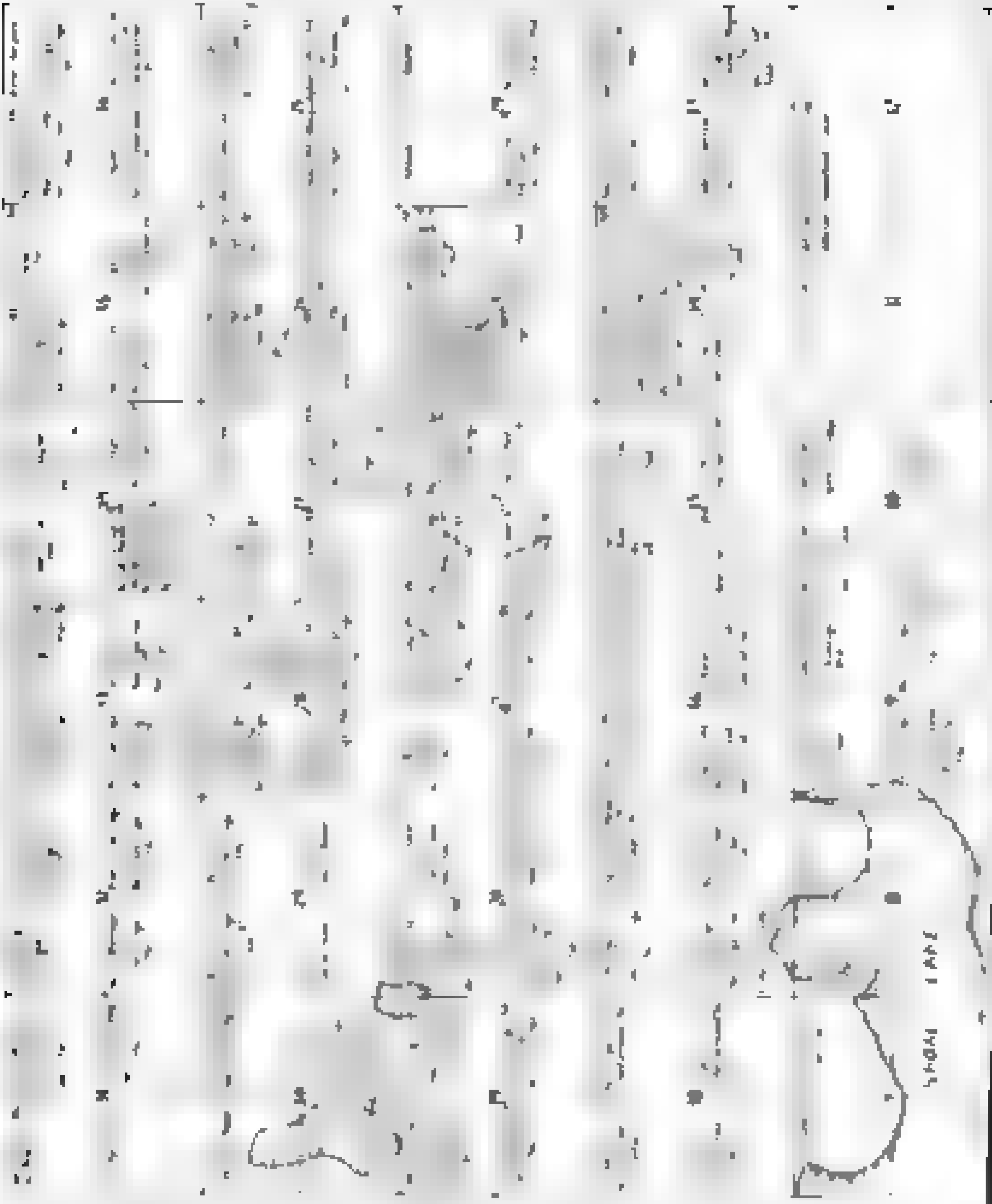
VROUW: 1. wife
2. woman.
WIJN: wine
WILHELMUS VAN NASSAUWE: Dutch national anthem, always sung heartily by Dutch immigrants.


THE NETHERLANDS
NORTH SEA
FRIESLAND
GRONINGEN
DRENTHE
NORTH HOLLAND
OVERIJSSEL
SOUTH HOLLAND
UTRECHT
GELDERLAND
NORTH BRABANT
LIMBURG
Middelburg
BELGIUM
GERMANY

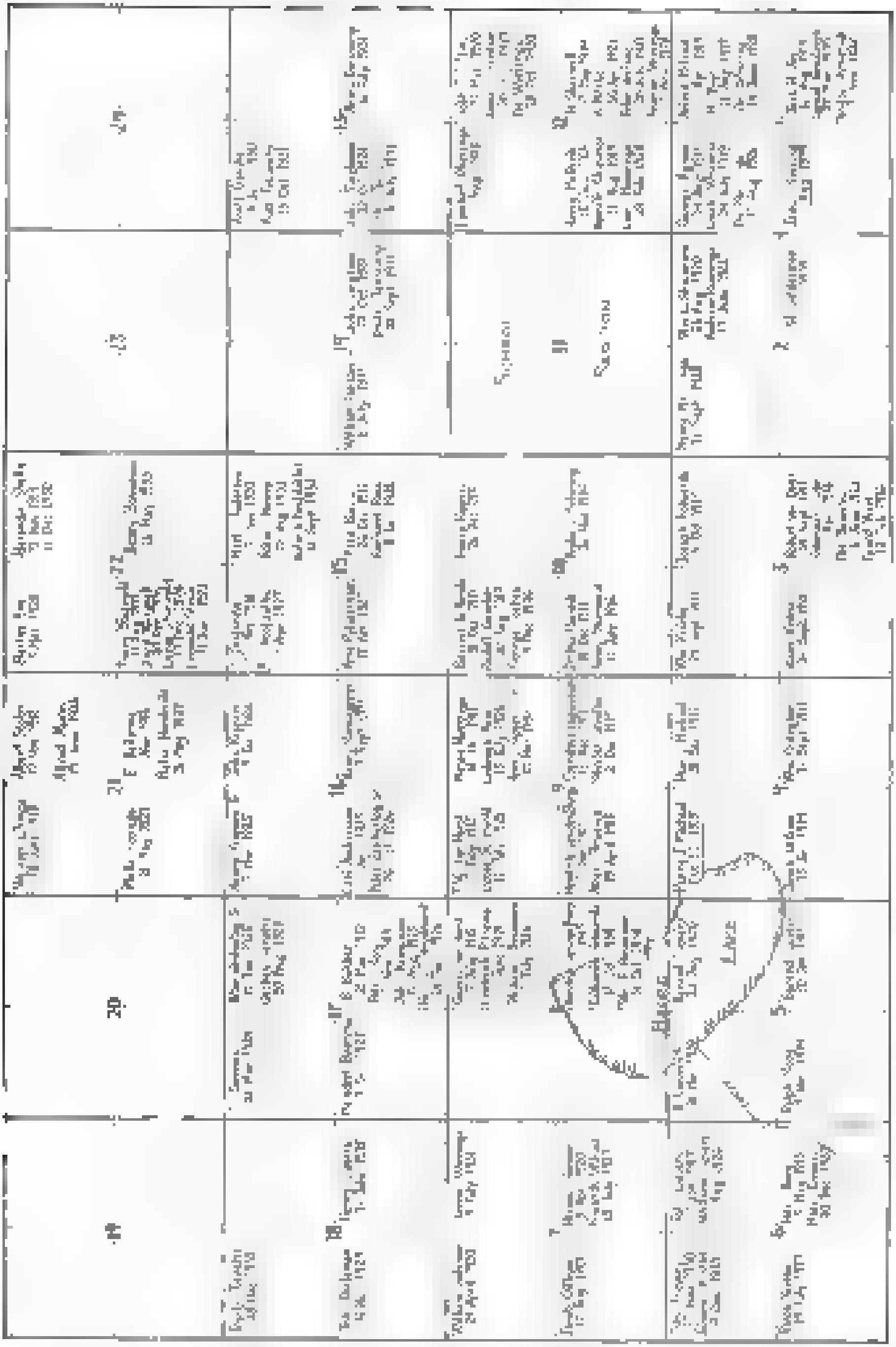


Map of Township [illegible] showing all those who filed on the homesteads until the land was patented. Information from Homestead Records.

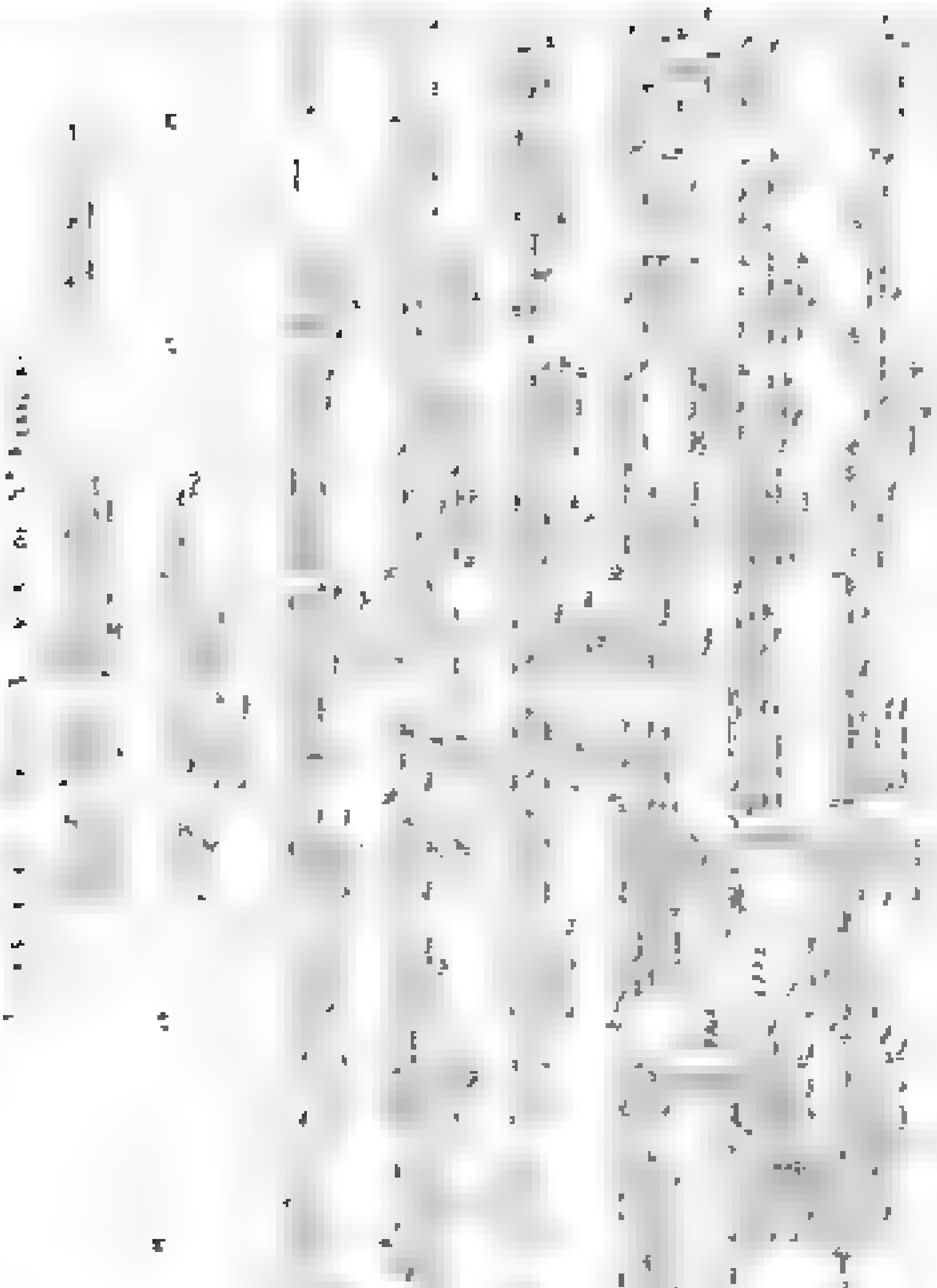
TOWNSHIP 61 RANGE 1



Map of Township 61 showing homesteaders who received patent to the land and subsequent owners. Information from homestead records and accounts of individual owners. In many cases the year of purchase is approximate.



Map of Township 62 showing all those who lived on the homesteads until the land was patented. Information from Homestead Records.



[illegible]

World War II Veterans

Charlie Baker	Reserve Pacific Volunteers, 1943-1944
Henry Bouwman	
Pete Emmerzael	First Canadian Corps Troops Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, 1941-1946; overseas 1942-1945.
Simon Fisher	First Canadian Division, Royal Edmonton Regiment; served overseas.
Gerrit Geldeman	Antiaircraft Division; Artillery Division, 1942-1945
Cor Hiemstra	Fifth Armoured Division, 1942-1946
Bill Johnman	1943-1945, active duty in Africa and Italy
Jim Johnman	Royal Edmonton Regiment, corporal in infantry, 1943-1946
Pete Johnson	Ordnance Corps, instructor, 1940-1945
Bill B. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment, jeep driver, 1943-1945
Bill H. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment, sniper, 1941-1945.
Harry Lievers	Royal Canadian Artillery, gunner, 1941-1942
Jim Lievers	Instructor.
Clarence Maat	Seventh Reconnaissance Armoured Corps, 17th Duke of Yorks, 1941-1946; overseas 1944-1946
Bert Nanninga	Vancouver Regiment, Irish Fusiliers, 1942-1946, active duty in Jamaica one year
John Peters	Engineers; served one year.
Simon Tuininga	Eighth Division, Fourteenth Infantry Brigade, Kings Own Rifles; Air Force Flight 53, 1942-1946
Ed Visser	U.S. Army, 44th American Engineers; 1940-1945, overseas.
Andrew L. Wieringa	Artillery, gunner, infantry, sharpshooter, 1942-1946
Joe A. Wierenga	Heavy Artillery, Sydney, Nova Scotia; 1942-1943
Joe H. Wierenga	Light Antiaircraft Artillery, Esquimalt, B.C., 1942-1945

Teachers — Neerlandia Public School

Henry van den Berg	1915
Helen Kuny	1916-1918
J. A. Heath	October 16-November 15, 1918
L. Dirksen	1919-2
Sammy Keyser	May 1919-August 1921
Jenny Lieuwnga teacher helper	September 1919-1921
R. Walton	May 1921-September 1922
Mr. Fisher	1922-23
William van Ark	1922-25
L. Thelma Hare (Levy)	May-November 1923; August 1928-December 1929
R. Levy	1925
Miss Spaulding	1925-26
John Hammond	March 1-April 6, 1926
R. Levy	June-November 1926
Jack Tracy	1927-28
Irene Carlyle	1927-28
R. Levy	1929-30
P. R. McKleith	1930
Jean Ross	1930-1
John Dickson	December 1930-June 1931
Alice Brown	1931-32
Aubrey C. Ashley	1931-35
M. E. A. Smith	1932-33
Grace Boer	1933-37
Reta Spears	1937-39
Olive Young	1939-42
Clara (Visser) Schoonekamp	1942-44; 1947-48; September 22, 1952-67
W. Albena Robb	1944-46
Ward Daudswaak	1945-46
John Van Rijsar	1946-48
Sophia Crowley	1946-47
Tom Ahdey	1947-48
David Smith	April-June 1948
A. Irene Fowler	1948-57
Fern Borden (supervisor)	September 1-October 2, 1948
Lewis Vandermaaden	October 4, 1948-September 22, 1952
Wilma Visser (supervisor)	1948-April 14, 1948
Ruth (Schoonakers) Janssen	April 13, 1949-1950; 1952-54; 1955
Janet Starvold	1951-52
Magdalena Baker	1952-55
Margaret Bouwman	1952-54
Eleanor Sayes	1954-55
Shirley Olthuis	1954-55
Elsie (Olthuis) Nieve	1955
Mary Tansowny	1955-57
Joyce van Dijken (supervisor)	1956 part
James Tuininga	1957-59
Wladmir Beyduza	1958-62
Edith Sader	May 6, 1959-60
Rita Tuininga	1959-60
John Piers	1960-
Anne Tuininga	1962-64
Martha Kalmbach	September 30, 1963 (23 days)
Anna Churchill	May 3-June 30, 1964; 1965-1975
James Strydhorst	1964-65
Tena De Haan	1965-66
Sander De Haan	1965-67
John Bouma	1966-69
Bamford F. Dodd	1968-70
Joan Tansowny	1968-69
Arlene Zolkiewski	1968-70
Carol Bremer	1970-76
Norman Bremer	1970-76
Beverly Nydam	1970-72
Elaine Guild	1972-73
Hazel Kanninga	1973-74
Pete Strydhorst	1973-March 29, 1976
Robert Wiley	1976-77
Kenneth Wild	1976-77
Evert Vroon	1976-79
Joy Siebring-Wieringa	1977-May 1980
Liz Esselink	1977-1981
Margaret Dykstra	1979-80
Frank Rasmeen	1979-
Katie Tollinga	May 1980-March 1984
Jim Bosma	1980-
Joanne Vanden Brink	1981-83
Ron Gueller	1983-
Brenda Schulz	1983-
Alvina Dorn	March 1984-

Teachers — Covenant Canadian Reformed School

Jacob L. Hoekstra	1977-1984
Anita Janssen	September-December 1977
Jeanette Kingma	January-June 1978
Cor H. Aardappel	1978-1981
Jan Jongsma	January 1979-1981
Hilda Dugenbos	1979-1983
Peter Koopman	1981-1983
Henry Snijder	1981
Albert R. Stas	1981-1984
Justina J. T. Vander Linden	September-December 10, 1983
Rose Beljan	February-June 1984

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Maul, Kenneth [illegible]
Maul, Klaus [illegible]
Maus, Klaus [illegible]
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[illegible]

Wil Bedankt

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Rik Visser, Chris Vriend, and [illegible] Wierenga

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Neerlandia District History

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Neerlandia Historical Society wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following institutions and persons:

Heritage Hall, Calvin College and Seminary
Provincial Museum and Archives, Edmonton
Lorne R. Buhr, Legislature Library, Edmonton
Allan Charles, county manager, County of Barrhead #11
Herman Frescher of Shoal Creek for his help in obtaining photos of coins and paper money
Herman Ganzevoort of the University of Calgary for material, advice, and editorial assistance
Al Granger of Friesen Printers for his assistance
Benita Hinse of Canada Post
Ellen Mathers of Sioux Center, Iowa, U.S.A. for help with editing and design
Norman Mathers of Sioux Center, Iowa, U.S.A. for his original drawings for the chapter title pages
Albert van der Heide of *The Windmill Herald* for providing photos
Bill Weber of Alberta Education
C. H. Weir for supplying data on the titles of the land in the hamlet
The society is also grateful for the grant from Alberta Culture

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ISBN 0-88925-465-6

NOV 13 1986

Published by
Neerlandia Historical Society
Neerlandia, Alberta T0G 1R0
Canada

First printing, 1985

Printed and bound in Canada by
Friesen Printers
16644-117 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5M 3W2
Canada
Head Office
Altona, Manitoba
Canada

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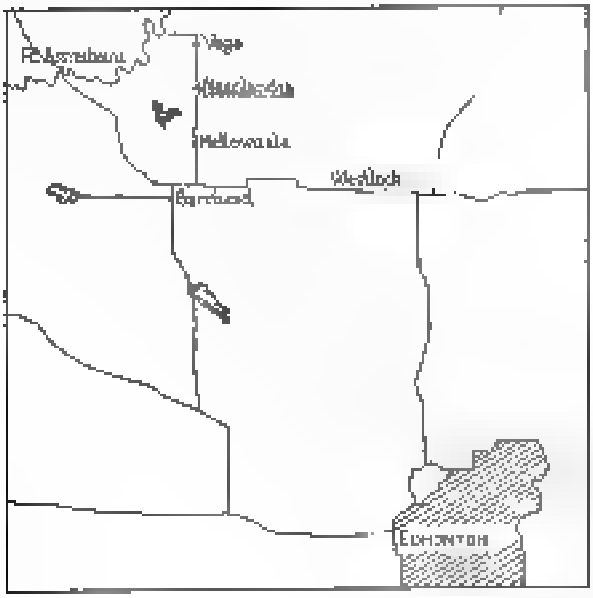
PREFACE

The Neerlandia community is defined as much by church affiliation as by the location of one's land. Therefore the boundaries have been delineated in two ways. Since those who began the community settled in a certain area of Townships 61 and 62, anyone who resides or formerly resided on these sections has been recorded in the book. In addition, anyone who is affiliated with either the Canadian Reformed Church or the Christian Reformed Church in Neerlandia has been included even though they live outside the physical boundaries.

We regret that we were unable to contact some former residents and that some residents did not submit family histories.



INTRODUCTION

For many years the people of Neerlandia said to each other, "Somebody should write a book about Neerlandia." and everyone always agreed. For many years that is all that happened.

Then in 1982 a group of old-timers, children of the original settlers, met to discuss ways and means of recording the history of Neerlandia. Very quickly this group realized the immensity of the task which lay before them. Already in their seventies and with little formal education, they believed the task to be beyond them. They turned to us, their children, and we willingly shouldered the burden.

As we engaged in this labour of love, we grew to appreciate the sacrifices which our forefathers had made to provide a better life for their children. We began to realize the courage and faith they had, but above all we saw the leading of God in their lives.

Neerlandia, whose story we tell, is a unique community. Almost all of its residents, since 1911, have been of one ethnic background — Dutch — and of one faith — Protestants of Reformed persuasion.

There is more than one way to record the history of any area. We have attempted not only to record the events that took place in Neerlandia from 1911 to 1984, but also to show how a people whose express purpose was to establish a Christian community have worked toward that goal.

To you, the reader, we offer this book — a history of Neerlandia. We hope that the people whose stories are recorded herein become as real to you as they did to us.

Neerlandia Historical Society
Editors:
Elsie Navis
Joy Siebring Wierenga

A FURROW LAID BARE

[illegible] though clothed in luscious garments of natural growth

[illegible]

[illegible] seed while God provides the increase in all areas of life

[illegible] bare as a furrow

[illegible] love

[illegible]

Carrie Groot

[illegible]

[illegible] recalled with delight or distaste

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] tions, and perceptions

[illegible]

[illegible] maybe the truth lies somewhere in between

Shirley Mathers

Part One

Historical Frame Work

The Setting

FLORA AND FAUNA

[illegible] is an area on the border of the parkland and boreal forest regions of Alberta. The region is home to many animal species. It is impossible to [illegible] mention all the plants and animals which live or have lived in the area. The following selections — factual or in story form — are intended to acquaint the reader with some of the inhabitants and portray life in days gone by.

Plants

Townships 61 and 62 were once covered with a mixture of willow, poplar, spruce, and tamarack. In lesser numbers birch, aspen, alders, and a few other trees could also be found. A wide variety of shrubs grew beneath the trees or along the creek banks. Nestled beneath the trees or in open areas grew numerous flowers.

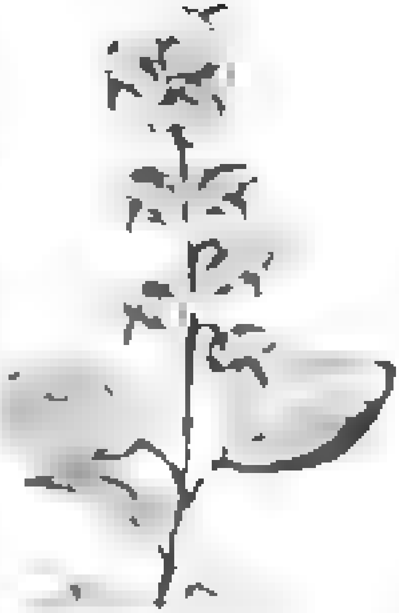
Year after year, from time immemorial, the plants follow the God-ordained rhythm for their lives. Let us follow the native plants through the seasons.

Before the snow is quite gone the prairie crocus is seen on sandy ground. It is followed closely by the bright yellow dandelion. In the meantime silver grey pussy willows on dark maroon stems have been watching the coming of spring. The birch and poplar vie with each other to be the first to leaf out. A common saying is, "If the birch leafs out before the poplar the spring will be wet." Regardless of which wins everyone is eager to see the first green after the long winter. At the same time the black poplar buds are swelling. Then almost overnight, all the trees show a hint of green, and after a couple of days of warm weather the leaves are out. Soon the trees are flowering. To see the flowers one must look closely because all the flowers are small. Among the most spectacular are the bright red catkin-like flowers of the black poplar. Having once seen these the observer will wonder why he did not notice them before. Having learned to look closely, the observer will next admire the bright purple flowers of the tamarack which look like the tiny cones they will become.

The tamarack is at the same time putting forth its delicate light green needles in little tufts, forming a lacy pattern. In the muskeg beneath the tamarack in marshy, boggy places, golden patches of the yellow marsh marigold (buttercup) are seen.

All the other trees and shrubs are also bursting forth in leaf and flower to make the most of the brief growing season. Everywhere the fruit bearing plants are displaying their white flowers. Those that can be most readily seen are the chokecherry along the creeks and the saskatoon scattered throughout the area. The dainty twining honeysuckle send forth a lovely smell. These flowers are protected by two leaves which form a protective cup. Smaller bushes such as raspberries and highbush cranberries can be easily found too. Then the beautiful pink wild roses bloom abundantly, filling the air with a lovely fragrance. One must look closely at the ground to find the pretty wild strawberry flower. Other flowers may also be seen if one but takes the time to look.

Under the shrubs the bluebells and white fairy bells are starting to show up. In shady places in the woods the lovely pink twin flowers bloom with round, shining green leaves. Winter green shows waxen pink flowers with red stamens in April. Other spring flowers that may be seen are the trillium with three leaves and the bunchberry, similar to the trillium but with five leaves. In shady spots the dainty Canada Mayflower with two leaves and a spray of white flowers are seen among the early spring flowers. Purple and white peavine grows everywhere.



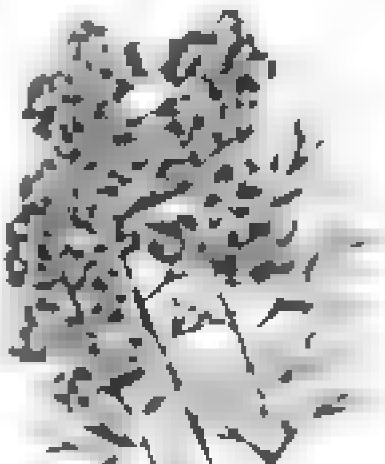
Soon the light green of spring gives way to the more mature dark green of summer. The early flowers quickly disappear as the plants begin to make seed. The aspen, a poplar known also as the trembling aspen, shows its smooth roundish leaves. Because its leaves shake and rattle with the slightest breeze the Indians called it the noisy leaf tree. The black poplars stand majestic in their rough grey bark and are equalled only by the stately white spruce which, though green all winter, now grow new needles. In the bogs the black spruce are also growing and making new cones. They are rather scraggly looking trees, but they too have their place on the landscape.

Now the fireweed is seen as it sends forth its spears of pink flowers in open sunny areas. These beautiful plants are the first to grow on burned land, often so abundant when a fire set by the Indians or started by an electrical storm had burned a piece of land.

The beautiful tiger lilies and the northern bedstraw and other summer flowers now appear. The meadow rue, white [illegible] weed and nodding wild onion with long leaves and white flowers seem to meet each other. In the muskeg are found the pink [illegible] which smells sweet. Sarsaparilla grows in somewhat less dense spots. In the woodlands are found the purple wild columbine. The dark purple flowers of the [illegible] clematis, a vine, may be seen twining around some slender tree. Sometimes it is possible to find the pink lady's slipper which is really an orchid.

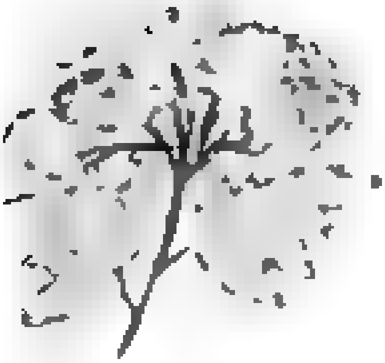
Before long the goldenrod is seen along the trails, replacing wild rose pink with the golden colour of fall. White asters and red and pink Indian paintbrush make the meadows look like a painting by Monet. Asters are also more noticeable in the beginning of fall. The [illegible] with its rusty spread head is seen throughout the area. Its thick yellow roots were used by the Indians to make dye.

The wild fruits are ripening on the shrubs. Chokecherries along the creeks are starting to hang in clusters bearing their astringent fruits. Saskatoons which in spring delighted with beautiful white blossoms now give purple fruits for which the birds and people compete. The fruits of these two plants were used by the Indians in making pemmican. On smaller bushes, about three feet from the ground, the red wild raspberries are ripening. Here and there one may find wild currants in the muskeg, although cranberries and gooseberry bushes will soon be ready for the ambitious picker.



As the short summer gives way to fall, the rosebushes hang heavy with rose hips. The beautiful dogwood flowers have formed their clusters of white berries. The high bush cranberries are ripe now. The conifers, including the black spruce, are laden with cones which the squirrels are busily storing away for their winter food supply. Every weed, shrub and tree is full of seed. The Indians used breaks loose and sails with the wind or lodges in an animal's fur. Now thistle and dandelion have already sent their seeds sailing to new homes on fluffy parachutes. The brown-headed bulrushes stand proudly in the ditches and marshes waiting for the wind to tug away at their heads and release their seeds too.

In this season the plants are clothed in autumn splendour. The smaller bushes and shrubs form a bright red contrast to the golden yellows of the birch and poplar. Somewhere the aspen shows a faint tinge of red. The tamarack now reveal the beauty of the muskegs as their needles turn orange in striking contrast to the dark green of their evergreen counterparts, the black spruce. The beauty of God's creation and the abundance of seed and fruit for man and beast is a source of wonder and praise.



Then winter comes, the leaves are gone, the little plants lie dormant beneath their mantle of snow. The bare branches of the broadleaf trees form an intricate pattern against the sky. Only the spruce remains green, a symbol of the life which will emerge again in spring.

Birds

The Indian paused on the trail to listen to the faint honking in the sky. Looking up he saw a V-shaped wedge of birds flying far overhead. Spring had come at last, he knew, for these were the great Canada geese returning from their winter home. He watched as they dropped to land on the water of Baird Lake. They would not stay long — just a few days to rest and then wing their way further north. But that did not matter. The Indian knew they were the heralds of spring.

The Indian did not call the birds Canada geese, nor was the lake known to him as Baird Lake. The event occurred before the white man arrived in the area now known as [illegible]. Many birds lived in the area at that time.

Baird Lake and the other little lakes and streams nearby were home to an abundance of waterfowl. Besides the Canada geese, snow geese, swans, and a variety of ducks used the lake as a stopping place on their journey north. Many moved on but some stayed. The mallards with their iridescent necks and the pintails were some of those that spent the summer. The elegant black and white loon, so graceful in the water, nested on the shores of the lakes — its lonely but beautiful cry echoing over the still lake in the evening.

On the shore red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds wove their nests around the stalks of the bulrushes. Terns which nested on the ground made graceful flights in the air above. Shore birds such as the killdeer and sandpiper frequented the edges of the streams and ponds. The killdeer was one of the first birds to return in spring and soon its monotonous call would be heard constantly. During its courtship flight over the muskeg where it made its home, the snipe produced a haunting sound by winnowing the air through its tail feathers.

Besides the migratory geese and ducks, the first returning bird the Indian saw was a big black crow. Not fussy eaters, the crow would easily survive in the cold spring days. Before long all the birds had returned to their summer homes and the air was filled with song as each staked out its territory. There were the red-breasted robins, hustling [illegible] about the [illegible] [illegible], a [illegible] spot and a few [illegible] warblers, sparrows and [illegible] flitting about. One day the Indian saw a yellow-breasted ground bird with a [illegible] shaped black patch on its breast, which he had never seen before. Little did he know it was a meadowlark, gradually extending its range northward as the white man cleared the land. Among the last to arrive were the goldfinches and when the Indian saw these bright yellow and black birds building nests, he knew that spring was over and summer had begun.

Though the birds were all busy building nests and raising their young, they had to be alert to danger because birds of prey [illegible] [illegible] the summer. The [illegible] [illegible] of the sparrow hawk, a pretty blue and brown bird that ate mainly insects, but when the pigeon hawk, the sharp-shinned hawk, the goshawk and the red-tailed hawk appeared the Indian would see the small birds flee in terror. The marsh hawk, which made its nest a few feet above the ground and dined on grasshoppers, mice and crickets, was no threat to them.

A wide variety of birds inhabited the area. In open areas the tall [illegible] [illegible] was seldom seen. A mournful [illegible] [illegible] the presence of a mourning dove. And northwest of [illegible] Lake a pair of bald eagles nested. From an aspen grove the [illegible] drumming of the ruffed grouse could be heard, though the bird itself was seldom seen. Among the tamarack and spruce, the western tanager made its home. Ruby-throated hummingbirds nested in the woods but they, too, were seldom seen. He sometimes [illegible] heard the yellow-bellied sapsuckers around, sipping the sap from the holes the larger birds had made.

When the Indian went hunting he would watch the graceful flight of the swallows overhead. Occasionally he saw a tree swallow's nest in a deserted woodpecker's hole. Sometimes when he returned home late in the evening he would be startled by the sudden swoop of a nighthawk.

As the days grew shorter and the leaves began to turn colour, the birds who had by then raised their families began to return to their winter homes. [illegible] and [illegible] gradually died. One day that [illegible] the Indian stopped to rest. Only [illegible] did he realize that there were few birds around. Then again he heard the familiar honking and looking upward he again saw the Canada geese winging their way across the sky. He stood and watched for a moment and then went on his way. Though many birds were gone, some would remain for the winter.

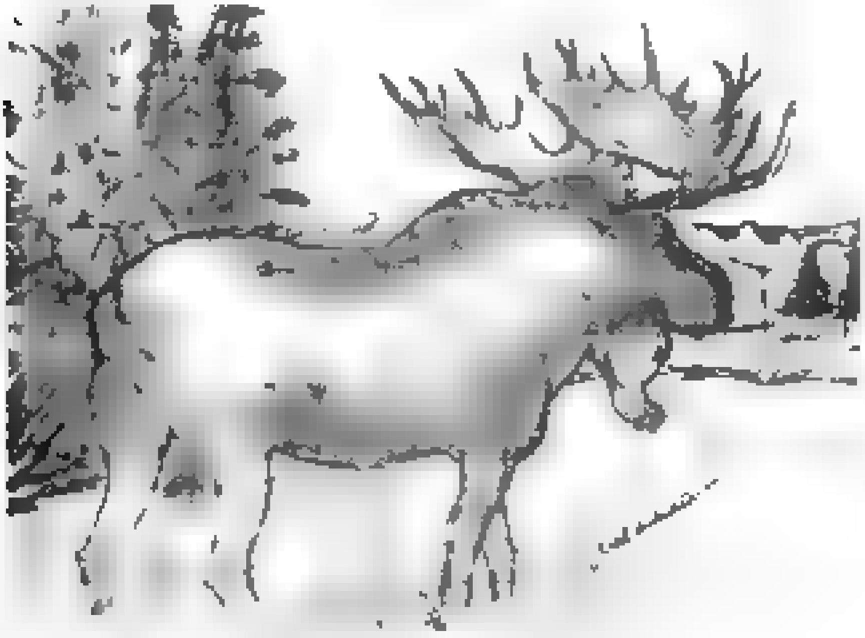
In the distance a woodpecker could be heard drumming on a tree. It might have been a hairy woodpecker or its smaller brother, the downy woodpecker. It may have been the pileated woodpecker, a black bird the size of a crow but with a bright red crest. But most likely it was the most common of the woodpeckers — the common flicker.

Time went by, all the summer residents were gone but it was far from quiet in the woods. The [illegible] chickadees hopped about and called to one another. The blue jays called out in their strident voices. At night the whoo-whoo of an owl could be heard. The great gray owl and the great horned owl are two of the owls which lived in the area. The boreal owl, with a head that appeared as large as its body, could be seen sitting in a tree. The Canada jay (or gray jay or whisky jack as it is variously known) was a frequent visitor to the Indian encampment, picking up what scraps it could.

Then one morning the Indian awoke to see a flock of snow buntings (snow birds) swooping about. Now they appeared dark, now light, as the flock rose and turned as one. He knew that fall was over and winter was at hand, for these birds never entered the area till October. Soon it would snow and winter would have come. Other birds that spent the winter would be seen. He thought of the long winter ahead and hoped that he would be able to shoot ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse for his family. They were easy to spot because of their habit of roosting in trees, but they were so alert that they often flew away in a whirr of wings before he could release an arrow. The spruce hen, though not as tasty, was easier to catch. As he mused the first snowflakes began to fall and soon the ground was covered with snow.

Mammals

Standing at the edge of the timber on high ground, the bull moose surveyed his kingdom. To the southeast he could see a lake; to the west lay the muskeg. The moose had lived here in the swampy land of Alberta for many years. On his hide were scars from battles fought with other males in the rutting season, but for the moment he was at peace. He lowered his head and began to browse on the tender willow that were all around him. As he browsed he gradually wandered into the muskeg.



Suddenly a rabbit (Mackenzie varying hare) came zig-zagging into view, pursued by a lynx. Neither of them liked the boggy terrain but in the race they had not noticed where they were going. The hare found a hummock on which to crouch and the lynx gave up the chase.

The commotion had disturbed the moose and he lifted his head and moved awkwardly to higher ground. After pausing for a moment on the edge of the muskeg he moved off into the woods. As he did so, a tiny shrew, weighing less than four grams, scurried away unnoticed beneath his feet. Perched on a rotting log, a little northern chipmunk watched his progress and then went on gnawing a rose hip. Other animals marked his passing too — voles and mice in the grass beneath hesitated in their search for seeds. In the trees above squirrels scolded loudly as he passed, but the moose, lord of the land, paid them no heed. He was looking for deciduous trees with tender foliage.

As he travelled he met other animals — most of which he ignored. At one spot he met a porcupine that had descended from a tree and was shuffling along the path. After a moment's hesitation the moose stepped aside to let the smaller animal pass. A few paces further the moose met a coyote who had not been so wise. Frantically the coyote, who had hoped to make a meal of the porcupine, was trying to scrape off the quills which were firmly embedded in its muzzle. On seeing the moose it retreated into the bush.

The moose had been travelling steadily south and now it came to a small lake. Along the shore grew the succulent plants the moose loved. He waded into the water, lowered his head and began to feed, oblivious to the commotion he caused. Muskrats, whose untidily constructed homes dotted the little lake, dived at his coming. Birds flew away at his approach. When they saw that he meant no harm to them, the smaller animals soon went about their business again.

His appetite satisfied, the moose turned from the lake and, following a trail which led to the northeast, he went on his way. He followed a creek which flowed out of Beard Lake. At one point he came upon a beaver dam behind which he could see several lodges. Skirting the dam he crossed the creek and wandered in an easterly direction. Occasionally he stopped to browse. He came to a heavy bush where there was a stand of big poplars. Here he found a comfortable spot and bedded down. He dozed and dreamed of younger days. Suddenly there was a commotion overhead as a marten pursued a squirrel. How the squirrels scolded as they scattered this way and that, but one was too slow and soon the marten retired to eat its meal.

The moose arose and, still travelling eastward, came to an open spot where mule deer were grazing. He watched them curiously because they were not often seen in this wooded part of Alberta. Then he was on his way again, paying no attention to a weasel which popped its head out of a fallen log. The moose wandered restlessly here and there. In the distance he saw a wood bison standing quietly beneath a tree. He watched unconcernedly as a group of caribou (western woodland caribou) trotted by with a clacking of flowers. With greater alertness the moose watched a black bear as it overturned logs in search of insects.

Suddenly the moose caught the scent of a wolf. Though not common in the area, wolves occasionally ranged this far in search of food. As a healthy adult moose he was not in great danger from a lone wolf but, taking no chances, he lifted his head and raced to the south into a patch of deadfall to avoid it. The wolf seemed not to be hunting, for it made no attempt to follow the fleeing animal.

When the moose realized he was not being pursued, he stopped. However, something seemed to be urging him on, so he picked his way through the fallen trees and ambled onward. As before, he met a number of animals as he went — a skunk family which was delicately searching through the remains of a rotten log for insects and larvae, and a couple of bright-eyed foxes playing on a creek bank.

The moose turned and followed the creek past beaver lodge after beaver lodge — but nowhere did he see a beaver. Not so long ago the streams were filled with beaver who slapped their tails and dived beneath the water at his approach. He did not know that the Indians had trapped and killed them for their furs. To his surprise he saw a mink slink along the creek bank. It was strange not only because mink, along with flying squirrels and bats, usually came out only at night, but also because there seemed to be fewer mink around than before. Perhaps the mink felt the same restlessness that the moose did.

Tired of following the creek, the moose turned west, and here he saw something he had never seen before. It was a wooden structure built in a clearing. About it he noticed the smell of man — not the smell of the Indians who hunted him, but a strange, paler smell that he did not know. Frightened now, the moose made a wide arc around the area and fled to the northwest until he reached his home. Safe in the thick woods he pondered the strange thing he had seen and wondered what it meant. As night fell, the moose forgot the encounter, little knowing the change it would bring, not only to his life but to the lives of all the animals of the district.

Thunderstorm

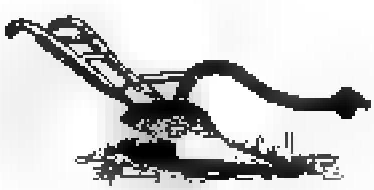
Sometimes, after a stifling hot summer's day, with not even a wisp of breeze to give some relief, clouds can be seen gathering on the horizon — a thunderstorm is brewing. Thunderstorms can come up very fast. The faraway rumbling, which seems to come from the bowels of the earth, soon becomes sharper and rolls from horizon to horizon. The glaringly bright jags of lightning seem almost audible, like the cracking of a whip or the hissing of a viper. When the thunderstorm is right above, lightning and thunder blend together in a frightening concert. But still no refreshing rain. Suddenly great gusts of wind blow up dust and loose objects fly across the fields. Then the rain starts pouring from the dark, black sky. Now the thunder and lightning diminish and the thunderstorm moves on. But the rain, falling more gently now, keeps on — the mild aftermath of violent thunderstorms, refreshing man and beast.

The Northern Lights

Those who have seen the Northern Lights have looked in awe at this display of heavenly beauty. There is something so fragile and fleeting, yet so awe-inspiring, about the rays and bundles of light which seem to chase one another across the sky! At first a few bundles appear, then suddenly the sky is filled with rolling running spikes of white, yellow, green, pink, and blue light! They disappear and re-appear and tumble over each other, first here, then there like beautiful long fingers of coloured light. At times the rustling, tinkling sound of the Lights can also be heard.

Hoarfrost

How lovely the landscape is transformed by the first pure white blanket of snow! But a far greater beauty can be seen some winter mornings — every tree, stalk of grain, blade of grass, — everything that can raise its head above the snow is covered with hoarfrost. Shrubs, grasses, and weeds are also covered with the beautiful, white, snowlike icy foliage, a display of such great beauty by the Creator. Then the sun comes up and makes the hoarfrost sparkle and dazzle like myriads of diamonds. But the sun also ends this phenomena. With soft plops, the white covering falls to the ground to blend with the soft white snow. So ends a world encased in glittering crystal, again to appear during some other winter night.



Early Sojourners

EARLY SOJOURNERS: PRE 1911

Neerlandia as a township has a relatively young history, compared to the thousands of years before white settlers moved in. Then the land belonged to native tribes of Indians who hunted, trapped, and traded here as recently as thirty years before settlement began. In those times the land was thick with trees, scattered full of treacherous swamps, and teeming with wildlife. The native peoples thrived here for centuries, and their traces go so far back in time we can scarcely begin to piece their whole story together. The few remnants left give clues to their lifestyles, and we must depend on our knowledge of geography, archeology, and geology for the rest.

Pre-history in the Neerlandia District

The pre-history of Neerlandia is obviously sketchy; all there is to go on are the tools (largely projectile points) which were left behind. The artifacts reveal that a culture did exist here many years ago, and it existed for some time. Beyond that, it is difficult to say anything conclusive.

There are many theories of how man came to live in Alberta, much of it speculative. The following ideas are generally agreed upon by archaeologists:

1. Early men arrived in North America from Asia, bringing such characteristics as copper-coloured skin, straight black hair, and high cheekbones.

2. They came by way of the Bering Strait which probably was dry land at one time, owing to the larger quantities of water frozen at the earth's ice caps.

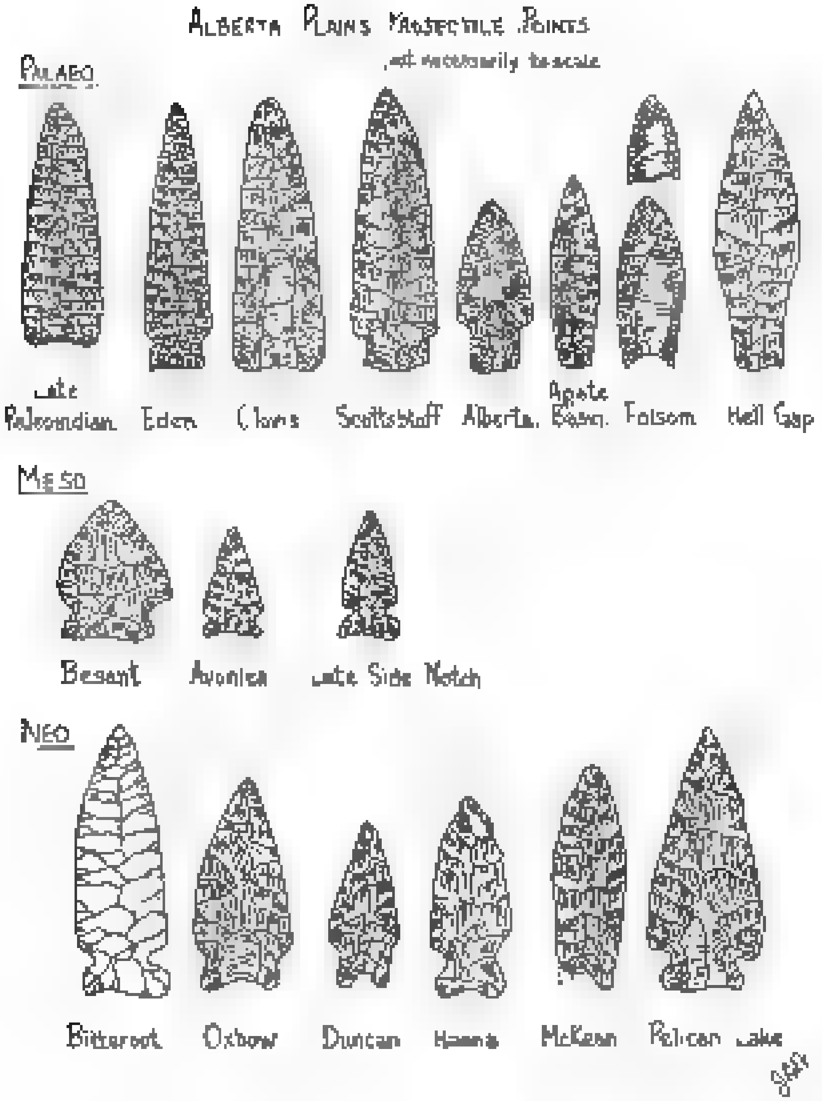
3. These people were a Stone Age people, highly skilled at flint knapping (chipping stones) to fashion tools; the word "primitive" is a misleading adjective to describe these early inhabitants.

4. They came when much of North America was frozen, and travelled through an ice-free corridor through modern-day Alberta.

While many projectile points have been collected from around Shoal Creek and Shoal Lake, very few are arrowheads. The points used for arrows were rarely larger than one-and-one-half inches and the bow and arrow was a relative late-comer to the local people's weaponry. Archaeologists think that the bow and arrow probably "arrived" in Alberta around 200 A.D., and the projectile points made before that time are more accurately termed spearheads. (Not all spearheads however are older than 200 A.D.)

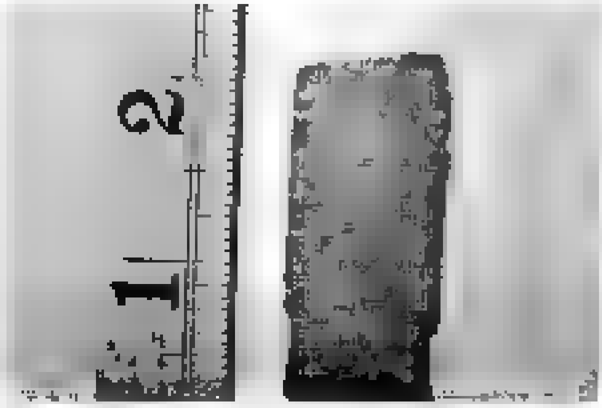
As to the points themselves, much can be learned. Various styles of points have been found in Alberta and are grouped according to periods of history. Palaeo points are the oldest and Neo points are the most recent. Each particular point has a name based on the location where the first such point was located, not necessarily in Alberta.

Clovis and Folsom points, first found in the American Midwest, are the oldest category of points found in Alberta. They are characterized by a hollowed-out portion near the base of the point



a so-called 'fluted' point. This type of point is unlikely to be found in the Neerlandia district.

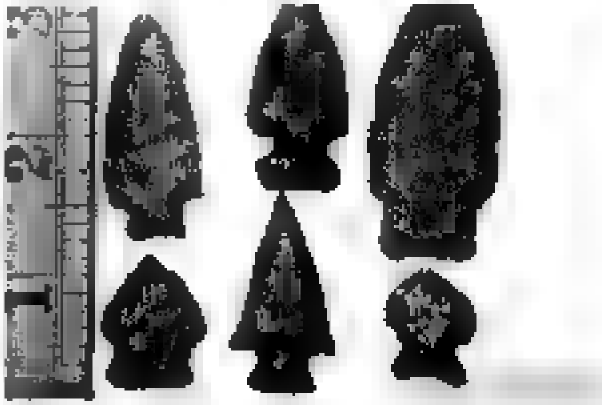
Other Palaeo points, however, have been found. Several fine specimens of Eden points have been located near Shoal Lake. One such point (shown in photograph), though broken and insignificant-looking, is special because of the type of stone used in its construction and the quality of work it displays. Apparently this point was made from Beaver River sandstone, a rock unique to the Fort McMurray area. This may indicate trading patterns between the two regions or a seasonal (or permanent) migration of Indians from that area to the Neerlandia district. This point is also special because the quality of workmanship shows concern for aesthetics as well.



An Eden point from Beaver River sandstone. Note: All artifacts from collections of Cor and Russel Fisher

Eden and Scottsbluff points

Oxbow points, smallest point Besant, broken point unknown.

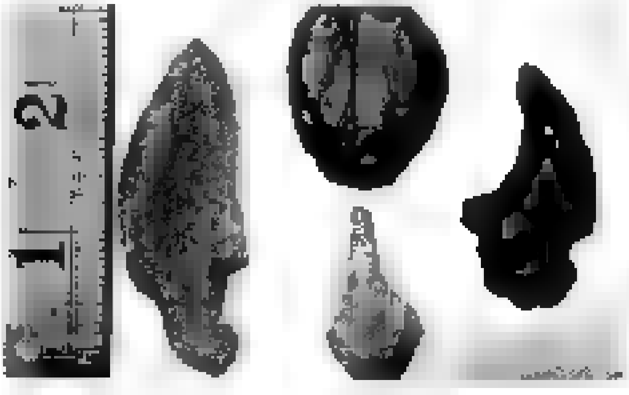


Top: Hanna, Pelican Lake, Scottsbluff. Bottom: Besant, Pelican Lake, Besant.

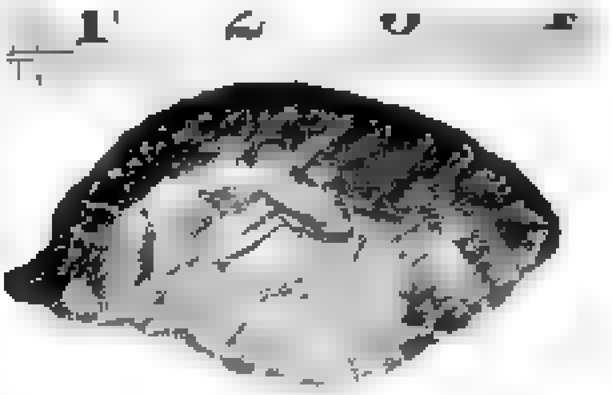
Another almost-intact Eden point was found along Shoal Lake and was constructed from another foreign type of rock — a so-called Knife River flint, commonly found in North Dakota. The stone is a dark translucent colour and is encased in a limestone-like shell. Since archaeologists rarely locate Eden, Scottsbluff, and Alberta points north of Edmonton, these projectile points are quite significant.

A variety of points have been found in the area, but Oxbow and McKean points are probably the most common in the numerous collections around. In addition to what has been noted thus far, other factors to consider when studying the points for identification are size, notched or straight ends, concave or convex bases, the angle of the point, and the kind of chips taken off the point. Even experienced archaeologists find it difficult to categorize all points.

Early man used stone for a great many of his tools, not simply for projectiles. One such small tool was probably used as a spokeshave. This object was bound to a small wooden handle and used to shave the shafts of wooden spears or arrows. Another tool, a small unifacial cutter (worked on one side only), was perhaps used to cut animal hides. Some cutters were constructed of obsidian, which was highly valued for its cutting qualities. The nearest source of obsidian to the area's early inhabitants was most likely the interior of B.C. More common than cutters were bifacial scrapers — large granite or quartzite scrapers chipped on both sides, commonly known as hide scrapers.



Blade, cutter, spokeshave. Front: punch.



Scraper.

Stoneworking was an art common to early man. Judging from the artifacts, he had to be highly skilled, have great strength in his hands, and have a great deal of patience since flaking required this. Often, a piece of moose or caribou hide was placed in the palm to protect the workman's hands from cuts and bruises. Antlers or other stones were probably used to shape the stone. A flake could be expertly chipped from both edges of a projectile point, generating the rib-like design illustrated by the Eden point. Skill was required in selecting the right kind of stone as well, and a brisk trade in Beaver River sandstone from a quarry site near Fort McMurray may have developed.

Early man used his weapons sparingly. Since most points were chipped or broken upon contact with animal bone, hunters wanted to be sure a hit meant a kill. Weapons such as spears and arrows were used in conjunction with snares and deadfalls, with the projectile weapons usually 'finishing off' the prey.

Native Peoples in the Neerlandia District: The Beaver, the Cree, and the Assiniboine

Before 1740, bands of Beaver Indians made their camps along the shores of Shoal Lake near the mouth of the creek and hunted the forests. The migratory Indians had one primary concern: food. When they were unable to bring down large game, which was often the case, they would eat the plentiful hares, unless of course these were low in their cycle. Survival was a relentless chore: starvation was reality.

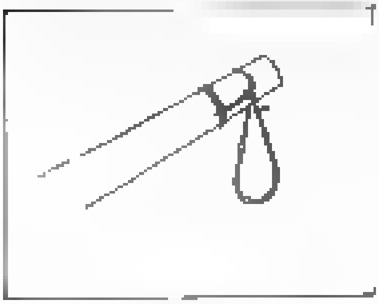
In the hunt, snares and deadfalls were frequently used. Weapons like the bow and arrow and spear were more rare, used usually to kill a snared animal. It was far easier to allow the animals to trap themselves than to expend precious energy chasing them.

Snares were used on animals whose heads were larger than their necks: grouse, hare, fox, lynx, caribou, moose, and bear. The

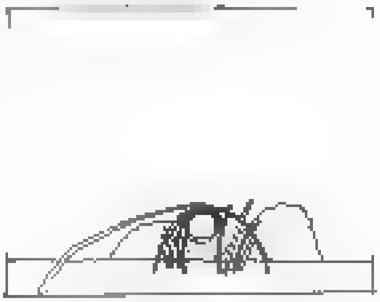
Flint knapping. Drawn from a sketch in National Geographic. Used with permission.

pole snare required a human nearby. The noose snare, probably made from black spruce rootlets gathered in the fall, may have been used to strangle animals already trapped in a set snare, so as not to damage their furs. A spring pole snare required no human assistance.

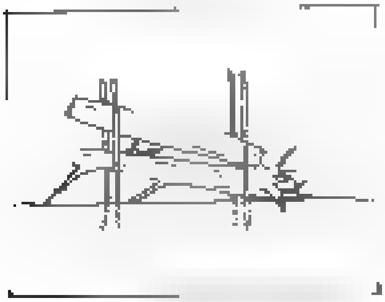
Deadfalls were traps constructed of logs and a bait. When an animal tugged at the bait a heavy log would come crashing down onto its back or neck. The animal rarely lived as a broken neck or crushed skull was enough to cause death.



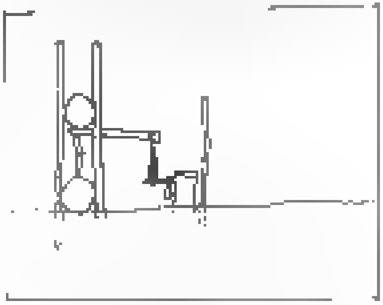
a pole snare



a spring-pole snare



a deadfall

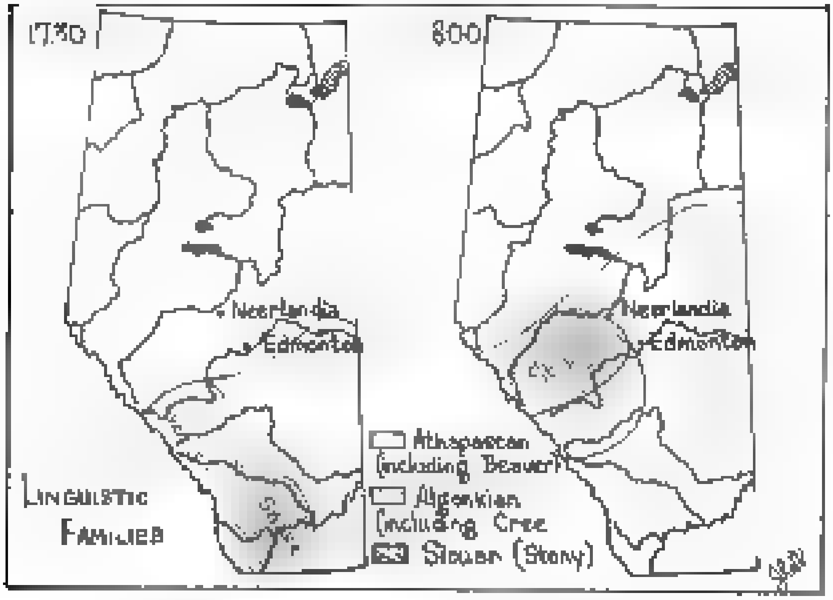


single-beam deadfall

These hunters lived as an integral part of nature. They believed that the animals they hunted allowed themselves to be killed to prevent the hunter from starving. The Beaver Indian considered himself a part of the environment, not a master of it.

The local Beaver Indians experienced the effects of the fur trade (probably as early as 1740) when they began trapping furs for their eastern neighbours, the Cree. The steel trap may have replaced the traditional snares and deadfalls as early as 1800. Yet the benefits of the fur trade — metal goods, guns, liquor and beads — found their way slowly to the isolated regions of northern Alberta, and European influence on the Beaver way of life was indirect.

By the mid-1700s, events were transpiring that would eventually disrupt the Beaver way of life in the Neerlandia area. The Cree Indians in the Northern forests of Ontario and Quebec around Hudson Bay had begun to exhaust the furs in that area. As well, Canadian merchants began building forts farther and farther westward. The Crees began to migrate in advance of the fur trading posts, in search of more pelts. As they moved west, they put pressure on other tribes, such as the Beaver, to make way. Resistance to the Cree was not feasible: the Cree had the advantage of



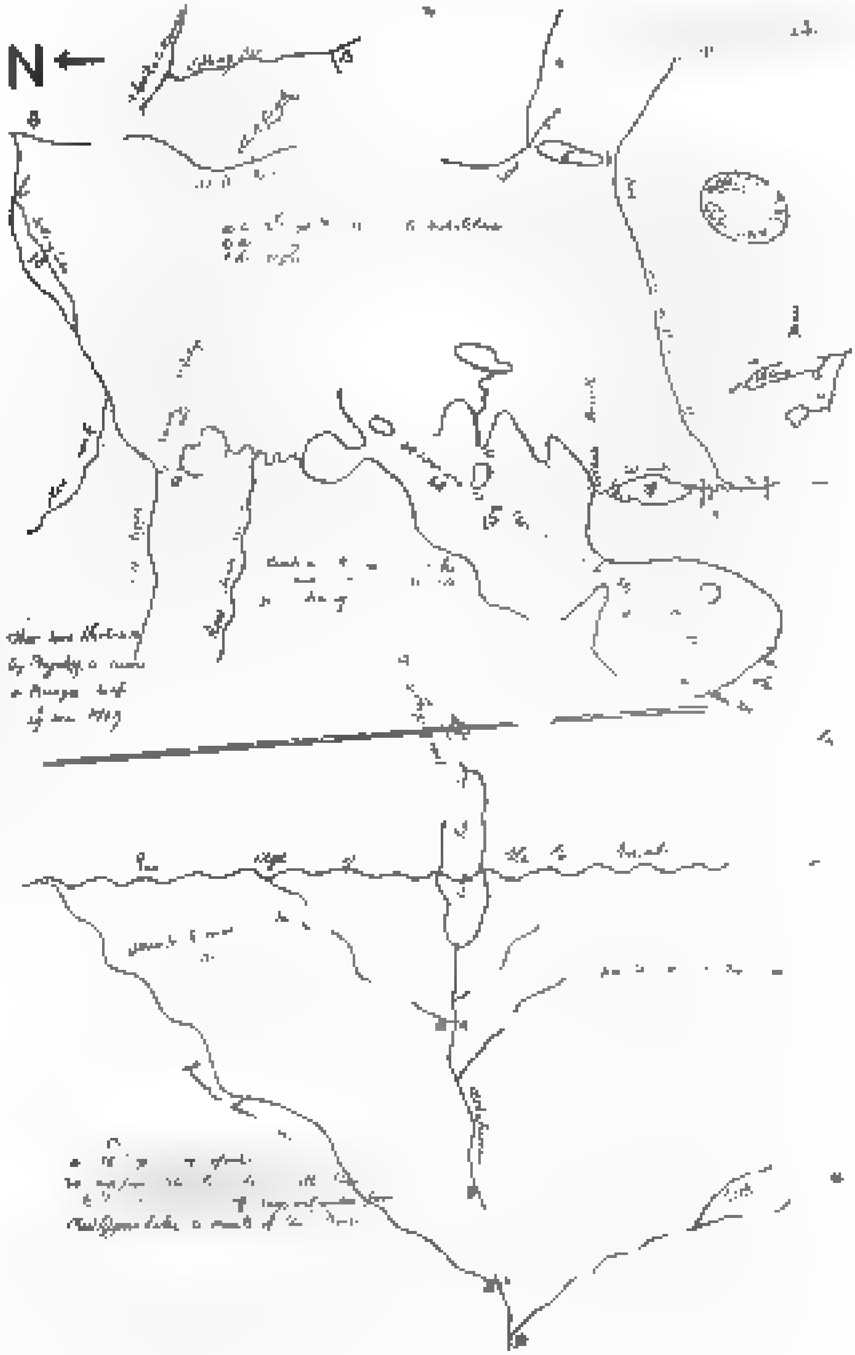
firearms acquired from the Europeans. The local Beaver Indians then began to vacate the Neerlandia area in the late 1700s, moving northward into the Peace River country.

The Cree, a forest people like the Beaver, also migrated in search of food. Since the game they hunted moved in small groups, their bands tended to be smaller family units. They may have wintered on the edges of Shoal Lake, then in the spring moved to the prairies, forming larger bands to hunt the plentiful herds of buffalo.

The Neerlandia district was also the hunting ground of a few scattered bands of Assiniboine Indians. A European explorer, Alexander Henry, reported in 1811 that there were thirty lodges of Swampy Ground Assiniboines at the juncture of the Pembina and Athabasca Rivers, sixty tents of Strong Wood Assiniboines at the MacCleod and Athabasca Rivers (near Whitecourt), and thirty tents of Cree, Assiniboine, and Métis in the forests northwest of Edmonton House.

The Assiniboine Indians had once been part of the larger Yankton Dakota tribe, a powerful group in the mighty Sioux nation. They broke away sometime around 1640 and migrated north to the area above Lake Superior, then westward into the future provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Allying themselves with the Cree, in part for protection against the powerful Blackfoot Confederacy, they eventually found themselves in the former hunting grounds of the Beaver Indians. Some Assiniboines, the Strong Woods, preferred the fast pace of life on the prairies and the excitement of the buffalo hunt. Those who drifted into the boreal forests northwest of Edmonton became known as the Swampy Grounds.

For the Swampy Grounds, life in northern Alberta was not unlike that the Beavers had experienced previously. They hunted the big game — moose, deer, and forest species of caribou and bison —



This map was drawn for Peter Fidler, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Lesser Slave Lake, by a Bungee Indian chief in 1909. It shows the future Neerlandia district, bounded by the Summerberry (Pembina) River and an unnamed tributary of the Athapascow (Athabasca) River — The Macleod River — to be the hunting grounds of the Swampy Ground Stony or Assiniboine Indians. The chief indicated to Peter Fidler at that time that these Assiniboines had formerly hunted around Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

for food, probably by shooting them as they swam across Shoal Lake or chasing them as they migrated through the district. Beavers and muskrat were often trapped or dug out of their lodges along the creeks or on the edge of the lakes. Birds were lured by decoys and shot, or snared using willow shoot snares. Starvation was part of everyday life, however, as game was not always available in abundance. When bands became desperate for food, it was the hunters who were the first to suffer starvation. Every unsuccessful day spent in search of food sapped the hunter's strength making him less able to continue the following day.

The wanderings of both the Cree and Assiniboine seem to have stopped by the early 1800s. By then, two successive smallpox epidemics had reduced their populations by one-sixth. More important, European traders were establishing fur posts in Alberta.

The Local Indians and the Fur Trade

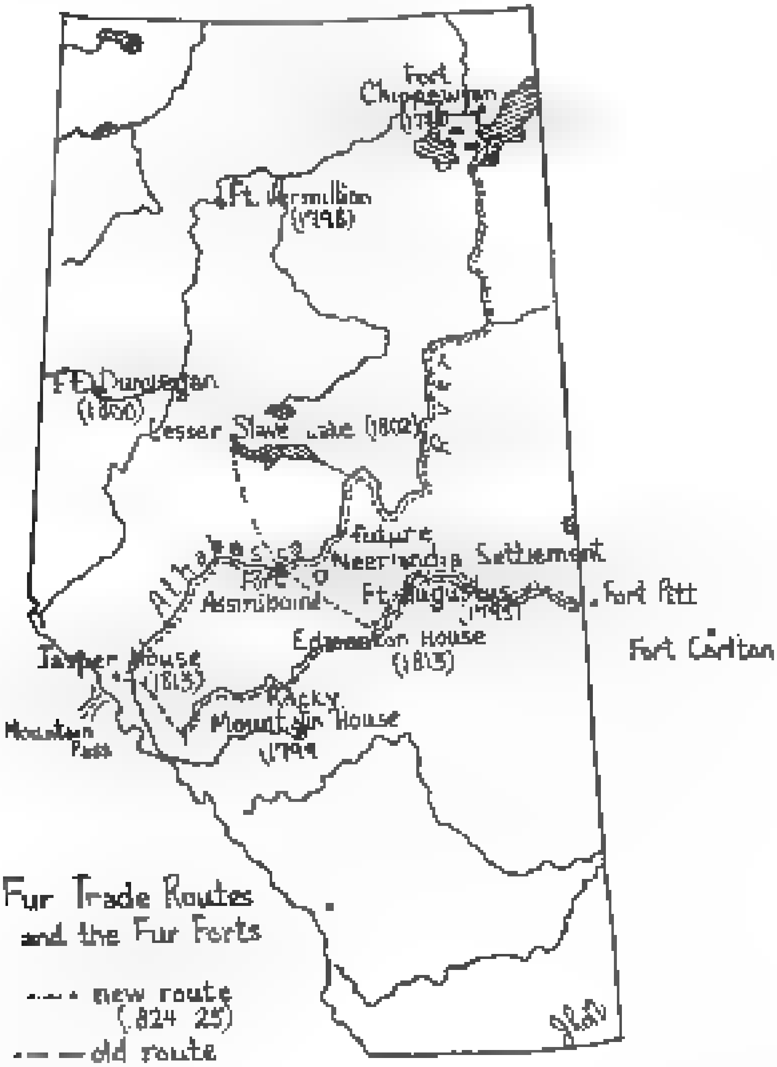
After the turn of the nineteenth century, the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company began a rivalry that put many native tribes in a favourable position. The Northwest Company was the first to set up operations in present-day Alberta. The Hudson's Bay Company countered by establishing Edmonton House on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. More forts followed, including one at Lesser Slave Lake. This competitive situation ended, however, when the two companies merged under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821.

This was the context of the first permanent European presence in the Neerlandia district. In 1823, the Hudson's Bay Company's Committee of the Northern Department gave the go-ahead for the construction of another fort, this one to be built on the Athabasca River. The fort would serve one main purpose: to draw trade away from the fur depleted Lesser Slave Lake region. One year later, the fort was built at the junction of the Freeman and Athabasca rivers. [illegible] MacDonald was the first official in charge of Athabasca River House, later called Fort Assiniboine, which probably consisted of no more than a few buildings at first. The governor had decided that the local Strong Wood Cree and Assiniboine Indians would be attached to the fort, and every effort was to be made to encourage these Indians to trade there.

From the early Fort Assiniboine journals, it appears that the local Cree and Assiniboine, including the Indians in the [illegible] Lake area, were unwilling to trade at the new fort. In the past, these Indians probably traded at Old White Mud Fort, west of Edmonton. Two representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company, Patrick Small and George Wood, were instructed to tell the natives in the area that the doors of Old White Mud Fort would henceforth be closed to them, but the Indians refused to comply. They complained to the Chief Factor of Edmonton House, John Rowand, about the situation, indicating that they preferred to obtain their supplies from Edmonton House. Rowand encouraged them to trade at Fort Assiniboine, awarding them with small parcels of tobacco and ammunition.

Although the new fort never did meet the expectations of the Hudson's Bay Company, the region became an important link in the Company's transportation system. Canoes and, after 1824, York boats carrying outfits (shipments of trade goods) travelled from York Factory on Hudson Bay along the Saskatchewan River system to points west and north through Edmonton House. With the addition of Fort Assiniboine, the Company would make use of the Athabasca River system to transport outfits to forts further west.

The route required an overland connection to be built between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton House, since the two forts were on



different river systems To that end George Simpson commissioned the construction of a road between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton House It was cut in the winter of 1824-25, and ran just south of Shoal Lake. The trail's construction attracted some Métis and Freemen (traders independent of the Hudson's Bay Company) to the Neerlandia area Apparently one such person, Jacques Cardinal, helped cut the trail in this region, before going on to be the horsekeeper at Fort Assiniboine several years later.

The relation of the surrounding Indians to the Fort, even though its fur trade never amounted to much, was one of dependence The Indians relied on the credit system they bought supplies with any money that remained They subsisted during the spring and summer by supplying the post with game — mostly deer, moose, and geese

The Fort also provided charity in periods of illness and starva-

tion. Frequent cases of starvation were reported in Fort Assiniboine's journals. The Fort dispensed liquor to the natives as a reward for good behaviour during the summer or to encourage winter production. The bands that most often frequented the Fort were the [illegible], François [illegible], and the bands of Cree and Assiniboine Indians. Le Petit [illegible], Blue Earth Son, Man-ne-nah Ch-a, Fere Cassee, the Little Crow, and Cree Speaking Son were all mentioned several times in the journals as coming to the Fort to trade.

The trail from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine opened up the region. The trail, however, was never a good route. It was constantly rendered impassable by deadfall and fallen timber; bogs and mud holes were a continual problem. The route from Holmes Crossing to the Pembina, passing just shy of the southern shore of Shoal Lake, was particularly bad. One traveller from Edmonton in 1845 reported that "to the crossing of the Pembina (the track) was good but thereafter we encountered swamps, fallen trees, and mosquitoes, the latter in myriads and all hungry."

The missionaries, as usual, were not far behind the fur traders. The famous Methodist missionary, Robert T. Rundle, began working out of Edmonton House in 1840 and reported great success among the Assiniboines northwest of that post. According to reports, he even conducted several crusades at Fort Assiniboine and found the local bands receptive to the gospel message.

The life of the local Indian population until 1861 revolved around the fur trading post of Fort Assiniboine. They were troubled by bouts of starvation and plagued by lack of game. They travelled in small bands during the winter, roved on the plains, [illegible] to Edmonton House in the spring and summer, and probably looked with reluctance upon the encroaching European civilization. Epidemics of smallpox in 1784 and again in 1838 reduced their numbers drastically.

The Local Indians and the Treaties

By 1861 the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine road as part of its transcontinental transport system, bringing isolation back to the Neerlandia area. Fort Assiniboine became little more than a way station which connected Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake to Edmonton House. Fur transport parties were redirected over a new trail — that from Edmonton House to Athabasca Landing, built in 18[illegible]. The road from Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton House, always a difficult road at best, fell into further disuse. The fur trade, a limited success even in the early days, soon lost its importance in the 18[illegible]s since beaver pelts were no longer in high demand. Beaver hats, which had long been stylish in European countries, had been replaced by silk ones. By 18[illegible] Fort Assiniboine was abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company.

The disappearance of the buffalo also ended the traditional Indian way of life. Local Indians in the district may have depended on the buffalo to some extent, but the starvation that became rampant among the Plains Indians may not have been as severe for the Swampy Grounds. In any case, the slaughter of entire herds for little more than tongues and skins led to the animal's virtual extinction by 1879, and ended what little independent life the natives had enjoyed.

More important in the end was the sale, unknown to the Indians, of Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories to the fledgling Dominion of Canada in 1870. Although clumsily engineered, the sale was to have a great effect on the Indian way of life. Following on the heels of the land sale were Indian treaties — agreements to extinguish the land titles.

Apparently, the Indians in the Neerlandia area themselves requested a treaty. In 1871 W. J. Christie, then Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Edmonton House, reported that he "had a visit from the Cree chiefs . . . The object of their visit was to ascertain whether their lands had been sold or not . . . They referred to an epidemic that had raged throughout the past summer, and the subsequent starvation, the poverty of their country, and the visible diminution of their country . . . ."

The government called together the various tribes; two isolated bands of Assiniboine Indians northwest of Edmonton asked to take part in the "ceremonies". These bands, led by their chiefs, Paul and Alexis, had lived apart from many of their tribe, hunting and fishing in the boreal forest region in northern Alberta. The proceedings were held in Forts Carlton and Pitt in the late summer of 1876, and not long afterward the Indians chose their reserves — approximately five square miles per family — near their traditional hunting areas. The treaty was later called Treaty No. 6 and covered all the territory south of the Athabasca River in central Alberta.

Meanwhile, independent traders began working in the Timeu Creek area and perhaps some Indians there did not go to live on reserves. Most likely, they began supplying the traders with furs until 1899. The majority of Cree and Assiniboine Indians, however, stopped trapping altogether, resigned themselves to their new status, and abandoned the area to go to the newly-created Alexis and Alexander Reserves.

The Settlement Period Begins: The Gold Rush and the Dominion Lands Survey

Although the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine trail was little-used, settlement was following the trail from Edmonton outward in concentric circles. Settlements such as St. Albert (1894) and Riviere Qui Barre (1895) sprang up along the road, and a store opened up (1896) on the Pembina River at McDonald's Crossing, later called Belvedere.

The next year (1897-98) was the year of the Klondike Gold Rush. Public meetings were held in Edmonton to discuss the Gold Rush and its transportation needs. A good number of Klondikers embarked on their way to the Yukon from Edmonton. There were many routes one could follow. One route, from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, then via the Athabasca, Slave, and McKenzie rivers, involved a trip of 2500 miles. Another, from Edmonton to Lac Ste. Anne, Whitecourt, and Fort St. John using the old Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine road, was only 1500 miles — though it was far more difficult. In all, 766 men, 9 women, and 400 horses chose the latter route — only 160 of the men arrived. The road was a difficult one during the construction of the route through the Swan Hills. 300 horses had died of starvation due to lack of hay pastures. Ferries were installed to make the trip easier — one near Fort Assiniboine and one at McDonald's Crossing at Belvedere.

The impact of the Gold Rush on townships 61 and 62 was, however, limited. It did resurrect an almost long-forgotten trail and, in a limited way, pave the way for future settlers, but the Rush was short-lived, lasting only three years. The firm of Henderson and [illegible] set up trading posts along the trail at Belvedere and [illegible] in [illegible]. Americans settled [illegible] in [illegible]. Paddle River was settled in [illegible]. Scattered settlers had been squatting on their land since [illegible], and settlers in the [illegible] and [illegible] districts began filing for homesteads in 1906-07.

A surveying system for the land had already been decided upon when the Dominion acquired it in [illegible]. A checkerboard pattern would be followed, after the pattern the Americans had used in their great Midwest. Meridians running north to south and baselines running east to west twenty-four miles apart would be surveyed first. This would be followed by townships blocked out thirty-six square miles. Each one mile block was to be further subdivided into four quarter sections.

With a few modifications, this system remained in effect until [illegible] when the provinces took over the control of their own public lands. Certain sections were designated as school sections, while the Hudson's Bay Company was given two sections from every township. The teams of surveyors, generally from eastern Canada, faced the monumental task of imposing a giant man-made grid over a seemingly endless expanse of territory, not all of it conducive to surveying work. Each team consisted of a deputy surveyor of the Dominion Lands Survey (D.L.S.) and two chainmen. The latter were expected to stretch out a long chain perfectly level, using a plumb bob, in accordance with the transit operator's directions. The team also had the services of two flagmen to help with the setting out of township and section markers. These men were often employed as axemen in the more heavily wooded areas to clear the path for the chainmen and transit operator. In the early years each team was allotted one cook, one horse and cart, and a ration allowance of sixty cents per day. The total daily budget was $13.60.

The deputy surveyor used the stars to superimpose the grid on the land — a system which required a great deal of accuracy. Any errors immediately became apparent when teams of surveyors failed to intersect each other's paths. The D.L.S. official made field notes on every township surveyed, often describing the [illegible] conditions of the [illegible], the temperature, the [illegible] over the [illegible], as well as giving other information. He was required to give technical information about his day's work of cutting through the bush, traversing streams and lakes, and setting up iron post markers at quarter and section corners. More importantly, however, he reported on the suitability of each township for settlement. These field notes were then handed in to the Surveyor General.

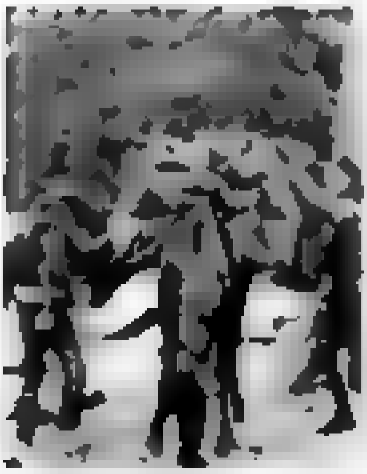
Townships were marked out with wooden posts in the early days, but by the time [illegible] was surveyed, steel township markers were in use for township and section corners. [illegible] for the human senses. Blizzards and shortages of good water and food were common problems experienced by the surveyors, not to mention the difficulty in keeping good men. The reward was often no more than the charming of new trails and looking upon virgin lands. The job was practically complete by [illegible] — [illegible] quarters were marked out — a phenomenal total of [illegible] million acres.

Cutting a survey line

R. W. Cautley Surveys the Baseline Through Neerlandia

Townships [illegible] and [illegible], Range 3 West of the 5th Meridian, were not surveyed by any single crew. Meridians and baselines were usually surveyed before other crews came in to survey the individual townships. Since the sixteenth baseline follows the southern edge of Township [illegible], the men who surveyed it were the first surveyors in the area.

Surveying the sixteenth baseline west of the fifth meridian began in the summer of [illegible]. [illegible] Fontaine, D.L.S., began working west along the sixteenth baseline, and on June [illegible], he recorded putting iron post markers at the section corners and wooden post markers at the quarter section corners. Each marker was mounded using the dirt from four large pits about two-and-one-half feet square surrounding the post. The posts were inscribed in Roman numerals with the legal descriptions of the four quarters in each direction. Where it was not possible to mark the corners in the normal fashion because a corner was located in a swamp or lake, a witness post was erected at the nearest suitable spot on the quarter section lines. Unfortunately, Fontaine's personal diary, which all D.L.S. officials were obliged to keep in addition to their field notes, has not survived.



All packed and ready to go

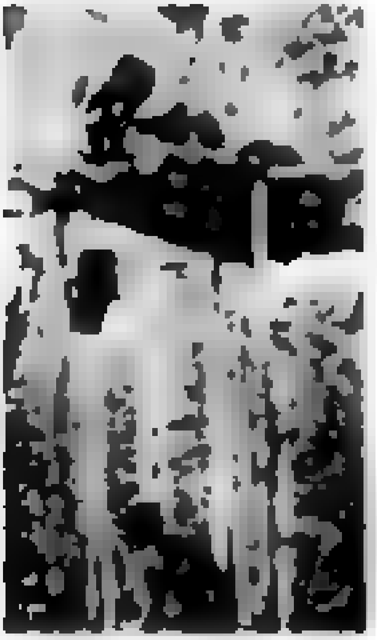
The next surveyor to enter this country was R. W. Cautley, who was instructed by the Surveyor General in the fall of [illegible] to continue where Fontaine had left off. He was to locate the sixteenth baseline and proceed west until he reached the sixth meridian, where work was being carried out by Arthur Saint Cyr. Cautley's diary has survived and gives some interesting insights into the conditions under which this area was surveyed.

Surveying a lake shore

Cautley left Edmonton in early November with his crew of fourteen men and six wagons, four of which were contracted from local people. The party arrived in Rivière Qui Barre the same day and, using a government supplied patronage list, bought additional supplies, including about 10,000 pounds of oats for the horses, from the approved merchants. This done, the group moved on. As they descended the banks of the Pembina River, an axle on one of the government wagons broke, and Cautley had to send a man back to Edmonton to get it replaced.

Cautley used native people from the Lac Ste. Anne area reserves to help him transport supplies. The Indians, presumably once from the Neerlandia area, offered to help Cautley pack his load to his destination. Cautley reports this in his diary: "spent 2½ days haggling with Indians over packing rates; they demanded a daily wage for themselves and horses, but as I was not going with them I refused to consider anything but a flat rate per (pound), which was fortunate as the Indians whom I subsequently started out from Ste. Anne with myself made the trip in exactly half the time that the first outfit took." In any case, Cautley apparently valued the help and especially the Indian ponies supplied by the Indians.

Packing supplies



A food cache

Upon locating the sixteenth baseline a short distance west of the Neerlandia district, Cautley set his men to building a log cache station to store his supplies. This camp would then service his daily camps, the so-called "flying camps" set up along the trail. With the wagon repaired and camp set up, the crew was ready to begin work. On November 21, Cautley "sent packers ahead to make camp six miles east on the line. He left Archie Duncan Best and [illegible] to cruise a road out west and brush log cache [illegible]. Myself with packerman, two chainmen and cook, were working out along line toward east. Surveyed five miles." Upon making contact with [illegible]'s last post marker and confirming its accuracy, he was ready to continue west towards the Fort Assiniboine district. Of the Neerlandia area, Cautley noted only the great stretches of windfall and brule (burnt-over woodland), at times almost three feet deep, which made [illegible] difficult. The burnt-over forest was presumably a result of the giant forest fires that raged prior to the settlement period. The temperature that day (November 22) was [illegible] F, though it was too cloudy for Cautley to make an observation to verify his position.

Surveying Townships 61 and 62

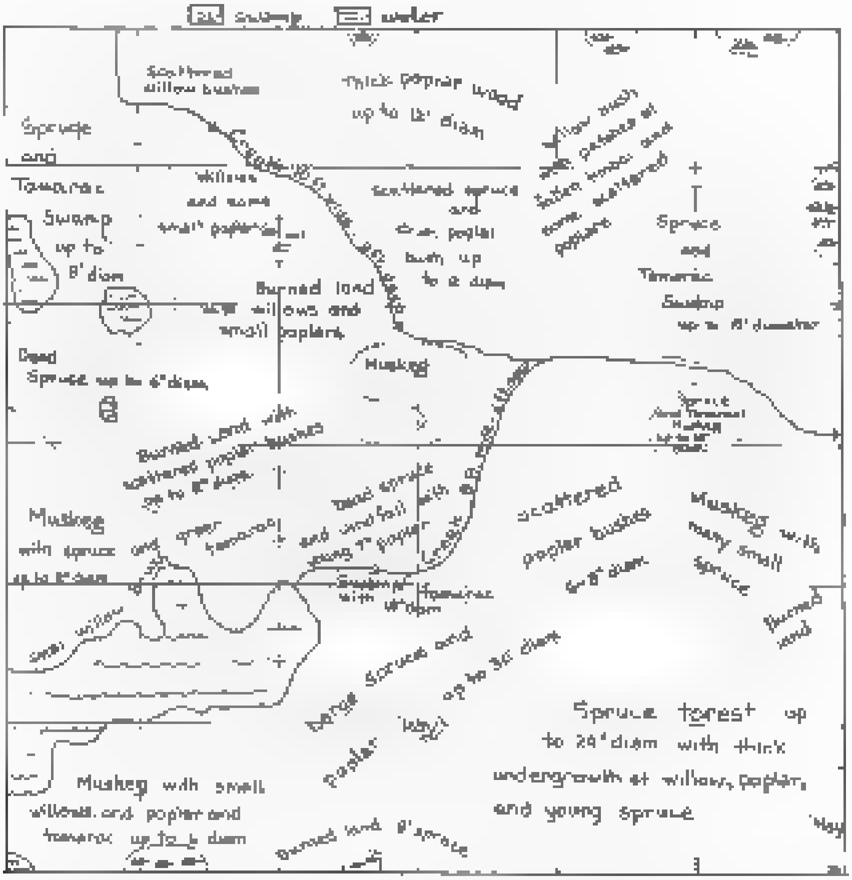
A more substantial survey of the Neerlandia area was carried out, not by R. W. Cautley but by two other men. In 1907 R. H. Knight surveyed Township 61 and in 1908 [illegible] [illegible] did the same for Township 62. Although their personal diaries are not available, Knight and [illegible]'s field notes are a source of information.

R. H. Knight led a crew of thirty-three men into the area of Township 61-3-5 in September 1907 and finished his surveying job in approximately three weeks. The entire cost of the survey, including wages, equipment and iron posts was $1,[illegible]. This all-British crew had three assistants, one cook, a teamster and packer, eight chainmen, four mounders, and two axemen crews of seven men each. Knight's report to his superior, the Surveyor General in Ottawa, ran as follows:

> "The best route by which to reach this township from Edmonton is by the old Klondike wagon trail as far as section 19 township 60 range 3, thence by a poorly constructed wagon trail north-easterly which enters this township at section [illegible].
>
> "The surface of this township is gently rolling and the surface soil is composed of black loam averaging about [illegible] inches deep with a subsoil of [illegible] [illegible] mixed farming. There is no prairie [illegible] all the [illegible] of the township.
>
> "There is a large quantity of good [illegible] spruce and tamarack timber in sections 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.
>
> "The remaining sections are covered with poplar up to eight inches in diameter accompanied in many places by young spruce of the same age. There are muskegs [illegible] on the north [illegible] and the west halves of sections 29 and 32 are practically all muskeg. These muskegs are nearly always covered with young spruce or tamarack up to six inches in diameter.
>
> "The only hay found is that growing about the shore of Shoal Lake. There are large quantities here but the ground is wet which would make the cutting of the hay difficult.
>
> "The water of Shoal Lake is good, also that of Shoal Creek, which runs through the township in a northeasterly direction from the lake.
>
> "The chief source of fuel is the abundance of good wood. Coal is likely to

be found near the surface but does not outcrop. There are no stone quarries nor minerals of economic value.

"Game in this township is limited to moose and bear of which traces are frequently seen."


swamp
water
Scattered willow bushes
Thick poplar wood up to 12" diam
Willow bush with patches of fallen timber and some scattered poplars
Spruce and Tamarac Swamp up to 8' diam
Willows and some small poplars
Scattered spruce and green poplar bush up to 8" diam
Spruce and Tamarac Swamp up to 8" diameter
Burned land with willows and small poplars
Dead Spruce up to 6" diam
Muskeg
Spruce and Tamarac Muskeg
Burned land with scattered poplar bushes up to 8" diam
Dead spruce and windfall with young poplar
Muskeg with spruce and green tamarac up to 8" diam
Swamp with tamarac up to 6" diam
Scattered poplar bushes 6-8" diam
Muskeg with many small spruce
Burned land
Small willow
Large spruce and poplar up to 36" diam
Spruce forest up to 24" diam with thick undergrowth of willow, poplar, and young spruce
Muskeg with small willows and poplar and tamarac up to 6" diam
Burned land 8" spruce

Surveyor's description of Township 61, 1907

The bodies of water in this township are Shoal Lake, Freemen Lake Lake No 1, and Shoal Creek. One member of the surveying crew was an axeman named Freeman. Knight recorded the name of the lake as Freeman Lake later writing it as Freemen Lake so it is possible that the lake was named for one of his axemen. Shoal Lake presumably got its name by being the source of Shoal Creek which had been named earlier by another surveyor. The source of the name of Lake No. 1 remains a mystery.

The crew who surveyed Township 62 was led by Allan Findlay, DLS. The crew worked in this area from June 23 to July 16, 1910, three years after Knight had done his work further south. The crew had two transit men, Allan Findlay and James A. Findlay, four chainmen, one cook, one teamster and eighteen axemen and mounders.

The field notes describe a township swampy in several places, with much deadfall and brulé. The creeks leading into Baird Lake were measured according to depth, flow, and direction of flow. For example, the creek going into Baird Lake from the north was two feet deep at the time and had a flow of one hundred yards per hour

(One chainman was named Ivie Baird and it is possible that Baird Lake, the only body of water in this township, was named after him.)

In the muskeg.

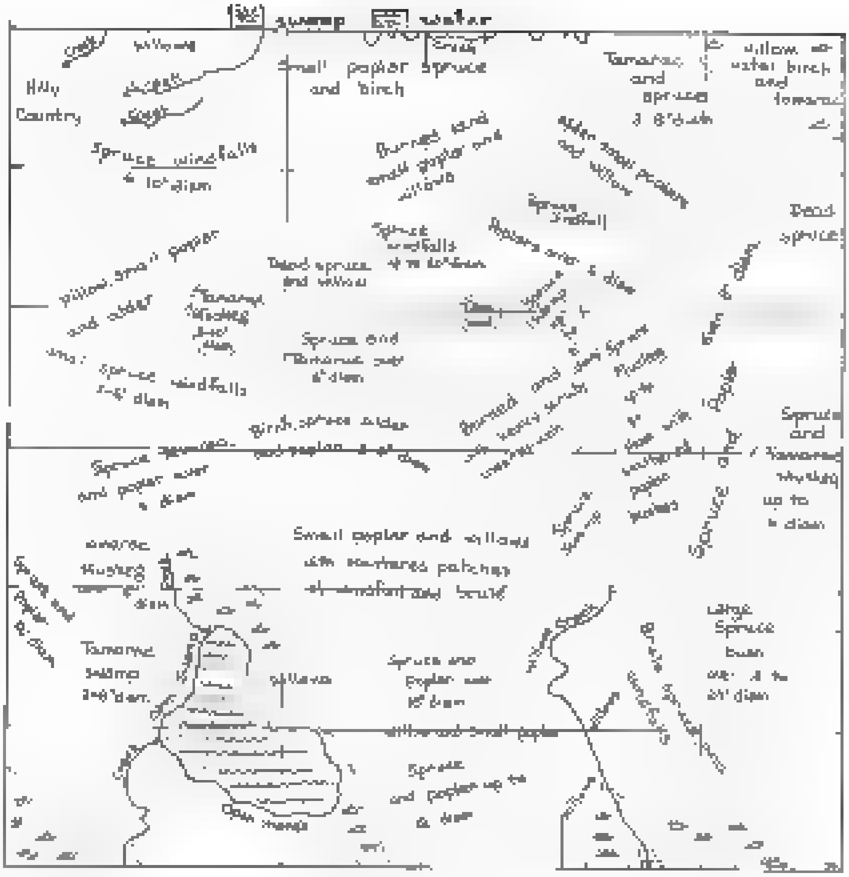
G. A. Weir A.L.S.

In 1910, Findlay was able to report that "This township is reached by a road running north from Mellowdale P.O. The road had previously been as far as Shoal Lake. It was boggy in a couple of places and somewhat blocked up by windfalls." Findlay reported cutting a road entering the township at the S.W. corner of Section 3 and leaving it at the N.E. corner of Section 33. He continues his report to his superiors as follows:

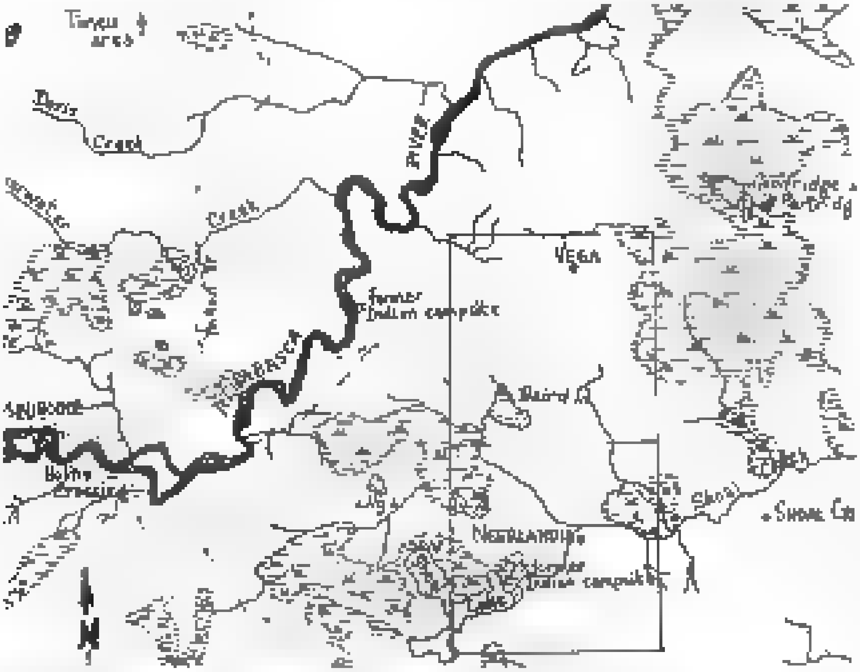
> "The surface of the township is fairly level, the main height of land being in the vicinity of the north boundary of section 28. In the swamps there is a considerable depth of moss and peat, the higher ground being composed of 4" to 10" black loam with heavy clay subsoil and being very suitable for mixed farming. Some slough hay can be obtained from the vicinity of Baird Lake.
>
> "There is an abundance of fresh water conserved by the forest growth and the muskeg. A number of small streams flow out of the township, but there are none flowing in, and there is no liability of floods nor any opportunity for the development of water powers. There is a plentiful supply of rain throughout the summer months. Some very hot weather was experienced in July, and no frosts were noticed until the latter part of August. Firewood can be procured in all parts of the township, former forest fires having left tracts of dead spruce, tamarack and poplar ready seasoned for use. There are no minerals, coal, or stones suitable for quarrying. Quite a number of black bears were seen, also moose, jumping deer, and some smaller game. Partridge are plentiful. Muskrats, mink and other fur-bearing animals are also to be found."

Early Settlement in the Neerlandia District

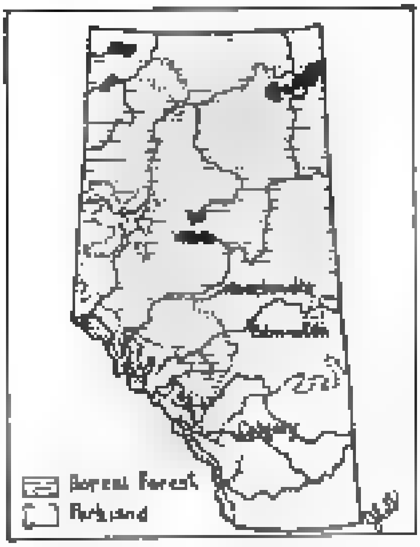
Settlement in northern Alberta prior to the turn of the century had to await the conclusion of the treaties and settlement of Indians on reserves after 1876. The discovery of new strains of wheat suitable for Alberta's growing season in the late 1800s was also a prerequisite. More importantly, settlement depended on a land survey, and this was achieved by 1907.



Surveyor's description of Township 62. 1910.

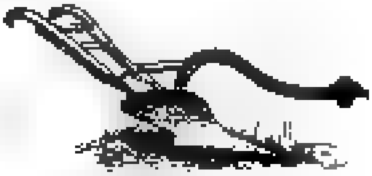


Early settlement in the Neerlandia district.



Many factors had made settlement prior to this date undesirable or even impossible. This district lies on the edge of the boreal forest region. Compared to the parkland region around Edmonton and as far northwest as the Pembina River, the land (Townships 61 and 62) was less suitable for homesteaders. The area northwest of Edmonton also suffered from the lack of good transportation. Early settlers coming into the area prior to 1907 probably used the Klondike Trail (the old Fort Assiniboine-Edmonton road). C. C. Fairchild, DLS, in his survey of the area, commented on the poor condition of the trail. It apparently was in no better shape in 1909 than it had been in 1827 or any time in between, for that matter.

By 1909 the area was ready for settlement and by 1910 settlers had filed on homesteads in the southern sections of Township 61. The Dutchmen were not the first people in this area, nor the first Europeans. Of the native groups, all that remain are a few collections of artifacts, caches of pemmican, and faint memories of now ploughed-under campsites. The natives themselves had all but vanished by the time this district was settled.



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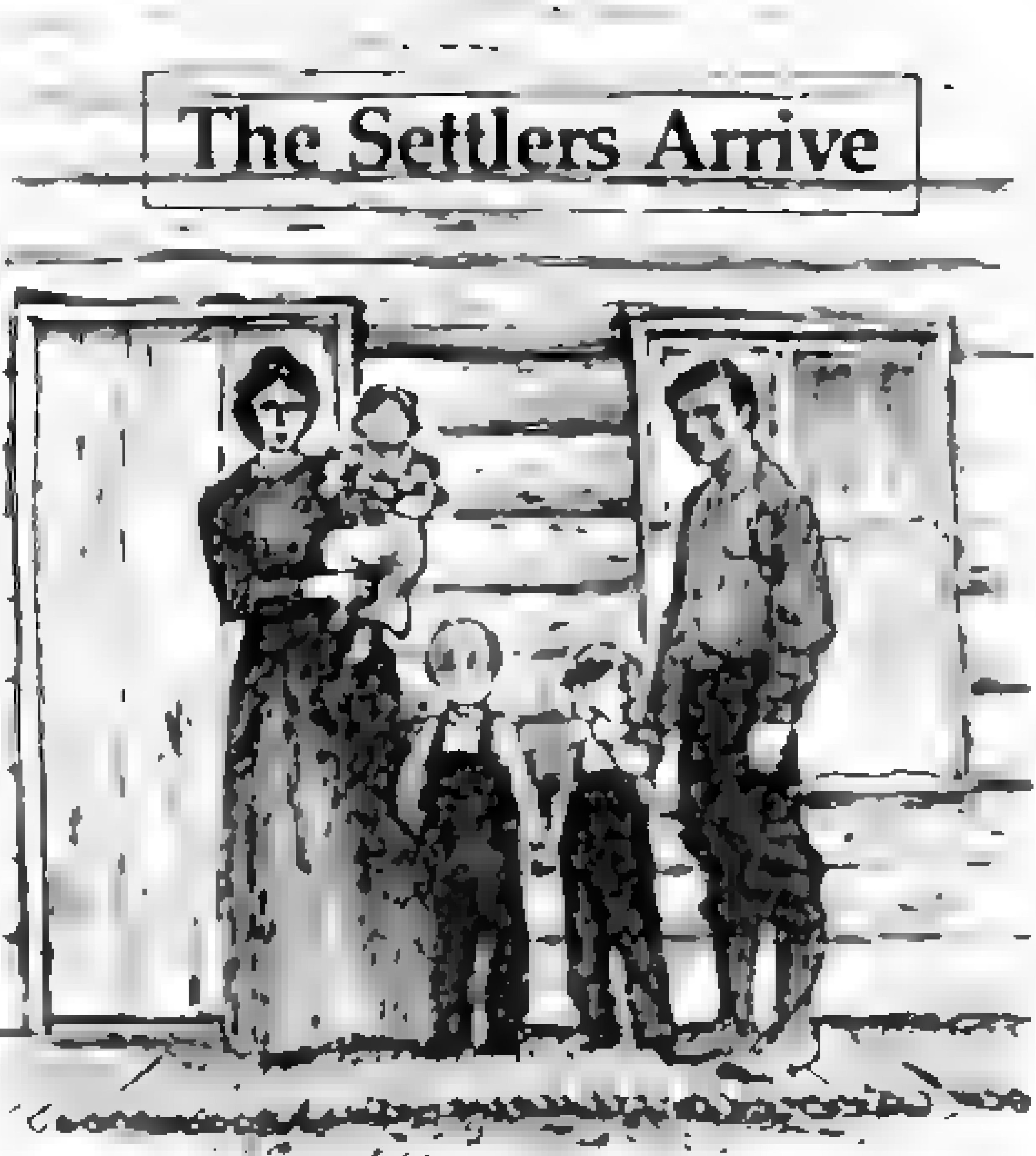
The Settlers Arrive



THE SETTLERS ARRIVE

Emigration

Townships 41 and 42 were settled by emigrants from the Netherlands. To leave one's country in the early 1950s and travel some thousands of miles of ocean and continent to settle in an uninhabited area of central Alberta was a tremendous undertaking. Yet in [illegible] and the years immediately following many families did just that.

Although the individual reasons for the move vary, it is clear that they did not leave for religious reasons. There was religious freedom in the Netherlands. Though many reasons can be given, most have to do [illegible] and are primarily rooted in economic conditions. These economic conditions were the result of serious pressures put on the Dutch economy by forces within and outside its borders.

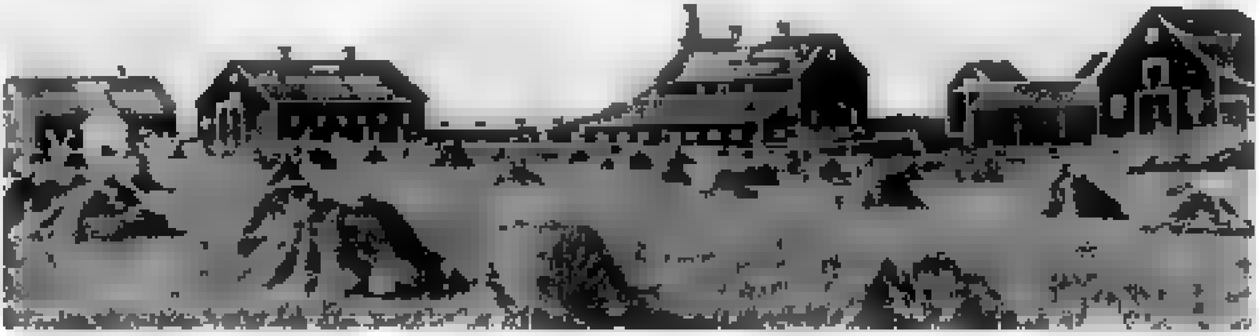
The Netherlands is a very small country. In 1950 it had a population of about ten million [illegible] had only seven million. Given the lack of resources and the density of population, it seemed the Netherlands was unable to provide work and opportunities for all its people. Even though the reclamation of land from the sea had helped over the years to provide more room and to help support the need for resources, it was not enough to alleviate the problems of room and finances for many of the Dutch people. Besides low wages for the labourer and little opportunity to begin farming, unemployment was high. The young especially saw little opportunity for advancement in the future.

Not all emigrants left the Netherlands for strictly economic reasons. Some were looking for adventure. A few were anxious to leave because of the compulsory two-year service in the Dutch army. People in the Netherlands were also very class conscious, and for this reason those of lower and middle class often longed for a country where people would be viewed not by their standing in a community, but on their own merits.

Once people began to look for alternatives to life in the Netherlands, they were encouraged by emigration societies and agents. The former were concerned with the welfare of the emigrant; the latter often tried to get as many bodies as possible to [illegible] the coffers of the transportation company they worked for. Each agent was paid by the company for each person he recruited.

Although the emigration societies were intended to help potential emigrants avoid the pitfalls encountered in Canada, it seems few availed themselves of these services. The societies' chief goal was to curtail the activities of unscrupulous agents, whose main concern seemed to be numbers rather than service. The societies never accomplished this goal, as both the Dutch and Canadian governments failed to pass laws regulating the activities of these agents.

There were many agents working in the Netherlands during this period. Although other transportation companies such as the White Star Lines, Red Star Lines, the Cunard line and the Holland America line also actively recruited people to leave the Netherlands and come to Canada, the CPR agents were most active. The CPR had a dual reason for recruiting emigrants since they also owned large tracts of land in Canada that they wished to sell to bonafide farmers. The agents that toured the Netherlands before 1914 emphasized in their lectures the things they felt would have the most impact. They said there was lots of free land and they handed out literature illustrating immense harvests and indicating yields per acre that staggered the imagination. The agents held magic lantern slides showing threshing gangs, prairie homes, fields of grain, and pictures of the Rocky Mountains. They emphasized the 160 acres for only a ten-dollar filing fee, but did not relate the saying popular in Canada at that time, "The government bets you ten dollars you can't last three times six months on your homestead." They played down the long, cold winters as not that severe; besides, a person could live to a ripe old age breathing the "Champagne Air."



1187-Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives

Scenes such as this enticed people to emigrate to Alberta

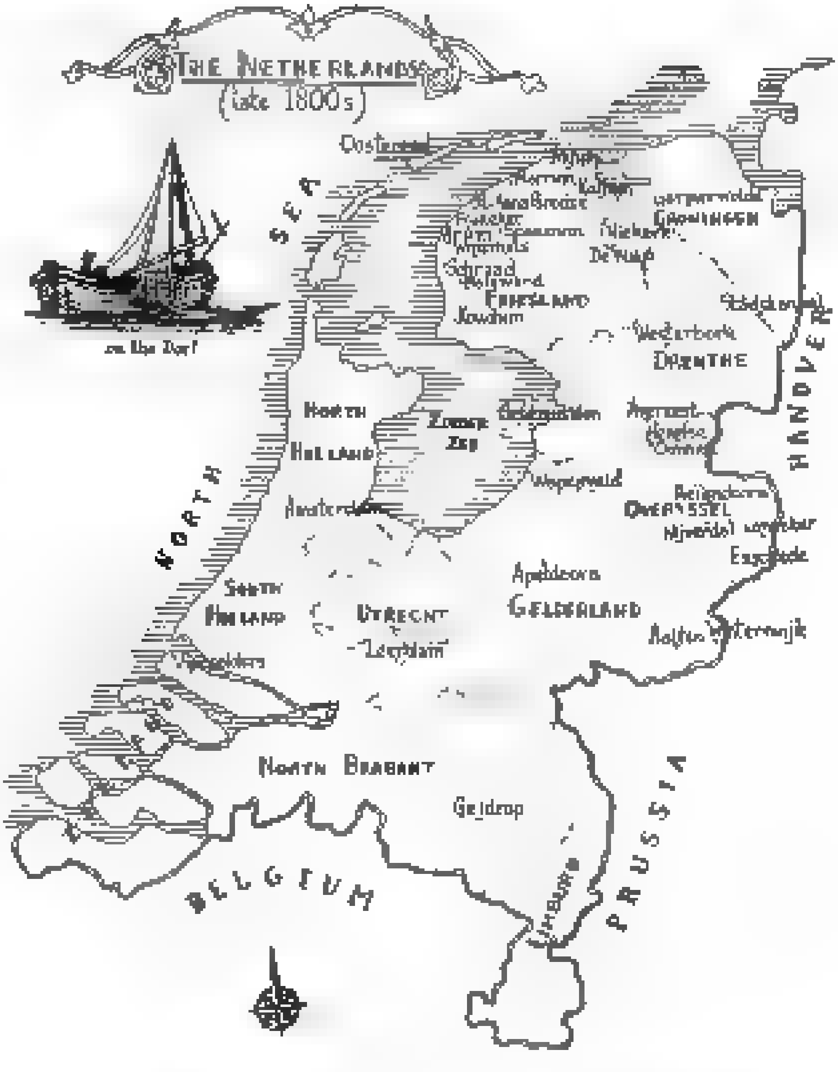
Few emigrants failed to be influenced by the stories and exaggerated claims of a land flowing with untapped resources and potential wealth. Once a person immigrated to Canada he too became a potential agent. If he wrote home that things were going well it would influence his family and friends. Often these letters were published in papers without critical comment. One such booster of Canada was Henry Kippers Sr., who wrote articles for Dutch newspapers extolling the virtues of the west.

The kind of emigrant that left the Netherlands at that time was described in a pamphlet written about 1913:

> "Most of the emigrants are not reckless young people who throw themselves boldly into the adventures of a new and strange life. Naturally there are some among them, but most of them either quickly return or learn through privation and experience to accustom themselves to a set task. The great majority of Netherlands emigrants have outgrown the years of reckless and adventurous desire. They are mostly lower middle class or labourers, store clerks who can look forward to no significant promotion, salesmen who have been put out of competition, small businesses who are being pressed to death by larger companies, factory labourers who foresee a dreary life of hard work and no advancement whether for themselves or for their children, and especially farm labourers who, pulled often by enticing offers supported by each other's example, often easily leave their district and homeland in large number."

1840/Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives

CPR propaganda photo, late 1880s



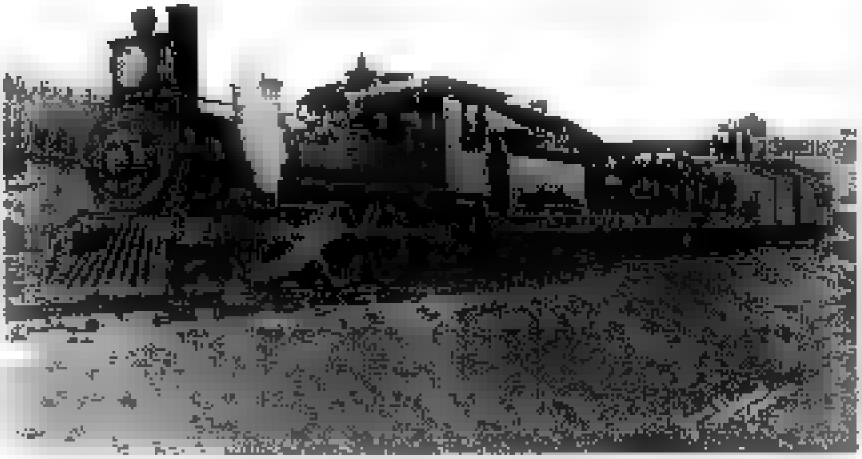
The towns the pioneers came from

Once the decision to leave was made, the question of where to go occupied the emigrants' minds. It would seem logical that those of Reformed persuasion would consider going to the United States where there were well developed and thriving Reformed churches of considerable stature. This, indeed, did seem a favourable destination but most of the desirable land available for homesteading in the U.S.A. had been claimed by 1900. What was left was considered of poor quality. Some cheaper land was available to purchase but most of the would-be immigrants had little or no money. The possibility of going to the Dutch colonies in Michigan or Iowa and working as a labourer was also considered, but that would mean they would still not have their independence. These appear to be the main reasons why Canada began to be looked on as the only place left. The overwhelming desire was to become independent, to get out of what they considered to be little better than slavery, and to own their own land.

In turn, the Dutch were regarded by Canada as desirable immigrants because of their work habits and because they were familiar with the governmental system. A letter to [illegible], Consul General for the Netherlands, from the minister of the interior of Canada, T.M. Daly, dated December 3, [illegible], states: "The minister regards the people of Holland as a specially desirable class in the North West, being particularly adapted to the system of local self government everywhere in vogue in this country." Such a positive assertion of the acceptability of Dutch immigrants was welcomed in the Netherlands. The Canadian government clearly thought Dutch immigrants would fit into Canadian society without any problems.

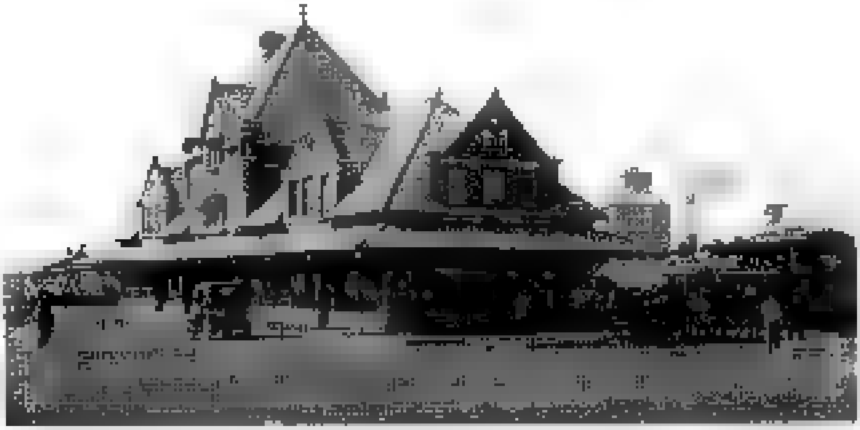
For those going, however, the excitement of going away on this adventure often prevented them from realizing the extent of the anguish for the family left behind. The knowledge that a son or daughter was reading promotional material and showing some interest put a stab of fear in many a parent's heart. When this interest was transferred into action and the announcement was made of the decision to leave, the grief was sometimes equal to a death in the family. There was no guarantee of ever seeing each other again and for many this was the case. Most of them had little money; though relatives and friends sometimes provided them with some help, they left with little cash and few belongings but much hope. Before leaving they had to put their affairs in order, say goodbye to friends and relatives, and look wistfully over the familiar surroundings which many would never see again.

When all the arrangements had been made and tearful goodbyes been said, it was time to board the boat. For most of the emigrants it was no luxury trip. Some travelled steerage because this was cheaper. For families it was particularly trying. The emigration societies and agents encouraged emigrants to travel in the early spring so they would have the summer months in Canada to become settled. At this time of the year the seas were rough and icebergs could be a hazard. The trip normally took ten to fourteen days and stories about seasickness are legion. What a relief when they were finally able to set foot on the firm soil of Halifax or Montreal. The immediate benefits of landing were a chance to get a glimpse of the new homeland and to obtain relief from nausea and illness. However, new problems began immediately. Those immigrants who travelled with CPR encountered few problems, since the CPR made all the necessary arrangements. For others, though, the disembarkation became a blur of lost baggage, upset children, custom inspection, and a desperate effort to find the right train.



CNR train coming into Edmonton.

B6262/E. Brown, Provincial Archives of Alberta



CNR Station, 1913.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta.

When they found the right train the immigrants realized that no food would be provided, and a rush to buy bread and sausage began. (Later immigrants were advised to bake currant bread to take along, since it seemed the currants would keep the bread fresh for the long journey.) If the trip seemed long, the immigrants accepted it as part of the bargain. For the Dutch, who measured distance by minutes, the train trip seemed endless. Distances between cities were measured in days, and it seemed there was no end to Canada. Day after day they stared at trees and waste land and, except for small areas, it seemed unsuitable for agriculture. The train was smoky, the benches were hard, and the stops at major

stations became a mad scramble to buy some food. Finally they arrived in Winnipeg, where they had a stopover and could refresh themselves.

From Winnipeg they set out for their final destination, Edmonton. When that was reached, the journey was over.

To The Homestead

* * *

The Edmonton newspapers report business as usual for the burgeoning capital in the spring of 1911. The official opening of the Legislature, a Lieutenant Governor's breakfast, and the progress of the High Level Bridge project all make the newspaper headlines. Not as prominently displayed is another noteworthy item: "More foreigners arrive" — foreigners meaning non-British people. The official pomp and ceremony alluded to in the big headlines are a far cry from the dingy Immigration Hall quarters where most of the newcomers stay while the men look for work.

* * *

B4738/E Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Edmonton, looking east from 2nd Street, c. 1911.

Of the Dutch people who later homesteaded in Neerlandia, Fred Baron and his family were probably one of the first to arrive in Edmonton. They came in 1906, and other future Neerlandians soon followed including the families of Cornelius Ingwersen and Henry Kippers. There was little group awareness at first among these Dutch immigrants, but one tragic event occurred to change that situation. In the spring of 1910, two of the Kippers children passed away from scarlet fever. When the *Edmonton Journal* reported the deaths, Dutchmen from Edmonton who read the article visited the Kippers' family to offer their sympathies. Shortly after this, Henry Kippers, undoubtedly moved by the feeling of "communion of the saints" invited a group of Dutch people to his home. He wanted to discuss a matter that concerned many of them, namely the setting up of a Reformed church such as they were used to in the Netherlands. Some had already begun to worship in mainline Canadian denominations, but the group decided to send Henry Kippers to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A., where the Christian Reformed Church was holding a meeting of Classis Pacific.

There was other talk among the Dutch immigrants too. Many of them were not entirely satisfied with their new way of life in Canada. Some of them had been lured here by the promise of free land, but the lack of cash prevented them from venturing outside of Edmonton to start farms of their own. A dream of starting a farming community of their own caught hold of some of them. For the time being, though, these Dutchmen agreed to stay on in Edmonton until their circumstances changed.

In October 1910 Henry Kippers returned from the Classis meeting in Lynden, Washington. With him was Rev. J. Vander Mey of Manhatten, Montana, sent to help organize the First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. The founding members consisted of nine families, one single person, and twenty-three children. Elected as elders were Henry Kippers and Fred Baron.

When it was cold, the church services were held in private homes; otherwise they met in a large tent pitched on the corner of 109th street and Jasper Avenue. Here, among the poplars, the people gathered together to hear the word of God proclaimed and sing the beloved *Psalmen*. In 1911 the tent was sold and the immigrants rented a room in the Reed and Robinson Building for their Sunday services.

Henry Kippers, besides being responsible for the organization of the church, also became secretary for an immigration society organized in 1910. In that capacity he wrote articles for Dutch and American papers such as *Patrimonium* and *De Wachter*, encouraging Dutch people to settle in Edmonton. His persuasive pen had the desired effect. On April 4, 1911, a front page headline in the *Edmonton Bulletin* read: "Nucleus of Dutch Colony is En Route." The article explained that fifty Dutch residents of Whitinsville, Massachusetts, left town that day for Alberta, Canada. The Baker and Mast families were part of that group. Around the same time the families of Sietsen Tiemstra and Jan Anema came to Edmonton from South Dakota.

* * *

A Dutch Colonization Society

In Edmonton, Canada, our church has a congregation. There is also a society to establish a Dutch colony (settlement) in that area. The society consists largely of members of our congregation there. Brother H. Kippers, secretary of this society and at the same time clerk of the consistory, writes the following concerning this matter:

There is here a Christian Society which purposes to establish a Dutch colony (settlement) in a good area. Nearly all members of our congregation have joined this society. This spring they will go to look for land (this was to have been done in the fall, but due to circumstances they did not have opportunity to accomplish it) to a well-known area and, with the Lord's blessing, are sure to succeed. Everyone will then receive 160 acres of the best land free by the drawing of lots. You need not worry that you will not have a church or school. You can be positively assured of those.

To be a member of this society you contribute ten dollars. Send this to the treasurer J. H. Ter Horst, Pine Ave., Edmonton, or to the undersigned who is also the secretary of this society. Besides this, it is required that you are able to speak the Dutch language. Not only the head of a family, but every young man older than 18 has a right to 160 acres, so each claimant is required to pay ten dollars into this society.

If you desire more detailed information, write soon since a great number are interested. If you have little or no money, or if you are thinking to come to Canada to farm, we advise you to join (us), come in the spring, work in Edmonton the following summer and go with us to the farm. As much as possible, the consistory will supply work and housing. I may not ask for more space. Write for information, as soon as possible, to the secretary of the society, who is also the clerk of the consistory. This is necessary, for of course it would not do to make the congregation a colonization society. Therefore the consistory would also like this to be placed under "Letters". Thank you for the allotted space.

For the consistory
H. Kippers, Clerk
118 Griesbach St., Edmonton, Canada.

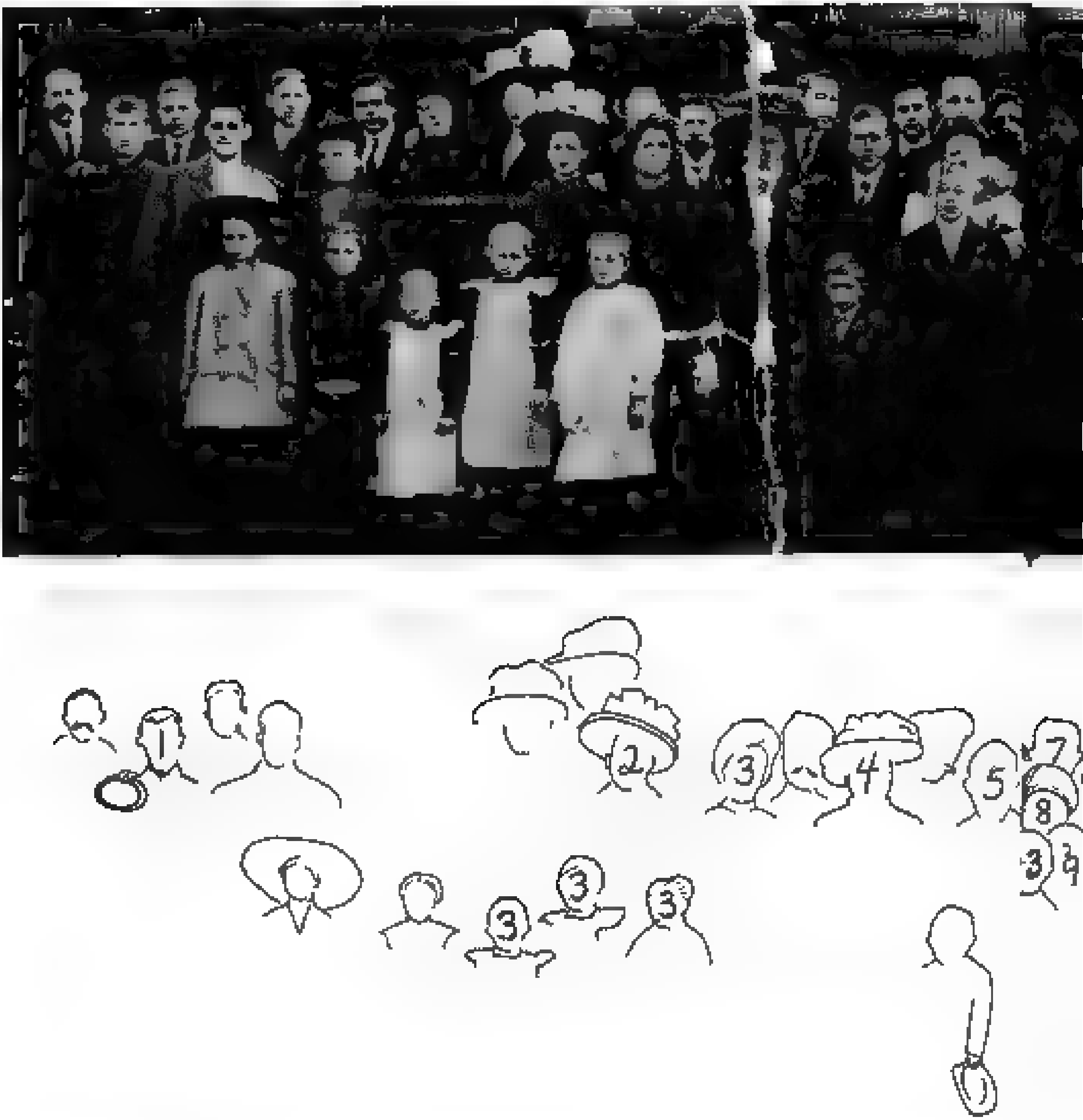
The above letter was written in Dutch and published in the January 1, 1911 issue of De Wachter.

* * *

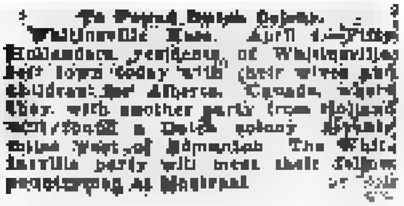
The dream of owning their own land was the reason why these people had come and on April 28, 1911, seven men filed on homesteads in what are today the Thorhild and Abee areas of the province: Jan Anema, Jouke Baker, Cornelius Ingwersen, Henry Kippers, Koop Mast, Albert M. Mast and Siebren Tiemstra. However, in the summer of that same year, these men all abandoned their homesteads. Jan Anema wrote that his homestead had too much muskeg on it, and Cornelius Ingwersen wrote: "Everyone of my friends is leaving . . . and I wish to join them elsewhere."

Many more immigrants came from the Netherlands in the spring of 1911 and, by the summer, the Dutch community was firmly established. Most of them were anxious to begin homesteading, but they first had to work to make money.

Many of the Dutch immigrants had homes in Fraser Flats, homes that sometimes consisted of tents or crude shacks. Other Dutchmen lived in the Parkdale area of the city. The women's chores included washing clothes on washboards, hauling water, gathering firewood, and learning to bake bread. Most of the men had steady work, though it may not have been the best-paying. (It helped, of course, that employers held Dutch workers in high regard.) More often than not their work involved heavy physical labour. Some of the men worked at Little's Brickyard or the lumber mill, which were both in Fraser Flats, others found jobs with the City Water Works department or working on the new High Level Bridge. Many also found work at Swift's or Burns packing plants. While living conditions were not what they had been used to, the future looked promising to most of the immigrants.



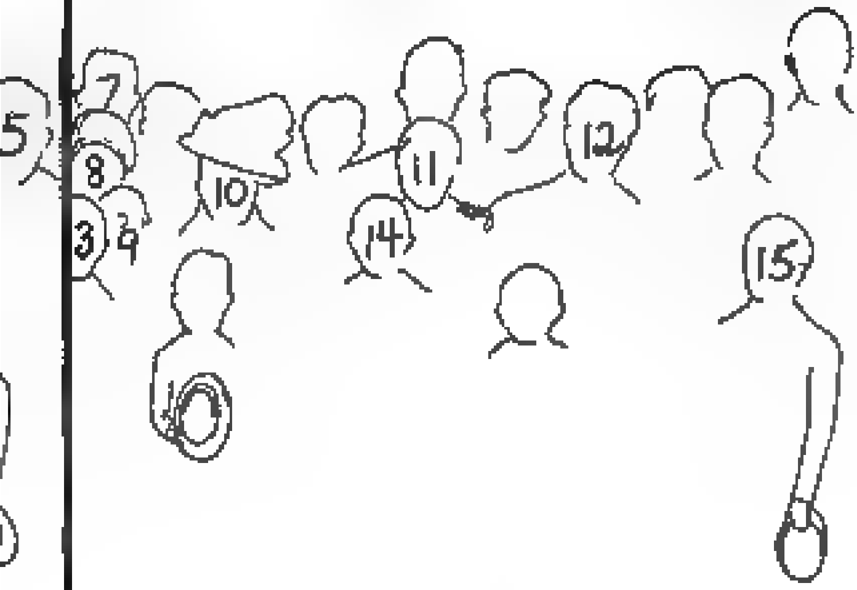
The group from Whitinsville (with some railway officials) after arriving in Edmonton, April 1911. 1. Raymond Baker, 2. Katie Baker. 3. Mrs. Hempel and three daughters. 4. Magdalena Baker. 5. Albert Mast. 6. Joseph Baker, 7. Gasie Baker. 8. Aaltje Baker holding 9. George. 10. Catharina Baker. 11. Minke Mast, 12. Koop Mast, 13. C. K. Mast, 14. Henry Mast. 15. Dick Baker. Mrs. Hempel put the clean white aprons on her girls a short time before they arrived, but after reaching the Immigration Hall and seeing the dirty quarters there, she immediately took them off.

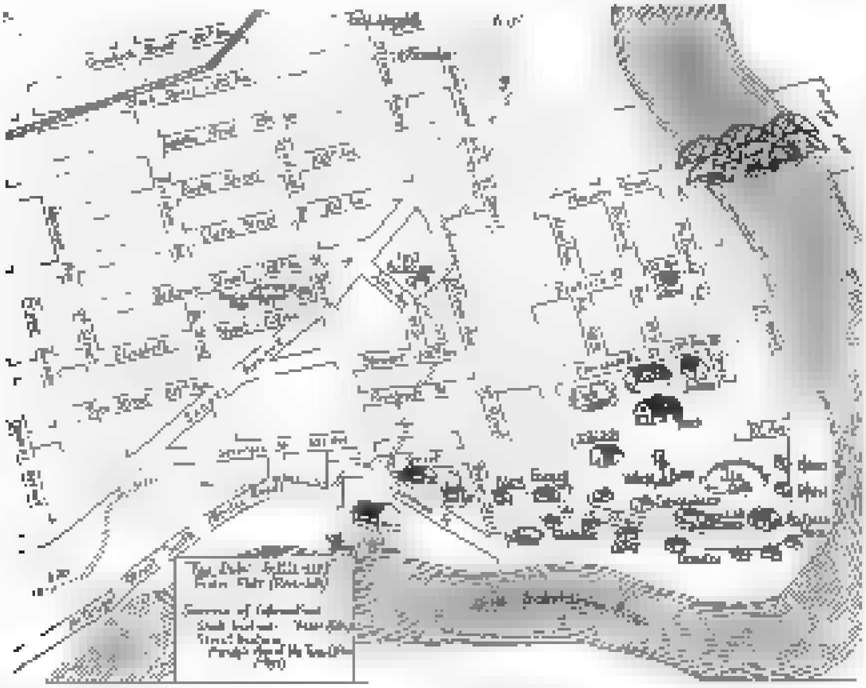


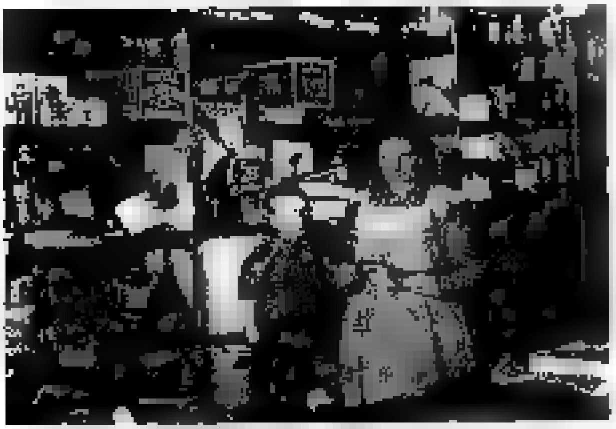
To Found Dutch Colony.

Whitinsville, Mass., April 4.—Fifty Hollanders, residents of Whitinsville, left town today with their wives and children for Alberta, Canada, where they, with another party from Holland, will found a Dutch colony [illegible] miles west of Edmonton. The Whitinsville party will meet their fellow countrymen at Montreal.

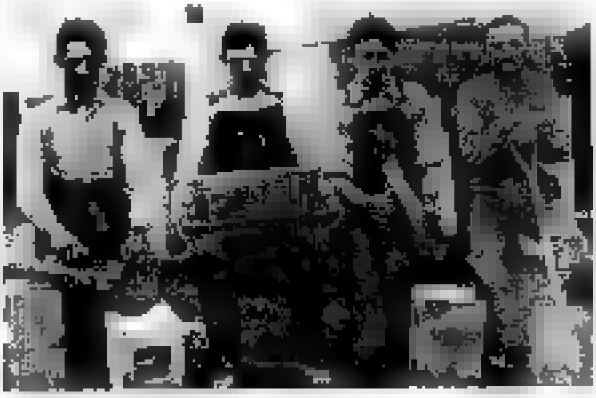
Edmonton Bulletin, April 4, 1911





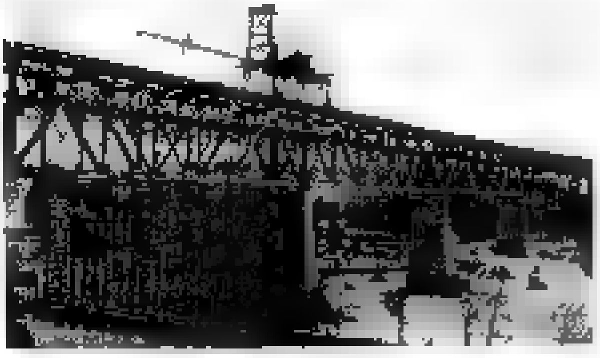


Baron's store. James, Maggie Baron.



Working in brickyard. John, Gerrit, Willem ter Horst, ?

At Burns Meat Plant. Lizzie Baron, ?, Ada Terpsma.



Construction on High Level Bridge, 1911.

The dream of establishing a Dutch farming community was still alive. It seems sometime in 1911 a committee was established to look through the land records to find a suitable location to begin a settlement. The mandate was simple: find an area where other settlers had not yet gone, where there would be enough land to establish a Reformed community, and where there would be room to expand.

By that time, the good land surrounding the city was already occupied by settlers of many nationalities. Even good land at great distances from the city had settlers interspersed throughout. The committee did, however, find a recently-surveyed area to the northwest that seemed to hold some possibilities. If the dream of a place of their own and a settlement that would allow them to carry out their objectives would ever materialize, it would have to be soon. The committee urgently recommended that they should take a look at Townships 61 and 62, Range 3, west of the 5th Meridian.

Dutch immigrants in Edmonton, November 1911. Back: Jan Terpsma, Hendrik Schoonekamp, Jelle Holwerda, Arie Emmerzaal, Jan Anema. Front: Frank de Jager, Elke Jorritsma, Willem van Ark, Jouke Baker, Gerrit Gotzen.

As a result of this recommendation, about twenty men who were interested made a trip to the area in early December 1911. Because there was no snow yet and temperatures ranged from forty to fifty degrees Fahrenheit, they travelled by horse and wagon. Even though the weather was warm for the time of year, the soil was frozen so the trip was pleasant and mostly easy. They followed the road north from Edmonton, passing through well-settled areas. Along the way, they stayed at stopping places. After they crossed the Pembina River the population was sparse, but there was still a

passable trail. Once they passed Naples, though, they came to a heavily-timbered area and had to cut their way through the bush to reach Township 61.

The group spent a few days looking over the area, then returned to Edmonton. It seemed that everyone was satisfied with what they had found. Six quarters were not available since they had already been taken up by George Caughum, Tom Lewis, Elizabeth Melsome, and George Wing.

The men had noted the quarter sections they thought suitable for farming. To divide up the land in a fair and orderly way, they put the quarter numbers of the good sections of land into a hat. Each man picked a number from the hat and that became his quarter.

On the morning of December 18, 1911, the following men filed in Edmonton at the Dominion Lands Office:

John Anema	SW 23-61-3
Rients de Jager	SW 34-61-3
Drikus Huinink	SW 10-62-3
Cornelius Ingwersen	SE 09-62-3
Albert M. Mast	SE 22-61-3
Koop Peter Mast	NE 15-61-3
Johan Messelink	NE 34-61-3
Henry J. Michael	NE 04-62-3
Menne Nanninga	NE 09-62-3
Albert J. Oldegbers	SE 34-61-3
Hendrik Schoonekamp	NW 34-61-3
Berend te Ronde	SE 15-61-3
Douwe Terpsma	SW 35-61-3
John Terpsma	NW 26-61-3
Siebren Tiemstra	NW 14-61-3
Willem van Ark	SW 15-61-3

Three others filed shortly thereafter:

December 26, 1911

Fred Baron	SE 15-62-3
Henry J. Kippers	NE 10-62-3

February 6, 1912

Arie Emmerzael	NE 28-61-3

These men formed the group whose determination was responsible for the beginning of a new community.

* * *

On December 19, 1911, both the *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* and *The Edmonton Journal* noted that a group of Dutchmen had settled on land near Edmonton. The *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* reported:

> HOLLANDERS FILE ON HOMESTEADS
>
> Yesterday a party of sixteen Hollanders appeared at the land office and filed on homesteads. They had spent considerable time in looking over the country adjacent to Edmonton and returned to the city satisfied that it was a good enough place for them to live and make their permanent home. The Hollanders located on land that will bring their homesteads all together, making them close neighbours.

* * *

Early in January 1912, some or all of the men who had filed returned to their homesteads to build houses, since their intentions

were to begin homesteading as soon as possible. The men helped each other build the houses.

* * *

First trip to Neerlandia

It was in the fall of the year that the settlers of Edmonton saw a strange parade leave the city early one morning. It was so interesting that a reporter from the *Edmonton Journal* made a report and took a photograph.

The wagon was pulled by two big horses and loaded with such things as groceries, tools, and rifles. The driver was a sturdy man from Gelderland named Buink [Dirkus Huizink]. About twenty Dutchmen, from almost all the provinces of the Netherlands, walked alongside or sat on the wagon. Frisians were in the majority but Gelderland and Overijssel were amply represented. The aged Jan Oldeghers was there, who would come later with his brave wife. Through good times and bad, they would later be the leading couple. From North Brabant was the always cheerful Henry Michael and even two Amsterdamers were along [Ingwersen and van Ark].

The big aim was to find living space adaptable to expansion, with good land and preferably not too-heavy bush. The first day they travelled about thirty miles through beautiful country but everything was taken up by French settlers. These farms conveyed prosperity. At the twelve-mile mark was the town of St. Albert. Twenty miles farther was the beautiful town of Morinville, and farther on were the hamlets of Legal and Vimy. So far they had been going north through the French area, but now they came to the Scottish settlement of Clyde, which was at the end of the railroad. [From Clyde they travelled west.]

The journey now went to places that were less populated. There was no lack of stopping places, though, in spite of the sparse population. Everywhere they came they were received with open arms. Humble meals were supplied and sleeping place was provided, even if it was mostly in the hay.

If they had wanted to, there was opportunity to take up land in that area, closer to the city and the railway. However, then they would have been among settlers of other nationalities, and the idea was to establish a *zuiver Nederlandse kolonie* (pure Dutch colony).

Now the men had to cross the Pembina River. Luckily a short time before a wooden bridge had been built. They followed the advice of many to go north from the Pembina River. There was already a settlement in that area called Dusseldorf, settled by Germans from Rhineland.

In Dusseldorf lived Mr. Munsterman, one of the German leaders who had started a store. His neighbour was an Englishman, Mr. Southworth. A bit farther west was a new settlement called Naples, started by Italians.

A day's travelling brought the landseekers to the edge of a very ancient bush. There lived a heavily-built Scottish man by the name of Wilson and his family. His buildings were built of large logs and the homestead had a big fenced-off clearing, where a few cows and a pair of horses were grazing. Against the background of large trees the site was very picturesque. When they asked him where he got feed for his animals he pointed to the haystack which was cut of hay in the woods; he said there were enough clearings where an abundance of grass grew which he had mowed and brought home.

The rest of his land was covered with fallen and burnt tree trunks which made it difficult to clear. He said the whole area to the Athabasca River had been very heavy bush. Thirty years ago, however, there had been such a great forest fire that over one thousand acres were burned; only a four or five-mile area of the old bush had been spared.

The landseekers had only to work themselves through this bush and the promised land would be before them. They had to use an axe to make a trail for the wagon. After a night's sleep in the hay at the Wilson place, with pancakes and bear meat for breakfast, everybody was curious to see what was on the other side of the forest. It was not an easy job to make a trail through the virgin forest, but after much sweat and toil they reached the other side in the early evening. Before they went any farther they made a camp, since there was a greater difficulty ahead — a seemingly endless field of muskeg which had been built up over the ages since there was poor drainage in the country. It was nearly impassable. The settlers now understood why the fire had stopped at the bush. After a long search they found a place that could be forded; with logs and poles they improvised a road for the wagon to go over.

Finally the promised land was in sight, the place where the future Neerlandia would be. It was not an open area because over the thirty years since the fire an abundant growth of shrubs and trees, especially poplar, had grown over the land. Here and there were patches of old trees which had been spared from the fire.

The area was not absolutely uninhabited. The Dutchmen had been informed that three hunters and trappers lived three miles north, so they planned to find them. They made a little clearing and left the horses and wagon in the care of some of the older men while the others divided into groups to look over the land and make contact with the three hunters.

Soon they found the survey lines and it was not long before they stood in front of a little settlement. It was a friendly and romantic scene with three small log houses amidst low growing bush and shrubs. The houses were not very close together but each the same distance from the corner of their homesteads. Getting acquainted was pleasant and surprising. Tom Lewis was a tall broad-shouldered Englishman with a clean-shaven, kindly face. His friends were quite the opposite — two rough looking bearded Irishmen named George Wing and George Coughlin. They were pleased to see the group of Hollanders and looked forward to the area being inhabited. They made their living by hunting and trapping fur-bearing animals. Wild animals were plentiful, and big game like bear, moose, deer, and coyotes abounded. Rabbits were as numerous as a plague. The landseekers enjoyed tender moose steaks for the first time, and they had bear meat as well. A good meal was an absolute necessity since walking in that wild country proved quite difficult.

In the evening, after a very tiring day, they sat around the campfire. The Dutchmen were divided into the three cabins and each host told their group his own history. They had been in the area a number of years already and knew the country through and through. Summer months were used for prospecting — walking the length and breadth of the country. The cold months were for trapping and hunting when the season was open and the fur was most valuable. They each had their own traplines, mainly in the area of the Athabasca River.

That same winter in January, after celebrating Christmas and New Year's with their families, the men travelled again to the area to build log houses. Again Mr. Burnik's wagon was loaded with necessary provisions and brought to the destination.

In Neerlandia they were divided into groups of four or five men who, as neighbours, helped each other build. First they had to cut the necessary logs (forty to fifty) for each building. Each group had a large bush in the neighbourhood where they could saw down straight trees. After that, horses were used to drag the logs to the building site. A stable for the horses was the first priority and a thick layer of hay was put over it to make a roof. Half of the stable served as sleeping and living quarters for the builders. It was not too comfortable but warm. The meals consisted of brown beans, rice and rabbit meat.

The foreman (Nanninga) was a careful, capable man from Groningen, a carpenter by occupation and an architect. There was also the Brabanter, Michael, who looked very serious but in reality was a cheerful and humourous man, in contrast to the single fellow from Gelderland (de Rondel) who saw everything from the pessimistic side. Soon our friend from Gelderland left; the foreman also went back to Edmonton in the beginning of March to leave the finishing up for the rest.

In a few days, the weather began to change so much that it looked as if spring had come. The rest of the men (the three left of that group) prepared to return home. Early in the morning they were to leave, and at three o'clock they were ready. It started to rain and a terrible wind came up. It was pitch dark, and the rain changed to icy water. The melted snow began to stream and, on top of it all, they completely lost direction. Daylight came and they noticed that they were in a totally strange country. But what else could they do except keep on walking. Finally they were happy to come to a small clearing with a house on it, inhabited by Italians. These people gave them a place by a warm stove so they could dry their clothes. Instead of going south the men had walked east and had arrived in Naples.

After being shown the right direction, the group continued on their way. It rained and snowed so heavily, however, that they were soon soaked again. The water began to stream from every direction. One of the three, who was in front, thought: "I'm wet anyways, it makes no difference if I get wetter." So he waded right through streams and creeks which were at times several feet deep. The others were more cautious and if they noticed that the leader was going through deep water they found shallower places to go through. Came to evening, the leader was so stiff that he could

hardly walk. Just in time, after a thirteen-hour struggle, they reached an old store, the so-called Post Office at Hazel Bluff. There they could enjoy a good warm meal and a decent place to rest.

Early in the morning, after a good breakfast, they went on again. Luckily for them, they would now follow a travelled road. It was clear, a bit frozen, and everything was covered with a lever of fine snow. It seemed like the difficulties of the day before had not done much harm; only the leader was now the follower. He could not move his left leg very well; the muscles had become stiff. After several miles, he had to quit completely, but it was six miles before the nearest stopping place. Not too far away was a farmhouse, so the invalid went there while the two others continued on their way.

The invalid was received with typical Canadian hospitality by the couple Brown and remained there for two days with rest and a massage with petroleum (the only medication they had on hand) which helped a lot. He felt good enough to continue his journey and, even if he limped somewhat, he could travel the eight miles or so to a certain Marshall, who had a big democrat with two big mules pulling it. Marshall brought him in a few hours to Morinville where he could catch the train to Edmonton. There was a happy reunion with his wife and family and in no time his leg was back to normal again.

Cornelius Ingwersen

Excerpts taken from memoirs written in Dutch by Cornelius Ingwersen during the 1950s

* * *

[Arie Emmerzaell] and more young men had built their log cabins the year before [1912] and I will tell you a few stories about the building program as told to me. There were ten or twelve young men who went together from Edmonton to build a log cabin for each. They were living together in a log barn of an older settler.

They bought wholesale tools — saws, axes, stoves, and heaters — and some groceries, not forgetting brown beans and some salted pork, salt, tea, and coffee. "And they had all things in common (Acts 2:44)."

Different characters were together: one ex-officer from the Dutch army [Willem van Ark], a father and son [Koop and Albert Mast], and [Arie Emmerzaell], an ex-laundryman. Also one or two had been farmers in the States [Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema]. The older man [Koop Mast] was installed as cook and handyman. The young men went into the bush cutting logs and building cabins and once in a while some of them went looking for a homestead.

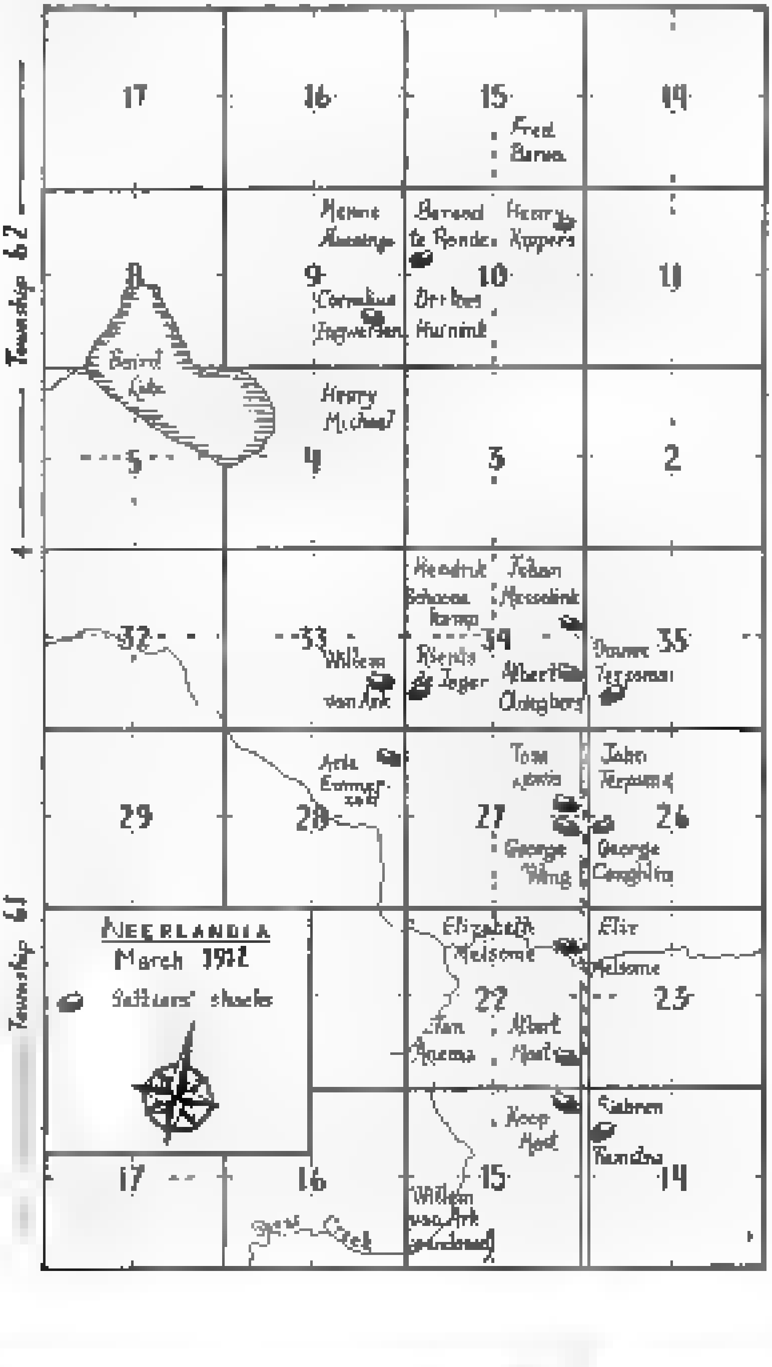
Remember it was winter and snow was on the ground. There were thousands of rabbits at that time and they had their trails all over the snow. Since there was no well, the cook had to use snow water for cooking. It happened one time they were eating beans for supper and the ex-officer was picking out beans and laying them on the table. The cook said, "Are they not done?"

"Yes," was the reply, "They are done alright but not the right kind. They are rabbit beans!"

The cook's son jumped up and said, "Dad, I told you before, you should put the water through a cloth!" A few days later the ex-

officer came into the kitchen and saw the old man using the towel for a sieve to clean up the snow water. That night the officer would not eat beans at all, since the towel had been used by all the men beforehand.

At one time a few of the men had been out looking for land and they were returning home over the frozen creek. But Arie was all in and could not go any farther. It was decided the officer should go ahead and Arie should follow slowly. "But stay on the creek so you will not get lost," the officer told him, "and I will get you something



to eat. After a rest you will make it home." The cook was just baking pancakes so he took some and met Arie and fed him some pancakes and they made it home.

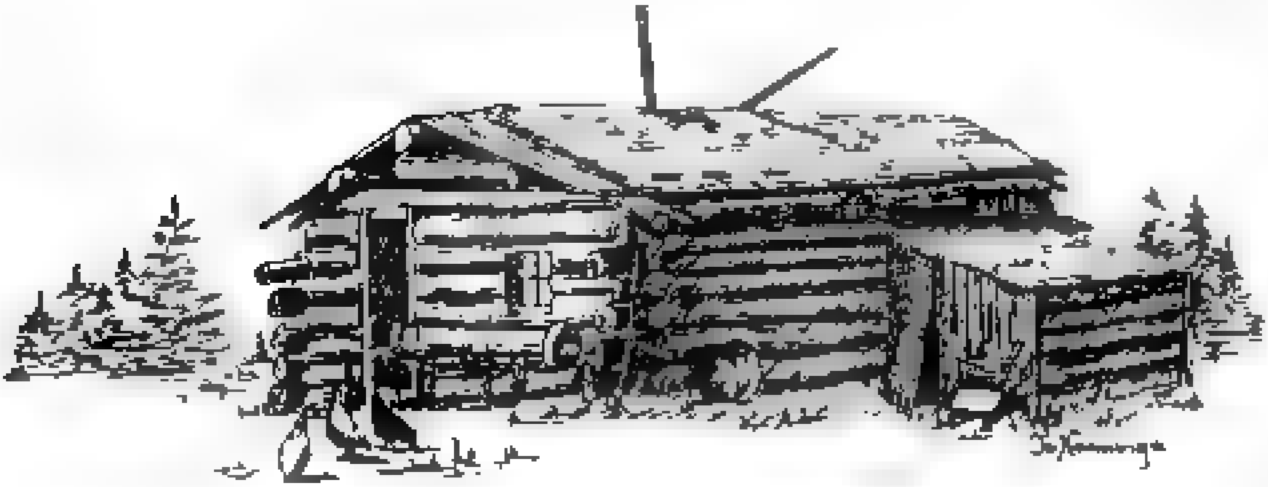
Ben Lievers (memoirs)

* * *

By May the building project was completed. At least twelve cabins had been built. According to homestead records, these men had cabins on their homesteads by the spring of 1912: Rients de Jager, Arie Emmerzael, Cornelius Ingwersen, Henry Kippers, Albert Mast, Koop Mast, Johan Messelink, Jan Oldegbers, Berend te Ronde, Douwe Terpsma, Siebren Tiemstra, and Willem van Ark. After their return to Edmonton most of the men continued at their former jobs. The Mast, Oldegbers, and Terpsma families were the first to leave for their homesteads.

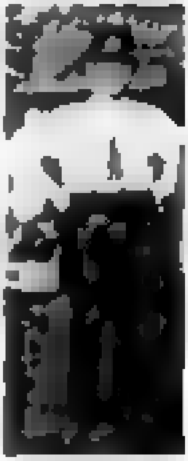
To begin homesteading took courage and determination. Though Douwe and Betje Terpsma were in their thirties the other couples were much older. Albert Jan Oldegbers was sixty-four, his wife, Johanna, was fifty-four. Koop Mast was fifty-eight, his wife Minke was fifty-three. At an age when most people contemplate retirement they were beginning a new and difficult life. Both the Oldegbers and the Masts had their youngest children with them. John Oldegbers was thirteen and Henry Mast was fourteen when they came in 1912. For the Terpsmas it was no less difficult. They had five children to feed — Norman, the youngest, was only two years old.

By the fall of 1912 the area had a name — Neerlandia. The pioneers wanted a name that reflected their Dutch origin. There were several suggestions but at a meeting it was finally narrowed down to Neerlandia — Willem van Ark's suggestion — and Hollandia. A vote was taken and most votes were for Neerlandia, a name which more accurately reflected that the background of the pioneers was from many Dutch provinces.



During 1913 more settlers joined the first pioneers. The families of Gerrit Bakker, Hendrik [illegible], Albert Mast, Johan Messelink, and Siebren Tiemstra came as well as six other men: Arie [illegible], Berend [illegible], Anne [illegible], Berend te Rande, Jelle Tuininga and Willem van Ark.

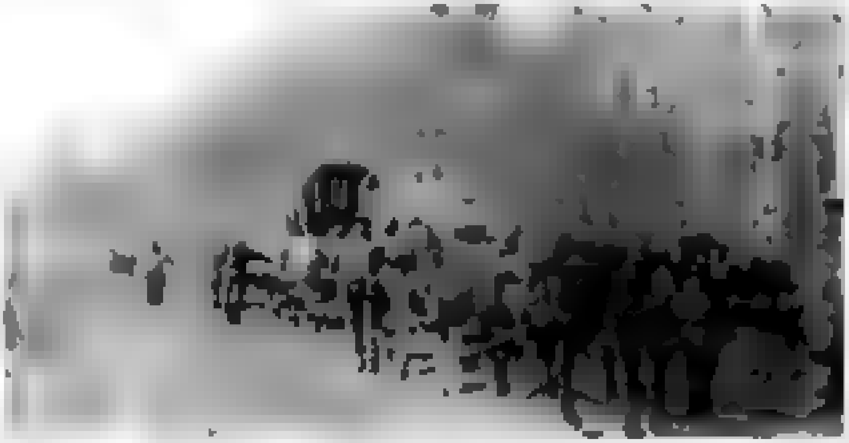
The main road of the new settlement was called Jasper Avenue. Those who came to Neerlandia during its early history would first reach the south end of Jasper Avenue, the only route into the settlement. Since their homestead was at the south end of the settlement, the "welcoming committee" was the family of Siebren Tiemstra. Tiemstra was qualified to be sitting at the "gate" of the [illegible]. He was a small and energetic man who was always optimistic. His family gave food and shelter to many visitors and potential settlers. Siebren guided each would-be homesteader to the available land and gave them advice.



Siebren

The Great War which began August 4, 1914 had some effect on the settling of Neerlandia. The economy began slowing down in Edmonton and jobs were becoming scarce. People began to think it would be wise to move to the homestead. This option was even more attractive to those young Dutch citizens who were subject to the draft from their homeland. A few did accept the free passage home to join the army. For others whose dream of becoming a landowner was strong, hearing these events gave them the boost needed to become homesteaders.

During the war years the provincial government tried to entice families to move to the homestead as a means of reducing unemployment in the city. Some people were given food and other necessities for the winter if they would go to the homestead.



Settlers on trail north of Edmonton

• • •

During the early years of the settlement, some homesteaders received the Dominion Government Provision Loan. The amount loaned seems to have been thirty to forty dollars. According to homestead records, John [illegible], [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], Berend [illegible], Douwe [illegible], Siebren Tiemstra and Bauke Tuininga were among those who obtained this loan.

• • •

A few families that moved to Neerlandia in 1914 left again the following spring. Most people, however, who came in 1914 stayed and contributed to the growth of the community. By the end of the year more than eleven more families and several single men had begun homesteading.

More settlers came in 1915 and with the arrival of Menne Nanninga in 1916, all those who filed in 1914 had returned to Neerlandia. Of the nineteen who filed, only two did not stay. Berend te Ronde lived in Neerlandia for only a few months and Drikus Huinink left in 1915.

During the pioneer years it was difficult to make a living on the homestead. Some men left their families in Edmonton and worked on the homestead during the summer. Others took their families to the homestead but found it impossible to stay since the money supply was inadequate; they left their families alone on the homestead while they went elsewhere to earn money. Many of them went to southern Alberta during the fall and helped with the harvesting. During the winter they worked at sawmills or in logging camps to provide a source of income. When the men were gone, it was a period of loneliness and hardship for those left on the homestead. Some families moved back to Edmonton until they had earned enough money to continue homesteading. Still others spent the winter in Edmonton and returned to the homestead in summer.

Michael's cabin

If the homesteader did not live the required six months on his land, another interested party could request cancellation of the quarter. The homesteader was notified and the quarter was cancelled if he did not move to the homestead within a certain period of time. Some quarters in Neerlandia were cancelled, but many more were abandoned.

A homesteader would declare abandonment if he did not have money to prove up the quarter or if he was dissatisfied with the one he had chosen. Later, though, he could file on another quarter. (If some improvements had been made to the abandoned quarter, these were listed and paid for by the next person who filed. Usually the stated value was contested and the land inspector would be sent out. In most cases he thought the improvements were worth less than had been stated.)

The Dominion Government required a homesteader to cultivate five acres of land per year for three years. He was also expected to reside on the homestead for six months of the year. When these obligations were fulfilled the homesteader could apply for the patent to the land. To receive the patent he had to be a Canadian citizen, and if the patent was granted he became the legal owner.

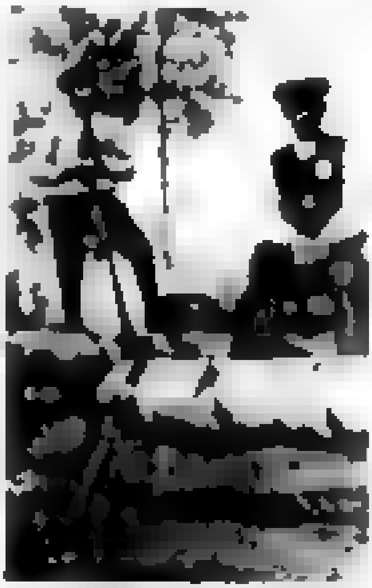
* * *

Before building a log house, a small piece of land was cleared. There were plenty of trees available to use for the building project. The straightest trees were cut down with saws, then limbed using axes. After the logs were dragged to the clearing with horses or oxen the building could begin. The ends of each log were notched so they would interlock with the logs that formed the adjoining wall.

The cabins were built rather low and all had peaked roofs, though they were not very steep. For the roof, poles four to five inches in diameter were placed close together over the ridge pole. Over these poles a fork handle length of hay or grass was spread, then covered with thick grass sods. Sometimes dirt was put over the sods.

After the walls were up, the door and windows were cut out. There were usually few windows and they were small. The glass was brought from Edmonton. The door hung on hinges of metal or leather. If the family could afford it, lumber was used for a floor, otherwise it was dirt.

* * *


Log building under construction

The resident requirement was the easiest to keep. Only part of the family had to reside on the land to fulfil this requirement. For single men this was more difficult to do, as they often had to work off the farm to obtain cash.

The requirement to clear and break fifteen acres of land in three years was a difficult task. Not only was the standing bush difficult to clear up, but in many cases the fire that had levelled the area years ago had left many logs lying on the ground. Because of standing trees, deadfall and undergrowth the ground remained wet, adding to the homesteaders' difficulties. The clearing of land with axe and oxen was a stupendous undertaking. If the pioneers were unable to meet the land clearing requirement they could fulfil their obligations by the ownership of a certain number of cattle.

Most of the early settlers applied for a patent on their land after four years of residence. By that time each applicant had cleared from five to twenty acres. By 1920 most settlers had ten to twenty head of cattle, including oxen, and about half owned two to four horses as well. From the homestead records it appears that the government accepted any combination of acres cleared and animals owned. Since the main objective was to get people to farm the land, the government accepted any application that indicated a sincere effort to make one's home on the land. It appears that all the patents were approved: the government recognized the difficulties the pioneers encountered.

By 1920, about ten Neerlandia settlers had received the patent to their homesteads and there were more than thirty families living in the community. These early settlers were the pioneers who established Neerlandia. They set the tone for the future and defined the direction others followed.

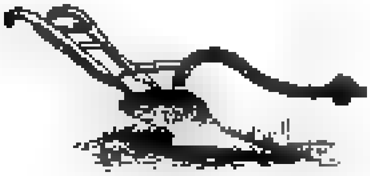
Mr Henning, Mr Schuurman, Willem and Klaas Kikke, Hendrik Schoonekamp.

Song of the Dutch Canadians
Come ye, who boast of Dutch descent
Sons of the Netherlands,
Who found a home in Canada
Far from "Old Country's" strands,
Let us unite in festive song
And praise this blessed land,
To which God in His providence
Did lead us by His hand

We love the land across the sea;
We glory in its past,
We pray for its prosperity
May it forever last!
But though we love old Holland still,
We now, with all our might
Must love and live for Canada,
For justice here, and right

Oh grant, we pray, our fathers' God
That by Thy guiding hand,
We may become a blessing here
For our adopted land!
Infuse the best of all our past,
And what we are today
Into the life, into the deed
Of blessed Canada

Author Unknown
(Tune. "*Wien Neêrlandsch bloed* ")



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The Depression

DAYS OF MEAGRE RETURNS

"It was the fall of 1930. We had no radio, no newspapers. I did not know a thing about the caving in of the stock exchange in New York. I did not know how it started. I went to Barrhead to look for a job. A Dutch man owned the Creamery there and quite a few farmers came there with cream. I wanted a job on a binder and asked a farmer what he paid and he said, "Two dollars a day." I said, "What?" (I was used to five dollars a day.) He said, "What do you think with a Depression on?"

Henry Strydhorst, Sr

Depression

When the stock market fell at the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929, the worst crash in its history, it is unlikely that any Neerlandia farmers immediately heard or read about it, or about the panic and recession that followed. Since the main farm papers of the day made little of the news, the farmers would not have been alarmed even if they had read about it. In any event the news did not immediately affect them because they had no money invested in the stock market. As the economy ground slowly to a halt, however, the effects of the Depression were felt — even in Neerlandia.

The Depression, though a difficult time for all, did not have as much of an impact on the Neerlandia community as it did on other parts of Canada. Since Neerlandia did not suffer the drought experienced by other parts of the prairie provinces, the fields and gardens continued to produce abundantly. Furthermore, they had never experienced real prosperity and, though things had been improving for a brief period, they had in many ways never left the pioneer lifestyle.

Generally though, the established families in Neerlandia were better off during the 1930s than more recent immigrants. They had more land cleared and owned more livestock and, even though they got the same low prices, had more to sell and consequently more income. The families who had begun homesteading in the late twenties, especially those with younger children, went through the difficult time of making a beginning on their homesteads while also experiencing the hardships of the Depression.

For Neerlandia the Depression was a contradictory time. On the one hand there was an abundance of farm and garden produce. The animals too continued to produce normally. The problem was that the produce was worth next to nothing on the market. Prices for farm products dropped to a fraction of pre-Depression days. Wheat dropped from $1.59 to $.18 per bushel. Barley went as low as eight cents, and oats as low as seven cents. A hog weighing two hundred pounds netted the farmers as little as $2.00, down from $24.00. One farmer shipped a 350 pound sow and, after paying the freight, had only $.75 left. A five gallon can of cream was worth about $3.00, less than half of the $8.00 it would have brought before. Since marketing their produce was the only way the farmers could obtain cash, they had little money. Thus, using the produce from farm and garden, one lady in Neerlandia was able to bake pie every Saturday but was unable to afford a Sunday coat

* * *

"I remember that first year My husband worked for his dad and he did all the cropping and everything and we had to buy wheat at one dollar a bushel, Garnet wheat You know, by the time fall came it was worth nothing nineteen cents. And then we had all the threshing and everything done and we could not pay all the costs. We were in the hole "

Harda Terpsma

* * *

How do you like that?

"I remember my dad shipped pigs and then he got five dollars apiece for them and the truck driver Loe Reyse got two-and-a-half dollars, so my dad got two-fifty apiece. And [Siebren] Tiemstra bought cows on a sale for eight dollars apiece And I know John Terpsma took one hundred bushels of oats to the elevator and he got eight cents a bushel he got eight dollars for that big load and he had a top on top of his sleighbox yet And when he came back, he needed something for the knotter head of the binder and didn't have enough to pay for it. How do you like that? One hundred bushels of good oats!"

* * *

Average Value Per Animal in the Prairie Provinces

year	Hogs	Horses
1929	15.39	54.60
1930	4.80	47.14
1931	583	5229
1932	346	32.52
1933	775	3652
1934	862	4197
1935	1038	4723
1936	102	5480
1937	11.12	5345

Taken from Livestock Statistics
M C Urquhart and K A H Buckley eds
Historical Statistics of Canada pg 137

For $1.99, in November 1933, you could buy

Amount	Item	Price
2 lbs	meat (roast or stew)	13¢
2 dozen	eggs.	45¢
1 lb	butter	21¢
1 lb	cheese	19¢
3 lbs.	flour	09¢
1 lb.	sugar	.08¢
2 lbs	rolled oats	07¢
1 lb	rice	07¢
2 lbs.	molasses	15¢
3 loaves	bread	12¢
1 lb	tea or coffee	32¢
3 bars.	soap	11¢

Food and Clothing

In spite of the hard times most people ate well. The food was plain and unvaried — meat, potatoes, and vegetables — but there was lots of it. The women continued the practice of raising good-sized gardens and storing the produce for the winter. They preserved wild fruit as well. There was plenty of meat available too. Every farmer had cattle or hogs to butcher. The old sows provided plenty of lard, which was used in baking and cooking and even, with a sprinkling of salt and pepper, as a spread for school lunches. In many cases the meat supply was supplemented with game.

* * *

Butchering time

"We had pigs, we had cows; whatever few dollars you could get from selling them. My dad would take a load of wheat to the flour mill in Barrhead and get twelve to thirteen hundred pounds of flour plus the bran and shorts and whatever else came out of that and that lasted a year. In the fall we would butcher a cow and a big fatted sow and have a whole pile of lard and that would do for all the frying and baking. And you had eggs. In the winter you had a deep freeze (outside) and whatever came through the winter you could can, otherwise it was canned right away. It was a lot of work. Everything was either smoked or salted or canned."

Susie Vanee

* * *

In those days, the hunting laws were not strictly enforced. Gerrit Kippers shot a moose out of season, but only wounded it and followed it for three miles until he came in the neighbourhood of the game warden's house (John Tansowny). Gerrit had no bullets left and, knowing the game warden had the same kind of rifle, went to ask him if he could borrow some. It was already getting dark and the game warden said, "Wait until morning and I'll help you. I'm not a game warden for farmers, only for strangers."

* * *

A Good Meal

"Once in a while I would eat at the Ohio Cafe in Barrhead. Slim, a Chinese man, was the proprietor then. For thirty-five cents you got good thick pork chops, two of them, a wedge of pie — not an eighth or a sixteenth piece like nowadays — almost a quarter of a pie, usually raisin or apple, coffee, vegetables, and potatoes.

It was a good meal."

Bill Olthuis

* * *

But many items could not be grown or raised, so the people had to make do in other ways. Many roasted peas or barley in the oven, then ground them for use as coffee. Some collected peppermint leaves and dried them to use instead of tea. Women made their own brown soap from rind or lard that had gone rancid. The Elzingas made syrup from sugar beets to use as sugar. Hendrik Wierenga, a heavy smoker, dried sweet clover and fireweed to use in his pipe for smoking. Clarence Tuininga, though, decided to simply put his pipe away until he could afford the tobacco. Some things could be neither grown nor made, but the cream cheque provided the settler the means of obtaining goods that had to be paid for in cash.

* * *

"People always used to say, 'Cream cheque — you don't make nothing on cream.' But it was pretty nice to get. That was the only thing that kept us through all those things. It was a real life saver."

* * *

Many families could afford only the necessities — yeast, sugar, salt, coal oil — and these were used very sparingly. There was often not enough money left to buy material or clothes for the family. Every mother spent evenings putting patch upon patch, mending clothes to get the most use of every article. Some families had only one set of underwear per person and the family members had to spend most of wash day inside the house waiting for the clothes to dry. On a rainy day one had a long wait. Others did not have enough footwear for everyone and mother and father or mother and daughter would take turns going to church because they used the same footwear. John Visser Sr. used cardboard for soles in his rubbers, something many others did too.

For families with school-aged children, obtaining clothing was a concern. The children needed coats, boots, and other clothing to be able to go to school through the winter. For many children, the only "new" clothes they got were handed down from older family members or remade from used clothing. Shoes and rubbers were also hand-me-downs. Lolla Bos had a pair of rubbers with heels in them, but no shoes to wear in the rubbers. To go to church, she would put a potato in each heel and by the time she had walked the four miles to church, the potatoes were mush.

* * *

After school one day, a young fellow from a family that had it somewhat better than others bought a new pair of used rubber boots and threw his old well used pair in the ditch. Two other boys saw the rubbers being thrown away and both made a dive for them. They got there at the same time and an angry fight followed over who would get the rubbers. Since it was after school there was no interruption by teachers and other classmates encouraged them to continue. Eventually one of the boys was victorious and went proudly home with the rubbers.

* * *

Enough

"What else did we need? We had enough to read, enough to eat, enough to listen to. We also visited quite a bit. I worked for fifty cents a day plus board in Edmonton. I could save fifteen dollars a month. Pants were one dollar, jackets were one dollar, combination underwear was one dollar. Fifteen dollars went a long way."

Melie Elzinga (Interview)

* * *

Paying the Bills

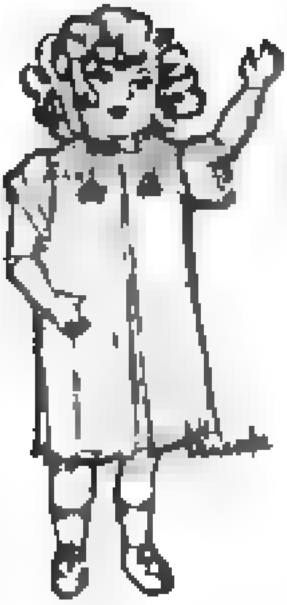
During the Depression, goods were exchanged for services rendered, since there was no cash to pay anyone with. John Schuring cleared land for Sigurd Tofte of Vega in the spring of 1931 and received two heifers in payment. Henry Strydhorst gave one hundred bushels of seed oats to George Toebes in the spring of 1932 in trade for a sow ready to farrow. The sow had twelve young ones. After fattening the pigs and keeping two — one for butchering and one for increasing the herd — Henry sold the others for only twenty-eight dollars. Sometimes a trade could be made for groceries: the Elzingas brought their eggs to the Vega store and took home groceries in payment; the Strydhorsts sent their eggs via the mailman Bill Jansowns to the Red and White Store in Barrhead and gave along a list of groceries that had the same value to be taken back.

During the 1920's, financial conditions had improved to the point that some Neerlandia farmers had bought fuel-powered machinery. But once the Depression hit, gas became an item they could not afford. Klaas Tuininga did not use his tractor during the thirties and Joseph Baker took the tires off his car and left it up on blocks for many years.

The families that had older sons or daughters usually did alright. The older children could find odd jobs in Neerlandia or work in Edmonton, and they sent the money earned home to their parents. There were one or two families in Neerlandia who simply could not make ends meet. They finally applied for and received relief during some of the Depression years. Relief amounted to three or four dollars a month.

* * *

One Dollar



Can you imagine having a little girl whose heart is set on a doll in Eaton's catalogue that only costs ninety-eight cents, a little girl who spends every chance she gets to look at that doll, dreaming of what it would be like to have this precious doll to be her very own, and you do not have ninety-eight cents to buy that doll? I was that little girl and someone owed my father one dollar, but that man did not have one dollar either. My parents, realizing how dear that doll was to my heart, promised me that should they ever collect that one dollar, I could have that doll. Imagine when this man came and paid the one-dollar debt to my father and I could have the doll. They kept their promise and I can still remember that doll. I think I must have been the happiest and the luckiest little girl in Neerlandia.

Now I realize the great sacrifice it must have been for my parents to fulfil my wish, when that dollar was needed for so many other important things.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

Health Care

If money was scarce for clothing, it was equally scarce for medical expenses. One went to the hospital only in emergencies, and then special arrangements had to be made to pay the bill. Many women still had their babies born at home with the help of a midwife, even though Dr. Verreau was practicing in Barrhead and a hospital, St. Elizabeth's, had been built there. Gerrit Kippers had his appendix taken out in 1932 or 1933 by Dr. Verreau and, as Gerrit said, "I think he took a pig for my appendix." Sophie Wierenga also had her appendix taken out in the Barrhead hospital in 1936. Her father, Hendrik, paid off part of the bill by bringing Dr. Verreau a wagon load of lumber. Sophie paid off the rest by working in the hospital doing the laundry. In 1936 three-year-old Cornelius Schuring needed treatment for osteomyelitis. Dr. Verreau was paid with eggs and veal. Later Cornelius had to go to the General Hospital in Edmonton for an operation which cost one hundred dollars; the subsequent eighteen month stay cost an additional one hundred dollars. To pay this enormous bill, John Schuring made an agreement with the hospital and a packing plant. He would have animals brought to the packing plant and the meat would go to the hospital. The hospital credited him with one cent more per pound than the going price for the meat.

The provincial government initiated some free medical assistance during the thirties. In 1935, a Travelling Clinic came to Neerlandia and the medical team did a number of minor operations. The annual report of the Department of Health in 1935 stated that the Travelling Clinic visited thirty-four centres.

> "This clinic was in the field from May 30th to September 29th. During this time 4,105 persons were examined and 888 operations for the removal of tonsils and adenoids were performed, as well as a considerable number of minor operations. The staff consisted of a surgeon in charge, one physician, two dentists, three nurses and two truck drivers, and the same high standard of service was provided as in previous years. The dentists on the staff examined 5,044 children, gave treatment to 2,449 and extracted 1,238 teeth."

* * *

The Clinic

The two-room school was turned into a miniature hospital. The little room was used as a check-up room and a recovery area. The big room was the operating area. The Travelling Clinic had come in a large transport truck equipped with recovery cots, operating tables, and all other necessary medical equipment. All school children were supposed to be checked and anyone else needing attention was able to get it.

It was a very hot day in August. The children who came were given a physical examination and, if further attention was needed, they were sent to wait their turn in the cloak rooms, one for girls and one for boys. When his or her turn came, the nurse helped the patient onto the operation table, and the doctor administered ether. No one who was operated on that day will ever forget it — the smell of ether, trying to count, the ringing sounds in your ears, and the flashing lights as you went under. When the patient awoke in the recovery room it was a gruesome thing. Everyone was sick and came out of the ether spitting up blood and wondering where they were and what had happened. Volunteers helped to clean up the patients and get them ready to be picked up by parents, then *changed the cots to get them ready for the next patients. One child followed the next in quick succession. A large number of children had their tonsils and adenoids removed and found when they woke up that they had teeth missing too. (They also missed the tooth fairy.) It must have been very difficult for the parents to take these sick children home over bumpy roads in wagons or democrats.*

After the operation, most children had very sore throats. With some children the bleeding did not stop quickly and they were sick for many days. Others were up and eating the next day. Still others were out herding cows two or three days afterward.

The Clinic left the next day and returned at regular intervals to administer the immunization program. It is amazing that not a patient was lost.

Sadie Prins

* * *

Bill and Carrie Olthuis' wedding photo, 1934

John and Johanna Visser wedding photo, 1934

Getting Married

It took courage to get married during the Depression years — courage and trust in the Lord who holds the future. Couples that got married during the thirties began housekeeping with little in the way of material possessions, although things were cheap if you could afford them. It was more difficult for some than for others.

Bill and Carrie Olthuis, who married in March 1934, had a new little house but could not afford to put linoleum on the floor. It was merely oiled. They could not afford the heavy paper that was generally tacked to the walls before wallpapering, but they did buy wallpaper — at ten cents a roll. Carrie papered the walls. It looked nice too, until the wallpaper dried and cracked along every board. What a disappointment! Bill and Carrie bought a bed, a stove, and some unpainted chairs with fifty dollars Bill had borrowed from Sam Hovey. For twenty-five cents they got a rocking chair without rockers. Jim Johnman made some for it. When their wedding day came, Bill got married in his brother's shoes because his own had the soles worn through — and that would be visible when they knelt for the wedding prayer.

John and Johanna Visser, who married in the fall of 1934, were better able to buy the things they needed. John had the proceeds of his crop to spend. With the two hundred dollars he received, he first paid Menno Nanninga the one hundred he owed for threshing. Then he and Johanna went to Edmonton to buy some household items with the rest of the money. Dick Fisher, the trucker, offered to freight the items at no charge for a wedding present. In town John and Johanna bought a new bed and mattress and some second hand items such as a sewing machine, a wood and coal stove, and a dresser. They even had money left for a set of rings which cost fifteen dollars and a wedding picture taken at a photographer's — about eight dollars. Johanna had worked in Edmonton for two months at $7.50 a month. With her earnings, they bought a dining room table, five chairs, and one armchair.

Government Work Camps

The Canadian federal government financed work camps from 1932 to 1935 to relieve the problem of the unemployed. A govern-

ment agent came to Neerlandia and went from farm to farm to find anyone that was willing to have a land-clearing camp set up on his land and/or willing to have his land cleared. Siebren Tiemstra and Henry Kippers Sr. each agreed to have a camp set up on his quarter.

On the camp site, canvas tents were erected as living quarters for the men. Each camp had a full-time cook who cooked plenty of good food. (The Tiemstra children would get the empty cans of jam from the camp cook. The cans had enough jam left in them that the children could use it on sandwiches — a real treat.) Besides the cook, two men stayed in camp each day to cut up firewood using a crosscut saw. Each weekday morning at about eight o'clock, the rest of the men would walk single file to the area that had to be cleared. They were well-outfitted for the work of clearing, being provided with double-bitted axes, mattocks, adzes, and crosscut saws. After cutting down the trees and bushes, the logs and brush were piled up teepee-wise so that water could drain off easily. The men went back to camp for lunch and their work day was over at five o'clock.

* * *

Regulations for men in the land-clearing camp included the following.

"The conditions under which these works will be carried out are as follows.

(a) Accomodation, food and medical care will be provided in kind, and an allowance not exceeding 20 cents per diem for each day worked in Camp, exclusive of days in transit proceeding to camp, will be issued in cash.

(b) Clothing which is issued to personnel on Unemployment Relief Projects does not become the private property of the individual.

(c) The clothing which the man may be permitted to retain on discharge will be strictly limited to essential articles on his person. Spare underwear, socks, 'Necessaries' etc. will be withdrawn and returned to camp stores.

(d) Rubbers and Boots, Knee. rubber, are station (camp) stores and will be issued from time to time only as required for specific purposes."[2]

* * *

One land-clearing camp was located on the NE 14-61-3-5. It had forty to fifty men and they cleared land for Siebren Tiemstra, Henry Mast, Bill Olthuis, and Jim Johnman. They spent most of one winter there. Gerben Tiemstra, who was hired to haul water for them, went once a day with a team of horses and a sleigh with four empty barrels on it to the Kalmbach farm in Mellowdale. The Kalmbachs had a good well with a windmill, so if there was a wind Gerben did not have to pump. The water was pumped into the barrels using a hose, but once Gerben got back to the camp, he had to unload the water with a pail. The job took him about four-and-a-half hours. The other camp, which employed one hundred men, was located on the line between the north quarters of 16-62-3-5. These men cleared on quarters belonging to Henry Kippers Sr., John Kippers Sr., and

Bill Bouwman. Gerrit Kippers hauled water for the camp. There was hardly any snow that winter, so he used the horses and wagon. Every morning at about six o'clock he left for camp where he picked up five 45-gallon barrels and drove to a natural spring north of Bonstrom's in Vega. Once there he and his assistant, a man from the camp, filled the barrels using pails. They made it back to camp around one o'clock. Gerrit often had a meal there before going home again. On Saturdays, he had to make two trips, the second one to Baird Lake to provide water for the men's Saturday-night baths.

Workers leaving the land clearing on Kippers

Kitchen crew, land clearing camp on Kippers.

The farmers had to pay the government five to ten dollars per acre for the clearing done on their land, depending on how heavy the timber was. After the clearing had been done, though, some of the farmers could not afford to break the land and the brush grew up again. Most of them could not afford to pay the government either, so in later years much of the debt was forgiven.

* * *

Camps

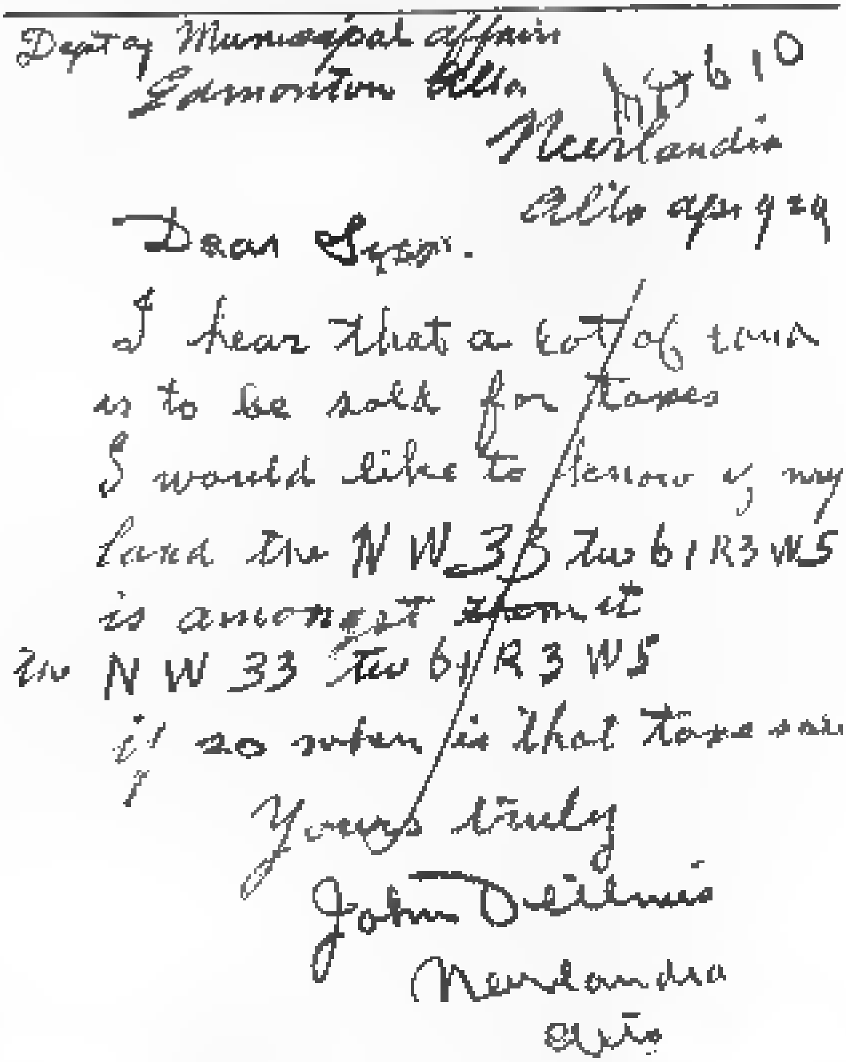
"During the Depression the government was afraid men would rebel. They made camps for men and provided food and a small wage. Siebren [Tiemstra] had a camp. They cleared more than one hundred acres. Farmers were supposed to pay the government six dollars an acre. . . . The government passed a debt adjustment act because people could not pay for it. . . . The debt was wiped out. They got off pretty good. It took a lot of nerve to venture that. There was a lot of jealousy about it."

John Ingwersen (interview)

* * *

Government Aid

The federal government initiated some programs to aid the farmers. During 1932, under R. B. Bennett, the government



Dept of Municipal affairs
Edmonton Alta

610

Neerlandia
Alta apr 9 29

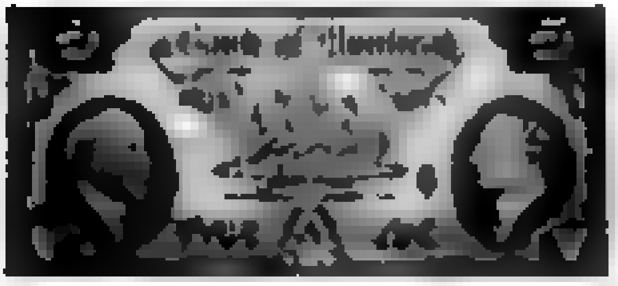
Dear Sirs.

I hear that a lot of land
is to be sold for taxes
I would like to know if my
land the N W 33 Tw 61 R3 W5
is amongst ~~them~~ it
the N W 33 Tw 61 R 3 W5
if so when is that taxe sale
?

Yours truly
John [illegible]
Neerlandia
Alta

awarded grain farmers a bonus of five cents a bushel at a time when wheat was nineteen cents a bushel. In 1936-37 the government of Mackenzie King set up a seed program. In Neerlandia the crops had frozen during the fall of 1935. Threshing was charged by the hour that year, and there was not enough feed for the winter and no seed grain for the next year. A government official came to Neerlandia in the spring of 1936 and set up his office in the church basement. Anyone who needed seed grain was advised to see him. The basement was filled with people and, unfortunately for some who had come early, he called everyone up in alphabetical order.

The Depression created many difficulties for the farmers but, as one farmer said, "The worst was the taxes." There was just no money for taxes. Taxes were calculated according to the land assessment. In 1929 [illegible] had paid a mortgage tax of [illegible]. Henry [illegible] had paid the amount of [illegible] on his homestead and Joseph [illegible] had paid [illegible]. That kind of money was difficult to obtain during the thirties. The government did allow farmers to pay off some of their tax debt by working on the road. [illegible] worked on the road one winter, hauling sand on the road allowance along the [illegible]. Henry [illegible] also worked off some taxes on the road for the wage of one dollar a day. The government added interest each year to taxes owing. One day in 1936 or 37 a notice was posted in the post office of the Neerlandia store listing the tax quarters which the government would sell if taxes on them were not paid. And there were some who thought this would be a good opportunity to buy land cheaply. Henry [illegible] name was on the list; he had a high tax bill including compound interest. He and his father-in-law went to the municipal district office in [illegible] to talk to [illegible], the secretary-treasurer. Mr. [illegible] accepted a small payment on the debt; as long as the farmers were trying to pay on the debt the government was satisfied. As a result of government legislation, taxes could be consolidated. The penalties and interest were removed and a yearly payment plan was set up for each farmer. One farmer could not pay his taxes and did lose his quarter.



Only a few immigrants came to Neerlandia during the thirties, partly because of the world-wide depression, but also Neerlandia was considered full in regard to available land. On January [illegible] Willem van Ark, a colonization agent and former resident of Neerlandia, wrote:

> Neerlandia always had large families, some even 14 children. The children who were small when they came are now grown and getting married now. The number of marriages will increase every year. Then young people desire to

> secure land in the same district if possible, because they do not wish to lose the church connection but the land available is very limited and quarters marked as good are taken. To the south is a strip of heavy timber, to the north the sandy hills of the Athabasca River, to the west swamp and muskeg and to the east more unsuitable land.
>
> Neerlandia can be called a district with an overflowing population and if a number of them have to secure land elsewhere they will insist on going to a district where they can start or join another group of the same denomination.[44]

He encouraged Dutch immigrants to find another place to settle.

* * *

Councillors

In 1932 the councillors had their payment for each Municipal District meeting they attended reduced from five to four dollars. In 1933 it was further reduced to three dollars and sixty cents. The councillors also received payment for mileage to and from the meetings and for mileage covered during supervisory work. The mileage rate of ten cents per mile remained the same despite other cutbacks.

* * *

The thirties, in spite of the hard times, were fascinating years. During that decade such things as ball point pens, nylon stockings, refrigerators, cellophane, and canned soup and baby food made their appearance in Canada though it took some time before they could be seen in Neerlandia. In Neerlandia, the new thing was the radio. The whole family would sit around the radio to listen to such programs as "Amos 'n Andy" or "The Happy Gang" and friends would be invited over to listen as well. With the coming of the radio, people had an increased awareness of the outside world. Farm magazines such as the *Free Press Weekly* or *The Country Guide* had always been read, but the news was at least a week old — even if you had a subscription. If it was passed along a few times, the news was even older. But with the radio, one could follow world events as they happened. People could hear reports on the hunt for the Mad Trapper in 1932 or on the mining disaster in Nova Scotia in 1936. The birth of the Dionne quintuplets was an event that everyone heard about, whether they had a radio or not, and which captured everyone's attention. Some people listened to Edward VIII's abdication speech in 1936, while others heard King George's inaugural speech, remembering that he stammered and that it was reported that Queen Elizabeth held his hand to give him confidence.

* * *

Our First Radio

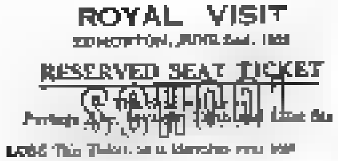
In the year 1930, my father built a radio powered by a large car battery. He used earphones and could hear programs from Edmonton. Once we even picked up a program from Seattle. How thrilling it was, we let our imaginations work, and could almost picture the people we were hearing. The radio was truly a great source of excitement.

We took turns listening, and one day Simon heard that anyone hearing that program who lived in the country could write in to the station and tell them where they lived. Then the one living the farthest away would win a prize. Simon, only thirteen at the time

The Royal Visit

A truckload of pupils and some women of the community left Neerlandia at 6:00 a.m. of June 2, 1939, to see King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Ashley (foreground) took the students of grade four and up. A group of students from Shoal Creek went along too. Mr. Fisher provided the transportation and put seats in the back of his truck to accommodate the passengers.

When the truckload reached Edmonton, they went to the river flats at Laurier Park, where they ate lunch. A cream can of chocolate milk was supplied by Mr. Fisher. After lunch, they drove to Portage Avenue (Kingsway) where bleachers had been set up. The area was still bush and was called The Hudson's Bay Reserve.



ROYAL VISIT

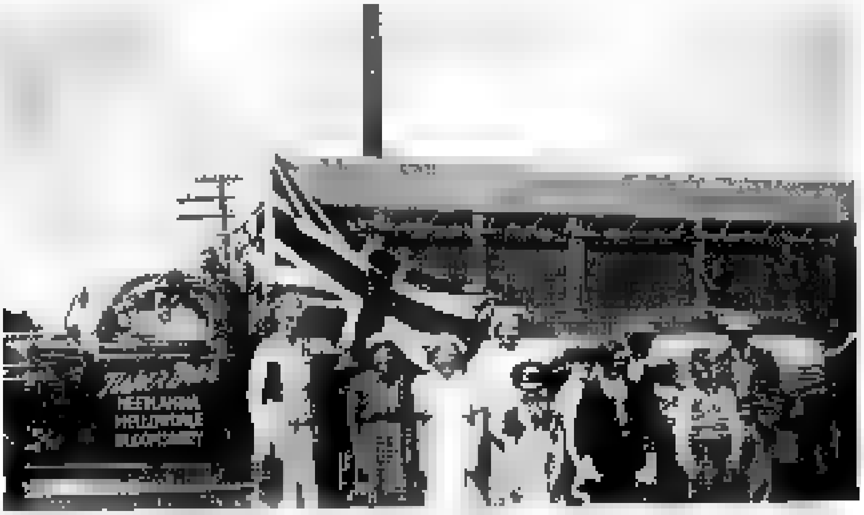
EDMONTON, JUNE 2nd, 1939

RESERVED SEAT TICKET

[illegible]

Portage Ave. [illegible]

[illegible]



When the Parade was over, the group returned to Neerlandia, arriving home at about 10 p.m.

Don't forget to cheer Their Majesties on this historic occasion. The King and Queen of England have left their native land to visit Canada for the first time! Let your voices tell Their Majesties you are glad they have honoured us so!

If you haven't already bought your reserved seats, get them at Mike's Newstand before it is too late

If you want to reserve a room, phone 28282, or go to 10064 100th Street (opposite the Macdonald Hotel) All available rooms in the city are listed there.

◆ ◆

A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Men should remove their hats while Their Majesties are passing by

Join in the singing And cheer when the Royal Progress comes in sight along the route.

Get your seat early

Watch for special direction signs through the city

Stores close at 12.30 noon in the city June 2nd.

Streets on which Royal Car and Progress will travel closed to motor traffic after 11.00 a.m.

Open again at 4.30 p.m., except 100th Street from C.N.R. Depot to Macdonald Hotel.

Comfort Stations are located at rear of all bleachers and in schools on or close to Royal Progress Route, all marked by prominent signs.

First Aid depots, manned by trained men, nurses and doctors, will be found all along the route, marked by a large Red Cross.

◆ ◆

A FEW DON'TS

Don't cross the Royal Route after Their Majesties come in sight.

Don't leave your seat tickets at home.

Don't crowd while standing in line.

THE ROYAL VISIT

Edmonton Alberta

1939

SONGS

FOR EVERYONE

Published by

THE ROYAL VISIT COMMITTEE

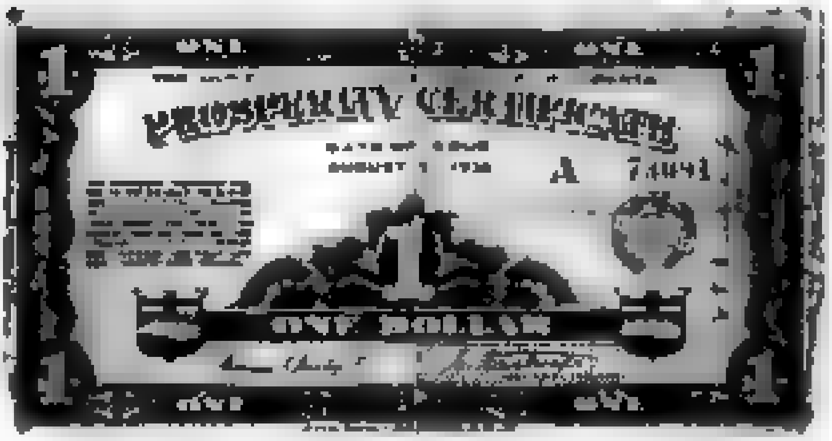
EDMONTON

eagerly wrote in. The household was filled with suspense and excitement in the hope we would win. Win we did, and one day we received the parcel. Inside was a beautiful mauve taffeta cushion. What a luxury for our old furniture to have such a pillow sitting on the couch.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

A popular radio program in the early 30s was William Aberhart's Sunday afternoon broadcasts, during which he preached, and expounded some economic ideas as well. William Aberhart, or "Bible Bill" as he was often called, was chiefly responsible for forming the Social Credit party in early 1935. There was to be a provincial election on August 22, 1935, and among Aberhart's proposals during his election campaign was a program of issuing money in which every adult in the province would receive a twenty-five dollar certificate each month. Sometime before the election, the secretary of the Social Credit party, J. H. Unwin, held a meeting in the Neerlandia church basement. The place was packed. He also promised twenty-five dollars a month to everyone and some people "took it in like water." In the subsequent election Aberhart's party carried fifty-six seats out of a total of sixty-three. The United Farmers of Alberta party was soundly defeated, failing to get a single seat. Many people in Neerlandia voted for Aberhart but they maintained it was because he was a Christian, not because they believed his election promises of monthly dividends.



Funny money

Aberhart did issue some prosperity certificates in 1936 which earned the name "funny money." Some people in Neerlandia received a certificate, but at the cost of one cent a week to put the required stamp on the back of it, the certificate was considered too expensive and quickly redeemed. Anna Schuring was given some certificates by her brother Peter, who had received some from his dairy customers and could not use them all. Anna, who was in Edmonton since her son was in the hospital there, went to the Army and Navy store to buy some clothes. Not all stores would accept the funny money, but at the Army and Navy she was able to buy herself a grey summer coat and a dress and some clothes for the children, all in exchange for the certificates. Aberhart's plans for monthly dividends soon vanished, but his party's popularity remained.

On September 10, 1939 Canada declared war on Germany. After Canada became involved in the war, the prices of farm products went up and the Depression was over.

* * *

Making Ends Meet

Even though there were not many jobs available, some found other ways to work and make ends meet. Bill Olthuis bought two heifers from Bill Krikke for thirteen dollars. After butchering them himself, he peddled the meat through the settlement for two cents a pound. He had the hides tanned at the tannery in Edmonton. After selling the meat and paying for the leather, he broke even, although he had kept some meat for himself and could use the leather for repairing his horse harnesses.

* * *

Depression Period

The year 1929 found us well-established on our farm. Prices for agricultural products were good. A five-gallon can of cream sold for $8.00. Wheat was $1.59 a bushel, hogs 12¢ a pound. We could not afford a large home. Prospects were rosy from the business viewpoint. Banks were already granting loans to responsible farmers, and after much discussion, we agreed to do what we had never done before, go into debt and borrow to build our home. As security for the bank loan we had sixty acres in crop, five brood sows with forty-eight young ones. The yield of wheat for that year had been sixty bushels per acre with forty bushels for barley and eighty for oats. So we got the loan and I got busy building our home.

That very fall, for the first time in my life, I was in debt. I was building a new house with a bank loan and I sold enough wheat to pay my threshing and store bills and kept the rest to be sold the next spring. But, alas, the same wheat which had sold at $1.50 to $1.80 the previous year sold the next spring for 19¢ a bushel.

As a member of the Alberta Wheat Pool, I followed the advice of the elevator operator and decided to hold my grain for a while. In the spring of 1930, the whole world economic system collapsed. I hauled grain to Barrhead and, contrary to expectations, had to let it go for 19¢ a bushel. No one could explain the causes of the market crash but everyone was affected by it. Everything followed, hogs sold for $4.00 a head, dairy products were just as low. In short, we were flat broke and heading for bankruptcy (which had never entered our heads since we had come to Canada).

In fact we were worse off than when we started fifteen years before. Little by little, wide scale unemployment spread throughout the cities. Money became scarcer and scarcer. Wages dropped to a low of 10¢ per hour. Farmers could hire a man for $5.00 per month plus their board and room. In some cases, the Bennett government was refunding the farmers five bucks just to get the men away from crowded centres. In others, men were willing to work just for their keep as it was impossible to get even that in cities. No matter how hard one tried, there was no work or money available.

In a way, people in the country fared better than people in the city. They could grow their own food and always managed to have plenty of it. The farmers hauled wheat to get it ground into flour and paid the miller with half the grain. On this trading system we managed to get our wheat, oats, and barley threshed for all our needs. The miller would generally accept grain in return for the making of flour, cream of wheat, and other needs. Those of us who had grain to spare would give some to those of us who had none. The animals supplied meat, milk, and eggs. The gardens produced all kinds of vegetables and the land provided hay for the cattle and horses and grain for the farmer's own needs, if he had succeeded in getting enough seed to sow the land in the spring.

Clothes and equipment had to last. Shoes had to be repaired as best we could. Many were worn-out. Not being able to replace them, some people went barefooted, especially the children, whose feet grow quickly. Some of us became self-taught blacksmiths and farm mechanics in order to keep our farm equipment running. And so it was. Life carried on and people survived.

Ted Reitsma

Taken from *The Struggles of a Dutch Immigrant*, written by Ted Reitsma in 1968

* * *

The Hungry Thirties

Then came the Hungry Thirties. On the prairies the farmers were dried out and many were on relief. We managed to get groceries, but we had to pay back the government before we could get the title to our land. Those were hard years. I sent four cows to Edmonton and received twelve dollars for them. A pig sold for three dollars, cream was eleven cents a pound butterfat, eggs were five cents a dozen, wheat twenty-five cents a bushel, and oats you could not sell for any price. Calves you could not give away so we killed them as they were born. Klaas Krikke and I took a load of wheat to Westlock. The elevator man said, "I have no room for it, everything is full to the top. No cars to ship it — but you can go in the grocery store and buy some gunny sacks and we will put your wheat here on the scale." And in that way we did get rid of it. A fellow with a load of oats was not so fortunate. It was standing on an open lot, he could not even get a meal for it. We went home and I don't know if he sold his load of oats or not. It was not worth taking back the seventy miles. That was the time of the unemployed marching on Ottawa, the rides on the freight trains and the soup kitchens in every city. People had no money to pay taxes so the government had to mark "paid" on the taxes, even if they had only paid a part of it. I'm sure the government lost on that. But we did not starve, we were just poor in the midst of plenty!

Ben Lievers

* * *

* * *

Oil Money

After working for farmers for seven days a week for the grand sum of twenty to twenty-five dollars per month, John Vanee was lured to Turner Valley by the prospects of making big money in the oil fields. In the spring of 1928 he began working as a roughneck for ninety-three cents an hour, fifty-six dollars a week. Living expenses were one dollar per day, allowing John accumulation of excess money to play the stock market. Prior to the crash of 1929, he was worth approximately $20-30,000 on paper. (In 1930 John and a friend took a trip to Ontario for a month in a 1930 Essex.) By 1931, however, John arrived in Neerlandia driving a Model A Ford and owning about three thousand dollars to begin homesteading. He traded the Model A for a cow. For furniture he purchased a solid brass bed, a stove, and a table and chairs, which were brought from Edmonton by Mr. Quick. Four horses and harnesses were purchased at an auction in Edmonton. John also bought a walking plow, a disc, harrows, a wagon, a sleigh, and a buggy. All these purchases, as well as the building of a shack and a barn, pretty well took care of the three thousand dollars.

Frances Vanee Churchill

FOOTNOTES

Annual Report of the Department of Public Health, Province of Alberta, 1935, pg 16.

[2] Extract: Regulations, Unemployment Relief Works, 1933, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

[3] Memorandum for Mr. H. S. Kent: RE: Holland Settlement, Neerlandia, Alta. January 11, 1933.

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The War Years

THE WAR YEARS

Most Neerlandians first became interested in the war events [illegible] war on September 10, 1939.

The radio was full of news about the war, and those who did [illegible] private tears.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] for medical reasons.

[illegible] try they loved.

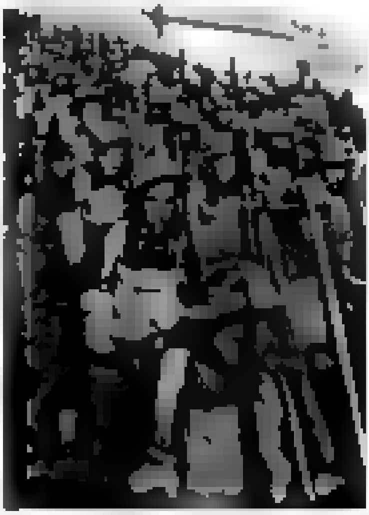
Never before in their sheltered lives had the men from [illegible]

[illegible]

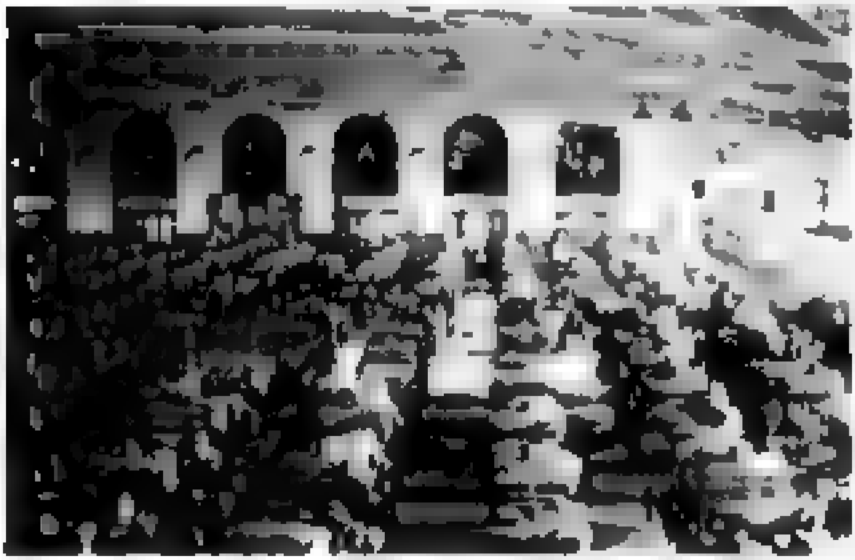
In training, Moose Jaw, [illegible]

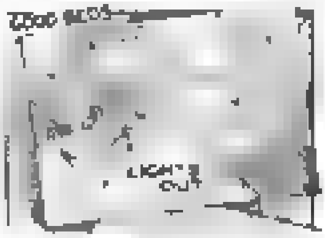
over for punishment. One trainee put it this way: "Along with the lye and homemade soap there were always others who were there beside you, also learning to scrub and obey."

At training camp the boys were exposed to other things. Some contracted measles, mumps, or chicken pox; others became very homesick. For many this first time away from home was traumatic — many had never even been to a barbershop before. Others realized this was only training camp and considered it an adventure. Basic training lasted anywhere from one to four months. At first the boys were allowed to return home on leave after basic training was completed.

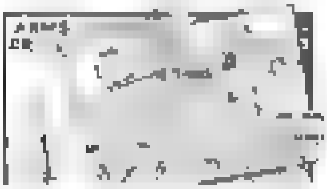


Soldiers leaving parade ground after review.

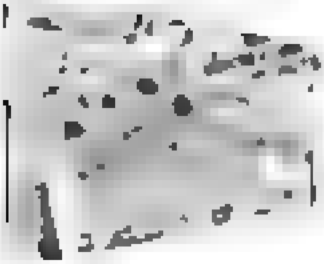




Sleeping quarters. Note rolled-up bedding.



Jim Lievers, Clarence Mast, John Peters, John Bos, Joe H. Wieringa.



There were many promotions to persuade men to enlist for overseas duty. [illegible] tunes were played on the radio. [illegible] heard songs like [illegible] "The White Cliffs of Dover", [illegible] and [illegible]. Soldiering was portrayed as adventurous and glamorous. [illegible] Men were challenged to defend the world against domination by Germany. However, these promotions did not affect the boys from Neerlandia much.

As the war progressed, the conscription policy changed and [illegible] After [illegible] training, depending on [illegible] the men [illegible] in which they wished to serve: army, air force or navy. Most local men served in the [illegible] Canadian Army, but Henry [illegible] and Simon Tuininga joined the air force.

The wages for serving the country were $1.[illegible] per day if the soldier remained in Canada and $1.[illegible] per day if he was sent overseas. The men usually sent one half of the overseas pay home to their wives or mothers. The other half was kept for spending money, though all needs except items such as cigarettes and beer were supplied by the army.

Once the first shock was over most of the local boys stationed in Canada enjoyed the [illegible]. They had no [illegible] as they realized they might as well make the best of it. They received a furlough once a year which entitled them to two weeks there. For this leave the army paid the train fare home and back. If a soldier was needed on the farm he could also get a harvest leave of four to five weeks. First, however, it had to be proven that the need was there; a letter from a minister or other authorized person was required as proof. If a soldier stayed away a few extra days his pay would be docked and he would be put in detention. Any time army personnel rode the train, even for personal reasons, the fare was automatically half price if they were in uniform.

[illegible] at first they were always offering to take the soldiers out for coffee. When a soldier came back to Neerlandia on furlough he would have his picture taken [illegible]. The younger boys of the community looked at the uniforms and dreamed of glamour and adventure in faraway places.

The men in army camp did not find it difficult to practise their religious beliefs. Every Sunday morning they had church parade. In uniform, they were [illegible] to attend either a Catholic or Protestant service, usually held in the drill hall and led by a chaplain. The chaplain would give a Biblical message and the group would sing songs and pray. A song often requested was "Oh God Our Help In Ages Past".

Naturally there were many undesirable things a Christian would see among them: continuous swearing and drinking. The local boys soon picked their friends from those they had things in common with and whose lifestyle was similar to theirs.

Before the men were sent overseas they were given a few days

George [illegible] c. 1942

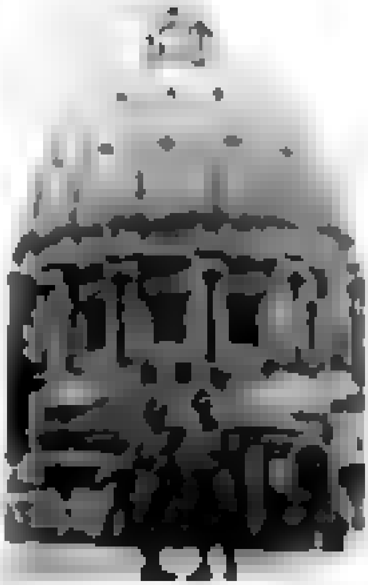
In uniform: Bert [illegible], 1944

embarkation leave [illegible] that was spent saying goodbye to family and friends. [illegible] and they would be reunited with their loved ones. [illegible] they were back with the [illegible] again there was little talk [illegible] about these things [illegible] of the full routine.

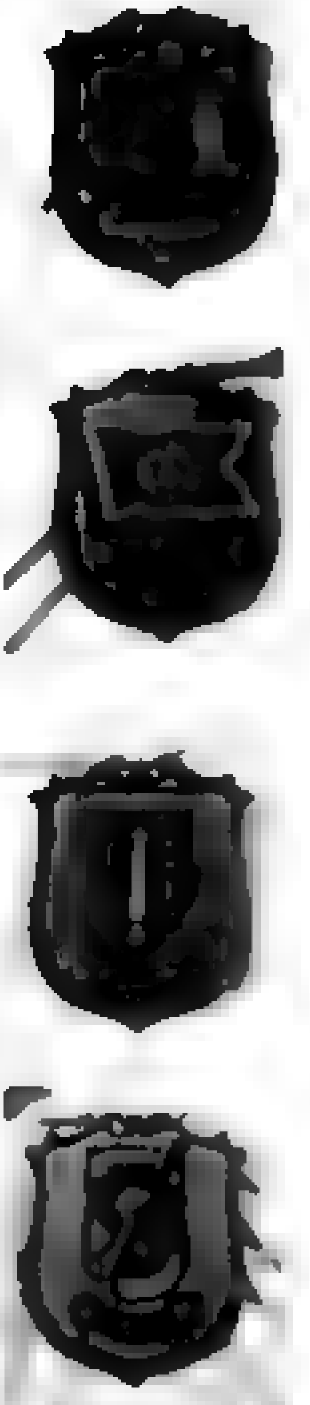
When overseas, a few had opportunity to visit some famous sites, including St. Peter's and the Colosseum in Rome. The sights were very impressive, but the soldiers were unable to appreciate the beauty of a country under the adverse circumstances in which they were seeing it.

Canada was also involved in the war effort on the home front. Firms that had made vacuum cleaners before the war began to make machine guns. Automobile factories were converted to manufacture airplanes, engines and tanks. Women filled positions [illegible] Jennie Hermanson of Vermandia worked at the [illegible] building [illegible] in Edmonton. No women had worked there before the war and the managers were pleasantly surprised at what women could do.

Many food items were in short supply during the war. For some items that consumers had to buy on a regular basis, ration coupons were instituted in 1942. The items rationed were coffee, tea, sugar, butter and later preserves and meats. Shoppers had to take their coupons with them when they shopped and surrender a certain number of coupons for each rationed item they bought. The rationing of butter, meat and preserves did not affect Vermandia residents much. Almost every one [illegible] made butter, put up their own preserves and had animals to use for meat. The rural people were probably most affected by the sugar ration. [illegible] traded their sugar and butter coupons for [illegible] from the [illegible] started drinking their coffee and tea without sugar when others drank [illegible] instead. A few farmers, such as the [illegible] Hermanson, Albert [illegible] and Pete [illegible], kept bees to supplement their sugar requirements with honey. The Blue Ribbon Manufacturing Company did put out a Blue Ribbon Cook Book during the war which contained sugarless recipes for cakes and other baked goods. In the fall during canning time extra sugar was available.



At St. Peter's in Rome, 1944. Pete Emmanuel on the right.



Plaques received by Henry Kippers for selling Victory Bonds.

Coffee or tea was available with one coupon. If the coupons were used for tea, then one could not buy coffee. Aafke and Minne Plantinga dug up dandelion roots, scraped them, cut them into long thin strips, and dried them. The strips were then roasted in the oven and ground, and used instead of ground coffee. There may have been a small amount of bartering for ration coupons, but most of the people made do with what was available. They were not accustomed to luxury and tried to live within the bounds imposed upon them. Besides, there was always plenty to eat on the farm.

Gasoline was also rationed, but it was not used extensively in the community and there was no rationing of purple gas. With some advance planning there was no need to run short of gas. Truckers could get permits to buy the needed amounts to operate their business.

There were many other shortages because raw materials were being used for the war effort. Certificates were issued for automobiles, tires, stoves, and washing machines. These certificates were given on the basis of need, and one had to prove to the local ration board that he had a genuine need for a particular item. Rubber tires had recently become available in this area and if one was fortunate and had bought some before the shortage, he would not need new tires because they were expected to last from six to eight years. Tires bought during the war, though, were made of synthetic rubber but seemed to be composed of saw dust and other foreign material held together with rubber; they fell apart in no time. As the war progressed, farm implements became almost impossible to buy. Used tires and aluminum were collected at the school for recycling. Secondhand items were difficult to obtain too. A few farmers in Neerlandia managed to buy a secondhand car but one remembers looking for a car and finding only one lone advertisement of a car for sale in an Edmonton paper — and that car was in Saskatchewan.

Several other smaller, but crucial, items were difficult to obtain. Rubber rings for canning jars were in short supply. Clothespins with metal springs were unavailable and peg clothespins were sold instead. These usually were too thick or too thin for the line and were cracked in half. If one ran out of clothespins, clothes were draped over the clothesline or a fence. Toothpaste was sold in tubes and John Cuss, the Watkins man, had to have the empty tubes back before he could sell the householder a new, full tube. This was also the case if shaving cream was purchased in tubes. Elastic, though available, was of very poor quality. It did not have much stretch to it and what it did have was soon lost.

Nylon stockings were almost unobtainable during the war because nylon was being used to make parachutes. In order to be fashionable, the girls would paint their legs beige with a sponge. A friend would draw a black line down the back of the leg for a seam, completing the "stockings."

Farm prices rose during the war years because of the great demand for the food the farmer was producing. With extra income but a shortage of items to purchase, some farmers had extra cash. In order to finance the war effort the government sold Victory Bonds and Henry Kippers Sr. became the agent in Neerlandia. Other canvas remembers buying at least three thousand dollars worth of these Victory Bonds because there was not much else to spend their money on. A small amount of interest was paid to the buyer and these bonds could be cashed at any time.

The women of the community did their part too. Jacoba Koning was in charge of the Red Cross effort in this community. She would give wool to any woman who had the time to knit. Socks, scarves and toques were among the items made by various volunteers. Old sheets were cut into strips, rolled up and sent to the Red Cross for use as bandages on the front lines.

As much contact as possible was kept with the soldiers who were away. Parents and friends prayed for the safe return of each one gone. The Young People's Society took turns writing to their members and *The Banner* was sent to some. Clarence Mast recalls that he was asked the name of his favourite hymn. His choice, "It is Well with My Soul," was sung by the congregation one Sunday. Letters from home were always treasured by the soldiers and they enjoyed the local newspapers that were also included. Family and friends also sent them parcels containing personal items such as cigarettes, chocolate bars (when available), gum, cans of Spork or Spam, or some little item the soldiers had requested. Sometimes the men would not receive the parcels, but the families continued sending them with the hope that someone (other than the enemy) would use and appreciate the contents.

Jan Koning, manager of Neerlandia Co-op, was very patriotic and interested in the war effort. He had a world map tacked up on a wall in the store and used coloured pins to show the advance or retreat of the Allied forces — the pins were moved according to the different areas of combat. This map became a gathering place for customers who were also interested in the war.

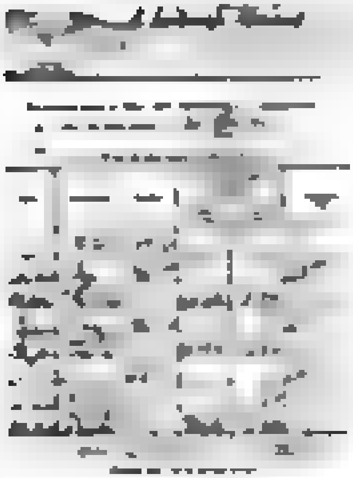
The eight o'clock news every night was a very important time. Who does not remember the voice of Matthew Halton or Lorne Greene coming from the CBC? The children had to either be in bed or very quiet. Some of them had the strange idea that after the war was over there would not be any more news.

Finally good news was heard, "Victory in Europe!" There was much celebrating in the Allied nations when V-E (Victory in Europe) Day was declared May 8, 1945. Huge bonfires were lit in England where Bert Nanninga was stationed. Simon Fisher was also in England and he recalls church bells ringing and people singing and dancing in the streets. Clarence Mast was in Germany but although they knew of the victory, the troops there were still on the alert because of sporadic fighting by small bands of Germans. Later thousands of soldiers came together in drill halls to be entertained for over a week. This victory celebration included nightly variety shows with much singing, band playing, and other entertainment performed by army women and men.

After that wonderful news the soldier's life became more relaxed. The troops did not parade much and they put in time overseas waiting for a ship to take them home. No more spit and polish either. The peace and quiet was a dramatic change from the previous constant noise and activity.

While the veterans had been away fighting, the farmers of

Young People's had a picnic celebration in Vega sandhills after V-J Day, 1945. [illegible] Frances Anema, Annie Leder, Sophie Anema.



home had done well. After the war, legislation was passed to help soldiers get on their feet again in farming. The Veterans' Land Act entitled the returning soldiers to nonrepayable grants for clearing and improving farmland. Money was also available for purchasing farmland at an interest rate of [illegible] percent with a twenty-[illegible] year repayment term, and other loans were available at five percent if the conditions had been met on the first loans. There were no taxes on land owned by veterans until one year after they were home.

When the soldiers returned home they found Neerlandia and its citizens had changed very little. The soldiers were the ones who had changed. They were no longer "bush rabbits" and their thinking was slightly different. They had known many soldiers, come into contact with many different ideas, and came home with a broader view of life. Neerlandia seemed sheltered and removed from reality and yet they were thankful to be home. Neerlandia seemed awfully quiet but they were glad to relax. No [illegible] was given to the returning men. No fuss was made on their account and most soon became involved in farming again. But the change was almost too dramatic. For those who had served in the front lines it took a long time to be at ease again and a sudden or any loud bang would make them drop to the ground immediately. The army had given them a sense of comradeship which they now missed. The men were somewhat at loose ends and unsure whether they wanted to continue farming, though most eventually did. Even though Neerlandia residents did not give the returning soldiers a hero's welcome, they were also glad that the war was over and their sons had returned.

A Prisoner of War

I was drafted in June 1942 at the age of twenty-[illegible]. The army put me in Infantry and I was sent to [illegible] Centre for my basic training. From there I was sent to Calgary for advanced training. I took sick there and after I recuperated I had to wash dishes and look after the Mess Hall. In February 1943 I went to England for more training and I stayed there about four to five months. While in England I met Jim [illegible] who was in the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, a group of six hundred men.

From England our division was sent to Sicily by boat. It was July 1943. The invasion of Sicily had taken place four days before and sixty thousand Italian soldiers had been taken prisoner. This happened at the time when Italy had surrendered to Eisenhower and the Germans were retreating. Many bridges had been bombed and rivers had to be crossed by pontoons (inflated rubber boats). We stayed in Sicily for one week, then chased the Germans up to Ortona, the winterline, which was one hundred and fifty miles northeast of Rome. We also called it the static line. It was hard for us as well as the enemy to move because of the mud. I did patrolling while there at Campobasso, Italy, which was one hundred and twenty-five miles southeast of Rome, and got hit by machine gun fire in the leg. The doctor put a cast on and I was flown to a hospital in Phillipville, North Africa.

I was at Cassino, Italy, seventy-five miles southeast of Rome in the spring of 1944. The Germans had a strong hold on the city and

On the move in Palermo, Italy. Simon Fisher sixth from left

resisted Allied attempts to seize it. We fought a battle there for seven days and many soldiers were killed. After this we regrouped and went to the east coast of Italy to fight. While advancing one day at [illegible] we went [illegible] ahead of the rest of the army and were taken prisoner. We were shipped to Moosburg outside of Munich in Germany. It was there that we saw [illegible] of people taken to the [illegible] We saw the smoke go up and [illegible] for [illegible] was put in prison [illegible] The diet was [illegible] per day and [illegible] cabbage [illegible] the cabbage and black bread. [illegible] a week we had a [illegible] sausage [illegible] Again [illegible] and when I got better they made me work in the kitchen [illegible] potatoes and [illegible] up to distribute amongst the soldiers. [illegible] mans stole these potatoes from the Netherlands.

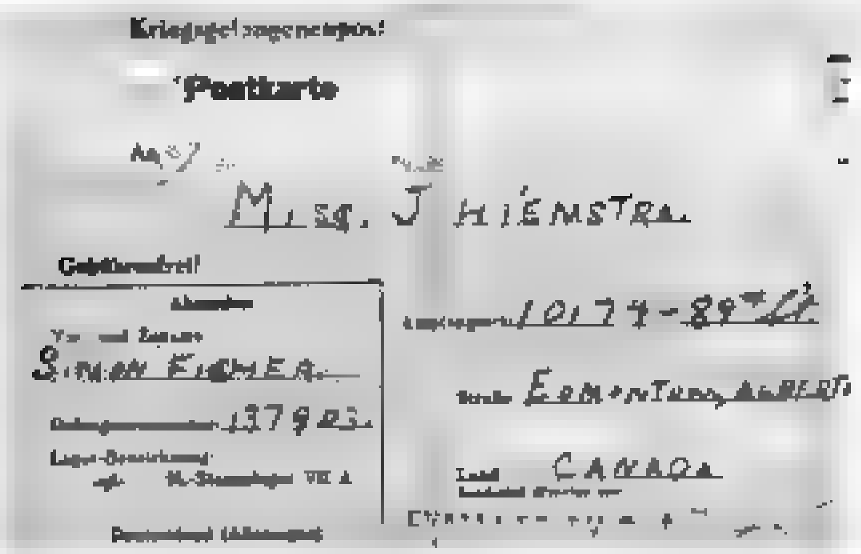
The beds were made of boards [illegible] We had one grey blanket and [illegible] up [illegible] after the bombings in the [illegible] There were [illegible] thousand prisoners in that camp. I stayed for nine months [illegible] the first month [illegible] we had no parcels. [illegible] parcels and [illegible] each month. Many parcels and letters were [illegible] by the German Army and kept [illegible] Hitler's [illegible] We knew this through the underground grapevine.

[illegible] a truck driver [illegible] prisoners would not escape. [illegible] there was a German [illegible] along

[illegible]

who often wanted to stop for a bit of gas. I could not figure him out but after found out he was stalling for time. He knew we would be running into the Americans, which we did. They captured us. I was not in too good a shape and it was through a Swiss doctor that I got back on my feet at Konstanz, Germany. The date of my rescue was April 13, 1945.

From there they flew me to England. At that time I only weighed ninety pounds. They gave me one bottle of Stout beer to drink at every meal. It is a nice beer and nutritious. On June 10, 1945, I went home. I took up farming in Neerlandia with the bullet still in my leg. It will stay there till my dying day. As I recall those days I must say they were dangerous. I hated it at times. We had been trained to kill, to destroy, and that scared me after I came home.



Kriegsgefangenenpost

Postkarte

An Miss. J Hiemstra

Gebührenfrei!

Absender

Vor- und Zuname: Simon Fisher

Gefangenennummer: 137923

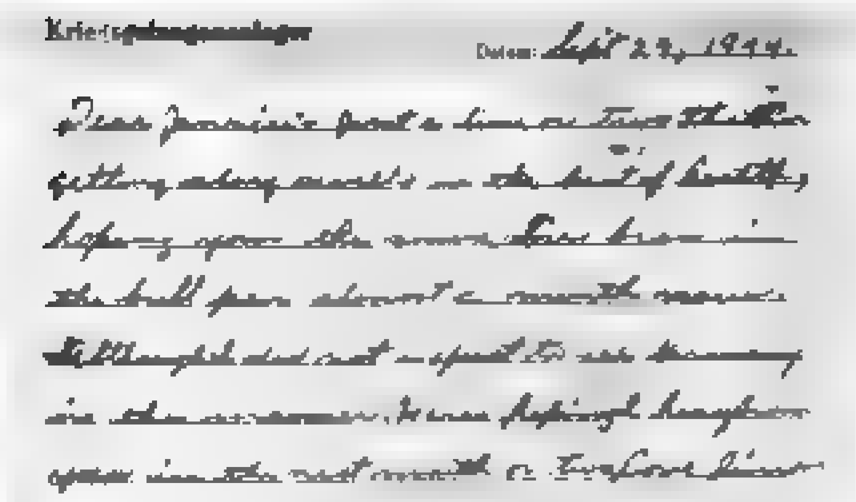
Lager-Bezeichnung: M.-Stammlager VII A

Deutschland (Allemagne)

10174 - 89th St.

Edmonton, Alberta

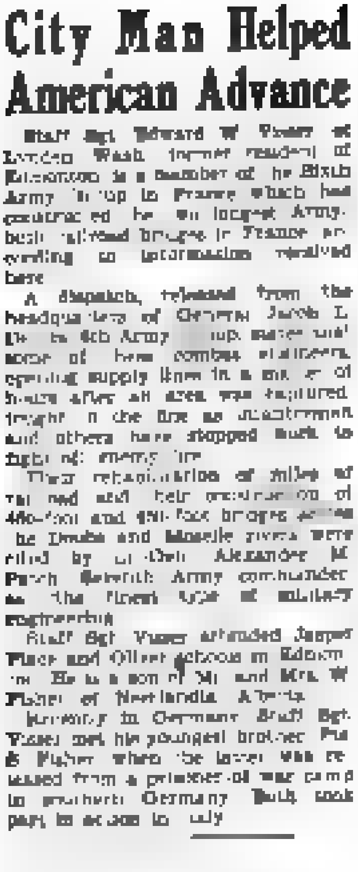
Land: CANADA



Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: Sept 22, 1944.

Letter from Stalag 7A.



City Man Helped American Advance

Staff Sgt. Edward W. Visser of Lynden, Wash., former resident of Edmonton, is a member of the Sixth Army Group in France which has constructed the two longest Army-built railroad bridges in France, according to information received here.

A dispatch, released from the headquarters of General Jacob L. Devers' 6th Army Group, states that some of these combat engineers, opening supply lines in a matter of hours after an area was captured, fought in the line as infantrymen and others have stopped work to fight off enemy fire.

Their rehabilitation of miles of railroad and their construction of 400-foot and 650-foot bridges across the Doubs and Moselle rivers were cited by Lt.-Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army commander, as "the finest type of military engineering."

Staff Sgt. Visser attended Jasper Place and Oliver schools in Edmonton. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Fisher of Neerlandia, Alberta.

Recently in Germany Staff Sgt. Visser met his youngest brother, Pte. S. Fisher, when the latter was released from a prisoner-of-war camp in southern Germany. Both took part in action in Italy.

Now that all is behind, I find it also interesting, even though I still have nightmares about it at times.

Simon Fisher

My Wartime Experiences

It was fall when I got into a uniform to serve my country. I had to report in Edmonton and from there had basic training in Camrose. Basic training had for its aim self discipline. The officers in the army ordered us to polish our shoes, the buttons of our uniform and our guns every day. When we were almost finished our basic training, I got sick and had to have an appendix operation. That meant I had to take my training again for two months. For the winter we moved on to Dundurn, Saskatchewan, for advanced training as a driver in tanks, jeeps, motorcycles and army cars. After that we were sent to the coast for guard duty for a while. Then we went back to Wainwright, Alberta, for more advanced training with other units in war games.

From Alberta we went to Nova Scotia, and from there on to Halifax where we boarded a ship to England. After about six days on the water, we landed safe on the other side. We were, however, not exactly safe. In fact we had our first hair raising experience of war. Sirens were wailing and bombs could be heard in the distance. We were sent into field training that same week. This time it was the real thing. We lived under ground sheets and under the stars. Most of the time it was raining, and I was glad when field training was finished.

In front of an air raid shelter, Clarence [illegible]

From there we were flown to Ghent, Belgium, in bomber planes. We were there for a while until we landed in the Netherlands and moved on through to Winschoten, the Netherlands, where I met my future wife, Grace. We had just met when I had to go into Germany again. It didn't take long since the end of the war was coming. We stayed in Germany about six weeks, and in the meantime I joined the occupation force. We moved back to the Netherlands and had a good rest. We were allowed to travel through the Netherlands, and I looked up my girlfriend again. Then I went to Enschede to find my relatives. We were soon back in Germany to keep things in order.

At one time I brought some prisoners of war across the border to Germany. These soldiers had been in jail in the Netherlands but had to be put in prison camps. If they had any badges or decorations on their uniform, they were taken away from them. They were not allowed to go back to Germany with any sign of bravery or distinction. They were not allowed to even pick a flower from the roadside to put on their lapel. One soldier tried to get away with it and kept the badge on his coat. When I noticed this, I ripped this badge off the soldier's lapel. I took it with me and still have this badge at home.

I had a nice job of border patrol and was able to see my girlfriend as she lived only twenty to thirty miles from where I was stationed. After about six or eight months, on March 6, 1946, we were married in Utrecht. Then it was back to Germany. My wife stayed by her grandparents in Winschoten, close to the German border, and so we saw each other quite often.

Clarence swearing an oath that he does not have a wife in Canada

Grace and Clarence alighting from the coach on the way to the Stadhuis.

Later on the Dutch government closed the border, so we could not cross into the Netherlands. I remember one incident that happened with a friend of mine, Kobe, who was in the secret service. He said he could use me as an interpreter. When he told me all about it, I got cold feet. But he talked me into it. I had to have pips on my shoulder to look like an officer. One time when we came along on our motorbikes at this small crossing, I noticed guards there, but Kobe, ahead of me, waved me on. As I came close, the guards came forward, saluted me, and sent me on. That was the shaky start. I drove to Winschoten close to where my wife was. When I arrived I saw a jeep, and lo and behold, there was my major. I said to Kobe, "Well, my goose is cooked."

"That's nothing," Kobe said. "If your goose is cooked, so is his, because he is not allowed to be here either." It all turned out good as Kobe said and I went with him several times. Sometimes I did go to help him but other times I used the excuse to visit Grace. We would not cross the border at the main crossroads, but sneak around a mile down.

Finally the day came to go back to Canada. I came back in the first week of July 1946. Grace came to Canada two months later.

Clarence Mast

Boy Meets Girl

During World War II, I was teaching in Ede, Gelderland, a town about twelve kilometres from the town of Wageningen where I lived. I biked to and from school daily. My best girlfriend lived in a pleasant villa in Ede with her parents and sister, since their house in Bennekom had been destroyed in the war. One day on my way home from school I dropped in at my friend's house for a cup of tea. Three Canadian soldiers were visiting there too. (Because the Netherlands had been liberated by the Canadians, the Canadian soldiers were welcomed in the Dutch homes.) One of them was Steve Abday, and I was immediately attracted to him. One might say it was "love at first sight."

When I got up to leave, Steve asked me if he could accompany me on my way home. He had rented a bike for the day at the cost of a carton of cigarettes. During that first bike ride together, Steve asked me about my family and inquired as to whether he might visit us some evening.

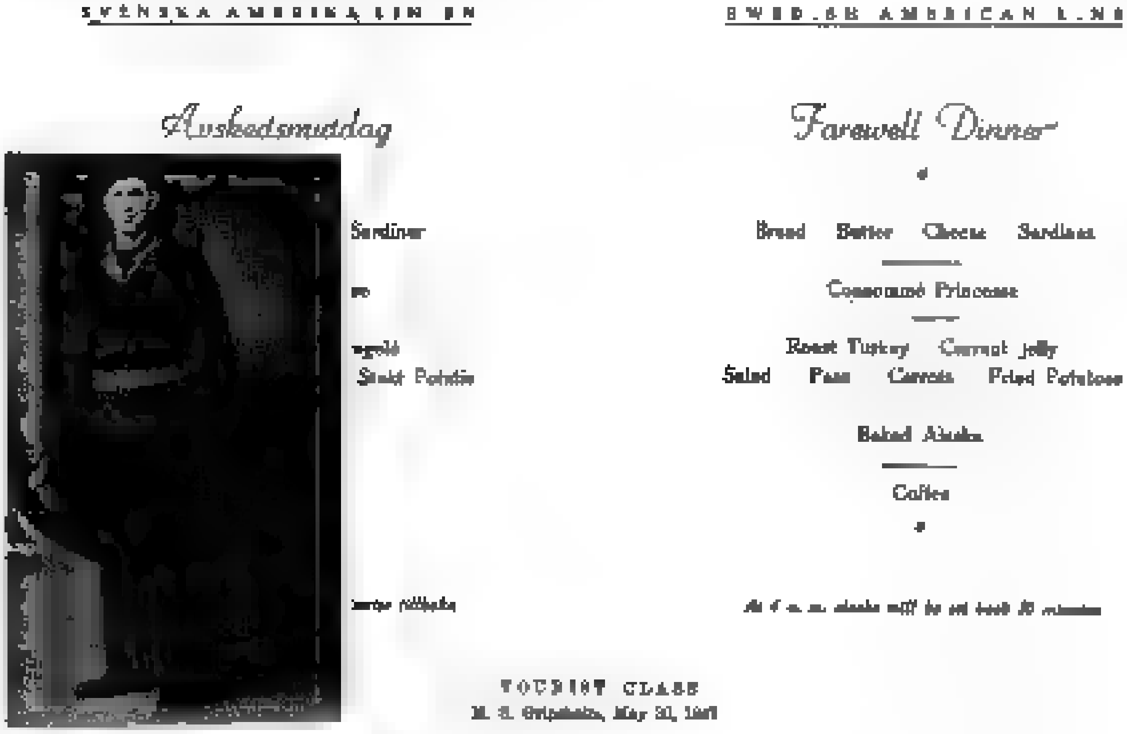
The following night Steve arrived with cigarettes, butter, tins of luncheon meat, etc. Everyone liked him. He visited us whenever he could. We learned that Steve Martin Abday was born July 28, 1920, at Sakenthal, Saskatchewan. He grew up on his father's farm, with four brothers and six sisters. During the Second World War, he joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He was sent overseas and served four years in the army as a mechanic and truck driver. The summer of 1945 passed pleasantly and all too quickly.

One day my mother said, "I don't know what to think about that Canadian soldier visiting us so often, and you, Tiny, sometimes going on a biking trip to show him the surroundings. I also heard you once saying 'Steve dear'."

Then quite unexpectedly came the message that the Regina

Rifle Regiment, of which Steve was a member, was to be discharged and was returning to Canada at the end of November 1945. At that moment we both realized that "parting is (not) such sweet sorrow."

Steve promised to send me a subscription to the *Family Herald* and the *Free Press Weekly* so I could learn more about Canada. Moreover, he would let me come to Canada as soon as possible. We didn't anticipate that it would involve much red tape, and that it would take two years before we'd see each other again. The Canadian War Brides could go to Canada right away and their passage across the Atlantic was paid by the Canadian Government. But the fiancées had to go through a lot of red tape, and their husbands-to-be had to pay for the Atlantic crossing.


SVENSKA AMERIKA LINIEN

Avskedsmiddag

Sardiner

ro

ngelé

Stekt Potatis

arna tillbaka

SWEDISH AMERICAN LINE

Farewell Dinner

Bread Butter Cheese Sardines

Consommé Princesse

Roast Turkey Currant jelly
Salad Peas Carrots Fried Potatoes

Baked Alaska

Coffee

At 4 a. m. clocks will be set back 30 minutes

TOURIST CLASS
M. S. Gripsholm, May 20, 1947

Dinner for the "War Brides". Inset: Steve.

Finally Steve got all the papers approved and on May 20, 1947 I landed in New York on the *Gripsholm*, a ship of the Swedish-America Line. Four other Dutch girls came across with me. Three were headed for Winnipeg and two of us for Saskatchewan. It took three ticket agents at New York Central Station to find the province of Saskatchewan on the map. They had never heard of it and concluded, "Only Indians must live there!"

The trip by train seemed endless and the melancholic blowing of the whistle made me very depressed. But Steve sent a telegram that he'd meet me at Rivers, Manitoba. How happy we were to be together again! Before long we arrived at Melville, Saskatchewan.

From Melville we drove forty-five miles by car to the farm of Steve's parents in Dubuc.

Now it was the end of May and very warm. The rolling prairies were colourful with blooming wild carnations and tiger lilies. Although the prairies have their own characteristic beauty, I didn't like them. There weren't many trees, only the silver willow bushes, and by the farmhouses there were some maple trees and lilacs. A dry hot wind blew constantly. It made your skin feel rough and dry.

The skies, however, were imposing. They seemed so high and majestic. Thunderclouds towered like castles and the sky behind was a beautiful azure. Very frightening was the first thunderstorm, the thunder rolling on over the prairies for minutes on end. Devastating were the hailstones and the rain falling in bucketfuls from the sky. Everything was so great and overpowering. Still, I didn't want to live there after I heard the stories of wintry blizzards which caused snowdrifts as high as telephone poles.

I remembered that I had a distant relative, G. G. Dyk, living in Westlock, Alberta. I persuaded Steve to visit him with me so that we could see what Alberta was like. We thought Alberta was beautiful with its abundance of different trees and green shrubs. Mr. Dyk took us to Neerlandia and to the Christian Reformed Church service on a Sunday. I felt right at home going to church there and meeting all the Dutch people. After the service, the people stayed talking outside the church, a custom unknown in the Netherlands.

Upon hearing that I was a Christian Reformed teacher just arrived from the Netherlands, Herman Wierenga and Carl Mast asked me if I wanted to teach in Neerlandia. "There would be work enough for Steve too," they assured us. We liked Neerlandia very much, and so it was agreed that I would start teaching grades 4, 5 and 6 in September.

Steve and I went back to Saskatchewan and got married in the United Church in Melville on July 10, 1947.

Tine Abday

The First War Bride

After the war was over in 1945, the Canadian soldiers started to look for a girl to take home. I met Clarence Mast, and after ten months we decided to get married. He was a farmer, and I a city girl who had never seen a cow close up. Clarence went to Neerlandia before I did. The Canadian Army paid for my trip. I left home on August 24, 1946, and was trucked to Antwerp, Belgium. There were one hundred war brides, and we waited for French and Belgian girls to join us. The boat was named the *Lady Rodney*. We were in Antwerp harbour for three days.

Then we set out for Southhampton, England. We had a terrible storm on the North Sea and all the brides were filling up the cardboard boxes. I was the only one not sick and helped all day with throwing boxes overboard, until I got in our sleeping hut. Then I ran back and tied a box up, as the smell was horrible in the hut. It was a small boat and only crossed the North Sea.

From England we went on a big ship, the *Aquitania*. After ten days on the ocean the boat anchored in Halifax. A band was playing "Here Comes the Bride" for the war brides on board. I then travelled five days by train from Halifax to Edmonton, and the rest of the way by car. I arrived in Neerlandia on September 9, 1946, two months after Clarence. I was the first war bride in Neerlandia.

So we started farming. Our quarter was all bush except for thirty acres — the rest had to be cleared. Of course we had no water and electricity, but Clarence said that water was no problem. After a few days with pick and shovel we had a ten foot well with lots of water, although it was not very clear. Then he set off picking roots and clearing the bush. At night his clothes were just like the soil, and oh, what a job trying to clean them on a scrub board. Our light was a coal oil lamp and later on we had a gas lamp. I was afraid of that gas lamp. Sometimes when I lit the match, the lamp would give a puff and I would jerk the match and break the mantle. So we sat in the dark till we had transportation to go to the store. The roads were very narrow and in the winter there was lots of snow. Good thing there were not too many cars in those days for there was no room to pass anyone.

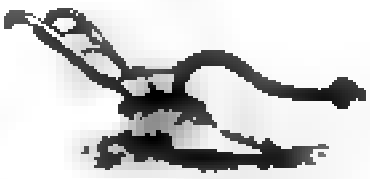
We had the cook stove going all day, even in the hot summer. We had to heat all our water for coffee or tea on the stove. Also, the baker didn't come to the house to deliver bread and cookies, so that was another job I didn't know of. Mom Mast taught me how to bake bread. I have to admit my first loaves were like rocks, but we lived through it all.

We had two cows given by Mom and Dad Mast, and I was scared of the things. Once Clarence was gone all day getting logs out for building and then it happened: the cows, who were staked out since we had no fences, broke loose. I thought that I better get them in the barn before the boss came home, so I picked up both chains and started walking. Every time I looked back, I thought the cows were going faster and faster, but it was I who was almost running. At the barn I opened the door and let the beasts in. I didn't dare put them in their stalls.

Another time I was sick and had to go see a doctor. The sleigh and horse stood ready. On the sleigh was an old heater with blocks of wood and an old chair which was bought at a sale for one dollar. So I was sitting pretty and warm. We had to go for nine miles to the folks' place and from there by car to Barrhead to see Dr. Kerr.

So you see, it was quite a change for a city girl, and being the first new one here, nobody understood how lost and lonely I felt. It was nice, however, to come to a Dutch settlement where you could speak your own language.

Grace Mast



Postwar Immigration

POSTWAR IMMIGRATION

The end of the Second World War signaled a new phase in [illegible] history [illegible] the coming of a third wave of Dutch immigrants. The immigrants who came this time were different from previous immigrants and the times in which they came were [illegible] the previous times. More significantly, there [illegible] well-established Dutch [illegible] friendship and [illegible] and [illegible] amalgamation. The background and the experiences of the postwar immigrants [illegible] Canada differed from that of the [illegible] and adjusting [illegible] meant adjusting to conditions which differed from those to which they were accustomed.

European Background

The people who came to [illegible] after World War II left behind a war-ravaged country. The [illegible] of the Netherlands had been [illegible] German [illegible] of the war. This had the effect of [illegible] and creating a large [illegible] had lost [illegible] as a direct result of the war. The [illegible] everywhere [illegible] factories [illegible] and buildings had been [illegible] and the [illegible] Germans had [illegible] Dutch [illegible] to go underground [illegible] Germans managed to [illegible] land [illegible] the war's end, a severe housing shortage and [illegible] industrial plants [illegible] after the major problems for Dutch citizens.

As [illegible] these problems, there was an armed guerilla uprising in the Dutch East Indies soon after the war ended, necessitating the [illegible] Dutch soldiers [illegible] this new threat. [illegible] had [illegible] before the war. [illegible] of the men drafted in 1949 and sent to the South Pacific.) In [illegible] became [illegible] that the Netherlands [illegible] more than [illegible] repatriates and refugees [illegible] refuge in the Netherlands, [illegible] an already tight housing situation to the critical level.

'Emigration Fever'

Many Dutchmen had no stomach for continued conflict and the immense reconstruction problems that lay before them. The fear of Soviet invasion in Western Europe also loomed large in many people's minds. As a result, an unprecedented emigration fever hit the population. The Dutch had never been an emigrating people in previous years; while other nations encouraged emigration as a solution to economic, political and religious problems, the Dutch stayed home. The [illegible] emigration that had resulted in the establishment of [illegible] had been an anomaly. Now, however, Dutchmen from all walks of life were pressuring the government to let them out of the country. Canada was the destination for many

[illegible] house after the Germans flooded the polders.

perhaps because it was Canadian soldiers who had liberated the Netherlands in those final weeks during World War II. For many of those destined for Neerlandia however, the choice was even easier. These people for the most part had relatives in Neerlandia with whom they had kept up a [illegible] correspondence during the years before and after the war. Mabel [illegible] and others had kept writing their families throughout the war and even sent Care Packages upon hearing of postwar shortages. Johannes Peters also kept up the lines of communication with his brother Hendrik who was in the Netherlands. For these people and others, when emigration fever caught hold of them, Neerlandia was the place to go.

Emigration Begins

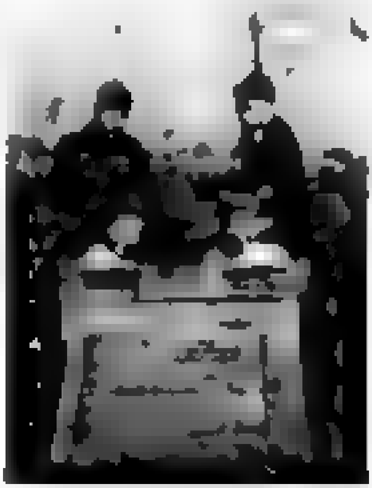
Fortunately, the Dutchmen who immigrated to Canada before World War II had built up a good reputation among their neighbours and government officials, being known for their industriousness, integrity and farming expertise. Thus Canadian government officials were not against letting more Dutch people in when a request was made by the Dutch government to open the doors once again.

Canadians had some hesitations initially. There was the concern that the economy would not react as well to peace as it had to war. The government was also intent that the poor treatment of returning World War I soldiers would not be repeated and that enough job opportunities would be available for them. As many farm workers had left and moved to the cities for lucrative factory jobs, however, Canada's farm labour pool was experiencing severe shortages. The Canadian government thus quickly warmed to the idea of importing Dutch farm labourers as immigrants. By January 31, 1947 Mackenzie King agreed to allow sponsored agriculturalists from the Netherlands into the country and in June 1947 the first boatload of such immigrants docked in Halifax aboard the Waterman. One family destined for Neerlandia was on the boat, the Jan Paas family, sponsored by Jan's uncle Gerhard who had made the trip to Neerlandia some twenty years before. Even before the two governments signed formal agreements later that year, another boat, the *Tabinta*, unloaded more farmers destined for Canadian farms in September 1947.

The War Brides

Technically, the Jan Paas family were not the first Dutch immigrants to come to Neerlandia after World War II. Two women, one married and the other engaged to Neerlandia soldiers, had arrived the year before. After the war in 1945, the military was under extreme pressure to send back Canadian soldiers and their wives and families, but the [illegible] soldiers generally took precedence. Dutch women who married Canadian soldiers lost their Dutch citizenship, creating an awkward situation for the Canadian Embassy in den Hague, and in December 1945 a Dutch Wives Bureau was set up so that the speedy passage of Canada's newest citizens could be accomplished. By mid 1946, the problems of insuring the women's luggage, providing passports and other documents, and changing their Dutch guilders to Canadian dollars were resolved.

Thus it was that newly wed Grace Mast (nee Dop) and Eve Gemmen (fiancee of Pete Emmerzael) began their trip to Canada



Ready to leave Zuidwolde, 1948. Bo Henk, Christina, Lily Hanna

Grace went by train to Antwerpen, Belgium, along with one hundred other Dutch war brides and eventually made it to Canada aboard the *Aquitania* in September 1946. Eve left her native land some months later aboard the *[illegible]*, arriving in Neerlandia in May 1947. Unbeknownst to Eve, Tine Bouma was also on that same ship, though Tine was destined for Melville, Saskatchewan, where young Steve [illegible] was awaiting her. Steve and Tine later made their way to Neerlandia where Tine had been hired as a teacher.

How to Emigrate

A trip to *Stichting Landverhuizing Nederland* was necessary to determine if a person met the minimum qualifications to emigrate. Dutch authorities, of course, wanted emigrants to be model citizens in their new land, and criminals, debtors, and other undesirables were not permitted to leave the country. Secondly, the successful applicant had to have skills that the Canadian government wanted and that the Dutch government was willing to part with. In the early years (1946-49) it was mostly agricultural workers who were permitted out of the country, but as the years wore on people of all walks of life were allowed to come to Canada. At one point, an emigrant applied to leave but was denied since his blacksmithing skills were in high demand in the Netherlands. The Canadian government also imposed restrictions on welders, factory workers, and bricklayers, as there were surpluses of these labourers in Canada. Finally, it seems that many of the emigrants were required to sign a pledge in which they agreed to stay with their sponsor for at least one year.

Once the emigrant cleared that stage of the emigration process he was placed on a waiting list to obtain a sponsor. This could take a long time depending on the availability of sponsors who came forward to Canadian officials. Then, a telegram received in the night might mean only twelve hours notice to get to Rotterdam. Many of the emigrants destined for Neerlandia, though, had secured their own sponsor through contact with a near or distant relative living in Neerlandia. Neerlandia farmers could apply to sponsor a specific immigrant family simply by filling out the appropriate form at a National Employment Service office, immigration offices in Edmonton, or at the Colonization offices of either of the major railways. This application was then sent to Canadian officials at den Hague and matched up with the application for emigration filled out by the other relative.

Compared to the pioneers who had left the Netherlands to settle Neerlandia in the early 1910s, the destiny of the emigrant was in the hands of a well-organized bureaucracy. This bureaucracy involved such organizations as the Christian Reformed Churches of North America, the comparable *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands, the major Canadian railroad companies, and branches of the Canadian and Dutch governments. With all these thumbs in the pie there was some confusion. Yet, considering the numbers who left the Netherlands in these years, it was a surprisingly smooth operation.

Prospective emigrants could first of all become members of the popular *Christelijke Emigratie Centrale* (CEC) for an annual fee of ten guilders. This organization took care of the spread of information about Canada, secured visas for its members, and handled placements with the various Canadian sponsors. The work of the C.E.S. was done as soon as the emigrant became immigrant, whereupon the Christian Reformed Church of North America could take over. That body had set up a committee at its 1947 Synod to handle the anticipated influx of Hollanders of the Reformed faith to its fifteen Canadian Christian Reformed churches. This committee, which later hired fieldmen and home missionaries, was responsible for the publication of a small booklet entitled *De Gids* which enlightened the emigrant about church matters in Canada.

De Gids was published shortly after the committee was struck and two thousand copies of the booklet were distributed through Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. It contained a brief description of fifteen Canadian communities, including Neerlandia, where Reformed people had already clustered together. Of Neerlandia the guidebook spoke quite highly, saying that although there was no room for group settlement of any kind, there was room for several farm families. The article erroneously stated that there were potential jobs for five different tradesmen: a barber, coppersmith, blacksmith, painter, wallpaper hanger and carpenter. A wage of $1.00 to $1.50 per hour could be expected in these trades. Working as a hired hand on a farm could bring in sixty to eighty dollars per month. Farms were hard to come by, the report said, averaging eight to nine thousand dollars for a quarter section. For those who wanted to live out their Calvinist faith, Neerlandia was a welcome place, boasting a large church and a well-established ministry of catechism, men's and women's societies, and boys' and girls' societies.

In *De Gids*, the principles for emigration were also laid out in typical Reformed fashion. Emigration had a scriptural foundation in the cultural mandate found in Genesis 1:28: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth . . ." Deep in the heart of every emigrant 5 should be the Christian pilgrim's zeal that looks forward to the Heavenly city, described in Hebrews 11. The writers encouraged people to remember that in their quest for material prosperity, "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but loses his own soul?" the booklet rhetorically asked.

The Dutch government actively supported emigration in the postwar years. Emigration was one solution to the country's monumental economic problems. Emigration offices were placed in economically depressed areas of the country to encourage people to leave the Netherlands. The government sponsored "how to" seminars for those wanting to leave but unsure of how to go about it. By the early 1950s, the Dutch government was giving subsidies to immigrants unable to pay the boat fare.

One government stipulation that created some hardship, especially among the many people wanting to begin farming in Canada, was that no more than one hundred dollars per person could be taken out of the country. This led to many people transporting all the furniture and household possessions they could, but prevented those with sizable amounts of money from applying it to a down payment on a Canadian farm.

The Dutch government also pressed the Canadian govern-

Kota Inten

ment quite strongly to allow Dutch immigrants to enter the country. An agreement had been signed late in 194 to allow for the entry of ten thousand agriculturalists. At a press conference the government outlined its 1948 program, the result of which saw many more emigrants embark on the long journey to Neerlandia. The *Kota Inten* and *Tabinta* were chartered for a total of thirteen trips, each transporting 770 passengers bound for Canada. The first boats docked at Halifax in March (the St. Lawrence was still frozen) and subsequent boats docked in either Quebec City or Halifax. The 1948 run of emigrant boats carried the largest number of immigrants for Neerlandia, beginning with the D. H. Navis and F. Hessels families. The *Kota Inten* and the *Tabinta*, the ships by which most of the immigrants headed for Neerlandia travelled, were unsuitable for the task, one being a converted freighter and the other a troop carrier. Some of the later immigrants to arrive in Neerlandia travelled in remodelled transport ships such as the *Waterman*, the *Groote Beer*, and the *Zuiderkruis*, which were luxurious compared to the earlier immigrant ships.

Volendam

Why They Came

De Gids gave a pious rationale for emigration, but few emigrants came to Neerlandia to fulfil the cultural mandate. (Besides, according to some, Neerlandia was already full!) The prime motivation for many seems to have been to escape their war ravaged country, to provide a better future for their children, or to seek better opportunities in a new land. One person claimed he left the Netherlands to escape the Dutch government's ever reaching grasp.

At the same time, several families who came to Neerlandia state that they came after speaking with either Lammert or Andries Wierenga. Indeed, these two Neerlandians, who had made the move to Canada already in the 1910s, paid their first return visit to their birthplace in Groningen in 1947 and spoke to several people who were considering making the move. The brothers were accompanied by Lammert's daughter Catherine Holwerda and her two children. It was a family visit, not intended to be a recruiting trip, since Lammert had two sons in the Netherlands who had not emigrated with the rest of the family. However, it was quite common in those days for a visiting Canadian to be asked by people to give more insight into what Canada was really like. The Wierengas did encourage people to come to Neerlandia, and not long after they returned to Canada, Hollanders came "knocking at their door." After speaking with them, the George Wiegers family in Uithuizen and the Adrian Harmsen family in Utrecht decided to come to Canada. The Wierenga brothers also visited the Hendrik Peters family who later also immigrated.

One of the family members remembered seeing slide shows in the Netherlands about Canada, picturing lumber camps, beautiful grain fields, and wild country; it was a captivating picture for some.

The Voyage

The long boat trip gave people mixed feelings, to say the least. For some it could mean ten to twelve days of seasickness. For others, like Gerrit van Dijken, who had become used to the seas when in Indonesia, the trip was fun. Apparently, the trick was to stay on your feet as much as possible, for lying down only worsened your condition. The early ships were not designed for immigrants, however, and the trip was not the most pleasant. Marten de Jong, on his way to Neerlandia in August 1948 aboard the *Tabinta*, wrote that "women and children were all in one big room, sleeping in three tiers. There were probably about three hundred women. The men from ages twelve and up were in one room also, but at least we didn't have crying babies. . . . My wife was seasick the whole time, and she was seven months pregnant." The segregated sleeping quarters was the result of the ships having been used to transport troops to the Dutch East Indies. Hammock style beds and inadequate facilities for small children were still vivid in some people's minds thirty years after the trip. Other hardships were quickly forgotten. One immigrant noted that as soon as Halifax was sighted, seasick passengers miraculously forgot their ailments.

In many cases a Catholic or Protestant chaplain was provided by the *Deputaatschap* on the boat. Regular devotions would be broadcast over the ship's loudspeaker system or in a prearranged

[illegible] to *Canada*? 1948

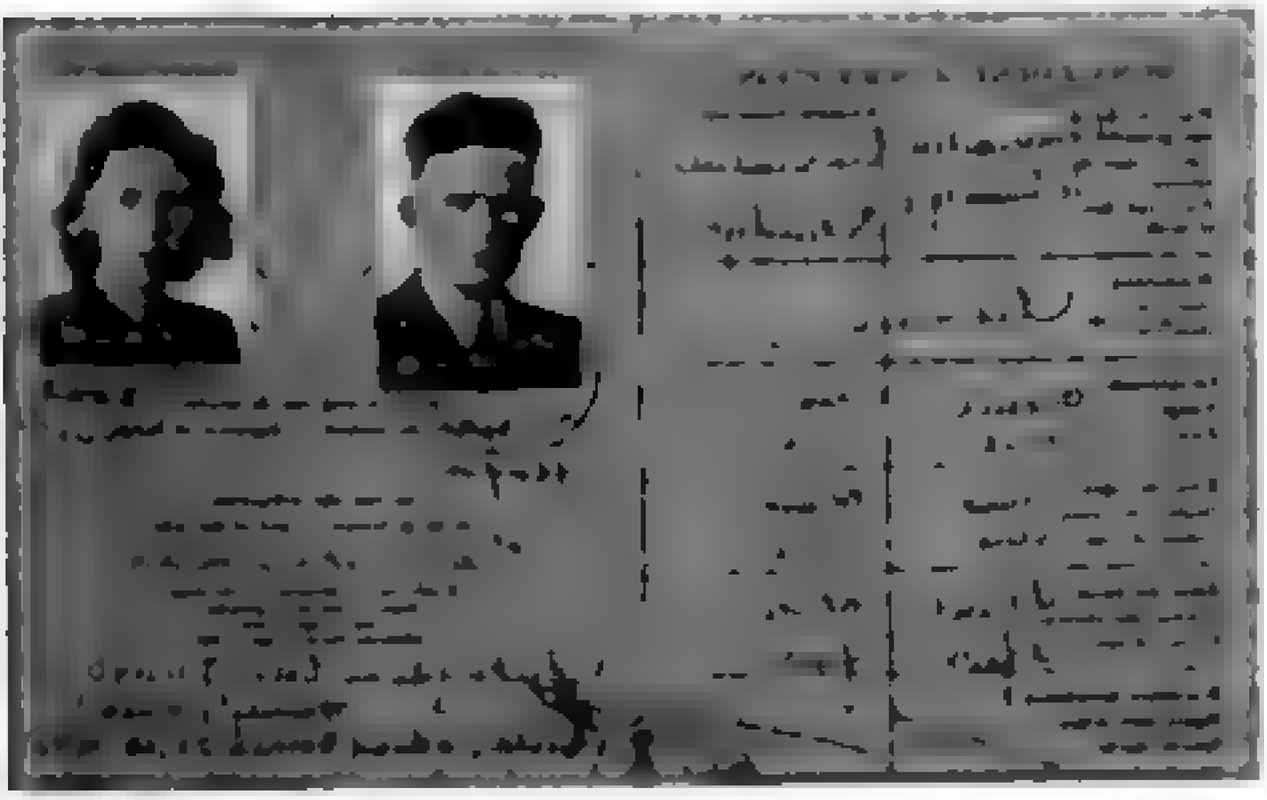
meeting place. [illegible] realized that the language [illegible] through [illegible]

[illegible] Atlantic [illegible] a [illegible] experience. [illegible]

[illegible] times too.

The meals and other [illegible] on board were included in the [illegible] of passage. The food was [illegible] though [illegible] the white bread [illegible] on board the ship [illegible] remembered [illegible] ness. Another shipboard luxury was showers.

Some people met others [illegible] aboard these emigrant ships. [illegible] eighteen and [illegible] all the



[illegible]

vard" for the first time, meeting Marten de Jong was a godsend. The immigrant ships carried not only Hollanders, though, as Rotterdam was the gathering place for French and other European immigrants as well.

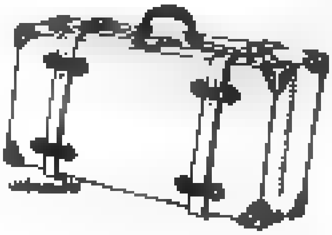
Language was not a problem until the boat docked in a Canadian port, but even here the *Deputaatschap* provided helpful services for the immigrant. Some ships had *tolk* (interpreters) aboard; generally they were university students, fluent in English and Dutch, whose trip was provided free of charge. Their job was to try to eliminate complications that could arise once the immigrants arrived at Canadian Customs. No amount of translation seemed to help Marten de Jong and his family of ten children (with as many suitcases and trunks) solve his problem. A five-dollar bill to the right man, however, was enough.

When the ships reached Halifax after the long trip, the city offered a beautiful panoramic sight if it was viewed at night. The lights dotting the gently sloping hillside was a sight not soon forgotten by one immigrant. For another, the squalor and slums of Quebec City's harbour side was his introduction to Canada.

* * *

Leaving the Netherlands

We had never been anywhere before we left. Oh, sure, we had visited neighbouring towns, and we had watched the Germans come and go. But when Dad decided to emigrate, there were so many new experiences in such a short time we could not take it all in. We had never been in a big city. Now we had to go first to the Hague to get the necessary papers and then to Rotterdam to board the ship. There were so many new things to see in the city and the harbour. Then there was the ship and the trip itself. Next came the train trip across Canada, the immigration hall, the trip to Barrhead, and, finally, Neerlandia and the snow. It was a case of information overload. Some things will never be forgotten, and others seem not to have happened at all.



* * *

All Aboard!

For most immigrants, however, docking in one of Canada's harbours was merely a brief interval before being whisked away for a four-day trip in an immigrant railcar to western Canada. The trip was different from the boat trip. Meals and showers were not provided, putting a burden on immigrants who were unsure how far their one hundred dollars would take them. One immigrant had the unpleasant experience of having the washrooms locked up by the conductor for someone's misbehavior. An added unpleasantry was the dirt and grime which accumulated as a result of the coal-fired engine spewing billows of smoke backwards toward open windows, but at least there was no seasickness. One immigrant recalls the men and boys sitting atop the roof of the car for parts of the trip. For this 'luxury' these men sorely needed a bath when they reached the Immigration Hall in Edmonton. Another thing which characterized the immigrant cars were the lines of clothes hanging in each car, making a simple trip to the washroom a veritable obstacle course. It was a wonder that nobody was hung!

Language was a problem for most of the new arrivals. Dick Froma remembers being asked to remove his coat when he entered the dining car (what was he doing there?) and when the waiter realized Dick was unable to understand, he began tugging at his sleeves. A fistfight was narrowly avoided by Dick's wife hustling him back to their seats. For Simon de Groot, the fact that Marten de Jong knew English was helpful. The train stopped at various places en route, and often the passengers were allowed a fifteen-minute break. One immigrant left his seat to buy a thirty-five cent cigar and came back just in time for the train to leave, but with a jar of marmalade. The storekeepers must have seen the immigrants coming. One immigrant did not make it back to the train on time and was rushed by taxi to the next station.

The scenery was fantastic as immigrants entered upon a new land flowing with many lakes, creeks, and rivers. But as one immigrant noted about his trip from Quebec, "You can only be excited about scenery for so long." As the monotony of the Canadian Shield wore on, many a passenger must have asked, "But where is Neerlandia?" The distances were hard to comprehend for even those Dutchmen who had been forewarned. To some, a sign indicating that Alberta was ahead was the best sight they had seen in three days. Upon entering Alberta, one naive immigrant's curiosity was aroused by the sight of many small wooden granaries near farms; she asked her husband if he thought people lived in those places. "They must," he replied and, after some thought, comforted his wife by saying they must be for bachelors since none of the buildings had chimneys. The woman's fears were laid to rest.

The Fieldman

The immigrants were met either in Edmonton or near Lloydminster by Herman Wierenga. He was a Neerlandia farmer who began working for the Christian Reformed Church as fieldman in 1948. His job was to coordinate and assist the placement of Gereformeerden in northern Alberta. His job was a demanding one. He acted as chauffeur, shuttling immigrants to their prospective sponsors; he acted as host, inviting immigrants to dinner; he acted as ombudsman, hearing complaints from irate immigrants whose sponsors had left them high and dry. In short, he tried to make their adjustment to Canadian life as easy as possible.

The fieldman's job was at times complicated by the immigrants' attitude. In one article Herman Wierenga wrote for the Calvinist Contact in 1951, he complained that people who paid ten guilders for membership in the CES expected the immigration committee of the CRC in Canada to begin "working for them" once they got to Canada. Wrote Herman Wierenga, "I would appreciate it if the CES always told their members that the ten guilders does not give anyone the right to expect help. . . . This help is given free by (our) churches, the Canadian government, and the railroads." The fieldman's annoyance was unmistakable.

If the immigrant was a bit demanding, it was understandable. Many came to this foreign land not understanding English, forcing the few who did understand it into the position of translators. As well, sponsors were notorious for opting out at the last minute, something for which there was no solution. Many sponsors were obtained in the winter so as to guarantee a late summer arrival date for the immigrant, in time for the fall work. However, winter was a difficult time for any farmer to predict his needs for the following harvest. Farming was a capricious business. The Wever, de Boer, and Werkman families all were left without a sponsor before they came to Neerlandia. For others, like Roelof Vander Veen, the sponsor was unable to pay the required wage of seventy-five dollars per month after several months had gone by. In this case, a cancelled sponsor would have been preferable.

The fieldman of the CRC was an active and, later on, an integral part of the immigration bureaucracy. By 1951, they located more sponsors among Christian Reformed Church people than authorities could muster immigrants for. Armed with a list of Christian Reformed sponsors, the fieldman could match up families whose sponsor had reneged on his agreement and usually could have the situation well in hand without any significant delay. However, as the fieldman became more and more important to the incoming Dutchmen, he was also taking more and more responsibilities, often to the chagrin of government authorities. In one case, a government official became quite irate when the fieldman began redirecting Dutch immigrants away from government appointed sponsors (in many cases, non-CRC people) towards Christian Reformed communities and Dutch sponsors. One immigrant had this experience when he arrived in Edmonton and was hustled off to Neerlandia with five other men to help with the harvest in Neerlandia. The fieldman's actions were admirable; in this way Christian Reformed people would not be isolated in places far from people of their own faith. At the same time, it annoyed government officials considerably.

One of the chief reasons that immigrants experienced difficulty upon arriving in Edmonton was their lack of knowledge of English. Herman Wierenga was clear on this when he wrote in an article in Calvinist Contact: "It is the lack of knowledge of the English language which causes the immigrants the greatest difficulty. Therefore, it cannot be said enough to the people of the Netherlands: Learn English!"

This is Neerlandia

Neerlandia, by war's end, was a comfortable place in which to live. The war had affected the community somewhat (some of her native sons had enlisted, although not all Neerlandians were in favour of enlistment), but generally life had gone on unchanged. Higher prices for farm products did enable some farmers to get on their feet financially and many farmers were able to purchase tractors and cars during these times. Other farmers, latecomers to the community perhaps (if you were not there by 1929, you were a latecomer), who had a harder time getting started, got out of debt a bit during the war years. Land was beginning to be cleared in large portions, as Caterpillar tractors began doing the work which had once been done by hand and horses. With new machinery and some newly cleared fields, many of the young men were able to get established quite quickly.

The hamlet itself boasted a frame church built in the late twenties, a three-room school built in 1943, a large Co-op store, and a garage — each on one corner of the crossroads. By the end of the war, the size of the hamlet was growing since the first of the pioneers were already building retirement homes at the Corner. The pioneers had a lot to be proud of, and proud they were, a fact attested to by an immigrant store clerk who reported that the old-timers loved to talk Neerlandia history at the store.

Another obvious feature of the community was a subtle spirit of Canadianization. Just how far Canadianization had proceeded is hard to gauge, but it can be measured by the passage of the community from Dutch to English language usage. Just before the war, catechism classes began to be conducted in English out of concern for the young people. Dutch was still used in church but only in the morning service; later on the Dutch service was held in the basement with an elder reading Dutch sermons. By the time Al Munneke was hired as a clerk in the store in 1949, the condition for employment was that only English was to be the language of commerce in Neerlandia. To be sure, Dutch was often used in everyday speech, but increasingly it became the language of the old timers. (As early as 1926, a Dutch visitor noted that school children did not even know their Dutch anymore!)

This is Neerlandia?!

Some of the immigrants journeyed from Edmonton via their sponsor's vehicles; others either travelled by train or bus to Barrhead, where they met their sponsor. One can imagine the somewhat tense situation that developed as immigrants, weary from over two weeks of motion, gazed distractedly, waiting for their sponsor to reveal himself from among the dozen or so people at the station. Often all the immigrant saw were scrutinizing glances, piercing looks, and curious glances as a would-be sponsor searched out the immigrants for a distant relative of whom he knew very little. Once contact was made and formalities exchanged, the short trip to Neerlandia began. The immigrants who arrived in the spring will often recall how they got stuck along the way and had to get out and push or walk the rest of the way (in Sunday shoes, too yet). For

Moving Gerrit Beyers' house, 1950. Steve Abday, John Peters, Gerrit Beyers.

one, his first job was to drive a tractor back and pull the vehicle out.

The first meal was a tense occasion, too. A plate of corn on the cob was placed in front of one man who hesitated and watched to see what his Canadian hosts were going to do with that chicken feed. But usually, after such a long time away from home, the Neerlandia dinnertime was a real *gezellige tijd* (cozy time).

Housing the immigrants necessitated some preparation by the sponsor and, more often as not, an old house was dragged onto a farmer's yard to make a new home. Thus, the Cecil Tuininga house was moved to SE 25-62-3-5 to provide housing for the Jan Paas family and Louis Nanninga's old house was moved to the Abdas's new farm south of Neerlandia. Indeed, houses were moved from place to place so often in the post war years that it seems tractors were used for little else.

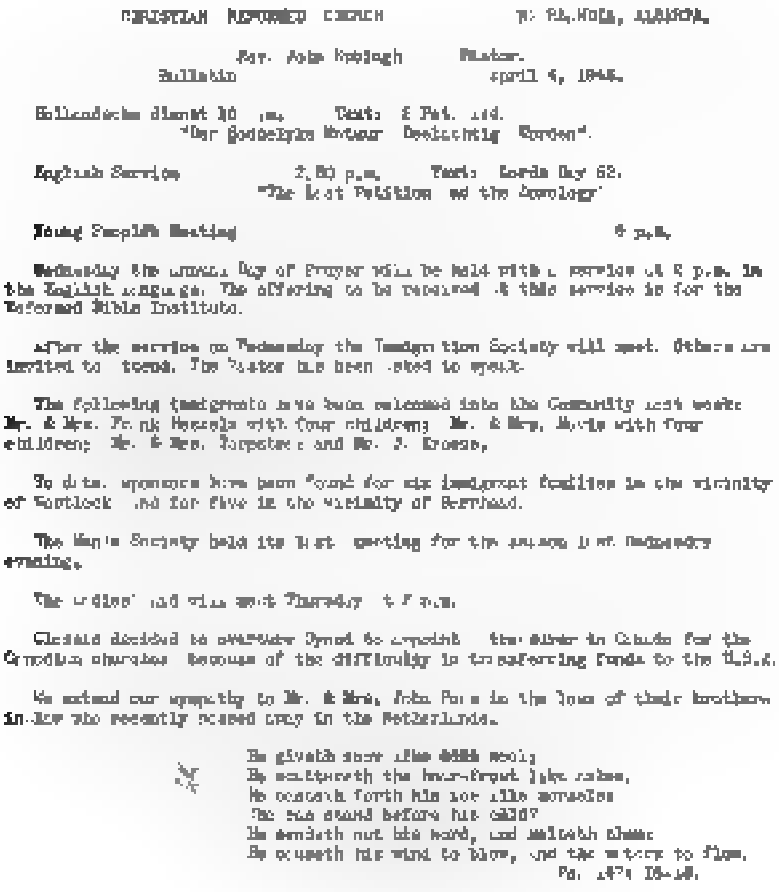
Often the houses were not of the best quality, a fact sorely evident once winter set in. But then, even the houses of the Neerlandia farmers were not much different; the farmers did their utmost to make the living accommodations as good as possible. For a single man who boarded at his sponsor's place, housing was no problem. A lot depended on the financial state of the farmer for whom an immigrant worked. Generally, people were taken care of as well as could be expected.

The community helped the immigrants in various ways. Many of the immigrants reported that a shower providing canned foods and many other necessary household articles was held for them when they arrived. Rev. Rubingh's wife helped several newcomers by taking them out grocery shopping or by having the young immigrant girls over several times. The consistory of the local CRC organized church members with cars to drive immigrants from outlying areas to church Sunday mornings. Immigrants would then stay with a family for the day and return home after the second service. Neerlandians were also interested in visiting with the newcomers, partly because news from the "old country" was sought after.

The men who came to Neerlandia went to work immediately and did a variety of farm-related jobs. If one came in August, the harvest was at hand and an extra man was often needed for stooking and threshing. Of course, with the amount of clearing going on in those years, root picking became a common job. "We picked roots till we were roots," reminisced one immigrant. It could be a lonely job — all day in the field doing an unfulfilling job. It was a job that had to be done, however, and most immigrants did not complain about it. The farmers who got to be respected by the immigrants, however, were the ones who did not expect the immigrants to do what they themselves would not do.

Some immigrants found jobs helping to build the new church. (A fire had destroyed the old structure and a new building was begun up in the summer of 1949.) If other work was scarce, one could cut firewood for a few days and haul wood to various farmers' woodpiles. In the winter, one could often find a ride to one of the lumber camps and do some bushwhacking for a few months.

The men were the ones that were hired, but that does not mean that the women were idle. Wages were set at a minimum of forty-



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH [illegible], ALBERTA.

Rev. John Rubingh Pastor.
Bulletin April 4, 1948.

Hollandsche dienst 10 a.m. Text: 2 Pet. 1:4.
"Der Goddelijke Natuur Deelachtig Worden".

English Service 2.00 p.m. Text: Lords Day 52.
"The Last Petition and the Doxology"

Young People's Meeting 8 p.m.

Wednesday the Annual Day of Prayer will be held with a service at 8 p.m. in the English language. The offering to be received at this service is for the Reformed Bible Institute.

After the service on Wednesday the Immigration Society will meet. Others are invited to attend. The Pastor has been asked to speak.

The following immigrants have been welcomed into the Community last week: Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hessels with four children; Mr. & Mrs. [illegible] with four children; Mr. & Mrs. [illegible] and Mr. J. Kroeze.

To date, sponsors have been found for six immigrant families in the vicinity of Westlock and for five in the vicinity of Barrhead.

The Men's Society held its last meeting for the season last Wednesday evening.

The Ladies' Aid will meet Thursday at 2 p.m.

Classis decided to overture Synod to appoint a treasurer in Canada for the Canadian churches because of the difficulty in transferring funds to the U.S.A.

We extend our sympathy to Mr. & Mrs. John [illegible] in the loss of their brother-in-law who recently passed away in the Netherlands.

He giveth snow like wool;
He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.
He casteth forth his ice like morsels:
Who can stand before his cold?
He sendeth out his word, and melteth them:
He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters to flow.
Ps. 147: 16-18.

five dollars a month for a single person and seventy-five dollars for a family, indicating that more work was expected from a family. Often while the men were in the field, an immigrant's wife was required to help the farmer's wife in the kitchen, in the garden, or bringing meals out to the fields. In those days, a woman's pride was her garden, and fall time meant reaping its fruits. Young women often found work keeping house. Thus, Tjamke Moes kept house for Grace Piers Sr. and made meals for the Piers men. Hers was a 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. job, for wages of forty dollars a month.

* * *

Going to catechism was difficult. The minister would usually indicate by looking at a person that he was the one chosen to answer the question. Unfortunately for us, the minister was cross-eyed.

The Neerlandia young people had learned how to tell who he meant, but we couldn't tell. We either answered when we should not have or didn't answer when we were expected to.

* * *

Immigrants were teased a lot in those days, although most of it was good-natured. One man was told to be ready at 6:00 a.m. the next morning to begin loading bundles. At 6:00 a.m. in the morning he found the harnesses hopelessly tangled, forcing him to arrive late that day, amidst laughter and the mock frustration of the boss. One man was instructed to fetch the hay wagon but could not move it more than a few feet. He whipped the horses to no avail — the wagon spokes had been tied to the undercarriage.

Work in the lumber camps was an adventure for many of the Hollanders. Two immigrants nearly froze when they were given a lift on the back of the pickup to a lumber camp in Fort Assiniboine. Once there, the numbed immigrants were told they had to walk a few miles into the bush to get to the camp. They were prodded along by enthusiastic comments from the ones in front: "There's a nice dancehall at the camp," and "There'll be lots of music and fun," and "I can just make out the lights ahead." The joke was on all of them, however, as the camp had been moved to an altogether different spot the day before.

To the immigrants, life in Neerlandia was strange in many ways. Most expected that the hamlet would have been bigger — they expected more civilization. The roads left a lot to be desired, and the lack of electricity, indoor plumbing, and telephones meant a retreat into the Dark Ages for many. But this was Neerlandia, home to many a proud pioneer family. After all, the community had been little more than a wilderness not thirty years before.

* * *

One immigrant remembers being offered a stick of rhubarb, and politely declined, saying, "We don't eat rhubarb raw in the Netherlands, we cook it." That immigrant walked away none the wiser as the rhubarb had really been a stick of celery.

* * *

To the amazement of some of the immigrants, farmers in Neerlandia wore gloves while working in the summer. Little did the newcomers realize how necessary the gloves were for protecting the hands while doing manual work. They wore the strangest-looking denim bib overalls and all the men, young and old alike, wore flat caps. More striking still was the custom of the truckers taking out their tally books after church on Sundays to record the Monday morning run of hogs and produce to Edmonton. For others who had left crops already a foot high in the old country, it was strange to find on their arrival in Neerlandia that farmers were just getting into the fields.

* * *

Chamber Pot

One newly-arrived family went to Mr. Elgersma's at Neerlandia Corner to get milk. Every morning one of the children, carrying a large chamber pot with a handle, went to the Elgersma family to get *their daily supply of milk. Curtains were opened a little bit and a little snickering for sure could have been heard in each house.*

One day the lady of the new family asked me, "Why do people grin when our children get the milk?" Then I told her that it was quite unusual and not very common to get milk in a chamber pot. We both had a hearty laugh. Exit chamber pot — for milk, I mean.

Tine Abday

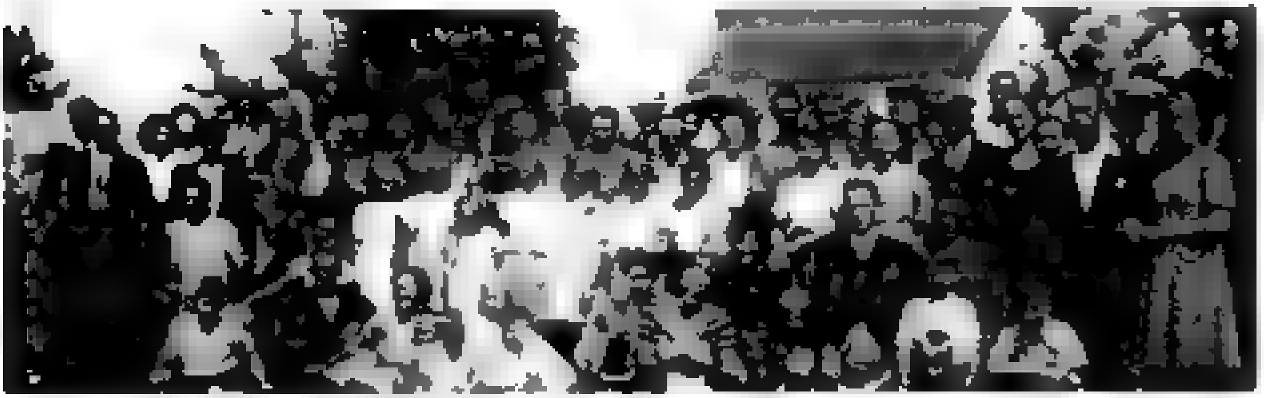
* * *

In turn, the immigrants seemed a strange bunch to native Neerlandians. They dressed strangely too: the boys wore short pants and their dads wore *petten*. The immigrants could eat, oh could they eat! Their appetites seemed insatiable. (The immigrants defended themselves by noting that the food so abundant in Neerlandia homes was scarce in the Netherlands.) Language was a problem for immigrant young people, especially at Young Peoples Society on Sunday evenings. One Sunday it was decided to ask a recent immigrant to close in prayer; she, not knowing a word of English, prayed the Lord's Prayer in her native language. Many of the Neerlandia young people did not welcome the immigrants. Traditions and friendships were firmly established and they saw no need to change either. Furthermore, the newcomers were considered too rowdy and too liberal. Why, they even wanted to sing secular songs at Bible Camp. The immigrants were noisy in church and the women flipped up the hem of their coats before sitting down. What strange behaviour — at least so it seemed.

Some of the immigrants were greenhorns at farming. The story is told that two young men stooked for a half a day putting the heads upside down, before an irate farmer corrected their mistake. One young man was sent into the fields to harrow and after about six hours, the farmer decided to find out what was taking him so long. He found the harrows hitched up behind each other rather than side by side. Immigrants often got lost in the fields after being given directions several times. Yes, there were many things to learn!

Immigration in Retrospect

Most of the immigrants arrived in the Neerlandia community in the years 1948-1949. A lot of single young men and a few families came after that. In 195[illegible] six young men stepped off the train in



Dutch immigrants in Neerlandia, 1948.

Barrhead, ready to help with the harvest in Neerlandia. Because of early snows, that bunch left almost as suddenly as they had come.

There was not enough room for a wholesale influx of people. Farmland was expensive here and some immigrants, who came to Canada intent on farming, thought this was not the best place to get started and left for other communities. Several men were able to borrow money locally and to buy a farm. Others took up homesteads. Many supplemented their income by working in the bush during the winter. Some borrowed machinery from old-timers, free of charge. Still others got a few pigs or a cow to start with and repaid their benefactors later. Several of those who had come to Neerlandia were not farmers and soon moved on to the towns and cities.

For those immigrants who stayed, Neerlandia became home. The single men and women married native Neerlandians — to the benefit of both. The married couples saw their children grow up and marry old timers' children. One elder on *huisbezoek* encouraged two immigrant boys to date the Neerlandia girls. "We need new blood in this community," he said. "After Young Peoples, just grab my daughter by the arm and take her home." In any case there soon was a free exchange of ideas between the two groups of young people. The parents had always had amicable relationships. Before long, immigrants served in the consistory and other boards and held managerial positions in the store and garage.

The basic direction of the community did not change with the influx of immigrants, but it was subtly altered. In Europe the immigrants had been exposed to cultural ideas and activities not readily available to the Neerlandians. Thus a greater appreciation for art and music developed partly because of the immigrants' influence. Many did, indeed, hold a more liberal view on the relationship to the larger community and these too influenced decisions made in Neerlandia.

Gradually, this last wave of immigrants became an integral part of Neerlandia. By the 1980s they had become a part of this close knit community and have firmly established friendship and kinship ties. Both old timers and newcomers benefited from their relationship as the community continued its development.

EXPERIENCES OF AN IMMIGRANT

When my wife, **Jo-anne** Veurman, and our two-year-old son, **Jim**, and I arrived in Neerlandia in the spring of 1948, there were flood conditions. Our trip that far had been far from glorious. It took nine days on an army transport ship to take us across the ocean, and five days in a dusty, sometimes smoke-filled train to take us from Quebec City to Edmonton. There we met our sponsor, who took us by Fisher's truck to Barrhead. Here we had our first meal in a restaurant, where our sponsor paid for my wife's and son's lunches but I had pay for my own, a good example of old timer thrift. We still had to go from Barrhead to Neerlandia, but the bridge over a creek north of Mellowdale was washed out. So here our suitcases were unloaded from Fisher's truck, carried across a log laid over the creek, and loaded on a smaller truck on the other side. All went well till about a mile past the store towards the east. The road was so muddy that a tractor had to pull our truck through the most soggy spots. Finally, when we arrived at our destination, my wife said with a sigh of desperation, "I don't think we will ever get out of here again!" and I tended to agree with her. However, after three days of sunny weather, the road had completely dried up and we were able to drive where we wanted.

We were among the first post-war immigrants to arrive in Neerlandia and lived there from 1948-1952, with a one year interval when I worked in Lacombe.

During the first spring and summer I worked on the farm mainly for our sponsor. The wages were seventy dollars per month, for which salary my wife also did the housekeeping. Since it was a late spring, it was crucial to get the crop in, and I have sat on the tractor from four o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night. Conditions were far from ideal, especially since my sponsor assured me that he could not guarantee me any work for the winter. Moreover, Jo-anne had been brought up rather sheltered in the Netherlands and could hardly cope with the hard work in the farm household and with our total lack of privacy. So, after work at night I often took my bike to the store to look for some better lodging. After a few weeks of trying, I met George Baker, who agreed to rent me his house on the church quarter for twenty dollars per month. When I asked when I could move in, George said, "Tomorrow morning!"

The day before, Jo-anne had gone by Fisher's truck to Edmonton to see a doctor because she had become so homesick for the Netherlands that she developed dizzy spells to the point of fainting.

That night, after George promised me the house, I went back to the farmer elated, but found that our sponsor and his son had already gone to bed. The next morning when I came out of bed at 4:00 a.m., they were almost thunderstruck when I announced, "I am going to move." They asked, "When?" and I answered, "This morning." I still did not have the faintest idea who was going to move me, but I knew that the farmer next door, a certain [illegible], had a truck, so I talked to him at 6:00 a.m. He agreed to move me with his truck for ten dollars per hour. We loaded up in about twenty minutes, drove to our new location in about twenty minutes, and unloaded in about twenty minutes — so the whole moving cost me exactly ten dollars.

That day I unpacked everything, put things in place, and met my wife at the arrival of Fisher's truck with the exclamation, "You don't have to go back — we got our own place!" This became one of the happiest evenings in our lives.

Now I had to look for other work and luckily our neighbour Simon [illegible], who proved to be a true friend to us, hired me for sixty cents an hour. Often I worked twenty days a month for ten hours a day and almost doubled my former salary. That same fall, Simon lent me a team of horses and a hayrack to work on his brother Jack's threshing outfit, and during that time I got paid for both my team and my labour and made, for the standards of the day, lots of money. I don't have to describe here the life with a threshing outfit, travelling from one farm to another. I will never forget the amounts of food we absorbed there, and I can truly say that those were the most glorious days of my Canadian farming career.

After my uncle in Lacombe found me a steady job, we moved down there until a year later, when Jack Tuininga offered me a job by phone as a store clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op store. But since he phoned me from a board meeting in session, and there were other candidates to consider, I had to give an answer right away. Without consulting anybody, I said, "Yes," and had my next job. We now moved into the dwelling above the store, and belonged to the privileged few who had running water and electricity. The first thing we bought was an electric washing machine, and the back-breaking work of hand washing was finished and with it Joanne's dizzy spells.

One condition on which I was hired was that I had to speak only English in the store, which was hard to do since many old-timers insisted on accommodating me by speaking Dutch, sayings or *Fries* to me, and it was my duty to respond with my limited English, but somehow we got by. Of course, in my position of store clerk, we got to know the Neerlandia settlement a lot better and our lives became a great deal more agreeable.

Personally, I loved talking to the old timers around the store and spent many a time discussing Neerlandia history with people like Klaas Tuininga Sr., John Anema, Henry Kuppers, and Joe Baker. However, you could never discuss Neerlandia history without touching on religion, which was the "hobby" of many an old timer, and were they ever knowledgeable — but hardly up-to-date. They came to this continent when two branches of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands united, namely those of the *Afscheiding* (group A) and those of the *Doleantie* (group B). Most of the Tuiningas were notable group B persons and, I think, there were not many people better versed in the old works of Dr. Abraham Kuyper than Klaas Tuininga Sr. The Wierengas, however, were mostly group A people, and adhered to the works of Bavinck and Lindeboom. When we arrived in Neerlandia in 1948, we found that they had managed to keep this controversy going for almost fifty years and were still bravely discussing the merits of A and B.

This condition was pretty hard for the ministers that came to Neerlandia, because the people tried to pin every minister down as A or B, in which case he could never hope to get more than half of the settlement in his favour. In case a minister defied classification, he was judged as kind of a nobody. Consequently, Neerlandia was not the easiest place for a minister and was often vacant.

It was our privilege to give board and room to most of the ministers who came to fulfil classical appointments for the Classis Pacific Northwest because, above the store, we had a bathroom with a bathtub and a flush toilet — which evidently were "bare necessities" for ministers. Sometimes we had ministers that stayed for a longer period of time, and one of them was the Rev. Posthumus, a retired minister who lived in Lynden, Washington. His first stay was very successful and everybody was pleased. It took a full year before he came back, and during that year he must have had a great deal of time to meditate, because during this time he "discovered" a new explanation of baptism and he wrote a series of ten sermons on this topic. Armed with these sermons, he arrived in Neerlandia and, at our place, lost no time in giving me a full explanation of his verses. Most of the time I agreed with him for the simple reason that I did not know exactly what he was talking about. After he had delivered the first four sermons, he got a visit from the consistory and the brethren told him that he would keep preaching in Neerlandia on condition that he would not give any more sermons on the topic of baptism. The next morning the old minister packed his bags and said to me: "As I don't teach these farmers how to farm, and they don't have to teach me how or what to preach." This was too bad, because he was a delightful old gentleman.

Finally we got a permanent minister in the Rev. Bert Mulder, who succeeded to manage both parties of A and B rather well.

In Neerlandia, our family increased with two members. Both **Arthur** (May 31, 19[illegible]) and **Patricia** (May 1, 19[illegible]) were born in the Barrhead hospital.

Life was good in Neerlandia in those days, even if we spent hardly any money. We had a garden plot across the road and during the hot summer days our spare time was mostly occupied with weeding, endless harvesting and canning to lay up supplies for the winter. The berry picking outings with groups of people were veritable highlights in our daily existence. The saskatoons were canned with rhubarb and the blueberries made delicious pies. Once in a while we splurged and went to Dick Fisher for a bottle of whiskey which he took back from Edmonton by truck, but for plain parties we used the locally produced potato champagne — a very heavy drink which was brewed from a concoction of potatoes and citrus fruits. Potato champagne used to produce a terrific elation at night and a terrible headache in the morning — but I shall never forget the beautiful parties we had in Neerlandia.

One year in September, Rom [illegible] and I agreed to try our hand at the production of around five gallons of potato champagne which we placed in a plastic vessel behind our cook stove. It would supposedly be ready for Christmas. During the first couple of weeks the stuff really brewed and foamed so that you could smell it through the whole house. But after that, although the brew was still covered with a layer of foam, it settled down. As a good wine maker, every night I tested how the fermentation was progressing. I tested by sticking a straw through the foam and tasting some of the liquid. It wasn't too bad. The trouble was that after several weeks the level of our champagne was going down, so I had to add some lukewarm water. A few weeks later a repeat performance of this procedure was required. As Christmastime was approaching, Rom came over one night to see if our potato champagne was ready. I will never forget his reaction to the first sample: "Not very strong!" he said.

Of course, we tried to cut other corners as well. A favourite with new immigrants was the consumption of cheap horse meat, a custom which was frowned upon by old timers and "real" Canadians. But horses were cheap since machines had taken over their work. One day I bought a horse for ten dollars but, since a whole horse would be too much for our small family, I agreed to split it with Gerrit Koppers — each half a horse for five dollars. On a Saturday morning in the late fall we went out to butcher the horse. Gerrit arrived with a gun over his shoulder and a few knives in his hand. Of course, I was totally inexperienced in something like that and when Gerrit told me in a matter-of-fact voice that, if I would shoot the horse, he would cut its throat, I exclaimed: "But Gerrit, I have never shot a horse before!"

"Well," said Gerrit, "In that case I will shoot the horse and you cut its throat." This sounded even worse to me. To accommodate me, Gerrit said in Dutch, "*Hoe moet dat dan?*" How must we do it then? and I responded, "That is very simple really, you both shoot it and cut its throat." To this proposition Gerrit finally agreed and consequently the horse was killed. We ripped the skin off in pieces and discovered later that we could have sold it for ten dollars in Barrhead if we had taken it off in one piece. I came home with half a horse. This proved too much for us, and we cut up only the hind quarter. Two days earlier, a certain Merkus family had arrived in Neerlandia from the Netherlands and I asked him if he would buy some meat. "But I don't have any money!" he replied. When I told him that he could have the front quarter of a horse for two cents per pound, he was delighted, and I had my five dollars back. I had to say my wife did not like the horse meat, and when my brother-in-law, John Vos, immigrated from the Netherlands, she gave the whole works to him. What an effort down the drain for nothing!

And what more can I say? Starting to write these memoirs, I realize all of a sudden that I would have enough material to write a whole book, and I can truly say that, through all these experiences, Neerlandia became our home away from home, and we are really thankful for the time we were allowed to spend there.

Al Munneke

EXPERIENCES OF A YOUNG IMMIGRANT

What makes a twenty-one-year-old Dutchman move to Neerlandia?

Well, I can tell you that watching the Canadian Armed Forces shoot back the enemy into Germany had a lot to do with it. They were kind in passing us the cigarettes and gum, but businesslike in disposing of the enemy.

Then came the romantic stories about Canada. A Mrs. Aberson-Eges of Winnipeg travelled our province of Groningen with speeches and slide shows that filled every building to the rafters. She showed the transformation of cheap land into elegant farms complete with Cockshutt tractors, Case combines, and De Soto automobiles. We also talked to a visitor, Mr. Veenkamp, who came from Nobleford to our area. He was Christian Reformed and his reassuring advice made my folks relax. His daughter, who was with him, did beautiful petit point and my youngest sister, in admiration, thought Canada was okay. Then the Christian Reformed Church got into the act by issuing a booklet *De Gids*, complete with church locations, pictures, and wage scales. So via Rev. Hoekstra of Calgary and Herman Wierenga, fieldman in Neerlandia, my folks felt it safe to let me go. The departure from the Netherlands did not go smoothly — too many parties. The pastor's wife composed a twenty-five line farewell poem that made my eyes swell with moisture, but the next day I forgot all that again when my friends and I whooped it up in a grandiose manner. My wooden suitcase carried all the novels of my favourite writer, Antoon Coolen, triple thick

[illegible] c. 1948

underwear imported from Sweden, a bike, and a guitar. When the *Tabinta* pulled from the Holland Amerika dock in Rotterdam, the band played the national anthem and triggered our tear ducts again. I had my first sensation of seasickness in the English Channel and decided to make the rest of my trip in horizontal position, with feet facing toward Canada and an enormously interesting book, *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

The *Tabinta* was a converted Liberty freighter with bunkbeds for troop transport and segregated quarters for men and women – the latter in the midsection, where there was less turbulence. This was fair because a lot of young mothers were breast feeding their babies. The first morning there were hundreds of dairy farmers whose "alarm clock" went off at 4:00 a.m., milking time. We heard a cacophony of wooden shoes on steel decks until they were ordered back to bed by the loud speaker.

After nine days of bobbing and weaving, the *Tabinta* slid into the St. Lawrence Seaway; all the passengers scrambled to the upper deck to admire the magnificent landscape that slid past. Before we transferred to a train, we watched huge wooden immigrant boxes being unloaded. Some looked so quaint, with Canadian and Dutch flags painted on them, that many a grubby-looking longshoreman could not suppress a smile.

The four-day train trip was no luxury, but passable. Every two-and-a-half hours the train stopped to allow refilling of the boilers with water. We utilized the time by scrambling over railroad tracks to the nearest grocery store to stock up on food, which was not available on board. In Winnipeg, we were joined by fieldman Ten Hove of Blackfalds, Alberta. When he saw my name matched to the Kuppers family in Neerlandia, he looked over his glasses and said, "How good are you at washing diapers?" then added, "They have seven children." We all laughed.

In Edmonton, First Church gave us a warm welcome. George Sonnema and his son Alan took me by pickup to the Immigration Hall where a delicious supper — mashed potatoes, green beans, and roast beef — was waiting.

The next day we ventured into Edmonton unchaperoned. Yes, I knew a few English words but when I helped a fellow immigrant purchase some chewing gum, the storekeeper produced a bottle of Coke. Later we met fieldman Herman Wierenga, who escorted us by train to Barrhead. We were dressed in our Sunday best. Among cream cans, cow hides, and other paraphernalia of the agricultural industry, we must have looked like mission-minded Mormons.

That same afternoon I met the Kuppers family. They were very cordial and let me sleep and rest to my heart's content. A new bedroom had been added to the second floor and they did everything to make me feel at home.

After a long sleep, I rubbed my eyes and saw what Neerlandia was all about. Instead of electricity they had gas lamps, gasoline-powered washing machines, and water pump engines. The word "refrigeration" was unknown. All the produce and meat were canned and the cream and butter were lowered into a cold, deep well by pulley and rope. Mrs. Kuppers baked bread every week. Her husband helped with the kneading and the whole house filled with the delicious aroma while it was baking. With nine members in the family plus a hired hand, she displayed a lot of ingenuity to keep cinnamon buns from being snatched prematurely. With such a large family and so many mouths to feed, it was not easy. I will give you one example.

To take a bath meant chopping down a tree by Vega, bringing it home by horse and wagon, cutting it into sixteen inch pieces by saw hooked to the power takeoff of a Case tractor, chopping it by hand into smaller chunks, and curing it for nine months. Then you would put it into the kitchen stove and light it with an old *Winnipeg Free Press*. After forty-five minutes, you would carry a basin of hot water to your upstairs bedroom. With all the rigmarole, you might be tempted to just use a little extra deodorant.

The outhouse was a novelty, but I resented the wasted footsteps in case of unexpected occupancy. Finally, I resorted to a mental roll call to see if anyone was missing, but that took time too.

My socializing consisted of Norman and Fred Forbes calling in their white Chev to take me to the ball game on Friday night. I found playing baseball very complicated and when I was at bat and hit the ball right, I would wait for screamed instructions from the spectator gallery before I sped downfield. Afterwards we would drive north, stock up on goodies at the Vega store, and weave through the sandhills. If there was good music on the car radio, we would turn off the road to stop and listen. Sundays meant dinner invitations to people such as Krikkes, [illegible], Geldermans, Wierengas, and others. The Krikke girls did some very [illegible] dancing and the boys were hard to beat at chess. All these people were good-hearted and provided Christian fellowship.

Bible Camp 1948 at Cooking Lake was also a highlight. The Kippers let me go and I was briefed for weeks on all the gorgeous girls from the south. I remember names such as [illegible], ten Hove, Meindertsma, and others. We were housed in granary type cabins with squeaky doors that squeaked doubly loud after bedtime. The camp curfew was 11:00 p.m., but our personal cabin curfew was [illegible] a.m. Anyone entering after that faced a contraption over the door that made a pail of water tip over. Some of the victims are elders now.

No immigrant was worth his weight in salt unless he had done considerable root picking. For days, my lonely figure moved about piles of roots and fields that never seemed to get cleaned up. A break in the monotony came when a Kippers kid came over the horizon and brought coffee and cake with icing real thick. Being by myself had advantages because I could sing to my heart's content. "In the Mood" and "Woody Woodpecker" were in. Cowboy songs were my favourite and yodeling was a cinch — I was quite some singer.

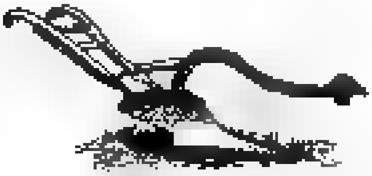
I smuggled a guitar into Neerlandia but was betrayed and invited to sing at a wedding above the store. The selection was *Sarie Marais*, a South African song written in pidgin Dutch, a sound that was not too unfamiliar to Neerlandian ears. Norman and Fred Forbes volunteered to be part of the trio. On the way to the festivities we practiced once more on the Sturwold road. After the performance everybody applauded so vigorously (Neerlandia style — clapping hands, stomping feet, and whistling) that we did not have the nerve to admit to a one-song repertoire and disappeared on the pretense of going to the bathroom.

My farm chores included taking cows to Elzinga's bull, a mile to the north. While the bull played host to my cow, I had coffee with the Elzingas in their kitchen. The topics of conversation usually centered around Article 31 in the Netherlands, immigration, and Frisians and Groningers. Elzinga wanted me to be a Frisian because of my name. I declined since I was born and raised in Groningen. On the return trip, I mulled over this conversation and concluded that Elzinga's insistence was prompted by the fact that fieldman Herman Wierenga had imported too many Groningers. Anyway, Groninger or Frisian, my cow went crazy from mosquitoes and black flies, took a giant leap and disappeared into the dense bushes, not to be recovered till three hours later. That evening I read about the merits of artificial insemination in *The County Guide* and agreed, wholeheartedly.

Watching Frank Visser auctioneer the annual Ladies' Aid Bazaar was fun. His enthusiasm opened wallets for the benefit of blacks in Nigeria. The lighting in this hall was dim and Frank could not always see the bidder. The back benches were occupied by young people who threw in fake bids and then pointed fingers at a sedate Neerlandian as the originator. Those smart alecks also watched Klaas Rowaan's wife bring down an armful of blueberry pies to the trunk of the Model T Coupe, only for her never to see them again.

The above events happened thirty-six years ago and a lot of things have changed — progress has changed farming standards and life-style. But my happy memories of Neerlandia will stay the same, thanks to all the Neerlandians.

Bill Braaksma



Part Two

The Generations

1911-1920

Yearly Anecdotes

1911-1920

The first decade of the Dutch in Neerlandia what a time that was! The immigrants, many of whom had never driven an ox, wielded an axe, or constructed a building, struggled to make a life for themselves in the wilderness. Their lives the joys and the sorrows are recorded in the family histories which follow.

The basic information for the family histories was submitted by those whose names appear at the end of the stories. For the sake of clarity we have in most cases changed the stories to the third person. We have attempted to flesh out the histories by talking to friends and family. Some passages - in particular characterizations have been added as a result of such research. Please read the family histories in the light of this statement. We have made every attempt to be accurate and apologize for any errors.

The editors

MEMOIRS OF BEN LIEVERS

I was born the [illegible] of December 1885, in a little town called Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands. I was the oldest of eight children. My father was a weaver in a factory. I was brought up in a Christian home, went to a Christian school, and attended an Assembly Sunday School. The education I received would be about the fifth grade.

By the time I was going to school there were one or two little brothers and my mother was going out working — washing or even working a neighbour's garden. Sometimes I had to stay home to watch the baby. When I was older Father had a cow and I had to herd the cow along the country roads. Some days I did not like to go to school so I stayed between the school and home till school was out. The outcome was that I did not learn much. When I was eleven my parents thought I was old enough to help a little so they sent me out to a farmer to herd the cows. Wages? Board and room, a pair of wooden shoes when needed, and some old clothing which my mother would alter to fit me or my younger brother.

After about a year an opening for a boy came in the factory and I was the "lucky" one to get in to learn weaving. Father was my teacher and I liked the change at first. It also felt good to have real money every Saturday night. But I had always wanted to be a carpenter although Father said, "Impossible, boy. You have to apprentice two years without wages and we can't afford that." So I made bird cages from sugar boxes at night. It so happened that a carpenter friend came over one night. He told my dad, "That boy should be a carpenter. I have plenty of work. I will take him and give him board and room. I have a small farm and if he helps once in a while on the farm I will give him a few cents." So I became a carpenter but I found out that I should have gone to school more and studied more when I had the chance.

Alice (Aaltje) **Walvoort** (born in Aalten, May 22, 1883) and I were married the 24th of October 1907. We were both working at first — I in carpentry, she in a cotton factory in Germany. Our first child was stillborn. Our second child, **Hanna** (Johanna), was born April 18, 1909. Around that time I picked up a paper about Canada and took it home to read. It was very interesting. Canada — I knew it was in North America but had no idea how big it was or what the climate was like. I did know there were wild Indians there. The paper told me there was land for anyone who wanted it. A homestead it was called — 160 acres and for the sum of ten dollars it was yours — 160 acres — that was bigger than any farm in our neighbourhood. I could not believe it, so took it with a pinch of salt. But I did write to the given address in Belgium and received photos of farmers on the prairies in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Territories. I thought, "If it is half as good as claimed, then it is still better than in the Netherlands."

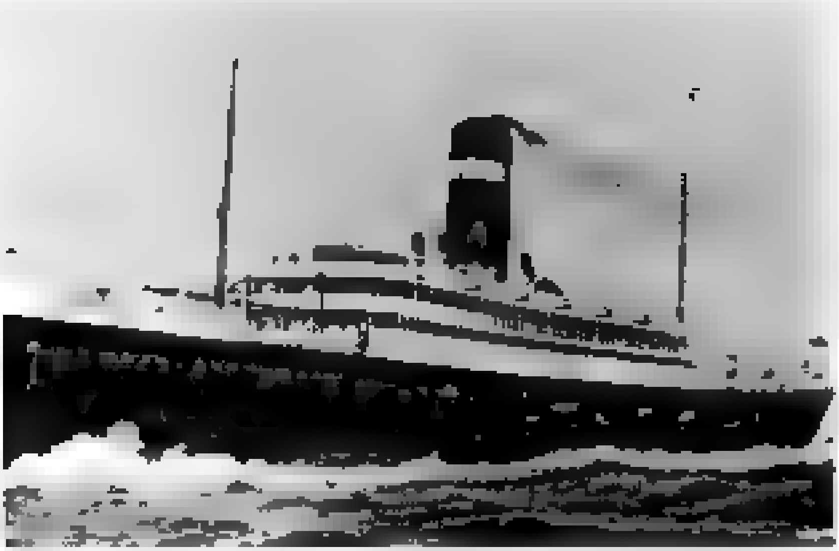
I started to talk about it with Alice, but she would not even listen. "Foolish! I don't believe they will give you so much land for ten dollars. I am not going there to live among wolves, bears, and wild Indians. No, I am not leaving our home and nice furniture and families and friends to go to that wild country!"

But I kept on writing for more information and heard of others who were thinking of moving to Canada. At last we called a meeting and a man from Belgium came over and told us how good it was in Canada. He had a sample of the wheat that they were raising in Saskatchewan and told us where to write for transportation, etc. As a result, some of us decided to immigrate. My dear wife had agreed to go with me so I started writing to a man, Ten Hove, whose address I got from a neighbour or friend. He advised us to come. He had a homestead at Edberg, Alberta, and told us that further west and north there was more free land. So we wrote for passage and the rest. We had a piece of land that we had intended to build our house on, but we sold it to buy our tickets to Canada and then we had a public auction of our household goods. We had boxes made for the stuff we could take along: clothing, bedding, some utensils and so on. The day of the sale arrived — one of the hardest things for Alie. There was the clock going, gone ... the new [illegible], a wedding present from friends, sold for a few guilders. Then the new baby buggy Alie had saved so long for, sold for half the price. Our [illegible] Minnie Wilhelmina had arrived January [illegible] 1911, so now she was three months old. So the sale went and we made enough money to pay the passage with a few guilders left over. Our house was empty so we moved in with Mother and Father for the night. We had had a family gathering just before the sale and I remember what my uncle said: "We are here to say farewell. God be with you in that faraway land. Remember that the Cross and the Throne of Grace are as near in Canada as in the Netherlands. Go to the Throne of Grace in believing prayer and the Lord will hear your prayers there as well as here." We found it so, as you will see.

The next morning we left on the train to Rotterdam. We left Father and Mother each quite sure that we would not see each other here on earth again. When we arrived at Rotterdam, as had been promised, someone helped us get our tickets for the boat to Hull, England, and the train to Liverpool, where we were to board the Allan Line Tunisian. We had to cross the river to get to the Hull boat, but the ferry was out of order so we had to walk over the bridge. I had two suitcases and two babies to carry so I managed it this way: a baby under each arm and a suitcase in each hand. We arrived at the boat and found more immigrants on the way to Edmonton. We were given a nice clean room and our party consisted of myself with Alie and the two girls, two young men, Herman, a carpenter, and Ben [illegible], an engineering student, a pair of newlyweds, Henry and his wife, a family [illegible] and his wife with four or five children, and a young man named [illegible]. We travelled together all the way from Rotterdam to Edmonton in April 1911. Some wondered what the paper boxes in the room were for; the young bride was the first to find out as we crossed the North Sea. It was rough and some were seasick. I was all right but Alie was sick all the way. By morning we reached England and as soon as we touched the ground [illegible]. Sure, it was all English, but not the English we had studied in a booklet, *English in a Few Lessons*. In England they could not understand our English, nor we theirs. A guide took us to the train for Liverpool where another guide, again provided by the shipping company, was waiting for us. We were transported by a double-decker bus pulled by two horses. I found out that in England they drove on the left side of the road, not on the right like in the Netherlands. We soon arrived at the dock, where the Victorian was to leave in the morning. There we were herded like sheep into a big waiting room. It was a great hall with an open coal-burning fireplace in the middle and benches along the walls. One mother was nursing a baby and alongside her was a young man playing an accordian; in front of them some folks were dancing. All around was talk in different languages. A real babble! Our children started to cry because they were afraid of the noise. I thought, "Do we have to sleep here overnight?" But after a while somebody came and brought us upstairs and we had a room for ourselves and we had a good rest.

Downtown Liverpool, 1908

The following morning we were brought to the boat and had to show our papers and be examined by a doctor. Our oldest girl, Hanna, had dauwworm (ringworm) on her head. I was carrying her and when the doctor looked, he put me aside. Somebody came and took me and Hanna to a separate room — the hospital. I did not feel too good. "What if they send us back?" But as soon as we were out of



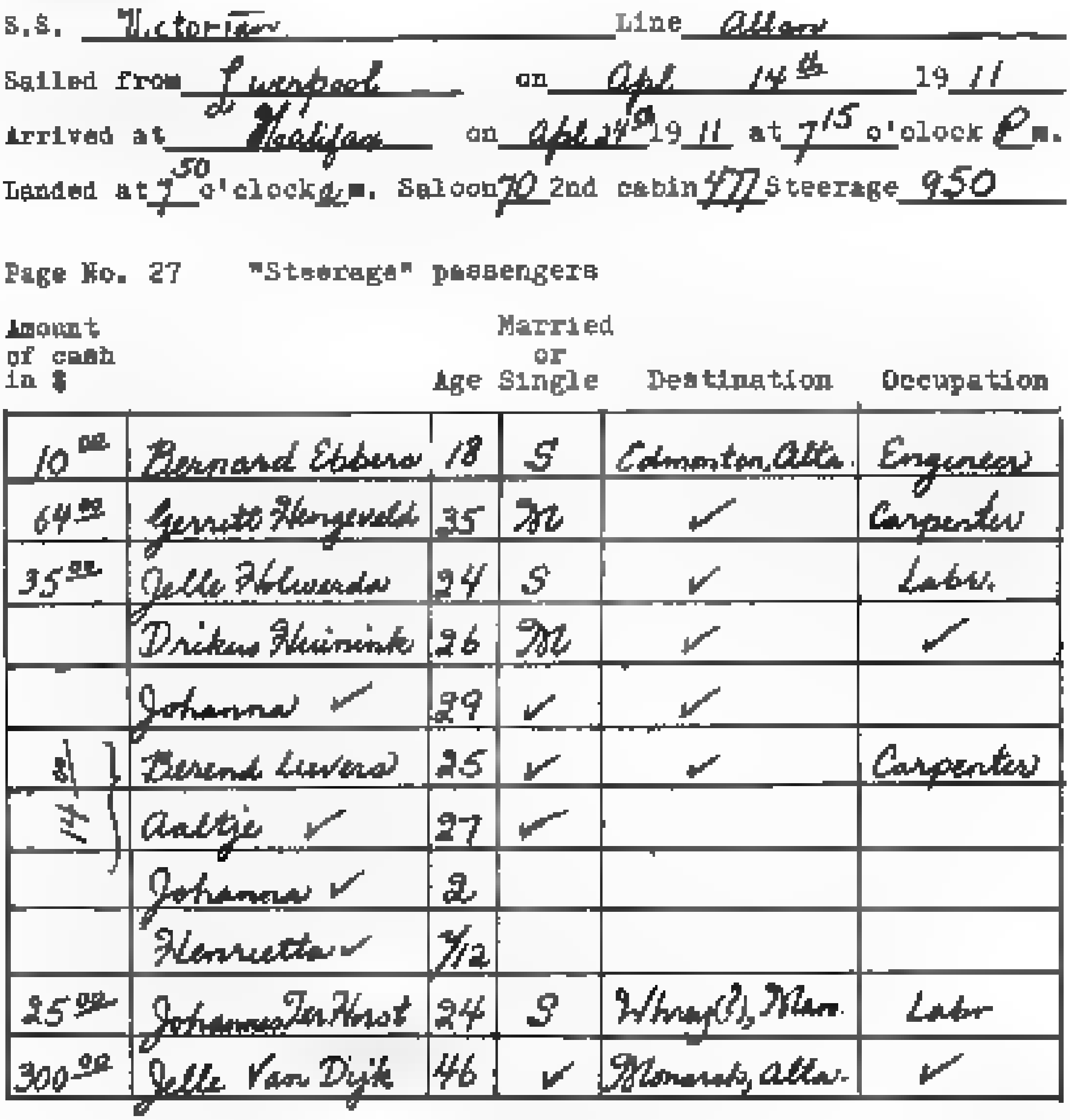
The Victorian

the harbour somebody came and brought us to our room. Alice and Minnie were already there. This boat did not look as clean as the Hull boat and the meals were not as good, but most of the passengers did not eat much because we had a rough crossing.

The first day the sea was calm, but the second day nearly everyone was seasick, except for the children. Alice stayed in bed for the seven days we were crossing. The sea was rough for the whole trip. some days we were not allowed on the deck because the waves were going over it. After a while ropes were stretched over the deck to hold on to, so you would not be washed away overboard. Once in a while the propeller would come out of the water with an awful noise — I did not feel too safe! The worst was over after about three or four days, but I never saw the sun in those seven days.

After seven days, we were nearing land. We saw one or two ships passing us and one iceberg in the distance. The sea gulls were flying around the ship now — a sign of land. It started to rain and blow so the upper section of the ship was all covered with ice and it became dangerous to be on deck on account of the ice falling. Soon we were nearing Halifax and the pilot came on board to bring us safely in, but a heavy fog settled over the sea and we were not able to move till it cleared. As soon as the fog cleared we saw Halifax city on the one side, and on the other side hills with houses here and there and covered with snow — still winter in Canada and when we had left the Netherlands the tulips were coming out. I thought, "Maybe the wife was right, it was foolish to go to this wild country." But we were here now and we would make the best of it. Our baggage was unloaded first. The next morning we came off the ship and were looked over by a doctor and had our papers checked. Then our baggage was inspected. After this we were herded on to the train and were soon on our way to Edmonton. Alice said, "This is better than the ship — I will never go over that sea again!"

I liked the Canadian passenger cars better than the English ones. we could go from one car into the other, not like in England



S.S. Victorian Line Allan

Sailed from Liverpool on Apl 14th 19 11

Arrived at Halifax on Apl 24th 19 11 at 7^{15} o'clock P m.

Landed at 7^{50} o'clock a.m. Saloon 70 2nd cabin 477 Steerage 950

Page No. 27 "Steerage" passengers

Amount of cash in $		Age	Married or Single	Destination	Occupation
10^{00}	Bernard Ebbers	18	S	Edmonton, Alta.	Engineer
64^{00}	Gerritt Hengeveld	35	M	✓	Carpenter
35^{00}	Jelle Holwerda	24	S	✓	Labr.
	Drikus Huinink	26	M	✓	✓
	Johanna ✓	29	✓	✓	
3	Berend Lievers	25	✓	✓	Carpenter
[illegible]	Aaltje ✓	27	✓		
	Johanna ✓	2			
	Henrietta ✓	7/12			
25^{00}	Johannes Ter Horst	24	S	Whray(?), Man.	Labr
300^{00}	Jelle Van Dijk	46	✓	Monarch, Alta.	✓

The above information was obtained from the manifest of the Victorian.

where they were divided into different rooms. Those immigration trains were just right for travelling — the seats were made so that two made one double bed, and above was a collapsible platform for a double bed that during the day served as a place for the baggage. There was a coal stove in every car on which to make coffee or tea, but we had to supply our own food. It was in Canada that we first saw bananas and tasted pie.

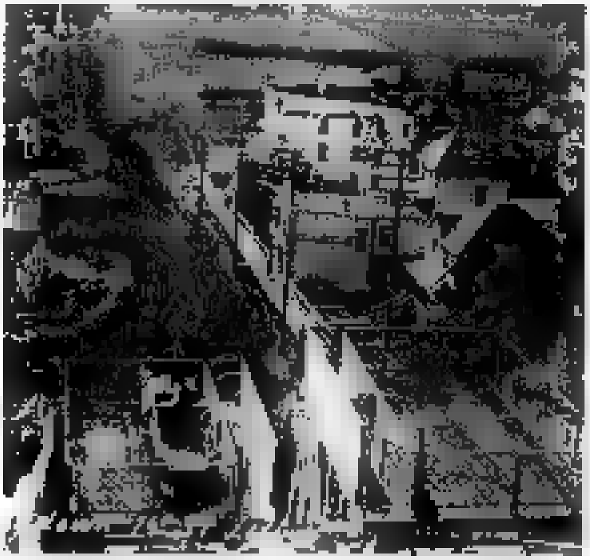
Looking out of the train, we did not like Canada. Small houses, we thought, but the distance fooled us. Ontario was wild bush country: rock, spruce and poplar, and muskeg that we mistook for the heather that we knew in the Netherlands. This cold wild country was not for us! We saw some small lakes full of logs and I wondered. "What are they going to do with all those fence posts?" When we came further west in the prairies, it was also not good no trees, no green grass, some cows and horses, and plenty of gophers that we thought were rats! No, Canada did not look promising. So far we had not seen anything of those big barns and houses pictured in the Dutch papers. And the English language — we would never learn that. Most of us could understand German, though. Herman spoke German best, so he was our interpreter.

When we arrived at Winnipeg, we changed trains. We stopped there for one hour, but did not see much of the city because we were afraid of getting lost. From there we went to Calgary and then on to Edmonton. There it was more parkland and, farther northwest, heavy timber — more like the part of Gelderland we came from. That we liked, but not Eastern Canada or the prairies. "We are nearing Edmonton," the conductor told us, so we gathered our stuff together and got the little girls dressed. George sent a telegram to the elders of the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton to meet them at the station. We had nobody waiting for us because the man we had been writing to was not in Edmonton but on a homestead in Eastburg.

CPR Station, Strathcona, 1890s.

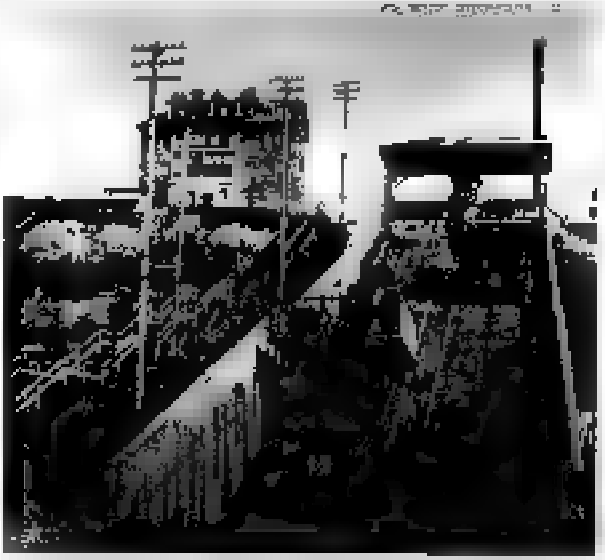
A[illegible]/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Well, at last we were in Strathcona, not yet in Edmonton. George's family had white roses in their lapels, waiting to meet the elders of the Church. Only it seemed there was nobody looking like an elder — just a couple of fellows in dirty overalls and they turned out to be the elders. They took George and his family but we were left to the CPR. They brought us by horse and wagon over the Low Level Bridge, as the High Level was just being built then. To get up McDougall Hill there was a platform that we, the horses, and the wagon were loaded on, and a steam engine on top pulled us up. Then we were brought to the Immigration Hall. It was April 28, 1911.



B6801/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

First steel lift, looking south



B6835/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Lift (incline railway) looking north.

The CPR took good care of us, but we were more or less on our own in a strange city, not understanding a word of English! At the Hall the caretaker told us, in German, that we could stay for a week but that we should get out as soon as possible because immigrants were coming in on every train. We had a room upstairs, but the kitchen and dining room were in the basement. All the utensils needed to make meals were there, and we had to clean up after every meal, of course. We decided to make *pannekoeken*, but had nothing to make them with. So Herman went to the store to get supplies. He came back with salt, fat, yeast, and cornmeal. We did not know what corn was, but meal seemed nearest to the Dutch *meel* (flour). The women made *pannekoeken* with it, but they did not taste very good.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta

Dining area, Immigration Hall, c. 1911-12.

The next day, Herman found us a shack on Namayo Avenue (97th Street) for ten dollars a month. So eight of us, six adults and two children, moved into the two-room shack, which had a coal shed at the back. Our boxes were used again, one for a table and the other for a cupboard. For chairs we had firewood blocks from the poplar trees growing in front of the shack. Some of us slept on the floor and the bedding was piled in a corner during the day. The women cooked and the men went out working and we all shared.

Edmonton was booming at that time. There was plenty of work for everybody. We lived together for a month and then Henry and his wife moved out.

I found out that we could rent a plot of ground from Mr. Little on Fraser Flats, build a shack there, and use water out of the pump by the backyard, so we decided to do that. I built a shack after hours and we moved out there. All the rent we paid was a dollar a month, no taxes, and free firewood out of the river. We liked Canada. In the Netherlands they would have condemned our house for a chicken coop, but we were satisfied with it and the freedom here. If we wanted to dig a hole — alright, lots of room around us and if we wanted to go hunting we could do that too around Edmonton. Not knowing the English language was a drawback in getting work. Here is one example: at that time there were Employment Offices started with people who understood different languages. For a fee of one dollar they would give you an address where you could go for a job. They would advertise "Carpenters wanted, twenty-five cents per hour" and you would pay a dollar and they gave you the address and you would go there and find a job, maybe for a day. Then the employer would send you away and the employment office would send another man and receive another dollar which it split with the employer. Between times I built a better living place, not a tar paper shack now, although still not a Dutch house. But it was all our own and it was all paid for, which we would never have been able to have in the Netherlands. So we were well satisfied in Canada.

Nevertheless, we were still thinking of a homestead and most of the Dutch were still talking about it as well and they clung together and sent some men out to look for land for a Dutch settlement. They intended it to be a Christian Reformed Dutch settlement and that is what it became, known as Neerlandia. A few had settled there already and others had gone there the winter before to build log houses, so six of us started off one morning (summer or fall 1912) with wagon and team to see Neerlandia. The distance from Edmonton to Neerlandia is about ninety miles, fifty of which were fairly good roads. There were a few small towns along the way, St. Albert, Morinville, Clyde, and further on a few stopping places, farmers' places mostly.

The first day we did quite a few miles — the roads were good and the horses and men were not yet tired. We stopped at a farmhouse for the night and had supper and a good bed and breakfast. It cost twenty-five cents per meal, bed twenty-five cents, and feed for the horses about the same. The next morning we made an early start again. The country was about the same, lots of bush left and the cultivated parts getting smaller and farther apart — but not

B2638 E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Morinville c 1910.

enough open homesteads here for a Dutch settlement. We travelled that day as far as Edison, the start of a little town with a school, church, livery barn and a few farm houses. After we left Edison, we decided to try to find a stopping place for the night but this was not easy for a team of horses and six men. At the first farmhouse we asked for room for six men, but the answer was "No, not for six of you." It was the same at the next and the next till at last we decided to settle down under spruce trees for the night. But one of us said, "I will ask at the next house and that will be the last." The next house turned out to be a little shed, but they said they would have room for us, although we were wondering where they would put the six of us. The farmer came out and helped to get the horses in the barn. When we came in, after we had a wash at the well, the table was set. After a good supper, I wandered around the barn for awhile and then found the others were in the house, and when I came in the fellows were all lying on the floor from one wall to the other. I dropped between two of them on the floor and it was a tight fit, but being young and tired I slept well. After breakfast the next morning we started again. We paid for the food and the night's lodging, leaving the lady of the house with more money than she had maybe seen for a long time.

The third day on the road we did not go as many miles because the roads were not so good and the horses were getting tired. But we reached a farmer's place about fifteen miles from Neerlandia and we stopped there overnight. Some of us slept in a granary full of oats and I found that better than a wooden floor for a spring and had a good sleep.

The last day of our trip was the hardest because we were in real timber country. No roads, although there was a trail around sloughs and around big trees. A few settlers had been over it with oxen or horses but we found creeks and sloughs and one of us went in front of the horses with a long stick measuring the depth of the mud to see if it would be safe for the horses to go through. We made it without accident, and arrived at the outskirts of Neerlandia that night, the Simon Tiemstra farm. They had a log cabin and said if we were content to sleep on the floor, we could stay there. So we

bedded down on the floor with a couple of horse blankets and a coat for a cushion. But since I found the boards hard, I was glad when the sun came up. After breakfast we were ready for land seeking and Mr. Tiemstra was willing to be our guide. We went along the Klondike Trail and then along the survey line from one corner stake to the other, having with us a plan of townships 61 and 62. The land that was open for settlement was marked on these plans in the Edmonton Lands Office. We did not take any of the homesteads at that time, but returned to Edmonton with a better idea of what a homestead was. For the time being I forgot about homesteading, as I had work and was making forty-five to fifty cents an hour!

In 1911 a neighbour, Joseph Baker, got sick with typhoid fever and my wife was helping his wife with a new baby. My wife got the same sickness and was brought to the hospital. The doctor did not give much hope. But after eight weeks in the hospital she came home — not even ninety pounds left of her and she had lost all her hair, but it all came back very quickly, darker than before. A neighbour woman looked after the baby. The Lord heard our prayers and Mother came home again. Yes, we were just as near to the Throne of Grace as we were in the Netherlands and He did bless us in this new country.

In 1912 and 1913 more immigrants came from the Netherlands, among them my brother Henry, his wife, and two children, as well as my younger brother John.

In the winter of 1912 I went to Neerlandia again and picked out a homestead, NE Sec. 15. On April 5, 1913, another daughter, Rieka (Hendrika), arrived — our first Canadian. I had made an agreement with another young man, Arie Emmerzael, who was going to Neerlandia and had a log cabin, that we could stay there while we built our log house. So in the fall of 1913 my brother John and I went back to build a log cabin. We did not go by horse this time, but by train as far as Clyde and from there by stage as far as fifteen miles from Neerlandia. We came to Clyde in the afternoon and on the platform was a fellow shouting, "Stage for the West!" He was going as far as Southworth that night. There was another passenger, a lady teacher, who wanted to get to Westlock by eight o'clock that night for a dance. She got the best seat in the front with the driver. I heard her say to the driver, "One dollar extra for you if you are there on time." The stage was a democrat with two mules to pull it. That was my first stage ride and I will never forget it. "Hold on," the driver said and he used a big stick on those mules. Hold on we had to, with both hands and feet. The ride was fast and rough, but he made his extra dollar! We reached Southworth's that night and slept at a place where I often stopped in later years on trips to Westlock. Mrs. Southworth was a motherly woman. We had a good rest, and after breakfast my brother and I left with our packs, which contained tools and clothing. One pack was heavy and the other light, so we decided to take turns carrying the heavy one. John said he would take the heavy one but he, not being used to that, slowed down after a few hours and changed with me. We had fifteen to seventeen miles to walk, and it had snowed the night before, but we made it to Tiemstras that night.

In the morning we started on the four mile trek to Arie's log cabin. He had left Edmonton the day before us so he could clean the cabin before we arrived, but we arrived and no Arie. He came that night, though. Since we needed groceries, the next morning Arie and I borrowed a team of oxen and a sleigh to go to the store, which was seven miles south and was open only one day a week. It seemed that the whole country was there — oxen, horses, sleighs, saddle horses — so we had to wait our turn. It was dark when we started our homeward journey, but after getting stuck behind a stump and losing some groceries, we made it, with one driving the oxen and one walking behind.

Arie had the necessary pots and pans, so we started housekeeping. Arie and I took turns making breakfast, since John was younger and needed more sleep. Arie was a better cook than either John or I, so we left it mostly up to him to bake bread, etc. He was older than I and not married and I was spoiled already because I had a wife who was a good cook, except in baking bread. (She had to learn that in Canada, and the first batches she made were quite heavy, but I had all my teeth yet at that time and an empty stomach, so it did not matter.) One morning I got out of bed and said to Arie, "Look, there is a fire in the roof along the stovepipe." He said, "That's all right. Let's have breakfast first!" A mud roof with a layer of snow on top does not burn fast so we had no trouble getting it out after breakfast.

As soon as we were settled in Arie's cabin we tried our hand at cutting logs but, being green at it, made mistakes. John had never used such tools before, but with the help of neighbours and their oxen we did manage to get the logs to the place. We started to build the frame, got eight feet high, then left it at that, and went back to Edmonton.

B4.781/E Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

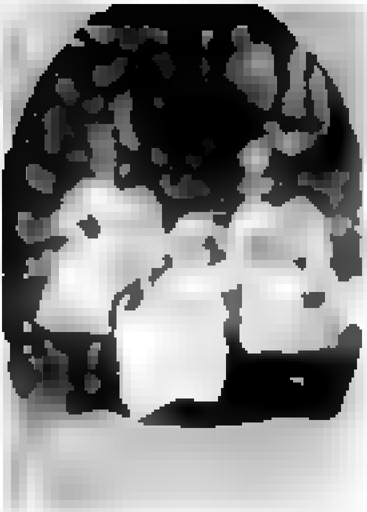
Edmonton, looking west from 2nd Street, 1914.

The city of Edmonton was growing like a toadstool with the selling of building lots all around it. Real estate offices were doing a great business, selling lots to immigrants who did not understand a word of English. Many found out afterwards that the lot they had

bought was a duck pond in a slough a mile out of the city. We did not buy because we did not have money. We had paid my brother's fare from the Netherlands and the doctor and the hospital for Mother's operation. Many Hollanders did buy. [illegible] Carnegie was the [illegible] to [illegible] in [illegible]. The real estate boom [illegible] lasted for the city. When the war started in 1914 the boom collapsed. No lots were sold. The houses built by the city [illegible] Water Works [illegible] payments as never before. People could not make the payments on lots and houses and the city took them for taxes. [illegible] enlisted for the war thinking to have a free trip overseas, but many did not come back. Nobody believed it would take years to conquer Germany. My brother [illegible] received a [illegible] from the Dutch government to come back for military service and since he had no work at that time, he went back to the Netherlands. He served in the Dutch army, but he never came back to Canada. He was sorry he ever left Canada.

As I have said, the boom in the city had collapsed, so after looking for work and not getting any, we decided to move to the homestead. We sold our little house and [illegible] and some of our furniture and bought some groceries and tools. We rented a team and wagon, and hired a teamster to bring us to Neerlandia. We loaded up most of our stuff, but [illegible] did not all fit on the wagon, and made a trip back later for that. In August 1914, during the month and year the First World War started, Alie and I and our three girls, along with a third [illegible], a brother-in-law who wanted to see Neerlandia, set out from Edmonton. The boxes that we had brought from the Netherlands were used again, this time as a seat for the [illegible] by day and a bed by night. Our cook stove was at the back of the wagon facing out, so we only had to put a piece of stovepipe on it when we wanted to use it. We had a tent over the wagon, but did not need it because the weather was fine.

The first day we made about thirty miles and found an empty schoolhouse to sleep in. There was also a pump for water and a barn for the horses there. After a good night's sleep and a good breakfast, we travelled on. The next night we reached what had been the start of a [illegible] I know [illegible] the [illegible] barn [illegible] there. We used it for the horses and for us to sleep in. In the morning Alie bought some butter from a farmer's wife and asked for some milk for our year-old baby, [illegible]. The woman said, "What, a baby and no milk?" So she gave us milk for no charge [illegible] for the poor baby. That day we came to the Pembina River and the water was very low, so the ferryman asked, "How heavy is your load?" We did not know, so he said he would try it. But we got stuck on the sandbar. We had to pull the team back, unload some of the goods and come back for them. The ferryman warned us, "There is a mud hole on the road. You have to go around it. Turn left into a farmer's yard and follow the trail and you will come out behind the mud hole." We did that and came up to a wire fence. The teamster took our axe and [illegible] the wire from the post and held it down so we could drive over it and we went over it back onto the road. So far so good, but we did not go very far. A man on horseback came up to us and said, "You fellows broke my fence and I am demanding you to pay [illegible] a dollar. Yesterday one of those homesteaders broke my fence


[illegible] 1914

and I had to hunt for my cattle." So I handed him a dollar. I heard later that in following years he charged ten dollars. That night we could not find an empty building to sleep in, so John and the driver found a haystack to sleep on and we settled down on the boxes in the wagon. Alice thought she heard a bear, but it turned out to be some cows eating our horses' feed.

Until then, we had had graded roads to travel over, but now there was only a trail. However, we did reach Tiemstras that night, even though the wagon had broken down in a mud hole about one mile from Tiemstra's cabin. Mrs. Tiemstra made us a good supper: moose meat, potatoes, and homemade bread. She said, "Eat your fill of the meat, as there is lots more in the bush. We have a neighbour, a real hunter; he hunts the moose and my husband, having an ox team, gets it out of the bush so we always have fresh meat. We are helping each other; one is a hunter, another a carpenter, and so on. We work together to make a start in this wilderness."

The next morning, after a breakfast of oatmeal and moosemeat, we got the wagon out of the mud hole. It had started to rain that morning, and our house was not ready — [illegible] had no doors or windows in it, so Mr. Tiemstra said, "You go as far as Klaas Knikker's and there are two cabins there, and one mile from your land. He will take you in." So we went to Klaas Knikker's cabin and knocked on the door. I noticed some writing on the door; it said "Andere Nooit Gedacht Castle (Never Thought)". Anyhow, nobody was there so the teamster said, "We better leave your wife and children here and unload the necessary [illegible]." "Oh no!" Alice said. "What do I say when the owner comes home?" Well, he came home that night. He had been helping a neighbour build a cabin and he told me afterwards: "When I came home that night I saw smoke coming out of the stovepipe and I thought there must be fire in the stove." As he came nearer he heard a baby cry and found a woman with three children in the house, and a very embarrassed woman too! Alice did not know what to say at first, but Klaas took it well and went to the next cabin, where there was also a bachelor, and slept there. He had left the cabin the day before, naming it "Neverthought" and that was a good name because, as he said, "I left it a single man and came back to find a woman and three children." Anyway, we had gotten our goods to the log cabin and the teamster went back to Edmonton — just in time, because after that three-day rain no wagon was able to get through.

We stayed at the Knikker cabin for those three days of rain and then went to ours to put in a floor of poles, hay, mud and sod. I had no experience building with logs, but the neighbours helped me. I had made the windows and one door in Edmonton. I put them in and filled between the logs on the inside with moss and on the outside with clay. Then I borrowed a few boards for the floor — enough for the table and chairs to stand on. It was impossible to get to the sawmill after the rain. The table stood firm, but the rest of the house was clay and weeds; the girls played in the grass inside. Alice hung up blankets to divide the house into rooms. It was nothing fancy, but we had a roof over our heads and a wall around us. We found out that the roof was not waterproof, nor the walls mosquito-proof!

As soon as we raised a little garden the rabbits helped us eat it and when we had a little patch of grain all around the edge it was eaten by the rabbits for about a rod wide and in the fall when the grain was in the stook the rabbits would climb on top of it and make a manure pile of it. Yes, there were millions of them and you could not possibly eat all of them. But our little garden grew and we shared it with the rabbits the first year but the next year I had a fence made from sticks to keep them out. The summer frosts took their toll on the gardens too in the early years. Summer frost would come as early as June or July so we did not have beans in the first years.

In the spring of 1915 I made the trip to Edmonton to get the rest of our goods and collect the money for the house, because our money and groceries were gone. I borrowed Mr. Gallagher's team on the condition that I take along his son John and Klaas Kruse who was engaged to his daughter. So we started, the three of us, with a sleigh and the team of oxen and a box. We had no load on the way in so we made good time. When we arrived in Edmonton it was two o'clock in the morning. The oxen stopped at every streetlight and looked up till we came to the corner of [illegible] Street. There was a theatre very brightly lit and all at once the oxen turned from the street, went over the sidewalk and intended to see those bright lights. I managed to turn the team back to the street. A policeman standing at the corner came running. "What have we here. Do you come from the country and how far? And how do you steer these beasts? I have never seen them before." And he walked along with us for a block or more, wondering and asking questions. The next morning we started for home, just John and I, as Klaas stayed on longer. But the snow had gone so we had to borrow a wagon, and when we came out of the city there still was snow, so it took seven days to return. I don't remember much of the seven days, only one day we were discussing what day of the week it was. I did not know and John did not know. We stopped for supper and asked the lady of the house what day of the week it was. "Don't you know? It is Sunday." A good thing the owner of the oxen did not know we worked his oxen on the Sabbath. He was very strict on Sabbath keeping and very careful with his animals. When we came home he felt the oxen and said, "They have been sweating." "Yes, I guess so when they work." When I asked him how much he wanted he said, "You are a carpenter and you can help me sometime fix up the new house." And that I did afterwards.

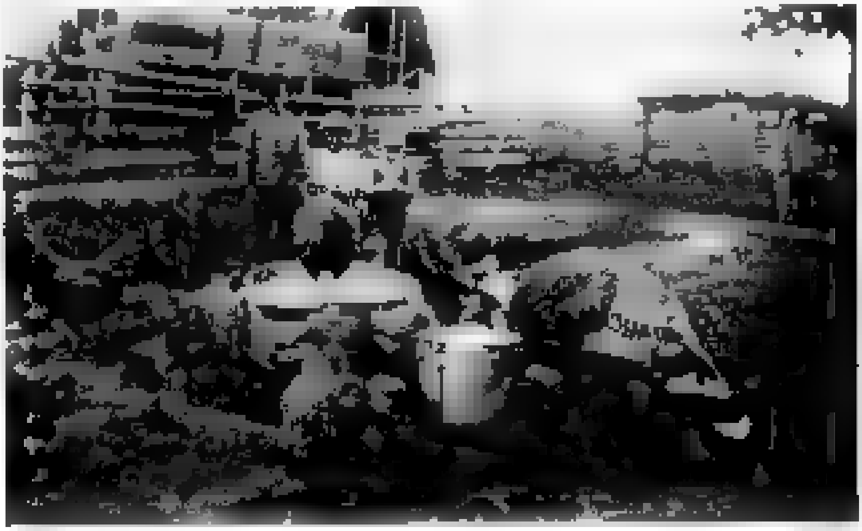
I came home with some more furniture and a few dollars and we bought a cow for that, our first animal on the homestead. Soon after that two of us went out to buy a cow. We went fifteen miles south and there we bought it. I bought a heifer that was supposed to be in calf and the owner had a small heifer he would like to sell as well but I did not have enough money. My partner said, "I will lend you the money." So I bought the heifers and he bought a cow. It turned out the nice heifer was not a good milk cow and the little one was our best cow for years to come. Now we had a start at farming, two cows and after awhile two calves. One of the calves grew into our first ox and I bought another ox. As a boy I had seen a farmer make a harness for his oxen so I went to the bush to look for a crooked birch tree and I made the harness with binder twine and moose hide. Now the job was to break the ox. I put on the harness and put him in front of a stone boat – everything went fine till I said, "Get up!" But the beast did not know what I meant so I gave him a little pat with my stick but he did not move – a little harder hit with my stick and there he went, right into a haystack! One thing I learned and that was that an ox will not back up! After much hard work I did get him trained to haul my firewood or go to the store. I also did some plowing with the two oxen later on.

We did progress, though, and soon had a few cows. We made butter, which we traded for groceries, and also had a few hens and sold the eggs if we could.

Rieka, Hanna, Alice holding Johannes, Ben, Minnie, Henry, Bill, 1918.

In the years 1915 to 1918, we were short of money and there was no work in Neerlandia, so some of the men went harvesting on the prairies. I received a letter asking if I would come and do some carpenter work. I went after April 28, 1915, because that is when our first son, **Bill** (Willem), was born. A few days later I left for Nobleford with my partner, Popko Schuring, and we worked together in Nobleford, Monarch, Granum, and Bendhill building houses, barns, and a church. I stayed away for five months while Alice and the girls did the homesteading. I made fifty cents an hour plus board and room. I made good at that time and came home with about five hundred dollars, with which we bought some haying machinery and a sewing machine for Alice, as well as other things. I went again the following years and in that way we made a start on our homestead. It was not easy and there were many hardships but the family grew and we got a second son, **Henry** (Hendrik), on September 28, 1916. Our third son, **Johannes**, was born November 10, 1917, and passed away March 5, 1919. Another son was stillborn on June 18, 1919.

The winter of 1919 was long and cold and many cattle died because of shortage of feed. We lost some in the spring too. Our last daughter, **Alice** (Aaltje), was born November 25, 1920. Three more sons were born in the 1920s: **Ben**, March 17, 1923; **John** (Jan), January 6, 1925, and **Gerrit**, January 17, 1929. All of them were born at home with just the womenfolk helping one another.



Lievers boys on homestead, late 1920s.

When our children were older, the girls worked out cooking in the lumber camps. We got a permit from the government for one dollar for about a hundred feet of lumber. We had to cut the logs, bring them to the sawmill and then bring the lumber home again. This had to be done in the winter, as the mill was on the south side of Shoal Lake. The boys and I would start early in the mornings to cut logs, and one of the girls worked at the sawmill as a cook to supply the money for the sawing. Alice and the younger children stayed at home to do the housework and chores. Alice had to bake bread every day to keep us in lunches. We finished the logging that winter and the sawmill had it all sawed, but by that time the ice was melting. We did get all the lumber home before the ice went out of the lake, though. The next year I started to build our third house which is still standing today (1966).

The house Ben built in 1932

Excerpts taken from memories written in 1966 by Ben Lievers Sr.

JAN AND FROUKJE (EERDMANS) ANEMA

Jan (John) Anema was born May 8, 1884, in Arum, Friesland, the Netherlands, to parents who were farmers. Froukje Eerdmans was born January 25, 1886, in Bolsward, Friesland. Her father was in the business of buying and selling hides. John and Froukje met and became engaged in Bolsward.

John had worked for dairy farmers in the Netherlands but, lured by the promise of streets paved with gold, John and his step-brother Siebren Tiemstra sailed to the U.S.A. in 1906. Froukje, accompanied by members of her family, followed him in 1907. She went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, because some of her family were already there. John and Froukje were married September 19, 1907, and went to Harrison, South Dakota, where John and Siebren had rented a farm. Two children were born to the Anemas there: **Della** (Dirkje), on December 11, 1908, and **Susan** (Sietske), on February 12, 1911.

Few trees grew in Harrison so buffalo chips had to be gathered for fuel. Drought (the second one in twenty years) hit the state, and South Dakota did not live up to the promise. John and Siebren were attracted to an advertisement placed in *De Wachter* by Henry Kippers of Edmonton, indicating his desire to establish a Dutch farming community near Edmonton. John responded to the advertisement, and in 1911 the Anema and Tiemstra families

Froukje and Jan's wedding photo, 1907

Susie, Froukje, Dela in Edmonton, 1913

arrived by train in Edmonton and settled in Fraser Flats. Although many other immigrants lived in tents, the Anemas were able to get a shack. John found work at the Edmonton Water Works, and he and his wife saved as much money as they could so they would be able to begin homesteading.

At first John filed on a quarter in the Thorhild district, but on December 18, 1911, he filed on the SW 23-61-3-5. This too was temporary. By the time the Anema family moved to what later became Neerlandia, he had refiled on the NW 35-61-3-5 (January 20, 1913). The big move came in 1914. By this time there were three children to take along since a baby girl, Tena (Katharina), had been born March 22, 1913.

John hired one of the teamsters who made a business of taking new settlers to their homesteads by horse and wagon. The Anemas loaded all their possessions on the wagon: beds, one dresser, a stove, a heater, a wringer, a sewing machine, and many other necessary items. On the trip Froukje's hat was knocked off and sank out of sight in a mud hole. The loss of the hat was in itself not so important, but it dramatized the drastic change that was taking place in her life. Her childhood had included maids, stylish clothing and the amenities of city life in the late 1800s. Now she was being jounced over a muddy trail in a wagon to an unnamed spot in the wilderness.

On their arrival the family stayed with the Siebren Tiemstra family until their home, a cabin with a sod roof, was built on the homestead. This house consisted of one large room partitioned by curtains to form two bedrooms on the end. The Anemas purchased chickens, pigs, and cows and began growing potatoes. They also grew grain, but the first crops were often poor because of early frosts.

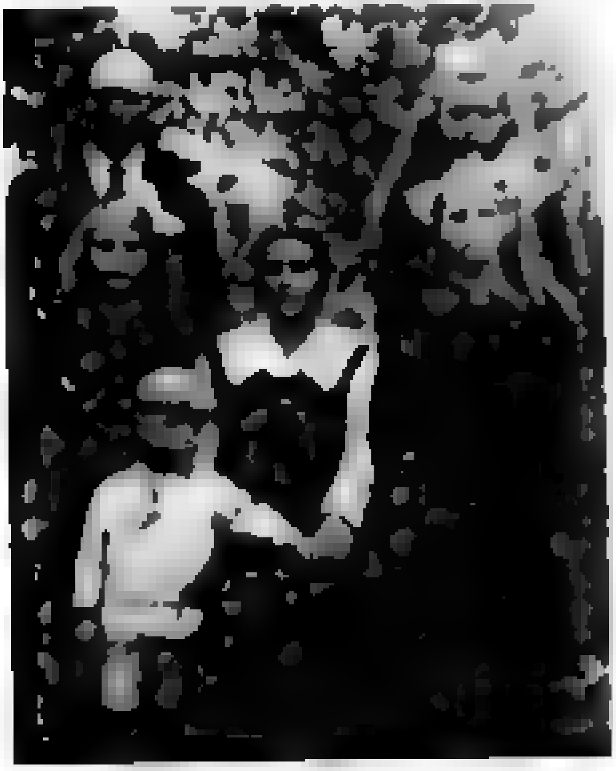
The wringer brought from Edmonton saved Froukje many hours of wringing out the wash by hand. It could be attached to a washtub and then turned to also serve the rinse tub.

The area in which the Anemas settled was still wilderness. Clearing the land had begun but there were few trails. To get to the Tiemstras, it was necessary to walk part of the way along a trail on which logs were placed to make it possible to cross streams or wet, low spots. On at least one occasion Della slipped off a log and arrived at the Tiemstras wet to the waist.

John worked hard to make a home in the wilderness. By the time he patented his land in November 1917, he had cleared sixteen acres, built a log house, barn, and granary, dug a twenty-foot well and constructed two miles of log fences. He had acquired three head of cattle and two horses. A second house was built in 1919 and the old one converted into a barn. The new one was a two-story log house with a proper roof. The downstairs had a front room and a large kitchen, upstairs were three bedrooms complete with closets. The beds were made of wood or iron, the mattresses were stuffed with straw. In winter the house was cold, but quilts, handmade from scraps of old clothing, kept the family warm at night.

This new land was good to the Anemas: here their only son, George (Gerrit), was born January 20, 1919. Another daughter, Anna, was born June 4, 1921.

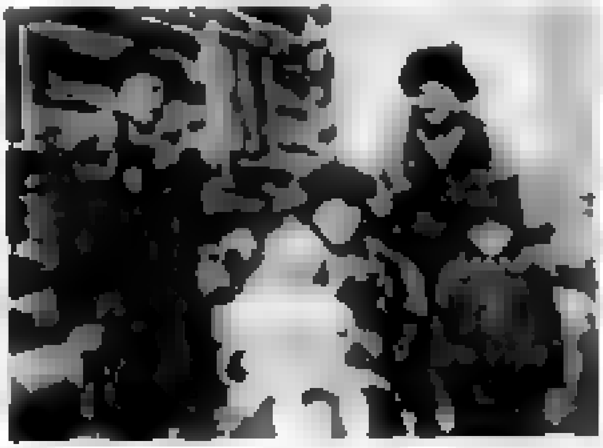
Froukje was an excellent seamstress. She made many clothes for the family from hundred-pound flour sacks, some of which she dyed in different colours. Clothes were also received from relatives and Christian Reformed churches in the Grand Rapids area. These were skillfully made over to fit the children. Knitting was a favourite pastime, and Froukje became so proficient at it that it was almost as natural to her as breathing. The constant clicking of her needles sounded like a cricket in flight.



Back: Jan, Della. Middle: Tena, Froukje, Susie. Front: George c. 1921

John, being a farmer's son, usually raised good crops. Other income was derived from the sale of eggs, butter and cream. Hay grew in the sloughs and was cut with a scythe and stacked in the barnyard for cattle.

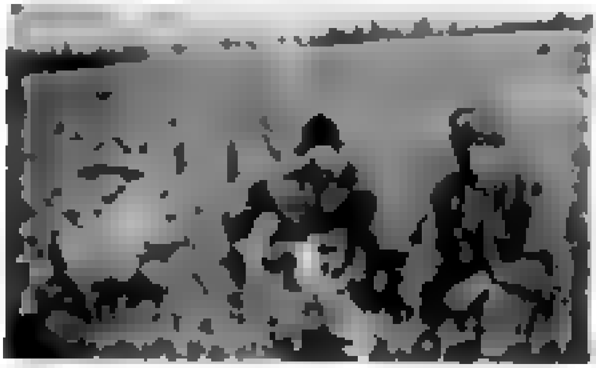
On the frontier, regard for the law was sometimes lax. One summer day John was burning brush without a permit, when the long arm of the law reached as far as Neerlandia. The officer arrived at the Anema farm and told John that the penalty for this infraction was a ten-dollar fine or three days in jail. Since John did not have the ten dollars he was taken off to jail in Edmonton by the officer. When they arrived by horse and buggy, in Clyde, someone in higher authority decided that the penalty was foolish and allowed John to return home. Only this time there was no ride for him, so he walked the forty miles home.



Tena, Della holding Annie, Susie, George, c. 1924

Since John did not like working alone, he often had his children working alongside him. At other times he would share tasks with his neighbours. Della and Susie were milking and doing other chores by age eight or nine. They also would go on horseback to get the cows who had to be driven to the slough for water. In the winter a hole had to be chopped in the ice so that the cows could drink. When the girls were older they also had to help with the cutting of the wood in the winter. They helped with plowing, harrowing, and stooking, and there was also a large garden to be weeded and piles of wood to be chopped.

Two more girls were born to John and Froukje: Frances (Froukje) on December 26, 1925, and Sophie, on October 8, 1928.

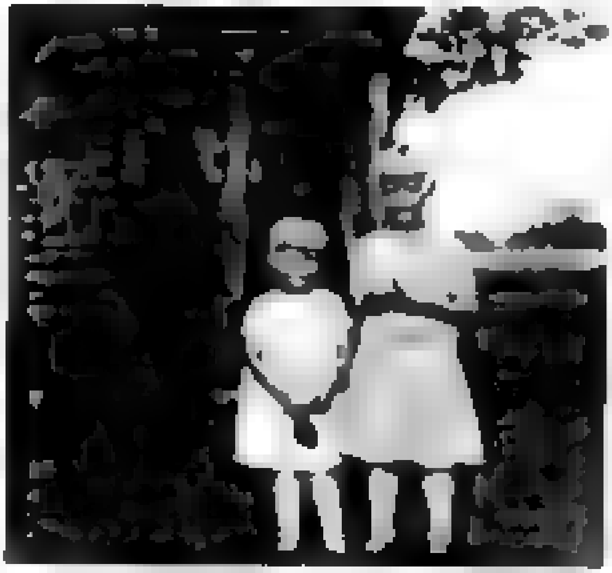


Lunch at threshing time, c. 1930. Della holding Frances, Susie, John

There was plenty of work to do, but the Anema house was always open to visitors. On Sundays many older single men such as Ike and Charlie Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Henry Strydhorst, and Oene Piers came for lunch. Families who lived too far from the church to go home between services sometimes stayed at the Anemas for lunch. Froukje would prepare a big pan of soup, loaves of her delicious bread, and a huge slab of white or chocolate cake. Froukje also baked, washed, ironed, and mended for the Visser brothers. Sometimes she would be down to her last loaf of bread when they came, but she would give it to them and then whip up a batch of baking powder biscuits for her own family. She did a lot of sewing for friends, relatives, and neighbours. The Messelink and Anema girls were often dressed alike because Froukje had made all the dresses.

Although there was enough to eat and wear, there was never any spare money. Froukje called the farm a *bodemloze put* (a bottomless pit). During the Depression, cows were not worth feeding, so the calves were taken out in the bush where John cut their throats.

All the children went to school until grade seven or eight or age fifteen or sixteen. Della and Susie were school janitors for some years. They would arrive early in the morning to start the heater, using kindling cut the night before, and shavings which they brought from home. With their first year's salary, a table was purchased for the living room. Later, Della went out working in Neerlandia and Edmonton. While working in Neerlandia she continued to help on the farm. She married Raymond Baker in 1934.



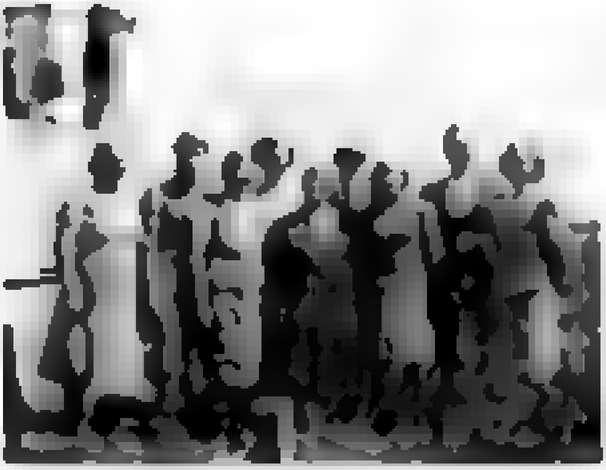
Sophie, Frances in front of the log house, 1932

When Susie was fifteen, she went out working too, and sent most of the money home where it helped to pay for a new sewing machine, a winter coat, and false teeth — all for her mother. She also contributed toward the purchase of a new family buggy. Susie married John Vanee in 1933.

Tena's first paying job was babysitting at the [illegible], who were both teaching in Neerlandia. She also did housework in Edmonton, earning fifteen dollars per month. Free rides to Edmonton were given by Billy Quick, the trucker. Tena married [illegible] in [illegible].

George, who was called Boy with a certain amount of pride, completed grade eight and then stayed home to help on the farm. He was called to join the army, but was gone for only one month because he was needed on the farm. He married Tina Velema in 1951.

Since John had chronic bronchitis and asthma, he found farming difficult, so in 1945 John



Della, Tena, Susie, Annie, Froukje, John, Sophie, George, Frances, 1944.

and Froukje moved to the hamlet and George took over the farm. The Anema house was located directly north of the Co-op store. From there John could see everything that was going on. He had always enjoyed being with people and now just a few steps would bring him to the hub of Neerlandia's activity. This central location made it easy for the grandchildren to come for a visit. They spent many happy hours playing Flinch or checkers with *Pake*. An avid reader, John enjoyed the many books sent by Froukje's relatives who owned Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses in Grand Rapids.

Anna helped many families in the area when a child was born or a mother became sick. She kept house for George until her marriage to Jerry Haagsma in June 1950. They lived in Edmonton where Jerry, who was a mechanic, had his business. After Jerry's death from a heart attack in 1980, Anna took up babysitting, a job she loves. The five Haagsma children live in or near the city.

When Frances was nineteen years of age, she entered the Reformed Bible Institute to become a missionary. There she met Jake Bol. They were married on June 24, 1949, in a double ceremony with Sophie and Lambert. Fran and Jake worked among the Navajo Indians in Rehoboth, New Mexico. Six children were born to the Bols. Frances died of cancer on December 15, 1964. Jake died in 1967 in a chemical plant explosion.

Sophie was the only one of the Anema family to complete grade nine, but school was not her only interest in life. Sophie loved working outside and was driving tractor at the age of thirteen. She drove for various farmers and was adept at it. She weighed ninety pounds and could pull a John Deere D fly-wheel weighing about [illegible] pounds. And [illegible] she got that tractor started too! She went to work as a clerk in Neerlandia Co-op in May 1946. The work was interesting and good times were shared with the other girls, Grace Tuininga and Lena Krikke, who worked there at the time. But the real fun was what happened behind the counters or in the warehouse when the boss was away and no customers were around. Sophie worked at the store until her marriage to Lambert Wieeenga in 1949.

In 1962, John and Froukje gave up their little white house at the Centre and moved to Hillcrest Lodge in Barrhead. There they lived happily together until Froukje died on September 14, 1965. John lived there alone until his death on May 1, 1967.

Anema Family

GAELE AND CATHARINA (VISSER) BAKER

Gaele Bakker was born July 31, 1858, in Koudom, Friesland, the Netherlands. His parents owned a bakery, which Gaele later took over. Gaele married Catharina (Catareena) Visser (Visser) on May 17, 1884, in Witmarsum. Catharina had been born March 9, 1864, in Terwoude.

Gaele and Catharina immigrated from the Netherlands in 1899. With them came their seven children: John (Jan, February 2, 1885), Joseph (Jouke, November 6, 1886), Jenny (Jacobse, April 4, 1888), Raymond (Riemer, January 13, 1891), Magdalena (February 21, 1893), Dick [illegible] and Rena [illegible] 8, 1897). Catharina's parents had immigrated to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A., many years earlier, and her brother Dick Visser had come back to Friesland with reports of the good conditions in Whitinsville, so that was their destination. Once there, Gaele found work in the Whitin Machine Works. The Bakker children went to school and, as they grew up, found work in the Machine Works or in the cotton mills. There was a Dutch Christian Reformed community in Whitinsville, and Jenny and Joseph married into Dutch families. While

Back: John, Raymond, Joseph, Magdalena. Front: Catharina, Katie, Gaele, Dick, Jenny, c. 1910.

in the States, the Bakkers changed their last name to the English "Baker". It seemed the Bakers were well settled in their adopted country.

Then the Bakers read an article in a Dutch newspaper, that told of good farmland available in Canada for free. The Bakers corresponded with the writer and were told jobs and houses would be waiting for them. It looked promising, so they made the move to Edmonton. John decided to stay as did Jenny and her husband. Joseph, his wife Aaltje Mast, their one-year-old son George, and the Mast family, as well as a number of single men, all travelled together. The group arrived in Edmonton on April 8, 1911. The Bakers were disappointed, things were not as they had expected. There were no jobs or houses awaiting them, in fact they spent their first nights at Immigration Hall. Some of the single men who had come could afford to go back to Whitinsville, and they did.

Soon, however, the Bakers found work. Gaele got a job working on construction of the High Level Bridge. He also found a place to live a shack in the Parkdale area. Joseph and Aaltje lived in a tent nearby.

Magdalena, who was eighteen years old, often had stomach pains. But Gaele and Catharina did not go to a doctor unless absolutely necessary. In Edmonton, when Magdalena had a recurrence of the trouble, they finally decided to take her to a doctor. He diagnosed an inflamed appendix. Magdalena was operated on immediately but her appendix had already ruptured, and she died September 4, 1912.

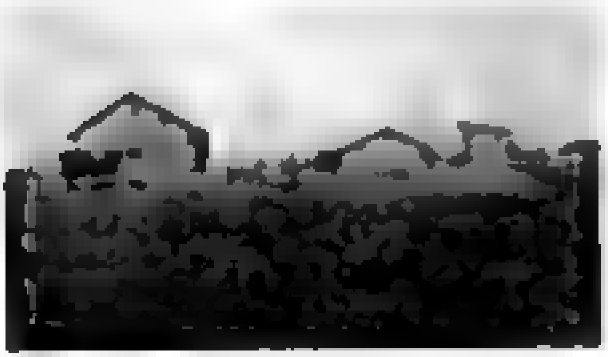
On July 19, 1912, Gaele and his son Raymond each filed on land northwest of Edmonton where the Masts and some other Dutchmen had taken out homesteads. Gaele filed on the NW 15-61-3-5 and Raymond filed on the quarter north of his father's. Gaele and Raymond built a cabin on Gaele's quarter, and in February 1913 Gaele and Catharina moved to Neerlandia with Raymond and Katie. Dick had a good job in Edmonton and never did try homesteading.

Gaele and Raymond kept cattle on their homesteads from the first year they were there. the cows were kept in a fenced pasture. The creek running through their land provided the necessary water for the livestock. Gaele made a watering trough by hewing out a balm log with an adze. Every day he would pull water up from the creek with a bucket and fill the trough. One day Gaele came to the creek to find the trough had disappeared. After checking around, he found it in the creek, where it had been dragged by a beaver attempting to build a dam.

Gaele, Raymond

Raymond worked to clear the land. He used oxen for breaking, but found them exasperatingly slow. He often said that he wished they would go on a rampage so the work would speed up. One summer day Raymond got his wish: while he was working with the breaking plow the oxen went through a hornet's nest. They took off on the run, going right through the creek and up the opposite bank, making a furrow as they ran. In later years Raymond would relate this incident and laugh about it.

The Bakers had dug a well near their log house, but the water was too hard to use for washing clothes, so it became Katie's job to carry water for the wash from the creek. While at the creek, she would often spend some time fishing for jackfish with a snare. They were so plentiful that she easily caught a few and would then clean them and take them home for supper. One time she caught a fish that was much bigger than usual. Seeing that one snare was too weak, she quickly grabbed another snare and doubled it. Later she weighed the fish — twenty-three pounds.



[illegible]

The first two years that the Bakers lived in the settlement there was no organized church. Gaele was the designated elder from the church in Edmonton and read the sermon each Sunday. The services were held in various homes, most of which had less-than-adequate roofs. One Sunday the service was held at Douwe Terpsma's house. A box had been placed on a chair to serve as a pulpit, and Gaele stood behind it to lead the service. It was a rainy day and dirty water was coming through the sod roof. Betje Terpsma held an umbrella over Gaele's head to keep the water from ruining the Bible or wetting the sermon book.

In the States, the Bakers had owned an organ, and most of the children had learned to play. Dick especially played the organ well and was later organist in the Edmonton church. Once they were on the homestead, Gaele bought an expensive organ and had it brought from Edmonton. Both he and Catharina enjoyed listening to the organ and singing with the family. Katie would usually play while they sang.

Gaele proved up his quarter by 1916. On his application, he indicated that he had fourteen acres cleared and three brushed. In 1914 he already had nine cattle and two horses on the homestead. He and Raymond had built a 25 by 30-foot log house, two log stables, a hen house and hog pens. Their well was dug forty-five feet deep and they had put up two-and-a-half miles of wire and pole fencing. Raymond received his patent in 1915. He then had eleven acres cleared on his homestead. On it he kept twenty-six cattle, two horses, and four hogs.

Gaele was fond of animals. When he sat down at home the family cat would drape itself across his back and the dog would sit on its haunches beside him. At mealtimes they would do the same, both waiting for a morsel of food. When Catharina was not looking, Gaele would quickly give them a piece of meat on his fork. One animal Gaele never did learn to handle, however, was the horse. He never rode one and the only horse he liked was a tame pony that his son Joseph gave him in 1921, which Gaele made use of by hitching to the stoneboat.

Gaele never lost his baking skills. His specialties were marzipan letters and shortbread. For special occasions, he would bake *gebakjes*. One such occasion was the wedding of his son Dick to Florence Terpsma in 1917. Generally though, Catharina did most of the daily baking. She always had white bread and cookies or cake in the house. This food was a real treat for her grandchildren, who did not get such food at home.

Ada Terpsma, Katie, Flora Baker, Catharina, Gaele with his dog, early 1920s

Gaele and Catharina enjoyed working in the garden. They raised many vegetables and also kept a strawberry patch. In 1918, at the local fair in the church, Gaele exhibited ripe tomatoes, something many of the settlement children had never seen. Catharina canned most of the vegetables in jars which she had taken along from the States.

Katie married Henry Hiemstra in 1919. Raymond lived and farmed with his parents until 1934 when he married Della Anema. Around that time Gaele and Catharina had a small house built on Henry and Katie's farm and moved there. Raymond took over Gaele's quarter.

Gaele and Catharina, 1942

Catharina was blessed with simple faith and love for all. She was content wherever she was. Gaele was of a different temperament. In his old age he wanted to move again, this time to some distant place such as California where his daughter Jenny was living, but the Lord provided for him just the person to temper him. Catharina was as patient as he was impatient and as satisfied as he was of a roaming nature. Catharina died in February 1943 at the age of 79 and Gaele died May 26, 1945, at the age of 87.

Baker Family

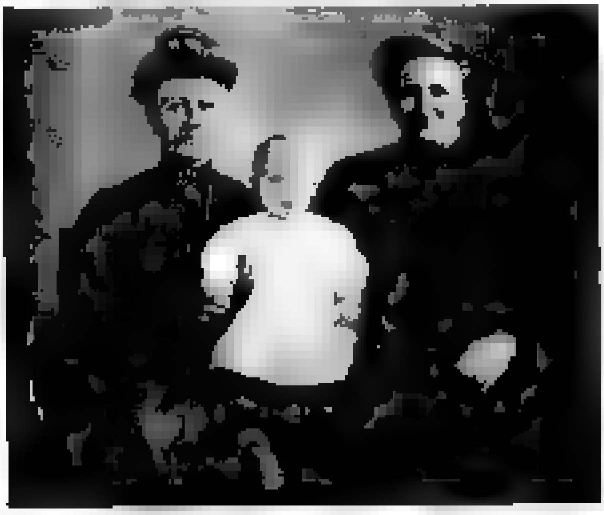
JOUKE AND AALTJE (MAST) BAKER

Jouke (Joseph) Baker, at the age of thirteen, immigrated to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A., with his parents in 1899. While he lived there he went to trade school, and became a journeyman machinist at seventeen years of age. He married Aaltje (Alice) Mast on September 4, 1909.

Jouke worked on a repair gang, where the work was more interesting than some of the other factory jobs in Whitinsville. But Jouke was not completely satisfied, so he was drawn to an article he had read in a Dutch paper that told of farming opportunities around Edmonton. The Bakers corresponded with the writer, who sent an encouraging reply. He mentioned,

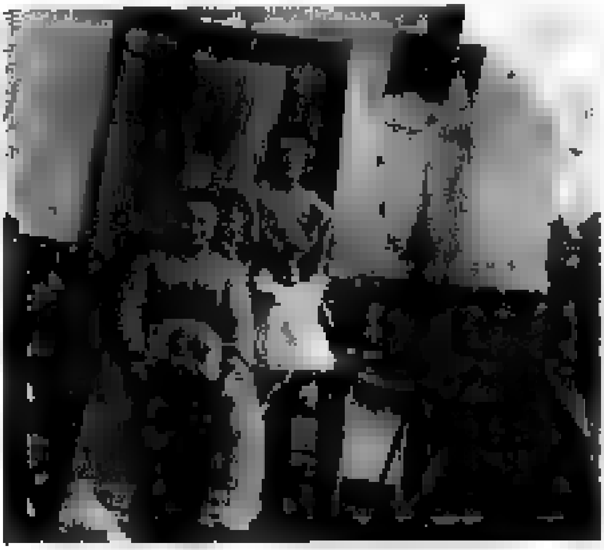
Jouke and Aaltje's wedding photo.

among other things, that even though the Dutch immigrants there had only been in Canada a few years, they already had water and light in their houses. It sounded attractive, and Jouke and Aaltje decided they would try homesteading. As requested, Jouke sent some money to provide for a search party to find suitable homesteads.



Aaltje, George, Minnie Meet, 1910.

In April 1911 Jouke, Aaltje, and their one-year-old son, **George** (Gaele, April 8, 1910), moved to Edmonton. (With them travelled both Jouke and Aaltje's parents and their families.) Conditions in Edmonton, though, were not as they had anticipated. Jouke first lived in a tent close to his father's shack in Parkdale. In their tent they did have light and water but, as with the other Dutch immigrants, it was nothing more than the light coming through the window and the water standing in the barrel. Jouke's tent had boards on the floor and at the end of it he built a lean-to big enough for a double bed. Aaltje used the tiny woodstove inside for cooking as well as for heat. Jouke again took up his trade, working for Coutts Machine Shop and for Nickel Brothers. He often travelled far to different sawmills or other industrial shops doing repair work.



In front of Baker's shack in Edmonton. Minnie with George, Alice with Minnie, c. 1912

A daughter, Minnie, was born to Jouke and Aaltje in July 1911. The following year an epidemic of summer complaint went through the Dutch community. Minnie became ill and died of the sickness on August 4, 1912. Aaltje received great comfort from her mother-in-law, Catharina, who lost a daughter shortly afterward. The two women would often sit outside in the warmth of the autumn sun holding hands and not saying a word. On November 4, 1912, a second daughter, also named **Minnie**, was born into the family.

Jouke had filed on a quarter in the Thorhild area on April 28, 1911 He abandoned that quarter and in 1912 filed on the SW 15-61-3-5 in Neerlandia. He hired Albert Mast to build a log house on it and clear three or four acres Since coming to Edmonton, Jouke had worked hard, frequently nights as well as days, to make some money. Often the children only saw him on Sunday Jouke was able to buy twenty-six lots in [illegible] ton. The prices for real estate had been going [illegible] slumped Eventually the taxes on the lots were higher than the price Jouke could sell them for, so he let the city take them over

In 1915 Jouke filed on the NE 20-61-3-5 in Neerlandia and let the other quarter go. He paid fifty dollars for the improvements on the [illegible] it, so the Bakers moved their belongings in with the intent of homesteading in earnest But this house with its contents burned down, so Jouke decided to stay in Edmonton to work and have Albert Mast build another house for him

In 1917 Jouke and Aaltje were ready to move to the promised land. In preparation, a team of ponies, a light wagon with two-inch-rimmed wheels, and a harness had been bought, all for three hundred dollars. On the wagon they packed a pump organ, a cookstove, bedsteads, bedsprings, tools, clothing, groceries, and [illegible] much too light for such a load, but Jouke had no idea what to look for in regards to horses. The trip took them five or six days. Aaltje drove the ponies because she was better with animals Besides, Jouke had a weak shoulder and could not raise it up, making it difficult to guide the reins. It was the beginning of April and the frost was coming out of the ground. Jouke walked alongside the wagon and George and Minnie sometimes joined him. Many times, the [illegible] could not pull the wagon out of a mud [illegible] of total exhaustion. Then Jouke would have to ask a nearby farmer to come with a team of horses to pull them out. When Jouke saw the team of big grey Percherons one farmer owned, he realized what kind of horses he ought to have purchased

When they stopped at night the cook stove [illegible] would cook a meal and also extra food for the day ahead. When they reached Neerlandia they first stayed at Koop Mast's place. Koop lent them a team of oxen to move their goods to the homestead. The trail was tough, with sloughs [illegible] powerful but slow, so Jouke told Aaltje to drive [illegible] ahead to start a fire and make some tea After some time he became concerned because the ox team had not arrived, so he went to investigate and found the oxen lying down in a mud hole, resting and contentedly chewing their cud After using a not-so-gentle persuader, they got home

[illegible] (Catharina) was born. Before her birth, Aaltje, when she knew it was time walked from the homestead to her mother's place. Along the [illegible] Aaltje's mother, being a midwife, helped deliver the baby

At that time the price for grain was good. [illegible] to sell. Therefore, the first task was to get the land ready for cultivation They also needed some livestock, which they soon obtained Jouke and Aaltje cut hay from around the lakes and sloughs for winter feed. They encouraged each other so that the land of promise became the land of promises In the summer they spent their time clearing and doing whatever else had to be done In the winter Jouke went to Edmonton to work in the shop, leaving Aaltje and the [illegible] stock, which was not an easy task For firewood George would chop down a tree and drag it to the house using a horse After cutting it into six or eight-foot lengths, he took the wood into the kitchen There Minnie would have to sit on one end of a log and Aaltje would hold the other end so it would not roll, while George sawed it [illegible]

During the winter of 1918 Jouke worked in Edmonton again. Besides helping with chores, George and Minnie would bring butter and eggs to Kampnar's store and exchange them for [illegible] the flu epidemic Because they feared contamination, the authorities allowed no one to mail letters, and the Post Office was closed Aaltje did not hear from Jouke for many weeks Reports were that in the city many had died from the flu, and Aaltje had no way of knowing if Jouke was alright. One day when George and Minnie came to the store with some butter, Bertha Kampnar told them that their father had phoned just five minutes earlier to say that he was doing well. George and Minnie hurried [illegible] statically happy, as they expected, she burst [illegible] flu, but when he returned in May the rest of the family caught a bout of it.

The following winter (1919) Jouke again worked at Nickel Brothers machine shop. On the homestead, there were six cows and six horses to care for. Each day it was George's task to take the animals to the muskeg one-half mile east to water them. Jouke had put up a considerable amount of lake hay for winter feed. He thought it was red top hay, but it was actually blue joint wild hay, which has no food value. Aaltje and George would pack the mangers [illegible] when they checked the animals before going to bed, the mangers would be empty and have to be refilled. None of the livestock died that winter, but in the spring two cows died after calving.

Another son, **Charles** (Karel) was born March 30, 1920. That fall Jouke left to work in Edmonton for the fourth winter in a row. In 1921 Jouke moved the family back to Edmonton, where he was still working in the machine shop. While there he bought a good bungalow home and got clear title to it. On November 17, 1923, **Magdalena** was born, a wee twerp of three pounds. In 1924 Beppe Mast, who was suffering from cancer, came to live with the family until her passing away in 1925.

In the spring of 1926 Jouke moved the family back to Neerlandia, this time to stay. By 1928 they had about one hundred acres under cultivation, and Jouke's favourite expression became, "Wait until the second crop from one hundred acres, then we can do this or that." In the fall of 1929 he had a good crop. Wheat was one dollar a bushel, but by spring it was sixty cents and later that year it went down to sixteen cents a bushel.

As the Depression got worse, people found [illegible] sheep, and the German women from nearby districts took wool on a fifty-fifty basis. They carded and spun the dirty, oily wool, then paid for it by giving Jouke half the yarn. Well, after

[illegible] plowing, [illegible]

Aaltje washed the first sweater she had knitted from this wool, it came down to the knees and past the fingertips — and the socks would have fit a kangaroo! The women soon learned from their mistake and washed the wool before selling it. To make clothing, Aaltje would get flour [illegible] or other things for the family. For purple dye [illegible] needed red colouring, she used the reddish cluster from Strawberry Blite. She would save onion skins and boil them to produce a yellow-orange dye.

In 1931 or 1932 Aaltje became desperately sick with an acutely infected gall bladder and went to Edmonton to see a doctor. He told her there was nothing to do but go home and wait for the end. She went to another doctor, however, who consulted a specialist, and they decided to operate. After a lengthy convalescence, Aaltje recovered. The specialist's bill was twenty-five dollars and Jouke made an agreement with him to settle for two dressed lambs. The doctor took Jouke's house in Edmonton for payment.

As things got worse, everyone had to adjust. All produce was sold to get the money to [illegible] tea, coffee, and sugar. At first Jouke smoked dried sweet clover but later, to keep peace in the family, he turned to leaf tobacco. Vegetables, potatoes, and tallow gravy were common fare

Most of the tallow had to be scraped out of the mouth afterwards. Without money one soon learned to barter. Jouke grew many vegetables, which he sold to the government relief camp on Siebren Tiemstra's place. Green peas were brought to Morneault's grocery store in Barrhead in trade for tobacco. (A sixty-pound bag of dried peas sold for about three dollars.) It was possible to trade a can of tobacco for lumber with the millworkers, who took their pay in lumber. George kept the family supplied with wild meat such as moose, deer, and prairie chicken.

Aaltje was a brave woman who would take on anything in the way of first aid. She would tend to some bad cuts and bruises and if someone had to go to the doctor she would first put splints or bandages on the injury. If people were sick or epileptic, she would help them too. For many years she served as midwife and, according to her records, she attended 111 birthings. She was also a great help with the livestock.

Jouke's greatest asset was his ability to walk. When he worked in Edmonton he used to walk to Neerlandia to visit the family. Later he served as councillor on the Municipal District of Shoal Creek and walked to the meetings, which were held in Shoal Creek. He would take a lantern to light the path, and the dog for company. Later he served in the consistory, store board, and school board. To those meetings or when going to church services, he always walked. He had a difficult time handling horses and never did ride one.

Things remained quite difficult through the 1930s, and no doubt Jouke and Aaltje sometimes wondered if this was the promised land. In 1939 war was declared, and that added to their anxiety for the sons that would be called up to serve in the armed forces. Things did get better financially. They stayed on the farm until 1944, when they moved to the hamlet of Neerlandia.

All the children had left home by that time. George Baker married Georgine Steddick of Strome in 1945. Minnie had married Aebe Plantinga in 1932, and Charlie had married Betty de Jong in 1944.

Kay, after completing grade ten, continued her education later at Alberta College, attending classes in bookkeeping and secretarial work. She first obtained a position with the

Charlie, Kay, Minnie, Alice, Joseph, George, Lena, 1954.

Provincial Auditor's Department, then in the late forties became secretary-treasurer of the Barrhead School Division. She married Earl Anderson of Barrhead in 1952. They had two daughters. Kay died in February 1965 of complications resulting from a congenital heart defect.

Magdalena, after graduating, went to Normal School in Edmonton for one year. After teaching for three years in Neerlandia, she taught in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, and Kalamazoo, Michigan, then returned to Canada and taught in Edmonton. She retired in 1984, but is involved in various church activities.

Alice, Joseph, [illegible]

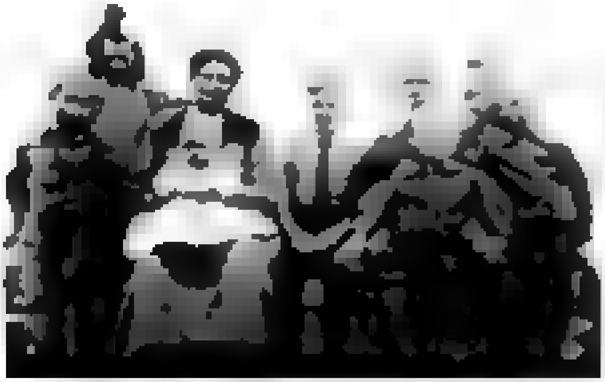
Jouke and Aaltje enjoyed a lengthy and, for the most part, healthy retirement. Aaltje died November 8, 1965, and Jouke died May 4, 1966, both at 79 years of age.

Charles Baker

FREDERICK AND MAGGIE (BODE) BARON

Fred (Foppe) Baron was born April 21, 1858, in de Wilp, Groningen, the Netherlands. He immigrated to the U.S.A. in later years and married Maggie Bode (June 3, 1875) on December 14, 1894. They first lived in South Holland, Illinois, but soon moved to Montana with their children **John** (Jan, September 12, 1896), **Lizzie** (Elizabeth, December 9, 1899), **Hendrik** (November 11, 1901), and **Rikkie** (December 17, 1903). After a year they moved to Edmonton [illegible]

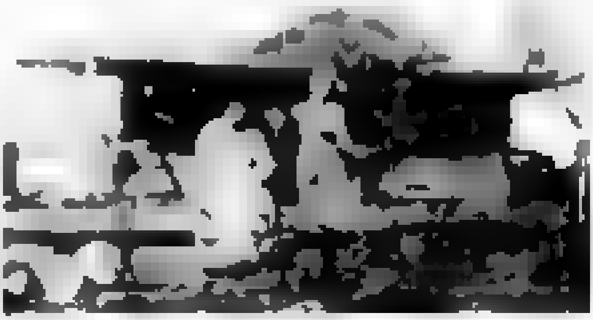
Fred first found work in the coal mines in Edmonton and later in a meat packing plant. The family lived in the Parkdale area of the city. Fred was instrumental in organizing the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton and was elected as one of the elders of the newly formed congregation. That same day (October 21, 1910) the three Baron children who had been born in Edmonton were baptized: **Elsa Geertje** (May 14, 1906), **Bill** (Wybe, October 1, 1908), and **Bennie** (Barend, December 30, 1909). Two years later another son, **James** (Jannes), was born (July 10, 1912).



Bennie, Rikkie, Maggie holding Lawrence, Henry, Fred with James, Gertie, Willie. 1914

Fred had taken out the SE 15-62-3-5 as a homestead on December 20, 1911, but let that quarter go and filed on the SE 16-62-3-5 on April 25, 1913. He built a 22 by 30-foot log house in January 1914, but the family did not move there until March 1915. Another son, **Lawrence** (Floris), was born December 24, 1915.

John Baron took out the SW 16-61-3-5 in 1914. During World War I he served in the American army from March 1918 to August 1919. Although he lived with his father, he made improvements to his homestead — he built a log house and a stable, dug a well, and put up some fencing. He also kept livestock; by 1920 he had seventeen cattle and six horses. He only cleared five acres though, and never cropped any of the land.



On the homestead, Maggie and the children

Fred Baron applied for the patent to his homestead in September 1920. According to the records he was cropping eight-and-a-half acres and had seven acres brushed. He owned sixteen cattle and three horses. Besides the house, he had built two log barns and put up a one-and-a-half mile fence made of poles.

Gertie, Rikkie, Lawrence

While they lived in Neerlandia, Bill and Bennie ran a trapline for muskrats. Sometimes they also caught mink and weasels. One year they made $300.00 from the sale of the pelts. North of the Baron place there was a large section of muskeg. When the family walked to church their footwear would get soaked from the wet trails.

In the fall or winter in 1920 the Baron family moved to Minnesota, U.S.A. They had a time auction to sell everything on their place — even the lumber off the roof of the house. After six years the Barons moved to California. Maggie died August 1, 1927, and Fred died in June 1935.

Ben Baron
John Sanney

HARRY AND HATTIE (SWAFFIELD) BEAUMONT

Harry Beaumont had been born (c. 1888) in Yorkshire, England, and was a toolmaker by trade. He moved with his wife, Hattie, from Cleveland, Ohio, to Edmonton around 1913. On March 28, 1913, he filed on the NW 28-61-3-5. The same day, he filed by proxy on nearby quarters for his father, **Henry** (c. 1857), and brothers **John** (c. 1886), **Clarence** (c. 1890) and **Earle** (c. 1892), who all lived in Cleveland.

Harry and Hattie moved to the homestead in April and the others soon moved to Neerlandia as well. Earle and Clarence lived with their parents on their homestead until they returned to Cleveland about a year later. In early 1915, Earle also left for Cleveland, having cleared about six acres on his homestead. Clarence also left Neerlandia during those years.

John and his wife, Edna, came to the homestead with their two-year old child in August 1913. They moved to London, Ontario, in March 1915. John listed the following improvements on his declaration of abandonment: "1 House, 1 Barn, 1 Water closet, 1 cribbed well, 1 chicken house, 1 rabbit tight fence around kitchen garden . . ."

Harry and Hattie continued living on the homestead until 1917, when Harry obtained the patent to it. He had cleared eighteen acres and built a log and lumber house, two hen houses, and a log barn. He had dug a well and put up two miles of fence. Hattie was a delicate woman and the homesteading life was too vigorous for her, so the Beaumonts moved to London, Ontario, with their son **Ralph**.

GEORGE AND CHRISTINA (MACKENZIE) CAUGHLIN

When George Caughlin came to the wild bush country of northern Alberta around 1911, there were already homesteaders living in Mellowdale but the rest of Township 61 was untouched by axe or grubhoe. George had [illegible] the third son in an Irish immigrant family of nine children. He had learned farming on the family farm and was also trained in carpentry, as his father had insisted that all his sons should know how to build a house. George loved the wilds and had spent much time hunting as he was growing up.

George came to northern Alberta with a friend, George Wing, who was also skilled in trapping and hunting. They both filed for homesteads on May 13, 1911, George Caughlin [illegible] next to his. That fall they each built a log house on the north corners of their homesteads so the cabins would be close together. George's maternal uncle, Tom Lewis, later took up the quarter just north of Wing's, and his log house was built on the southeast corner, so all these houses were on adjoining corners.

The three bachelors often went trapping and hunting in the area. George built a narrow [illegible] and [illegible] to take the freshly-killed game out of the bush. When the Dutch people came to the area, George helped many of them become skilled in hunting and trapping in the woods. Except for [illegible] people could not speak English.

Every spring and summer, George worked [illegible] winter, he often left to work elsewhere. For two winters, he worked in Vancouver as a carpenter at Caughlin Shipyards, which was owned by relatives of his.

George did not mind baching at all; he could cook and bake bread as well as any woman. One of George's brothers lived in Vancouver and in 1913 George went there to stand as best man for him. One of the bridesmaids at the wedding, Tina (Christina) MacKenzie, got George to thinking of marriage as well. After a courtship of two years, they were married December 16, 1915, in Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary. They went East after the wedding to

Tina, George, 1915

introduce Tina to George's family and spent their honeymoon at Niagara Falls.

Tina had been born May 22, 1880, in Tigh-na-mara, Ross-shire, Scotland. She was a nurse, and had also trained in Belgium as a chef. Since there was not much employment in England, she had come to Canada. After nursing in Hamilton, Ontario, she had gone to Vancouver, where one of her brothers lived.

When George and Tina came to the homestead, they lived first in the small sod log house, although George had begun building a new one. The new house was 16 by 22-feet, two storeys high, and had a shingled roof.

Tina had never lived on a farm before, so homesteading was quite an experience for her. George, by this time, had one riding horse as well as two work horses. Tina, however, did not know a thing about horses and never did learn to ride one. Later George began breeding horses, something his father and grandfather had also done. Once, after he had sold a few horses, he bought Tina a pretty little gold brooch with part of the proceeds.

George was tall and slim, smoothly-shaven, and had light brown hair. He was a great reader and took many courses to further his knowledge. One of his hobbies was photography; he developed the photos himself in enamel developing trays. George was also good at playing the Jew's harp.

Tina was much shorter than George. She had heavy red hair that was long enough for her to sit on. She always parted her hair in the centre, either putting it up in a bun or plaiting it into two thick braids and wrapping them around her head twice, securing them with bone hairpins. Tina was a warm, happy, outgoing woman, always calm. She loved to bake, and would often bring baked goods to George Wing or Uncle Tom Lewis, who had moved to Mellowdale by that time. Though she was an accomplished chef, George had to teach her how to make bread. Tina had taken a portable Singer along to the homestead. George built a stand with drawers for it and also converted it so it could be used with a treadle instead of a hand-crank.

In the winter of 1916, George went to work in a box factory in Edmonton. Since George never left Tina alone on the homestead when he was working out, she went along. That winter on December 10, a daughter **Isabelle** Christina Sarah Ann, was born to them in the Royal Alexandra Hospital.

The following spring, after they returned to the homestead, George applied for the patent to his land. Besides their house, he had built a log stable and chicken coop, was cropping fifteen acres of land and had five more broken and had also put up a 180-rod rail fence. After inspection, the patent was granted.

Each year, Tina put in a garden to provide vegetables for the family. She loved the wild strawberries that could be found in the woods nearby and often went blueberry picking. The family always had plenty of wild meat to eat, and one year they butchered a steer. The only time Tina ever complained about life on the homestead was after one incident when George and Wing had gone away for the day. Tina was home with Isabelle when a grass fire came right to the edge of the buildings before burning itself out, a terrifying experience for Tina.

Isabelle was George and Tina's joy, even though Tina was kept busy watching that Isabelle did not get into trouble. Tina had to lock the drawers on the sewing cabinet so Isabelle could not get into them. Isabelle loved to pester their big dog Blue, who on one occasion picked her up by the hair and brought her to Tina, dumping her at Tina's feet. During the summer of 1919 there was an epidemic of whooping cough, and Tina caught it. The doctor thought Isabelle had it too since she would whoop right after Tina did. However, Isabelle would also laugh immediately afterward — she had found out that she could imitate her mother!

Isabelle 1919

In the winter of 1917 George and Tina, with Isabelle, went to Vancouver since George had work there. The following winter the Caughlins went on a cruise to Hawaii as guests of the captain, who knew Tina's brother. Albert Christ, a bachelor from Mellowdale, usually took care of the horses when George was gone. In 1919, when the Caughlins returned to the homestead, they found their house had been broken into. Most of Tina's good silver, a wedding gift from the family, was gone as well as her good set of china. Her sewing machine was taken, the drawers on the stand had been broken open, and some pieces of fabric that she had intended to sew up were stolen as well. The mattress on the bed had been cut open as had a dark velvet pincushion on which Tina had done some cross-stitching.

George Wong would often stop by the Caughlin house late in the day and, after some casual conversation, would reach into a back pocket and pull out a piece of liver or some other choice part of an animal he had killed. The Caughlins visited often with Uncle Tom Lewis and George's maternal aunt Belle, and her husband, Wellington Trigger, who lived in Mellowdale as well.

One hot Sunday morning, September 5, 1920, George hitched up the wagon and he, Tina, and Isabelle left for Uncle Tom's, who had invited them to come over that day. They arrived at Tom's place before noon and Tina offered to cook dinner. Tom had a forty-five-foot dry well in his yard where he kept meat and dairy products, so George and Tina walked there with him since he wanted to get some meat up to use for dinner. Tom had rigged up a windlass on the well and was pulling up the meat that was in a bucket at the end of some cord when the cord broke. Tom went down a ladder which was on one side of the well but, unknown to Tina and George, fell when one of the rungs near the bottom broke. When Tom did not come up, George went down to get him. Meanwhile Tina went to the house, but soon returned. When George did not answer her call, she decided to go for help. She first ran across the road to the Davis homestead, where there was a store and a phone. No one was home so Tina went half-running, half-walking, dragging Isabelle along with her, to several other places, but no one was home until she came to Albert Christ's house. He was baking bread loaves but since they were nearly done he took them out of the oven and then left on the run for the Lewis homestead. Tina continued on and asked twelve-year old Herbert Klabunde to go for help also. He notified Jimmy Fowler, George Heileman, and George Kemp, who all arrived at the homestead at about three o'clock. Albert Christ had gone into the well, but had not come up either. Jimmy lowered a lantern into the well, but it went out at about fifteen feet, indicating that there was gas in the well. The men tied up a bundle of hay and burned it with a rope in the well to remove the gas. Then Jimmy went down and found the three men dead. They had all died from inhaling the gas in the well, a gas the old-timers called "black damp." The bodies were brought up using the windlass and a few days later all three were buried in the same grave in the Mellowdale cemetery. George had been thirty-nine years old.

Tina and Isabelle left Neerlandia soon after. They moved to Vancouver, where two of Tina's

brothers and some of George's relatives were living. There she worked as a nurse-housekeeper. Later she owned a rooming house [illegible] to Tom Wilson and Albert Scott, then sold it to Douwe Terpsma in 1926. Tina died in 1963, at 87 years of age. Isabelle wrote, "My father never [illegible] but from my mother and from his Aunt Bessie Trigger, I know he was happy there. Had he [illegible]

Isabelle Spouse

WILLEM AND HENDRIKA (BLOM) DE GROOT

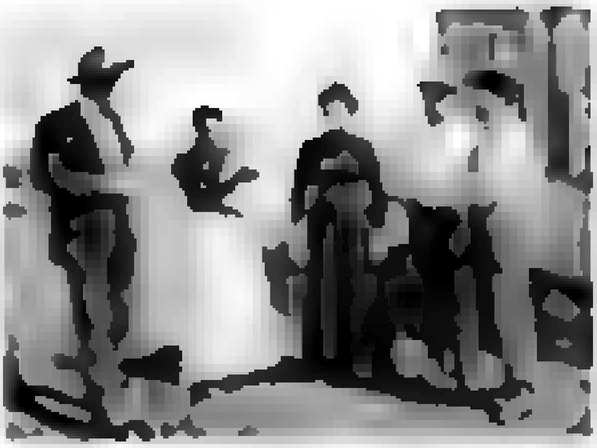
Willem de Groot was born December 1, 1851 in Oldebroek, Gelderland, the Netherlands. He was a widower with six children when he married Hendrika Blom on April 25, 1890. Hendrika had been born February 26, 1849, in Apeldoorn. Her first husband, Jan Wonink, had died of tuberculosis. They had a family of three or more children. A daughter, Manna (Gerritdina Hermanna) was born to Willem and Hendrika on December 3, 1892.

In 1912 Willem, Hendrika, and Manna immigrated to Canada aboard the *Corsican*. Two of Hendrika's children (daughters) had died of tuberculosis, but another daughter, Wip (Willemina), came with them as well as some of Manna's cousins (de Groots). They travelled third class, but Manna would go on the first class deck and mingle with the people. She could get away with it because of her beauty and nerve.

The de Groots went to Edmonton where Wip's sweetheart, Jacob Visser, was living. She and Jacob were married that same year. The de Groots lived in Fraser Flats while in Edmonton. Hendrika was an aunt to Aaltje Olthuis, who also lived there.

In 1914 Willem took up the NW 27-61-3-5 as a homestead. He built a 16 by 24-foot log house on it and he and Hendrika moved there in the fall. Manna stayed in Edmonton to work and married Willem van Ark. They moved to Neerlandia in 1916.

The land on the homestead had to be cleared, and Willem often had Hendrika help him. At times she would have to pull on the rope winch while Willem chopped at a stump to get it out. They did clear enough acres that by 1921 Willem was able to obtain the patent to his



Bill van Ark, Hendrika holding Gertrude Visser, Wip Visser, Willem, Jacob Visser.

land. Over seven acres were being cropped and [illegible] sheep, and two hogs. He had built an addition onto the log house, a hen house, and three-and-a-half miles of pole fencing. A sixteen-foot cribbed well had also been dug.

Soon after receiving the title to his land, Willem sold it to Klaas Tuininga, who wanted to move closer to school. Willem moved onto Emmerzael's quarter and built a house near the southeast corner.

Willem was from the *Gereformeerde Kerk* and held the views of those of the *Doleantie*. He often visited Klaas Tuininga, who was like-minded. The Tuininga children brought milk to the de Groots and when they came, Willem would give each of the children — Annie or Simon — a lump of brown sugar as a treat.

Willem never learned to speak English. He knew how to say 'hello' and 'good-bye', but got the two words mixed-up and said them at the wrong times. He became upset when he saw one of the schoolteachers, Jean Carlyle, who was boarding with the Tuiningas, crocheting on [illegible] not tell her so.

Hendrika died in 1923 or 1924. Some years later, Willem left Neerlandia. He moved back to the Netherlands where his daughter Manna had moved with her family.

RIENTS DE JAGER

Rients de Jager, a single man, was among the first group of Dutchmen that took up homesteads in Township 61 and 62 on December 18,

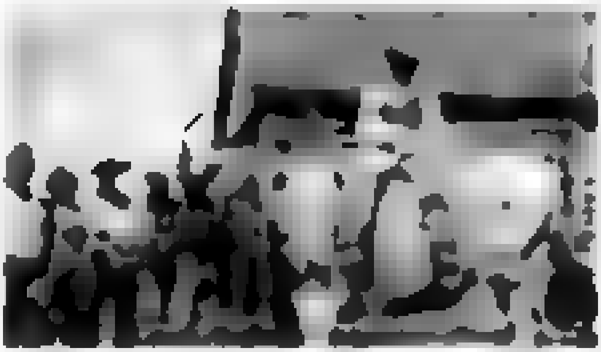
1911. He had been born December 30, 1880, in Spannum, Friesland, the Netherlands, and baptized in the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*. He was working in South Holland when he decided to emigrate, coming to Edmonton. There he found a job at Swift's Packing Plant where other Dutchmen were also working.

Rienk, as everyone called him, filed on the SW 34-61-3-5. He built a log house there in early 1912, but did not take up residence until March 1913. With the help of the two oxen he had brought along, Rienk began to prove up the land. He broke three acres that first year and put two of them in crop. Rienk, like many of the other early settlers here, was not experienced in all aspects of farming. When he first seeded grain, he moved from spot to spot on the clear- [illegible] he were feeding chickens. The grain grew [illegible] rect way — a brisk walk across the field with the grain thrown up high into the air. After he had harvested his few acres of crop that first fall, Rienk went to work in the harvest in Saskatchewan, but returned in the new year.

Rienk made enough improvements to his land that by 1917 he could receive the patent to it. By then he had built a 14 by 18-foot stable, a 12 by 16-foot shack, a chicken house, and a hog pen. He had dug a 19-foot well and put up two [illegible] had been broken but he was cropping only ten. Rienk also owned five cattle by that time.

Rienk's favourite animal was his part-Ayrshire ox. It was one of the nicest oxen in the settlement, a beautiful animal with a big pair of curved horns. That ox, with its partner, formed a team that was known among the settlers for its laziness. The following story was often told about them: After the church was built the men [illegible] land on the churchyard. One time Rienk and [illegible] stumps on the clearing. The oxen pulled and [illegible] Rienk, they hitched the oxen up to a stump that was loose. Again the oxen leaned forward, appearing to exert all their strength, but they [illegible] great amusement, walked up to the stump and pushed it over by themselves.

Many Neerlandia people were sick with the flu during the 1918 epidemic. Rienk was one of the few people who did not come down with it. He did chores for many others who were sick. During the next winter a Vega bachelor, James [illegible] cemetery. After watching the burial, at which only three men were present, Rienk commented, "So now I see how they bury a bachelor."



Rienk sitting on his favourite ox during a break while clearing the church grounds, 1918. John Amema, Klaas Tuininga Jr. Peter Kempner Jr. beside the ox. Siebren Tiemstra behind the ox.

In the early twenties, when many Neerlandia farmers began using horses instead of oxen, Rienk bought a pair of mares. Then with the help of some neighbours, he butchered his favourite ox. Later Rienk went to help a neighbour butcher his milk cow. He took along his 12 [illegible] bour wanted to get one last milking from the cow. Rienk waited while it was being milked, then finally asked "*Ben' je klaar?* (Are you finished?)" When the answer "yes" came from under the cow, Rienk immediately took aim and shot. Down fell the cow, right beside its owner, who in alarm said, "*Man, je kun mij ook geschieten hebben!* (You could have shot me too!)"

Rienk was dark-skinned, had dark hair, and wore a mustache. He always limped, the result of an open sore on his thigh caused by tuberculosis. He kept the spot bandaged and had to [illegible] was a meticulous person. He kept himself neatly dressed, and his house was always clean and tidy.

The house was a cozy place with a wood-burning cook stove and a heater in the big living area, pictures on the walls, and curtains in front of the windows. The kitchen table was covered with an oilcloth that had a design of berries on it. Rienk would often say to a young visitor, "You're probably wishing that was real fruit on the table, heh?" Besides the living area there was a small bedroom downstairs and an extra bed up in the loft. Rienk did all the household chores himself. He churned butter; baked bread, cookies, and cakes; and kept a garden in summer to provide vegetables for himself. For fresh meat, he sometimes went hunting near the slough on the south of his quarter. There he would wait behind nearby trees to see if he could shoot a meal of wild duck. Rienk also washed his own clothes, although he brought his Sunday shirt to Petertje Schoonekamp. He mended his clothes over and over until there was patch upon patch.

Rienk was a quiet, reserved fellow, yet sociable. He often visited his neighbours, the Schoonekamps, for morning coffee. Whenever one of the Schoonekamp children had a birthday, he brought a gift — sometimes a homemade one. One day he brought Rinie a chest of drawers: four matchboxes glued together, covered with wallpaper, and buttons on them for drawer pulls. Rienk also visited the Joe Baker family. During the winters that Joe worked in Edmonton, Rienk would sometimes help George and Minnie Baker with the chores, such as chopping down trees for firewood. When the Klaas Tuiningas moved to the quarter south of Rienk's in the late twenties, Rienk enjoyed going there and speaking *Fries* (Rienk never did learn to speak much English). Of the Tuininga children, Annie was his favourite. Annie

Some men of the community posing for a photo on the First of July, c. 1922. 1. Rienk de Jager, 2. Klaas Krikke, 3. Pete Tuininga, 4. Joe Hofwerda, 5. C. K. Mast, 6. John Oldegbers, 7. Popko Schuring, 8. Dave Tuininga, 9. Douwe Terpstra, 10. Hendrik Schoonekamp, 11. Pier Krikke, 12. Pete Louws, 13. John Louws, 14. Jan Anema, 15. Toney Stuntvold, 16. Jacob Offinga, 17. Case Ingwersen, 18. Albert Ritsema, 19. Willem van Ark, 20. Ben Lievers, 21. Henry Kuipers.

loved cornflakes, but her family could not afford to buy them. For her fifteenth birthday, though, Rienk brought her three skeins of embroidery cotton and a box of cornflakes

Through socializing with friends and attendance at church, Rienk kept close tabs on the current affairs in the community: which men were back from the harvest, which woman was expecting a child, and who had purchased something new. Rienk also faithfully read the Dutch papers that he received, thus keeping himself current on other matters as well

Being a thrifty person, Rienk watched his money carefully. He tried to save a bit of money from his weekly cream cheque, and once it was put away he would wait until the next cream cheque before he gave out any cash. One time, after asking a young woman to wash the curtains in his house, he paid her with some sugar sacks (which were used to make embroidered dresser runners). When he paid someone wages, he was concerned that the recipient spend the money wisely. It seems that one time, after writing a letter to his sister in Friesland, he put the letter in an envelope addressed to the bank and money in the envelope addressed to his sister. Discovering the mix-up too late, Rienk was upset. Others, however, said it must have been the Lord's will since his sister needed the money

There were not many eligible single women [illegible] jokingly say, "If I could only order one of those women in the Eaton's catalogue . . ." Being alone on the homestead, it was difficult to remember which day of the week it was. To keep track, he would put a check mark on the calender each day. One Sunday morning Klaas Tuininga stopped at Rienk's before church and, to [illegible] and heating his Saturday meal of *erwtensoep* on the stove. Gaele Baker sometimes stayed at Rienk's for Sunday dinner, since Gaele always walked to church services and Rienk suggested he stay there between services instead. After one morning service Gaele found Rienk busy kneading bread dough. Gaele asked, "Are you doing your work on Sunday?" In spite of it being Sunday, the bread was most likely baked anyhow

When the threshing crew came to Rienk's, though, he did not do the cooking and baking, but sent for Peterje Schoonekamp and her daughters to do it instead

In 1927 Rienk made a trip to Friesland to visit his sister. When he returned he brought gifts for his friends, including a rubber ball for baby Stewart Plantinga. About two years later a son of Rienk's sisters, **Ima Jongsma**, wanting to see something of the world, came to visit Rienk. Ima was still a young fellow, and Rienk [illegible] with him, he could eventually take over the farm. But Ima stayed only about two years, and then went back to the Netherlands. He did not like this country . . . there were too many trees to suit him and, if it was part of the world, it was certainly the backward end of it

The sore on his leg continually bothered Rienk. He never rode his horses, and when he was on the wagon or cutter, he went on his knees to ride instead of sitting. In the early thirties he hired one of Albert Mast's boys, Carl, to help him during the spring and summer. Carl helped him put in the crops and did the tasks that were more difficult for Rienk, such as walking behind the harrows

The ill effects of the tuberculosis increased [illegible] after stepping over a fence onto ice, causing [illegible] Arie Emmerzael to do the chores and his [illegible] Still keeping a watchful eye, Rienk had Annie wash the cream separator outside so the kitchen floor would not get wet. Rienk, now fifty-six years old, was more reticent when women were around, but later that year, on his birthday, when Annie came to haul water from his well, he told her to go inside the house. He had some hot chocolate and a piece of cake for Annie

In January 1938 Annie again came to help [illegible] went to the hospital in Barrhead and was transferred later to an Edmonton hospital. He died there on September 4, 1938, and was buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. There was quite a crowd of people at the funeral service. C. K. Mast, Jan Koning, and Klaas Tuininga were executors of the estate. Joe Baker bought the farm and everything else was auctioned off. The money was supposed to be sent to Rienk's relatives in the Netherlands, but the war had begun in Europe by then and the Canadian

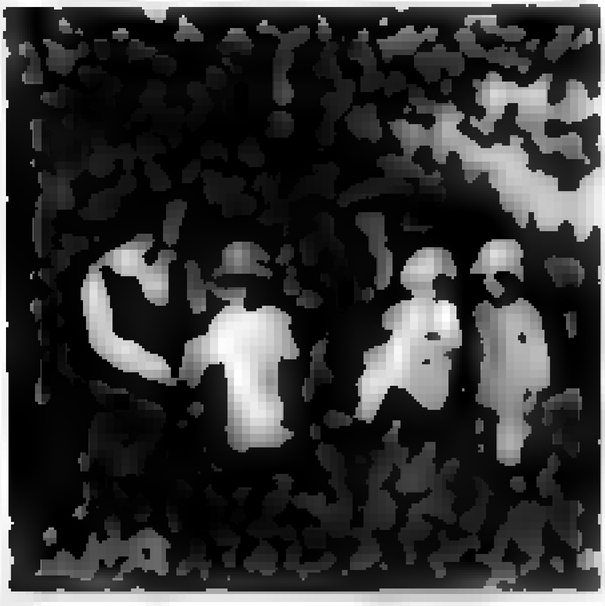
Government would not send money overseas so it seems the money never was sent

ARIE AND MARTHA (VAN DALEN) EMMERZAEL

Arie Emmerzael came to Edmonton in May 1911 as a single man. He had been born October 5, 1878, in Vierpolders, South Holland, the Netherlands. Before coming to Canada, he had worked in a laundry. At the time he decided to immigrate, he was working in Germany and some German acquaintances made the trip to Edmonton with him.

On February 6, 1913, Arie paid the ten-dollar fee and filed on the NE 28-61-3-5. He was among the first Dutch settlers in the area later known as Neerlandia. He had a 16 by 18-foot log house built for himself and worked to prove up the homestead. Every fall, he left to go out working in Edmonton or southern Alberta, usually returning in the early spring of the new year.

After Arie had been in Neerlandia for some time, he met Martha van Dalen. They were married January 20, 1918, in the log church in Neerlandia with Rev. Jongbloed of Edmonton officiating. Children were soon born into the family: **Annie** (Aartje, January 13, 1919), **Peter** (Pieter, February 19, 1920), and **Helen** (Hilli- [illegible] help of midwife Johanna Oldegbers.



[illegible]

Arie received the patent for his homestead in 1922. According to the records, he was cropping twelve acres and had five head of cattle. Besides a log house, he had a log stable, a hen house, and one-and-a-half miles of rail fencing. It was noted that the twelve-foot cribbed well was in quicksand. All these improvements were valued at $700.00. Earlier, in 1917, Arie had given two acres of his quarter to the Shoal [illegible] school site was "32 rods long, 10 rods wide — 1029 feet South of the NE corner."

[illegible] had been [illegible] came for their aging parents, the van Da- [illegible] U.S.A. Arie and Martha moved into the Schuring house so that they could take care of her parents. In those years Arie farmed both the Schuring quarter and his own, as well as often working on the prairies in the fall.

[illegible] more children were born to Arie and Martha: **Leonard** (Leendert) on February 3, 1925, and **William** on December 23, 1926. Both those times, Petertje Schoonekamp came to help with the births. The year after William was born, Arie again went to Nobleford to work. While Arie was gone, William took sick one Sunday. Martha immediately sent a message to Arie, but William died on Wednesday (October 19, 1927) before Arie returned home. Arie did not come home until Friday evening, so the burial was on Saturday. Menne Nanninga made the coffin.

Another incident almost led them to believe they had lost another son. Arie would let his cattle out to graze during the day. They would wander out to the east and usually came home at night on their own. One Friday night, however, in 1928 or 1929, the cattle did not come home. The next morning Martha sent Pete to look for them. Pete took along their dog Bobby and headed east. It was an overcast day and, though he eventually found the cattle, Pete became hopelessly lost. The cows refused to go in the direction he herded them, so he finally decided to leave them and go home to get his dad's help. Meanwhile Arie and Martha were getting worried and, towards evening when Pete still had not come home, they began looking for him. Martha went as far as Wiscarson's but was unable to find a trace of Pete or the dog. She feared that Pete might have drowned in a slough. They hunted until midnight, and the next morning John Kuppers went on horseback to the Co-op store to call the RCMP to come out with a tracking dog. John also alerted the people at church, where the service was to begin shortly. The men decided to search in groups and, if Pete was found, to fire gunshots.

The evening before, Pete had wandered north, and he and the dog had spent the night beside a fire on a spot where some men had been clearing land. He woke up early the next morning and, after some more walking, found a farmstead (SW 26-62-3-5). It was about six o'clock and the farmer, Gregor Popatnig, was in bed. Gregor brought Pete to Julius Boman whom he thought might know where the Emmerzaels or their neighbours, the Kuppers family, lived. Julius did not know either, but he did know where Toney Sturwold lived. Pete knew how to get home from Sturwold's place. From there, he walked across the quarter to his folk's place. The group of men from the church had just arrived when he walked onto the yard. Bertus Bos was the first to see Pete and he fired off the shots, ending the search.

Opoe van Dalen died in early 1929. Later that same year the Schurings sold their land. Arie's log house had burned, due to a change of wind direction while Arie was burning a straw pile, so the Emmerzaels and Opa van Dalen moved into van Ark's empty log house just north of Arie's quarter. Arie continued to crop on his own quarter while on van Ark's quarter he kept livestock - cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys.

Arie also owned a cayuse named Dolly, she had reddish-brown colouring and a black mane and tail. She was a gentle horse, although at times she could be quite stubborn. She was often used to bring the cows away to pasture on the quarter west of van Ark's. One day when Arie had Dolly hitched up in front of the potato cultivator for some work in the garden, she refused to move an inch. In frustration Arie finally hit her with a switch, but he happened to hit her in the wrong place: right behind her ears. She fell over unconscious, but having given Arie a proper scare, she came to after a while.

Among the turkeys running loose on the yard was one aggressive gobbler. The teacher, Mr. Dickson, who lived in the teacherage on the southeast corner of van Ark's quarter, had to pass the Emmerzael place on his way to and from school. The mean gobbler had an aversion to the red socks Mr. Dickson wore, and whenever the gobbler spotted them he would give chase and send the teacher on the run. Rev. Van Der Woude would come to visit Opa van Dalen wearing, as usual, his black felt hat. The gobbler did not like that hat either, and often the Reverend would come running into the house and say to Martha, "Missus, *waar heb je de* broom?" (Mrs., where do you have the broom?) He would then rush out with the broom and chase the gobbler away.

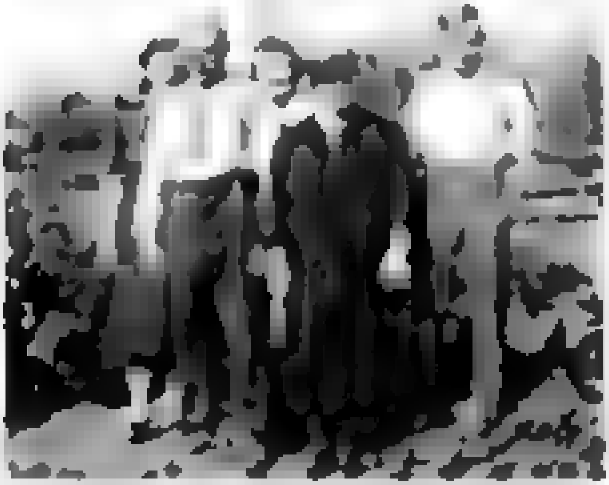
Peter, Opa, Leonard, 1931

Arie was a shy man. As he got older, he grew quite stout. Martha had always been stout. She loved to read, and borrowed Dutch and English books from Froukje Anema, who received boxes of books from her relatives, the Eerdmans. Martha also enjoyed knitting, and at night would often sit by the lamp, knitting and reading at the same time. She could sing well and taught the children many Dutch songs, as well as English ones such as "Old Black Joe" and "Tipperary".

As they grew older, the children did their share of the work — getting the cows, doing the milking, gathering eggs, and, in winter, sawing firewood for the stove.

Opa van Dalen died in 1932. During the hard times of the Depression Arie had his quarter. He began selling Dr. Bell's products around

1934. Dr Bell's products included spices, flavourings, feed additives, medicines for man and beast, and many salves and ointments. One of the medicines was Dr. Bell's Medical Wonder, an animal cure which sold for one dollar a bottle. It was a black liquid, good for colic in horses. The directions were to put it on the tongue — thirty drops for horses, five for dogs, and two for cats. One woman told Arie that she had even used it for herself! A medicine for humans was Anti-Pain Drops, also a black liquid, that had to be put in hot water and mixed with sugar. It was taken internally for stomach ailments or rubbed on externally for rheumatism. Arie bought a covered laundry wagon to use for selling the goods in summer, and in winter used a cutter. He went as far as Vega, Mellowdale and Pibroch, sometimes being gone for two weeks at a time. He would stay overnight at the homes of various customers. Later, Arie sold Christian literature from Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses. Psalters, commentaries, daily Bible calendars, and cards. He travelled with these through the Vega and Neerlandia area.



[illegible]

During the war years, the Emmerzael family experienced many changes. Pete was drafted into the army in 1941, Helen married Clarence Wierenga in 1942, and a year later Annie married Lucas Sturwold. After a short illness, Leonard died of cancer on January 5, 1944, at nineteen years of age. After the war, in 1947, Pete married Eva Gerritsen, whom he had met [illegible].

The Emmerzaels continued living in van Ark's log house, but in 1943, Arie bought the NE 31-61-3-5 from Adriaan Dieleman, and he and Martha moved there. Martha passed away December 31, 1950, at the age of 67. After her death, Arie bought Albert Reinsma's house. He moved it onto Pete and Eva's yard, and lived there until he passed away November 8, 1954.

Annie Sturwold

JOHN AND REKA (WICHERS) GELDERMAN

John (Jan) Willem Gelderman was born August 1, 1892, in Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands. As he grew older, he helped his father in the family bakery. Since there did not appear to be much of a future in the Netherlands for him or his parents, it was decided John would go to Canada and look for work. The plan was that he would then return to the Netherlands and prepare for a possible move to Canada with the rest of the family, [illegible] he remained in Canada for lack of money and never saw his parents again.

It was [illegible] when John and his cousin Jacob Visser immigrated to Canada. John was only 19, so Jacob was to keep a brotherly eye on him. They went to Edmonton where John's sister's fiancé, John Boer, and his brother, Jacob Boer, were already living. There John Gelderman had various jobs, including ones at the Hotel Macdonald and on the High Level Bridge.

In September 1911, John and the other three young men each took out a homestead in the [illegible] area. There John did logging. During one winter he did not receive any pay except his room and board. His homestead there was cancelled in 1913, but by that time he and his three companions had already returned to Edmonton. The following year, John and his cousin Jacob took out homesteads in Neerlandia. John filed on the NW 36-61-3-5 in September 1914. A month later he abandoned it, stating that it had too much muskeg.

The second homestead John took up in Neerlandia was the NE 35-61-3-5 on December 2, 1914. This one John began proving up, soon building a log house on it. But in 1916 he left for Granum where he and Bill Oldegbers worked as farmhands for William Williamson. That fall, John met Reka (Hendrika) Hermina Wichers, and later began courting her. Reka (born March 20, 1896) and her family had just immigrated from Nijverdal, Overijssel. She was the oldest of eight children. The Wichers had been advised by relatives in the Granum area to come to the good country of Canada. After they came Reka found work at her cousin's, William Williamson, doing housework. Later Reka worked for other families and John found work with an English couple who had no children. For the three years John worked for them he lived in with them and was treated as their son. While there he learned to speak English well.

John Gelderman, John Ebbers, Bill Oldegbers.

In September 1919 John returned to Neerlandia to work on the homestead. He bought five cattle and two horses and began clearing land. He also fixed up the log house putting in cupboards and making a table and a set of chairs. On July 1, 1920, John and Reka were married in Edmonton, since there was no minister in Neerlandia or Granum. Reka travelled from Nobleford by train while John went to Westlock by horse and wagon (which he left with a farmer) and then on to Edmonton by train. The wedding took place in the home of the minister, Rev. H. J. Ruys, and those present were John's brother Jacob, his sister Hendrika Boer, and her husband John. The reception was lunch at the Boers' home with some friends. After spending a few days in Edmonton, John and Reka left on their honeymoon to Neerlandia. Travelling with them was George Toebes, who was curious to see Neerlandia, Bill Oldegbers, who had a homestead in Neerlandia; and Hendrik de Groot, who wanted to visit his brother, Willem. In the morning they all caught the train to Westlock and from there they continued by horse and wagon. John and Reka camped overnight in the bush with the three men and a host of mosquitoes for company. They arrived in Neerlandia the following morning.

Some days later a reception was held for the newlyweds. Everyone in the settlement came. Among the gifts John and Reka received were a bread pan and a hen with chicks. These gifts came from people who had not much more to give than their help and kindness. The Young People's Society gave them a gas lamp.

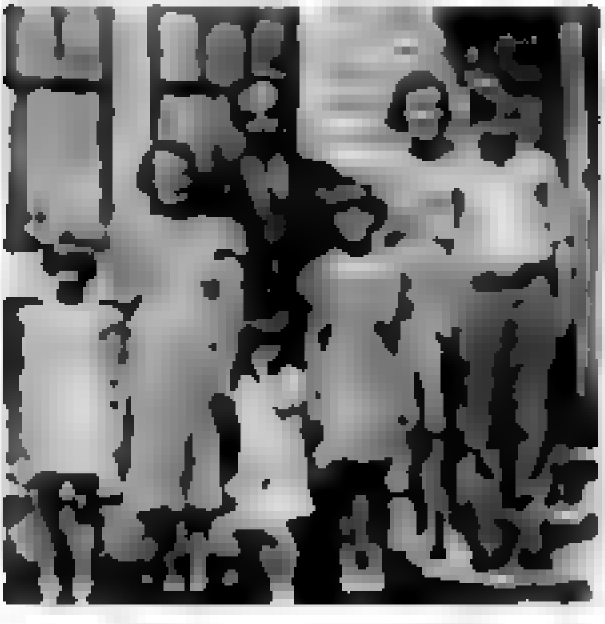
The year after he was married, John received the patent to his homestead. According

Reka, John, 1920.

to the records, by 1921 he had broken fifteen acres of land, was cropping nine acres, and had cleared twenty acres of meadow. The herd of cattle had increased to ten but his horse herd had decreased from three to two. Other un- [illegible] lumber house, a 20 by 30-foot log barn, an 18-foot well, and 1¾ miles of fencing.

In the early years of farming, life was diffi- [illegible] per year for seventeen years. It was thought that they died of swamp fever or from poison [illegible] grazed, since the horses kept at the yard were not affected. Through all problems, there was always enough for the family to eat and they experienced the Lord's blessings.

One blessing was John and Reka's family of eight healthy children: **Gerrit Jan** (May 9, 1921), **Sena** (Gezina, August 23, 1922), **Bertha** (April 8, 1924), **Herman** (Hermanus, February 2, 1926), **Rita** Hermina (October 25, 1928), **Jean** (September 5, 1931), **Henry** John (September 11, 1935), and **Joanne** May (April 28, 1942). All of the children except Joanne were born at home with the help of a midwife — either Johanna Oldegbers or Petertje Schoonekamp. All were born with dark hair except for Joanne, who was blond, and John wondered if they had taken the right baby home from the hospital.



Back: John, Bertha, Gerrit. Front: Jean, Reka, Henry, Rita Herman, [illegible]

Shortly after they were married, John purchased a used treadle sewing machine at Pete Kampnar's sale. In the Netherlands, Reka had worked in a clothing factory where she had learned sewing skills. She sewed most of the family's clothes, many of them from flour sacks. Sometimes her family sent material or used clothing from Nobleford. One afternoon Reka set about making herself a dress out of material sent by the family. But she was quite frustrated by the time John came home — there was not quite enough fabric, and she told him that no matter how she tried it, she could only get three sleeves out of the material!

One of the weekly household chores was doing the wash. Reka, however, had it better than some: instead of a washboard, she had a tub with a vane inside that was turned by moving a handle on the tub right and left. But since it was heavy work, the task often fell to John who found it a boring chore.

During the early 20s, John cleared land for Jan Oldegbers and received a pump organ as [illegible] organ for church services. He also gave organ and violin lessons. Some organ students came to the house, but for many John gave lessons in their homes. He spent one day a week giving lessons, travelling from place to place during [illegible] choir practice in the church. For many years he directed the church choir, which was made up [illegible] them without the use of the organ and they learned to read music with the help of the syllables do-re-mi-fa. A group of married men also came regularly to the Geldermans to practice as [illegible] a family or with friends often sang together around the organ.

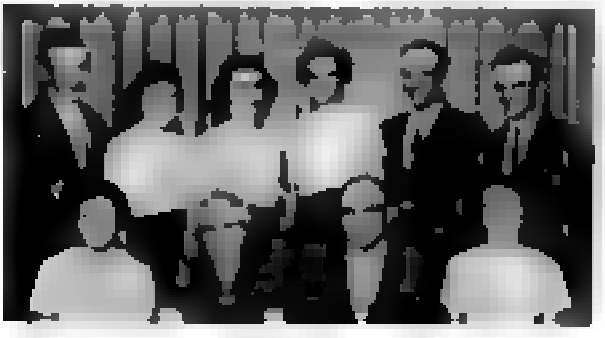
John and Reka were a loving father and mother. They believed Christians had to show [illegible] dren, "If you look for the good in people or [illegible] seem so important or will even disappear." When the children criticized people, John would remind them that those people were also brothers in Christ.

John held firmly to the basic truths of the Bible but not to what he felt were rules and traditions made by men. Thus the Gelderman girls were allowed to wear slacks for sports

Visitors from Edmonton at the Geiderman home

John pressed for the use of English in the church services. He felt that since they lived in Canada they should learn and use the language of the land. When the children were young he bought an English story Bible so he could read to the children in English and at a level they could understand.

John was always actively involved in community activities. He was a charter member of both the Neerlandia Co-op and the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union and served on the boards of each. He served as an elder in the Christian Reformed Church for many years and during those years was a delegate to Classis Pacific on several occasions and to Synod in 1946.



Back: Herman, Joanne, Bertha, Sena, Gerrit, Henry. Front: Jean, Rita, John, Reka. 1960

As the Geiderman children grew up, they all married and raised families of their own. Four of them married into the Nanninga clan: Gerrit to Hilda Nanninga, Sena to Corny Nanninga, Bertha to Bert Nanninga, and Joanne to [illegible] Nanninga. Two of them married into the Krikke family: Herman to Lula Krikke and Rita to Ralph Krikke. Henry married Betty Fisher.

Jean spent most of her life away from Neerlandia. After graduation she attended RBI, where she met George Spee, whom she later married. He became an ordained minister and they served on the Nigerian mission field for twenty-six years. They have four daughters. George and Jean are still working in missions.

John and Reka retired in 1960, bought Seibren Tiemstra's house and moved to the hamlet. They lived there until January, 19[illegible] when they moved into the Emmanuel Senior Citizens' Home in Edmonton. John passed away October 11, 1977 after a brief illness. Reka continues to live at the home and is in reasonably good health.

Geiderman Family

WOUTER AND JOHANNA (BOSCH) GROOTHUIS

In the winter of 1915 Wouter Groothuis, at the age of 34, came to Neerlandia to clear some land and build a log house for his future bride and himself. The land he chose was the SE 9-62-3-5, close to Baird Lake, with neighbours Henry Michael and William Kräcke living within a mile. He had filed for it on December 2, 1915. When the homestead was ready, he went back to Edmonton to marry his bride, Johanna G. Bosch, on January 23, 1916. That same week they left for Neerlandia.

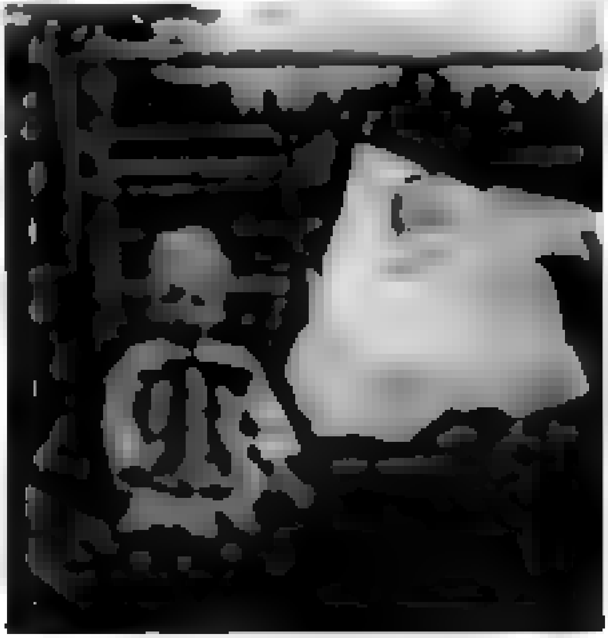
Wouter had been born on March 9, 1881, in Genemuiden, Overijssel, the Netherlands. He had emigrated in 1910 because, besides there not being much opportunity to begin farming in the Netherlands, nearly everyone in his village was related and Wouter did not care to get married to his relatives. He had first gone to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A., where he had worked as hired farm help, and then he headed for Montana. Soon after he returned to Lynden and, upon hearing about the opportunities in [illegible] read about the land available in Alberta in an article written by H. Kippers in *De Wachter*. Wouter first found work building roads in the city of Edmonton, but was interested in homesteading. On February 7, 1913, he took out the SE 35-61-3-5, although he never lived on the land and abandoned it on November 19, 1914, stating that it had too much muskeg.

Johanna had been born in the city of Enschede, Overijssel, on October 13, 1884. She had started working in a factory when she was twelve years old, and had continued to work there into her adult years. During those later years, the man to whom she was engaged contracted tuberculosis. When he died, Johanna, needing a change, had quit her job and immigrated to Canada in 1915. Her father had accompanied her, as single women were not allowed to travel alone. She went to Edmonton because her paternal aunt Wilhemina ter Horst and her husband, Jan, were living near Edmonton in Eastburg. After Johanna and Wouter had met and decided to wed, they made plans to begin homesteading. Johanna, having grown up in [illegible] was not afraid to tackle it. Thus began what were some of the hardest years of their lives.

When Wouter and Johanna arrived at the homestead after their wedding, Johanna asked, "Where is our house?" Even after Wouter pointed it out, she could hardly see it through the thick bush. The main floor of the house consisted of one large room which served as kitchen and living area. Off the kitchen was a small pantry. A stairway led to one big bedroom under the rafters.

Wouter and Johanna soon bought a few cows, some chickens, and a team of oxen to help with the clearing and breaking. There was plenty of work to do. First of all, the land that was already cleared had to be broken. Wouter decided it would be best if Johanna drove the oxen and he held the plow, as holding the plow was the more difficult task. What a disaster that was! Johanna simply could not keep those oxen in a straight line! Wouter was extremely frustrated by this, but could do nothing other than trade places with her. Johanna did, however, learn to milk cows and even shoot the chicken hawks that tried to steal the chickens.

On Friday, January 26, 1917, Johanna went into labour with their first child. The midwife, [illegible] wrong, but help was difficult to get with the doctor thirty miles away and it being the heart of winter. The baby still had not been born by Sunday, so Sietzen Tiemstra went on horseback to summon the doctor, who arrived the next morning. After examination, he said that he thought he could save Johanna but had no hope for the baby. The child was a boy and, though he was blue and purple when he was



[illegible]

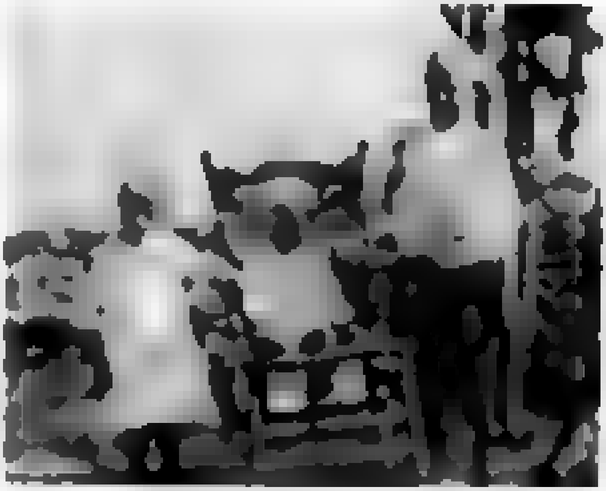
born, through a miracle he survived. The baby, whom Wouter and Johanna named Dick, could not keep down the milk that Johanna fed him. Nothing she gave him stayed down. One day Oom Jan and *Tante* Wilhemina ter Horst came for a visit. *Tante* Wilhemina knew what to do; she advised Johanna to cook cream of wheat in water, put in a piece of *koe vet* (*cow fat*) as well, and feed that to Dick. Johanna tried that and Dick started growing and continued to grow, eating cream of wheat cooked with *koe vet*.

A second child, Sina, was born March 25, 1918. Wouter and Johanna soon noticed that she was not in good health as she often turned completely blue. Again, there was no doctor available and it was too far to take the baby by sled or wagon all the way to see one. When the doctor next came to Neerlandia, he stopped at the Groothuis farm. He examined Sina and found her heart to be very weak. She lived for only fourteen months.

Another daughter, **Sena**, was born March 12, 1920, and a second son, **Hendrik**, on January 14, 1922. Wouter had made sufficient improvements to the homestead during that time [illegible] to the land. By then, he was cropping six acres [illegible] two stables on the homestead to shelter the sixteen cattle he owned.

Every fall, Wouter left the homestead to [illegible] provide for the family through the winter [illegible] dren and do the chores. She had to bake bread and churn cream into butter. She also had to tend the chickens, milk three or four cows, and haul drinking water with buckets from the well for the cows and the two oxen. Later she often told her children that those animals never seemed to get filled up.

In the fall of 1923, Wouter went 300 miles south to work with a threshing crew in Granum and Monarch. Johanna stayed on the homestead as usual. This time, all three children became sick with chicken pox and whooping cough. This meant that, besides being busy with her daily chores and caring for the livestock, Johanna was up half the night with the children. Hendrik, who was nearly two years [illegible] used many remedies to try to break the h[illegible] [illegible]



Sena, Henry, Dick, [illegible].

help. The doctor was fetched, but by that time it was too late. Hendrik died. Wouter was still in southern Alberta and could not be contacted immediately, so it was some time before he arrived home. Johanna was exhausted by then; she managed to get through the funeral, but collapsed afterwards. Sena remembered, "The funeral for my little brother was held in our home and Dad made some benches so all the people could sit down. There were so many [illegible] why we had so much company."

After all this, Wouter and Johanna decided to leave the homestead and in 1924 they went with their two children to Everett, Washington, U.S.A., where Johanna had relatives. The two children, Dick and Sena, later married and raised families of their own. Dick lived to be 63 years old, and Sena lives (1984) in Lynden, Washington, with her family.

Sena wrote, "I never knew my mother to be healthy as she coughed as long as I can remember and her health had been broken, for the family doctor often told us she certainly was the image of a pioneer mother, never to regain her full health." Johanna died in 1942 at the age of 57. Though the years had been hard, Johanna had many happy memories of Neerlandia. She often spoke of the beauty of nature in Neerlandia; of the long summer days; of the people living together as one big family, sharing each other's joys and tears; and, through it all, the evidence of God's goodness.

Wouter often longed to go back to Neerlandia for a visit, although he never managed it

He lived to be 77 years old and died in 1958. He, like his wife, had often told the children of his pioneering days. He would say that he wondered if it had been worth it but would then remark, "Somebody had to be the first."

Sena Steek

JAMES HEATH

James Albert Heath was sixty-two years old when he took up SW 14-61-3-5 in 1918. He had been born in the U.S.A. and came from Texas. On his homestead entry, he listed his previous occupation as Baptist minister.

James, who had some veterinary skills, was called Dr. Heath by the people who knew him. He would help Mellowdale farmers if they had problems with their livestock. He taught in Neerlandia for a short time.

Dr. Heath owned a 1914 Model T Ford that had an open top and a coal oil lamp on each side. He acted as chauffeur on occasion — one time to take Hilda Lindquist of Mellowdale and Lizzie Memome to Edmonton because Hilda needed some work done on her dentures.

Dr. Heath stayed in Neerlandia for about two years, but never made any improvements on his homestead. His homestead entry was cancelled in 1922.

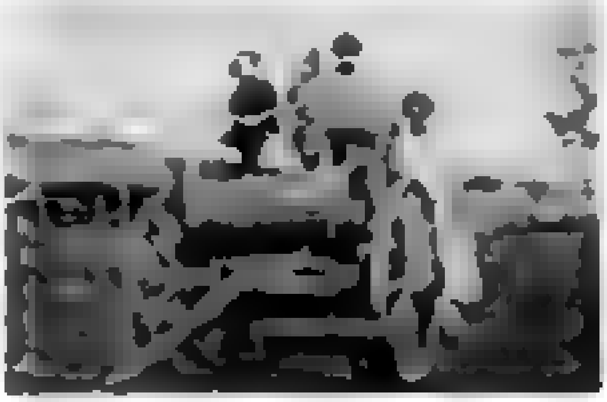
HENRY AND KATIE (BAKER) HIEMSTRA

Henry Hiemstra (September 20, 1890), was raised in Friesland, the Netherlands. From age twelve to nineteen, he worked in an asylum. After seven years of work there, he had contributed sufficient gratis time and was offered two hundred gulden or a suit of clothes and a trip to America. Henry chose the latter and so in 1911 he boarded the *Anacosta*. He went to Kitchener, Ontario, and left from there with a Lutheran pastor to Bruderheim, Alberta. Soon Henry left for Edmonton where he worked for a short while at the City Water Works.

In 1914 Henry applied for a homestead (SE 20-61-3-5) in Neerlandia. After building a log house, though, he stayed for only six months and then left to work elsewhere. He returned to the homestead in 1918. Henry married Katie Baker on March 22, 1919, in the Granum Presbyterian Church. They set up residence in Neerlandia. Their first son, **Cornelis**, was born January 16, 1921.

In 1921 Henry obtained the patent to his homestead. At this time he was cropping ten acres of land, and owned eight head of cattle and three horses. Hiemstras lived in a 20 by 30-foot log house. On the homestead there was also an 18 by 28-foot log barn, an 8 by 14-foot hen house, and a fourteen-foot cribbed well. Henry also had put up three miles of wire-and-rail fence.

When Cor was a small child, Henry went to work in the States for several months. One day sometime later, Cor saw a frightening stranger with a great big black bushy-bearded guy walk into the house. He scared Cor but Katie threw her arms around him. Henry was back.



Jennie, Corney, Catherine, Katie, c. 1927

More children were born to Henry and Katie: **Catherine** (Katharina, March 30, 1923); **Gertrude Richtje** (August 6, 1930); **Gilbert** (Gerrie, September 19, 1934); and **Donald John** (July 17, 1937). As well as farming, Henry worked for several years as foreman for a road construction crew in the area. He was also of help with the sick because of the knowledge he had gained while working in the asylum.

Henry and Katie moved to B.C. with Gilbert and Donald in 1948, and left the farming to Cor. Catherine married Harry Janssen. Gertrude had gone to B.C. before her parents. She married Peter Houweling and they live in New Westminster. Katie passed away November 21, 1970, and Henry on November 11, 1975.

Cor Hiemstra

JOE AND CATHERINE (WIERENGA) HOLWERDA

Jelle Wieger Holwerda was born December 30, 1886, in Arum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Jelle's parents owned a farm, but he received a good education and later did some teaching. In April 1911 he traveled to Canada with the Tjeerd Visser family, to whom he was related. They sailed aboard the *Victorian*. Jelle had thirty-five dollars with him to make a new start in the country of Canada. He lived in Edmonton for the first few years and bought [illegible] among his own people so soon moved to [illegible]

In March 1912 Jelle had filed on the SW 28-62-3-5 as 'John Holwerda', but by the time he took up the NE 3-62-3-5 on September 5, 1914, he wrote his name as Joseph (Joe). He soon built a 14 by 22-foot log house on that homestead and began living there in November.

Joe, who was one of the better-educated men who pioneered in Neerlandia, played an active role in public affairs. He could speak and write English well; he spoke it with hardly a trace of an accent. Joe was soon appointed road foreman over the Neerlandia area by Frank Thompson. In this position he was responsible for the road work that had to be done and also for hiring and paying the workers. He was a fair [illegible] ployees. Joe also became Justice of the Peace. If there was trouble between neighbours, he was the one to see. Once he presided over a hearing held because of a disagreement between two non-Dutch settlers to the south of the settlement. The hearing was held in the log church and Joe admonished the witnesses, "Speak the truth, in the name of the King!" Joe was the game warden for a number of years and he was [illegible] the person to see if one needed a fire or [illegible] permit.

[illegible] an accident. Once he had been working with a breaking plow when it got stuck. Joe urged the horses on and while they were pulling the evener broke in two and one end hit Joe in the legs. His knee was dislocated and after that it went out of joint easily.

Joe worked hard, often working long hours and consequently not eating regularly. Yet, he was an easygoing, cheerful person.

Joe obtained the patent to his land in 1920. He was cropping six acres and had fifteen acres broken and four acres slashed. Besides the house, he had put up a 30 by 34-foot log stable and 2½ miles of pole fences. The [illegible] horseback wherever he went and, while riding [illegible] seen without his hat.

[illegible] he Neerlandia Co-op was be[illegible] was a member of the store board for some years [illegible]

During an afternoon church service, a fire that was burning on Joe's land burned his shack [illegible] badly about it because in the shack had been a [illegible]

Joe obtained the SW 9-62-3-5 and the SE [illegible] During the twenties, Joe obtained more [illegible] years, there was a forced road fenced off be[illegible] quarters. It was wide enough for four horses [illegible]

Joe bought a big breaking plow that he used [illegible] hired Oene Piers and Henry Strydhorst to help [illegible] stayed there while he was working for Joe. By that time Joe had learned to cook for himself (his specialty was baking powder biscuits), but he had not learned many sewing skills. One [illegible] two of his overalls were completely [illegible]

[illegible] **Dirk Visser**, a schoolteacher, and his wife [illegible] eight months.

[illegible] in 1928, three Wierenga families and their many girls moved to Neerlandia. Joe was [illegible] not mind the girls at all. He was attracted to Catherine, one of Lammert Wierenga's girls, but she had some growing up to do — she was only seventeen at the time. But eventually, one month after her twenty-fourth birthday, Catherine became Mrs. Joe Holwerda. It was a double wedding ceremony with Bill Olthuis and Carrie Tuininga on Sunday, March 11, 1934.

Joe, Catherine, 1934

Joe had been elected councillor for Neerlandia in 1930. He was elected two more times, each for a two-year term. The meetings were held about two miles east of the Shoal Creek store on Jim Allen's homestead and Joe rode there, as usual, on horseback.

On December 15, 1934, a son, **Wilfred**, was born to Joe and Catherine. Joe was very proud of his son and vowed that he was going to have a good education. But human intentions and plans can only be performed as far as the Lord permits. The Lord called Joe home three months later on March 15, 1935. He was unable to fight off a bout of pneumonia and died after being taken to the hospital.

Wilfred was *Pake* and *Beppe* Holwerda's only grandson. A highlight in Wilfred's life came at the age of twelve years (1947), when Catherine took him to the Netherlands to visit the Holwerda family. *Beppe* had passed on, but *Pake* was still very fit at the age of eighty-six years. The two Holwerda uncles were both living too. From that experience Wilfred could form an imaginary father-image.

Elly Wierenga, Hattina Elgersma, Wilfred, 1943

Wilf Holwerda

DRIKUS AND JOHANNA (NIJMAN) HUININK

Johanna Nijman was born August 21, 1881 in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands. Four years later, Drikus Huinink was born in Winterswijk on January 31. Drikus and Johanna were married in early 1910. Drikus was a *vrachtrijder* — he drove a large team of horses and made deliveries. Johanna worked in a comb factory.

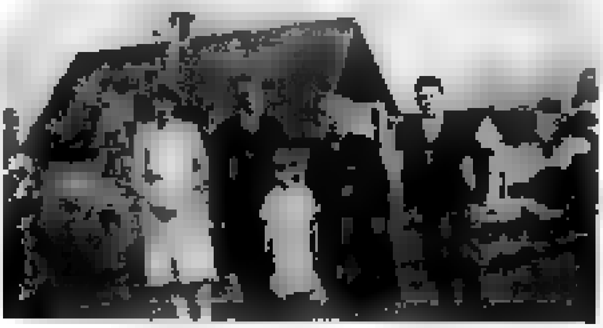
Drikus and Johanna were acquainted with Henry Kippers who was living in Edmonton and who wrote to them about the good land and opportunities there. Consequently, the Huininks decided to immigrate to Canada. They sailed on the *Victorian* in April 1911. After landing in Halifax, they took the train to Edmonton. There they lived in Fraser Flats, sharing a shack with the Tjeerd Visser family. Drikus soon found a job with the City Water Works.

Johanna, Drikus, 1910.

Drikus, like many other Dutch immigrants, wanted to farm in Canada so he went with a group of Dutchmen to Townships 61 and 62 in 1911. When he returned, he was thrilled to find that a daughter, **Margaret** (Grada), had been born while he was away (December 10, 1911). Drikus filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on December 18, 1911. A son, **Henry** (Hendrikus) was born in 1913.

After coming to Neerlandia in 1914 or 1915, the Huininks spent about a year on the homestead. But when it became clear that Johanna's health was such that she would not be able to handle the homesteading life, Drikus reluctantly gave up the homestead. He abandoned it in December 1915, stating that he had resided on it for fourteen months, had built a house and a stable, had broken two acres and cleared ten. He had sold his cow to Jacob Olthuis (which thereafter became known as "old Huinink").

Drikus resumed employment with the City



In Edmonton: Margaret, Drikus, Dena, Johanna, Henry, 1920s. Riverdale in the background.

Water Works and the Huininks remained in Edmonton for many years. Another daughter, Dena, was born in 1919. The Huininks had become good friends with the Kannegieters and often came to Neerlandia to visit them as well as the Ben Lievers family. Johanna died September 30, 1963, and Drikus August 17, 1970.

Huinink Family

CORNELIUS AND HERMINA (GOTZEN) INGWERSEN

In 1909, Case (Cornelius) Ingwersen immigrated to Canada at the age of about 29 years. He left behind his wife, Hermina, aged about 23 years; a small son, **Corny** (Cornelius, born September 17, 1908), as well as parents, brothers and sisters. Parting was not easy, but life for him in the Netherlands had become more and more unbearable. Working with his father in an upholstery business was boring and tiresome. The urge to be free and get away from the narrow confines of the store had become an obsession with him. Moreover, he had read in a Dutch newspaper of the wonderful opportunities there were in Canada. Land was literally being given away. For a mere ten dollars one could buy a whole quarter section of land. That was too good to pass up, he thought. After he talked it over with his family, they reluctantly consented to let him go. It was decided that Case would go alone first, and when he had a house and a job, Hermina would come and join him. She was not very happy with that decision, but she also saw the merit of it.

So it was, that Case Ingwersen arrived in Edmonton. Things were not as rosy as he had expected. Jobs were hard to find, and then there was the language problem. He found it [illegible] they could not understand his language either. [illegible] to rent was a small shack in Ross Flats, along the Saskatchewan River in Edmonton. He was glad his wife was not there to see it. Being alone did not bother him too much. There were more Dutch people living there, so he had companionship.

For a number of months, things went on quite normally. Case found the odd job, and was quite content with the way he lived. But if only he would receive some news from Hermina! He faithfully wrote to her, but never got a reply. Finally, he went to the post office and complained to the post master about his predicament. After Case told him that he was C. Ingwersen, the man started looking through the mail. He soon came back with a stack of letters that he had filed under the name C. Tingwersen (the written Dutch *I* looks much [illegible] was overjoyed! He started reading the letters [illegible] through them to the latest. When he got to the last one, he found that his wife was coming to Canada to join him. Their second child was due soon, and she wanted to be with Case. What was he to do? He had neither time nor money to get a better house and his wife was used to the finer things in life. He was horrified. But there was no way out — they would just have to make the best of it.

Hermina had a bad trip across the ocean because she was seasick most of the way. Arriving in Edmonton, Hermina was happy to finally be with her husband again. But when they came to their so-called "home", she broke down and cried. What kind of a place was this that he had brought her to? Had she come all the way from the Netherlands to live in this little tumble-down shack? There was hardly any furniture — a homemade table, two chairs and a bunk with straw on it. It was just too much! Case, of course, felt very badly, but [illegible] he could find a steady job. Hermina did not realize what she would have to go through before things would get better.

When winter set in, the days were dark and dreary. Inside the shack it was not much warmer than it was outdoors. Into this situation, their second son, **Gerrit** (Gerhard), was born on December 10, 1909. The neighbours were very good to Hermina and helped her out as much as possible. Gerrit grew well since he was healthy and strong, and when he learned to walk, he became a handful to take care of. He would continually walk away to the neighbours or wherever he found things of interest. One day, Father and Mother Ingwersen had to search for him for hours before they found him. After this scary experience, they decided to tie him with a rope to the house. That put an end to his wanderings.

The Ingwersens lived in Edmonton for five years. Two girls were born during that time. **Anne** (Agneta Jane) on January 29, 1913, and **Johanna** on October 12, 1914. Case did find more steady employment by painting and wallpapering for people. They also moved to a dif[illegible] improvement over the tarpaper shack.

[illegible] land was never far from Case's thoughts during these five years. Case filed on the N.E. [illegible] land in July of that same year. He then joined a group of sixteen Dutchmen and filed on the [illegible] Neerlandia, on December 18, 1911. Not all of these men went to their homesteads at this time and Case was one of those who chose to remain working in Edmonton. He abandoned his quarter in 1912, stating that it had to much muskeg and heavy timber. Later, he traded with Wouter Groothuis, who had taken up the S.E. 35-61-3-5. Case filed on that quarter on January 2, 1915, and it became the Ingwersen homestead.

Case built a log house and when all was ready, brought the family from Edmonton. Hermina tried to make a cozy atmosphere in the house with the things she had taken along from the Netherlands.

[illegible] morning the family viewed the sky through the gable end of the house. Everyone moved out, and Case did some repairing. They moved in [illegible] who lived across the road. He was quite happy with his new boarders, because Hermina did the cooking for him, but the arrangement was [illegible] the family went back to their own domain. The roof of the house was made of sods, and when it rained, the dirty water would drip everywhere — onto the beds, the floor, and, worst of all, onto the table with Hermina's beautiful *Desso tafelkleed* on it (the only thing which resembled her home in the Netherlands).

In the winter, the cracks between the logs would let in the outside air. Although the cracks had been "chinked up" with moss, the cold would shrink the moss and the family had free refrigeration. It would be so cold that water standing a few feet from the stove would freeze solid. Even with all the cold and misery, no one became seriously ill, although Hermina often suffered from toothaches and pleurisy.

The living conditions on the homestead were a sharp contrast to what Hermina and Case had been used to in the Netherlands, and it bothered Hermina the most. For her, the pioneering life was very trying, and she was often tempted to write to her parents about the sad state of affairs. They would gladly have sent money to pay for the trip back to the Netherlands. Case, however, had no desire to go back. He rather enjoyed this adventurous life. After all, they were healthy, they had a bed to sleep on, and they had enough to eat — what more did they need? Their food consisted mainly of rabbits and prairie chickens, which were plentiful in those days, and, of course, they got milk from a cow or two.

Relatives in the Netherlands would often send parcels with used clothing, toys, and so on. Whenever the parcels arrived, there was rejoicing at the Ingwersen household. Hermina was a good seamstress and transformed the clothes into something suitable for her children to wear. She seldom wore any of the beautiful dresses her family sent her, as they would have been out of place in that setting. But many evenings, she would sit with a needle and thread by the light of a coal-oil lamp, sewing clothes for her children. Later on, a relative sent money so Hermina could buy a sewing machine. The machine was a big help, and she treasured it more than anything else.

Case spent many winters working at a sawmill or doing roadwork. He would stay away until Saturday, when he would come home with a bag of groceries. The boys, small as they were, would have to milk the cows; Hermina was scared stiff of those creatures. With just one switch of their tails, they could send her running home. She was not cut out for that pioneering life, although she certainly made the best of the circumstances.

Case was one of the pioneers who put oxen to work. He bought one ox and another he raised himself. The one he bought was a large beast with a great set of horns. It was a reliable creature and usually a willing worker, although

Jan, Hermina, Annie, Johanna, Nellie, Case, Gerrit, Conny, c. [illegible] very slow. The one he raised himself was tem [illegible] These two oxen Case paired up to pull stumps haul firewood, and, for a while, to pull the wagon as a means of transportation. One day, [illegible] them, the small one refused to move. After many unsuccessful attempts to get some action, Case picked up a switch and gave it a thrashing. With one leap, it took off. Case had the reins tied around his waist, and away they went at top speed. Case was dragged over the ground, and could not get free until they got tangled up behind a tree. He was not seriously hurt but there was not much love between him and that ox afterward. It remained stubborn as long as it lived.

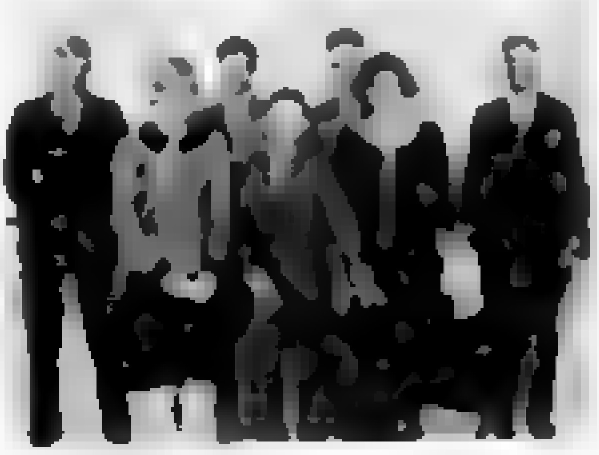
At that time, people in the community travelled to Mellowdale to get groceries. Since that was a rather long and tiring distance to travel, they decided to start a co-operative store in Neerlandia. This log store they built on the N.E. 34-61-3-5, thinking it would be central for everyone. Only the most important things such as sugar, flour, tallow, and tea were sold. At first, it was open for only one day a week but later it stayed open for three days a week. Case became the "storekeeper", as he had some business experience. Soon he also took a cream-testing course. Now farmers could bring their cream to the store, where it would be tested and then shipped to Westlock by horse and wagon. How good that cream was when it arrived in Westlock was never known, but the farmers received their cheques, which was the main thing.

This little store soon became too small for the community's needs, so a much bigger one [illegible] decided to build this one of lumber. It was built across from the church and Case, as the manager, was expected to live nearby. So he built a new house of lumber which was, for that time, quite impressive-looking. But when winter came, the family found that the lumber house was just as cold as the log house had been.

The Ingwersen family by this time had five children. A little girl, whom they called Nettie (Antoinette), was born on April 5, 1916, when they were still on the homestead. She was rather small, and was a poor eater — a child of the poor times. Their last child was born a few years later, on July 17, 1918, a healthy, robust boy whom they called John (Johannes).

The two oldest boys, Corny and Gerrit, were growing up and were doing their share of [illegible] and a better one could not have been found. Gerrit was handy with machinery and doing fieldwork. Corny took up the quarter Section east of the homestead, S.W. 36-61-3-5. So, while their father was looking after the store, the boys were keeping busy working on the farm.

Case Ingwersen was also the mail [illegible] and once a week he travelled to Mellowdale to pick up the mail. In the spring of 1924, he took [illegible] hauling trip. It was a very warm day, and the bull flies were out in hordes. They bothered the horses so much that the horses took off on the run and Case lost control of them. He fell off the democrat and his legs caught in the spokes of a [illegible] the result that both his legs were broken and [illegible] knee was crushed. After lying helpless awhile in the hot sun, he was found and brought to Edmonton in Dave Tuininga's car. He was in the hospital for eight weeks, but his [illegible] leg never straightened out completely. He remained crippled for the rest of his life. Hermina had to take over the store-keeping job while Case was in the hospital. This was an added burden for her, having six children to care for as well. It was a relief for her when her husband finally returned and was able to take over again.



Andy Nanninga, Nettie, Gerrit, John, Philip Eggermont Johanna, Corny

Case was the store manager for fifteen years, until the business became too much for [illegible] back to farming again. He bought the N [illegible] 33-61-3-5 from William Swaffield. There he built a new house and again took up his life-long ambition of farming. The children, by this time were leaving home. Annie went first. She married Andy Nanninga. Johanna was next to leave; she married John Visser. Gerrit eventually bought both the old homestead and Corny's section. Corny remained single, and stayed with the family, as did Nettie. John married Rose Tiemstra.

Case Ingwersen never was cut out to be a farmer, and that became more evident as time went on. John eventually took over the farm work. Case and Hermina sold the farm to him and moved to Edmonton, along with Corny and Nettie. They lived there about five years. During that time, Case bought and sold three different houses.

When in 1946, Annie and Andy decided to move to British Columbia, Case could not resist the temptation to move there too. So, once [illegible] to Burnaby and later to Abbotsford, where they bought a house and retired. There Case kept himself busy growing vegetables and flowers. Always a lover of nature, he could enjoy his old [illegible] other children moved to B.C. also, except for Johanna.

Corny, Gerrit, Annie, Johanna, Nettie, John. Seated: Case Hermina.

The elder Ingwersens often made the trip back to Neerlandia, since they could not easily forget the place where they had spent the better part of their lives. In spite of all the hardships, their hearts were still there. They had spent many happy years in Neerlandia, which [illegible] very different life-style in the Netherlands. Pioneering had a great effect on them. There was no distinction between rich and poor on the homesteads — everyone was poor. The pioneers came to appreciate one another, helping [illegible] sens made a number of trips back to the "old country" but they never showed any desire to stay. They had come to love their adopted land.

One thing Johanna remembers well about her parents was their love of music and singing. Father and Mother Ingwersen were both good singers. As a family, they spent many evenings [illegible] nie played. The elder Ingwersens seldom went out, so as a family they were together often. When the children got older and had boy friends (or girl friends), they were expected to spend part of the evening with the family. They did not always appreciate this at the time, but realize now that those were times well spent.

Another thing that was evident was the Ingwersens' faith in God. Amid all the trials of life they never relinquished that. Case spent many years as elder in the church. As a schoolboard member, he worked hard for the education of the children of the community.

Case passed away in 1973, after a short bout with pneumonia. He had always been a strong, healthy man, and lived to be ninety-two. Hermina, although she had often been sick and had many operations, lived to the age of ninety-four. She died in 1979. Nettie died a few years later, in 1982. Case and Hermina had lived [illegible] certainly many reasons for thanksgiving.

Johanna Visser

LAMBARTUS AND BOTJE (HOGGERHUIS) JANSSEN

Lambartus (Bart) Janssen was born in Waardenburg, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on July 4, 1888. As a young boy he helped his father in [illegible] he grew older, he decided to join the mounted police in the the Netherlands. After a few years with the police force, free land and adventure drew him to Alberta, where he settled in the Fraser Flats of Edmonton.

About 1912 he walked out to the Neerlandia area with his friend, Sam Vandergoot. His wife Botje and son Lambert stayed behind until a homestead could be filed on. The men found two Dutch homesteaders already in the area, the Oldegbers family and the Mast family.

When Bart and Sam arrived at one of these homes, they were invited to stay for dinner. They gladly accepted, as they were hungry. In the [illegible] of the log house, they could make out a pot on the stove, with leg bones protruding above the top. The good woman of the home placed a rabbit on each plate. It was delicious and when Sam told her so, she beamed and put another rabbit on each plate, despite their protests. That was the last rabbit Bart ever ate!

Later, Bart asked the woman's husband how he managed to get so many rabbits without a rifle. Bart was taken behind the house and was shown a pit covered with fodder. At night when the rabbits came to eat, they fell into the pit and so there was always a good supply of meat on hand.

Sam never applied for a homestead, but Bart Janssen did, at about the same time his friends, Simon Tiemstra and John Anema, applied. The first quarter he filed on was never proved up. In 1914, he filed on the SW 14-61-3-5.

Some time later, a log store was erected. Pete Kampnar, who had come from Montana with a herd of cows and some horses, was the storekeeper. He will always be remembered for two great kindnesses to the Janssen family. One day there was so little to eat in the house that Botje Janssen was in great despair — no money and no food. Then there was a knock on the door and in came Peter Kampnar with a hundred pound bag of flour on his back. He had carried it all the way from his store. Another time, one of Kampnar's bulls gored his stallion while they were in the corral together. Pete had to kill the horse and brought a quarter of the meat to the Janssens. This, too, was a real blessing.

Not many days later, two Mounties came to the door and asked for a meal. They were hunting an escaped criminal and were very hungry. Botje Janssen asked her husband what she should cook — somehow she felt Canadians would never eat horsemeat. But Bart told her to cook some steaks. He apologized to the Mounties for having moosemeat out of season, but they told him not to worry; they felt the homesteaders would never waste meat. After those delicious steaks were eaten, Bart mischievously asked his wife (in Dutch) if he should tell them truth about the meat. His wife became quite flustered, as she thought he was serious. How embarrassing — Mounties eating horsemeat!

One fall, before the store was erected, Bart planned a trip to Edmonton to buy winter supplies for himself and his neighbours. The orders were for beans, peas, sugar, flour, and at least one pair of shoes. Times were hard and there was no money. One man proposed they all catch rabbits and let Bart sell them to hotels and cafes in Edmonton. Then Bart could bring back the desperately needed supplies. The weather was cold; the pile of rabbits grew higher and higher.

On arrival in Edmonton after three days on the road, Bart managed to sell a few rabbits [illegible]

[illegible] and Sam Vandergoot after a hunting trip [illegible] some cafés and then rested for the night. During the night, the weather changed and the following day was warm and sunny. By midday the health inspector had visited the wagon and condemned the whole load. Bart had to dispose of the rabbits in the city incinerator. Those that had already been sold barely paid for the expense of burning the others. To return home to his neighbours and friends, totally without the supplies they so desperately needed, was almost more than Bart could bear. This was one story Bart often told to his children and grandchildren, always with a touch of sadness.

Then came a day when the butter was almost gone, but there was some lard left. Botje put the butter away for company and said that the family had to use lard on their bread. Bart got up from the table and got the butter. "We will have butter," he said, "and if folks drop by, they will have to use lard. And furthermore, if things are in such a state, we are not staying here any longer." He packed up their meagre belongings and moved his family back to Edmonton. [illegible]

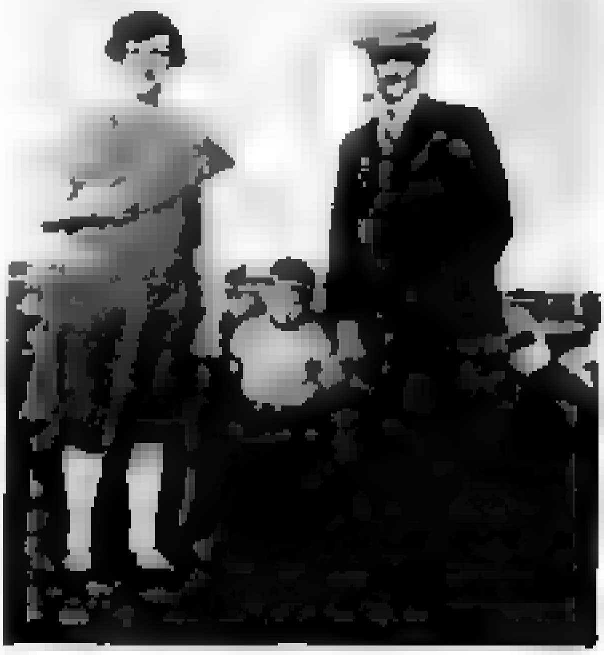
The next few years involved a number of moves for the family — to Everett, Washington, to work in a sawmill; to Vancouver, to Engen (near Vanderhoof, B.C.); and back to Edmonton. The move to Engen was made with a number of others, including George Toebes, in a venture to set up a community there. But Bart was still drawn to Neerlandia, so he and Sam Vandergoot came back once again.

In June 1919 Bart took up the NE 16-61-3-5. The family, which now included two boys, Lambert Albert and **Harry**, and one girl, **Agnes**, lived in a granary rented from Tjibbe Reitsma, while their own house was being [illegible]

Bart often talked about the winter of 1919. The first blizzard of the season arrived on October 7th. That was also the night Botje had their fourth child. Raymond Baker, a neighbour, was called upon to get Minke Mast, the midwife. Driving through the blizzard, over a newly made road of sorts, Raymond upset his buggy. However, after a harrowing trip, Minke arrived in time to deliver a four-and-a-half pound baby girl, **Rena**, complete with two teeth!

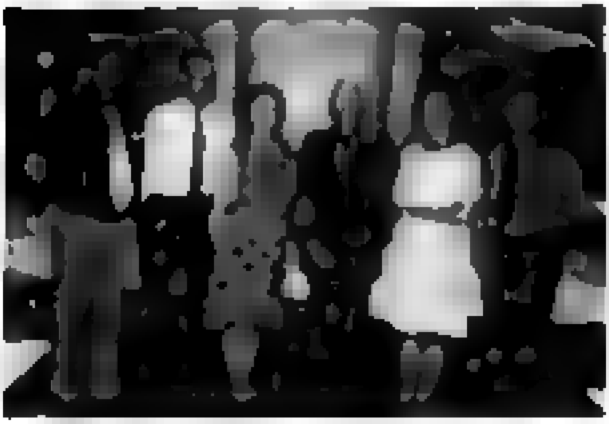
More outstanding was the fact that the snow never left after the October 7 storm, and many old-timers recall the winter of 1919 as the coldest winter in memory. Many cattle died. Speculation was that cattle would be very high-priced by spring, if you could keep them alive. Bart Janssen crammed his cattle into a square shed and threw them a little hay everyday. He had very little feed for them. But it was all for nought. The market slumped still more and cattle were worth very little the following spring.

Not only had the cattle suffered through that terrible winter, but so had the family, so in the spring Bart loaded up his possessions once again for yet another move to Edmonton. With his cattle he began dairying, selling milk for ten cents a quart. This venture proved quite successful, and the family lived there until 1938. It was during this time (1928) that their youngest son, Jack, was born.



Botje, Jack, Lambertus in Edmonton, c. 1931

Lambertus, c. 1970



Jack, Albert, Rene, Lambertus, Agnes, Henry c. 1970

Since the dairy farm was beside the airport the city bought the land in 1938 (the land is now the very centre of the present Industrial Airport). Once more the family moved to Neerlandia, this time to an improved homestead, the SW 15-62-3-5, which Bart bought from Arie Rylaarsdam.

Botje died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-eight in 1948. Bart lived a rich, full life until he passed away in 1978 at the age of ninety.

Rene Wierenga

ELKE AND JANKE (DUIMSTRA) JORRITSMA

Elke Wynia Jorritsma was born December 16, 1885, in Franeker, Friesland, the Netherlands. His mother died when he was born, so he was raised by his maternal grandparents, who were farmers. When Elke was twelve or thirteen years of age he started to work for a feed company. When he was nineteen, training in the army was compulsory. He served two years in the Dutch mobilization, Cavalry Division and, after his release, again worked for the feed company. His mind was already made up to go to Canada so he saved his money and immigrated to Edmonton with Douwe Terpsma and family in the spring of 1911. His first job was at Pat Burns' packing plant, but he did not like that work. He then worked on the construction of the High Level bridge and the Tegler Building.

During the time in Edmonton, Elke became acquainted with a group of other Dutchmen who were looking for land. Elke filed on a homestead (NE 27-61-3-5) in Neerlandia on April 18, 1914. He built a log shack on the land and began clearing. There was no money to be made clearing, so that fall he went to the Saskatchewan prairie to help with the harvest.

After a few years of working the homestead and harvesting in Saskatchewan, Elke rented his land to Peter Kampnaa. Then he went to Portland, Oregon, with Popko Schuring. There they worked loading railroad ties on flatdecks. Unfortunately, Elke was hit by a train and severely injured — he broke twenty-two bones. He spent eighteen months in the hospital recovering. His friend Popko often visited him and even helped him to shave. When Elke was able, he returned to Neerlandia. Instead of baching, he boarded with Douwe and Betty Terpsma to regain his strength.

In 1917 Elke was called up to serve in World War I for Canada, but by the time his enlistment papers came the war was over and he did not go. By this time he was again living on his land and going to harvest in Saskatchewan each fall. He visited with his neighbours and bought his butter from Froukje Anema for ten cents a pound. He helped with the construction of the first log church.

In 1921 the Westerbaan family came to Neerlandia and Elke decided to sell them his quarter. They moved into the house and cropped the land but they did not stay, so Elke took his quarter back again.

During the years 1911 to 1926, Elke went back to the Netherlands seven times to visit relatives. While there he met Janke Duimstra, whose family was living in the same area. Janke had been born in Sexbierum, Friesland, on June 28, 1898. Her parents were herring fishermen. As a teenager Janke worked for a neighbouring farmer in the fields. She fed calves, picked weeds, transplanted cabbage, and hoed potatoes. She contracted foot and mouth disease from the calves she fed and this mainly crippled her hand for life.

Elke and Janke courted by letter until 1927 when she arrived in Edmonton accompanied by Roelof Knake. She spent the first night at the Immigration Hall. Then she stayed with the Pete Schuurman family until her marriage to Elke on June 27, 1927, in Edmonton. Elke had built a new log house for his bride and had about thirty-five acres cleared. Janke took some pretty things from Friesland to make the new home.

The Jorritsma's first son, Jim (James), was

born April 24, 1928. A year-and-one-half later another son, Norman, was born prematurely and died six weeks later. A third son, Edward, came on March 22, 1931, and a girl, Tena Ida, was born April 16, 1934. Elke was busy all the time. He built a new lumber house in 1931 and a large barn in 1932. He was a powerful man who loved animals, especially horses. He always had one or two milk cows, as well as horses, pigs, and chickens. He cleared his whole quarter by hand [illegible] year by year until only four acres of bush remained. Wheat, oats, and barley were seeded.

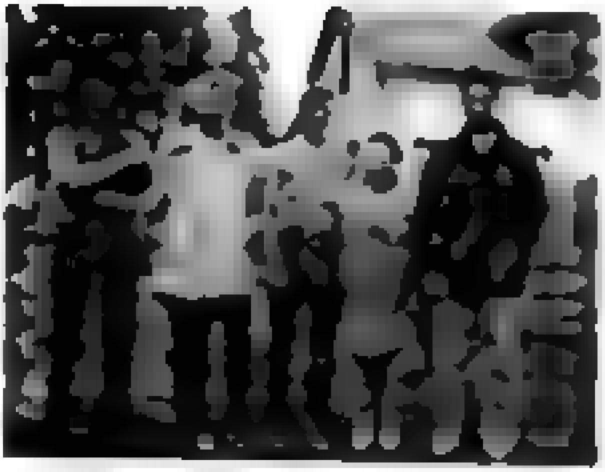
Janke was good-natured and very patient. She knitted many pairs of socks and mitts for her family and mended all their clothes. Her best friend was her neighbour Rika Wierenga and they spent many hours together.

The boys grew quickly and were helping to [illegible] wood hauling, feeding pigs, and pumping water. They loved to go swimming in the nearby creek with Martin Wierenga.

In September 1934 Jim was six years old and had to go to school. He thought everyone spoke *Fries* as they did at home. He walked to school with the Terpsma, Tiemstra, Fox, Mast, and Wilson children, and was teased by Mary Wilson because he knew no English. When the other children went into school, Jim ran into the bush. He did that for six weeks until Tom Wilson finally told Elke that Jim was not going to school. Meanwhile Jim was making slingshots, hunting rabbits, smoking, cutting firewood for his fire, and generally enjoying himself. Much to Jim's displeasure, Elke brought him to school and laid down the law — school from now on.

Jim and Ed loved making slingshots and bows and arrows, and were very accurate at shooting rabbits, birds, and telephone insulators.

Elke's first tractor was purchased in 1942 from C. K. Mast for $1127.35. Nevertheless, Elke never liked working with machinery. He never bought a car but always travelled by horse and buggy or cutter. When the boys were old enough they drove the four horses for cutting the grain and did a fair bit of work for neighbours such as George Anema, Henry Mast, and Norman Terpsma. Summers were filled with haying, stooking, and chores. There was no time for play, except to sneak away for the occasional swim in the creek.



Elke, Jim, Ed, Janke, Janke's brother, c. [illegible]

In 1944 Jim quit school and went to work at the Dutch Mill for a short time. The next year he went back there and after that sawmills and [illegible]

Ed did not like school much either; he [illegible] could. Ed and Jim did contract stooking at seventy-five cents an acre and could stook about two acres an hour together. That made nice spending money in 1955.

At sixty-seven years of age Elke was a sick man. He sold his farm to Ed and Jim and bought a house in Barrhead. He moved there in May 1952 and died the same year on September 26 from a brain tumor. Janke continued living in Barrhead and remarried in 1956. In 1957 she had a stroke which left her paralyzed. She lived in St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, Edmonton, until her death on March 3, 1983.

In 1952, Jim had purchased a rig for sawing firewood. He and Ed did a lot of custom wood sawing. In 1953 Ed spent five hundred hours sawing firewood at three dollars per hour. Jim liked that business and still does some wood sawing today (1984), especially now that wood heating is back in vogue. Jim also bought a weed sprayer in 1952. He did custom spraying in the area until 1982.

In 1955 Ed decided he needed a change. He moved to B.C. and worked in sawmills year-round. He is married and lives with his wife and three children in Merritt, B.

Tena grew up accustomed to working and [illegible] tle right along with her brothers. On a visit to her uncle in Burlington, Ontario, she met and fell in love with Henry Seitzema, a Dutch immigrant who was trained in agriculture. They got married and now live with their three children in Port Dover, Ontario.

Jim remained single and kept the family farm, where he spends his summers cropping the land. The winters are spent in bush camps doing what he loves best — working as edger man in the sawmill.

Jim and Ed Jorritsma

Editor's note: According to the [illegible] at the [illegible] the correct spelling of Jake Jorritsma's name is Jelke.

PETER AND IBELTJE (LUINSTRA) KAMPNAR
PETE AND ANNIE (KERKSTRA) KAMPNAR

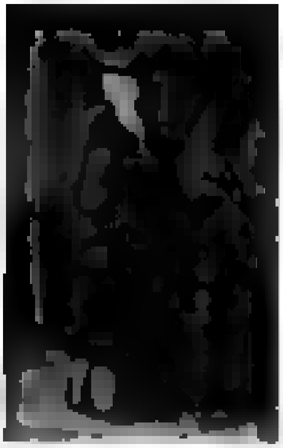
There are various ways of spelling Kampnar. This version was used by the Peter Kampnar family in the U.S.A. Originally in the Netherlands it was spelled Kampenaar or [illegible].

Peter (Piebe) Kampnar was born in Kolhum, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 2, 1862. He married Ibeltje Luinstra in 1883. Times were very difficult in the Netherlands and the Kampnars had a family to feed. In 1903, they moved to Germany to try to find better-paying jobs. The two oldest sons, Pete (October 29, 1884) and John, went to Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. All of them saved money until the rest of the family were able to sail on the *Ryndam* in 1905 to join the sons in Chicago.

In Chicago, on February 21, 1907, Pete married Annie (Antje) Kerkstra. All the Kampnars moved first to Wisconsin and then to Montana. Then the stories of fertile land and good weather drew them to Neerlandia. The first to arrive were Pete and Annie and their children **Ida**, **Nelly** and **Jennie**. Pete filed on the NW [illegible] on March 5, 1915.

Peter Sr. was persuaded by his son to pull up stakes in Montana and take the remainder of the family north. Pete had taken up the NW 10-61-3-5 for his brother Jake. By this time Peter Sr.'s wife had passed away, so he was accompanied only by his children: **Bertha** (Baukje) born March 15, 1895; **Jake** (Jacob) born November 29, 1897 and **Ida** (Ihe) born March 18, 1900. When the Kampnars sold out in Montana they had to get their cattle and house-hold effects to the train. The nearest station was at Conrad, about forty-five miles away. Jake was responsible for driving the cattle and horses during the two-and-a-half-day trip. When he arrived at the station he had to wait a week for a stock car. It was a very hot, dry August, and Jake quenched his thirst with water from the ponds nearby, which then began to make him sick. Once the cattle were loaded it was another eight days before he reached Westlock because of a three-day delay at the Canadian border for customs inspection. All this time Jake grew sicker, and by the time Pete met him to take the cattle and goods to a farm Pete had rented in Mellowdale, Jake was too sick to help. They got a travelling doctor to see Jake, and he diagnosed Jake's illness as typhoid fever. There was no way of preventing the disease from taking its course because of the distance from the hospital and lack of medicine. Jake died August 22, 1917, and was one of the first adults buried in the Neerlandia cemetery.

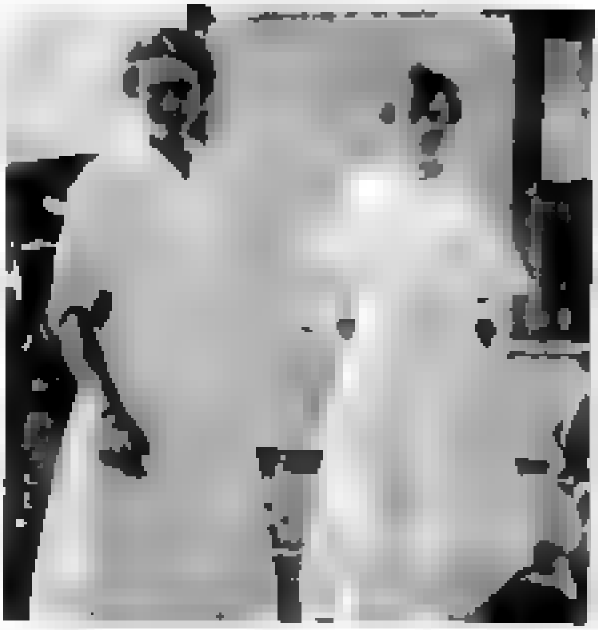
Pete, 1907



Annie, 1907

The rest of the family had arrived in Neerlandia in July 1917. Since Pete and Annie had only a small one-room shack they could not provide accommodation for the rest of the Kampnar family. Peter Sr. and the children set up a tent on Pete and Annie's yard.

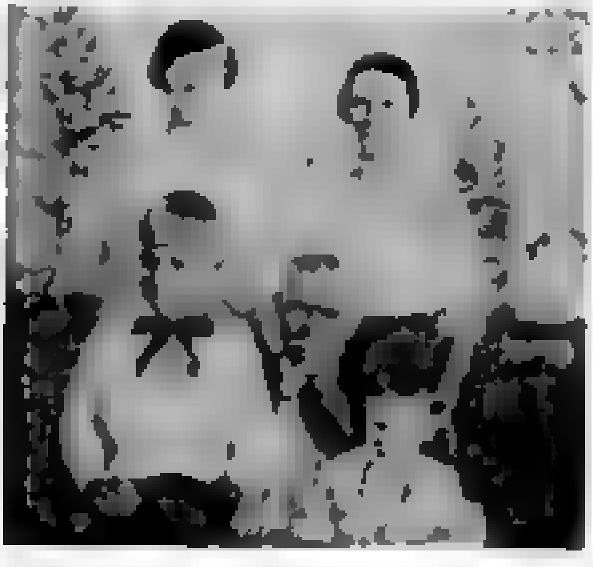
That fall hail wiped out Pete's crop. One of the first things Ida did in Neerlandia was to mow what was left of this crop to try to get feed for the livestock. That first winter, life was very difficult. There had been no time to build living quarters, so in order to survive the cold the family lived in a smaller tent that had been erected inside a larger horse tent.



Bertha, Ida, 1917

Peter Sr. bought the NW 23-61-3-5 and farmed this land with the help of his daughters. He also set up the first general store in Neerlandia.

A son, also named Peter, was born to Pete and Annie on February 28, 1918. The Pete Kampnar family returned to Montana in 1920. Their son died shortly after their return. Pete died on February 10, 1976, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.



Ida, Bertha. Front: Jackie Campbell, Peter, Sadie, 1924.

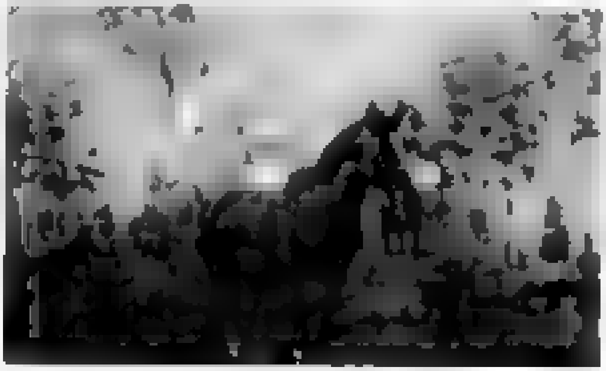
The elder Kampnar suffered from cancer, and the store was not a successful venture. He left for Great Falls, Montana in 1926 and passed away there the following year. Bertha arranged for an auction sale and for someone to farm the land for her. By this time Ida had already married Ted Reitsma, and Bertha later married Charlie Reitsma.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skarrow

HENDRIK AND MINA (WINKELHORST) KANNEGIETER

Hendrik Jan Kannegieter was born January 4, 1886, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands. When he grew up, he worked in Aalten, Gelderland, in a windmill used for grinding grain. While there, he met Mina (Wilhelmina) Aleida Winkelhorst (April 14, 1893), who worked in the mill operator's house. On April 8, 1913, Hendrik left for Edmonton, Alberta, where he worked for the City Water Works.

Hendrik took up the SW 16-62-3-5 in Neerlandia on September 17, 1913. Later that year he returned to the Netherlands where he married Mina on January 29, 1914. That same day they left for Canada. After arriving in Edmonton, they found that work was scarce, so decided to move to the homestead as soon as possible. Hendrik built a 14 by 22-foot log house in March and he and Mina moved there in August 1914.



Hendrik on the homestead

When Hendrik obtained the patent to his land in 1921 he was cropping thirteen-and-a-half acres and owned twenty-one cattle and three horses. He had obtained seven of the cattle in 1917 and the three horses in 1919.

Hendrik and Mina going to church

Hendrik had built a 12 by 14-foot cow stable and a 20 by 24-foot hip roof barn. There was a fourteen-foot well on the place as well as three miles of rail fencing.

The Kannegieters, especially Mina, enjoyed having young people and children over. They often had visitors and one time during the 1920s Henry Huinink stayed for a whole summer. Every Saturday, when Mina went to the store to get groceries, she would buy a Neilson's Jersey Milk chocolate bar. Everyday Henry's treat was to get one square of that chocolate bar. Even though he was expected to work hard, Henry was always treated well by the Kannegieters.

Hendrik was an excitable person and could be loud, but laughed a lot. He could sing like a lark. Mina was gentle and soft-spoken. Hendrik was a good farmer and was also very frugal. He used to say that he could live on fifty cents a day.

Kannegieter house built c. 1930.

In 1930 the Kannegieters built a lumber house in which plaster-board was used on the inside. During the thirties, Hendrik obtained the NE 28-61-3-5 after paying the taxes on it. After Hendrik bought a tractor, he would get one of the Sturwold girls to drive it while he sat on whatever piece of machinery was hitched up behind. If he wanted the machinery to go in reverse he would yell, "Retreat!" Hendrik also bought a Ford car, but was never able to drive it properly, often driving into fences and so on, so he eventually sold it.

Hendrik and Mina, 1940. Note the Ford car in the background which Hendrik eventually sold.

Mina was a neat housekeeper. She would not let Hendrik chew his tobacco in the house so before he came in from outside Hendrik would put his chew in a hollow next to the door jam. When he came outside, he would take it out of the hollow and begin chewing again.

Hendrik and Mina never had children. Fred Toebes would often walk over to Mina's and get cookies, and Mina always said that she wanted to adopt him. If children came over, Mina let them look at all the interesting things she had in the house. Fred was fascinated with the radio she had — imagine a box that could talk!

In 1944 Hendrik sold the farm. The deal was sealed with a handshake — no papers were signed. The Kannegieters retired and moved to Edmonton and in 1968 they moved back to the

Netherlands. Hendrik died there on January 28, 1970, and Mina on March 1, 1977

Joe Van Doesburg

RUDOLF AND GEESJE (SCHANS) [illegible]

Rudolf George Kieneker (c. 1877) was born in Assen, Drenthe, the Netherlands. He later became a carpenter and owned a shop in Amsterdam, but after the shop burned down he decided to immigrate to the U.S.A. in the early 1900s. His wife, Geesje, and the children followed later. The family was living in Grand [illegible] move again. In the spring of 1911 they went to [illegible] Rudolf took up the NW 10-62-3-5 in Neerlandia as a homestead in August 1914. Rudolf and Geesje moved to Neerlandia with their children **Jenny** (Jantje, June 30, 1898), **Grace** (Grietje April 26, 1900), **Ted** (Theodorus, September 7 1901), **Lina** (Roelina Hilberdina, December 18 1903), **Henry** (Koenraad Hendrik, May 13, 1909), **Hermina** (July 13, 1911), and **Hendrikje** (January 29, 1914)

The Kienekers were neighbours to the Kippers family and the boys often played together. They would sometimes play along the creek that ran through Kippers' land and one of their games was to see how far they dared to walk backwards toward the creek without looking. One time while playing this, one of the Kieneker boys fell in

It was difficult to make a living on the homestead. In 1915 Rudolf obtained $115 in relief (to be paid back) from the federal government. In [illegible] moved to Edmonton. Another son was born in 1917. The Kienekers moved to Monarch in 1918. Later they moved to Washington, U.S.A. After the Kienekers left Neerlandia, their house was burnt in a bush fire

Rudolf, Rev. [illegible] in front of log church, c. [illegible]

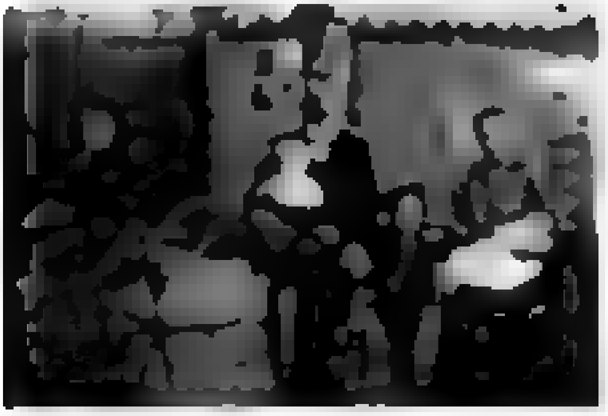
HENRY AND JENNIGJE (BRUINS) KIPPERS

Henry (Hendrik) Kippers was born November 16, 1883, in Overijssel, the Netherlands. Being the only child in the family, he took over his father's barbershop business as well as the shoemaker and harness shop. In 1903 Henry married Jennigje Bruins (May 11, 1875) in Nijverdal, Overijssel

In the winter of 1907, after reading an article in the *Twentsch Volksblad* by a teacher [Evert Aldus] who lived in Nijverdal, Alberta, Henry began thinking of farming in Canada. The whole village was full of talk about immigration because letters came regularly from family and friends writing about the new settlement in southern Alberta. It appealed to Henry, especially because he did not want to say "thank you" the rest of his life for three-cent haircuts. Jennigje, however, did not want to be a farmer's wife. She had always gotten sick when she had helped out with haying on her father's farm. Even so, Henry invited a Canadian agent from Antwerpen, Belgium, to come to their home. The agent gave information and showed pictures of the good life in Canada. After his visit Henry answered an ad in *De Standaard* asking for a voyage companion for a Canadian immi[illegible] wait for a year or so

Finally on the morning of April 10, 1910, the Kippers family left on the train to Rotterdam. With Henry and Jennigje were their four sons **Henry** (Hendrik, January 25, 1905), Klaas (May 24, 1906), **John** (Johannes, December 31, 1907), and Harm (Jan, March 28, 1909). The oldest three travelled for half fare and the baby for free. They went by a Batavier Line boat across to [illegible] Canada. The Kippers were accompanying Mrs [illegible] travelling to Edmonton where C. M. Quist was already living

Henry Kippers wrote memoirs of his immigration experience. The following account from



In the Netherlands, 1909. Henry; Hendrik holding John, Klaas, Jennigje holding Herm

the memoirs begins with their arrival in Edmonton.

Henry was determined that he wanted to live where there was a *Gereformeerde Kerk* and Christian School, or at least a chance of establishing them. There was nothing of this in Edmonton, and he did not know anyone either. Yet the Lord chooses his own ways, even if they are difficult for man. After about a week in Edmonton, all the Kippers children got sick. "Scarlet fever", it was said. "Picked up in Calgary." They called a doctor, who told them. "This is serious. Your three oldest have to go immediately to the hospital and the youngest [illegible] rugje understood only half of it, but they knew very well what was meant. Then the Lord dealt a hard blow. Only a few days later the feared news came — Klaas had died (May 13, 1910), and neither Henry or Jennigje were allowed to go there. Not even at the burial were they permitted to see their child. It did not go better with Herman at home: this little one the Lord took to Himself also (May 9, 1910). There they were, in a strange land, among a people whose [illegible] could pour their hearts out to brothers and sisters. An officer of the Salvation Army came to visit, and he indicated to Henry that he was willing, if they wished, to lead the funeral of the children. He read Psalm 23, which they knew very well. Here the Lord gave comfort; He took away, but also gave healing.

The evening after the funeral, both were deep in thought in the house. Suddenly Henry said, "There's an old man walking up and down the street. By all appearances he is looking for something. I'll see if I can help him." But the man was already knocking on the half-open door.

"Is this H. Kippers?" he asked, in good [illegible] your experience in *The Edmonton Journal*, and something inside of me said, 'You have to go there.' Then I thought, 'I must go there, not only because I am a Dutchman, but because we also serve the same Lord' . . . My name is Fred Baron. I came from the U.S.A., but for the last five years I have lived in this city and worked in a coal mine." Henry wanted to know if there were more *Nederlanders* in the city, and they decided to try to find them.

The following evening Fred Baron was on time. "I believe we should first go to Fraser Flats," he said. "There must be some Dutchmen there." To their great happiness, after some [illegible] few families, but they knew of others. After those were looked up, Henry said "I invite you all this coming Sunday to our place. Bring your wives and children along, of course, and we will worship the Lord together." That Sunday the house was full and the togetherness was pleasant. They agreed to meet together every [illegible] amazing thing was that nearly all had been in correspondence with the writer of the *De Standaard* advertisement.

The group formed an organization to establish a Christian Reformed Church. Fred Baron was made president, and Henry secretary. Henry received the same position when they formed a society for colonization, because no one considered staying in the city for long. They had come to Canada to farm, and that cannot be done in the city. They wanted a piece of land large enough for a decent-sized colony where they could have their own church and school so that they could continue their church ly life on their own.

Still, they were now in Edmonton for whatever length of time, so the secretary was asked to get in touch with the recently-organized Classis Pacific to see if Edmonton could become a congregation. In response to the writing ad- [illegible] ceived this answer, "Come yourself to the Classis and plead Edmonton's case there." In consultation with the brothers, Henry went and received a good reception at Classis [held in Lynden, Washington]. After the meeting Rev. van der Mey went with Henry on his return journey. Like a spreading fire it was soon known that Rev. van der Mey would lead the Sunday services. In the morning he preached on "God is Love", and in the afternoon he dealt with "Our God is a consuming fire." That day was certainly a *feast day* for all the brothers and sisters, even though they were gathered in a tent. Appropriately, they sang wholeheartedly "Voices can be heard in the tents of the right[illegible] singing of help and salvation" (Ps. 118). The minister asked the brothers and sisters to [illegible], 1910, to organize a congregation. That evening [illegible] spoke a short word, membership certificates were submitted, and after that an election for office bearers was held. The president and the secretary were chosen as elders, and Brother Gerrit Rozeboom as deacon. And so it was organized: The First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton.

"The Lord is good and great," said Henry that night. "Who would have thought it, that through the death of our children the way was opened to find each other and now we have our own congregation. Mysterious are the deeds of the Lord. After the bitter, he gives sweetness. We must learn to appreciate it. We have good reason to be thankful. The path the Lord has for us we do not understand completely, but that is not necessary: we need only to understand that his purpose is majestic."

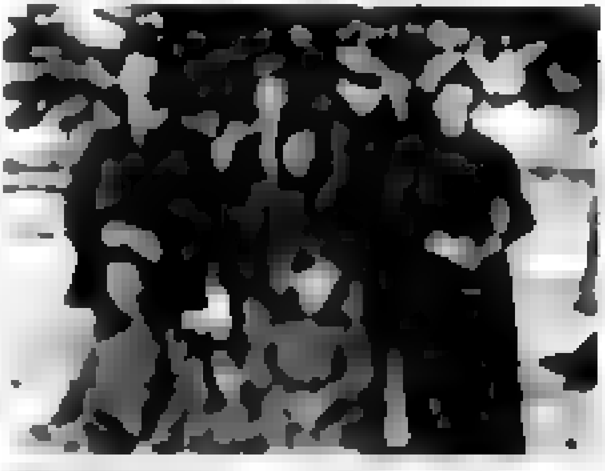
In Edmonton the Kippers family first lived on Griesbach Street. There a daughter, Gladys (Klazina), was born November 27, 1910. Henry first operated a harness-making shop on Casino Avenue, then a small grocery store on Pine Street. But he wanted to begin farming, and he [illegible] 28, 1911. He abandoned that quarter and later that year, on December 26, he filed on the NE 10-62-3-5 in the future Neerlandia area.

Another son, Gerrit, was born in Edmonton on November 15, 1913. Early the following year Henry and the family moved to the homestead. Their 20 by 30-foot house was built of spruce logs and, for a roof, poles had been put across [illegible] lumber except for a little piece of dirt floor un[illegible] leaked badly when it rained, so later a slab roof was put on. Once some friends came over and they asked, "Which is the house and which is the henhouse?" — one looked as bad as the other.

Henry had a good education and could [illegible] monium and *De Hollandsche Farmer*. In *De Hollandsche Farmer* the articles were on such topics as 'Grain Prices', 'Irrigation in Egypt', [illegible] the work he had done, he received a gold watch from *De Hollandsche Farmer*.

On the homestead Henry began clearing the land. The first crops were very small — the children cut it with bread knives. Henry used straw to tie up the bundles. When the grain was dry, it was threshed by clubbing it out with sticks and used to feed the chickens during the winter. Henry cut the hay along the creek with a scythe. After it was dry it was stacked in piles, and Jennigje helped him carry it to the yard on a homemade carrier with two poles. The hay was used to feed the cattle during the winter.

One winter during those early years they had no money and did not know where the next bag of flour would come from, but they knew Whom to go to with their cares. They laid it before the Lord, and the next morning a Vega farmer who owed Henry some money for work he had done came and paid him, providing him money for flour. Two more daughters were born to Henry and Jennigje: **Alice** (Arendje, July 27, 1915) and **Jenny** (Jennigje, December [illegible]



[illegible] Henry. Middle: Gerrit, Jennigje. Front [illegible] c. 1922

In 1917 Henry received the patent to the land. He was cropping seventeen acres and had [illegible] in the house. he had built a 16 by 18-foot log stable, an 18 by 22-foot log and lumber stable, and a workshop. There had also been a well dug and one mile of rail and wire fence put up.

Each spring Jennigje put in a big garden. It yielded many potatoes, but the beans always froze because the growing season was so short. Other vegetables such as beets, turnips, carrots, and cabbage, though, did well. In the summer and fall the family picked many wild raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries.

Jennigje did not know how to sew when she first came to the homestead. But Froukje Anema and Roelofje Sturwold taught her how, and in later years she did a lot of sewing. When the family could afford it, material was ordered out of *Eaton's* catalogue. But more often the clothes were made out of flour sacks. One time Gladys got a new outfit — a blouse made out of flour sacks dyed red and a black jumper that had come in a parcel of clothing sent by the Red Cross. Jennigje and Gladys wore straw hats to church or for special occasions, and when the hats became faded, Jennigje dyed them or covered them with cloth.

In the early years the family walked everywhere. Walking was at least as fast as using oxen. Henry walked to Davis Store in Mellowdale to get groceries, and the family always walked to church. Gladys often stayed at the Anemas between services. Once Henry had such a bad toothache that he set off for Westlock to see a doctor. He had gone as far as Old Barrhead when his toothache disappeared so he turned and went back home. After 1917 Henry bought a team of horses from Peter Kampman. Later he bought four horses from Albert Ritsema who was leaving for the U.S.A. Once one of the horses fell through the root cellar which was beside the house. The wood covering the cellar had rotted. Henry butchered that horse in the cellar.

For many winters Henry worked in the Chisholm Lumber Camp to make money to keep the family through the winter. He would walk there and back, leaving on Sunday night and coming home the following Saturday night. He often took eggs and butter along to sell to the Camp. When Henry Jr. was old enough, he went to work at Chisholm too. Henry Jr. also went to the prairies to make money for the family. With part of his earnings one year, Gladys received her first new coat; it was green with a soft fur collar.

When it was too dark to do any work, the children would sit around the table together and Jennigje would tell stories. She was good at it, and the children enjoyed listening to her. Henry was one of the first Sunday School teachers. He always taught the children in Dutch. At the Christmas program he would often tell the Christmas story to the children.

Gerrit, Gladys, John, Jennigje. Front: Gladys, Jennie, Allen, [illegible] [illegible]

Hendrik, Gladys, Allen, Gerrit, John, Jennie, [illegible]

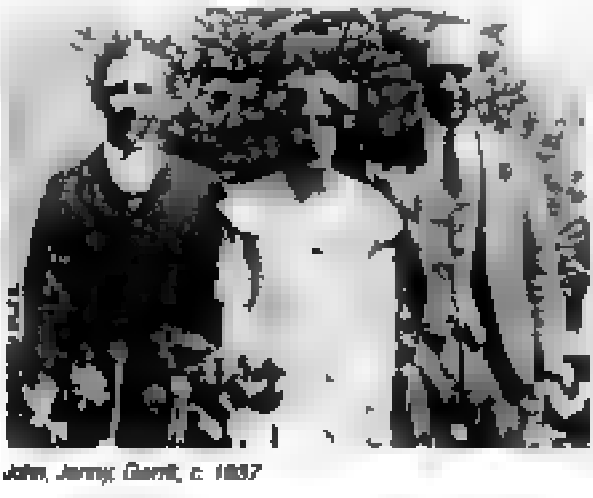
The Kippers children often played with their neighbours, the Schuring children, and also with the Wiscarson children who lived about two miles away. There were chores to do too, however. It was the children's job to get the

cows who grazed east in the meadows along the creek. Sometimes they would go on horseback to get them. Jennigje did the milking.

Around 1925, when Gladys was fifteen and Gerrit was fourteen, they quit school to help out at home. Even though Gladys preferred to work outside, she did a lot of household chores. She took over the sewing work and also did knitting. She began canning vegetables — Jennigje had either stored them in the cellar or salted them down in crocks. Gerrit did not work in the lumber camps during the winter but instead went hunting and trapping. He trapped mainly east of the homestead, getting coyote, squirrel, weasel and muskrat pelts. These he shipped by mail to the Hudson's Bay Company. The money he received went to the family.

In 1928 Gerhard Paas, a bachelor, moved in just north of the Kippers homestead and came over quite often. Twice a week he came to get milk and some of Jennigje's good home-baked bread. One New Year's Eve the family was sitting in the kitchen and around midnight was startled by two shotgun blasts near the house. After a few minutes Gerhard came in — he had fired right outside their window to announce the new year.

One day around 1929, Gerrit was working the land, walking beside the root harrows. Suddenly the horses went on a runaway, and Gerrit broke his leg. Rev. Van Der Woude took him to Barrhead with his car, but the doctor there could not set it, so Rev. Van Der Woude took him to the Misericordia in Edmonton. Gerrit stayed there for about a week.


John, Jenny, Gerrit, c. 1937

By the 1930s Henry had about thirty head of cattle. He was milking twenty-four cows and shipping the cream to Edmonton. In 1932 Henry took out a second homestead, the NE 10-62-3-5.

Gladys married Hendrik Strydhorst in 1932. Henry Jr. married Sophie Wierenga, daughter of Lammert and Hendertje, in 1936. In 1942 Alice married Eko Rowaan, and Gerrit married Clara Krikke. In 1943 Jennie and Klaas Rowaan were married and in 1948 John married Lucy Post.

Jennigje, Hendrik, c. 1940.

Henry and Jennigje had retired from farming in 1944 and moved to the Centre. Henry still kept active. He managed the Credit Union, sold license plates, and looked after the cemetery. He kept the books for the Credit Union until he was 80 years old. Jennigje was bedridden for about a year and went to be with her Lord on April 19, 1948. In May 1949 Henry remarried to Ann Lanning. In July 1973 Ann died of a heart attack. She was buried in the U.S.A. Later that year Gladys and Henry Strydhorst

Ann, Henry 1980s.

moved into Henry's house with him as he was too old to live alone and would not move in with them. He was 89 years old then. Henry passed away October 6, 1977, at nearly 94 years of age.

Gladys Strydhorst

ROELOF AND BOUKJE (KEMPENAR) KOOY

Roelof (Ralph) Kooy wanted to move from the prairie where he and his family lived. Having read glowing reports about Neerlandia in an article written by Henry Kippers Sr. in *De Wachter*. Roelof and a friend went in 1913 or 1914 to look the north country over. But Roelof was not impressed. He wrote to a friend of his, Jan Postman, who lived in Grande Prairie that "There is too much wood on the ground out there, so we didn't take up homesteads [illegible] a fine place for hunters and fishermen, but too hard work to clear a farm out there."[1] It was not that Roelof was afraid of hard work, but at middle age he was almost too old to begin a pioneer's life.

Roelof had been born in 1866 in Groningen, the Netherlands. He married Boukje (Bertha) Kempenar (born in 1863, Surhuisterveen, Friesland,) in May 1891. Roelof was a shoemaker by trade and was operating a shoe shop in Surhuisterveen when he decided to immigrate to America. He, Boukje, and their seven children arrived in Chicago in 1905. There their youngest child died of measles. A year or two later the family moved to a farm in Vesper, Wisconsin, but there was too much heavy timber on it to suit Roelof. The next time the family moved (1910) it was to the Dutch settlement of Nijverdal (Nobleford) in Alberta. But there the problem was hail and drought, which wiped out their crops in the following years. This made Roelof anxious to find another place to farm.

Roelof made a visit to Neerlandia but was considering a move to Grande Prairie. Finally he decided on Neerlandia — likely because of the Christian community. He took out a homestead (SW 5-62-3-5) on November 23, 1914. That first winter Roelof's son **Pete** (Pieter, December 20, 1894) and daughter **Alice** (October 24, 1896) came to the homestead with him. (Roelof's oldest son, John, continued farming in Nobleford but came to Neerlandia for visits, while his family lived here.) Alice did the cooking but she left in the spring, and her sister **Helen** (Henke Martha, May 1, 1899) took over. Roelof and Pete were building a house with some help from Ben Lievers, Jacob Olthuis, and Henry Kippers, so Helen did the cooking for those men as well.

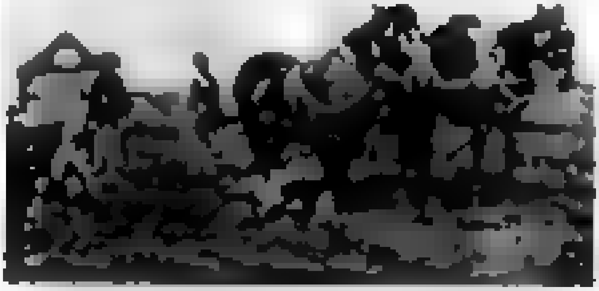
The house was built of logs, but was nicely finished off inside with lumber. It was big — 28

Kooy homestead.

by 24 feet and had seven rooms, most of which had clothes closets. The Kooys built their house near the northeast corner of their quarter. To get there on the local roads and trails was a task in itself.

Earlier that winter the Neerlandia church had been built. The following story has often been told about Roelof's involvement with the building project. The church was built of logs, and most of the men of the community, including Roelof, came to help put it up. When the walls became too high to lift the logs on by hand, Roelof offered to walk home and get his block and tackle. After about half an hour he reached home, and soon was on his way again with the block and tackle. Since it was quite heavy, Roelof decided to take a shortcut to get back. He set out southeast, past high poplar trees and stands of willow, and around bogs. After an hour or so he still had not reached the church site, and he realized that he was lost. He dropped the block and tackle on the ground, and sat down on a nearby log to rest. Then he heard a dog barking. He picked up his load and hurried toward the sound. To his surprise it was his own dog barking — he was back home!

The youngest Kooy children, Grace (Grietje, May 1, 1901) and Ida (November 10, 1902) came with Boukje to the homestead in 1915. They travelled by train, first to Edmonton and then to Westlock where Pete picked them up with the horses and wagon.



Ida with dog, Grace, Pete

The Kooy homestead bordered on Baird Lake, which the Kooys nicknamed "The Hudson." They built a ramp into the lake and Roelof made a rowboat so that the girls could go boating in the summer.

Roelof brought cattle from Monarch, probably first shipping them by train to Westlock, then herding them to Neerlandia. He had twelve of them, including a big red Shorthorn bull. To shelter the livestock Roelof and Pete built a log hip roof barn. On top of the barn, the Kooys put a huge swinging bell which could be rung by pulling a rope. The girls used it when they had to call the men for meals.

On Baird Lake: Jennie Oldeghem, Helen, Dena Meeuwsen, Peter, John Oldeghem

Helen Kooy taught school in the log church for about two years. Though she sometimes rode the pony to school she usually walked. She taught about four grades.

In 1918 Roelof received the patent to his homestead. He was cropping twenty-four acres (twenty of those had been cleared in 1916) and he owned eight cattle and two horses. As well as the house and barn, a granary had been built. There were also two wells on the place.

John, Grace, Peter, Alice, Helen, Ida, Roelof, Boukje and one-and-three-quarter miles of wire and rail fencing. The total value of the improvements was $1425

Roelof had some skills in tooth pulling and also some tools for that purpose, so the neighbourhood children would go to Roelof if they needed pulling done — the only lasting cure for a toothache. Henry Kippers Jr and Willy Olthuis were among those who got a tooth pulled by Roelof

Roelof was active in the community in other ways. He served as elder in the church from December 1916 until the family left Neerlandia. Boukje had never liked it on the homestead, so in June 1918 the Kooys returned to Monarch. In January 1919 Pete Kooy married Jennie Oldegbers, and they also moved to the Monarch area. Roelof and Boukje and their two youngest daughters moved again in 1925, this time to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A. Roelof died there in 1933 of a massive stroke. Boukje died in 1954.

Ida Hempel

John, Jennie Oldegbers, Ida, Pete, Grace, Helen, and Alice 1918.

The following are some letters that Roelof Kooy wrote while he lived in Neerlandia. They are addressed to his friend Postman in Grande Prairie. In his "advertising" of the community to his friend, Roelof gives us an inside look at what was likely a common mind set

> By far most of the people here are very poor. First of all [illegible] but each year it improves in all areas. [illegible] had [illegible] more here [illegible] think the English are leaving here. Many are already gone [illegible] Here there is still one, his name is Mr. [illegible] He has three quarters but wants to leave. The land is available [illegible] thought that was just something for a man like Postman
>
> Many greetings
> Your friend R. Kooy

Neerlandia August 16
Friend Postman and family

> I have already for some time neglected to write you again. We are very healthy and hope you are too. We are living on our homestead [illegible] Township [illegible] Range [illegible] West of 5th Meridian. [illegible] where we make hay. We have already [illegible] already in stack. Until now we have done it with [illegible] between the brush and trees. [illegible] the trees and bushes. That is also the reason that I did not write you earlier, because I know very well that where you are the country is much [illegible] than here and [illegible] that about this land [illegible] you would find it disappointing.
>
> I would gladly have you here, because many Hollanders are living here but they are all poor and it's understandable that it is difficult to keep a Dutch school going. Even the teacher Mr. van der Burg is leaving [illegible] during the [illegible] season and our daughter [illegible] is taking over while he is gone. We would really like to keep the Christian school, otherwise a public school will come in here and that will be more expensive. If we keep the school there will never be a public one because there are only a few English living in between us and they cannot begin anything against [illegible] There is no danger of having [illegible] But [illegible] need the people are mostly all poor. If some people like you came it would be a gain. With such [illegible] we might be able to fix things up in every way [illegible] And [illegible] a man that [illegible] taken on.
>
> The wheat, barley, and oats that grow here are very good. We bought heavy oats for the horses for them [illegible] cents a bushel. I am not going to [illegible] about [illegible] road right [illegible] a half mile from the post office, three miles from the church. The road will be graded up this fall. If you want to do something you have to see the country and that's all. [illegible] stay with us; we have a big house [illegible] with shingles and [illegible] upstairs. If you have to go to Edmonton again then come by and stop over at our place.
>
> What his [illegible] land looks like and how much is cleared I know nothing about. How much open land he has I don't know either. I only heard that [illegible]

wanted to leave and didn't have anything more and then I thought of you

Many greetings from us
B. Kooy and wife and children

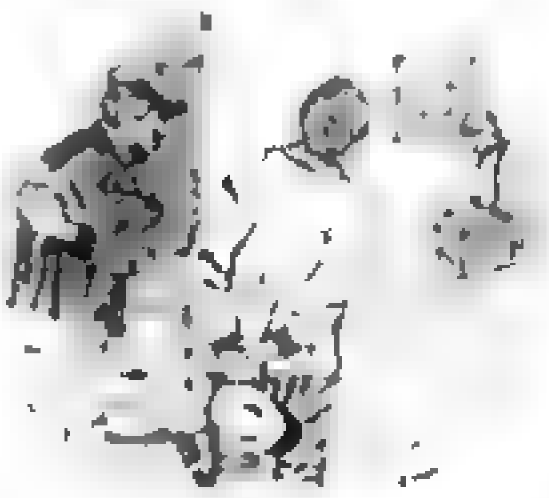
Most of quotes from Kooy's letters taken from *The Strength of Ten* [illegible] of Knight Publishing Ltd. Any other quotes are from letters in the private collection of [illegible]

KLAAS AND JANNA (OLDEGBERS) KRIKKE
ALBERT KRIKKE

The Canadian federal government sponsored an overseas advertising campaign to attract settlers to the Canadian west. One such advertisement caught the interest of a young Dutchman working in a clothing factory in Germany. Born in Oldemarkt, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on October 9, 1886, Klaas Krikke had lived there until both his parents died. Klaas, then fifteen years of age, had gone with Henry Kannegieter and Peter Schuurman to work in nearby Germany. Others in his family had gone to live with relatives. One brother, Bill, was brought up by the Meselink family and another brother, Roelf, was raised by an older sister, Lammetje. Now Klaas and Bill Krikke and Peter Schuurman, all of Enschede, set out for Alberta. They arrived in Edmonton in 1912 and worked there before taking up homesteads in Neerlandia in 1913. Henry Kannegieter was already here.

Klaas filed on the SW 3-62-3-5 on September 24, 1913. Here he, his brother Bill, Bill Oldegbers, and John Gelderman built a cabin and lived together until their cabins could be constructed. A bunch of young, high-spirited men living together usually results in lots of fun, some of it accidental and some of it planned. These men were no exception. Their early attempts at cooking created some problems. One of them tackled bread-baking. Mixing and kneading the dough was no problem. The dough even started to rise. The problem was it kept rising and rising and rising, out of the pan and onto the table. The dough was put into tins with lids, the lids were tied down, and the tins put in the oven, but the lids soon popped off, the bread rose over the edge and baked lopsidedly. Estimating the right amount of rice to cook for one meal was also a challenge. The first guess resulted in enough rice to last the bachelors for a week.

When each of the men had his own cabin, they played pranks on one another. Bill Oldegbers was a trusting fellow, eager to please. One day Klaas Krikke and John Gelderman went to visit Bill for an evening. On the way, they planned the prank which they proceeded to put into practice when they got to Bill's shack. Soon after their arrival, they told their host that it was cold in his shack. Obligingly, Bill put some wood in the heater. It did not take long before they complained that it was still cold. Once again wood was added. This did not seem to satisfy the visitors, they put on their overcoats and buttoned them up. Even then they seemed unable to get warm and moved closer to the fire. Finally, complaining that since Bill was unable to get his cabin warm they would have to go home to get warmed up, the visitors left. Poor Bill got little sleep that night because his cabin was unbearably hot and took a long time to cool down.



Not all of Klaas' time, however, was spent playing practical tricks on his friends. He was also proving up his quarter and more importantly, courting a young lady. Janna Oldegbers had immigrated in 1911 and was now working in Edmonton. Klaas and Janna had known each other already in the Netherlands where they had attended the same school. This time, however, their interest in each other grew and on January 22, 1917, they became the first couple to get married in the log building of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev

Jongbloed of Edmonton officiated at the ceremony.

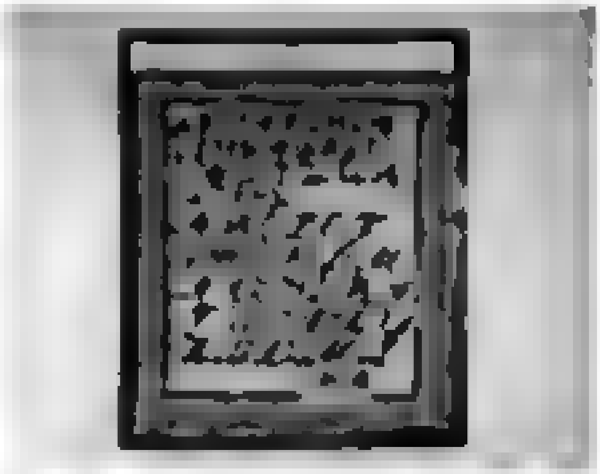
In many ways life was easier for Klaas Krikke after he married. He no longer needed to cook, wash, or do the cleaning. Janna was a loving and willing worker, helping out in every way she could. They struggled together to make a good home for their family. Their first home was the bachelor shack with the sod roof. As their family grew, Klaas built another log house measuring 14 by 22 feet, and later added a lean-to. That log house was cold in the winter and wet in summer when it rained. Many of Janna's possessions were spoiled by the water dripping through. The floor of the house was rough boards which had to be scrubbed with a brush, then wiped dry with a cloth. Big cracks developed between the boards as the lumber dried but they served a useful purpose. They were conveniently located for Klaas Krikke and his friend, Bertus Bos, to use as spittoons when they were chewing tobacco. Janna naturally disliked this practice. Their aim was not as accurate as it might be, and she knew who would have to scrub the floor again when they were done spitting.

The Krikke home was often a stopping place for those who lived further north in Neerlandia and Vega. Here they could rest and be assured of some food. Helping was common in the pioneer days. Many of those who stopped were [illegible]

Ryer, the first son, was born January 7, 1918, after a difficult labour. Help was sought from a doctor in Westlock but the baby was born before he arrived. The next year, on January 20, 1919, Johanna was born. By March 22, 1920, Klaas Krikke was able to patent his land. He had built up his cattle herd to fifteen but had no horses. He had two log stables valued together at $300. In addition he had dug two wells. He had three acres broken, seven acres of land in crop, and five acres slashed. The balance of the land was covered with heavy timber. Three miles of fence had been built by this time.

Janna kept vegetables in a small garden. Wild fruit and meat of wild animals and birds were also part of their diet. As time went on they bought a few chickens and other animals. During the harvest season Klaas went to Nobleford to earn cash to purchase necessities for their farm and home.

Sometimes it was very rough, and "if we could've crawled back to Holland we would've," Janna said. There were many good, happy, and prosperous times though, when they got pleasure and a sense of achievement from their hard work. Janna was an artistic woman. Before her marriage she had done oil painting as a hobby. She was also a capable seamstress. She and her sister Lily spent many hours hand-making a baptismal gown. The skirt was edged with dainty scallops and the bodice was covered with delicate embroidery, including an embroidered "K". Janna also did embroidery for others, creating designs of flowers or fruit, and at one time taught fancywork to the Messelink and Anema girls.

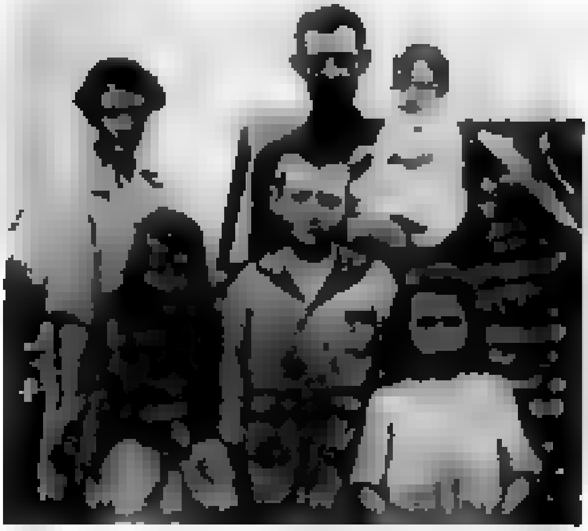


[illegible]

As a mother, Janna Krikke kept busy. She did much sewing and knitting to keep her family warm and well dressed. The family continued to grow in size and number. Gladys (Kazina) was born September 26, 1920; Lily (Lenda) came on October 8, 1923; Ralph (Roelof) arrived October 10, 1925, and Albert Jan was born January 10, 1929. The Krikkes were good and loving parents, putting their children's needs before their own. The children all went to Sunday school which was taught by three Leevers of the Brethren. Here they received Bible instruction, and learned many Bible verses and songs.

Klaas Krikke enjoyed his work and was particular about keeping the farm neat. He would walk through his fields picking weeds, making sure he pulled up the root as well. He seldom

Klaas and Jenna, 1925.



Back: Jenna, Klaas, Ralph. Middle: Jo, Ryan. Front: Lily, Gladys, 1929.

had spare time because draining puddles, fixing fences, and making other repairs kept him busy.

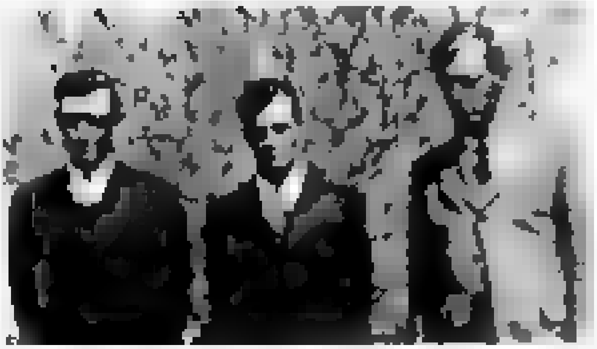
It was not all work with Klaas though. His sense of humour often surfaced. He knew he could always expect visitors on Halloween. One year he decided that the best way to cope with the pranksters was to join them. To that end he hid in the hayloft, a favourite target. Sure enough, some young fellows soon climbed up there. In the darkness Klaas blended in with the group as they discussed what to do. Now it so happened that Klaas had not had time to put his binder away for the winter so, disguising his voice, he subtly encouraged them to move the binder. This they did, and with their task accomplished the pranksters, laughing at their joke, left the farm. Klaas returned to his house laughing too, because he now had the binder exactly where he wanted it without any effort on his part.

The children too had fun as they grew up. Upstairs in the log house Johanna and Gladys would play tag when they should have been in bed. One night, in their excitement, they almost set the house on fire. They knocked down the red-hot stove pipe and it lay smoking on the floor. Klaas came up, put on his mitts, and put the pipe back in place. Then he took the mitts off and directed a stern reprimand to Johanna.

As the children grew up they were expected to help on the farm. One of the fall tasks was filling the mattresses with straw. Each child had to shake out the old straw and take the empty cover to the straw stack, fill it with fresh straw, and drag it home. Once the mattresses were back on the beds the children had great fun jumping on them to get them into the desired shape.

Klaas kept ten or fifteen sheep in the 1930s

Back: Johanna, Koby (a cousin), Klaas, Jenna, Lily. Front: Ryan, Ralph, Albert.



Ryer, Ralph, Albert

Janna and her daughters carded, washed, and spun the wool. The Krikke girls also had to help their mother cooking, cleaning, and mending, but when their assigned tasks were finished they were free to choose their activities. Janna encouraged her girls to draw and paint, and gave them some instruction on how to do it. Johanna enjoyed painting but Gladys and Lily preferred being outdoors, finding birds' nests, picking berries, and studying the plants. In their free time Gladys, Lily, Ralph, and Albert often gathered around the organ and sang hymns while their father played. Ryer, the oldest child, was a serious boy who enjoyed doing marquetry.

The boys followed their father by becoming farmers. The girls worked out for a time, all of them in the nursing field. All the Krikke children except Lily live in the district. Ryer married Jurina Elgersma, Johanna married Henry Bender of Mellowdale, and Gladys married Pete Mast. Lily, who became a registered nurse, married George Allen of Craigmyle, Alberta, on July 3, 1965. They have one son. Ralph married Rita Geiderman, and Albert, who stayed single, lives on the original homestead where he keeps dairy cattle.

Klaas died April 1, 1964, at the age of 77. His wife, Janna, outlived him by several years. She was housebound for the last years of her life because of arthritis, but she remained cheerful. She died August 12, 1982, trusting in the Lord's promises.

Krikke Family

WILLIAM AND CORNELIA (VAN DER VEER) KRIKKE

William Krikke was born in Avereest, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on October 15, 1891. Avereest was a factory town and his father was employed there. At the age of twenty, William and his brother Klaas decided to join the migration to Canada. The only available boat was one that arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. From there it was a long train ride to Edmonton, so the Krikkes saw parts of America not seen by those immigrants that landed in Eastern Canada.

Upon arrival in Edmonton, they immediately made contact with others whom they knew from the Netherlands. William and Klaas, too, caught the vision of a Dutch settlement in which to bring up their future families and to teach their beliefs in freedom. With these thoughts in mind, William filed on the NW 3-62-3-5 on September 25, 1913. His first home was a log shack.

"East-West in the Fatherland is also not so nice." William [illegible]

When the First World War broke out, William received his call to serve in the Dutch army. He strongly felt it was his duty as a Dutch citizen to return to the Netherlands. Thus he did in August 1914 and was placed with the regiment known as the Queen's Guard. Since it was the duty of the regiment to protect and guard Queen Wilhelmina. they travelled throughout the Netherlands with the queen

After he was released from the army, William served as a policeman in Rotterdam. During a skating outing, a friend introduced him to Cornelia Martina Van Der Veer. She had been born in Leiden, Utrecht, on September 18 1890. Cornelia had worked in different homes. mostly doing housework

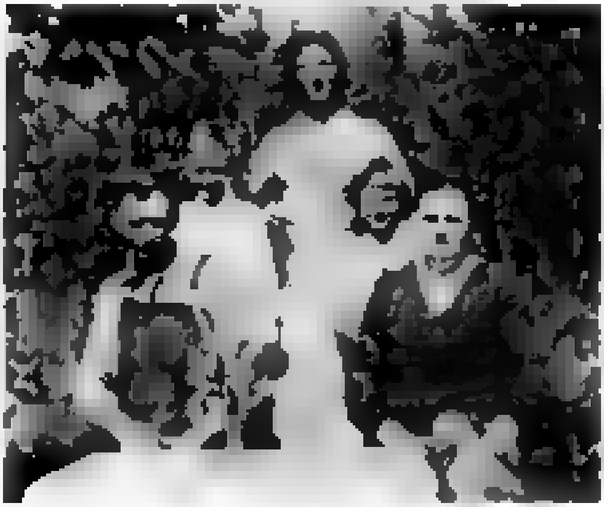
Wedding day: Cornelia, William, 1919

William and Cornelia were married in Rotterdam on May 7, 1919 They immediately made plans to travel to Canada and left the Netherlands in November 1919. This time the route was via Montreal. and within two weeks they arrived in Neerlandia. Their first log house was soon constructed and Cornelia tried her best to make it cozy From the Netherlands she had taken a German-made sewing machine that even had a reverse stitch on it This was put to good use (This machine is still being used by daughter Clara) Because umbrellas were in frequent use in the old country, Cornelia brought several umbrellas with her. The only use they ever saw in the "new land" was inside the sod roof house where it rained just as hard inside as outside They later ended up as toys for the children

William worked away from home to make some extra money One summer, he helped clear some of Tjeerd (George) Visser's land In his absence, Cornelia had to milk the cow The mosquitoes were so thick, she swathed her arms, legs, and neck in newspaper to keep from being bitten while doing the chores. She churned the cream into butter which was sold for cash to buy essentials

In the winter William also worked for the Chisholm Lumber Company. He froze his toes several times while walking home. During the summer, he managed to clear about five acres on his farm, and the following year he seeded it When William obtained his title on November 26 1923. it is recorded that he had nine acres cropped and another five broken He also owned twelve cattle, two stables, a well, granary. two-and-a-half miles of rail fencing, and a half mile of wire fencing All this plus the log house were valued at $900

The Krikkes had three children Clara (Klaasje Raampje), born March 14, 1922; Arie, born November 12, 1927, and Lula (Lammigje), born June 17 1930



William, Arie, Clara, Lula, Cornelia, 193[illegible]

In 1934 William contracted pneumonia and though his life was in danger, he eventually recovered. Clara and Arie went to Tante Janna until the danger was over and Petertje Schoonekamp came to help nurse William. During his illness friends and neighbours helped by doing chores and other tasks. They delivered firewood, and Toney Sturwold came and sawed it. After this illness, William caught colds easily. He also had allergy attacks.

Cornelia suffered from phlebitis and often had open ulcers on her legs. Despite these problems, Cornelia felt very much at home in Neerlandia. Nevertheless, she wrote letters constantly to her friends and relatives in the old country in order to keep in contact with them. She enjoyed reading poems or other selections at community functions.

One day two travelling salesmen came into the farmyard. They had a great deal to show Cornelia, who was home alone. They wanted some chickens, and in exchange she could have a nice set of dishes. There was only one problem: they did not have the dishes with them. Cornelia trustingly made the deal and the salesmen picked out the ten best chickens, promising to send the dishes. Egg production [illegible] gone. No dishes arrived either. William told his wife that she certainly had been "taken in" by those fast talkers. When the lost chickens were almost forgotten, a parcel arrived. Cornelia told the children it must be something from the Netherlands. But lo and behold, it was a set of beautiful, thin, lovely china dishes. They were almost too nice to use, but were used on special occasions and lasted a long time.

Chickens and eggs were essentials on the farm. In the winter, an old coal oil lamp was [illegible] to provide more daylight hours. The result was [illegible] ground in a coffee grinder, cooked, and then a little pepper was added. It was believed that the spice made the chickens a bit more ambitious.

The children helped their parents whenever possible. Clara did many hours of work outside. Before one could begin field work, the horses had to be caught. This was difficult because they were never beside the barn, but always as far away as possible. Clara would entice them one at a time with a little bit of oats and then slip a halter over the horse's head.

Cornelia, [illegible], Arie, and a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. 1917

But there was time for playing too. One time Clara dressed Arie in a pretty dress and bonnet, because she had always wanted a sister to play with. Arie did not mind, and they played happily together. That is, until Father William came along. He had only one son, and he fully [illegible]

The Krikke children grew up and got married. [illegible] married Cecelia Tiemstra, and Lula married Herman Gelderman.

William left Neerlandia only twice since he came back in 1919. The first time he walked to Edmonton to obtain his Canadian citizenship and the second time he rode to Edmonton to visit friends. The rest of his life was spent almost entirely on the farm in Neerlandia.

William and Cornelia were never blessed with prosperity and found life in the adopted land full of hardships and poverty. One cow died from milk fever, another ate a poison plant, and yet another had trouble calving and had to be shot. Life was a constant struggle. Yet through all these hardships they felt the loving hand of the Lord in all they did. They were rich in His promises. William passed away February 19, 1960, and Cornelia soon after on May 27, 1960.

Clara Kuipers

TOM LEWIS

Tom (Thomas) A. Lewis filed on the NE 27-61-3-5 on October 17, 1911, next to the quarters his friends George Wing and George Caughlin had filed on. Tom was forty-six years old at the time. He had been born in Huron County, Ontario. He was a tall man — nearly six feet tall, rather thin, and had brown hair. He was a carpenter by trade, but did a lot of hunting and trapping while living on the homestead, where he built a 12 by 14-foot log house.

Tom abandoned the homestead in 1913. By then he had cleared three acres of land and had also grubbed the roots out of the cleared acres. He moved to Ontario, but later returned to this area and took up the NE 34-60-3-5 in Mellowdale. He died September 5, 1920, after being gassed in a well.

BEN AND ALICE (WALVOORT) LIEVERS

Ben Lievers received the patent to his homestead (SE 5-62-3-5) in 1920. He had cleared fifteen acres, but the balance was heavy bush. He was cropping twelve of those acres and had twenty-four cattle and two horses. The horses and eighteen of the cattle had been obtained in 1919. On the farm he had built two log stables and put up 2½ miles of pole fence. He had also dug two wells — one twenty feet deep and the other twelve. Ben took out a second homestead, the NE 32-61-3-5, in 1929. He later bought the SW 4-62-3-5.

Some remembrances by the Lievers children include the following stories.

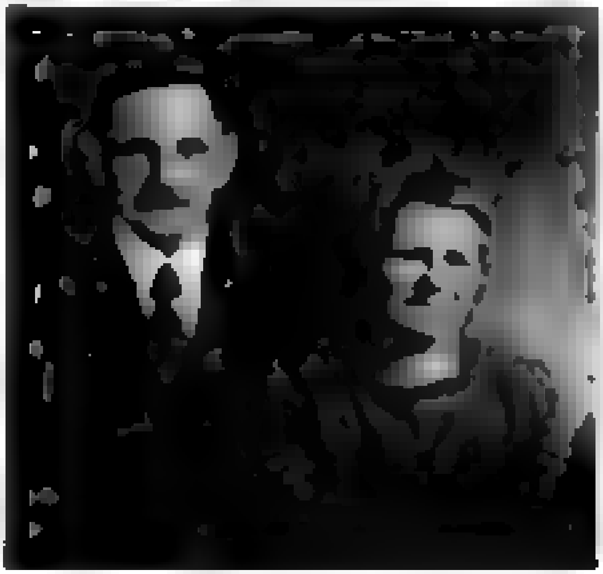
Their log house had no floor. The day they moved in (1914), the dry grass was so tall that Hanna and Minnie could not see each other in the house! But their running around and Mother Lievers' good housekeeping soon had the grass under control. When it rained the only dry place in the house was under the table. If the rain came from the west they moved to the east side of the house and vice versa. They often had three-day rains then, too, prolonging the inconvenience. Rather than wake the girls up at night, Mother Lievers would put pans on the beds to catch the drips.

When they were little girls Hanna and Minnie were sent two china dolls from an aunt in the Netherlands. One day when Mother Lievers was working outside, the sisters took the dolls down from their resting place high up on the cupboard and were busy playing with them when their mother came back in. Mother Lievers thought they were being so good that she let them play on while she went about her duties. But then Hanna teased Minnie, who became so vexed that she got a hammer and smashed Hanna's doll to pieces. When Mother Lievers came back in and was told what had happened, she said, "Then Minnie shall give her doll to Hanna." That was the last doll that Minnie ever had.

Minnie recalls that their very first garden was dug by hand by her mother — no small task. Her mother had a good garden every year. She worked hard inside and out. She had much work to do since she was often alone for days with the children while Dad Lievers was carpentering in southern Alberta. At these times she was afraid of the Indians who used to tent across the lake. When the family moved into their second log house, built about a year after their first one, Hanna, Minnie, and Rieka were told that they had to sleep three in a bed. Then they argued about who would sleep in the middle. No one wanted to, so Minnie agreed to take that place. As she was a light sleeper, she planned to start in the middle and as soon as the others were asleep, she would push one of them into that position. It worked and no one was the wiser.

As well as school and play, there was always a lot of work to be done. Minnie would have to stay home while Mother Lievers cut the grass with a scythe and then raked it by hand to make hay for the cattle.

Life was not dull on the Lievers farm with five boys around. They did have to work hard and times were tough, but they also had their fun. Ben Jr., John, and Gerrit were often up to



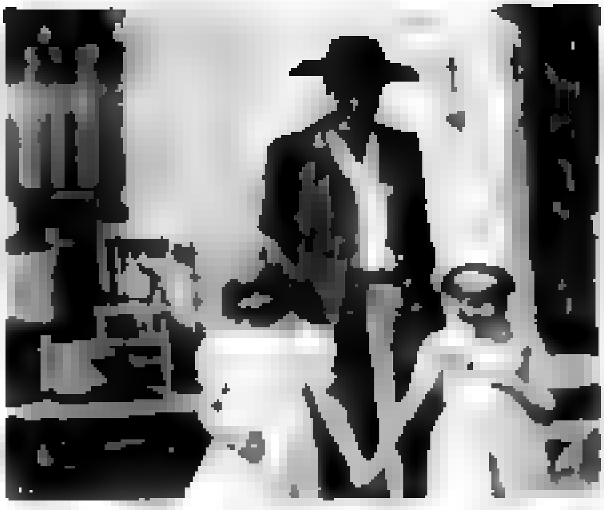
[illegible]

pranks. Once a neighbour boy was at their place. The Lievers had a Fordson tractor with four coils that could give quite a kick when induced to do so. The boys told their neighbour to put his hand to the coil. He said, "Do you think I'm crazy?" So the three suggested they catch a chicken and hold it to the coil. They tried to catch a chicken but really wanted the neighbour boy to do that, so edged him along to catch this chicken. He finally did and then held it to the coil. Guess who got the kick? He did!

Hanna married Ralph Krikke. After Minnie quit school, she got a job housekeeping for Mrs. Levy in Neerlandia, then worked for families in Westlock and Edmonton. Bill married Gwen Broadhead in 1946.

Ben Sr. had a farm sale in 1947 or 1948 but continued to live on the home place. His wife, Alice, passed away November 17, 1949, at the age of 66. Then Minnie came home to look after her dad. Ben Sr. took a trip to the Netherlands in 1950 and sponsored three immigrants from the Netherlands, Ben and Bill Walraven and Gerhard Beyers. They all stayed at the Lievers and Minnie had the job of keeping food on the table for them as well as for her brothers and her dad. Those were busy years for her.

Minnie

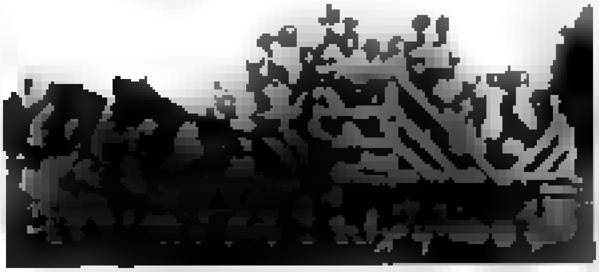

Rieka taking Hilda Molodowich (right) and a friend to Sunday School, 1945

After Minnie had helped at home for twelve years, Rieka took over and Minnie got work with the Housekeeping Department at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. She worked there for twelve years until her retirement. She is now living in the Muttart Homes in Edmonton. Henry Lievers married Jean Halbert of Calgary in 1943. They bought the SW 5-62-3-5, where they farmed, but sold it in 1960. Alice married Sam Kiffiak in 1948 and Ben Jr married Maude Flint in 1952.

John Lievers bought the home place when his father had the farm sale. In 1952 Ben Jr. took over the working of John's quarter and John got a job with Import Tool in Edmonton, where he still works. John married Helen Kipp of Westlock in 1954 and they have two sons. John bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Ben Jr in 1956. He still owns two quarters of land in Neerlandia. Gerrit married Betty Wilson of Lethbridge in 1957 and they live in Abbotsford, B.C.

In his later years Ben Sr. would walk to the store every morning for the mail, sometimes stopping along the way to talk to another oldtimer, Klaas Krikke. Ben Sr. passed away April 24, 1971.

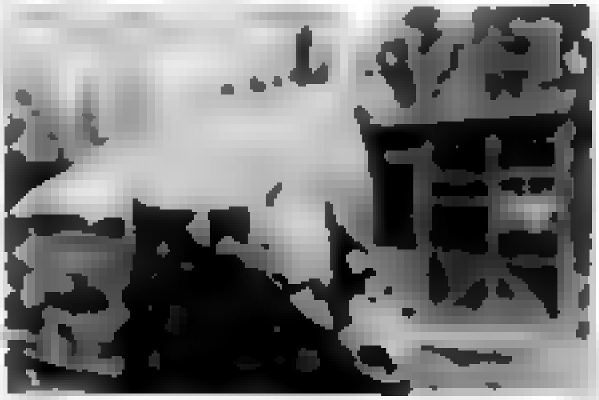
Lievers Family


The Lievers taking a group of children to Lac La Nonne Bible Camp, 1930s

HENDRIK AND JENNY (LIEVERS) LIEVERS

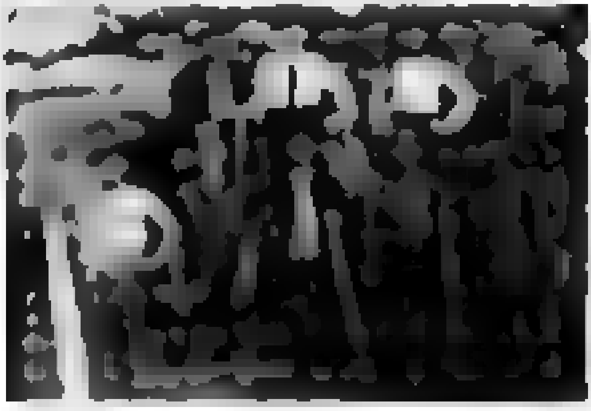
Hendrik was born July 18, 1888, in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands, and later married a distant relative Jenny (Jansjen) Lievers, born February 14, 1891. Times were poor in the

Netherlands, and Hendrik was persuaded to immigrate after hearing Canada advertised as a land of milk and honey. When they left in 1912 Hendrik and Jenny already had a family of three: Bill (Jan Willem, July 29, 1908), Harda (Gerhard) Johanna (October 10, 1909), and John (Gerrit Jan, April 29, 1912).



First home in Edmonton: Hendrik, Harda, Jenny, John, c 1912

The family came first to Edmonton, where Hendrik's brother Ben was already living. An- [illegible] Harry [illegible] on July 19, 1914. During the Great War years Hendrik and his family joined a group of Dutchmen who moved to Engen, B.C., in order to begin a settlement there. Another daughter, Annie (Johanna, Elisabeth), was born there on February 21, 1918. In Engen it got so cold that the pump would freeze hard in July. The land was also very poor and sandy; only pine trees and rabbits thrived. The settlement was not a success, and the Lievers family moved from there to a number of different places in B.C. George (Gerrit) was born March 28, 1919, in Hutton, B.C.



In Edmonton. Back: ?, Groothuis, ? George Elsbers. Front: ? George Tonbos, John Gort, John Elsbers, Hendrik

In 1920 Hendrik and Jenny moved to Neerlandia because it was a Dutch settlement and Hendrik hoped to farm and be his own boss. On February 25 the Lievers family came from Edmonton to Westlock by train and from there by horse and sleigh to Neerlandia. They stopped at Old Barrhead to warm up, as it was a cold day and there was lots of snow. In Neerlandia they first lived on Ben Lievers' place. Hendrik found work with a farmer named Agnew near Rossington, and would leave Monday morning and come home Saturday night on horseback.

That first summer of 1920 Hendrik met with a terrible accident. One Monday morning, instead of going to Rossington, he stayed home [illegible] July and grass-cutting time. Ben always cut the [illegible] needed Hendrik to walk ahead and see where the holes were, because if the horses stepped in [illegible] stick in the ground wherever there was a hole, and Ben was behind him on the mower, guiding the horses. Hendrik had never farmed before and did not realize that the knife was coming under the grass; he only stepped out of the way of the wheels, and the mower cut off one of his legs above the ankle. After the awful shock and lots of commotion, cooler heads prevailed and Hendrik got Ben to use long grass and a hankie from his pocket as a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. Ben could not lift Hendrik to get him on the horse, but after awhile Ben's daughters Hanna and Minnie came with lunch, as it was their turn to bring tea that day. They were wearing white Dutch aprons, and the apron strings were used to tie up the wound. The girls helped Ben put Hendrik on the horse and [illegible] home all night with the cut continually bleeding. Ben contacted a doctor in Westlock, who wanted to know first of all if he would get paid. Ben promised him that he would get money on time and begged him to come and fix up the leg. But the doctor refused to come, so Ben made a little box to put around the leg for support. Then he went by horseback to Douwe Terpsma's to ask for the use of his democrat since Douwe had one of the few democrats in the settlement. It was two o'clock in the morning when Ben got there. The horses were loose in the pasture, so Douwe went with a lantern to look for them and was fortunate enough to find them. After they were harnessed, John Terpsma took the democrat to Lievers' place. Hendrik was laid on the back of the democrat and John drove to Kampnar's place. By that time it was morning, on Church Road they passed the children on their way to school. Someone had come as far as Shoal Creek or Kampnar's with a car and they took Hendrik from there to Westlock, where he was given something to ease the pain. Hendrik remained conscious until they reached the hospital in Edmonton. There he passed out and did not regain consciousness until it was all over. The [illegible] left the hospital Hendrik stayed with *Dominee* Ruys in Edmonton for a couple of weeks. The Neerlandia people probably never expected to see him again, but after six weeks Hendrik was back, wearing an artificial leg.

Hendrik learned to get around quite well with his artificial leg. He took out the SE 6-62-3-5 as a homestead that winter on December 15, 1920, and the next year began the slow and arduous work of clearing and breaking the land. During the first years on the homestead, two more children were born to Hendrik and Jenny: **James** (Jacob) on January 14, 1921, and **Edward** on September 19, 1922. During the winter of 1921-22, Hendrik bought a team of oxen and one day *Dominee* Ruys came to help him break the team in. John Oldegbers came by [illegible] hayrack to haul home. He had his father's team of horses (they were a runaway team) and tied them to the garden fence. The men went to work with the oxen and, meanwhile, John Lievers went to the creek to chop some ice. (The family had no well and so they used melted ice for water.) After chopping out a block of ice, John carried it on his head to the house. The horses shyed away when they saw the ice, then broke loose and went running past the house onto a trail that had been cut through the trees. Hendrik made a practice of hanging his scythe up in the willows out of the children's reach, but it was knocked down by the runaway horses as they ran through the trees and got caught in the lines of the harness. The horses started to kick, but the more they kicked the worse it got. They ran about a quarter of a mile. [illegible] happened and they found one horse with a leg just about off and so cut up that they had to shoot it. The other horse was also badly cut, but Jan Oldegbers nursed it back to health, although it never regained its strength. The only good thing that came out of the episode was that the Lievers family got some delicious smoked horsemeat.

Hendrik did not own horses at first, so the oxen were used to pull the wagon. His oxen, like most, were strong, slow, and stubborn. One hot summer Bill and Harda had to go to the store. They hitched up the oxen and away they went, but not very fast since the oxen did not want to go. The road to the store was being built up at the time, so there was a long deep hole alongside the road where all the earth had been taken out. The hole was full of water, and when they came there, the oxen thought it was time for a rest and a drink. They walked into the big hole and drank some water, then went farther into the middle of the hole where the water was deeper. Bill and Harda were sitting on a board laid across the top of the wagon box, and the water got so deep that they had to put their feet [illegible] the children tried, the oxen would not budge from the hole. After about half an hour the oxen climbed out. When they got to the top all the water ran out of the wagon box, so Bill and Harda could put their feet down again.

One day Jenny was cutting up some vegetables and Hendrik tried to snatch them (just like a man), so Jenny threatened to cut his fingers with the knife. Hendrik dared her to hit the thick leather part of his artificial leg as hard as she could with the knife. Jenny did, and the knife was so sharp it went right through the leather and drew blood.

The Lievers children were quite a lively bunch, with lots of good-natured rivalry. On one occasion, on their way home from school, the boys were throwing mud balls from the end of a long green stick when Joe Holwerda came along with a team of horses and wagon. The [illegible] ie, to hit one of the horses, thinking he would miss. He needed no coaxing. He swung, and bingo — he hit one of the horses right between the eyes. Off went the team of horses and wagon across the ditch. When Joe finally brought them to a standstill, he climbed off the wagon and gave Shortie "Lesson No. 1."

Hendrik enjoyed hunting, and the children spent many hours outdoors as well. The boys had many favourite pastimes such as chasing squirrels, climbing the tallest spruce tree and then sliding down on the branches to the ground, or climbing poplar saplings and swinging out from near the top. Annie went along on all these adventures and was part of the gang.

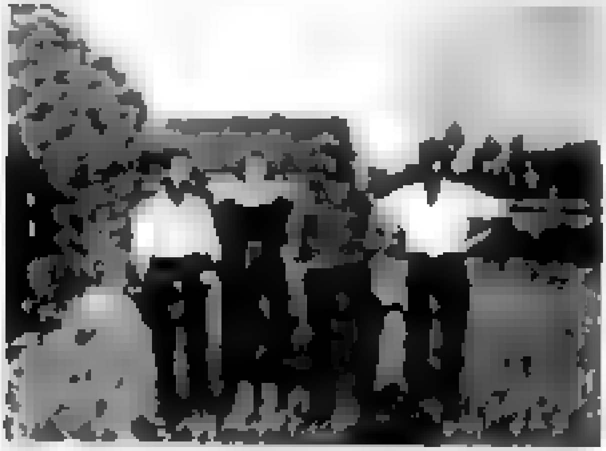
On long winter nights the family would sit around the fire and play various instruments. They had quite a band at one time, consisting of a piano accordion, a mandolin, guitars, and harmonicas. Jenny and Hendrik both had lovely voices and all the children loved to sing.

George, Harda

Around 1922, Jenny became sick and was later bedridden for three years with asthma and pneumonia. She never regained her health and on February 8, 1927, she passed away as a result of a ruptured appendix. It was a terrible loss for the family. Life for them became very difficult.

After Jenny's death Harda kept the house. She had quite a time of it trying to keep things in order. The boys would play tricks on her like knocking on the door and then hiding on her. When she would come to the door no one would be there. After a few times of this she finally composed a little tune and, whenever the boys knocked, would sing, "If there is someone there, then let him come in." One day a neighbour, Jacob Olthuis, came to the house and knocked at the door. Harda started to sing her little tune but of course Jacob kept on knocking for a while. He finally gave up, accepted the invitation, and entered the kitchen, standing behind her for a while listening to her little tune. Then suddenly he spoke, and Harda — quite surprised — found it necessary to give him an explanation.

Harda also had quite a time with Shortie and Harry, who were supposed to keep the wood box filled with firewood. When she ran out of wood she would start to sing a little tune. Of course it was not long until Shortie and Harry had picked up the tune and were singing it just outside the door, which only added to her frustration. Then Harda would come storming through the door — one time only to find a dead skinned muskrat tied to the door knob. Harda married John Terpsma of Neerlandia in 1928. After that Hendrik and the family did their own housekeeping.



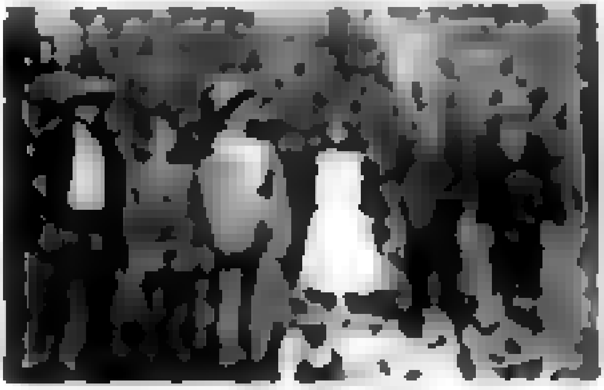
Hendrik, Harda and John Terpsma, George

Shortie, known for his good nature, could sometimes be quite mischievious. The younger Lievers children were left to themselves quite a bit of the time and, having nothing better to do, they made a tunnel through the straw stack and reinforced it with poles (much the same way it was done in the coal mines). It was quite safe, and they used to spend a lot of time in the tunnel. Shortie, however, would come along and with the help of Harry drive a bunch of sows through the tunnel while the younger children were in it. They could not, however, figure out why no one was coming out the other [illegible] the tunnel ahead of [illegible] Knowing their good-natured brothers, George and the others had counted on them doing something like that and had made short tunnels off the main one with small doors they could close behind them. So they were never in any real danger of being trampled by the sows.

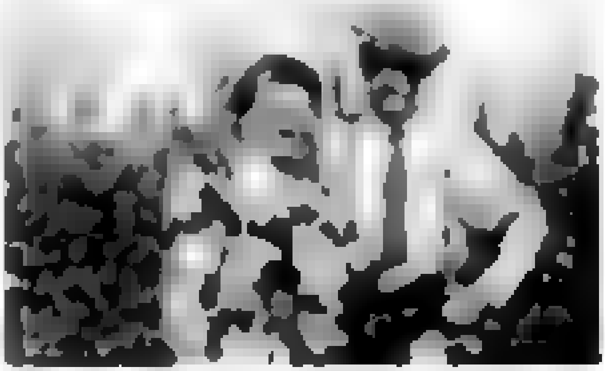
Harry could run like a hare and squeal like a pig. There was one sow with a litter of piglets [illegible] got into the habit of teasing her by squealing like a little pig. The sow would get excited, of course, thinking he had one of her little ones, and come running with her mouth wide open. Harry could run a lot faster than the younger children, so as soon as they heard Harry's squeal they knew what was going to happen and off they would go as fast as they could. They would run to the log chicken coop, which had been banked all around with dirt, and make two leaps, one onto the bank and the other onto the low roof of the chicken coop. The angry sow was always only a few feet behind the last child to reach the coop; none of the children ever forgot to make that second leap. This went on for the most part of one summer until it backfired. It happened that the Lievers' house had a very low window which had been removed. One day Harry was again teasing the sow, but this time the children did not think they could make it to the hen house. So one after the other they went through the window opening, the sow in angry pursuit. Luckily there was a one-hundred-pound bag of flour on the kitchen floor for the sow to vent her rage on. She grabbed the bag of flour and scattered it all over the kitchen floor (the children were up the stairs by that time). That may have been a blessing in disguise because it put an end to the whole episode, when Dad Lievers came home there was some explaining to do!

On another occasion, school had just been dismissed, and the Lievers children were on the road by the Co-op store when along came Slim (George) Olthuis with a four-horse outfit. He was riding one of the horses, with the reins dragging behind. What a temptation for a young boy! Jim needed no encouragement, he stepped on one of the reins and the horses turned, with Slim completely out of control. Slim jumped off the horse and took after Jim, long legs after short legs, back and forth through the trees. What a sight to behold. Slim would get within a few feet, with long arms reaching, but Jim finally got away.

The Lievers family did their own housekeeping until 1932 when Hendrik remarried to **Katherine Bonak**. Katherine (born 1909) came from Altacane, Saskatchewan, with two children, **Frank** (born July 12, 1925) and **Violet** (born 1928) Tilloston.



Hendrik, George, Harry, Annie, cousins Bill and Harry Lievers. Seated: Jim, Frank and Violet Tilloston, Edward



[illegible]

In 1936 and '37, Bill, Harry, and George went to the Peace River country to work. During 1938-40, they did mill work and logging at [illegible] owned respectively by [illegible], Matt Lessard, and Harry Branden. Wages were poor, but they got board and room. Then the Second World War broke out. Bill and Harry volunteered for the Army, and George and James were drafted. Another brother, **Stanley** was born April 23, 1940.

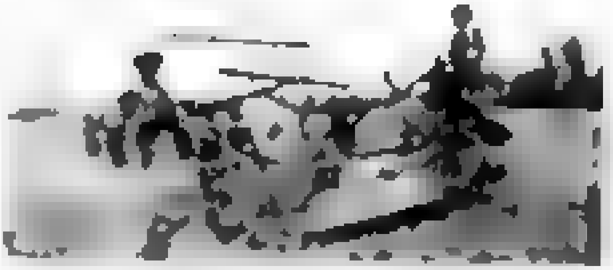
Bill had taken out the NE 6-62-3-5 as a homestead in 1926. He was a great outdoorsman. He loved to hunt and trap and was a crack shot with a rifle. He married Bertha Howey and they had three children, **Josephine**, Jim, and **John**. After World War II, Bill left Neerlandia. He later married Opal Desjarlais. In later years Bill and Opal divorced, and Bill remarried. He farmed in Flatbush for a number of years before moving first to Edmonton and then to Ponoka where he passed away.

John homesteaded the NW 6-62-3-5 for a short time but never proved it up. In later years he bought the home place. After selling it in 1948 he farmed in Flatbush. He is now retired and living with his sister Harda in New Westminster, B.C.

Harry homesteaded the W½ 9-62-4-5. He married Hannah Thulien of Veteran, Alberta. They have nine children, one passed away. They moved to Flatbush in 1953 after selling their land. They are now retired and residing in Flatbush.

Annie left home quite young and worked out housekeeping. While working in Granum she met and married Joe Rigel. They have three children and are residing on a farm near Fort Macleod, where they have lived since they were married.

In 1946 George began homesteading the SW 14-62-4-5 and the NW 11-62-4-5, selling them in 1954. He married Eileen Munro of Condor. They have four children and live on a farm in Flatbush.



Hendrik, George on binder 1941

Jim homesteaded the SW 31-61-3-5 for a short time before the Second World War. In the army he attained to the rank of sergeant and spent time overseas, serving in England during the time of the Blitz. Jim married Joan Styles whom he met in England during the war. They settled in Fort Macleod where they operate a bulk gas station. Jim and Joan have five children.

Edward married **Emma Neumann** of Camp Creek. They first lived on the home place and then homesteaded the NW 14-62-4-5. After selling their land in the 1940s, they lived in Edmonton for some time and then farmed for many years in Flatbush. They have five children. Edward and Emma are now doing evangelism work near Hannah.

Frank Tillotson homesteaded the SE 14-62-4-5 but never proved it up. He and his wife, Melitta Klatt of Edmonton, have four children. After leaving Neerlandia Frank worked

George and Hendrik checking the wheat, [illegible]

as a truck driver. Presently he is working as a bus driver in Edmonton.

After her schooling Violet Tillotson worked at various jobs in Neerlandia. She married Mel Barr of Wetaskiwin, and they had two children. She later married Nick Garuk of Edmonton.

Like the rest of the family, Stanley was educated in Neerlandia school. As a boy he spent a lot of time in a bush camp in Ft. Assiniboine with his parents. Stanley was always interested in cars. He worked in the Neerlandia garage for a while, then lived in Edmonton where he built and rebuilt motors. In recent years he has built his own racing cars. Stanley married Carmen Tarren of Vancouver, B.C. They have one child. Later they were divorced, and Stanley married Beverly Friesen of Coronation. They have two children and live in Cache Creek, B.C.

In 1974, Hendrik, age eighty-five, and Katherine, age sixty-five, passed away within a few months of each other.

George Lievers
Harda Terpsma

PETE LOUWS

Pete (Pieter) Louws (c. 1892) had lived in Conrad, Montana, but although the rest of his family moved to Lynden, Washington, he moved to Canada. Pete first took up the NW 10-61-3-5 in Neerlandia in 1913. He later took up the SW 23-61-3-5 on May 15, 1916. He was twenty-four years old at that time. On his homestead application, he listed his birthplace as Middelburg, Zeeland, the Netherlands, and his occupation as farmer.

Pete moved to the SW 23 in October 1916 and soon built a 10 by 12-foot log shack with a sod roof. It was a low house and he had to duck to get through the doorway. He also dug a twelve-foot well and built a log barn for his two horses, although he had no horses after 1920. He was cropping fourteen acres in 1920 but summerfallowed all of them in 1921. Besides the acres cropped, he had slashed ten acres and enclosed the cleared land with a fence 260 rods long. Peter received the patent to his land in 1922.

A brother of Pete's, John, also spent some time in Neerlandia around the early twenties, but soon returned to Lynden. When Pete was on the homestead — usually during the winter — he would do some trapping, but he kept no livestock. He was good at working with machinery and could fix almost anything. Besides his mechanical skills, it was said that he could remember sermons word for word. In his later years here, he listened to sermons on the radio rather than come to church to hear them — he had always been somewhat of a loner.

John, Peter, c. [illegible]

Pete was often gone from the homestead for over six months or more at a time. While away he worked on farms in southern Alberta or in the mines in Edmonton. As far as is known, Pete left Neerlandia around 1935. He first went south and worked on a ranch, then moved to Edmonton in the 1950s. He sold newspapers there and died around 1977.

ALBERT AND EVERDINA (OLDEGBERS) MAST

Albert Mast came to Edmonton with his parents in 1911. As his father did, he filed first in the Thorhild area and later in what was to become Neerlandia. He chose the SE 21-61-3-5 and filed on it on December 18, 1911. While in Edmonton he met Everdina Oldegbers and married her April 8, 1912. He had gone back to the homestead with the rest of the men in January 1912 to build cabins so he had a home for his wife.

A son, Carl (Koop) Pieter, was born March 1, 1913, to Everdina and Albert, and just three weeks later the Masts packed up their belong

Everdina, 1907

ings and went to their homestead. On the way the oxen grew tired and, upon reaching a slough, lay down to take a rest. The Masts were worried that something was wrong with the animals but, on checking, discovered the oxen were contentedly chewing their cud. The log house they lived in had a sod roof which leaked so badly that when it rained the only dry place Everdina could find to put baby Carl was under the table.

At first water was hauled from the muskeg or the nearby creek. In winter it was necessary to chop a hole in the ice. The water was then poured into a barrel on a stoneboat pulled by one horse. Later, Albert built a two-storey log house. The main floor was partitioned into two rooms. Upon entering the first room one would see a corner partitioned off to form a little room for the post office. Albert became postmaster in 1913. The Masts kept a general store from 1914-1922, so another corner of the room served as storage room for the containers of staple foods brought in from Edmonton by whatever means possible. At this time Albert was also a registrar and recorded births and deaths in the community. Life was difficult for the pioneers. Many times Albert walked from Manola, Dusseldorf, or even Edmonton carrying heavy loads on his back. Once while carrying the mail he was treed by a bear for a night.

Infant mortality was high. Albert and Everdina lost an infant son, **Klaas**, in 1914. The baby, who had been sickly since his birth on May 3, died May 20 at about two weeks of age. Albert made the tiny coffin himself, and the baby was buried on the northeast corner of Koop's land. When land was designated for a cemetery in 1915 the child was reburied there, since this was required by law.

In order to make extra money to provide for his growing family, Albert worked at a variety of jobs which kept him away from home for weeks at a time. In the meantime, Everdina worked just as hard at home looking after the family and livestock. In those days the livestock still roamed free (the only fences were around the gardens), so Everdina had to tramp about looking for the cattle. Carl, then about seven years old, would stay at home to watch the younger children: **Carrie** (Gerltye) born October 9, 1915; **Clarence** (Klaas) born September 18, 1917; and **Pete** (Pieter Koop) born November 13, 1919. Carl would give Pete the can of syrup to keep him quiet. At times, when it seemed to little Carl that his mother must be lost because she had been gone a long time, he would stand on a fence post and ring a cowbell. She could hear the bell for a long way and would follow the sound home.

Albert was able to patent his land by July 21, 1917. At this time, according to the government records, he had built two log stables and a hen house, constructed one-and-one-half miles of wire and rail fences, and dug a well. These improvements were valued at two hundred and eighty-nine dollars. He had cleared and broken ten acres of land and had six head of cattle and three horses.

The Masts moved back to Edmonton in 1923 to make money which would enable them to continue to live on the homestead. They kept a few cows and peddled milk. While in Edmonton a son, whom they named **William**, was born (December 11, 1924).

In 1926 the family returned to the homestead and the back-breaking work continued. On laundry day Everdina would go to the well and haul pail after pail of water, two pails at a time, for the wash.

On an extremely cold night in December, **Kobee** (Coba) was born. It was December 22, 1926, and so cold that everything cracked from the frost. That night a cat family froze to death.

under the porch. In the house, however, a chimney fire set the roof ablaze and Albert was kept busy hauling water to save the family home. In the midst of all the excitement, Kobie entered the world. Two years later on July 3, 1928, Albert was born in the quietness of the Barrhead hospital.

Alice (Aaltje, March 4, 1930) and **John** (Jan, October 3, 1932) were born in the log house, but not Joe (Johannes). A new chicken house was under construction and when it was finished it was such a nice building that the family decided to move into it themselves. Here Joe was born March 2, 1935. A granary was put against the chicken house and used as a bedroom for the children. The chickens got the old house. They did eventually get the house which had been built for them, after Albert and Everdina built a frame house for themselves in 1939.

Back: Clarence, Peter. Front: John, Joe, c. 1938

Everdina loved all animals and was especially fond of sheep. Her boys inherited her fondness for animals and could easily train them. This trait was put to good use when Clarence and Pete sought an easier way than walking to get to school. They trained their dog, Towser, to pull a sled. That got them to school in a hurry. Towser was followed by Jip

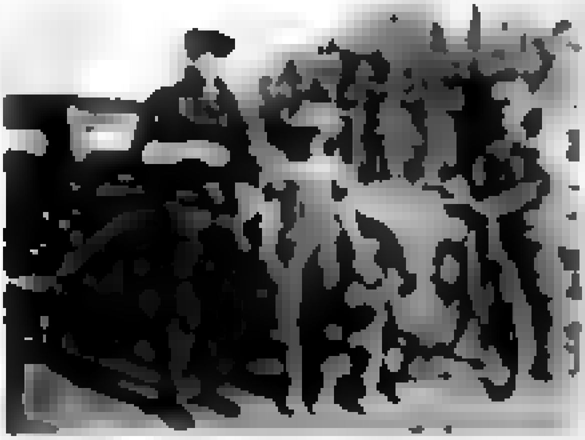
Back: Bill Ottengbers, Peter, Carrie, Minnie, Clarence. Middle: Bill, Albert Sr., Everdina. Front: Albert, Alice, John, Joe, c. 1938.

and Sport who pulled Albert, John, and Joe to school.

Albert Sr. became the first janitor of the Christian Reformed Church built in 1928. He held this position until 1948. In winter he would have to start the fire on Saturday to make sure the church would be comfortable for the Sunday services. Often he would walk with a lantern to the church late Saturday evening to check the fires.

As time went on, Albert cleared more land. The clearing was done by hand and, as they grew up, the older boys also helped. The oxen and horses did a lot of work and certainly earned their keep. Blackflies and bull flies were a constant nuisance. Plowing a straight furrow was sometimes an impossible task. Everything would be going fine when along would come a swarm of flies and the oxen would run to the nearest clump of trees. Soon the field would look like a piece of abstract art.

The Maats were members of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. As the years went by, the children (one after the other) found their life partners and left home. Carrie was the first to go when she married Gerrit Nanninga in 1942. Next, Minnie married Tymen Berger of Edmonton in 1943. When Clarence was in Europe during World War II, he met and married Grace Dop (1946). In 1949 Pete married Gladys Krikke in the store hall



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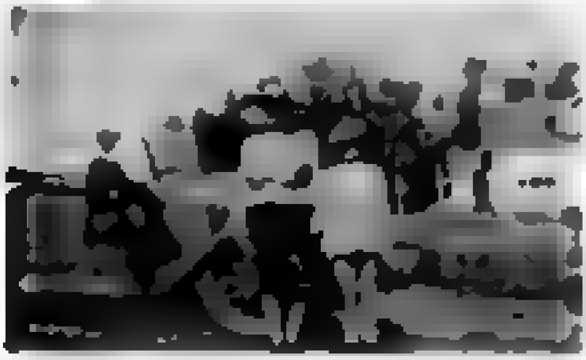


Bill, Everdina, Joe, 1944.

Albert Jr. married Ann Hamoen in 1951 in Barrhead. For two years there was a little peace, and then the marriage wheel started turning again. Four of the Mast children married in 1953. In March Bill married Joan Talen in Edmonton. In May, Kobie married William Vander Leest in Neerlandia. In August, John married Hennie Vander Meulen in the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church. At the end of 1953 Carl married Agnes Muir in the Mast home. Albert Sr. was very ill with cancer at that time, and in this way he was able to witness his oldest son getting married.

On January 28, 1954, Albert Sr. passed away after a lengthy illness. He was laid to rest in the Neerlandia cemetery a few days later.

Nine years after Carl and Agnes got married, wedding bells rang for Joe. He married Marion Postma in Neerlandia in 1962. The last of the Masts to marry was Alice, who married Terrence Saville in Edmonton.

Everdina Mast is living in the Emmanuel Christian Senior Citizens Home in Edmonton. Even though the family suffered many hardships, Everdina is thankful to the Lord for His constant care and guidance, for sustaining her and her family through both the bad and the good years. She is thankful that she has been given many years to watch her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren grow up.

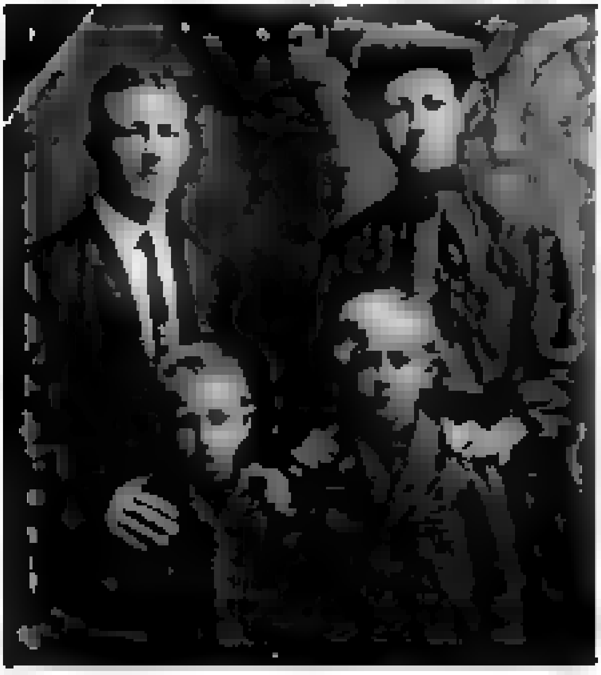
Joe Mast

KOOP AND MINKE (DE RUITER) MAST

Koop P. (1852) and Minke A. (1857) Mast lived on a freight boat in St. Anna Parochie, Friesland, the Netherlands, and moved freight from place to place along the canals. But living on the freight boat was not ideal for a young growing family, and it did not pay enough to support the family. The children were able to attend school only in the winter when the canals were frozen. The family finally sold their ship and moved to Almelo, Overijssel. There some of the family worked in cotton factories, and Minke did some custom sewing — but there was not enough work for all of them. Their oldest son, Peter, went to Germany to look for work. The family did not hear from him for a while, so their second son, Albert, went to look for Peter in order to bring him back, for by then they had heard about America, the land of opportunity, through a local newspaper.

Since the Netherlands was overcrowded, jobs were hard to come by, and the wages poor, the Masts decided to immigrate to America, the country where it was possible to own some land and be your own boss. Albert needed new footwear before they left, so he went to the store to buy some klompen. He came home with the biggest pair he could find. His mother said, *"In frede's namme wat dochsto mei die grutte dingen?* (What on earth are you doing with those big things?)" Albert answered, "*Se wiene foar itselde jild.* (They were for the same price.)"

The Masts travelled to the U.S.A. at the turn of the century (1901 or 1902) with four boys and one girl: Peter (1882), Albert Minne (November 8, 1884), Alice (Aaltje, May 29, 1886), Carl K (Koop, 1895), and Henry (Hendrikus, March 11, 1898). They had two other boys named Koop and Cornelius, who died in infancy. On arrival in New York the family settled in Utica, New York, and found work in the cotton factories.



Albert, Henry, Carl K., Aaltje, c. 1908

Aaltje, Henry, Minnie, Carl K., c. 1905

Albert could not work there because he was allergic to cotton (it made him break out into boils) so he sold milk from door-to-door with a horse and wagon.

Peter became very ill, contracted diphtheria, and died in 1904 at the age of 22 years. After living in Utica for about seven years the family moved to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, again for better job opportunities. There they worked in the cotton factories, and Albert worked on a farm. While working in the factory, a belt of the machine at which Koop was working hit him and damaged his eyes, leaving him with poor eyesight.

The Masts met the Baker family in the U.S.A. and Alice married their son Joe. Then, in a Dutch newspaper, they read about Canada, where you could buy land for ten dollars a quarter. This was too good an opportunity to pass up so the Masts and the Bakers came by train from Whitinsville and arrived in Edmonton on April 8, 1911. There they first lived in a tent. They took up land near Thorhild, but abandoned this land to go northwest of Edmonton with other Dutchmen. Koop filed on the NE 15-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911.

In the spring of 1912, the Mast family moved to their homestead. The Albert Jan Oldegbers and Koop Mast families traveled together to Neerlandia. John Oldegbers reported that they came to Neerlandia over the Klondike Trail. At first John Anema and Siebren Tiemstra accompanied them with horse teams but they had to return to their jobs and, since it was impossible to use the horses — they sank into the mud up to their bellies, they left the two families. Albert Jan then purchased an ox and a bull; the Masts also had oxen. When Anema and Tiemstra left them the others left some of their belongings behind.

Even with the oxen it was necessary to double up the teams to get the wagons through some parts of the trail. Sometimes the men would unhitch the teams, drive them around a mucky spot, stretch chain across and pull the wagon through in that way. It was necessary to walk for much of the way because both the oxen and the horses had enough to pull without the added weight of people. Finally after about two weeks they reached the Big Timber — it took them two days to get through that. The trip was long and hard. Just south of the homestead was another slough. Here the wagons got quite stuck. This last struggle overwhelmed Koop. "Just roll me over into the creek," he said.

At first the Mast family lived in a log shack. This was later replaced by a sturdily-built log house.

Mast homestead, c. 1913. Minke, Koop

Minke Mast was also sturdily built. She was only about five feet and four inches tall, but weighed over two hundred pounds. Her practice of wearing aprons with big ruffles around the waist emphasized her size. Because she had worked right along with the men on the houseboat, many of those pounds were muscle. She had no trouble bending over and hefting a washtub full of water. Minke's husband was a slightly-built man whom she could lift — chair and all — when she was sweeping the floor. While still in Edmonton, the Mast sons had rescued a little dog that was floating down the river in a box. Minke, who promptly named him Moses, took him along to the homestead where he fathered many little black dogs. There were always dogs and cats around the Mast household because Minke loved animals.

Koop walked to Edmonton many times. It took about three days one way. He made one trip to see his daughter Alice's new baby. Another time Koop grew tired, lay down, and fell asleep. When he awoke he continued walking but lost his way. After walking for some time he came to a clearing where he saw a shack. He knocked on the door and was surprised when his own wife opened the door.

Koop and Minke worked hard in their pioneer days though they had come to Neerlandia in their late fifties. Koop was not in the best of health but his sons, Carl and Henry, helped to develop the homestead. They took turns working out to make extra money. Albert had married Everdina Oldegbers and had his own homestead. Minke worked as a midwife for a number of years. Koop and Minke were a couple with big hearts, ready to help others in need. Koop Mast died March 30, 1915, at sixty-three years of age. He was the first person buried in the Neerlandia Cemetery. Minke died August 8, 1925, at sixty-eight years of age.

Marion Mast

JOHN AND EVERDINA (OLDEGBERS) MESSELINK

John (Johan Albert) Messelink, born August 16, 1886, in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, grew up to be a farmhand and occasionally worked in a factory. He married Dina (Everdina) Oldegbers on October 13, 1910. Life in the Netherlands was difficult for the young couple, so when Everdina's parents immigrated to Canada, John and Everdina went along. They arrived in Edmonton in 1911. The Messelinks stayed in Edmonton for two years. During this time two children, **Margaret** (Gerharda, October 11, 1911) and **Johanna** (April 7, 1913) were born.

John had applied for a homestead (NE 34-61-3-5) on December 18, 1911 and after the birth of Johanna, John and Everdina moved to Neerlandia. Here, in a 14 by 20-foot log house,

Lily (Aleida) was born on October 25, 1914, and **Albert** Jan on May 11, 1916. Albert wrote, "Many fond memories linger with us of the old log house and the years that were spent there. When it rained hard the only dry place seemed to be under the table. We also had a free loader at all our meals, a big one-eyed cat that sat at the end of the bench."

On the homestead there was a 16 by 22-foot log barn and a chicken coop. There were two wells, one twenty-four and the other thirty feet deep. A few acres of land were broken and put in crop and harvested. John also put up 1½ miles of a three-strand wire fence.

John on the homestead.

John had heart trouble for several years, and on November 21, 1916, he passed away. At the request of Dina, Case Ingwersen, clerk of the church, wrote a letter to John's father in the Netherlands. Here are a few excerpts:

> Dear Brother,
>
> during the last days, his illness was such that, humanly speaking there was no hope for recovery. Happily he had been spiritually ready for a long time to leave this vale of tears.
>
> Still, his dying was unexpected to everyone. He left this morning at eight o'clock, quietly and peacefully to his eternal home. Knowing that his life was in Christ, we may assume that also his dying was profit for him.
>
> His widow requested on behalf of the family to advise you and yours of this sad news. I hereby fulfill my painful task.
>
> Also on behalf of the consistory, of which our brother was a faithful member, I offer you our sympathy and condolences. We bid you the comfort of the Holy Spirit in this painful loss.
>
> With sincere condolences
> C. Ingwersen

The death of John changed the life of the family and the subsequent development of the homestead in a dramatic way. No doubt Dina had some misgivings about what was to become of her family, but because of her faith in God and his Providential care, the children felt secure and happy as they grew up.

Albert, Johanna, Lillian, Margaret, early 1920s.

Trying to live on a small widow's pension, doing the wash for one of the "better off" families, and being janitor of the school to help pay for the school taxes became part of Dina's life. As school janitor she had to light the stove each morning. Carrying a bag of kindling one mile in twenty-below-zero F. weather was hard, cold work. When spring arrived the roads became quagmire, and a lot of mud was carried into the school in large lumps. Many Saturdays were

spent scraping the mud off the floor to get it looking respectable for the coming week.

Many neighbours helped Dina with farming and the care of her family. Some neighbours cleared land and cropped it, increasing the cropped land to six acres by 1920. In order to keep warm in winter it was necessary to have an adequate supply of fuel. Large trees were cut down and [illegible] would arrive with his engine-powered saw and cut the logs into stove length blocks. Sometimes the Messelinks ran out of firewood and then the children would get out the big crosscut saw, cut their own wood, and chop it into manageable pieces.

Repairing roof of Messelink's house. John and Bill Champion

Part of the Messelinks' food supply was the produce from the large garden that Dina planted each year. When some meat was needed, Margaret would catch a chicken. Lil and Jo would hold it while Margaret wielded the axe and cut off its head. When the axe fell Lil and Jo fled in panic, since the chicken would run in circles until dead.

Besides chickens, the Messelinks had two milk cows. After the morning milking, the cows were turned loose to forage since there was no herd law. When the girls had to get the cows in the evening they sometimes had to walk a long way to find them.

In 1921 there was excitement and activity on the Messelink homestead. A log store was set up, with Mr. Ingwersen as storekeeper. The store was situated there for one year.

Weeks of excitement preceded the first of July picnic. It was the only day one could buy ice-cream and pop. After all the practising they had done for the three-legged race, sack race and straight race, it was quite exciting to see how much money they could make. Quarters and dimes were handed out to the winners of the races and the children really thought they were fortunate to have so much money for a few days. Being good athletes made a difference!

One time the girls contracted whooping cough and scarlet fever and were confined to their home. At that time it was considered very contagious, so they were not allowed to see or talk to anyone. Lil wrote, "Notes were written to friends at school and put on a fence post some yards from the house. In exchange, the friends would write notes to us and the Anema girls (close neighbours) would pick up ours and leave the others. Watching from the window, we would wait until our friends had left and run and get the letters."

The years went by and after Margaret reached the age of sixteen, Dina's pension was reduced. Realizing that when the rest of the children reached this age there would be no pension, Dina decided to sell the homestead to her cousin Bia Oldegbers in exchange for a home in Edmonton. Thus in [illegible] the Messelink family left Neerlandia. On March 16, 1983, at the age of ninety-five, Everdina Messelink passed away.

Albert and Lil Messelink

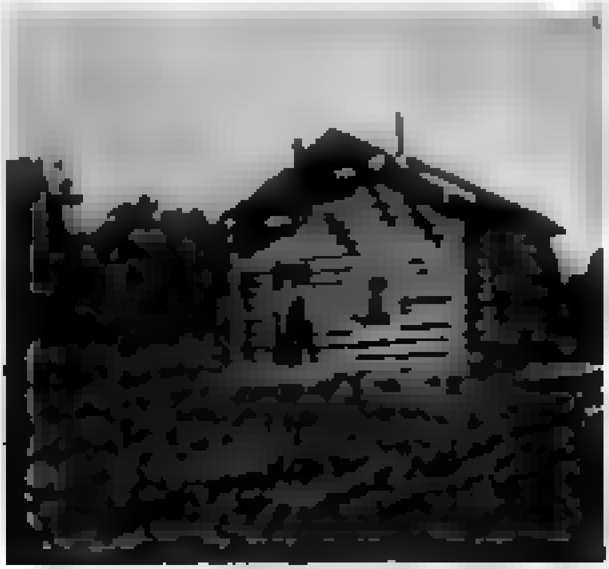
HENRY AND ANNA (MICHAEL) MICHAEL

Henry J. Michael was born February 9, 1873, in Geldrop, North Brabant, the Netherlands. Since he was the youngest in a family of eleven children, he learned the upholstery trade instead of farming as his father and grandfather had done. In 1906 he married his cousin Anna Elisabeth Michael (born in 1875). Employment was difficult to find in the Netherlands so Henry worked in Belgium for awhile.

Henry and Anna had already moved to Breda, South Holland, when they read an advertisement in a Dutch newspaper encouraging people to come to Canada. In 1911, after some indecision, they set sail. They went to Edmonton, where they lived for two years, first in a tent. Henry worked for Blowey-Henry Upholstery for awhile, but their hearts were set on farming.

On December 18, 1911, after Henry had gone to [illegible] with a group of other Dutchmen, he paid the required ten-dollar filing fee and took out a homestead (NE 4-62-3-5). Some time later he walked to the area with Menne Nanninga and Cornelius Ingwersen. They took along some tools to help each other build log houses. To build, they used the trees that they had cleared off the site. Since Anna had poor eyesight, Henry made large windows in his log house. After their mission was accomplished, the men walked back to Edmonton.

Walking through the bush was very difficult, and in seeking an easy trail one of the men walked on a frozen creek. Suddenly he went through the ice and had to stay at a stopping place until the next day to dry out and warm up. It was a Saturday evening when the other two, tired and with swollen feet, arrived home in Edmonton. The next day they went to church anyway.



[illegible] log house

Anna, Henry, on the homestead, c. [illegible]

In 1913 Henry and Anna bought a beautiful heavy yoke of oxen and a wagon, and moved to the homestead. Henry and Anna hoped for a child but Anna hemorrhaged easily and always miscarried. A friend in the Netherlands wrote to Anna with some advice — Queen Wilhelmina, who had the same difficulty, had been told by her doctor to stay in bed during the time she was expecting [illegible] in due time Princess Juliana had been born — maybe Anna should try the same. Anna took the advice, although she found it quite trying to stay in bed for so long. The neighbour women helped with the work. What a happy day it was when on November 25, 1916, a son was born to Henry and Anna. They named him Bert (Lambertus) Johannes.

In 1918 Henry sold the oxen and replaced them with two horses. Not being experienced in buying horses, he ended up with broncos he could not handle. He often wished he had kept the oxen — they were slow, but at least they were sure.

Henry had to work hard to make a living on the land, but joy and satisfaction came with each additional acre cleared. One fall (1918) he went with Menne Nanninga and Ben Lievers to southern Alberta during the harvest to earn money to enable him to continue on the homestead.

When the government of Alberta intro-

Henry, Bert, Anna, [illegible]

duced the Cow Bill, Henry, along with others from the settlement, applied for the grant. The cattle were bought at the Edmonton stockyards and herded home from there. During the trip three of Henry's herd went astray. It took him several days and much prayer to find them.

In those years cream had to be taken to Barrhead for shipping. Henry was one of the farmers who took turns taking it there. Often much-needed groceries were bought with the money received for the cream.

[illegible]

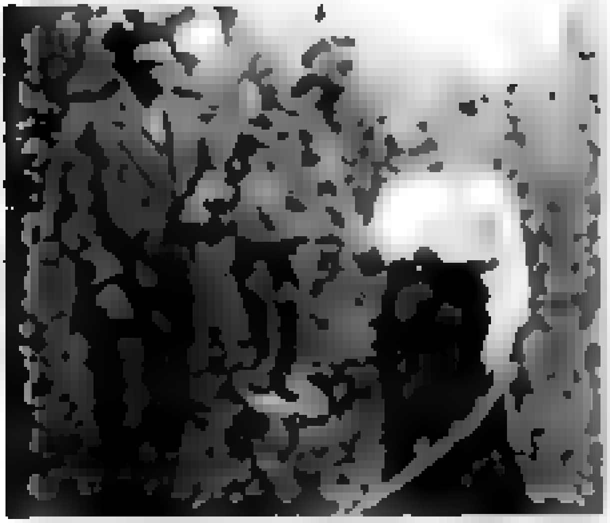
By 1921, when he patented the land, Henry was [illegible] acres with [illegible] broken. Besides the 14×18-foot house, Henry had built a 26×40-foot log stable, an 18×22-foot hen house, a cow stable, and a 2¼ mile rail fence. These improvements were valued at $800. He also owned twenty-five cattle and two horses. For these animals, there was plenty of grass available in the nearby meadows around Baird Lake. The quarter on which the Michaels lived had a heavy stand of poplar trees. After a family with the same surname moved into the Neerlandia area in 1923, Henry became known as Poplar Michael to keep him straight from the other one, who was then called Muskeg Michael.

Anna was not a strong woman. She had a weak heart, and helping with the livestock or doing outside chores was too strenuous for her. Once Henry hid the garden hoe on her, but Anna said, "If you want to make life miserable for me [illegible]," and did the hoeing anyhow. Henry fixed up the well, which was sixteen feet deep, so that the pail was attached to a weight equal to that of a full pail of water. The weight acted as a counterbalance thus making it easier for Anna to draw water when she needed it.

During the winter months Henry would take up his upholstery tools and make furniture. For lumber he used birch logs which he sawed by hand. He used hay and burlap to pad the furniture. Rev. Van Der Woude needed a chair for his study, Henry Kippers ordered a love seat, and Oene Piers wanted a bench to put behind the table for his boys to sit on. Henry built Oene a lovely bench. The back and seat were padded and covered with leather. The whole thing was glued — not a nail to be found.

Both Henry and Anna were musical and could sing well. Henry also directed Choral Society for awhile.

Anna had a serious thyroid condition as well as a weak heart. It became necessary for her to go to Edmonton for an operation — to be done in two stages. The first stage left her so weak that the second stage was postponed for some time. During this waiting period she said, "Do not pray that I will live, but pray that I will be willing to abide by God's will." That was hard for Henry to do. The second stage was undertaken in 1926 and Anna died shortly afterward. She was 51 years old. A great tragedy for a husband and a [illegible]



Henry, Bert, Anna, c. [illegible]

neighbours were very helpful during that time. Henry considered going back to the Netherlands but decided to carry on the best that he could. Henry's sister-in-law Deana Michael, a nurse from Michigan, U.S.A., came for three months to help them adjust. After that Henry did the housekeeping. He learned to cook, make butter, and even bake bread. The neighbour women helped out by washing the clothes and bringing produce from their gardens.

Henry and his son Bert built a lumber chicken coop in 1929. Later that same year their log house burnt down due to a brush fire which caught the grass along the fence. Nothing in the house was saved. Many people, however, donated things such as a bed, pots, pans and linen, enabling Henry and Bert to set up house in the chicken coop. The following year they built a 16 × 20-foot lumber house. It had three rooms downstairs and one bedroom upstairs. Windows, nails, shingles, and tar paper for the building were bought at the store. The bill came to fifty dollars, a lot of cream cheques.

Henry, Bert, 1927

Bert had a trap line on the way to school which he checked each day before and after school. In it, he caught squirrels and weasels as well as the occasional skunk. He also trapped many muskrats in Baird Lake. The money from the furs went into a cocoa tin in the cupboard for school supplies, mitts, or whatever Bert needed. Anna had always quoted a good rule in life: "Buy first what is necessary, then what is useful, and last what is desirable."

Henry had trouble with arthritis, so when Bert was fourteen he quit school to help his father with the farm work. During the Depression Henry and Bert lived from the land as much as possible. One time, when their hog return was over $100, Bert got a new .22 rifle from Eaton's catalogue for $4.95. He considered himself the happiest boy in Canada. But Henry said, "You may only shoot for fur or food." Bert hunted deer and moose for meat. When the first snow came, the season was open and he and the neighbourhood boys, usually Ryer Krikke and Albert Schoonekamp, would go hunting in the bush west of Baird Lake. Bert tried his hand at mink ranching during the '30s but had to give it up for lack of fresh meat and fish.

During World War II, Bert was exempted from enlistment in the army because he was needed on the farm and had to take care of his father. By that time, Henry, due to his age and arthritic condition, had difficulty keeping up with the household duties. Both he and Bert were praying for a helpmeet for Bert. Their prayers were answered and Bert married Jenny Bouwman in 1945.

Henry lived with Bert and Jenny until he became ill in 1960 and went to the Barrhead hospital. On July 15, 1960, after a brief illness of one month, Henry went to be with the Lord he loved.

Jenny Michael

MENNE AND AALTJE (VAN TIL)
NANNINGA

Menne Nanninga was born March 18, 1879 in Niekerk, Groningen, the Netherlands. Aaltje Van Til was born April 13, 1881, also in Groningen, to a family of boeren. The couple was married in 1906. Both Menne's father and his grandfather were carpenters and Menne followed in their footsteps. He also went to night school to learn more about his trade. While in the Netherlands three sons were born to Menne and Aaltje: **Andy** (Anne) on July 29, 1907; **Ike** (Ite) on August 14, 1908; and **Louis** (Louwe) on February 7, 1910.

The year after Louis was born, in April, Menne and Aaltje left their families behind and sailed for Canada. They became sea-sick the first day, but somehow managed to feed and care for their three hungry and active boys during the trip. From Quebec they rode the train to Alberta. The train was dusty and dirty, and there were many Polish immigrants on board with them. The Nanningas came to Edmonton via Calgary and were surprised to see green grass there after the snowy prairie.

Menne soon obtained a job as a carpenter, to enable him to provide for his family. A fourth son, **Gerrit** (Gerard), was born July 26, soon after they arrived in 1911. On December 18, 1911 while living in Edmonton, Menne filed on the NE 9-62-3-5 in what later became Neerlandia. He failed to do the required work on it and it went back to the government. Menne soon built a house in Edmonton for his family. The Nanningas milked cows and had a small milk route there. Another son was born in 1912, but lived only ten months. A daughter was born in 1914, but she died six-and-a-half months later. Both children died from summer complaint. Another son, **Andrew** (Enne) was born November 7, 1915.

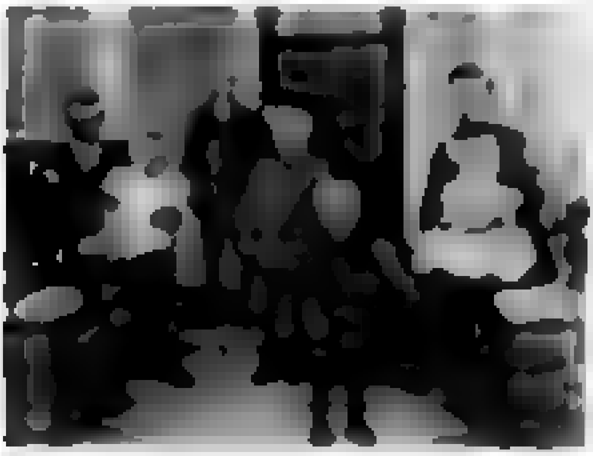
Menne built two houses in what is now the Norwood district of Edmonton. The first he sold with no difficulty, but the second was completed during World War I and practically had to be given away, because no one had any money.

The year of the move to Neerlandia was 1916. Menne had filed on the SE 32-61-3-5 in 1915. He chose that quarter because he could get water from the creek and there was plenty of grass for cattle. Menne went to the homestead first and built a log house with the help of Jim and Klaas Tuininga. The family came by train to Clyde, by Marshall's Stage to Old Barrhead, and from there by bobsleigh to the homestead (there was still snow on the ground in the Neerlandia area). Menne had purchased a couple of horses in Edmonton, and took them, along with the wagon packed with the family's possessions, to Neerlandia. Most likely one or two of the oldest sons went with him. Once at the homestead, the Nanningas erected a log barn and began clearing the land using axe and horses.

A daughter, **Grace** (Geeske), was a welcome addition on March 7, 1917. Another son, **Cor** (Cornelis), was born April 11, 1919. That was the year of the deep snow. Government loans had been used to buy cows, but four of the cattle died that winter. The snow was so deep that the horses had to take a big jump in order to get going. Andy and Ike, however, did not seem to mind the snow. They made skis and went over the drifts with ease.

Menne and Aaltje's eighth son, whom they named **Bert** (Albertus), was born July 15, 1920. Sons were important in this land, for many hands made much work lighter. Also around 1920, the Nanningas built one of the first lumber houses in Neerlandia. The house was 16 by 28-feet, had two storeys, and was considered a palace. Another girl, **Hilda**, was born in this house on December 16, 1923.

Menne received the patent to his homestead in 1920. At that time, he had already broken twenty acres and was cropping thirteen. Records indicate that in 1918 he had nine



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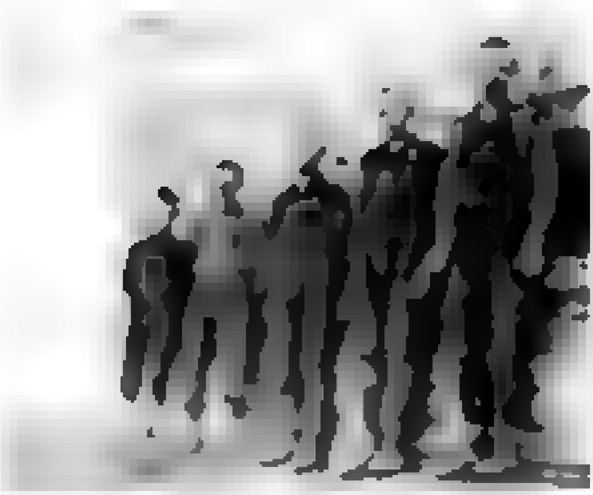


On the homestead about 1921: [illegible], Gerrit, Louis, Ike, Andy.

cattle, in 1919 obtained eleven more, but by 1920 had only sixteen cattle. He also owned four horses, had dug a 16-foot well, and built two log stables and 1½ miles of fence. All the improvements, including the frame house, were valued at [illegible].

At about this time Louis, then thirteen or fourteen, fell down the stairs in the barn and cracked his ankle. Dave Tuininga, trucker at the time, took him to Westlock where his foot was looked at and packed in ice. The next day someone took him to Edmonton where he received X-Rays. Louis came home a celebrity because he needed a cast for that ankle. Minor medical problems and some not-so-minor were handled at home. Andy got up one morning to discover red streaks going up his arm — blood poisoning, no doubt. Menne cut Andy's infected arm with a razor blade and drained the poison out. Everything healed nicely.

Walking was a necessary part of pioneering. Menne walked to Edmonton and back at least once, and one time walked home from Dusseldorf with a pig's head that Aaltje used for making headcheese.

Aaltje worked hard on the homestead. She baked bread three times a week, nine long loaves each time to provide enough for her large family. Each of the children had two sets of clothes, one for Sunday and the other for the rest of the week. Aaltje did the wash twice a week, using a scrub board. She usually washed the clothes in the nearby creek. One time she was on a board that had been put across the creek, rinsing out some clothes. She was on her knees and before she knew it she had fallen in headfirst. She got to her feet quickly in the waist-deep water and started shouting for help. Louis pulled her out of the creek easily, but according to her she ontrent verzopen (almost drowned). Besides the household chores and caring for the children, Aaltje did much of the outside work when necessary. With the help of the older children, she would pitch hay, milk cows, feed animals and tend a huge garden.

Making a living for such a large family did not come easily, so around 1922 or 1923 Menne went to work in Portland, Oregon, as a carpenter, leaving Aaltje and the children to look after the farm. In Oregon Menne worked on buildings for the World Fair. In later years, he and his older sons also worked in southern Alberta near Granum during the summer and fall. They helped with the harvest there and brought their wages home to help make ends meet in the lean years. Menne also worked at Lacombe Research Station during one harvest.

For the children, growing up poor was no hardship. In the summer the boys swam in the creek and in winter they fashioned their own sleigh and went up and down the hills with glee. Chasing rabbits or riding steers was fun too. Quiet entertainment (if there is such a thing with nine children) was reading or playing games with each other. In those years the children walked to school through the bush on a trail along the creek.

In the pioneer days it was said that the people of Fort Assiniboine lived on wild meat and berries, but those in Neerlandia lived on old cows and fat sows. The cows that were not marketable were eaten. One of Nanninga's cows, Old Blue, was a Cow Bill cow and she finally got put on the table after twenty years of giving milk. The fat sows were needed for lard that was used in cooking, baking, and frying. A special treat at Easter time was as many hard-boiled eggs as one could eat.

Before 1929, breaking the land was done with seven or eight horses, but that year the family purchased a brand-new McCormack tractor and a threshing machine. The tractor was used to do some custom breaking as well as the Nanningas' own farm work. The older sons, Andy and Ike, helped to purchase the tractor with wages earned at Floet's Sawmill and at Chisholm Lumber.

In 1932 Menne decided to set up his own sawmill. There was an abundance of trees and a possible demand for lumber. Besides, Menne had his own home-grown crew — seven sons. The idea worked well. With this mill he also did quite a bit of custom sawing.

Menne was skilled at drafting and architectural work. He drafted many blueprints for the homes of his children as they married. He enjoyed this more than farming.

Menne Nanninga built the first lumber school in 1918 with the help of Ben Lievers and Jacob Olthuis and he also worked on the second school. He drafted the plans for the two Christian Reformed Church buildings and the first parsonage. Menne worked with other carpenters in the second Co-op store. In 1938 he also had a hand in designing and building the present Co-op building. Menne Nanninga, as well as Ben Lievers, was often called upon to construct coffins for community members who had passed away. After making the coffin, Menne usually delivered it and stayed to help prepare the body for burial.

Menne, Aaltje, 1949.

Both Menne and Aaltje had great faith that their heavenly Father had led them to this country for a purpose and they trusted in Him for all things. Menne was active in church and community. He served on the consistory and was a charter member of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association.

In 1947, when Menne was 68 and Aaltje 66, they sold their farm to Bert and moved to the Centre. All the children were married by then. They bought a house from Henry Bouwman (probably the first house they ever bought instead of built) and enjoyed retirement. A chicken house, however, had to be built there and Menne also spent many happy hours drafting blueprints for houses in his little room upstairs. Aaltje passed away October 12, 1962, and Menne nine months later on July 12, 1963.

Nanninga Family

BILL OLDEGBERS

Bill (Willem) Oldegbers (born March 15, 1890) and his sister Dena (Everdina, born May 29, 1891) had been taken in by their uncle and aunt Jan and Johanna Oldgebers in 1893 because their mother, Gerritje (Witpaard) Oldegbers, had died and their father, Klaas, was unable to cope with his loss. When the Oldegbers immigrated to Canada in 1911, Bill and Dena decided to go along, though their father begged them with tears to stay in the Netherlands.

Bill, before 1911

When Bill came to this area, he filed on the SE 4-62-3-5, on September 24, 1913. Here he lived alone, eating many a meal of rabbit — fried, roasted, or stewed. Though he stayed only a few years, he worked hard to clear his land, and became known as a helpful friend, more than ready to help anyone in need.

As time went on, Bill went to Edmonton to

[redacted] his quarter to Klaas Krikke and later sold it to Chris Leder. His interest in Neerlandia remained very strong, however, and Uncle Bill as he was affectionately called, came back often to help and visit

When Dena Messelink moved to Edmonton in 1926, Bill bought her land (NE 34-61-3-5) Still, he continued living in Edmonton, renting the land to John Visser for many years and later selling it to him For as many years as possible. until old age prevented him from doing so, Uncle Bill made Neerlandia his second home He had many good friends among the adults, teenagers, and children. He was a great reader of Christian books, and when visiting his friends and family he would tell the story he had just read. This telling would be a long evening's entertainment which even the children enjoyed. And Bill enjoyed the children He always had his pockets filled with candy or gum, and was known to the children as the "Candy Man" He had a good sense of humour and his visits always included jokes and riddles for his friends to figure out. The children could never figure out how he got that needle all the way through his head — pushing it in through his forehead and pulling it out the back! Or, how come he could make his nose crack when he pushed it on the table, when they could not? More amazing, it never hurt him when he did these things!

Bill was a very honest man. completely trustworthy in business dealings. He believed other people were too, especially those whom he considered fellow Christians. Because of this, his word was his bond Unfortunately, some people took advantage of his trusting nature. and Bill was badly cheated a few times These occasions pained him deeply

[redacted] approximately one year. This man was from [redacted] would not be returned to the Netherlands to fight in World War I. At first no one knew that the fugitive was there, but people became suspicious when Bill began buying more groceries than was his custom. Klaas and Janna Krikke became privy to the secret one day when Bill had a chimney fire. Klaas. whose house was across the road from Bill's and who knew that Bill was gone for the day, was going over to put the fire out when he suddenly noticed someone on the roof. More curious than ever, he went over and discovered that the man on the roof was someone he had previously met in Gramsm. The fugitive had married shortly before coming to Neerlandia, and after about six months his wife joined him to live in a cabin they built in the woods to the northwest of Bill's quarter Bill was relieved when the war was over. He said he would never do such a thing again because he thought it was not right

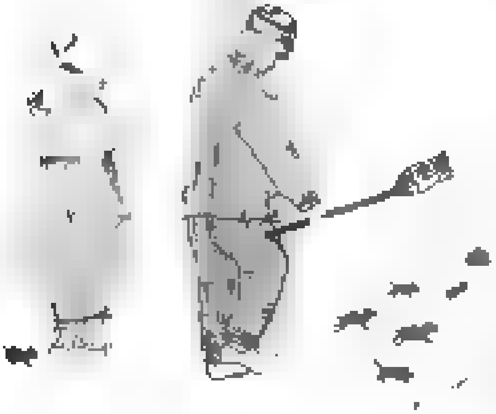
Bill continued to work for the City Water Works until his retirement He was also the janitor for the First Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton for many years, a task he did free of charge. Bill died at 91 years of age, in March of 1981 He is remembered by his friends as Uncle Bill

Johanna Bender
Rita Krikke

JAN AND JOHANNA (WITPAARD) OLDEGBERS

At the age of sixty most people start thinking of taking it a bit easier Not so with Albert Jan and Albertje Johanna Oldegbers, born in Ommen, Overijssel, who at the ages of 64 and 55 set sail for Canada and the extreme hardships of homesteading Jan had a friend in Can[redacted] how good it was in Canada had persuaded him [redacted] family group that left Enschede, Overijssel: Albert Jan (March 5, 1847) and Johanna (September 16, 1856) Oldegbers, two married daughters and their husbands. Henry and **Petertje** (January 18, 1883) Schoonekamp, and Albert and **Dena** (December 26. 1887) Messelink, three unmarried daughters, **Janna** (September 22, 1889) **Lily** (February 18, 1894), and **Jennae** (1896), their son **John** (Gerrit Jan, December 23. 1898), and a nephew and niece, **Willem** and Dena Oldegbers, who had been part of the family since an early age.

The boat the Oldegbers family had originally planned on taking needed repairs so they booked passage on another which took them to New York and which, incidentally. meant arriving earlier than they anticipated in the new country. Upon docking they were conducted to [redacted] stayed while awaiting the proper train The immigration hall in which the Oldegbers family stayed was so infested with mice that the men



fastened their pants tightly around their ankles to prevent the mice from crawling up their legs. The women experienced greater difficulty yet, trying to tighten their skirts around their ankles. Sleeping was a nightmare since the mice ran around and over the people. The Oldegbers were delighted that their stay was just a short one. A ten-day trip by train took them from New York to Edmonton. They spent another ten days at the Immigration Hall in Edmonton while looking for their own accommodations. They received food and shelter there and, best of all, there were no mice.

In Edmonton they rented a house, and as many family members as possible went out working to earn money to enable them to start homesteading. Because John was still young, he had to attend school. Jan Oldegbers soon left with eleven other men to find land where they could all farm close together. About ninety-five miles northwest in Townships 61 and 62 they found the area they liked. The first thing they did was build a shack where they could live while they looked the land over. The quarters were all numbered with government stakes and the men made a list of the ones which interested them. Then they put the numbers in a pile and began to draw. Each went back to Edmonton with the land number he had picked. Jan drew the SE 34-61-3-5, the quarter on which the shack had been built. Since the family could live in this cabin they moved to the homestead in 1912.

Jan, Johanna, 1910.

After hiring two teams of horses, two wagons, and two drivers (John Anema and Siebren Tiemstra), the Oldegbers and their son John and the Koop Masts and their son Henry left for their homesteads. They were the first of the twelve to bring their families to the wilderness and the first Dutch people to settle the area.

The trip was a nightmare — only a winding trail through the bush, criss-crossed with sloughs, creeks, and rivers. There were hordes of black flies, mosquitoes, and other insects for company. The men and often women too would walk to make it easier for the horses. When they came to sloughs they had to decide whether to find a way around or to struggle through it. If they were to go around a slough it meant extra miles and time. If they went through the slough, the men would use logging chains and both teams to get the wagons across, one at a time. At one place the Oldegbers had to leave some of their furniture behind in a shack and when they returned later most of it was gone.

The Oldegbers spent many days travelling, sleeping in the bush along the way. When they

finally came to what is now Neerlandia, they could settle in their new home and start farming. Jan had taken some chickens on the wagon, but most of them died on the trip. He bought a cow and heifer along the way. The single girls had remained in Edmonton earning money to help the parents on the farm. For the next few years they sent groceries and other needed supplies. The Oldegbers family had their own eggs and milk. There were also many wild animals and birds to be had. John became a good hunter and kept the family supplied with meat, which they salted down so it would keep. Wild fruit was plentiful. They soon had a small garden plot where they could grow vegetables and potatoes. Because it was so difficult to get supplies into the area these pioneers had to make many of their own tools and furniture. Jan Oldegbers made a chair frame from intertwined willows and covered it with moosehide.

Johanna, John, Jan, 1913

Farming was difficult. On occasion Jan Oldegbers and Douwe Terpsma would put up hay together. They would look for open spots where grass grew. Then working by hand with scythe, rake, and fork, they would make hay. The rake was made out of twigs and branches and a bit of lumber, and included a cradle to catch the hay. One time they had made two stacks and decided that because of the dryness and the fire hazard they should put a fireguard around them. They had just completed one fireguard when a whirlwind came and deposited sparks on the other stack. Before the men could act and because no water was available the entire stack was consumed before their eyes — a winter's supply of hay gone in minutes.

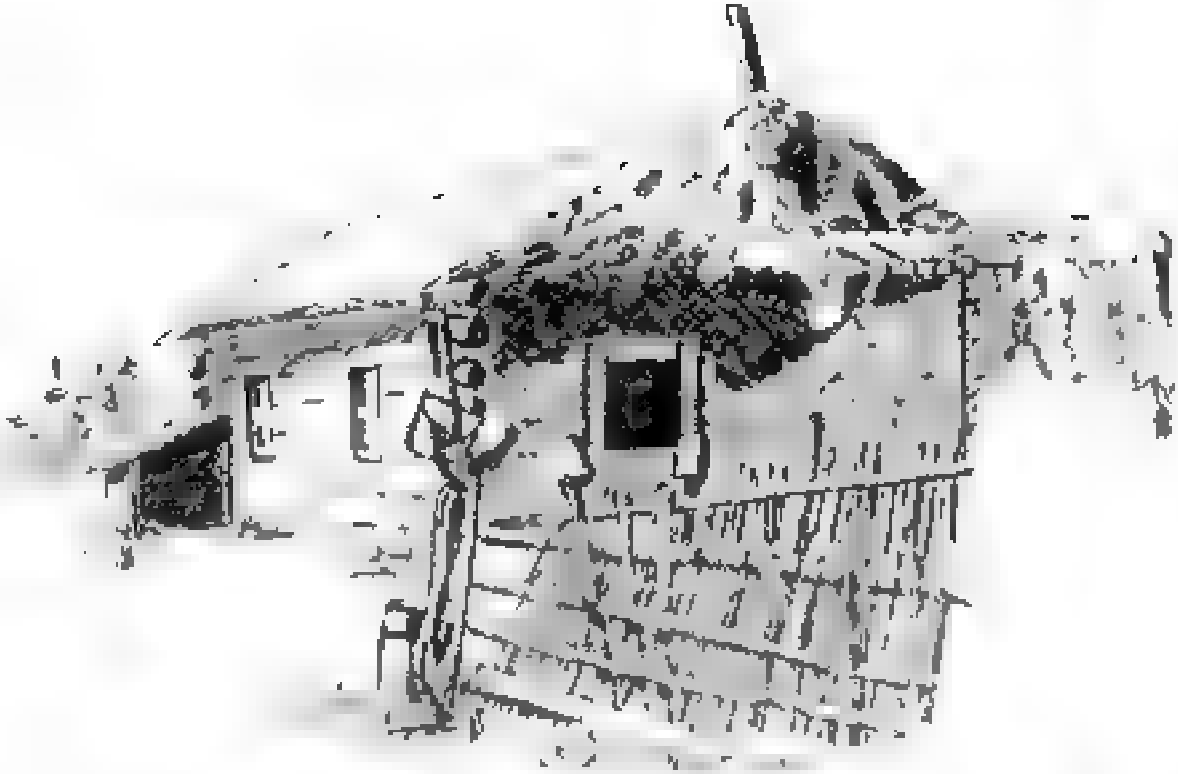
Jan was good at farming and worked hard. He was especially good with sick animals. He often walked many miles to help those with sick livestock. On a number of occasions, sometimes at night, he went all the way to Vega. Wherever he was needed, he responded. He continued to do this although he himself was not healthy, suffering from diabetes.

Jan liked to discuss religious matters and appeared to be a stern man, but he could also be humorous. He would show visiting youngsters a variety of rope tricks and amuse them with jokes and riddles. One time he asked a little boy, "What do you do with poor firewood?" The little fellow confessed that he did not know so Jan said, "We burn ours."

Johanna loved pretty things and tried to make her pioneer home attractive by planting flowers. One of her favourite was Sweet William. Near the house she planted hops, which grew quickly and soon covered the walls and roof. She also had another use for plants. From the flower of the pineapple weed, she made an herbal tea which was good for colds. Johanna was a quiet person who liked to putter in her garden, but she was also helpful, and good with sick people. While her husband walked miles for animals, Johanna went for people, often serving as a midwife, helping in childbirth.

The two oldest Oldegbers daughters remained in Edmonton with their families a few years, but came to Neerlandia in 1915. The three girls, Janna, Lily, and Jennie, who worked in Edmonton, occasionally came to visit their parents and brother. These trips were no pleasure as the roads were terrible and the travel slow. They would come by freight train to Clyde, then by stage coach or with the mailman to the Dusseldorf area. The trip from Edmonton took two days.

One regular stopping place was Southworth's. Many travellers stayed the night there. The girls would be afraid because the men would begin drinking, become rowdy, and make improper advances to the girls. The man of the house, however, was a wonderful host. He would tell the girls not to worry, and he himself would sleep right outside their door.



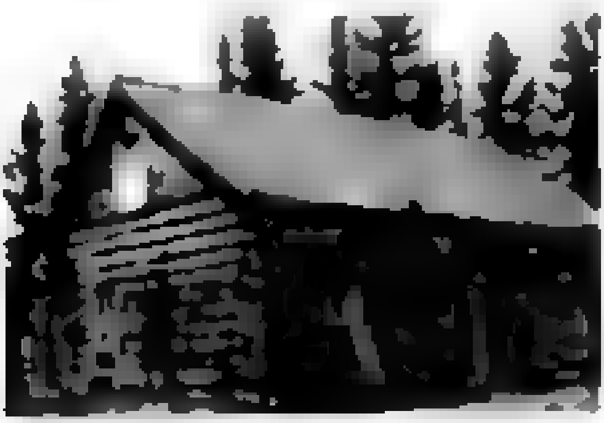
which was simply a curtain, so no one would bother them. From Southworth's place to Neerlandia the girls had to walk. Brother John would come to meet them and help carry their luggage.

Janna married Klaas Krikke, and became a farmer's wife. Lily married John Ebbers, mov-

Janna, Jenny, Lily, 1915.

Johanna, John, Jan, c. 1916

ing to a dairy farm near Edmonton. Jennie married Pete Kooy; they went to Nobleford, taking up dairy farming there. John married Jennie Tuininga, and Bill stayed single. Dena had married Albert Mast in 1912.



Oldegbers' log house

Jan passed away in 1926 at the age of 79. Johanna Oldegbers then sold the farm to Jacob Olthuis and moved into a house built for her on the Schoonekamp yard. She had a little dog, Topsy, who was her constant companion. She lived for another thirteen years. Her later years were spent in the Schoonekamp home. She passed away in 1939 at 83 years of age.

Rita Krikke
Rubie Nanninga

JACOB AND AALTJE (EILANDER) OLTHUIS

The Olthuis' Neerlandia account covers a time space of roughly 20 years, beginning in [illegible] and extending to [illegible] a relatively short period in their entire life span. Jacob Olthuis was born in Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on October 23, 1880. Aaltje Eilander was born in Hattem, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on February 10, 1885. They were married May 27, 1905.

Jacob was a tradesman, carpenter and bricklayer, and he operated a small hardware store. Jacob and Aaltje were relatively well-to-do. They had three young sons: John (Jan, December 25, 1905), William (Willem, April 23, 1908), and Fred (Frederick, July 25, 1910). They were happy.

Olthuis was bothered, however, by the fact that the Netherlands had conscription, making it mandatory for him and others to take military training for three months each year. He felt that the whole matter was an unnecessary intrusion on him and his family life. He resented taking orders and the stringent, domineering rules. Jacob hated barrack life with its lice, profanity, and vulgarities.

The pondering on these matters along with careful reading of literature on economic conditions and possibilities in Canada brought a dream to Jacob. It became ever clearer to him that Canada was the land of freedom and opportunity, so immigration presented itself as an answer to his quest for liberty.

On April [illegible] Jacob booked steerage-class passage on the *Montezuma* and sailed from Antwerp for Canada leaving Aaltje and the children with relatives in Gelderland. He arrived in Edmonton and met other Hollanders there and worked as a tradesman on the High Level Bridge project.

Jacob returned to the Netherlands some time later and built a new home for his family. However, the same discontent arose and the desire to immigrate surfaced anew.

Jacob and Aaltje sold most of their possessions, purchased passage for the family and bade farewell to friends and relatives. They sailed on the *Corsican* from Liverpool across the Atlantic on May 3, 1913, with their young family. There were now four children since a baby girl, whom they named Berandje, had been born on January 12, 1913. As Jacob had done on the earlier trip, they too came steerage class. Little Bill ran about the ship and peered out of the portholes, through which he could hear the rush of the water. The ship lay at anchor for a few days because of icebergs. After a fourteen-day boat ride and a tedious train ride across Canada they arrived safely in Edmonton. Jacob and Aaltje never saw their parents or brothers or sisters after leaving the Netherlands.

Jacob built a small shack on city land (a common practice among the immigrants in those days) approximately at the north-east corner of where the Commonwealth Stadium now stands.

Father Olthuis obtained a job laying concrete sewer pipes in the Norwood-Parkdale area for the City of Edmonton. Circumstances were favourable for the family. John attended Parkdale school and the family soon made new friends as the Hollanders found each other through church attendance or through casual events. Learning a new language was difficult.

During the first summer in Edmonton, both Fred and the baby were ill with summer complaint. Medication was given but little Eerlandje grew weaker and died. She was buried in August — a sad experience for the family.

On June 4, 1914, a second daughter, Eva (Eerlandje), was born. Dr. Johnston attended the birth as he was their family doctor. During that same year, World War I broke out creating massive unemployment in the city and Jacob was laid off. Without a steady income to [illegible]ide for the family of four children, Jacob [illegible] another move in order to pioneer on a homestead.

On January 20, 1914, Jacob Olthuis made application for entry for a homestead (SW 4-62-3-5). The family moved to Neerlandia in April 1915.

Jacob had purchased two horses, two cows and a few chickens. He received a fifty-dollar government grocery grant with which he bought supplies. The family's belongings were [illegible] [illegible]rses to the homestead — a ten-day trip. Aaltje and the children travelled by train and stage. Their so-called homestead was 160 acres [illegible]

Though the early pioneering days with its [illegible] Olthuis family, neither were they disastrous.

Through Jacob's inexperience as a farmer and lack of a good understanding regarding the terms and conditions of their new land, the family encountered some disappointments and adversities. However, as the Olthuis sons and daughters reminisce they most often recall the humorous and positive factors.

The early pioneers, through dependence on [illegible] eke out an existence. Neighbours and friends [illegible] and Aaltje, with four children, lived in with the Ben Lievers family for a short time before moving into their own house. The Lievers family was hospitable and most helpful.

The first Olthuis house was of log construction with a too-steep sod roof. The poplar trees, chosen for their easy access to the building site, were a poor choice. The logs were not straight and uniform enough, resulting in uneven spaces left to be chinked up with moss or mud — a tedious task. Besides this the logs were not heavy enough, they were too thin and the cold could readily penetrate. The heavy rains soaked through the sod roof, showering muddy water on most everything within their home. On at least one occasion Mother Olthuis sat up in bed, holding up an umbrella in order to keep the baby in her arms dry.

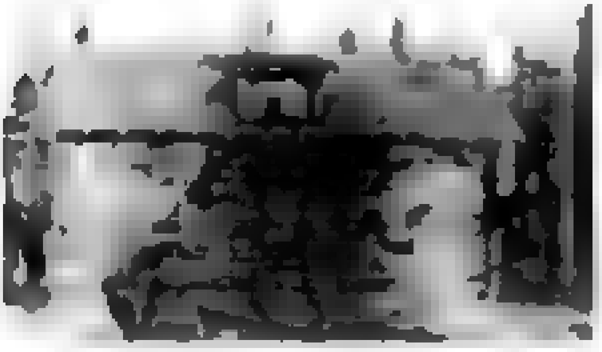
The first tilling of the land was by spade and shovel. Later Jacob hitched a horse and an ox together to the plow — naturally the horse was [illegible] Neighbours reminded him that in the Bible that was forbidden — nor was the method efficient so it was discontinued.

Jacob made a large airtight heater which served as the heating unit for the living room. In the middle of the lid he cut an opening just large enough to hold the bottom half of a five-pound lard pail. That way the fuel used to heat [illegible] do other bits of cooking. It worked extremely well, except that the opening gradually got [illegible] stant use. One morning Jacob cooked some wheat porridge and just before it was done the entire pail of food slid into the fire. "Oh, dear, no hot breakfast that morning!" However, [illegible] other ring-lid was quickly made because the method worked so well.

Jacob would also cook eggs for the family's breakfast. His clever idea was to put the eggs in an empty salt bag, lower them into the water and at the appointed minute lift bag and eggs out in one easy motion. One morning there were two salt bags on the counter one with salt and the other with the unboiled eggs. Jacob inadvertently picked up the bag with salt and deftly lowered it into the bubbling water without a splash. Four-and-one-half minutes later he went to lift out the eggs. An empty limp bag met his surprised stare.

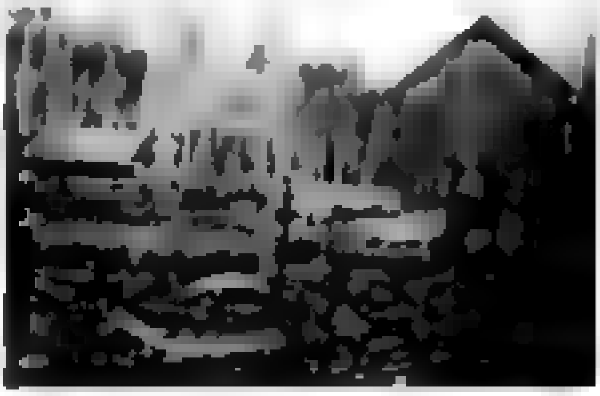
One day Jacob had a rather serious accident. He had been riding a snappy little grey horse when the accident occured. Klaas Krikke and Henry Schoonekamp found him and walked him home, supporting him between the two of them. Whether he had fallen off and then been kicked by the horse or had been struck by [illegible] overhanging branch the family never learned with certainty because Jacob himself could not explain exactly what had happened to him. He was not a pretty sight. His ear was bleeding badly and his nose was split open. Joe Hoiwerda heard about the accident and came to see if he could be of assistance. When he arrived Jacob was sitting outside in a rocking chair. The sight of Jacob's face was too much for Joe. He took one look and hastily turned away, passed out cold, and fell headlong on the grass. After sometime Jacob was taken to Westlock where the doctor diagnosed a broken nose but the time lapse which had taken place made stitching useless. The resulting scar remained with him for life.

The Olthuis family stayed in Neerlandia only three years the first time before returning to Edmonton. During their stay in Neerlandia a fourth son, **George** (Jan Gerard), was born May 7, 1917. By this time the farm had nine acres under cultivation, as well as some buildings and fences erected on it. Upon their return to Edmonton in 1918 Jacob took a job at McGavins Bakery. **Carrie** (Gerritje) was born in Edmonton on February 5, 1919, and soon thereafter the family of eight moved back to Neerlandia. It was September 1, 1919, when they took on anew the task of homesteading on the same quarter. This time Jacob built a house near the middle of the quarter and close to Baird Lake. Later he moved the house to the southeast corner of the same quarter.



One of the Olthuis houses. Jacob and Alice, c. 1922

Conditions and times were not as austere for the Olthuis family on their return as those which they had experienced on arrival in 1915. The winter of 1919, however, proved to be one of the worst ever experienced in Neerlandia. In 1921 Jacob made application for the homestead patent and that was issued. The farm had fifteen-and-one-half acres under cultivation at that time. Besides the house there were four other buildings, and both barbed wire and pole fences had been put up. There were sixteen head of cattle, four horses, five sheep, and some hogs and chickens. Jacob also applied for the privilege of taking up a second homestead (SW 7-62-3-5) and that was also granted.



Assembling a binder. John studying the instructions, early 1920s.

The log house they lived in was better than the first one since Jacob had learned from the experience of building the earlier one. The family always managed to find enough food to eat as meat could be supplied by trapping or hunting. The farm provided milk, eggs, butter, cheese, and vegetables. Other goods which were needed could at times be exchanged for surplus farm products.

It seems that each move the Olthuis family made resulted in an addition to the family; this last move was no exception. On May 17, 1922 the Olthuis family had their last child, **Alice** (Aaltje). She was born at home with the assistance of the same midwife who had attended George's birth. When Alice was a few months old her parents noticed that she was tongue-tied. The doctor came to the house, snipped the offending tissue while Jacob and Aaltje held their daughter on a pillow on the kitchen table. Eva and Carrie cringed at the baby's loud cry; they wanted to watch but yet they were afraid to look.

Farming was not Jacob's thing — he was a tradesman at heart. Early in the twenties he sold his farm to Ike Tiemstra, with the intention of moving to Grand Rapids, Michigan. This did not materialize. After the homestead was sold

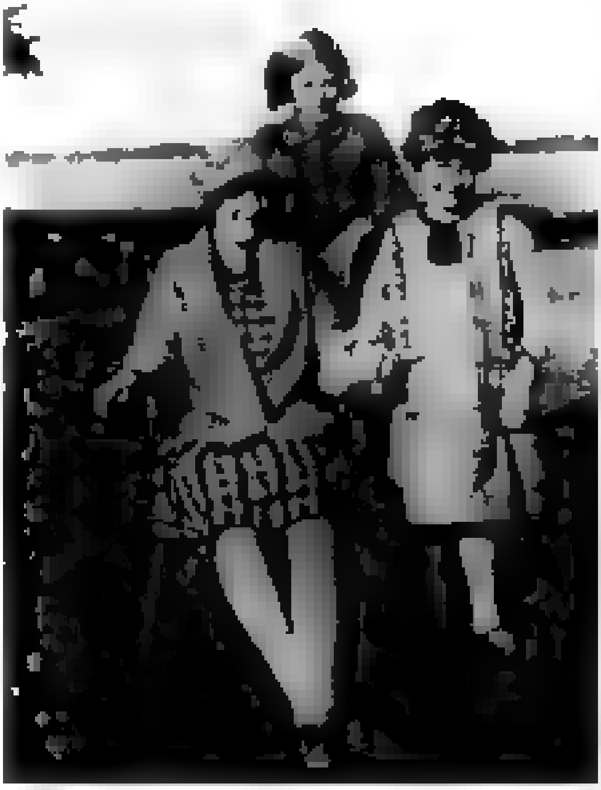
Jacob bought a Ford truck, hoping to launch a freight-hauling business between Neerlandia and Edmonton. This venture was not a success, mainly due to the unusual weather and the resulting road conditions. In 1925 the hauling business was discontinued.

From 1924 to 1926 the family lived in a two-storey lumber constructed house on John's homestead (NW 33-61-3-5). Then they moved into Bill van Ark's house and lived there until Jacob bought the Oldegbers farm in 1927. Bill and Fred also made applications for homesteads, as John had done earlier and these were granted. Bill filed on the NE 13-61-3-5 and Fred on the SE 7-62-3-5. For a time John, Bill, and Fred bached together in a shack on Fred's homestead. Then one Sunday disaster struck. The Olthuis brothers had gone to stay at their parents' home for the weekend and when they returned the place was burned to the ground. The cause of the fire is still a mystery. R. J. De Vries had checked the cabin on his way to church and found nothing amiss. Though it was just a one-room cabin it was a great loss because all their worldly possessions were in it. Bill still regrets the loss of "the best rifle I ever had". In spite of this setback all three brothers eventually patented their homesteads — John in 1929, Bill in 1934, and Fred in 1937.

A furrow laid bare, John at left.

When the Olthuis family first lived in Neerlandia many services were non-existent. The nearest doctor and medical aid was available at Westlock and in later years also from Barrhead. When in 1924 many cases of whooping cough were evident, the doctor did come to check on the patients in various homes. Eva suffered greatly from the disease. In 1930 an epidemic of chicken pox hit the community and

Fred, Bill, Eva, 1930.



Eva, Carrie, Alice, c. 1931

Carrie was very ill, so the doctor was called in. Generally, though, the Olthuis family seldom needed care in the area of health.

Aaltje, who experienced somewhat frail health, often required extra help within the home. Hannah Lievers came on many occa[illegible] to help out. Rose Sturwold did the wash for the family during one period of Aaltje's [illegible] them during another. Others offered help too. When Fred was in his early teens he proved to be very helpful as he could perform many household tasks ably.

Jacob served as member of the church consistory. While he was deacon, among other things, it was his task to count and record the offerings. On one such occasion, the entire collection of pennies, nickels, dimes, and the odd quarter was spread out on the kitchen table. Just then the Watkins man came by with his wares. Mother Olthuis did not wish to buy anything and she dismissed him with the standard reply, "No money!" With a degree of skepticism, his eyes took in the little piles of [illegible] arranged for an easy counting.

In any rural area, people are bound to come [illegible] or blessing. The Olthuis family found this to be true in Neerlandia. Jacob and John went out one February day to cut firewood. John walked to a bluff about one hundred yards away from where his father was working.

"Oh, there's a bear hole here!" he called.

"Anything in it?" asked Jacob.

"Nah," John replied, but on taking a closer [illegible] Losing no time Jacob and John went to get help [illegible] Lievers, and Henry Michael. Dusk was falling as the four men lined up in front of the hole. On command they let go a salvo into the den. After such a barrage of gunfire they expected the bear to be dead, so they were greatly surprised to hear sounds issuing from the den. Someone made a torch and they fearfully peered into the dark hole. There they saw a she-bear and one cub lying dead and still, but another tiny cub still alive. Jacob carried the cub home inside his shirt in hopes of raising it but, being so you[illegible] vive. The adult bear was divided among the men. It was in prime shape with a thick layer of fat still covering its body which made good eating. The Olthuis family says that bear meat can best be compared to pork for flavour and texture.

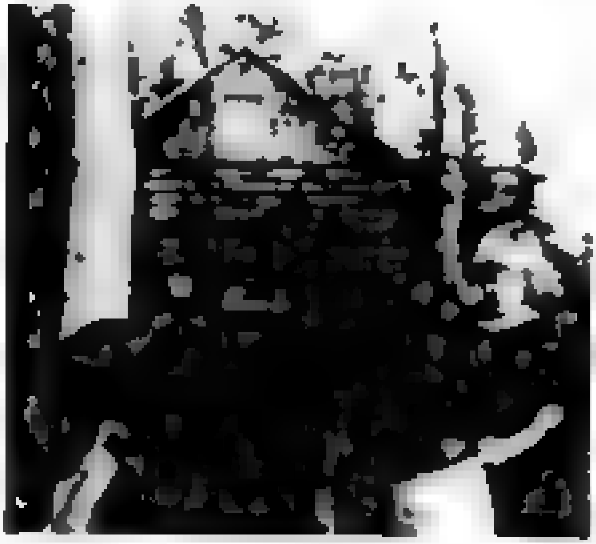
Deer, rabbit, partridge, fish, ducks, and a variety of animals were hunted down and caught for food. Coyotes were considered pests and were trapped for their pelts. Bill was the family hunter and trapper. The pelts and skins of weasel, muskrat, and squirrel obtained by him were shipped and sold. Big brother Bill was George's hero and he copied Bill in many ways. As Bill did, he also enjoyed the outdoors for exploring and hunting.

The Olthuis family captured two coyote pups and raised one to adulthood. It chewed and gnawed until eventually a space large enough for escape from its slab-board kennel was made.

The year of the caterpillars, 1924, descended on the community, leaving destruction on tree and shrub. The creatures followed the sun's rays and crawled into open doorways; they seemed to be everywhere. Alice was a toddler and she enjoyed playing with the creepy things.

Three animals were remembered by the Olthuis family — a dog named Bob, a mare named Vos, and a ram with no name at all (though he was probably called lots of names). Bob was protective of everything around him — he would guard the house, watch over the chickens, or stand as a guard when meat hung at the yard butchering site. He could bring in the cows from the pasture and sort out any intruder — and he was most protective of the three youngest Olthuis children. Vos was a faithful, good-natured, steady workhorse willing to perform for her master — when she was too old to work she was retired and pensioned-off to live her remaining years on Bill's farm. The ram was a general nuisance. He butted Willem de Groot down, he would not let Fred Ritsema off the woodpile, and once he got into Ben Lievers' house and chased the occupants out.

Mother Olthuis had long black hair which she twisted or braided and then rolled into a [illegible] and two curved combs, one on each side of the chignon. Her hair was a bit curly and waved easily about her face. Aaltje's eyes were

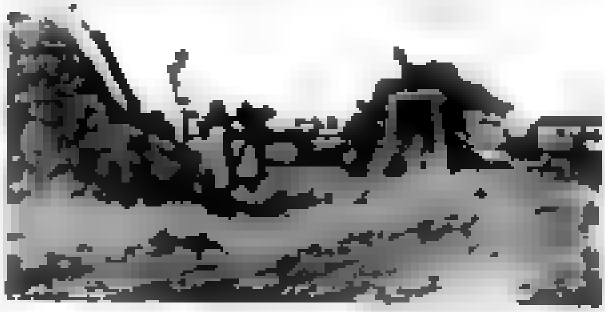


Carrie feeding an orphaned colt, 1929.

greyish-blue. Her skin was fair and soft. Through the heavy work of a pioneer her shoulders became slightly stooped. Though Mother Olthuis was not robust physically, she was strong in spirit with a lucid mind and a steadfast will to carry on without complaint or lament. Her feelings and responses were often kept guarded. Problems were for solving, obstacles were for licking, shortages were for filling, jobs were for doing. Aaltje was inventive, ingenious, and resourceful. When the supply of soap, store-bought or the homemade kind, was in short supply she supplemented it with water in which ashes had been stirred, left to settle, and strained; that "softened water" worked well. Aaltje never threw anything away, everything was saved for possible future use. As she went about her daily work, Aaltje wore a print dress protected by a bibstyle apron — both made of a dark cotton fabric of a small geometric or floral pattern. Because Aaltje was often sick, the patching and mending were not always done on time. Bill remembers using a nail to replace a missing button on his bib overalls.

Mother Olthuis roasted wheat and ground it up for coffee — during better times a substance called "coffee essence" was added for truer coffee flavour. Ground wheat was boiled to make porridge for breakfast and served with milk and sugar. It was used to bake nutritious dark brown bread. These loaves were often baked in lard or syrup pails. The Olthuis children would at times cut the first slice from a loaf and with a spoon dig out the centre of the loaf letting the bits fall crumbled into a bowl. Milk (or cream if available) and sugar were added for a delicious breakfast.

When her health permitted Aaltje would make large meals, especially on Sundays. Unless they lived nearby, morning church worshippers did not have enough time to go home to eat between services so people were always welcomed to the Olthuis home, which was central. Aaltje was a good cook and served tasty dinners. Excellent use was made of every berry that could be picked locally for a good variety of tastes.



Threshing from a stack. Eva, Alice, Jacob, 1929

Threshing time called for special meals served up in enormous quantities. Aaltje learned to take the entire contents of a sealer of home-canned pork and to grind it up, spiced and seasoned to taste, it made an appetizing sandwich filling.

In 1928, three nephews came from the Netherlands to stay at the Olthuis home. It

Fred, Annie Arends, John, Alice, Henry Kuipers.

meant that Aaltje had a family of nine adults and three children to cook, bake, wash, and care for. Eva, at age fourteen, was taken out of school for an entire year to help with the mountain of work involved

One feat that Jacob enjoyed was making [illegible] ditty, "O Canada, *wat heb je mij bedrogen!*" (O Canada, how I've been deceived) — all this with tongue-in-cheek and a smile on his face

The floor in an early Olthuis home was made of split rails laid close together. Once John stepped on one end of a rail and it tilted the other end up just where the churn filled with cream stood. The churn tipped over and spilled the cream, which rapidly disappeared between the rails. Mother Olthuis was annoyed and asked how it happened. John said that he had been at the other side of the room and explained what had happened. Mother said that that was impossible. She stepped hard down on the rail to prove her point but, sure enough, over went the churn spilling out whatever cream was left in it after the first incident

The Olthuis family enjoyed reading and storytelling. The Bible held a prominent place in the Olthuis home; there were both Dutch and English versions. There were also a few other books, newspapers, and magazines. Father [illegible] would gather around him to hear the fabulous tales he related with great animation and lots of expression. He would also recite poetry, and [illegible] lessons which the children had to apply to their own lives. Delightful memories!

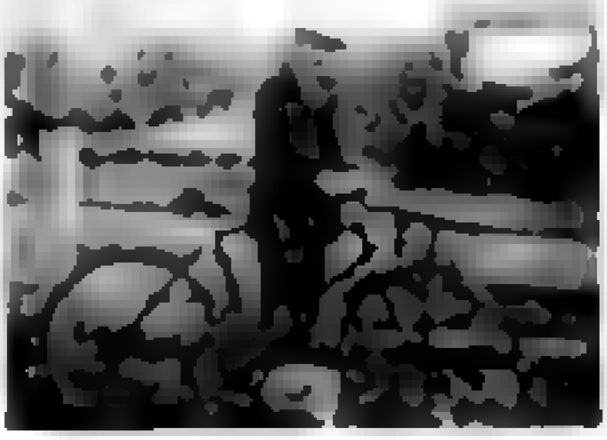
Aaltje was generally occupied with some [illegible] those special times of stories or games. Entire [illegible] taught the children many songs and verses. Hours were spent around the organ singing for enjoyment and pleasure. Both Eve and [illegible] took organ lessons from John Gelderman. Jacob and Aaltje advocated good education for all of their children. They were very pleased when Fred was the first of their children to bring home a grade eight diploma

Jacob was of medium height and rather stocky build. Bright blue eyes looked out from under bushy eyebrows. He had brown hair and a large mustache which he would sometimes twist into handlebar points. (In winter the mustache would freeze fast to his scarf or at times to the bedding.) At an early age, his hair began to thin out and for many years he had only a halo-like rim of hair around his head. On Sundays Jacob wore a dark suit and a light shirt. He never wore a belt [illegible] his pants were held up by wide, brightly-coloured suspenders

Jacob and Aaltje left Neerlandia in 1934 to live in Edmonton, only Bill remained as a farmer in Neerlandia. They enjoyed a much more [illegible] carpentry trade. He built several houses for rental purposes; this proved to be a profitable undertaking. Building was to his liking and it gave him a good measure of satisfaction

John married Jennie Wierenga in 1937, and they lived in Edmonton. He was manager at McGavins Bakeries. John and Jennie reside in Edmonton

Bill married Carrie Tuininga in 1934. Fred married Winnie Prins in 1940. He was a radio and T.V. technician and worked for Wade and Richards Radio Ltd. He is now retired and lives in Edmonton



Jacob, c. [illegible]

Eva, homemaker, married Simon Jacob Groot in 1939. They live in Edmonton. George married Alice Martin in 1970. He was partner and manager of Edwards Hatcheries. He was also employed at Dow Chemicals. He is retired and lives in Edmonton. Carrie married Simon Groot in 1940. They lived in Neerlandia for three years. Alice, homemaker, married Peter Visser in 1946. They live in Edmonton.

Jacob and Aaltje were richly blessed and lived comfortably into and during their retirement years. Jacob was strong and agile; he could still ride his bicycle at eighty years of age. After fifty-five years of marriage, Aaltje died June 14, 1960, at age seventy-five. Father Jacob lived to be eighty-six, and he died March 16, 1967.

Olthuis Family

TED AND IDA (KAMPNAR) REITSMA

Ted (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born April 15, 1894, in Garmerwolde, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was the oldest of a family of seven and the only one to emigrate, which he did in the summer of 1913. He sailed from Rotterdam as a steerage passenger on a German ship, for a fee of forty dollars. He landed in Halifax and then travelled to Quebec with another young man he had met aboard ship. He found it difficult to get started in a country where he could not understand the language, but he did find work helping to build a bridge over the St. Lawrence River. He was delightfully surprised one day, in the spring of 1914, when he came home from work to find an uncle, **Lubbe Bosma**, waiting for him. Lubbe (who was Ted's age) and Ted formed a team and decided to "go west." Ted had the address of a friend, George Dykema of Granum, and Lubbe had the name of Roelf Kooy in Monarch, so southern Alberta was their target. During the summer of 1914, they worked their way across Canada, arriving in Granum in August. With the help of Mr. Dykema they got work for the fall harvest and then just worked for room and board over the winter.

During the 1915 harvest they met two homesteaders from Neerlandia, John Anema and Popko Schuring. These gentlemen were very persuasive, telling in glowing terms the good things Neerlandia had to offer, so after the harvest they accompanied John Anema north. The trip from Edmonton to Neerlandia was memorable — four hours on the train to arrive in Clyde, then a drive on a six-seat democrat pulled by a mule team to Dusseldorf (Freedom), and then a long walk in the dark carrying full packs, to arrive at Anema's home at 3:00 A.M.

After looking over the land with Simon Tiemstra, they headed back to Westlock to file on their homesteads. Ted filed on the SE 21-61-3-5. Because this quarter had a one-room lumber shack, a well, a barn, and many other improvements on it, Ted had to pay forty dollars rather than the normal ten-dollar filing fee. Ted and Lubbe lived together for the first winter, sharing cooking and other chores. The first time Ted made pancakes, he attempted to emulate his mother by taking the handle of the pan and flipping the hotcakes over. Unfortunately, he lacked her expertise and the pancake stuck to the ceiling, where it still was stuck when Lubbe came in for supper.

Ted and Lubbe left each spring to work on the prairies and came home after the harvest to try clear more land. On one occasion in 1917, Ted was dismissed from his job for refusing to work on Sundays. In the year of the worldwide flu epidemic, Ted arrived in Neerlandia to find the Pete Kampnar Jr. family sick. He nursed them back to health and then, realizing that he was coming down with the flu himself, filled his shack with food, water and fuel, and crawled into bed.

Lubbe who died in the 1918 flu epidemic in Edmonton, 1915

The following winter Ted went to work in a logging camp, but spent his weekends at home. His visits home paid off when he married Ida Kampner on January 3, 1921, at Mellowdale, Alberta. That summer both Ida and Ted worked in Killam, returning to Neerlandia before the birth of their oldest daughter, **Sadie**, on November 2, 1921. This set Ted to doing something to improve the shack, finishing it off and adding a fourteen-by-twenty-foot log lean-to which served as a bedroom and kitchen. Each year more land was cleared and more livestock added. Yet ends would not meet and Ted went to Edmonton for two winters, working in the mines in Beverly. Ida took care of the stock by herself for those months.

Ted, Sadie, 1921

Ted became a Canadian citizen in 1922. He took an active part in the community by serving as chairman of the board of directors of Neerlandia Co-operative Association. Ted also took a course at The University of Alberta to qualify as Weed Inspector. For two years he travelled on horseback to do the job. Then he purchased a Model A Ford, which made it easier for him to get around.

Soon it was time to build a new house. Two more children had been born: **Helen** on November 15, 1925, and **Harry** on November 14, 1927. For the first time, Ted and Ida went into debt to build a lumber house, only to have the Depression bring them near to bankruptcy. The Reitsmas' last child, **Anna**, was born on May 3, 1933.

Ted, Helen, Harry, Sadie, Ida. Front: Anna, 1943.

As time went on Ted became involved in the co-operative movement which formed implement co-ops, stores, and credit unions. He became a director of Alberta Wholesale and Implement Co-op and travelled to such places as Winnipeg, Toronto, Calgary, and Toledo. In the meantime, the children were growing up and getting jobs of their own. From the time she was fifteen until she left Neerlandia in 1942, Sadie worked as a clerk in Neerlandia Co-op. Then she worked in Edmonton Post Office before her marriage to Peter Prins in 1946. They have two daughters.

Sadie beside Reitsma's first lumber house, 1925

Helen completed high school at Barrhead and then joined Sadie in Edmonton in 1944. She left for the U.S.A. in 1947 to study at Calvin College. After teaching in Denver, Colorado, for two years, she returned to Edmonton and married Stan Skurrow. They have three children.

Ted and Ida sold the farm to Jerry Reitsma in 1946 and, with the rest of their children, moved to Edmonton. Harry finished high school in Edmonton and then joined the RCMP. After his stint of duty he left the force and purchased a butcher shop. He married Thelma Sturwold in 1954, and they have four children. Anna became a nurse, and married Ed Smith in 1960. They have one son.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skurrow

ALBERT AND SUSANNA (JANSEN) RITSEMA

Albert Ritsema was born in Groningen, the Netherlands, on November 3, 1875. In 1891 he and his family immigrated to Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. The Jansen family had already immigrated to the same place in 1878 from Overijssel, where Susie (Susanna) was born November 17, 1875.

Albert and Susie met, and married in the spring of 1900. They set up their home in Grand Rapids were five children were born to them: **Fred** (Fridus), May 31, 1901; **Sadie** (Sara), September 19, 1903; **John** (Jan) Peter, September 24, 1904; **Tena** (Trijntje), May 8, 1906; and **Clara** (Klaaske), December 5, 1907.

Because of Susie's health, she and Albert decided to move to Canada. Susie had tuberculosis and the doctors advised a warmer, drier climate for her. Their destination was Granum, Alberta, where they had relatives. The Ritsemas arrived in 1908 and farmed there until 1918. Here seven more children were added to the family: **Jim** (Jacobus) on February 4, 1909; **Gertie** (Gerhardina) on June 16, 1911; **Pete** (Pieter) on December 16, 1912; **Henry** (Hendrik) on March 4, 1914; **George** (Geert) on October 14, 1915; **Lena** (Magdalena) on February 26, 1917; and **Garret** (Gerard) on May 4, 1918.

Tena, Clara, Peter, Susie holding Garret, Fred holding Lena, Henry, Albert holding George, Jim, Gertie, John

Albert filed for a homestead (SW 23-61-3-5) in Neerlandia in 1914, then in 1918 he and Susie moved here with eleven of their children. Fred stayed in Granum for another year to harvest [illegible]

Upon arriving in Neerlandia the Ritsemas first lived in Roelof Kooy's house. That same [illegible] on December 16, the house burned down. Clara recalls, "Ma and Pa had hitched the horses to the sleigh and went for a visit to Pete Kampoar's, eight miles away, for the day. Sadie was home with us and as she was getting supper ready, the baby (Garret) was on the bed and some of the kids were trying to entertain him. Somehow Tena knocked the lamp over, and since the log house had heavy brown paper for wall paper, it didn't take long (before) the walls [illegible] in flames. We had to draw water from the well by pail so you see it was a losing battle. [illegible] There was another house empty that belonged [illegible] in and got that fixed up, making four beds with boards and filling big sacks with straw. Ma and Pa and a couple younger kids had a bedroom downstairs. That same winter we had a chimney fire, and of course we kids panicked and started carrying things out. I wrapped the baby, Garret, in [a] blanket and laid him in a snowbank. When Pa had the fire out we all went in the house again. Ma asked where the [illegible] in. He was sleeping."

Albert and Susie's last child [illegible] (Menno) was born in Neerlandia on January 27, 1919.

Albert never lived or worked on the first quarter he filed on but later filed on the SW 9-62-3-5. He paid the filing fee of ten dollars, plus twenty-five dollars for the improvements that Van den Burg had made, which consisted of some cleared land and a cabin. In the spring neighbours such as Lievers, Michael, Sturwold, and Olthuis helped Albert build a new log house. Fred arrived in Neerlandia in 1919 with horses, a wagon, and farm machinery. The following is Fred's account of his trip.

"The moving I am about to describe is different from ordinary moving. This is a moving from the southern part of the province of Alberta to the northern part, some 380 miles distance. We had to move by train or boxcar. My folks with their eleven children had already moved to Neerlandia a year earlier.

I remained behind to continue farming in southern Alberta one year. The year my folks moved the crops were fairly good. The following year was a very dry year and no crop. My father wanted me to move all the farm machinery with the horses to the new homestead. These were all loaded in a boxcar. My Uncle Henry Oosterheert helped take apart all the machinery including two binders, a seed drill, and other things, leaving enough room so the horses could be taken out at different times for watering and feeding. It took us a whole day to get loaded.

People told me I would be able to sleep in the caboose on a bed. This I found not to be true; I had to sleep in my seat or on the floor. I arrived about three days later in Westlock, which was as far as the train went. I arrived in the morning and started to unload the boxcar. Since all the parts of the wagon were near the door, I assembled the wagon. I hitched up a team of horses and very gently had the horses pull out the box of the wagon. With some lifting and manoeuvring I managed to get the box on the wagon. Then I pulled out the larger pieces with the horses. At noon I bought a loaf of bread, I made two meals of it. I did not want to take the time to eat in a restaurant nor did I want to spend the money. One binder I had to store under the loading dock because I did not have room on the wagon. I really had a big load and it was late in the day when I pulled out. I had thirty miles to go at a speed of less than three miles per hour. I must have been a spectacle, driving four horses with one in tow. Everyone else was using bobsleds which are much easier to pull when the ground is covered with snow — there must have been a foot of snow.

Why did I start out late in the day on such a long trip in the wintertime? Wouldn't it have been wiser to have taken the horses to the livery stable, bed them down, buy them feed, [illegible] a good night's sleep, and then strike out [illegible] thought very long for the simple reason I did not have that much money. After paying for the boxcar I had less than ten dollars. I had not [illegible]e so very far down the road when I met my [illegible] see each other. He had come all this distance since morning. He had gotten my letter telling him approximately when I would arrive. He suggested that he go to get something to eat and food for the horses. He would come back and join me and we would then travel together to Neerlandia. Since he could travel faster, he could catch up to me quite easily. So I kept going steadily. Then I came to an intersection and I did not know which road to take. I later found out I was supposed to turn left but I went straight. I don't know why I did not stop and wait for my father. The road I took got to be narrower and finally I asked someone for the right directions. I got turned around which was not easy and finally got on the right road but had lost a lot of time. That was not the worst of it; in the meantime my father had gone by. He was on the right road and I was way behind, but he did not know it. He tried hard to catch up to me when I was really far behind him. He thought that I was driving my horses very fast when, in fact, I was driving them very slow because they were very tired. When my father got home and I was not there, he didn't know what to do. He realized that I had gotten lost, but where? He could not begin to go back to look for me, he had driven his team of horses for about sixty miles. My parents stayed up waiting for me. My horses got more and more [illegible] pull the loaded wagon any more, so I pulled the wagon to the edge of the road, unhitched the [illegible] down on the road but soon got up again and finished the walk home. The lights were on when I finally walked in the yard early in the morning." Fred also filed for a homestead in Neerlandia but did not prove it up.

In the summer Fred, John, Sadie, and Tena went to Granum to work and would come home for the winter months. Fred and John also worked at a lumber camp north of Neerlandia.

The Ritsemas were an easygoing, happy family. Whenever the kids wanted a drink of milk they would run to the cow with a cup, fill it up, and drink it down. With such a big family, Susie wasn't too fussy about her floor being clean. Even when the floor had just been scrubbed no one was scolded for walking on the wet floor.

Once Clara had an especially scary experience. [illegible] home from school, instead of taking the graded road, I took a shortcut through Michael's place. I came to a patch of raspberries and stopped to [illegible] mother bear and her three cubs were there too. I left the patch quietly and as fast as I could. [illegible] mile. I sure did run!"

The whole family looked forward to the winter holidays, especially the *Kerstfeest* held at church. They spent the whole day there, had chocolate milk, coffee, cakes, cookies, and a nice program. There were also snowball fights, and around four or five o'clock they got in the sleigh to go home again. Another great holiday was July 1st — the only time the children got ice [illegible]

There was a time that Albert would take the farmers' eggs and cream to Westlock and then bring back groceries. Clara remembers that, "One time Pauline Sturwold and I went along. We would ride a while and then walk, as it was a thirty mile trip one way. Then we stayed at a [illegible] Pauline and I did a little shopping too. I remember we bought some apples, oranges, and bananas to eat on the way home. We did enjoy the trip."

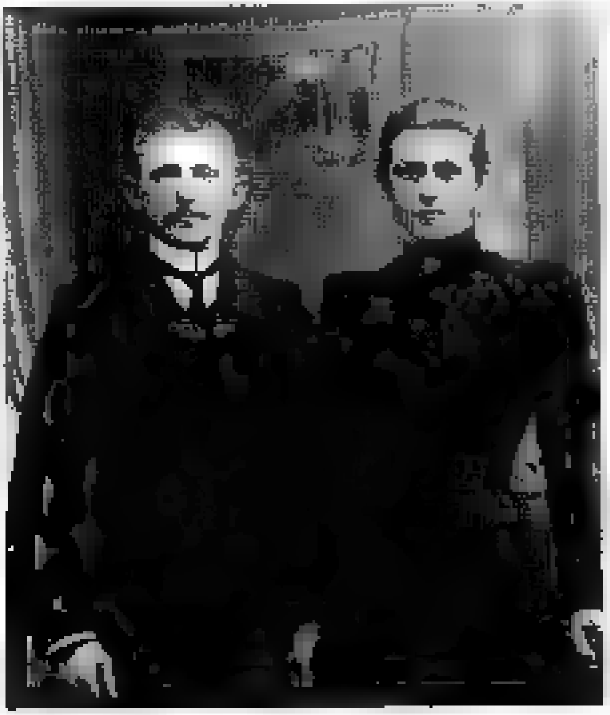
By 1923 Albert got the patent to his homestead. He had the house, two barns, a hen house, a well, and a rail fence of two-and-a-half miles. He was cropping twenty acres of land [illegible] and a few hogs. Even with the improvements made, however, things were not so good financially with the Ritsemas. That is why when relatives in the U.S.A. offered Fred and John jobs, and Albert and Susie money to move back, they decided to go. On April 1, 1924, they loaded everything into Dave Tuininga's truck and said good-bye to Canada.

Sadness came to the family in 1936 when an accident on the job claimed Albert's life; a bag of plaster fell from high up and landed on his head. Susie lived to be seventy-five. Clara writes, "We lived in an interesting age, from rags to riches. We were rich in good health, long life, and friends, and we are very thankful for all the blessings God has given us. God is good."

Ritsema Family

HENDRIK AND PETERTJE (OLDEGBERS) SCHOONEKAMP

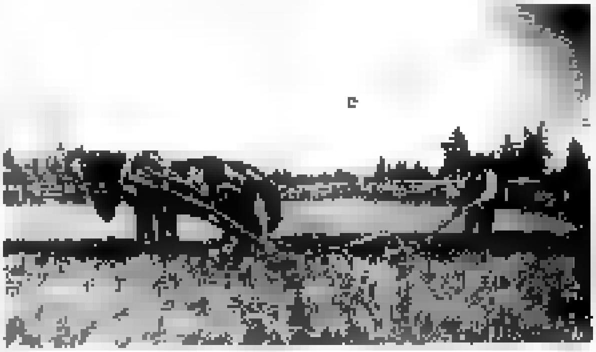
Hendrik Schoonekamp was born July 21 1881. in Heemse, Overijssel, the Netherlands. In 1907 he married Petertje Oldegbers. Three-and-a-half years later they immigrated to Canada with the Oldegbers family. Hendrik and Petertje did not really want to leave the Netherlands, but Petertje's mother did not want to leave any of her children behind, and so they agreed to go along.



Hendrik, Petertje, 1909.

In Edmonton the Schoonekamp's first residence was a shack in Fraser Flats near Little's Brick Yard. This little dwelling was often shared with others who had no family. They also had boarders. Hendrik worked at construction. While in Edmonton two children were born to them. **Jennie** (Janna, June 28, 1913) and **Annie** (Albertje Johanna, March 22, 1915).

Hendrik came to Neerlandia and filed on the NW 10-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911, but he did not move to Neerlandia at that time. On March 28, 1913, he abandoned that homestead and refiled on NW 34-61-3-5 because it was closer to the rest of Petertje's family. He built a cabin there in April of the same year. On April 27 1915, when Annie was only six weeks old, the Schoonekamps moved to Neerlandia. It is unknown how they came. They had no oxen and it was several years before they got any. They lived in a little sod-roofed shack.

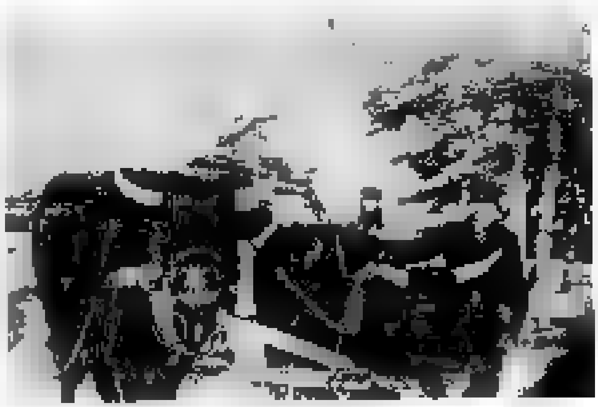


Hendrik plowing.

The first years, Hendrik went to southern Alberta each fall to work in the harvest. He did this to make enough money to buy supplies and clothes for the family. When he came home he would bring apples, and that was one time the children could each have a whole apple.

While her husband was gone Petertje would carry on alone. One chore that always had to be done was to look for the cows who roamed at large. Sometimes Petertje would be gone so long that the children would be afraid she was lost, but eventually she would return with the cows.

The Schoonekamps were hospitable folk and made everyone feel welcome. Because they lived close to church and school, their home was often a place for people to come. On Sun-



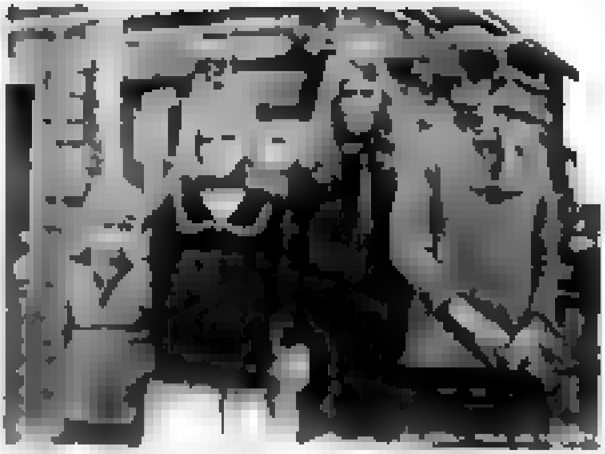
The team is yoked and ready to go. Hendrik beside his oxen.

days between services there were often extra people for dinner. In addition the Schoonekamps went out of their way to visit where there was need — those neglected by the community.

Life in the sod house was not easy. Not only was it difficult to keep clean, but when it rained the sod roof would get soaked. Precious items were often damaged and the blankets would get wet from the drips. When it stopped raining all the blankets and bedding would be taken outside to dry — a procedure to be repeated every time it rained. One dreary rainy day the Schoonekamp family sat down to supper. On the table stood their treasured oil lamp casting a cheerful glow. As the family sat around the table the roof began to leak. Plunk, plunk, came the drops of muddy water. Then, ping, one cold drop of water hit the hot, glass lamp chimney and cracked it, extinguishing the flame. Everyone sat in silence except for Peterke who sighed, "That was my last chimney."

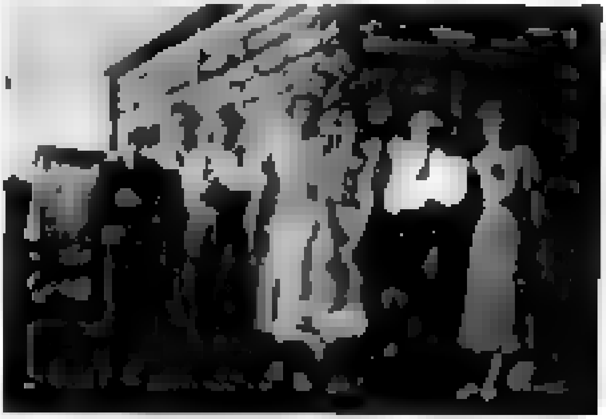
Schoonekamp's log house

On July 26, 1917, **Rulie** (Roelfje) was born, and on April 17, 1921, **Albert Jan**, the Schoonekamp's only son, arrived. Just before Albert was born the family moved into a new log house with a shingled roof. Ben Lievers built the house and little Rulie watched carefully as he built. Why, she wondered, did he take so much trouble to put the floor boards so close together — they would just fill up with dirt anyway! The new house had two bedrooms upstairs. There were no doors to separate the rooms — just curtains. In the front room was a Winnipeg couch that could be pulled out and made into a bed. Often people who stayed slept on it.



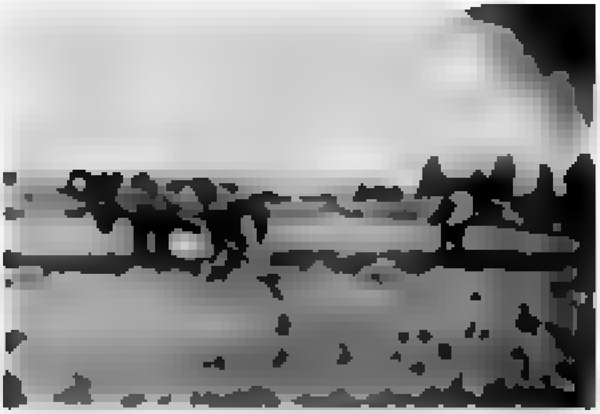
Albert, Rulie, Annie Jansen, c. 1925

Billy Quick, the truck driver, also stayed at Schoonekamp's place. This made for a lot of extra people coming and going because the truck also functioned as a bus. Several teachers boarded at Schoonekamp's: Alice Brown, Jean Rae, Grace Boer, Clara [illegible], and a little old English lady. The English lady had a very strong accent and Hendrik had a hard time understanding her and one time embarrassed her by accusing her of not speaking proper English.



Johanna Olsgoers, Peterje, Hendrik, Grace Boer, Annie, Cees Rientjes, Rev. Van Der Woude, Rulie. Seated: Albert, 1937

Hendrik was a small man, about 5'8", and not very heavy. This often made farm labour difficult for him, but he was very energetic and did everything quickly.



"Dat ben ik nog de gek." Hendrik plowing with his horses

Peterje was about as tall as her husband. She was quieter and a good organizer. Even though there were often a lot of people at her place she never seemed flustered or excited. She was often away helping as a midwife, a trade she had learned from her mother. Sometimes when the children got up in the morning she [illegible] that someone had come during the night for help. Mina Kannegieter taught knitting class at the Schoonekamp home at one time.

[illegible] c. [illegible]

Peterje used flour and salt bags for the girls' bloomers. Since the printing was hard to remove, this often meant free advertising for the products. One time when the chimney caught fire Rulie went up on the roof to put it out. Annie, always ready to tease, looked up and seeing the free advertising hollered, "Salt?"

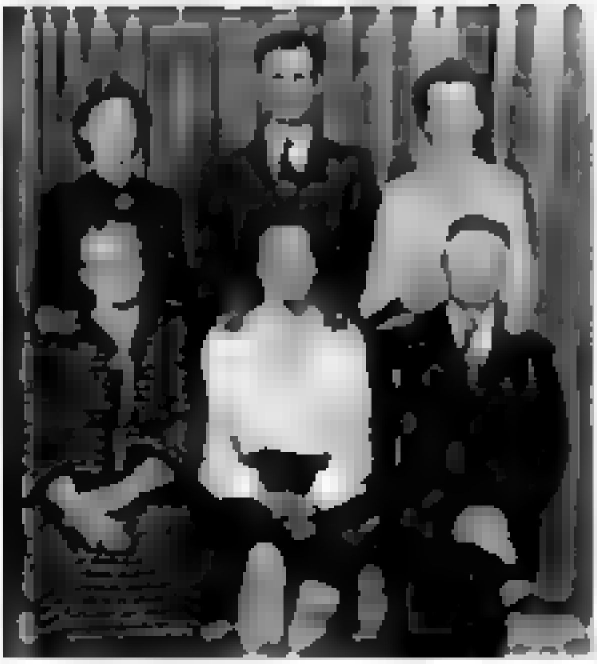
In wintertime, Hendrik often worked in the Chisholm lumber camp. He would walk home on weekends. In the early years Peterje was often afraid during his absence and would go to bed with a big butcher knife beside her.

Hendrik was janitor of the church from 1915 to 1923. He would often go back to church late Saturday evenings to fill up the heaters with wood so it would be warm for Sunday morning. One time, in 1918, a couple was going to be married in the little log church. For the occasion a kneeling bench was needed. There was none however, and so at the last minute the janitor was called upon to make one. The day of the wedding arrived, and the ceremony began. The minister helped the bride kneel on the bench, and that was fine. Then he helped the groom down. That was not so fine. Creaking and swaying, the kneeling bench gave way, taking the couple with it.

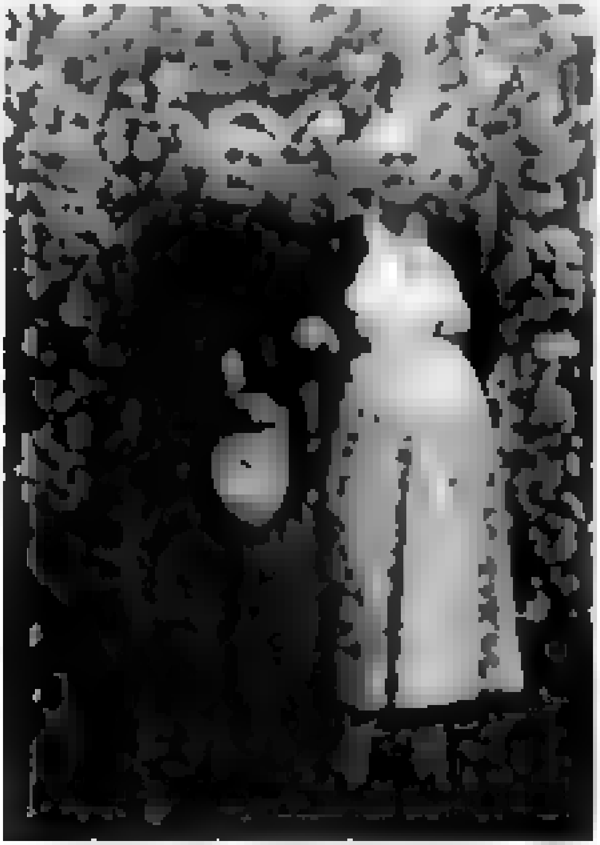
The church was made of logs, and the door, made of boards, had no lock. It was kept shut with a slat propped against it. One warm summer day when the cows were tormented by bull flies and the hot sun, one cow knocked the slat down, and the herd entered the church. When school was over for the day the students noticed that the church door was standing wide open and they went to investigate. What a sight met their eyes! Benches had been moved, the minister's water glass had been broken, and the floor — the floor was a mess! Hendrik was quickly called to the scene, but what could he say — they were his cows.

In 1921 Hendrik obtained the patent to his land. At that time he had eleven head of cattle and five-and-a-half acres in crop. In 1947 he sold the farm to Albert. By that time all the children were married: Jenny to Ike Nanninga, Annie to Cecil Tuininga, Rulie to Andrew Nanninga, and Albert to Clara Visser. Before they married, both Jennie and Annie worked for Rev. Van Der Woude. Rulie worked for six years in the Neerlandia Co-op and Post Office.

After their retirement in 1947 Hendrik and Peterje lived in a house they had built in the



[illegible] [illegible] Albert Jennie [illegible] Peterje Ruth Hendrik [illegible]



Hendrik, Peterje

hamlet on part of their homestead. Alvin, son of Ike and Jenny, remembers going to visit Grandpa there, and sometimes found him outside reading his Bible. After Hendrik died on January 12, 1960, Peterje stayed there for a couple of years. Then she moved to Hillcrest Lodge in Barrhead where she lived for another four years, passing away September 9, 1969. Hendrik and Peterje are remembered for their hospitality and service in church and community.

Schoonekamp family

POPKO AND JANTJE (VAN DALEN) SCHURING

Popko Dirk (born November 27, 1878) and Jantje Schuring immigrated to Canada from Stadskanaal, Groningen, the Netherlands, in the spring of 1913. Jantje's parents were already living in Edmonton so she and Popko went there too, finding a shack in Fraser Flats to live in. Their first child, **Jennie** (Jantje Hillechiena), was born there September 5, 1913.

Popko took up a homestead, the SE 10-62-3-5, in Neerlandia on November 26, 1914. He built two log houses on the homestead, one for his family and the other for Jantje's parents. Both families moved there in January 1915.

Popko and Jantje's second daughter, **Helen**, was born May 20, 1915. She was the first baby baptized in the log church. Another daughter, **Cora**, was born April 29, 1916, and a son, **Peter** on October 25, 1918. A second son, **Johannes** (May 14, 1920), was sickly from birth and died July 29, 1920. Another daughter, **Johanna**, was born July 7, 1921.

Popko was a carpenter by trade and helped many others build their houses. His own house was built from squared logs and had a shingled hip roof on it. He also built Toney Sturwold's house, making it out of squared dovetailed logs.

Popko had been a choirmaster in the Netherlands and had directed choir in Edmonton as well. While in Neerlandia he also directed choir. It had about twenty members. All the songs that were sung were Dutch. Before the Christmas concert, Popko would practice four or five times with the children and then lead them at the concert. Besides directing choir, Popko also served on the consistory of the church and one year was a delegate to a meeting of Classis Pacific in Montana.

Back: Jennie, Popko, Joe Holwerda (driving oxen), John Kooy (sitting on ox). Front: Marinus Geleynse, Alice Kooy, Helen Kooy, Jennie, Hilgien van Dalen, Pieter van Dalen, 1915.

Helen, Cora, Jennie, 1918.

To make enough money to stay on the [illegible] prairies — sometimes helping with the harvest and other times doing carpentry. Jantje stayed on the homestead to care for the children and the homestead. She once told another settler "Even if we have to eat rabbits and potato peels, [illegible] going to stay here."

From the homestead, it was nearly a four mile walk to Kampnar's store. Opa van Daien would watch the little children while Jantje walked to the store for groceries. At one time she came home with a pack of groceries on her back, a gallon of coal oil in each hand, and a [illegible] bers saw her and commented that if she were to come back in another life, she would come as a *werk ezel* (pack animal).

[illegible] 1921. Records indicate that he had built two log houses, one fourteen by twenty-feet and the other sixteen by twenty eight-feet, a sixteen by forty-three-foot stable; and two henhouses. There were two wells on the place — a cribbed thirty-foot well and also a forty-foot well. He had broken eight acres, was cropping eleven, and had seven more cleared. In 1917 he had four cattle, but in 1918 he had obtained twelve more. Besides the cattle, he also had three horses.

In 1923, Popko went with Menne Nanninga to Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., to find work as a carpenter. In November of that same year, Jantje followed with the children. Another daughter was born in 1928. Popko passed away in 1951 and Jantje in 1972.

Schuring Family

TONEY AND RULIE (SMIT) STURWOLD

Toney Sturwold was born June 4, 1885, in Groningen, the Netherlands. When he was fourteen his family immigrated to Michigan, U.S.A. Toney married Rulie (Roelofje) Smit in July 1906. Rulie had been born June 20, 1888, in Drenthe, the Netherlands, and her family had immigrated to the U.S.A. when she was five. Toney operated a general store in Mic[illegible] but he decided to move to Iowa for health reasons; the doctor had advised him to find a job where he could work outside.

Toney and Rulie and their three children **Pauline** (March 8, 1907), **Lukas** (November 8, 1908), and **Lula** (Lammigje, March 30, 1913) lived in Iowa for two years, then moved to Lark, North Dakota. In both places Toney did farming and also worked at blacksmithing, a skill he had learned in the Netherlands. But the Sturwolds experienced poor weather conditions in both states, being frozen out one year and hailed out another, so they decided to move to Canada, where one could get free land. This time they moved with four children: another daughter, **Margaret** (Maritje, October 4, 1915), had been born in North Dakota.

Toney filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on July 13, 1916. Since there were improvements on the quarter, he paid an additional fifteen dollars besides the ten-dollar filing fee. There was already a house on the land so the Sturwolds moved into it. That first summer Toney went south to work on the prairies.

Toney became well-known in the Neerlandia community. Case Ingwersen wrote the following about him:

> "Toney was a man with foresight, who saw a good future for Neerlandia. He was soon involved in business that brought grist to the mill and he was received with gladness into the settlement. He bought a one-horsepower motor, put it on a sled in winter and on a low wagon in the summer, put a circular saw opposite the motor, and went on the road that way, a pair of oxen in front — later horses — from farm to farm sawing wood at each. To keep that up day after day, through all hours was no small thing. To protect himself somewhat against the intense cold, he began growing a beard each fall so that in the winter months he was decked with a handsome full red beard. In later years he also mounted a grain crusher on his wagon, so that he was busy the whole year through. [When Toney came to saw wood,] the farmer had to make sure that he had a stack of logs ready, enough for the whole [illegible] helped cut up the mountain of logs into short pieces."

In 1921 Toney received the patent to his land. He was cropping fifteen acres and owned [illegible] log stable worth $75, a 10 by 16-foot workshop worth $50, a 16-foot well worth $32, and a 2½-mile fence valued at $200. The 16 by 24-foot log house was listed at $100. That same year, Popko Schuring helped Toney build a new log house

It was bigger — 18 by 28 feet — and well-built. All the logs were dovetailed.

By 1921 two more children had been born into the family: **Jake** (Jacob, June 14, 1919) and **Ralph** (Roelof, November 1920). When Ralph was two years old he became ill with pneumonia and died about nine days later (May 1923). In November of that year another boy, **Toney**, was born, but he lived for only ten days.

In the workshop he had on the farm Toney did blacksmithing and also shoed horses. He would straighten and sharpen plowshares, first making them hot in coals and then working them on an anvil. When someone had a broken piece of machinery, he would bring it to Toney to be fixed.

Rulie was an excellent seamstress and also a good cook. She knew how to make good bread and apple pies, something she had learned as a girl. Many times she would have extra people at mealtimes — farmers who had brought something to be fixed were invited in to stay for the meal.

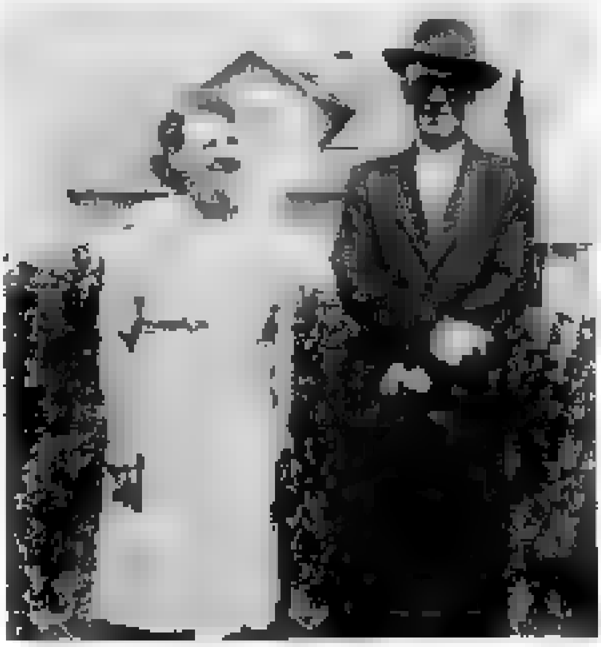
Back: Jake, Ruby, Thelma, Janet. Front: Margaret, Lula, Lukas, Pauline, 1966

Three more daughters were born to the Sturwolds: **Ruby** (Roelofje, October 13, 1924), **Thelma** (May 20, 1928), and **Janet** Magdalene (April 18, 1930).

Through the years, the Sturwold children all married. Pauline married Jim Tuininga of Edmonton on January 5, 1929. They had four children; one passed away. Lukas married Annie Emmerzael in 1943, Lula married Art Fisher in 1938. Margaret married Jack Tuininga in 1935, and Jake married Tena (Koning) Seinen in 1950.

Rulie, Ruby, Jacob, Lula, Margaret, Lukas, c. 1926.

Ruby (later called Rulie) married Angelo Cavaliero in 1945. They lived first in Edmonton, then moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. They had two children. Ruby died in 1978. Thelma married Harry Reitsma in 1954. In



Rulie, Toney, c. 1941

1955 Janet married Jack Stulp, a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. They have six children and live in Hudsonville, Michigan, U.S.A.

Toney served as a councillor for many years. He later took up custom painting, which he continued until shortly before he died. After Jake married, Toney and Rutie moved into a small house that had been built for them on the farm. Rutie died June 30, 1956, and Toney died May 31, 1966.

WILLIAM AND EMMA (HENNING) SWAFFIELD

William (born in 1859, Goderich, Ontario) and Emma Swaffield (1864) married in 1881 and first lived in Cleveland, Ohio, where William worked as a general contractor. They had two daughters, **Edna** (1888) who was married to John Beaumont and **Hattie** (1890) who had married John's brother Henry, and three sons. In 1913 they decided to move from the polluted city of Cleveland because their son Harry had a lung (or heart) condition. Edna and Hattie and their husbands were already living in Alberta, and Edna filed by proxy on the NE [illegible] for her father.

So the Swaffields planned the move to Canada, but a few days before they were to leave Harry died. They decided to stick with their plans and arrived in Neerlandia on June 17, 1913, with their sons **Robert William** (September 5, 1902) and **Norman** (January 27, 1906).

The family stayed in Neerlandia only two years. William cleared thirteen acres during those two years and also built a 16 by 20-foot log house and a stable. He dug a well and put up one mile of fencing.

Even though the Swaffields were an English-speaking family in a Dutch community, they had contact with the rest of the community. They lived near Schoonekamps, and the mail was brought alternately to the two homes to be sorted. When the log church was built in early 1915, William did some finishing work on it. Young Norman Swaffield and Willie Olthuis sometimes played "war" together; they made wooden guns and covered them with tin foil paper.

The Swaffields left Neerlandia in December 1915 and moved to Eston, Saskatchewan. Emma died in 1921, and William remarried. He died May 9, 1941.

[illegible]

Olive Swaffield

HENDRIK AND WILLEMINA (BOSCH) TER HORST

Hendrik (born August 25, 1862, in Loenseker) and Willemina (born February 9, 1867, in Hellendoorn) ter Horst lived in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, with their family of six children. Hendrik worked in a textile factory. Their youngest son died at the age of three, and after this sad event the ter Horsts wanted to move. Hendrik and his oldest son **John** (Johan, Hendrik (December 30, 1891), travelled with Hendrik's friends Herman Huishof, Gerrit Hoogers, and Gerrit Nyland to Edmonton in March 1909. Meanwhile Hendrik's second son **Gerrit** (November 16, 1893) worked in a shoe factory to support the family still in the Netherlands.

Within a year Hendrik and John had saved enough money to pay the fares for the rest of the family. Willemina and the other four children, Gerrit, **Bill** (Jan Willem, December 24, 1895), **Henry** (Hendrik Johan, January 17, 1899), and **Rika** (Hendrika Johanna, March 15, 1903), sailed first to Liverpool, then on to Canada in April 1910. With them travelled Mina Nyland and her five month-old daughter Hermiena, Anna Huishof, and Sina Hoogers.

After the boat voyage the women and children travelled by train to Edmonton. Gerrit was in charge of baby Hermiena, who was securely covered up in a basket. The conductor tried to put the basket into the baggage car. Gerrit, who could not speak English, quickly uncovered the baby. The conductor simply shook his head and beckoned them on. Gerrit was embar-

Hendrika, Hendrik Jan, Gerrit, Johan, Willem, Willemina. Hendrik, 1909.

rassed because he thought the conductor assumed it was his child

Hendrik and John took out homesteads in Eastburg (south of Hazel Bluff), but the ter Horst family joined the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church when it was formed in 1910. Hendrik was actively involved in the Immigration Society that had been formed in Edmonton and wrote letters to prospective immigrants in the Netherlands, encouraging them to come. The ter Horsts became members of the Neerlandia church in 1916, although Hendrik and Willemina continued to live in Eastburg. As members of the church they received *huis bezoek* once a year and also contributed to the church. The ter Horsts also visited the Neerlandia community where Willemina's relatives, Wouter and Johanna Groothuis, lived.

In 1915 Gerrit and Bill took out homesteads in Neerlandia, Gerrit the NE 8-62-3-5 and Bill the NW 9-62-3-5. While they lived here they would sometimes visit the Kooy family, who lived across Baird Lake. The ter Horsts would paddle across in a makeshift boat which leaked so badly that one of them had to bail almost continuously while the other paddled. If they wanted to visit friends or family, Gerrit and Bill usually had to walk. They often saw wild animals when walking through the woods. Once Gerrit saw a brown and a black bear along the path and another time a wolf crossed the path in front of him.

Gerrit went to the U.S.A. for a trip in 1919. He visited Floris Visser in Everett, Washington, during the trip. While in Everett he met Carrie Klein, whom he married in 1920. Gerrit did not return to Neerlandia to live because he found the winters much warmer in Washington. Bill also went to Everett for a visit and met his future wife, Rena Colyn, there. After their marriage in August 1920 they came to Eastburg for three months. But Rena was unhappy, so they returned to Everett. John ter Horst and his wife, Eva de Groot of Edmonton, moved to Everett in the fall of 1920, and Hendrik and Willemina soon followed their three sons. Henry and Rika remained in Canada.

Shortly after they moved to Everett,

Hendrik broke his neck in a fall from a scaffold. He and Willemina were caretakers of the Christian Reformed Church in Everett for some years. Hendrik died in July 1930 and Willemina on June 9, 1952, both of cancer.

Carrie Bennett
Viola Vander Wall

BEREND TE RONDE

Berend te Ronde filed on the NW 10-62-3-5 on December 18, 1911. He was single and came with the group of Hollanders that travelled to Townships 61 and 62 in January 1912 to build houses. On Berend's quarter a 16 by 24-foot log shack was built. After leaving in the spring Berend returned to Neerlandia in March 1913, but left two months later. He is reported to have said that living in Neerlandia was like living in a doodskist (coffin), and on his declaration of abandonment he stated that there was "too heavy timber".

[illegible]

It all began overseas in Friesland, the Netherlands, on July 23, 1874, when Douwe Terpsma was born. A year earlier on July 18, also in Friesland, a little girl, Betje (Brechtje) Dijkstra, had been born. These two met some years later and were joined in wedlock in 1893 in their native country.

Around 1910 it was becoming increasingly popular to immigrate to the new and prosperous country of Canada. A Dutch immigrant [illegible] in Canada there were good prospects for future generations. He was an excellent story writer and story teller. By his stories "that the land was ready for the plow" and the pictures he sent to the Netherlands of the wheat fields of southern Alberta and the prairies blowing in the wind, he managed to persuade many a young man's heart, including Douwe's. Douwe was a dairy farmer, and the pictures of the vast wheatfields of the Canadian West attracted him. Besides, the Netherlands was a densely populated country and the future did not look as prosperous there for his six children as it did in western Canada. So the difficult decision to leave was reached. Their relatives and friends would be left behind, as well as their home and many of their possessions. This was especially hard for Betje, but she promised to stand behind her husband. Correspondence took place with Henry Kippers. Douwe sent a ten-dollar [illegible] for them. Henry Kippers promised that he [illegible] ton. He would wear an orange ribbon (the colour of their King) on his chest for easy recognition.

Thus, in the spring of 1911, Douwe and Betje and their six children (the oldest 18 years of age) left Franeker, Friesland. They took trunks containing the most necessary items, as well as some of their best clothing with them. A friend of the family, Elke Jorritsma, accompanied them. They had booked passage on a second-class boat, but as preparations were made and the boarding was done, a mix-up occurred and the Terpsmas as well as others were placed on a third-class freight boat that transported livestock. This was by no means an easy or pleasant way to travel across the ocean. The voyage lasted ten days. During that time, Douwe was extremely seasick and could not eat any food. The food provided was cooked in one huge pot. One member of each group would go to get the food and, after indicating to the cook how many were in the group, would get that many scoops dished out to him. Elke got the food for the Terpsmas. He would hold up nine fingers and, after coming back with the food, would try to get Douwe to eat, but to no avail.

After what seemed like forever, the boat landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia. There the Terpsma family and Elke boarded a train which took them on a four-day trip across Canada to their desired destination. They arrived in Strathcona [illegible] ing their orange ribbons, there was no one wearing an orange ribbon to meet them at the station. With their boxes of belongings and $300 (all that was left after the journey), the Terpsmas were brought by a cart to the Immigration Hall. Douwe and his oldest son, **John** (Jan, October 5, 1893), immediately set out to find Henry Kippers. They had been told that he was attending a church service at Fred Baron's home on Greisbach Street, not too far away.

Meanwhile, after some inspection, Betje found cockroaches in the room they were to stay in at the Hall and declared that the family was not staying there. So she and the rest of the children stood outside on the steps, their luggage beside them, waiting for Douwe and John to return. Later, Douwe and John returned

Immigration Hall. While Betje and the children were standing on the steps of Immigration Hall, two men walked by and Betje heard one say, "Dat lijkt net zo'n Hollandse boerinnetje. (That looks just like a Dutch farm girl)." Acquaintance was quickly made with Thomas Bakker and Gerrit Gotsen, who had left the church service early.

Henry Kippers came that evening and said they would have to stay at the Immigration Hall, but that if they would be ready at five the next morning, he would take them to work at Swift's. Douwe soon moved the family into a tent in Parkdale next to Gaese Baker's house. That fall after John got work constructing the High Level Bridge, the family moved into a shack that Douwe had purchased. It was located in the area of 109 Street and the river bottom near the bridge.

[illegible] first shack near High Level Bridge, 1911. Betje [illegible]

That winter of 1911, Douwe, John, and twelve other Dutchmen decided to search for homesteads northwest of the city. They wanted to find a reasonably-sized area where no quarters of land had been filed on in order that a Dutch community, with its own church and school, could be established. Most of the prairie land of southern Alberta was taken, so the land that was left was not 'ready for the plow' but instead 'ready for the ax'. The Dutchmen followed the Klondike Trail to get to Townships [illegible] and [illegible], an area they found suitable large enough, although it was approximately one-hundred miles northwest of Edmonton.

Once they picked their area, they found the numbers of the quarters they thought suitable for homesteading. The numbers were on the steel surveyor's pins, which had been pounded into the ground on the corners of each quarter. They wrote each number on a piece of paper and tossed them into a hat. Whatever number each drew, that would be his quarter. The Dutchmen decided that if a man had a son eighteen years of age or older, the son could file on the quarter beside that of his father. Thus when Douwe got the SW 35-61-3-5, John received the quarter just south of him, the NW 26-61-3-5. After returning to Edmonton to officially file on the land, Douwe, John, and others came out again to build cabins.

The men all worked together and also stayed together in a log house that had been built on one of the quarters. Some of the younger fellows would occasionally get a bit rambunctious. One night, when all were retired, each side by side on the floor, John and Willem van Ark got somewhat boisterous. One of the older members of the group, thinking to quiet them down, got up and, by the light of the coal oil lamp, read a portion from the Bible that encouraged them to be matig (sober). But his manner of ending each verse with a high-pitched upswing only made it more difficult for the young fellows to quiet down.

There was not much time for relaxation, though, as the cabins had to be built. When the cabins were completed, the men returned to their waiting families.

That spring of 1912, three families decided to go homesteading immediately. Douwe made preparations to take his family to the homestead. Koop and Minke Mast and their son, Henry, and Jan and Johanna Oldegbers and their son, John, were the other two families that went to their homesteads. They soon found that to travel in the spring was a mistake; they should have travelled by sleigh when the ground was still frozen.

Douwe had purchased a team of oxen in anticipation of homesteading, as well as a [redacted] to work, but the rest of the family went to the homestead. They packed their belongings on the wagon the trunks brought from the Netherlands (some of which had never been opened as Betje had unpacked only the absolute necessities), a heater, a cookstove, some furniture, groceries, a cross-cut saw, axes, and some other household items and tools. Also on the wagon were a bag of beans and five gallons [redacted] On top of the whole load was a crate of chickens. Tied behind was a milk cow. **Florence** (Froukje, November 21, 1895) had to sit on top of the wagon load to drive the oxen while Douwe walked, leading them. The two youngest children, **Tena** (Tetje, March 12, 1908) and **Norman** (Nanning, September 21, 1909), were allowed to ride on the wagon. Betje, **Ada** (Aafkje, May 23, 1899), and **Art** (Otto, October 16, 1902) had to walk alongside.

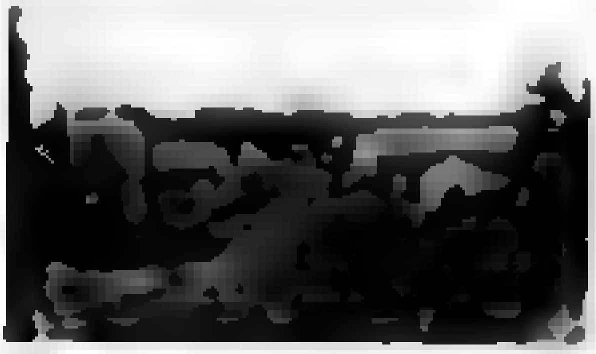
The family set off along Jasper Avenue, but problems soon arose. To go north to St. Albert, they had to cross the streetcar tracks, which were raised about eight to ten inches above the ground. After crossing the tracks themselves, the oxen tried to pull the heavy wagon over, but soon gave up and lay down. Douwe had no experience with oxen and, no matter what he did, he could not persuade them to move. When the streetcar came along, the conductor had to stop. He was quite upset because he had a schedule to meet. He took sticks out of the bush nearby and gave Betje and Ada each — to use, then instructed Douwe to pull the oxen up by their nose rings. When Ada saw him use his stick on the oxen she exclaimed, "Oh missus, please don't hurt the oxes!" But she and Betje were told to help by hitting the oxen. The wagon was soon on its way again.

When they reached the first hill near St. Albert, the oxen had a difficult time pulling the heavily-loaded wagon. So Douwe unloaded nearly half the load, mostly trunks, at a farmer's place along the road, promising to retrieve the goods when he could. At Morinville they had to leave a few more items behind. Even though the load was lighter, progress was agonizingly slow. During much of the trip, the weather was rainy. North of Morinville, there was a lot of muskeg, the trails were poor and had large mud holes. The Terpsmas often had to cross creeks with no bridges. The wagon would usually get stuck up to its axles in the deep mud holes or the creeks. Then it would have to be unloaded before the oxen could pull it out of the hole and loaded again before continuing. Trees blown down across the trail also slowed the journey. Douwe put the saw and axes to good use in clearing the way so the oxen could [redacted]

Betje had taken along enough food to last three or four days, but the food was finished before they reached Clyde. When they came to a farm, Betje would sometimes ask Art or Ada to go to the farmhouse and ask if a loaf of bread or some butter could be purchased. Usually Art went, since he was a friendly sort and got along with everyone. But during the journey one of the oxen stepped on Art's foot, so for awhile Ada, who was much shyer, had to go.

After Morinville, the settlements were smaller. The Terpsmas travelled past Legal and [redacted] French. At night, they usually stayed at a halfway house. At one such stopping place, they had bedded down for the night when they noticed, to their dismay, that there were bedbugs. The rest of the night Betje sat up with a lantern to keep the bugs off the sleeping children. By four o'clock the next morning, Douwe had had enough of the bedbugs and the family packed up and set off again.

The Terpsmas continued on, through Clyde, Edison, and on to Rossington. At the Pembina River, they took a few more trunks off the wagon before they crossed on the ferry, again promising to return for them later. At Dusseldorf, they exchanged their cook stove

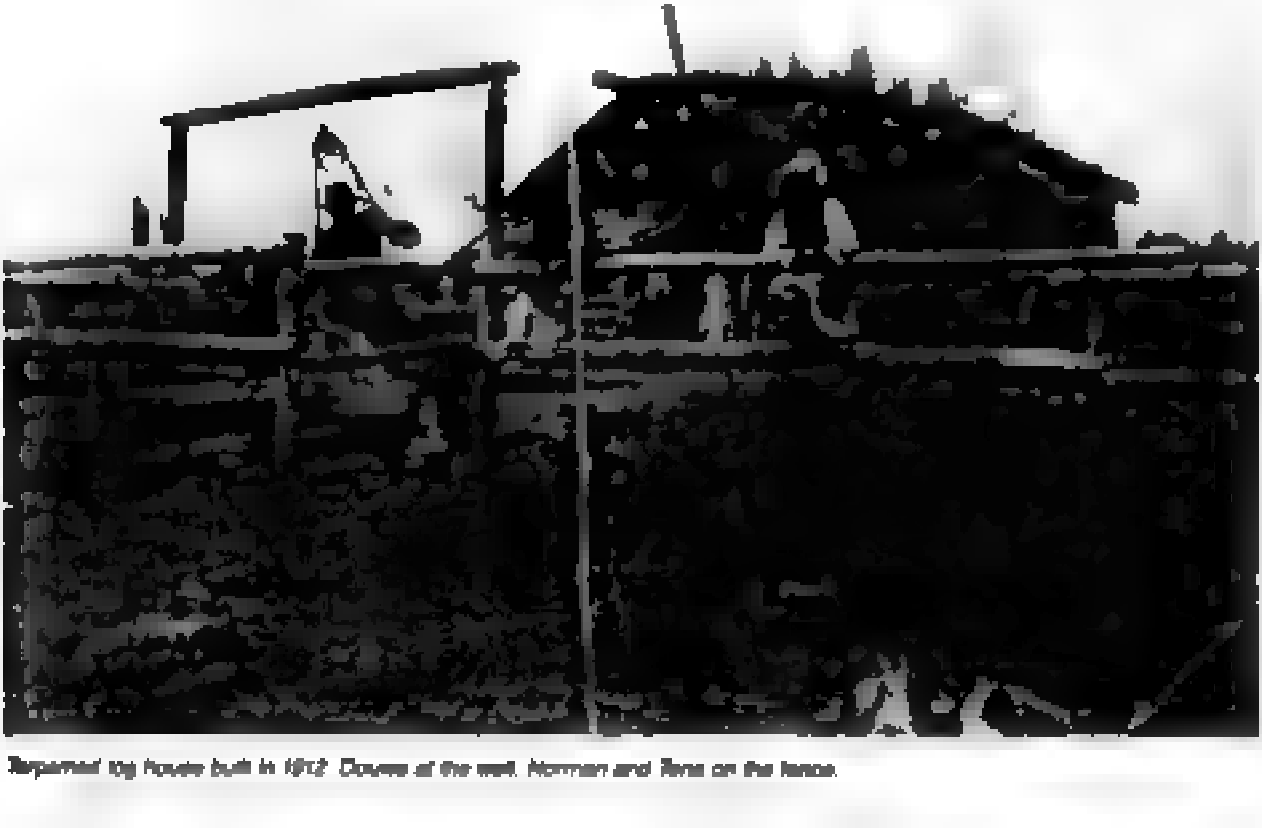


[illegible]/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

for a smaller one to lighten the load still more since the trail was becoming worse and the oxen were becoming weaker as a result of the arduous journey.

Finally, after having traveled for fifteen days, the Terpsmas came to the Shoal Creek, where the Scott family lived. The children had to get off the wagon since the oxen had a difficult job bracing themselves going down the steep bank into the creek. The creek was high from spring run-off, and the logs that had been laid across to make a footbridge were covered with a few inches of water. Betje crossed over the logs holding Tena with one arm and Norman with the other. She was halfway across when she slid off the logs into the waist-deep water; somehow she managed to keep Tena and Norman from getting wet. Once on the other side, Abe Scott advised them not to go farther with the wagon because there was a deep mud hole on the trail between Wing and Caughlin's quarters and he felt the oxen would never make it through, especially in their exhausted condition. He offered to take them the rest of the way with his oxen and stoneboat. Therefore the borrowed cook stove, the bedding, and a few necessities were loaded onto Abe's stoneboat and he took the family the last one-and-a-half miles of their journey. Douwe walked the distance with the oxen and the cow and went back soon afterward for the wagon and the rest of the load. Sometime later in the summer he picked up the bigger cook stove he had left at Dusseldorf.

Once the Terpsmas got to the homestead, they found that the cellar was filled with water from the spring thaw. The cabin itself had not been completely finished — the four walls were up and the roof logs were on, but they still had to be covered. As soon as the family was settled in, Douwe and the children found small branches to put on the roof, then dug up sod (which was soaking wet like everything else) to put over the branches. The sods were placed beside each other and stayed on the roof quite well because the roof was built nearly flat. As the sods dried later that summer, great cracks appeared between them.



Terpsmas' log house built in 1912. Douwe at the well, Norman and Tena on the fence.

On the homestead, the Terpsmas lived on a diet of rabbits and pancakes. It was Florence's task to set the rabbit snares everyday. Each morning, she would check the snares and skin and clean the rabbits that had been caught. Betje would cook the meat for supper.

The milk cow Douwe had taken along provided milk for the young children and the rest of the family. Even though most of the area was heavily covered with trees and bush, the cow found some meadows to the west of the Oldegbers homestead to graze on. She had soon worn a path through the bush to her favourite spots and came home on her own each night. One night, though, when she failed to show up at the usual milking time, Florence and Ada were sent to find her. They followed the cowpath but could not find her anywhere [illegible] although they did see a bear. After seaching [illegible] came hopelessly lost. Which way to go? If they went in the wrong direction they might not find [illegible] gunshot. Florence was sure it had come from one direction while Ada was certain it had come from another. Then they noticed smoke above [illegible] soon came to a clearing by the Oldegbers' ho[illegible] had fired in hope of helping the girls find their way. Douwe and Betje were there also, they had come to the Oldegbers' to see what could be done to find the girls. The cow had come home long before.

Soon after they came to the homestead, Douwe began the necessary part of homesteading, clearing the land. Towards the north, he found a few acres of land that had a lot of brush on it but not too much heavy timber. That summer he, Florence, and Ada spent most of their time clearing the piece so it would be ready for plowing. It proved to be much harder work than Douwe had anticipated. There was heavy, wet deadfall under all the brush as a result of a forest fire that had gone through the country some years earlier. In spite of everything, Douwe remained cheerful, often singing while he was clearing, "*O Canada, wat heb je mij bedrogen!* (Oh Canada, how you have deceived me!)" The song delighted Florence and Ada, who could not help but laugh at the words.

Living on the homestead meant there was work to be done from morning until late at night, and the Terpsmas had little time to visit with the Mast or Oldegbers families. About once a week though, Florence and Ada walked with Henry Mast or John Oldegbers to Mellowdale to see if there was any mail and to buy groceries. They would leave, barefoot, at six o'clock in the morning, and follow the narrow muddy trail through the bush. They would take food along to eat on the way. By the time they got to the post office, the girls' skirts would be soaking wet from the dew on the [illegible] ceries Betje might need — usually flour, su[illegible] long distance. By the time they got back to the settlement, it would be late in the day. Minke Mast would often call the girls in before they [illegible] some *koek* or a bottle of *karnemelkse pap* to take home.

After carrying the groceries home quite a [illegible] one of the oxen along to carry the groceries [illegible] into two bags, attached the bags with a ro[illegible] side. All went well until they came to the creek and the ox thought it was time for a drink. Standing on the bank, it reached way down to quench its thirst, not taking any notice of the groceries which slid forward behind its horns and dangled over its neck in the water. Florence and Ada, both short and slightly-built, tried with all their might to heave up its head but, no matter what they did, the ox stopped drinking [illegible] the bags of groceries had become wet but Betje [illegible]

Once that summer, the Terpsmas had visitors. Gaele and Raymond Baker had come from Edmonton to look for suitable homesteads. They had stayed with the Masts, but came to talk to Douwe for a short while. How Florence and Ada wished they could go back to the city [illegible] and all the mud.

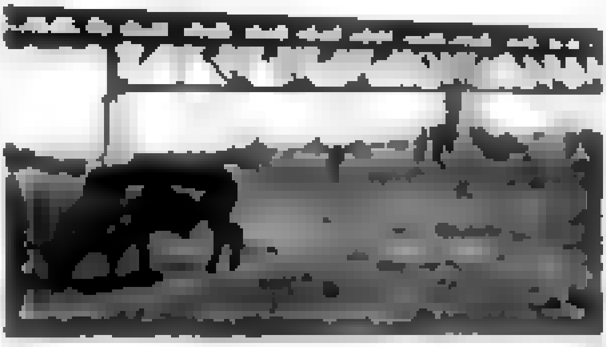
[illegible] ng trees down while clearing or in pulling [illegible] pull logs out of the bush with their oxen. Henry needed the logs for building a barn, and his father, Koop, was not well enough to help him with such heavy work. After the girls had helped, Minke gave Florence a pair of her son Carl's leather shoes. They were a boon to Florence: the only other pair of shoes she owned was a rather sloppy pair that had been made from a leather football.

The summer was soon over and by fall, Douwe had four acres cleared. Sometime later, he discovered that those acres were part of the next quarter to the north. What a discouragement! When this quarter was taken up, Douwe was promised that two acres would be cleared on his land in return, but it was never done.

The Terpsmas did not have enough supplies to keep them over the winter; most of the winter clothing was in the trunks that had been left along the way, and the heater had also been left. They had no seed to plant in the spring either. So in November, Douwe took his family and animals back to Edmonton.

Douwe stopped at the farms near Morinville and St. Albert to pick up the trunks that had been left, but he found the owners had moved and the trunks were gone. This was a big disappointment — Betje had been depending on using the clothes for the children, now she had to make do with what they had. At one time she was so short of material that she sewed sixteen little pieces of cloth together to make a pair of pants for Art.

The family moved again to the area near the High Level Bridge. This time Douwe erected a wood and canvas tent-type dwelling. The oxen and the cow, each tied to an iron peg, were pastured on the grass near the tent. Every night, Betje moved the cow close to the tent. But one time, after the cow had just been moved to a new location, Douwe decided to leave her there for the night. The next morning, the cow was gone — only the rope and peg were left.



Jimmy the bull, the milk cow, Mike the ox near the High Level Bridge, 1912

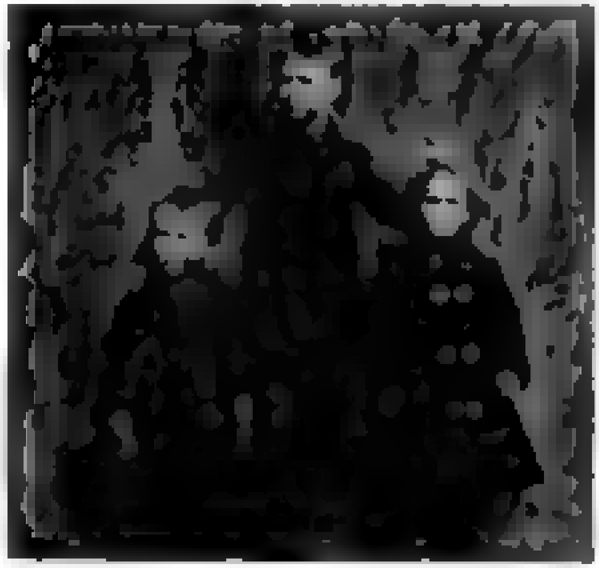
Along the river bank, not far from the Terpsma's tent, there were half-breeds living. Though Betje was afraid of them, when she saw a half-breed trying to take one of the oxen away

Terpsma's second shack near High Level Bridge, 1912. Indians encamped on hill in background.

she yelled, and the man quickly left. After that, she was quite sure that the half-breeds had taken their milk cow

Florence, Ada in front of shack, 1913

Florence and Ada soon got jobs at Burns, wrapping butter and candling eggs, and Douwe found a job working for the city on road construction. John had returned from the prairies and was working on the High Level Bridge. By the spring of 1913, enough money had been saved that the Terpsmas could return to the homestead.



Near High Level Bridge, 1913. Herman, Art, Tena

Douwe went twice to the homestead that year — from March 5 to June 4 and from August 6 to October 25. During one stay he took the whole family to the homestead and during the other only John and Florence went along. Fred Baron went along on one trip to look for a homestead. Another milk cow and a pony were also part of the entourage. They had no mishaps on that trip until they reached the Big Timber. The overhead branches of a tree got caught on the crate of chickens that was on top of the wagon load. A slat broke off the crate and it fell to the ground. The squawking chickens escaped into the bush. Art ran after them and retrieved as many as he could. Once they got to the homestead, the pony often tried to escape and always headed south if it got loose. Finally it got away and Douwe never saw it again.

In the spring, John went with a sleigh to pick up the trunks that had been left at Rossington. Among the items in the trunks were a long *Fries* wall clock and Betje's good clothing from the Netherlands. John loaded up the sleigh, but when he went onto the river ice, the sleigh began to sink. John returned quickly to shore, but the bottom few inches of the trunks had gotten wet. He left the trunks in the shed and returned later that year to pick them up. When Douwe and Betje finally unpacked the trunks, the clothing had rotted and the clockwork was water-damaged. It appeared that when the trunks had been put back in the shed, they had been turned upside down and the water had soaked everything.

In the fall of 1913, Douwe got some crop off the land, but he did not have enough money or food to stay at the homestead for the winter. The next year, though, the family came to the homestead to stay. Florence and Ada remained working in Edmonton and sent any extra money they made to their parents. John built a cabin on his homestead but continued to live with his parents.

All the quarters in the area were heavily populated with poplar, spruce, willow, tamarack and underbrush, and clearing these trees was also hard work. Douwe and the children would clear approximately five acres at a time. Douwe marked off a square by skinning bark off the trees. Most of the trees that had been cleared were used for firewood. Douwe and the boys bucked up their firewood for the first four years by using a crosscut saw.

Each year Douwe raised a calf from the milk cow. If it was a heifer she was kept, for in this way Douwe built up the herd. If it was a bull calf he was kept for butchering. Butter was made from the cream and the milk was used for many things.

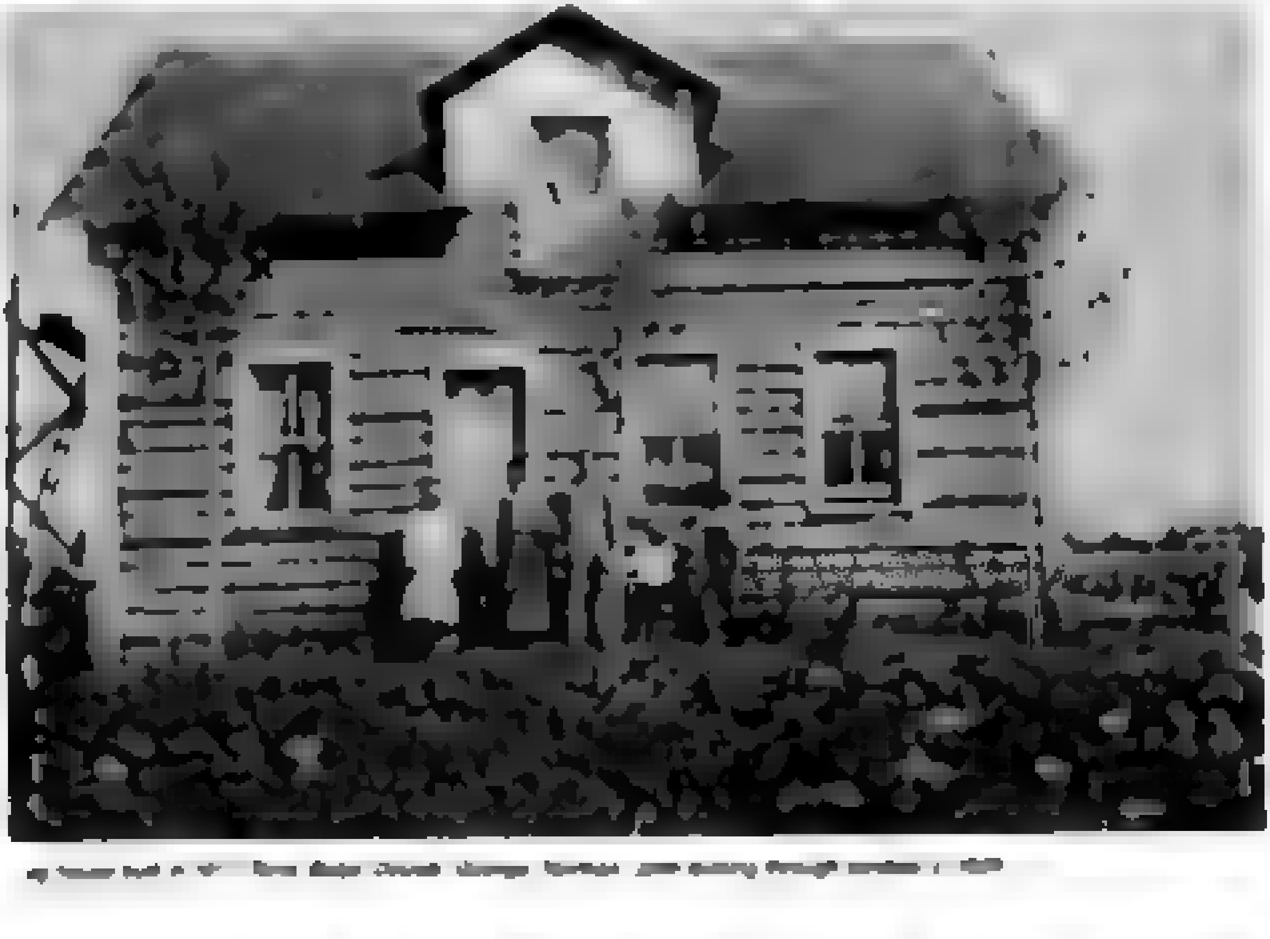
On October 23, 1915, Betje gave birth to another son, George (Gerlof), in their home. It was a difficult birth. Art, Tena, Norman, and Florence, who was out from the city, stayed at the Oldegbers' place while Johanna Oldegbers, the midwife, stayed with Betje.

Douwe patented his homestead in 1917. Records indicate that he was cropping nineteen acres and had eleven more brushed. He owned eleven head of cattle, but no horses. On the farm, he had built a 16 by 24-foot log house, a 20 by 30-foot log stable, and two other log buildings. Other improvements were 1¾ mile of pole and wire fences and two wells, one twenty feet and the other thirty feet deep.

The sod roof on the log shack leaked whenever it rained. Betje was careful to keep the feather beds dry by putting pots and pans out [illegible] changed considerably when Douwe seeded the sods with grass seed. Once the grass grew, the roots held the water and kept it from leaking through the roof. Even with this improvement, the shack was not [illegible] it was [illegible] and the [illegible] very small.

Douwe built a new house in 1917. George Caughlin squared it up north and south for Douwe and put up stakes where it should stand. Menne Nanninga and Popko Schuring were among those who helped Douwe build it. The new house was two stories high, with four bedrooms upstairs. It had big windows too, but the greatest improvement was the shingled roof.

Betje never had bedbugs in the house, but [illegible] brought a stallion around to the local farmers would stay in the area for two or three days every time he came. One time he stayed with the Terpsmas, and slept in one of the upstairs bedrooms. On the second night the visitor was [illegible] that he went outside to the barrel by the well and jumped in to soothe the itching. When Betje



[illegible] house built [illegible] Tena, Betje, Douwe, George, Norman, [illegible] through window [illegible] mentioned the incident the following day, their visitor suggested bedbugs might be the cause. After he left, Betje checked the bed he had slept in and did find bedbugs! She suspected they had probably been carried in on the heavy thick overcoat the man wore. When Norman and Tena came home after school, they found Betje quite distressed. She was bustling about in the infested bedroom, putting a pan under each bed leg and pouring boiling water down each corner to try to kill the bugs. They continued to be plagued by bedbugs, though no matter what remedy she tried, Betje could not get rid of them.

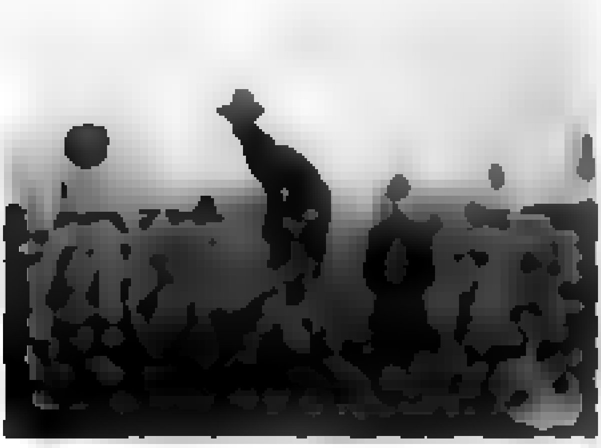
While living in Edmonton, Florence had met and become engaged to Dick Baker, son of Gaele and Catharina. They came to Neerlandia to be married in the church here. Florence was at her parents' homestead awaiting her big day, which was to be on her birthday, November 21. But Rev. Jongbloed, after taking the train from Edmonton, became stranded in Westlock because everything was drifted in after a bad snowstorm. So the wedding was postponed till Sunday. A wedding is a very special day in a woman's life and everything has to be just so, especially the wedding attire. Since Florence lived in the city, she saw stylish clothing in the shops. For her wedding, Florence purchased a beautiful dress, a hat, gloves, and shoes with high heels. On Saturday evening there was a knock on the back door. It was Ralph Kooy, elder of the church, who came to talk to Florence about the marriage ceremony. He soon noticed the high-heeled shoes standing in the kitchen and the silk dress hanging there too. After seeing them, he turned to Florence and stated, "You can't wear those shoes with heels like that; they look far too worldly. A piece of those heels will definitely have to be cut off!" To show that he was serious, he took out his jack knife. He also told her that the dress was much too gaudy. But Florence firmly replied, "Mr. Kooy, those boots will be left untouched since I bought and paid for them myself. I plan to wear them and the dress too." The marriage ceremony was held during the following afternoon service and Florence wore the dress and the shoes. The wedding party was held the next day in John's shack which was decorated with spruce boughs taken from the bush. Everyone came dressed in their Sunday best, the minister spoke; and baked goods and chocolate milk were served. Florence and Dick Baker took up residence in Edmonton. They had two sons. Florence still lives (1984) in Edmonton.

The silk wedding dress. Dick and Florence's wedding photo 1917.

Douwe rented the homestead to Peter Kampnar, and moved back to Edmonton in the spring of 1918 in order to work and save some money. On the homestead he had five head of cattle and a few calves, but the Neerlandia farmers were too poor to buy them so Douwe took them along and advertised them in *The Edmonton Journal*. The Terpsmas rented a house in north Edmonton and went to work at the Swift's and Burns plants and in construction. Norman and Tena continued their schooling in Edmonton.

By the winter of 1919 they had saved enough money to buy new cows and return to the homestead. Art and John went first to bring the livestock. The eight head of cattle plus calves were put on the train to Westlock. From there Art and John herded them to the homestead. Then John came back for the family. They travelled in a canvas-covered bundle rack on a sleigh drawn by a team of grey ponies, Queen and Nellie. The cook stove inside was kept burning and the smoke went out a pipe at the top. It was warm inside and the family slept in it at night. The Terpsmas called it a caboose. John had bought a team of Clydesdales from McFadden's. He hitched them to another sleigh with a heavy load of the family's belongings that included a democrat and some furniture. The horses made good time with the sleighs gliding over the snow. A saddle pony named Kate was hitched behind the caboose and on nice days Tena and Norman took turns riding her; indeed, the children had fun during the trip. Along the way, they would stop to buy bread or maybe milk and butter. In Mellowdale they bought a whopper of a loaf of bread, but when they ate it, they found it had a sour taste — it was sourdough bread, which the Terpsmas had [illegible]

Once again the Terpsma family arrived at [illegible] of the cows and shipped cream. They fed their animals from the grain they raised but shipped some grain as well. It was usually a poor grade since frost always damaged the [illegible] because he had hoped to buy a small flock when he came to the homestead. But once here, he found no one had enough chickens to sell him a flock. So Tena and Norman were assigned to go through the settlement and try to buy enough chickens to get started. Since Queen and Nellie were not to be trusted with the children, old Kate was hitched up to the stoneboat. It had no shafts so Kate had to hurry [illegible] couple of afternoons visiting homesteads in the settlement, buying one or two chickens at each place. By that time, they had a respectably-sized flock of hens with one rooster. The chickens sported every colour under the sun and did they fight!



It was the wild and free west in Alberta for many years and not too many farmers had fenced off their quarters. The Terpsma's cattle and horses, like others, roamed and grazed at their leisure; sometimes one to two miles away. The one or two leading cows wore cowbells so they could be heard when the children were looking for them, although a cowbell did not help much when the cows were resting. One time it was Norman's turn to get the cows. So after school, he saddled Kate, only to return two hours later with no cows. Tena said that she would go and look for them and off she went. Just before 10:00 p.m., when she was getting very anxious about Tena's welfare, Betje stood outside and heard faintly in the distance what sounded like a cowbell. A short time later a herd of cows appeared and a weary Tena. It was after ten o'clock and all the cows had to be milked yet. Fortunately this did not happen often.

In the cold winter, doing morning chores, hauling firewood, and doing evening chores [illegible] would allow. The wells did not produce enough water for the cows so they were led away to muskeg holes. That was Norman's job. He would carry a deep watering barrel and make a trail through the deep snow, with the cows nicely walking single file behind him. This was very tiresome because it was quite a walk to these holes.

Ada married Ernie Schelly, an Irishman from Edmonton, in 1922. They are living in Enderby, B.C., at present. Arthur married Rose Violette of Naples in October 1923. They resided mostly in New Westminster, B.C. Rose died in 1966. Arthur passed away in 1980 of pneumonia.

The pioneers of the community shared many happy times, but also sad times. Weddings were always happy occasions. In January 1927, Tena became bride-elect of Peter Tuin-ga. They were married and resided on the SW [illegible] Tina Caughlin. A few months after Peter and Tena were married they found themselves [illegible] happy. This happiness was short-lived when

Tena suddenly took very ill on a Friday. Peter brought her home, where Betje helped nurse her. A doctor came out from Westlock and diagnosed her sickness to be infantile paralysis

Tena, c. 1922

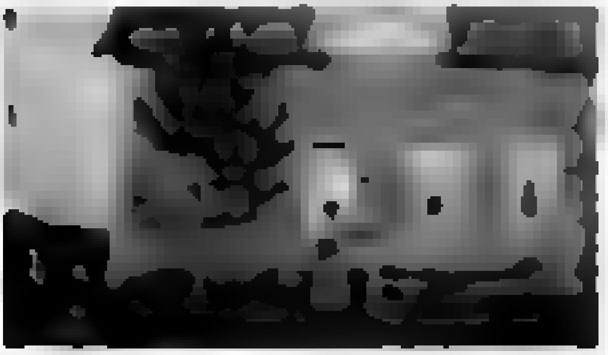
(polio). There was no medication to be given and the health authorities did not know much about the disease. A week later (September 30, 1927) Tena was called home to her Heavenly Father. A health inspector came from the city and quarantined the Terpsma farm. No one could come and no one could leave. The family prepared the body for burial and the casket was brought to the road where C. K. Mast picked it up with his truck. Ada and Florence came from the city and accompanied C. K. to the funeral services which were held in the graveyard. Neither Peter nor the others of Tena's family were permitted to attend the funeral service. Quarantine was not necessary but at that time little was known about the sickness.

Douwe enjoyed gardening, each year raising many vegetables and potatoes. During the winter he sold carrots, beets, turnips, or potatoes to the Chisholm lumbering camp run by Tom Wilson. Douwe delivered them to the camp, but had to wait for mild days so the vegetables would not freeze. One winter day in 1923, John had to bring a load of potatoes to the camp. Muskeg Michael rode along since he had a job at the Chisholm camp. John and some others were planning to log in another berth on the Athabasca River, so John needed his team

Terpsma farmyard. George, Harry Schelly, c. 1923.

of Clydesdales and a cook stove along. The potatoes were put in the bundle rack on the sleigh and the cook stove was put in the cutter which was hitched up behind the sleigh. Both the Clydesdales and the light team were needed to pull, so Norman came along to take the light team home. When they started off north along the trail, all went well. But north of the settlement the trail became quite narrow. The sides of the rack got stuck against trees alongside the trail. At first John would stop and chop the trees down before continuing, but the [illegible] snowing, making John anxious to reach the camp. He did not bother to stop anymore whenever he saw a narrow place ahead on the trail; he simply gathered up speed and went right through the narrow spots. Soon all the sides of the rack were gone and only the flat rack was left. When they got to the Horseshoe Bend hill just above the lumber camp, John took the heavy team and what was left of the bundle rack down the steep hill. Muskeg Michael followed with the light team and the cutter. After getting something to eat at the camp Norman took the cutter and the light team home, but it was dark long before he got there.

Betje did a lot of sewing for the family. She did most of it in the evening after the daily chores were done, working by the light of a coal oil lamp. Whether it was the poor lighting or something else, her eyesight was ruined by the time she was fifty. During the 1920s, a fellow came around selling glasses and Betje bought a pair that suited her. Florence and Ada told her to get her eyes tested by an eye doctor and not to use those glasses. But Betje insisted she could see just fine with them and never did go to the eye doctor.



[illegible]

A tragic incident struck the Terpsma famil[illegible] spilled was being burned in the cook stove when an explosion took place in the stove throwing the doors open. Fire shot out over the kitchen floor. Betje had to run through the fire to reach the water pail and her clothes caught fire. She ran outside, broke the ice off the puddles and rolled in them. By that time she was severely burned in many places, especially around her waist, where all the material from her skirt and blouse was gathered tightly against her body. Betje did not want to go to the hospital and, not knowing any better, had Douwe put cotton batting on the burns. Dr. Verreau came later from Barrhead and painstakingly [illegible] with tweezers. Betje was laid up for three months before she recovered enough to be a[illegible] of the family for the first six weeks. Others [illegible] wash for the family. The only good thing that [illegible] bedbugs in the house anymore. During the fire, the smoke had oozed out between the logs and killed all the bugs.

In the spring of 1929, Douwe and Betje decided to return to Edmonton. They had a farm sale and rented out their land two quarters with about one hundred acres cultivated to the Elzinga family. John had married Harda Lievers in 1928 so only the two boys, Norman and George, went along to Edmonton. There Douwe bought a seven-acre plot with a house [illegible] was the years of the hungry thirties and the produce did not sell, even though at one time they were selling ninety pounds of potatoes for only fifteen cents. One winter the Terpsmas had 1700 bushels of potatoes stored in the root cellar, unable to sell them. They kept them until June, when they started to rot and had to be [illegible] Neerlandia to take up farming. In 1937 Norman took over the original homestead and George took over Douwe's second quarter, the Caughlin homestead.

Douwe and Betje lived on their acreage for ten years. On May 16, 1939 Betje passed away from gallbladder and liver trouble. After she died, Douwe sold the acreage and lived with a brother in Lynden, Washington, for a time. He visited his children and spent the summers with Norman and his family. Later he married a widow, Etje Westra, from Randolph, Wisconsin. They were married three years, and then he became a widower once again. He moved to New Westminster and resided there till his passing on April 7, 1954, from stomach cancer. Both Douwe and Betje are buried in the Neerlandia cemetery.

Florence Baker
Norman Terpsma

SIEBREN AND WILLEMKE (DE BOER) TIEMSTRA

Siebren (Simon) Tiemstra (Tymstra) was born May 3, 1886, in Bolsward, Friesland, the Netherlands. When he grew up Siebren wanted to join the army but was refused because he was too short. Willemke de Boer, a cousin to Siebren, was born April 25, 1889, also in Bolsward. She was born into a farming family. When she was five years old she had to deliver bread every morning before school, a job for which she was paid three *stuivers* a week. But Willemke soon had to quit school and work for boeren. Through school she knew Froukje Eerdmans, who lived in a splendid house in the same town. Sometimes, when Willemke passed by the Eerdmans house, there would be sounds of people singing and an organ being played, and she would stand close to the house and listen to the beautiful sounds. Froukje was of a different social class, and that meant the girls would not have much to do with each other.

Siebren began courting Willemke, but in 1906 he and his stepbrother Jan Anema went to America. Willemke's brother Johannes farmed in Harrison, South Dakota, so Harrison was Siebren's destination. He found work with a farmer there and later rented land from him. Willemke came to Harrison in 1907, and she and Siebren were married January 16, 1908. Froukje Eerdmans also came to America, and she married Jan Anema. Away from the Netherlands, where social class divides people, Willemke and Froukje became close friends. Siebren enjoyed farming there and had an opportunity to buy the land he was renting, but was attracted by an article placed in *De Wachter* by H. Kippers. It stated that in Alberta, Canada, 160 acres could be bought for ten dollars, although it did not say that the 160 acres were nearly all bush. Siebren could not resist the lure, and in 1911, he, Willemke, and their two sons, **Albert** (Ulbe) George (May 30, 1908) and **Gerben** (April 3, 1910), travelled north with the Anemas by train to Edmonton.

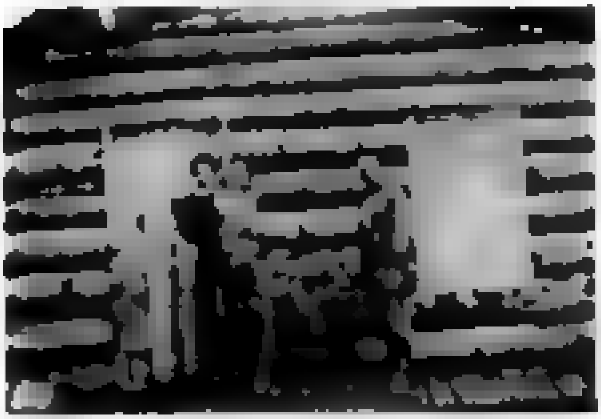
Albert, Gerben, Yabrand, c. 1912

Once in Edmonton the Tiemstras lived in a tent in Fraser Flats. The tent had a floor of boards, and during the winter Siebren put a fly over the tent. Beside them lived the Tjeerd Visser family, and Gerben and Tena Visser often played together. One day both of them fell into an abandoned outhouse pit, much to the disgust of Siebren, who cleaned them up.

Siebren was anxious to begin farming. One or two men had searched for land in the Thorhild area and found open land that had few trees. Siebren filed on a quarter in that area in April 1911. But later he discovered that most of the land was under water, and he abandoned it. On December 18, 1911, Siebren took up the NW 14-61-3-5 in what was later called Neerlandia as a homestead. He built a cabin on it in January 1912 and stayed there until April 1, when he returned to Edmonton to work. A third son, **Yabrand**, was born to the Tiemstras on July 1, 1912. The Tiemstra family moved to the homestead in January 1913. Siebren had bought a team of oxen and packed all their household goods on a sleigh for the trip

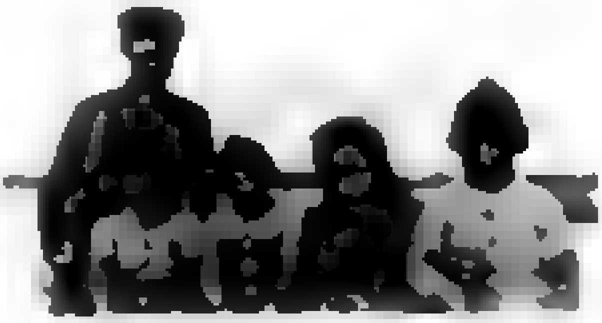
During their first years on the homestead the Tiemstras were supplied with wild meat by the trappers who lived north of them. One of the trappers, George Wing, would often come to tell Siebren where he could find a moose, deer, or bear that had been shot, and Siebren would go into the bush with his oxen to drag the meat out. Siebren also snared rabbits and shot prairie chickens and partridges. To catch rabbits in the winter, he would put a fence around the haystack beside the stable, make a little hole in the fence, and put a snare in it. Willemke cooked the choice pieces of the rabbits and Siebren hung the carcasses in the chicken coop for the chickens to eat

Siebren's homestead was at the southernmost part of the settlement. Many men who came to look for homesteads would stop at the Tiemstras' place first, often spending the night there. Other times whole families stayed until they had some place of their own. In some instances the stay stretched to weeks instead of days. Tiemstra's log house was twenty-five by sixteen feet and had one large living area and two bedrooms. When there was company the kitchen floor was often covered with blankets at night; sometimes there were as many as fourteen people sleeping on the floor. When men came looking for homesteads Siebren was willing to take them through the settlement to select a suitable quarter. He would sometimes go to Edmonton to pick up new settlers with his ox team and wagon. It took about two weeks to make the round trip



Willemke holding Yebrand, Albert, Gerben, Siebren, 1915

Siebren was the mail carrier from Mellowdale to Neerlandia for four or five years. Once a week he would go early in the morning to Albert Mast's place to pick up any outgoing mail and bring it to the post office in Mellowdale. By the time he got back to Mast's with the Neerlandia mail, it would be late in the day. When Siebren got a horse in 1916 he hitched it up to a two-wheeled cart to use for getting mail. Usually there was a fairly heavy bag of mail to take back, especially when there were parcels from Eaton's in it. The winters that Siebren was gone working, Willemke hauled the mail. Albert and Gerben went along to drive the horse for her, but they were not allowed to handle the mail themselves because they were underage



Siebren, Albert, Yebrand, Dela Anema, Gerben, 1916

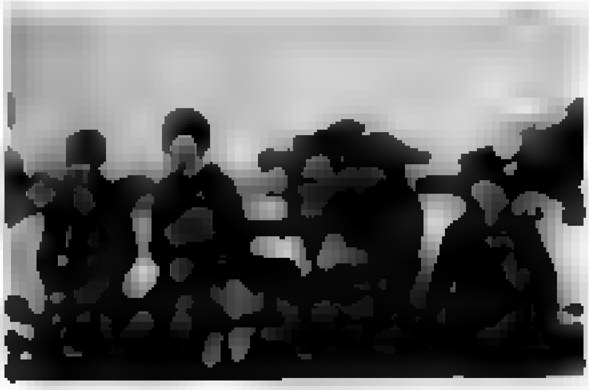
Siebren worked elsewhere during the winter to make some money. He usually worked at Fluet's Sawmill, leaving early Monday morning and returning Saturday night. Many Saturday nights Willemke sat up until the midnight hours patching Siebren's clothes, then washing them so they would be dry and ready for Monday morning. While Siebren was gone, Willemke did the chores

While clearing, Siebren found that much of the land on his quarter had burnt timber underneath and was very heavy clearing. The dead logs underneath had been big trees, much thicker than the ones that were standing. He had been applied for the patent to his homestead in December 1916. He was cropping eighteen acres and six more were brushed, with the balance being heavy brush. The other improvements were two log stables, a twenty-eight-foot well, and two miles of pole fence. Siebren had come with four cattle in 1913; by 1916 he had eight cattle and a horse. Siebren made hay for the animals from the meadows east along the Short Creek. He and Jan Anema usually worked together, making the hay in summer and bringing it home in winter.

One time while Siebren was breaking land, the coulter on his breaking plow broke. Siebren quickly decided that he could walk just as fast as his team of oxen would and carried the twenty-five-pound coulter all the way to Rossington, where the blacksmith Fletcher Johnson lived. The blacksmith fixed it for Siebren, then said, "If a man has that much ambition, to walk all that way with such a heavy thing, then I can't charge him." Siebren walked back the same day with the coulter.

Ysbrand became sick with the measles in 1917 and, just when he seemed to be recuperating, took a turn for the worse. Within a few days he died.

During the flu epidemic of 1918 Siebren and his neighbours helped each other out. When Lambertus Janssen and his family, who lived [illegible] came down with the flu, Siebren did their chores. Later Lambertus returned the favour when Siebren became sick. Pete Louws, a bachelor who lived just north of Tiemstras, came over when he felt the flu coming on — he was afraid that if he became desperately ill, no one would find him. After several days, though, he recovered and returned to his shack.



Albert, Margaret [illegible], Gerben, Jo [illegible], 1919

A daughter, Emma (Yankje), was born July 12, 1919. The following winter was a long one. Siebren did not have enough feed for his cattle and had to go to Mellowdale to get straw from the Metzgers. The snow was so deep that he had to go over drifts to get there and could not follow the trail. When spring finally came, all the cattle were still alive, but very weak. Siebren let them out to forage, but three or four of them died after walking too far in their weakened condition.

Siebren was a nimble and active man. He could do headstands, walk on his hands, and jump higher than most anyone in the settlement [illegible] stature. He was usually willing to try anything [illegible]

Willemke was tall and much quieter than Siebren. She and Froukje Anema were still close friends and visited each other often. Froukje did a lot of sewing for Willemke, who did not sew at all except for patching and mending on her hand sewing machine. Willemke spent many evenings knitting socks, mittens, or sweaters for the family.

Besides doing the family's wash, Willemke washed clothes for others. This included patching and mending them. George Heiseman, a widower from Mellowdale, would come to the Tiemstras once a week and change into his freshly-cleaned clothes there, leaving his dirty ones for Willemke to take care of the next week. He often gave Willemke a piece of tallow in return for the washing. Pete Louws also brought his clothes to Willemke to be washed.

Each summer mosquitoes were a plague. Towards bedtime, when the mosquitoes became unbearable, Willemke would make a smudge in the cook stove by covering the wood with green grass. She would leave the [illegible] plate off the stove to let the smoke spread through the house. Soon the mosquitoes would be crowded against the windows, trying to escape. Then Willemke and the children would kill the mosquitoes with wet rags. The family could then go to bed and sleep peacefully until four or five o'clock in the morning, when the mosquito population inside had again risen to an uncomfortable level. When Willemke had gardening to do she made four or five smudges in five-gallon pails and spaced them in the garden so she could work without too much distraction.

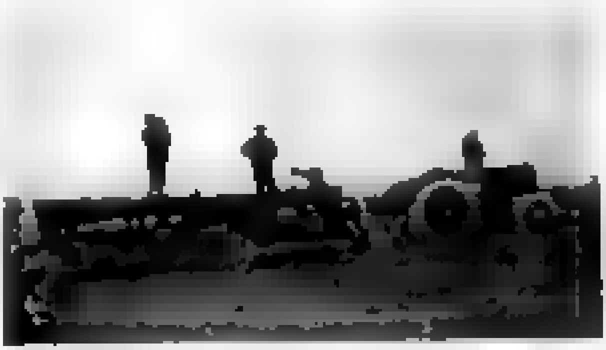
Before the Neerlandia church had its own minister, Siebren often went to pick up the minister (usually Rev. Jongbloed of Edmonton) who was to preach in church the coming Sunday. The minister would have to be met at Dunseldorf, which was as far as the stage went. Sometimes the minister would stay overnight at the Tiemstras as well.

The four-mile trip to church on Sundays took up to one and a half hours with the horses and wagon. The trail was so poor that Siebren had to drive slowly just to stay on the wagon. He would often walk to church instead, sometimes with Emma on his shoulders. In the winter the sleigh could be used and that went much faster. If it was too cold, though, Willemke stayed home with the children and read them Bible stories. In between services the Tiemstras would sometime stay at the Anemas for lunch. Siebren served in consistory for many years. He kept up on church matters by reading Dutch church papers and other books. Siebren taught Sunday school for some years and would often tell the Christmas story to the children at the annual Christmas concert in church.

Siebren bought a team of mules, Jack and Jerry, during the 1920s. Siebren found them to be clever animals. If he took them to a field and plowed three rounds with them the first day, the following time he went there they would plow three rounds, then stubbornly refuse to do any more. Siebren would use one of the mules hitched up to the buggy to take the family to church. He kept the mules for five or six years.

The original Tiemstra house was built of big unpeeled spruce logs. It had a sod roof which dripped whenever it rained. Willemke would often have to move the beds to spots where there were no drips. Siebren later built an addition of peeled logs which was used as a kitchen. In 1926, with the help of his son Gerben and Jim Johnman, he built a two-storey lumber house.

Albert and Gerben had already quit school by the time Emma was old enough to go. She began school in 1926, when she was seven years old. She was the only one going to school from that corner of the settlement, so at first she boarded with the Ingwersens. Ingwersen's daughter Annie would braid Emma's long hair each morning. But, even though she went home weekends, Emma became homesick and was soon moved to the Anemas. Her hair, though, was cut short to make less bother. Siebren would pick Emma up every Friday night, then bring her to school again Monday morning. Later, after the Albert Mast family moved back from Edmonton, Emma walked to school with the Mast children. Doris Wilson also lived along the way, and the children looked out for her, but she usually had work to do before and after school and rarely had time to walk with them. Emma never wore shoes to school because they would get ruined if it should happen to rain. Depending on the weather, therefore, she either wore rubbers or went barefoot.



Tractor and seed drill in transport. Siebren holding Joe, Gerben and Albert on tractor, 1930

Emma, Tena, Albert, Willemke, Siebren. Front: Rose, Joe. 1931

Siebren and Willemke had two more children: **Rose** (Rooske) was born October 20, 1923, and **Joe** (Johannes) on March 1, 1929. In 1931 Albert married Tena Wierenga and Gerben married Tena's cousin, Trientje, daughter of Andries and Rika Wierenga.

Emma married John Schuman of Bruderheim on April 26, 1939. They farmed at Naples and raised a family of three children. In 1941 Rose married John Ingwersen of Neerlandia.

Siebren and Willemke retired in 1944. Their sons took over the farm, with Albert taking the

north half of 14-61-3-5 and Gerben the south half. Siebren bought five acres at the Corner from John Ingwersen. He resold it in 1946, and he, Willemke, and Joe went for a trip to the states, first to South Dakota where Willemke's brother lived, and then to California where a sister lived. In 1947 Siebren and Willemke moved to Lynden, Washington. Joe stayed in California and married Charlene Kuiphof in 1949.

Willemke, Siebren, 1958.

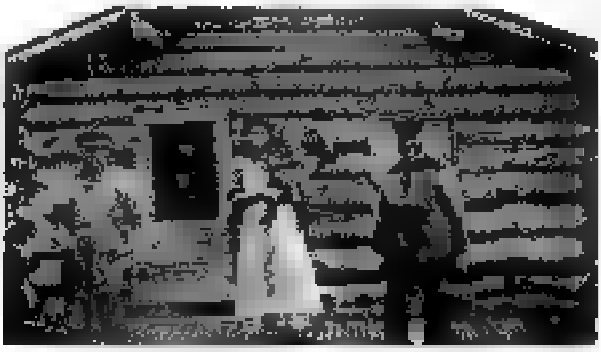
Around 1955 Siebren and Willemke returned to Neerlandia to live. They bought Henry Bouwman's house and moved there. Siebren remained an active person. A week before he died he was still doing handstands. He passed away May 25, 1960. Willemke then moved to Barrhead, living in her own home until 1974 when she went to Barrhead Nursing Home. She passed away February 3, 1979.

Tiemstra Family

ULBE TIEMSTRA
IKE TIEMSTRA

Ulbe Tiemstra (Tiymstra) was born August 3, 1854, in Wommels, Friesland, the Netherlands. He later owned a farm in the area. His first wife, Roosye de Boer, died, leaving Ulbe and four children, one of whom was Siebren. Ulbe remarried to a widow, Sietske de Haas, who had two children. One of those two children, **Jan Anema**, immigrated with Siebren to the U.S.A., and later both of them homesteaded in Neerlandia.

Two more children were born into Ulbe and Sietske's family: **Ike** (Ysbrand) on September 1, 1898, and **Charles** (Tjeerd) on January 30, 1903. Sietske died in a flu epidemic in 1919. Ulbe had sold his farm in 1916 because he was dissatisfied with the government intervention in farming. Then Charles decided to immigrate to Canada and he persuaded Ike to come with him. Ulbe decided to go along and visit Siebren. He planned to stay for about six months.



Siebren, Willemke with Emma, Ulbe, 1920.

Coal miners, Ted Reitsma, Charles, Ike, c. 1921.

After the three arrived in Neerlandia in June 1920, Ulbe and Ike stayed with Siebren. Ike worked for him that first summer. Ulbe liked the country so much that he decided to remain in Canada. Wherever he went, he was never seen without his *klompen*. He had a plain pair [illegible] handsomely-painted pair that he wore Sundays. Ulbe died in 1922 or 1923 at the age of 68.

In the fall of 1920 Ike and his brother, Charles, worked on a roadcrew. During the following years he worked for other farmers and, during the winter, in an Edmonton coal mine. He bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Jacob Olthuis in 1924. On it he kept a few milking cows, some horses, and some sheep. Ike remained a bachelor. The difficulties of pioneering took its toll, and in the late twenties he developed mental problems. He was hospitalized in Oliver Mental Institute in 1929 and remained there until his death on October 25, 1952.

[illegible] Family

[illegible]

[illegible] ernment was selling 160-acre parcels of land for [illegible] offer was irresistible to many Dutchmen, [illegible]cluding Jelle Tuininga (Tuinenga). Therefore, in 1911, Jelle (born on September 12, 1868) [illegible] Anke Tuininga (born on January 6, 1866) [illegible] the big step; they left Wommels, Friesland, [illegible] Netherlands, and sailed across the ocean.

[illegible] on March 26, 1893, and Jim (Jacobus), born on July 19, 1896. Jim sailed with them but [illegible] then 18 years of age, stayed behind because of lack of funds. Upon arrival in Canada, Jelle, Anke, and Jim boarded a train and travelled to [illegible] financial situation, Anke took in boarders.

[illegible] money to pay his passage and boarded an En[illegible] Canada. The St. Lawrence river was still frozen, and the ship was forced to dock at Halifax rather than at Montreal. From Halifax, Klaas took the train to Edmonton where he joined his family. For three years he worked at Swift's Packing Plant along with his brother. They worked ten hours a day at 20¢ per hour — a good wage for those days.

Jelle's aim was to be a farmer. Therefore, in 1913, he set out for Neerlandia with his friend **Anne Rustjema**. They travelled with a team of horses and a wagon loaded with supplies, among which were a sulky plow and a tent. On January 3, 1914, they filed on adjoining quarters — Jelle on the SE 19-61-3-5 and Anne on the SW 20-61-3-5. They lived in a tent the first winter. One night, they were so cold that they took the team of horses into the tent with them in an attempt to get warm. It was a costly move because the horses ate the year's supply of tobacco. Anne did not stay in Neerlandia and never did prove up his land.

Jelle had no idea how to judge what was good land in Alberta, but he did select a pleasant location. A small knoll overlooking a little lake was his choice of a site. There were no fish in the lake, but a variety of birds — including red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds — frequented the area. The lake was to be the water supply for man and beast for many years. [illegible] site, and the logs were piled up to be used in constructing a cabin. The roof was made from tarpaper and rough boards. Lumber for the roof was bought from a sawmill in the area for $10 per thousand board feet. Then, when the cabin was ready (the summer of 1914), Anke came to the farm to live.

Life was not easy in those years. The cookstove and a square drum heater were all Jelle and Anke had to keep their living quarters warm. Sleeping upstairs in their log cabin, the Tuiningas often had frost, formed by their breath, on the blankets. Clothes had to be washed by hand and ironed with flat irons. Jelle and Anke grew their own vegetables. *Grauwe erwten* were raised and eaten regularly.

In the spring of 1915, Klaas came to join his parents. He and his father cleared and plowed the land using horses, rather than oxen as many farmers did. Then during the late summer or fall, Klaas would go to southern Alberta to work for other farmers, and during the winter he would work in sawmills and lumber camps in the Neerlandia area.

For many, life on the frontier was a challenge, an adventure — but not for Anke. She loved to have people around her. In the Netherlands she had peddled bread and stopped to have a little chat at each house. In Edmonton, she had had boarders. Now, stuck on a homestead where she saw few people, she was starved for company. Sometimes when she saw friends on their way to visit her husband's brother, Klaas, and family, she would run out to the road to stop them for a little talk. As often as not, she would persuade them to visit her instead — much to her sister-in-law's dismay. No, life in Neerlandia in the pioneer years was not for her. She often said that she would have crawled back to the Netherlands if it had been possible.

Anke, Jelle

Jelle and Anke were both of medium height. Jelle had fine black hair which he parted in the middle, and a beard which Anke kept neatly trimmed for him. He had crinkly eyes which sparkled when he was amused. Anke's hair, quite different from Jelle's, was sparse and wiry. In those days women seldom washed their hair, and whether because of that or because of its wiriness, Anke's hair stood straight out when she combed it. Anke combed her hair energetically, as she did everything else, getting red in the face as she wound it into a little bun. She was always bustling around to get her work done. She used to maintain a schedule: breakfast, dinner, and supper were served exactly at 6:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m. respectively.

Jelle was a more quiet person than his wife, although he could be sharp-spoken when the occasion demanded it. Both he and his brother, Klaas, were well versed in Biblical knowledge, but when it came to presenting their views publicly, Jelle tended to stay in the background.

During those years, ministers came from Edmonton and the U.S.A. to preach. The ministers usually stayed at Jelle and Anke's place because they had more room than others did. Both Jelle and Anke enjoyed this — Anke because it meant company, and Jelle because he enjoyed discussing matters of Christian living with them.

The Tuiningas travelled to church by sled in winter, but in summer they often walked. When they walked, Anke would take extra socks along so they could change when they reached church: the heavy dew in the long grass soaked the socks they were wearing.

In 1920 Klaas made profession of faith.

In 1929 Klaas built a house for himself and his parents. The materials for it cost him $450. It was one of the few frame houses in Neerlandia at that time. The kitchen was finished off inside, but the two-by-fours were visible in the rest of the house. An unusual feature of the house, for that time, were the "store-bought" doorknobs. Everyone said, "Such a big house — and for only three people."

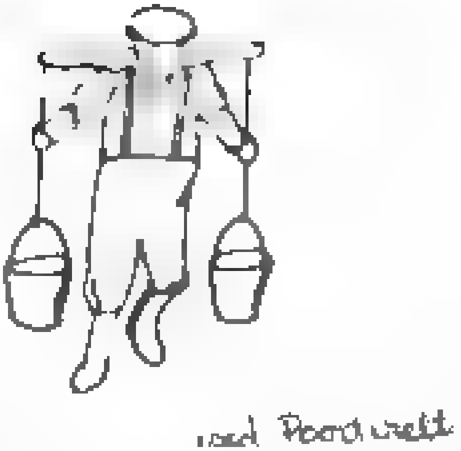
Klaas Tuininga Jr. house built in 1929.

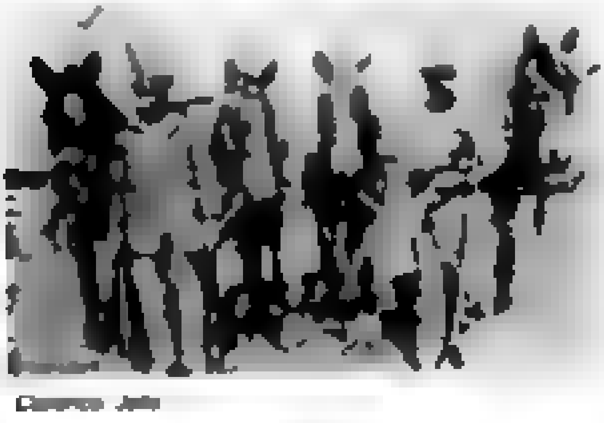
But perhaps Klaas had plans no one knew about. There had been a recent influx of immigrants to Neerlandia. Among them were three Wierenga families, each with several girls. Sure enough. Klaas decided to court Trientje Wierenga, daughter of Lammert and Henderije. They saw each other, at most, twice a week but being [illegible] and [illegible] years of age respectively, Klaas and Trientje thought there was no time to engage in a lengthy courtship. After three months, on Sunday, May 8, 1932, they were married. Klaas had become a Canadian citizen in June 1920. Now, through marrying him, Trientje automatically became one too. After the regular church service, Klaas and Trientje went to the Wierengas for supper, and later that evening Klaas brought Trientje to her new home by horse and buggy — a distance of 10 miles. That night bells rang, someone had tied cow-bells under their bed. That was the extent of their honeymoon.

At six o'clock the next morning Klaas went to work in the field. That was the first day it was possible that year because it had been a wet spring. Klaas' parents lived in the house with the newly-married couple. Three months later in July 1932, Mother Anke died from cancer, at the age of 66. Menne Nanninga made the coffin, there were no other expenses involved.

On August 13, 1933, Klaas and Trientje's first daughter, Henrietta, was born. The mid-wife, Aaltje Baker, had to be picked up early that Sunday morning to help with the delivery. Trientje spent over two weeks in bed and vowed never to have another baby, but the following August, on the 24th, a son, Jelle, was born. Then on April 8, 1936, along came a second son, Lambert, and on December 5, 1937, a third, James. For every delivery, Aaltje Baker received five dollars.

Doing the wash for a family of four children was quite an undertaking. Pake Jelle would haul water up from the lake with a yoke on his shoulders, from which a pail hung on each side. The water had to be heated in large boilers on an old, woodburning cookstove. It was put on the stove the night before washday and the woodbox was filled (a task which required many trips to the woodpile). In this way, Trientje could get an early start on Monday morning. She would be up at 4:30 a.m. so that she could get the wash on the line before the children left for school in the morning. Once the water was heated, it was taken in small pails from the stove to a hand-operated washing machine. All the clothes were washed in one tub of water and then rinsed in a second tub of clean water. In winter, the clothes were then hung on lines upstairs, where they often stayed until they were needed again.



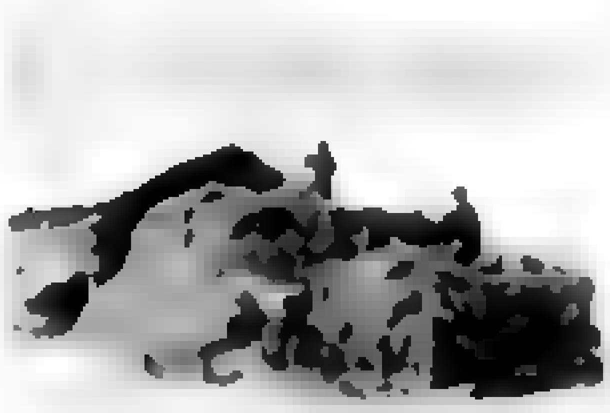

[illegible] Jelle

Jelle [illegible]

During the first years of their marriage, Klaas and Trientje were plagued by bedbugs. Trientje would search the mattress creases for the little creatures, but the problem remained. Finally, one summer, a granary was pulled beside the house. The family [illegible] during the day, while the heaters and stoves were stoked to full capacity in an attempt to kill the bedbugs. It is a wonder that the house did not burn down. But the heat did control the bedbugs, and when the house had cooled off, Trientje would sweep up the dead bugs. Two years later, when the house was finished off, the bedbug problem disappeared.

Klaas and a friend, Tjibbe Reitsma, went regularly to the weekly Men's Society meetings. Coming home on horseback, they would discuss items of interest to both of them. Because they both had loud voices, they could be heard coming a mile away.

Although the Tuiningas had no radio, they learned of a memorable event which occurred in 1939. One August morning their neighbour, Anne Elgersma, came over to tell them that he heard on the radio that another oorlog had started. That year, on August 28, a second daughter, Edith was born to Klaas and Trientje, and the next year, on December 2, a third, Anke, was born.



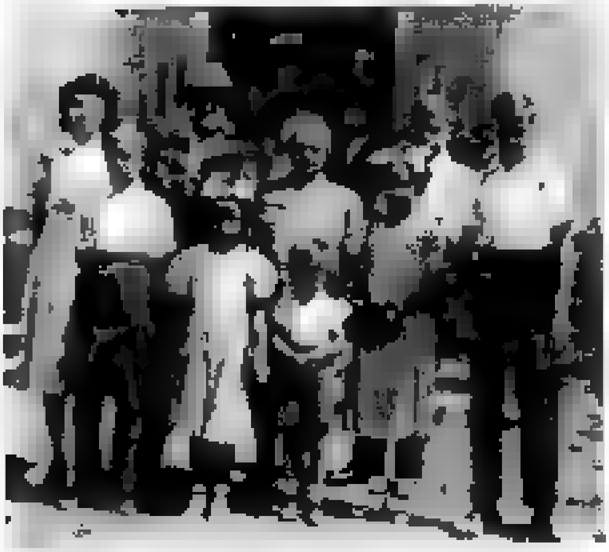
[illegible]

Going to church in the winter required determination and preparation. The Tuiningas had to rise earlier on Sundays than on a weekday morning in order to reach the church on time. They travelled in a closed sleigh drawn by two horses. At their feet were preheated stones wrapped in towels. For a few years they went to Grace and Oene Piers' for Sunday lunch. Once the Piers family started growing, the Tuiningas family prepared a [illegible] sandwiches each Sunday, and between services stayed in a small heated shack located one quarter mile south of the hamlet that belonged to Anne Elgersma. When they returned home at the end of the day, their house was stone-cold, and everyone shivered till the fires were started and had warmed the house.

During the summer months, Trientje and the children would sometimes go by horse and democrat to visit her family for the day. Along the way she [illegible]. One time she picked up Bill Oldegbers, a great storyteller. He told the kids that he could jump higher than the trees growing beside the road. When he stood up to show them, their eyes grew big and their mouths popped open. Was he going to take off? No, he only jumped a couple of inches! What a surprise.

In 1941 an old Hudson car was purchased. Everyone looked forward to the luxury of riding in a car. Mastering the art of driving, though, proved to be difficult for Klaas, who was [illegible] years old at the time. One Sunday morning Klaas rode right over an old well on the churchyard and got a flat tire. Changing a tire on that car was a real pain in the neck. Klaas could be heard fixing the tire during the church service. Many hammer blows were needed to make the outer rim fit over the inner. Klaas' explanation for the accident was that the steering had locked, but the hunch of others was that the driver was inexperienced. Another accident happened when Klaas was coming home from the [illegible]. [illegible] there was a car behind him, as he approached Baker's corner, he did not slow down in time to turn properly. He went back and forth over the ditches on either side of the road a few times, but eventually ended up back on the road again. It is amazing how the Hudson took all that abuse — to say nothing of the passengers who had expected a [illegible].

During the summer of 1948, Bill Olthuis and Jack Tuininga, who owned a well-drilling outfit together, came to drill a well for the Tuiningas. That put an end to hauling water from the lake. The children still had enough chores to do, however. The woodbox still had to be filled, and before leaving for school in the morning, the boys each had to milk one or two cows; the girls, not to be let off free, had to make beds and



Back: Henry, Clarence, Trientje, Jelle. Front: Jim, Anke, Gordon, Edith, Lambert, 1950.

dust the house before breakfast. To get ready on time, they had to get up at six o'clock in the morning.

As the Tuininga children walked to school they were joined by others, so that the group numbered about a dozen by the time they reached their destination. It usually took the Tuiningas about an hour and a half to walk the four miles to school.

To keep life interesting, another boy, Gordon, was born on November 6, 1944. This baby was born in St. Joseph's Hospital with Dr. Verreau and the nuns there to help. During the final weeks of each pregnancy, and for a few weeks thereafter, Trientje always had one of her sisters come to help her. This time was no exception.

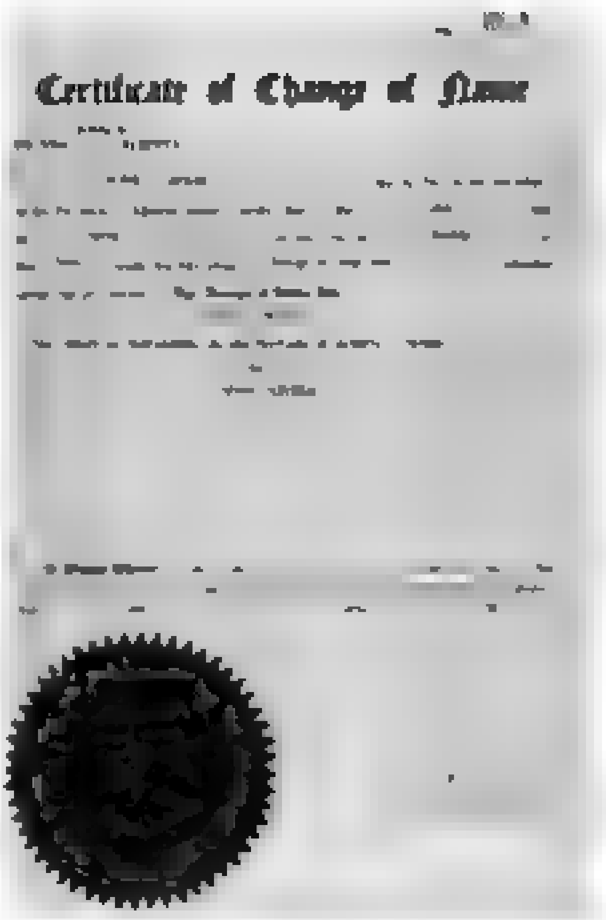
During all this time, *Pake* Jelle was living with the family. Trientje found him to be an uncomplaining person who was easy to get along with. On November 6, 1946, after a few weeks in St. Joseph's Hospital, he passed away at the age of 78.

Harvesting days were a busy but exciting and enjoyable time, because of the many neighbours getting together to help. An embarrassing moment for Trientje was when Jacob Hiemstra was about to eat some lettuce with his noon meal. *"Ik dacht al dat mijn eten beweegde,"* he said, as he pulled a big green worm out of his salad. (I thought already that my food was moving.)

Clarence holding Henry, Trientje holding Jelle, 1935.

Through the years there was a lot of confusion in the post office concerning which mail was meant for Klaas and which was meant for his uncle, also Klaas Tuininga. Therefore, on April 22, 1955, "Klaas, the younger" had his name officially changed to Clarence. To do this cost him $15 and a trip to the courthouse in Edmonton.

Clarence and Trientje, both strong-willed, dynamic people, have left their mark on family and community. As a young man, Clarence conducted Boys and Girls' Society for many years, teaching Bible study and church history. Later he diligently taught catechism. He also served in the consistory. Ministers heard from him in no uncertain terms, as to whether the sermon was good or bad. There was never any



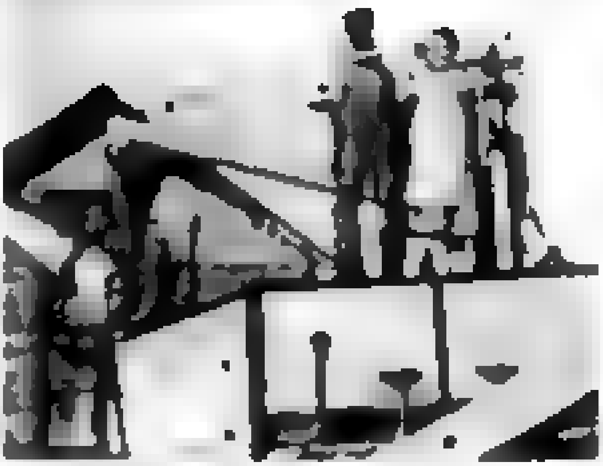
Certificate of Change of Name

question of where he stood on any issue. Trientje, too, was knowledgeable and forceful. Loud discussion on a variety of topics could be heard in the Tuininga household. The daughters, who were expected to help Trientje with the housework, did not always appreciate their mother's vocal strength. Henny wrote:

"Often during the summer holidays, while Mom took her nap, we'd sneak out and hide behind the garage hoping not to be found and put back to work. But Mom's voice carried loud and clear; it could not be ignored."

Even the farm animals were expected to know who was boss and obey. If they went the wrong way, Clarence addressed them in strong language.

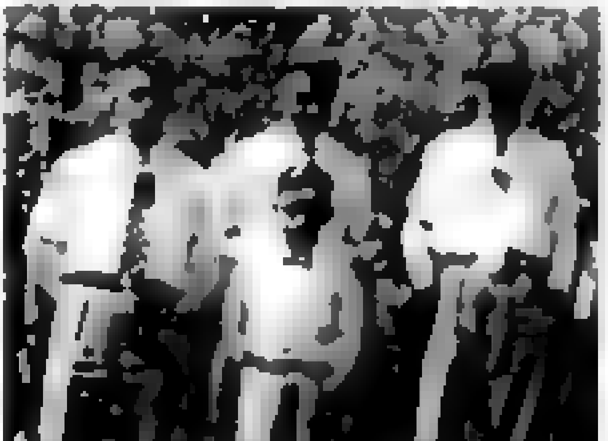
It was not all work and no play, though. After supper Clarence and Trientje relaxed and spent time with the children doing such things as playing games with them or helping them with their homework. When the children were small, they would stand on their father's feet and he would walk them around the kitchen.



Clarence, Trientje 1924

Sometimes he would take one of the children on his knees and bounce them up and down to the rhythm of *Hop, Hop, Hinke*, a Frisian rhyme. In spite of a congenital hip defect which caused Trientje to cripple, she would chase the children around the table and join in the laughter and joking when they all fell in a heap. She accepted her handicap gracefully, only once saying to her children, "If I could only run like you."

Going to the outhouse was something to be dreaded in the winter months. As Trientje walked with difficulty at the best of times, struggling against wind and snow made these



The Happy Gang! Jim, John, Lambert, Frank Gordon, 1932 treks hazardous for her. Sometimes Clarence or one of the children would go with her to prevent her from falling.

As time passed and the boys grew up, Clar- [illegible] them. The last year that he was actively in- [illegible] haul bales. He did not seem to age appreciably [illegible] of age, when he had lost his hair because of typhoid fever. He became a bit more rotund as the years went by, but until the age of 85 he could be seen planting and hoeing the garden, picking berries, or walking down the road. He averaged five miles a day, swinging his arms vigorously as he went.

Trientje kept busy crocheting and knitting, [illegible] children and finally for her great-grand [illegible]

Life has not always been easy for Clarence and Trientje. There have been difficulties and differences of opinion, but throughout the years of work and play a strong sense of com- [illegible] ently (1984), at the ages of 90 and 81 respectively, Clarence and Trientje are able, with the help of their children, to remain in the house Clarence built 51 years ago. Though their early years were hard, they did not consider themselves poor as they never lacked food, clothing, or shelter. They are thankful to the Lord who has blessed them richly.

Four of their children are living in other parts of Canada. Jelle married Henrietta Visscher of Edmonton in 1963. He was ordained as a minister of the Christian Reformed Church in the same year. They are living in Lethbridge, Alberta, where he is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church. They have four children. James married Irene Westerhof of Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1962. They are residing with their four children in Jarvis, Ontario, where James is serving as the minister of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church. Edith married William Sinnema from Granum, Alberta, in 1961. With their five children, they live in Edmonton where Bill is an electrical engineering instructor at NAIT. Anke lives in Toronto, Ontario, where she worked for the Curriculum Development Centre for several years. She is now doing family counselling in that city.

Henrietta De Groot

KLAAS AND SJOERDJE (WYMA)

[illegible]

Klaas and Sjoerdje Tuininga left Oosterend, [illegible] 1912, with nine children ranging in age from six months to thirteen years. Klaas had been a machinist in a butter factory, but did not see a future for his children in the Netherlands and had heard many good stories about all the land to be had, practically free, in Canada. But how was he to get there? His family used up every stuiver he earned, so one would think that emi- [illegible] acquaintances, however, agreed to lend him [illegible] *Volendam*.

What a journey — and with so many small children! Everyone except the baby was so seasick that they could not take care of themselves. Two bachelors on board looked after them. For part of the time Klaas was well enough to help care for the baby. (This was the only time in his life that he changed diapers.) The baby Carrie (Gerritje, September 27, 1911) probably escaped seasickness because she was used to a lot of rocking.

After the lengthy sea voyage the Tuiningas [illegible] travel by train before they reached their destination. On arrival in Edmonton they found that housing was so scarce that many people lived in tents. The Tuiningas managed to do a bit better; they got a shack.

How lonesome Sjoerdje was, and how hard it was for her to cope in this little shack in a strange land! Her husband had a Dutch-English dictionary which he had studied before coming to Canada, and this was of some help to them. Once again they were befriended. Kees Van Geest lived alone in a large house and invited them to share it with him. The move was made eagerly, but living there was not as easy as they had hoped. Kees believed that a human soul was in his large collie dog and expected the Tuininga family to treat it like a person. When Sjoerdje, who already had so many children to look after and so much to do, discovered that this included allowing the dog to shake his wet coat all over the house, she decided it was too much for her to bear. Soon they found another house, where they lived for a number of years

Back: Klaas, Sjoerdje holding Joe. Middle: Bertha, Claus, Jennie. Front: Sadie, Pete, Gerrit, Jack with Carrie, Dora 1914

During their three years in Edmonton, three more children, Joe (Jelle, September 2, 1913), Cecil (Sietze Willem, February 23, 1915) and Annie (Anke, December 7, 1916) were born to Klaas and Sjoerdje. Then, after five years in the city, they decided to move to the bush country. With twelve children to care for, one might consider such a move reckless and irresponsible, but the Tuiningas were trusting in God and His control of the future.

Klaas' brother Jelle and his family were already in Neerlandia and, with their encouragement and help, the move was made in the spring of 1917. Klaas bought one team of horses and a sleigh and his nephew Clarence (Klaas) came from Neerlandia with another. All their belongings were loaded on these two sleighs. The family clambered aboard, and off they went to Neerlandia, with a red cow and calf completing the entourage.

A ninety-mile trek, it took many a day
Over muskeg and creeks — no pavement or
gravel,
With so many children it was hard to travel
One sleigh tipped over, what a worry to Dad
Was his organ all right? — nothing else
mattered.

(adapted from a poem by Annie)

Before they left Edmonton, Klaas had purchased $80 worth of groceries (no luxuries, these) on time at the corner grocery store. The tallow, flour, sugar, tea, coffee, and salt which he bought were expected to last all year. When the tallow box was empty it was used as a bed for Annie.

When the Tuiningas arrived in Neerlandia they moved into a house owned by Martin van der Heide. The van der Heides were working in Edmonton at the time.

Klaas had filed on the NE 19-61-3-5 on April 23, 1915. Now he and his sons set about making a log house with a barn attached, to serve as a temporary dwelling. Since lumber was scarce, the building was given a sod roof and only half of the house floor could be covered with lumber; the beds stood on a mud floor. The only heat was provided by a very small heater and a cook stove, but there were never any serious ailments because of the cold.

The eldest children, Bertha (Boukje, March 16, 1899) and Claus (Klaas, June 15, 1900), stayed in Edmonton to augment the family's income. Bertha sent many welcome parcels of both new and used clothing. At Christmas there was usually a garment for each, plus a small toy. The arrival of a parcel was always a happy occasion. Two of the most welcome items were a huge drum heater which Claus supplied, and a beautiful, large range which Bertha sent. Even then with the bitterly cold winters, things froze in the house and no one was able to keep houseplants. One winter, the potatoes got chilled so badly that the Tuiningas ate sweet-tasting potatoes for the rest of the year.

Water was obtained from a well by means of a bucket. In the winter, as each pail was pulled up the water would splash against the cribbing and freeze to it. After water had been hauled day after day for the family and livestock, the ice got so thick that the pail could not go through. Klaas had a good idea: put some burning wood in the pail and let it down onto the ice. It worked very well — the ice melted and once again water could be hauled up — but the Tuiningas drank smoke-flavoured water for quite a while.

A year or two after they moved to their

homestead, Klaas built a larger log house, with a large kitchen and bedroom downstairs and an upstairs for additional bedrooms. They had lumber now for the floors and the roof, but there were no shingles, only tar paper, which was far from leak-proof. Many a night Mother Tuininga went upstairs with tins to catch the drips.

The "old" house was converted to a barn and gradually more buildings were constructed, among them a larger log barn and a granary. With the help of the sons, land was cleared and a large garden planted. **Jenny** (Janke, January 26, 1904), **Pete** (Pieter, May 21, 1905), and their mother all liked gardening.

Although the Tuiningas were very poor, the children accepted their lot. They had a happy home and never went to bed hungry. On a rainy day, Pete would go outside to the garden and bring in some nice, clean white turnips and bright carrots for the family to enjoy. Mother Tuininga would show the younger children how to make a wagon out of the carrots, holding on the carrot-slice wheels with matchsticks (matchsticks were longer in those days). In the fall, potatoes, beets, turnips, and carrots were put in the cellar. Sjoerdje made sauerkraut, and salted down beans in crocks.

Back: Klaas, Sjoerdje with baby Simon, Claus, Pete, Mattie, Sadie, Gertie, Jennie, Jack. Front: Carrie, Arnie, Joe, Cecil. 1920

Two more children, **Simon** (July 11, 1919) and **Grace** (Grietje, February 17, 1922), were born, with Aaltje Baker serving as midwife. There were now so many children all over the house that they named the place "Dooville", after a comic strip in the *Grain Grower's Guide*. Klaas and Sjoerdje firmly believed that if God had entrusted them with these children, He would help them take care of them. they never suffered any serious consequences of all their poverty or hardships.

Klaas, Sjoerdje, Simon, 1924

The Tuiningas did go through many hard times. The 1918-19 influenza struck all of them. Their neighbours, the van der Heides and Jelle and Antje Tuininga, were very helpful during this and other hard times. One especially bad time was the winter of 1919-20. When Klaas patented his land on January 7, 1920, records indicate that he had a 30 by 20-foot log house, a 30 by 30-foot log stable, a 22-foot well, two miles of pole fences, and twenty acres of cleared land. These improvements were valued at $1050. He owned seventeen head of cattle and five horses. During that hard winter, most of the cattle and horses died because of the cold and lack of food. Klaas managed to save four or five cows, hoping that they would supply cream and milk for the family and cream to sell. When spring came, he turned them out to graze. One Sunday evening, Pete went on horseback to look for the cows. There they all lay, dead, near the slough in which they had looked for a green blade of grass — but had found only poison hemlock. Pete came home crying. No doubt his parents felt like crying

[illegible]

too, with their hopes of milk for the family and extra income gone in one day. But Father Tuininga continued to have faith that "the Lord will provide

There were other hardships as well In 1926, while building a hip roof barn, Pete injured his foot rather badly. He was sitting on the roof, [illegible] and chopped right through his boot, severely [illegible] and Joe Baker took him to Westlock with his car On the way, they stopped at the home of the district nurse, who applied a tourniquet The wound healed perfectly

Father Klaas was an idealist and an optimist who was very rarely depressed He usually looked at the bright side and made light of [illegible] more She was often hard-pressed to provide enough food for her large family. As the milk production decreased she would be obliged to add water to the brij in order to have enough to serve everyone Then Klaas would tease her saying, "I see you've been milking the black [illegible] owned)." Sjoerdje, unable to see the humour [illegible] reply, "Ach, I would gladly give [illegible]

Mother Sjoerdje was very thrifty and tried her hand at many things, such as making soap from tallow and syrup from sugar beets. The [illegible] these Sjoerdje made the children look quite [illegible]

The children all walked barefoot until [illegible] booming business, as everyone needed fleece-lined underwear, woolen stockings, felt shoes [illegible] sma's place while Tjibbe was working in [illegible] coal mine in Edmonton. They stayed a week at [illegible] did the chores. One beautiful, crisp Saturday afternoon, Carrie, her week completed, began the walk home At first her feet were cold, but

Sjoerdje, Jack, Bertha, Grace, [illegible]

soon the cold did not seem so bad and she enjoyed the walk. After she was home for a while her mother noticed bloodstains on the freshly-scrubbed wooden floor and wondered where they came from. On investigation, it was found that Carrie's toe was bleeding. Her old shoe had worn out. Her mother had sewn thick soles onto her socks, but these too had worn through, exposing her toe to the freezing cold. Because of her frozen toe, Carrie, then about ten, was unable to go out for six weeks. This was still a happy time for her because the school library had just acquired some books, which Carrie could read without interruption. Best of all, she still passed her grade.

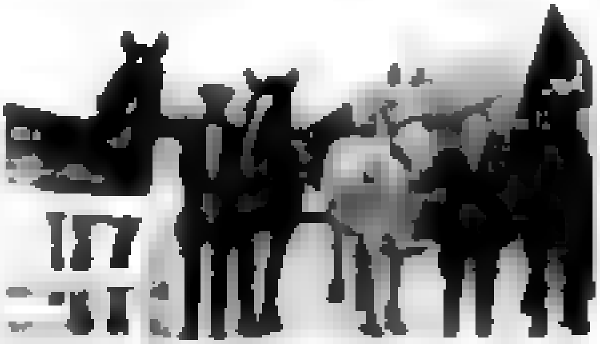
Gertie (Geertje, June 28, 1908) loved dolls, but with fourteen children to provide food and clothing for, the Tuiningas could not afford dolls. Aaltje Baker felt sorry for Gertie and set to work. One day when Gertie came home from school, there in the window sat a cute little rag doll with nose and all, a handmade gift from Aaltje.

At one time, to supplement their income, **Klaas** Tuininga and Siebren Tiemstra bought a small thresher nicknamed the Coffee Mill. In the winter, Klaas and Siebren would go from farm to farm threshing. They would charge by the bag. The acreages were small, so they could thresh for many farmers.

Because Neerlandia was far from sources of supply it was not always possible to get even the necessities. Sometimes the Tuiningas would be unable to light the lamps because they had run out of coal oil. Then they would sit in the dark while Father Klaas would teach the children hymns, holding the hymnbook so the light of the open cook stove door would fall on the page. Klaas and Sjoerdje both enjoyed singing, and in their old age sang many songs, which they had marked in their hymnbook as favourites. Just the same, Sjoerdje was often homesick. She would stand outside at night gazing at the stars and say, "These same stars are shining on *Mem* in Friesland," and that made her feel somehow closer to her mother.

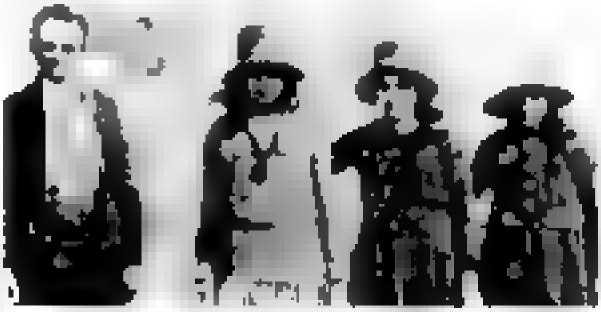
As in most families of Christian Reformed persuasion, it was customary after each meal in the Tuininga household to read one chapter from the Bible, regardless of the length of the chapter. If the chapter was a lengthy one, the children would become increasingly restless. **Dave** (Douwe, 1901) sat opposite the mirror and, as he lost interest in what his father was reading, he would begin making faces at himself in the mirror, much to the amusement of everyone except his parents.

In those early years, there were many



Dave, Jack, [illegible]

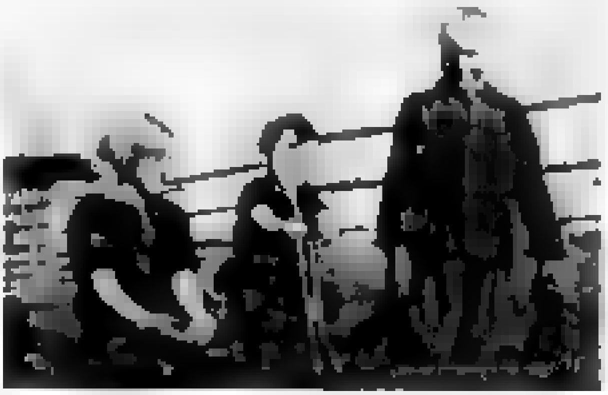
muskrats and weasels, so Jack (Jacobus, March 28, 1907) and Pete did a lot of trapping. From the proceeds of the sale of the pelts in 1923, both bought new suits.



Jack, Sadie, Gerrie, Carrie.

For a time, things went well, prices went up, and in 1924 Klaas could afford a small Fordson tractor. He also had a second-hand Model T Ford. Later, a larger tractor was obtained and used for breaking land. In 1925, the Tuningas moved from their homestead to the NW 27-61-3-5, which Klaas bought from Willem de Groot in order to be closer to the church and school.

Then came the Depression, and it was back to the good old flour, sugar, and oatmeal bags for pillowcases, sheets, dish towels, aprons, and so forth. Sjoerdje was back at soap-making. In addition, she made coffee from roasted barley and starch from raw potatoes. She would grate the potatoes and pour the water off. The residue was left to dry. It was then used to thicken puddings and to starch clothes. She even tried making yeast.



Grace, James (Buddy) Levy, Simon, 1929.

The entertainment, too, was self-made. Flinch was often played with homemade cards. The children had sleigh rides, visited other families to sing and play the harmonica, and played such games as Wink and Spin the Bottle. Pete and Sadie (Sjuke, February 23, 1910) often played their mouth organs together. Beginning in 1927, the girls went to a girls' society on Wednesday afternoons where their older sister Bertha taught hand sewing. Part of the afternoon was spent in Bible study. During the winter season, Young People's Society was held every week. Bible discussions and reading essays on Bible passages were the main activities. The Tuininga youngsters faithfully attended these societies.

Ready for chores. Carrie holding Joyce Muller, 1930.

Life in the new country brought about many changes. The Tuininga family became trilingual: they spoke *Fries*, their mother tongue, at home; Dutch in church and at catechism classes; and English in school.

All of the children married and spent part of their married life in Neerlandia, except the following three. Claus married Beatrice Ritz, and from this union four children were born. At the age of 69, Claus died from a heart attack. Dave married Catherine Ballah and lived in Bowness, Alberta. He and his wife had one daugh-

Grace, Simon, Anna, Cecil, Joe, Carrie, Sadie, Gertie, Jack. Seated: Pete, Sjoerdje, Klaas, Claus

ter, Ruth. In 1949 Dave, Kate, and Ruth moved to Mellowdale, where he died of cancer at the age of 49. Gertie married Herman Muller. They have eight children and live in Richmond, B.C.

Klaas and Sjoerdje both lived to a ripe old age. Sjoerdje had waist-length black hair which she wore in a bun at the back of her head. When she was in her eighties her hair was just as dark as it had been when she was eighteen. Klaas suggested (tongue-in-cheek) that this unusual phenomenon was a result of her having a life with no worries.

First combine in Neerlandia. Klaas, Joe, Jack, Pete.

The Tuiningas were eventually able to repay their fare to their benefactors, although it was not till all the children were married and the land was sold to their son Simon. They finally were able to enjoy some of the material benefits of their years of hard work: a comfortable, warm house, electricity, a car. In 1937 Klaas and his sons Pete, Jack, and Joe bought one of the first combines in the Neerlandia area. Both Klaas and Sjoerdje enjoyed good health until 1959, when they died within a few weeks of each other. Klaas died in May, at the age of 86. His wife followed about six weeks later, at 83 years of age.

Carrie Olthuis

WILLEM AND MANNA (DE GROOT) VAN ARK

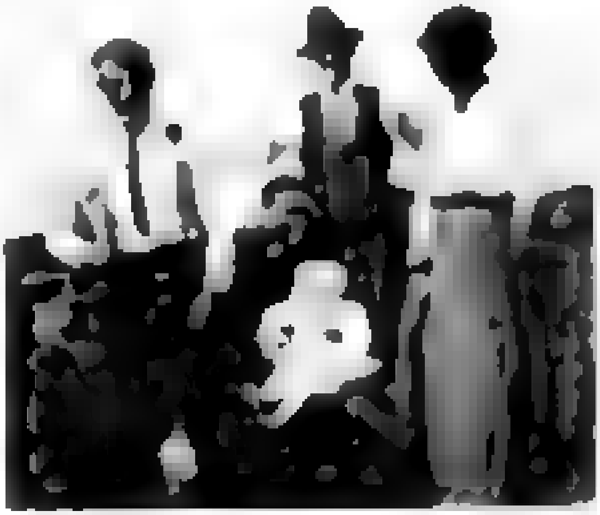
Willem van Ark (c. 1889) had been born in South Holland, the Netherlands, and emigrated from there in 1910. He travelled first to England, then left from Liverpool on May 7 aboard a ship which had been renamed *Canada*. After arriving in Canada, Willem first lived in Ontario for a while, then headed west

In a letter to J. Maurer, Director of the Information Bureau of the Dutch Immigration Society (February 17, 1915), Willem wrote,

"In 1911, I met a number of Hollanders in Edmonton, Alberta, who wanted to take up homesteads. But they did not want to live amongst people of another nationality . . . I went to Canada with the idea of taking up a homestead and so I found a group of people I could join.

The number of people at that time who wanted to take up land was seventeen. In December 1911 we set out to look for land. This was not easy since we needed to find a district where a colony could be established and which was capable of expansion in the future, therefore we needed good land and room in the surrounding area also. We found what we were looking for . . . when we had examined the [illegible] homestead. In the beginning of January, we left [illegible] dig wells, make roads, in short, to prepare to [illegible]

Willem had filed on the SW 15-61-3-5, but on March 6, 1912, he refiled on the SE 33-61-3-5. During the next years he spent some months of the year on the homestead and the rest of the time he worked as a shipping clerk in Edmonton. [illegible] whom he later married. From July 1914 to September [illegible] serving in the Dutch army as a sergeant.



[illegible]

After returning to Canada, Willem moved to the homestead with Manna. During the following years, they had two children: Wim (Willem) and Zus (Hendrika). Willem filed on the NW 21-61-3-5 on August 24, 1916, for his stepbrother **Herbert Vander Helm** who was seventeen at the time. Herbert moved from Amsterdam and lived with the van Arks for a short time before returning to the Netherlands.

Manna was an excellent seamstress and she could make do with very little. The family always looked neat and well dressed. Manna held classes in her home for the schoolgirls to teach them how to embroider. When the congregation bought an organ, Manna served as the church organist. She also started a singing group, and the young people often went to the van Arks in the evening to sing together.

[illegible] land. According to the records he was cropping [illegible] horses. The other improvements consisted of a 16 by 20-foot log house, a log barn, 2 log stables, a 14-foot cribbed well, 1½ miles of two-rail fence, 3½ cleared acres, and 2 brushed acres. These were valued at $845.

Around 1921-22 Willem went to Normal School for a year, then taught in Neerlandia School from 1922-25. He was a strict teacher but he tried to teach the children manners and how to conduct themselves properly. He also tried to beautify the schoolyard by planting flowers and trees.

After Willem quit teaching, the van Arks moved to the Netherlands. By then another daughter, **Mona**, had been born. Willem worked as a C.P.R. agent for many years in the Netherlands. Two more daughters were born to the van Arks there. Later the family moved to Ontario and then to the U.S.A.

PIETER AND HILIGIEN (HEUKERS) VAN DALEN

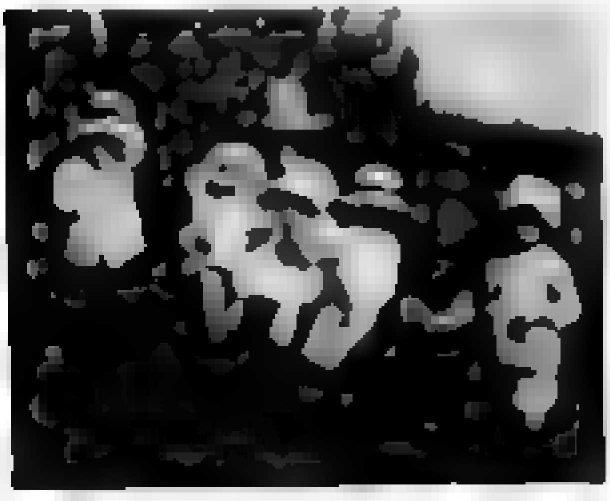
Pieter van Dalen, born January 29, 1845, lived in Leerdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. He made a living by transporting freight along the waterways of the southern part of the province. His cargo was usually sugar beets and turf, which was used for fuel. By 1912 Pieter and Hiligien's son Sikko had already immigrated [illegible] He thought Canada was a good place to live, and sent tickets for his parents to join him. In

June 1912 Pieter, aged 67 Hiligien (February 7 1857), and their children **Martha** (August 16 1883), **Nellie** (Niesje. March 14, 1895), and Bob (Bartel) made the move Daughter **Jennie** (Jantje, August 21, 1888) stayed behind since she was engaged to be married

The van Dalens first lived on Fraser Flats in Edmonton A year later Jennie and her husband, Popko Schuring, also immigrated In 1914 Pieter and Hiligien moved to Neerlandia with Popko and Jennie Martha, Nellie, and Bob stayed in Edmonton to work, although they often came to Neerlandia to visit The van Dalens moved into a one-room log shack close to Popko and Jennie's house, because Hiligien was an invalid and needed Jennie to cook meals for her and Pieter Later, in fact. van Dalen's shack was moved right against Popko and Jen[illegible] the two houses, but put in a door so that each [illegible]

Pieter loved music and singing, and passed [illegible] and Nellie often sang together at the annual Christmas concert and if Bob was visiting on [illegible] the young people's coffee party on Sunday evenings. He was considered one of the best players and his playing was enjoyed by all

In 1918 Martha married Arie Emmerzael of Neerlandia. In September 1921 Nellie married Simon Keyzer, a teacher in Neerlandia at the time. Simon and Nellie later went to the U.S.A where Simon continued teaching



Pete Schuring, Jo Schuring, Pieter, Helen and Annie Emmerzael, Hiligien, Pete Emmerzael, 1923

In the first years on the homestead, Pieter helped Popko in any way he could. He even cleared three acres on the homestead by himself while Popko was working on the prairie By about 1920 Hiligien was not able to walk at all Fortunately she was a tiny woman, making it possible for Jennie or one of the other children to carry her when necessary

When Popko and Jennie left Neerlandia in 1923, the Emmerzaels moved into the Schuring house and Pieter and Hiligien were provided for by Martha. The Emmerzael children, Annie. Peter, and Helen, loved to sit and visit with their grandparents. Pieter chewed tobacco and bought one-half pound of leaf tobacco at a time Annie would take the sticks out of the tobacco for him and put the rest in a container Then Pieter could take the tobacco as he needed it for his *pruimpje*.

Hiligien died February 3, 1929 Later that year Pieter moved with the Emmerzaels to van Ark's house. Though he was eighty-four, he still took his grandchildren for walks occasionally or kept an eye on them when Martha was away. He never lost his love of music and while walking or sitting in his chair would often sing one of the *Psalmen* or other Dutch songs that he knew by heart. Pieter died January 3, 1932

[illegible]

HENRY VAN DEN BURG

Henry (Hendrik) van den Burg was thirty-three years old when he took up the SW 9-62-3-5 in Neerlandia on December 2, 1914 He had been born in Soest, Utrecht, the Netherlands, but had recently lived in Edmonton. On his homestead application he listed his previous occupation as farmer

Henry built a log house on his homestead He agreed to teach the school children of the settlement and began teaching in 1915 The settlers were too poor to pay him a salary, but in exchange the schoolboys were to help him clear land and make fence posts after school and on Saturdays. One time two young fellows came to work after school. They were supposed to cut willow pickets, but instead they spent their time eating a big panful of prunes that Henry had supplied — one of the boys ate the prune pits and all

The teaching arrangement did not provide [illegible] the homestead and in 1916 he went to the U S A to work. Since he had been unable to find a wife here, he did not return to Neerlandia and later moved to Chicago, Illinois.

MARTIN AND ANNA (JANSMA) VAN DER HEIDE

Martin van der Heide, born March 10, 1890 in Ferwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, was the oldest in a family of seven children. When Martin was ten years old, he saw a picture entitled *The Prairies of America*. It showed wild animals galloping through the prairie grass. From that time Martin dreamed of going America and in 1914 he convinced the girl he was courting, Anna (Antje) M. Jansma (January 6, 1890), to go with him. On March 20 they sailed from Rotterdam on the *Noordam*.

Upon landing in New York City, they were told that unmarried couples could not enter the country. It did not take Martin and Anna long to decide what to do they were married the next morning at City Hall with the aid of an interpreter. Later that day they boarded a train for South Dakota. But South Dakota was not the Promised Land they had expected. The country was hilly, bare of trees, and rocky; their sponsor had a poorly-kept farm and their meals were their wages.

When Martin and Anna heard from Anna's [illegible] ton, how well things were going there, they [illegible] odd jobs in Edmonton, they were hired to work for a year for a Wetaskiwin farmer.

The following account of the van der Heides' experiences in Neerlandia is taken from Martin van der Heide's unpublished Dutch autobiography, *Fifty years in Canada and the United States*, written in 1964.

In the spring of 1916 we went to Edmonton where we stayed with friends for a week. We decided that I should go to Neerlandia and, if it appealed to me, to take up a homestead there. [illegible] had to wait for the stage to Dusseldorf. Was it ever cold, the wind was blowing and the snow was drifting. It seemed to me like Siberia. After [illegible] rived and all the passengers piled in. I wrapped myself in some old horse blankets that I found in the bottom of the sleigh, but I could not keep [illegible] night, I bought a pair of overshoes [illegible] Neerlandia, a thirteen-mile trip over very poor roads. Sometimes I had to wade through water and muck but finally I arrived. After spending the night with one of the settlers I started looking for a suitable homestead. After considerable walking I decided on a place at the southwest of the settlement. It had a house and a small barn, both made of logs, about two acres of cleared and broken land, and a dug hole for a well. Also, some fencing had been done. I believe that for this we paid fifty dollars. This seemed cheap enough but the house was built of poplar logs which were so crooked that in places you could see between them to the outside. However we now had a homestead.

Once I was back in Edmonton, my wife and I busied ourselves gathering supplies: house[illegible] a team of horses and a wagon. We loaded [illegible] belongings and pulled out for Neerlandia. The first night we lodged with a farmer near Morinville and the following two nights we stayed in vacant farm houses. On the fourth day we reached Gaele Baker's place where we had difficulty crossing a small creek. At the Bakers' suggestion we spent the night with them. The [illegible] which we did by driving right through it [illegible] the bridge was unsafe. We were only two miles from home but it took us another hour or so to get there over the poor trail, mud holes, and [illegible]

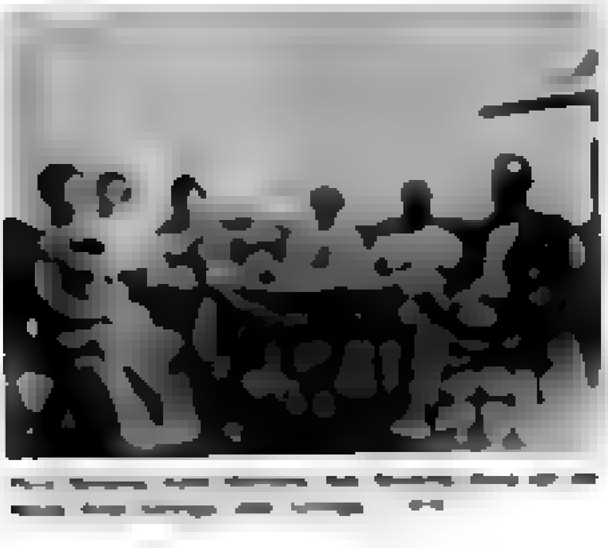
We went to work immediately. There was a good-sized garden plot that we prepared and seeded. Most of the work had to be done with [illegible] and shovel. Although we had a team of horses and a small plow, we had no money to buy more machinery. To make the house a bit [illegible] filled the cracks with a mixture of moss, clay, and cow manure.

On warm days the mosquitoes would attack [illegible] hand free to keep them away. We usually swished a willow branch around otherwise we would be eaten alive.

We could not buy fresh meat, we had to kill [illegible] own or go without. Anna would watch for prairie chickens and shoot them with a .22 rifle. [illegible] the evenings I often went to a small lake nearby and shot a duck or two. To attract the ducks to land, I would scatter a handful of wheat on an open patch of high ground. I also [illegible] moose. But I never had much luck with moose — you need experience to get a moose

[illegible]tlement and a lot of fish came upstream in the spring. Anna and I caught them with a stick with a copper wire loop at the end. We sat [illegible] opposite banks of the creek, each with a stick and hauled them out one after the other. One time we caught so many that we could hardly [illegible] them all home. We cleaned and salted them and hung them up until they were dry enough to store

That first winter we had to store up enough firewood by the house to last us for the next year. The house was very cold in winter. Every- [illegible] pot, in the coffeepot, and in the slop pail. The only place where it did not freeze was in the cellar — a little hole under the house where we stored our vegetables. The logs of the house cracked with the intense cold; it sounded just like a rifle shot. Each night before going to bed I [illegible] wood, but in the morning there was not so much as a spark left. Often when I woke in the morning there would be frost on my mustache. We slept in the loft and when it snowed the snowflakes came through holes in the roofing paper. (A hailstorm the year before our arrival had damaged the roof). We remedied that by stringing up a blanket above our heads



[illegible]

[illegible] strong and always healthy. We were happy in [illegible] scarce, everybody was poor in material things, and a lot of people were in debt. We too ran out of money; since we had no children we decided [illegible] put some of our household goods in the wagon, hitched up the horses, and rode to Edmonton. There we sold the team and went to work in southern Alberta. After harvest we went back to Neerlandia for a while to rest up, then found jobs in Edmonton

[illegible] back to our homestead. How foolish we were — we both had good jobs which we enjoyed, and then to go homesteading. We purchased some groceries, a few pieces of machinery, a wagon, and a team of horses

The horses were supposedly harness-broke. When I tried to hitch them, however they acted a bit nervous. After hitching them I jumped on the wagon and off we went. I tried to hold them back but I could not. Soon they were galloping full-speed down Alberta (118th) [illegible] pass. We went flying all the way along the ave- [illegible] where I managed to steer the horses into a thick cluster of willow bushes. There we came to a stop. The horses were trembling and the sweat was running off their hides. One of the reins had come loose from the bridle. Without it I had no control over the team. I was hoping that they would stand still long enough for me to fasten it, but one of them saw me coming and they were off again — this time without me. They went back the way they had come. After running for about one block they ran into an electric light pole, one on each side, snapping the neck yoke in two. One horse fell on his back into the ditch beside the road and the other stood there shaking. I unhitched them and took them back to where I had bought them. There I traded them in for a gentler team

We then loaded our belongings and started for the homestead once more, camping along the way as before. One night there was a lot of thunder and lightning so it was a good thing we had a roof over our heads. When we were nearly at Neerlandia, we came to a large and deep mud hole which we would be unable to cross with our full load. We unloaded twelve rolls of barbed wire, a plow, and a *duk*[3] and left them in the bush beside the road. With the lighter load we made it through the mud hole and got home.

A day later I returned to pick up the stuff, [illegible] stolen it. I reported the theft to the police but they would not do anything about it unless I pointed out a suspect. This I was unable to do. After a year or so they found the culprit. He was Dutch and as far as I know a member of the church. He had stolen a large quantity of items from many people. For his crime he was [illegible]tenced to two weeks in jail. In my opinion he should have served at least two years, because he had stolen from other poor homesteaders [illegible] equipment. He later moved to the U.S.A.

On our homestead we immediately went to work clearing and breaking the land. Anna helped by burning brush and so on. That summer we made a lot of hay with our friend and neighbour [Joseph Baker]. We each had two horses, a mower, and a hayrake. We camped near the lake in a tent [illegible] we enjoyed it. In the evenings we would play the harmonica and sing together. At the end of the week we would go home. When fall came our neighbour went to Edmonton. He was a machinist by trade and could earn good money there. I hauled his hay [illegible]

The winter of 1919-1920 was a long, severe [illegible]. The snow was very high. I used four horses to haul the hay through the deep snow. Often I had to guess where the road was, be[illegible] than once I upset the load and then I had to reload again. While hauling hay, I noticed some trappers on the lake. I talked to them and found out some things about trapping. They told me that muskrat skins brought a good price. This looked interesting to me, and even though I had never trapped before I decided to give it a try.

I bought two traps which I put out while I was hauling the hay. To my surprise, the next morning I had two muskrats. Although I had never done this job before, I skinned them and tacked the skins to a stretcher. After a few days I sold them to a fur dealer for three-and-a-half dollars per skin. This was the easiest money I had ever made! For some time after that I caught two muskrats per day except, of course, on Sunday. That meant seven dollars a day. That was better than hauling hay or any other [illegible] money before. In all I caught between $150 and $200 worth. Unfortunately it did not last long, since the lake was rapidly becoming trapped out.

Things looked promising. Cattle were high-[illegible] stock, and plenty of hay to feed them. Quite a few farmers from across the lake wanted to buy hay, and I could have asked almost any price, but because I was in partnership with my neighbour and we needed the hay for our own cattle I could not sell it. Then followed the hard winter. One or two of our cows died and the few skinny ones that remained were not worth much. Besides this the price of cattle had dropped considerably. We had worked for practically nothing, making the hay in the summer, hauling it home, and feeding it to some cows which were not worth much anymore. The little trapping I did brought more money than all the hay and cows.

In March a neighbour asked if I would go to Westlock with his son, who wanted to file on a homestead at the Land Titles Office there. (He didn't want his son, who was eighteen years old, to go by himself.) He suggested that we go on horseback using his horses. I was never keen on horseback riding, but I liked to do him favours because he was a nice old man. He in turn, would do anything for me. Early one morning we started off riding bareback and carrying sandwiches to save on meals. Sometimes we would get off and walk a mile or two. We arrived in Westlock a little stiff in the legs, but in time for my companion to file on the homestead. The same evening we started out for home again. A few miles out of Westlock we stopped, tied our horses to a fence, fed and watered them, ate a lunch, and afterwards crawled into a haystack. We did not sleep very well because it was a bit chilly; we should have taken blankets along. However we saved ourselves a hotel bill and that compensated somewhat for our hardships. Next day we arrived home stiff and sore. Never again, I promised myself.

The following summer we worked hard putting in a garden, fencing the whole quarter [illegible] son, Henry, was born (September 18, 1920) with only a neighbour lady attending and she stayed for only a few days. However, everything went fine and we were all healthy and happy.

One might get the impression that we had nothing but hard work, hardships, and poverty. This is not the case. We worked hard, but then we had done that in Friesland too. A lot of the work we enjoyed immensely, it was very interesting, always something new, something [illegible] work with pleasure and we always had plenty to eat. Homesteading had an attraction: a person lived close to nature. Making improvements every day gave us satisfaction.

That fall I went to the harvest fields in southern Alberta with two other men. We left at five o'clock in the morning because we had to walk the forty-five miles to Clyde that day in order to catch the train the next morning. If it had not been for a farmer who gave us a lift for eight miles we would not have made it. One of my companions developed blisters on his feet and was limping when we reached Clyde late that evening. The next morning we boarded the train for Edmonton using cheap-rate tickets provided by the Government to encourage people to go to the harvest fields.

We went to Nobleford where I worked at various jobs — stooking for thirty or forty cents an acre, depending on the weight of the crop, threshing, and also digging potatoes for three dollars a day. I came home with three hundred dollars. The cost of living was low so that money would keep us well all winter on our homestead.

On the homestead we now (1920) had about twenty acres of land broken, a quarter section fenced in, a house, a barn, and a hole in the ground for water (it could be called a well), so I applied for title to the land. The Homestead Inspector came out, looked over the land and improvements, and gave his approval. Before this I had applied to become a Canadian cit- [illegible] to come to the Court House in Edmonton. There I was asked a few questions — mostly to see if I could understand enough English to get around in this country. (Soon after that I received my citizenship papers and, on April 14, 1921, the title to the land.)

In 1920 I trapped on a larger scale. That winter I bought twenty-four traps and expanded my territory to include some small lakes nearby and one about three miles west of our place. With a pair of skis that I made out of a log I could slide over the snow. I caught quite a few muskrats and some weasels that winter. I skinned the muskrats right where I caught them to relieve me of the carcasses and to make my load lighter to carry through the bush. To catch a weasel I would hang a carcass or part of it on a willow branch about a foot above the ground and place a small trap directly beneath it. I had thought that I would do much better than the winter before but the prices had dropped considerably. Muskrats were worth only sixty cents each and weasels were only about twenty-five cents so although I had more skins I did not make any more money than the year before — maybe even less.

That winter I shot a young moose, which boosted our winter's meat supply. I think I earned that one, counting the many miles I had hunted for it, it was not easy work.

One day after a heavy snowfall, I was walking on a lake near the shore when suddenly I shot through the ice, down to my neck in icy water and muck. As quickly as I went down I shot up and out again. The temperature was around zero and in no time my clothes were frozen stiff. I was three miles from home with no roads or trails through the muskeg, bush, and windfalls, but I wasted no time and began [illegible] worried about what could happen to me in the wilderness — I could freeze to death and probably no one would ever find me. But the Lord saw fit to bring me back home again and without any ill effects. When I got home I was chilled to the bone and was glad to be near the warm stove that night with my loved ones.

In the spring of 1921 we decided to move to Edmonton. Since we had title to the land we could sell it. We loaded our personal belongings on the wagon and I drove to Edmonton with two men, who rode with me. Anna and Henry followed later. In Edmonton I sold the wagon and one horse. The other horse was of no value so I had to shoot it. We built a house in Edmonton and I found work in a brickyard.

The van der Heides operated a dairy farm at [illegible] their two sons then moved to Prince Rupert and later to Chemainus, B.C. Anna died there in 1962 and Martin in 1974.

Maynard Vander Heide

Some excerpts were also taken from the English version of van der Heide's biography, which was kindly provided by Albert van der Heide of Vanderheide Publishing Company. It is unclear what implement this is.

FRANK VIOLETTE

Frank Violette (May 15, 1894), moved to Neerlandia from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan, with his sister **Hazel** (March 28, 1900) about 1919. Frank took out the NE 23-61-3-5 as a homestead and built a log cabin to live in while they were building a larger house. While living in the cabin Hazel tamed a skunk. Thinking to prevent an accident, she sewed a pair of pants for it. It is not known if the experiment was a success.

Frank's father had died in 1919, and Frank's mother, **Annie Scott**, soon came to the homestead with the rest of the family: **Ruby** (December 17, 1896), **Robert** (January 13, 1898), **Roy and Rosemond** (November 7, 1906), and **Glen** (May 1, 1912). About a year later the log house burned to the ground, and the Violette family moved to the Caughun place, where they lived for two years.

One day Roy and Rosemond were playing on a nearby bridge. Rosemond picked up a rock and dropped it into the water. It fell several feet and landed on the head of a pike. They had fresh fish for supper that night. Social events consisted of activities held at the Christian Reformed Church. At one of these Rosemond met Arthur Terpsma, whom she later married.

After a disagreement with Robert, Frank left and moved to California. Rosemond and Arthur stayed with the family for a short time, and then moved to Edmonton. Hazel married Charlie Wiscarson. The rest of the family left Neerlandia by the mid-twenties, most of them moving to the U.S.A.

Ada Kindlein

JACOB AND WILLEMINA (WONINK) VISSER

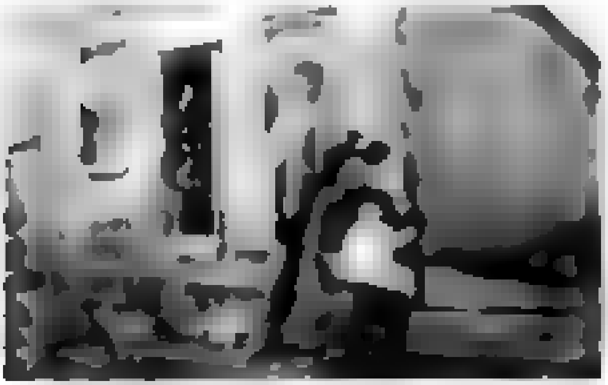
Jacob Visser (born in 1884, Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands) immigrated with his cousin Jan Gelderman in 1911. Jacob took up a homestead in the Darwell area in September 1911 and lived there from November 1911 to May 1912. He had built a log shack on the homestead, but abandoned it later in 1912.

Willemina (Wip) Wonink had been born September 16, 1887, in Oldebroek, Gelderland

Bob Violette's farmyard

Willemina immigrated to Canada with her mother, stepfather (Willem de Groot), and half sister (Manna de Groot), in 1912. Willemina and Jacob had known each other in the Netherlands and they were married June 30, 1912, in Edmonton by Rev. Jongbloed. Their oldest daughter **Gertrude** (Geertje), was born there on November 14, 1913.

Jacob took up the SE 28-61-3-5 as a homestead in Neerlandia on June 8, 1914, and the family moved there in September. Jacob was a carpenter by trade and he soon had a log house built. It was sixteen by twenty-four feet and one of the nicest houses in the settlement. Jacob had peeled all the logs for the house before using them. He later built a ten by fourteen-foot addition to the house.



Edmonton, 1914. Jacob, Willemina holding Gertrude

Two more daughters, **Reika** (Hendrika) **Hermanna** (February 26, 1916) and **Anna** (January 10, 1917) were born in Neerlandia. Willemina had a good sense of humour which stood her in good stead through the difficulties of homesteading. She suffered from hay fever and her health was not good at times, but both she and Jacob were hard workers.

In March 1917, the Visser family left Neerlandia and moved to Burdett, where they again tried farming. Anna died there and three more children were born to Jacob and Willemina. They moved to Portland, Michigan, U.S.A., in 1923. There Jacob again took up his trade of carpenter. The family grew to include three more children. Jacob died in 1941 at the age of fifty-seven of stomach cancer. Willemina died in 1956.

After he had left Neerlandia, Jacob applied for the patent to his homestead (1923). He had broken ten acres and had cropped six. A well had been dug and a log barn and one-and-a-half miles of rail fence had also been put up. Siebren Tiemstra later bought the homestead.

Reika Raglin

LOUIS AND IDA (KAMPNAR) WESTERBAAN

In the winter of 1920 Louis (Lieuwe) and Ida (Itje) Westerbaan, both close to fifty years of age, came to Canada from Kollum, Friesland, the Netherlands. With them came their only child, **Hiltje Maartje**, then thirteen years of age. They first stopped at a farm close to Brandon, Manitoba, where a friend of Louis' lived. From there they went to Monarch-Nobleford, to the Ralph Kooy family (Bertha Kooy was Ida's sister). The bald prairie did not appeal to them at that time, so they went to Neerlandia, where Ida's brother Peter Kampnar and his two daughters were living. They travelled as far as Westlock by train, then to Mellowdale by truck. It was a dark, cold, early winter night in November 1920 when Ted Reitsma met them with a team and sleigh to take them the rest of the way to Uncle Kampnar's place. His two- [illegible] with lots of wood to keep the fire going.

In the spring, the Westerbaans went to live on the SE 27-61-3-5, homestead of Elke Jorritsma, from whom they got an option to buy. Elke was a bachelor then and working in Edmonton. The land was mostly bush, with just a little piece broken. Arthur Terpsma broke a few more acres for them that summer. That was a dreadful job, as it was impossible to use the horses in the heat of the day because of the big, black bull flies. So early morning and late evening were the times to do it.

Hilda Westerbaan went to the one-room school in Neerlandia. She would walk with the Terpsmas (Tena, Norman, and maybe little George) through the bush and then across Mr. and Mrs. Jan Oldegbers' yard, as this shortened the way. As they walked, they carried their lunchpails — three-pound lard pails — which contained bread or, if the bread had not turned out, pancakes for lunch. When Hilda started school, Mr. Keyzer placed her in grade one because she could speak no English. But, even though there was no school during the winter, she was in grade six when she left Neerlandia in August 1921.

Hilda remembers going raspberry picking in Neerlandia with a whole wagonload of youngsters to a low, rather swampy bush near Simon Tiemstra's place. That summer, Mr Tiemstra's father and two brothers, Charley and Ike had come from Friesland. They came over for coffee sometimes, and *Pake* Tiemstra told the Westerbaans that Simon was building a piece onto the house and it was beginning to look like *Salamo's voorhof* (Solomon's courts).

Ida and Louis, about 1910.

The change from life in the Netherlands to the isolation of life in pioneer times was too much for Ida, so the Westerbaans' stay in Neerlandia was short. In August 1921 they left for Edmonton, where they bought an acreage close to town. The ties with Neerlandia never broke. Hilda visited Neerlandia from time to time, staying with the Anema family who, although there were nine in the family, always had room for one more. When the new church was dedicated Hilda was there. She was also there when the Edmonton young people came to Neerlandia by truck for the first time to celebrate the first of July in 1927. That was a memorable occasion because it was the last time she saw her old school chum, Tena Terpsma (then Mrs. Pete Tuininga), a happy wife and mother-to-be. In September her friend died — the one and only victim of the dreaded polio in Neerlandia.

Another thing that cemented the ties with Neerlandia was Hilda's marriage on January 1, 1932, to John Elzinga of Neerlandia. They settled on an acreage in north Edmonton, where they raised five children.

Louis Westerbaan died in Gibbons at the age of 82 in 1951. His wife died in 1966 at the age of 92.

Hilda Elzinga

THOMAS AND ELIZABETH (SCOTT) WILSON
ALBERT SCOTT

In 1882 a baby girl, Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie), was born to the Scotts, an English family living in Ontario. Tragedy was to touch her life many times before she found happiness. First, when she was six years of age, both of her parents died. Lizzie then went to live with her grandmother while her younger brother was adopted, and her four older brothers went to stay at other homes. Only six years later Lizzie's grandmother died, leaving Lizzie homeless again. For a few years after that she worked in various homes.

Then, in the early 1900s, three of her brothers, Albert, George, and Jim Scott, heard the call, "Go west, young man, go west!" Taking Lizzie with them, they headed west. They spent several years on the way, stopping for a while at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, to try ranching. Somewhere along the way, Lizzie married Percy Metcalfe. Brief happiness was hers in those years as three sons were born to her. Soon though, tragedy struck again: both Percy and the youngest son, still a baby, died of pneumonia. After that Lizzie again travelled west with her brothers.

In 1910, the family group arrived in Edmonton. Lizzie and her two remaining children, Harry and Jimmie, stayed in Edmonton that winter while the brothers trapped and looked for land. When they reached the area now known as Neerlandia, the Scotts were impressed with the lush growth, the abundance of game, and the fish leaping out of the waters of Shoal Creek. On May 15, 1911, Lizzie filed on the NE 22-61-3-5 and the NW 23-61-3-5. She received the two north quarters of section 22 as homesteads through Ernest E. Nicholson, a Boer War veteran. He was entitled to 320 acres of land, but transferred the script from his name to Lizzie's. Jim and George did not settle in Neerlandia, but stayed to help Lizzie and Albert get settled and then left for the U.S.A. Although Albert stayed to farm with Lizzie, he did not file on any land.

Being amongst the very first settlers in the district, Lizzie had the pick of the land and she chose one of the most beautiful locations in the whole area. The Shoal Creek, good for fishing and swimming in the summer, ran through most of the land and sported wild strawberries, raspberries, and chokecherries in abundance along its banks. On warm summer evenings one could take lovely walks along the creek, finding berries also on the hillsides.

Lizzie was a crack shot, and shot rabbits, ducks, and partridges for the table. She also caught fish and prepared them for meals.

Only necessities and a few prized possessions could be brought to the wilderness. Lizzie chose to bring a lovely piano which she protected with canvas because of her leaking roof. Although she had never had a piano lesson in her life, Lizzie loved music and played by ear. The piano remained a part of her home as long as she lived. Even the box the piano had been packed in had a special place in the house. It was a huge, sturdy, wooden box, and fit into the end of the pantry. After having shelves built in and doors put on, and receiving a coat of paint, the box became quite an effective cupboard and was the only kitchen cabinet Lizzie had for many years.

Every Monday morning, Jimmie would leave home for school in Freedom, the closest school. He would spend the week with a family in the district and return home on Friday evenings. Because Harry was deaf, he spent three years in Montreal at a school for deaf children. Lizzie grieved at being separated from her handicapped son, and when she heard the stories he told of life at the school, she could bear it no longer. Though she had only three or four years of formal education, she brought Harry home and set about teaching him herself. She did, in fact, teach him to read and write. More-

Threshing from a stack on the [illegible] farm, late fall, 1916. [illegible] over, she learned sign language in order to communicate with him more easily. In later years, however, she wished she had been more resolute and had realized the importance of a good education for Harry.

When Jimmie was 12 years old (1917 or 1918), he got appendicitis. The closest doctor and hospital were in Edmonton and the nearest railway began in Westlock. Albert and Lizzie rushed him, as quickly as they could by team, to catch the train to the city hospital, but it was too late. The appendix had ruptured, and in a few days he was gone. He was buried in an Edmonton cemetery.

Lizzie and her brother were hard-working and ambitious: all three quarters were proved up by 1917. Then Albert and Jim, who had returned to Neerlandia for a short time, built a fairly large frame house and barn on the NE 22-61-3-5. Being on the route taken by the men working for Chisholm Lumber Company, the home served as a stopping place for men and horses on their trips to and from the camp.

Around 1918 Tom (Thomas) Alex Wilson, the camp superintendent, began stopping in, and a romance began. Tom and Lizzie were married in 1920.

Tom loved his work and continued with it until he retired in 1936. Born in Minnesota, U.S.A., in 1872, he had learned the logging trade while working in Oregon. Logging was winter work except for two or three weeks in the summer when Tom cruised timber for the next winter's logging. More than knowing the trade, however, he knew how to manage men. Though easy-going in his personal relationships, he had high expectations of the men on the job, and was able to get their co-operation. With these skills he was a valuable employee at the Chisholm camp, and is often credited with its success. Tom was always ready to help others. Through the years he lent small sums of money to many people. If they did not pay him back, he made no attempt to collect it.

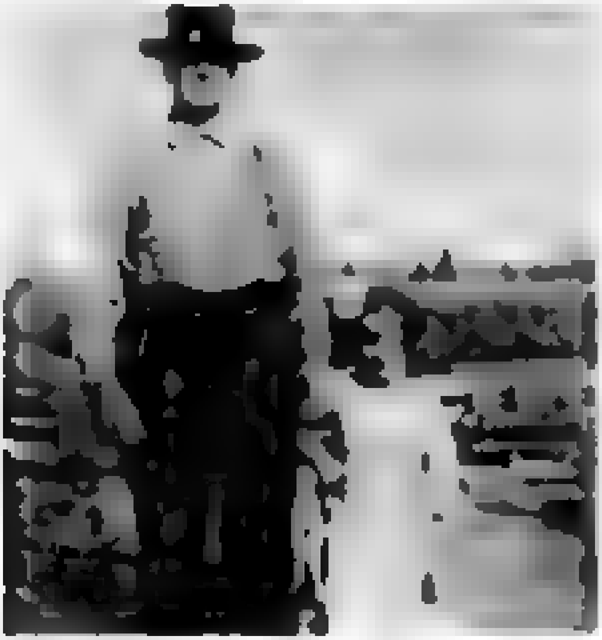
In the early years, Tom drove a matched team of black driving horses, Dan and Charley. It was a sight to behold when Tom came by in his cutter, with his slim, long-legged beauties kicking up the snow as they trotted along. Later Tom gave up the horses for the more modern conveyance, the car. One day, so the story goes, Tom went to Barrhead and bought a brand new car. On the way home, he rolled the car at the two-mile corner. He picked himself up, went back to Barrhead, and bought another.

The outdoors had more appeal for Lizzie

Mallone house built c. 1917

than the tasks in the house did so she often had help in the kitchen. Among those who helped her were Mrs. John Howey, Carrie Mast, and the Andries Wierenga girls. At the best of times, the English-speaking Wilsons and their Dutch neighbours had a hard time understanding each other, but when the Wierengas spoke their dialect, *Gronings*, it was almost impossible. Somehow Lizzie got them to understand that she would hire the girls, and so Trientje came to work. Lizzie never could twist her tongue around that name; the closest she could get was "Treats", and Treats she remained to Lizzie.

Lizzie was a resourceful woman and learned to nurse both men and beast. On the Wilson farm, it was Lizzie who doctored the sick animals. Or when the neighbouring bachelors were sick, Lizzie would bring over a pot of soup, a mustard plaster, and any other remedies she considered necessary. When one of these men was too sick to look after himself, Lizzie took him home to stay with her family. She also helped Everdina Mast, whom she thought was too frail to bear all the children she did.



Albert Scott, Doris, [illegible]

When after two years of marriage Tom and Lizzie had no children, they wondered if Lizzie might be too old to have a baby. Therefore, in 1922 they adopted a little two-year old girl, whom they named Doris. [illegible] Surprisingly, in 1925, at the age of 43, Lizzie gave birth to a son, Thomas, and in [illegible] to a daughter, Mary. Then, in 1929, Tom took the NE 23-61-3-5 as a homestead. It was proved up in 1936.

For years the Wilsons had the only telephone in the district. The phone, which was installed in 19[illegible], was called Shoal Creek, after the creek on which they lived. Doris recalls the event of a change in the name.

"After a time a man came from the telephone company informing us of the phone being put in the Shoal Creek store east of us and that they would be claiming our name for theirs. He asked Uncle Albert if he had a choice of a name for our phone. Jokingly Uncle Albert said, 'Call it Tipperary.' The man seemed to think that was fine. Uncle Albert laughed and said, 'I was just joking. You wouldn't want that for a name.'

'Sure, why not?' said the man. That's the name our phone went by till my folks left Neerlandia in 1942."

Albert married Tena Cole, a widow from Westlock, in 1932. In 1934 they moved to Breton, Alberta, where they farmed for several years.

Since the Wilsons lived three miles from school, Lizzie did not let Doris start attending school until she was seven years old. She walked with the Tiemstras and the Masts, who lived along the same road. Doris loved school and most of her teachers. She reminisces about her school life in this way:

"I remember how some of us grade threes cried when Miss Rae announced that she was leaving to get married. "

[illegible] seeing there was only one other English-speaking family in the district at that time (the Howeys), [illegible] did feel a bit in the minority. I was elated when some of the girls said they would teach me to speak Dutch. My joy lasted only a few days when Mr. [illegible] announced there would be no language spoken in the schoolyard except English. I never did learn to speak or understand much Dutch."

Doris quit school in grade nine and helped her folks at home until she was twenty-one. Lizzie, an outspoken woman, was strict with her children, and she carefully screened Doris' suitors. Finally Archie Lindquist of Mellowdale

John Howey, Tom holding Thomas, Lizzie (turned sideways) holding Mary, Bob Howey, Mrs. Cole, ?, Albert Scott, Ethel Howey, Archie Lindquist, Mr. Cole, Neil Lindquist, Harry. Children: Fred Cole, Doris, Bertha and Ethel Howey, Carl Cole standing, Archie Howey sitting, 1927

Thomas, Doris, Mary, 1929

passed the test and Doris married him in 1941. They farmed with Archie's brother Neil for three years, before moving to Hythe, Alberta, in 1944. Archie and Doris have six children. Archie died in 1959, but Doris and the children continued living on the farm. She remarried in 1967. Her second husband, Harold James, died in 1978.

Because Tom was in poor health, he and Lizzie, with their children Harry, Thomas, and Mary, moved to Penticton, British Columbia, in 1942. Tom died in 1943, at 71 years of age. Harry died in 1965, at 62 years of age. Lizzie then came back to Edmonton to be near Thomas. She died in 1971 at 89 years of age. Mary lived with her family in Hope, British Columbia, till she died in 1981. She had four children. Thomas and his wife and family of three children live in Edmonton.

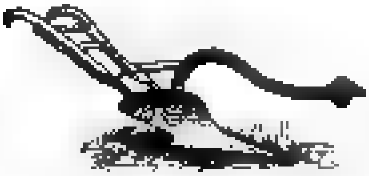
Doris James

GEORGE WING

George Wing (c. 1878) was born in Elgin County, Ontario. On May 13, 1911, he filed on the SE 27-61-3-5 in what was later called Neerlandia. On his homestead application he listed his occupation as carpenter and his last place of residence as Vancouver. George built a log house on his land in October 1911 and began living there around the same time.

On the quarter next to George's lived his friend George Caughlin. They did a lot of trapping and hunting in the area. George also spent some time working on his land so that by the time he received his patent in 1915 he was cropping fifteen acres, had built a log barn, dug a well, and put up one-and-a-half miles of fencing. The only animal he kept was a horse.

George often visited Siebren Tiemstra and sold his quarter to him during the 1920s. He eventually moved back to Ontario.



Living conditions changed for pioneer youngsters who came to Neerlandia. A studio photo of Minnie and George Baker, taken in Massachusetts, U.S.A.

1921-1945

1921-1945

From 1921 to 1945 the immigration to Neerlandia slowed. There **were** *several young single men who came, stayed and married Neerlandia girls. There were a few families who came, notable among them a clan from Uithuizen, Groningen the Peters and the three Wierenga families — with a grand total of thirty-five children.*

But this time was mainly one of the pioneer children attaining adulthood and marrying those they had known all their lives or, of course, the Wierengas. Their stories comprise this section

THE HISTORY AND MEMOIRS OF GEORGE ANEMA

I was born on the 20th day of January, 1919 in the log house built by my father on the NW 35-61-4-5. My father acquired this homestead in 1913, when he also built the first log house with a sod roof with little slope on it. If it rained for one day the water seeped through the sods for three days. After the second house was built, the first one was made into a cow barn. The homestead was one mile east of Neerlandia and was known for a long time as Anema's Corner.

I have been told that the winter of 1919 was a long, cold, hard winter with a lot of snow. If the saying is true that only the fittest survive, I must have been quite fit because I am still here today. However, I had a lot of help to survive that first cold winter. I had a very loving mother and three loving older sisters, Della, Susie and Catherine. Dad had hoped for a son but, every time my mother had a baby, it was a girl until I came along, so all the attention I got from the family made survival easy for me.

My dad often thought if he could get a few sons they would soon be able to help him with a lot of all this work. His stepbrother, Simon Tiemstra, had two strong boys, Menne Nanninga already had five boys, and Henry Kippers had three boys; he himself had three daughters, but he kept trying, and then I came along. After me, my parents had three more girls, Annie, Frances, and Sophie. That put me smack in the middle of a family of six sisters. I was the luckiest kid in the world, even though I have often wished I had a brother.

The old cast-iron stove in the living room had to be kept going steady because those log houses were far from energy-efficient. In the fall the cracks between the logs had to be chinked with either moss, clay, or cow manure, but this stuff dried out and shrank some in the cold dry air and the cold would seep in through the cracks. The ceiling, or rather the upstairs floor, was of a single layer of shiplap boards and, since heat rises, it was often warmer upstairs than downstairs. There was no insulation under the roof, so a lot of heat escaped through the roof. The heat escaping through the roof would melt the snow on it and that would freeze again as it ran off the eaves, forming icicles three or four feet long.

Those long, cold winters were hard on man and beast, and, I am sure, even more hard on a woman. Imagine trying to haul a load of hay or firewood on a sleigh with a team of horses through four feet of loose snow. The horses could hardly walk through that much snow, let alone pull a sleigh through it.

There was a good supply of dry tamarack trees for firewood in those days, but they had to be cut into blocks by hand with a crosscut saw, and split before they could be put in the stove. Many evenings after supper my dad and mother would go out and saw another day's supply of firewood.

I have only happy recollections of my childhood and youth. I can't remember ever being hungry or cold or miserable. There was no competition with peers for toys, clothes, or money to spend because none of my friends had any more or less than I did. And there wasn't much time to get bored because there was always wood to bring in and feeding to be done, and to bring home for milking in the summer, and some time for play in the evenings.

Before the railway was brought into Barrhead, the grain and produce the farmers sold had to be brought to Westlock. The return trip to Westlock took two days by horse and wagon or sleigh if it was in the winter. There was a stage passenger service, but that only went as far as Dusseldorf.

In 1925, when I was six years old, my father had a pretty good crop. He had a load of wheat to sell at the elevator in Westlock. My uncle Herman [illegible] also had grain to sell, and they agreed to both go on the same day so they could travel together. I asked my dad if I could go along. His first thought was I was too small to make that long trip in the cold weather. After a bit of coaxing, he finally agreed to take me. After all, I was the son of the farmer and the experience would be good for me. He thought in a few years I would be big enough to do these sorts of things on the farm and he thought my sisters might take care of the farm without my help. The big day for me soon came and we started off at five o'clock in the morning. We took along enough sandwiches to last for two days, feed for the horses, and blankets for the night. We could not afford a hotel room so we were going to sleep on the floor in the office of the livery barn in Westlock. It was a cold day and in order to keep warm and to keep the blood going, I think we walked more than half the way behind the sleigh. At [illegible] we stopped to feed and water the horses and we went inside to get warmed up. There we ate some frozen sandwiches and got a hot cup of coffee. We got to Westlock in time to sell and unload the grain before the elevator closed for the day. Then we put the horses in the livery barn and got our blankets into the office to warm up before we crawled under them for the night.

Then Uncle Herman took me on a night seeing tour of Westlock. I heard a rumbling noise followed by a loud whistle, and asked what that was. Uncle Herman said, "That was the train. I'll show you what it looks like." He took me to the station where the train had stopped, and took me inside to show me the rows of beautiful seats in the passenger car. What an experience for a six-year-old from Neerlandia! I had crossed the big Pembina River on a bridge, I had seen the big grain elevators that reached way up into the sky, the big stores in Westlock where you could buy anything your heart desired if you had the money, and I had seen a train with a giant steam engine pulling all those cars. I really had a story to tell when I got home the next day.

My first teacher in school was Bill van Ark. I can also remember Miss Thelma Hare, who later became Mrs. [illegible]. My grade five teacher was Mr. McKitrick. He was a bachelor about fifty years old and he boarded with our minister, Rev. H. Van [illegible]. We had a two-room school at that time. The Junior room had grades one to four, and the Senior had grades five to nine.

Mr. McKitrick was not the best for keeping his classes disciplined, and we soon learned that we could get away with a bit of mischief without his noticing, and we could break a lot of rules without getting punished. If he thought we needed punishment he didn't have the heart to carry it out, so he just got more and more frustrated with us — but we didn't worry about that.

It really is amazing how a group of kids, even Christian Reformed kids who have been taught to be responsible for their actions at home, in church, and at school, and had always lived in a very strict and conservative way like we did in Neerlandia, could find so many ways to totally frustrate a teacher who could not keep discipline. It starts quite innocently, and once kids know they can get away with small things, they soon want to try it with bigger or worse things. It snowballs, and in a matter of five or six months a classroom becomes chaos.

We had a pencil sharpener tied to the wall of the school, and were taught by former teachers to raise our hand, and ask, "Please, may I sharpen my pencil?" Old Mac, as we had nicknamed him, said, "You may sharpen your pencils without asking as long as you go one at a time." It didn't take long until some kids brought pockets full of sticks along to grind up in that pencil sharpener, and it was going steady all day long. He applied the same rule to going out to the toilet: we could go without asking, but one at a time. It didn't take long until someone went out and didn't come back, so another would go to see what became of him, and sometimes five or six would go out and stay out until recess or noon hour and Old Mac would never miss them.

Old Mac used a series of cards with arithmetic problems for us to do. We had to take a card from his desk, and work out the problems in our scribbler. When we were finished, we had to exchange workbooks with our desk mate (we had double desks in those days). Then we would pick up another card that had the correct answers and we had to correct each other's work. A few days later my desk mate had his work for the day all done in no time and I was still working on my second problem. I asked him how he got finished so soon, and he said, "Simple. I have the answer card here and I am all finished and a hundred percent correct." After that my hardest subject, arithmetic, was very easy to do, and it was a long time before Mr. McKitrick realized what we were doing.

For history we had to read from our textbooks and then Mr. McKitrick would have us tell him in story form what we had read, for example: "Marco Polo walked across Europe, and from Asia to China . . . ." Then one day he said, "I am going to do something new. I will take two classes at the same time. I will teach grade nine literature, and grade five will line up against the opposite wall and tell me your history stories." He seemed quite absorbed in the grade nine literature, and the opposite wall was about forty feet away. John Ingwersen started off, "Mr. McKitrick walked across Europe and Asia to China . . . ." and down the line all six of us had a story about Old Mac. When we told him we were finished he said, "See, I told you I could take two classes at the same time."

In those days, the quarter section on which the school is built had not been cleared yet except for a few acres on the south side. One beautiful fall day Old Mac took us into the woods for a nature hike. He was going to show us how things were getting ready for the winter. The grass was now brown and dead looking, the leaves were changing colour and snow had already fallen, and the rabbits were starting to turn white. A group of us boys had had enough of his lectures by then, so we started running deeper into the woods. He told us to come back but we kept going, and he could not keep up with us. So a frustrated Mr. McKitrick went back to school with about half of his pupils who felt sorry for him. When we came back to school much later we had thought out a nice story to tell him which he accepted as truth, and we were also forgiven.

About a week later the weather was still beautiful, and our group of boys were ready for another nature hike, but without the teacher. At noon hour we took off into the woods. We returned shortly before 3:30 p.m. and were confronted by a very angry Mr. McKitrick. We had to stay in after school and were asked where we had been and what we had done. As I was one of the first to be asked, I said that we were on a nature hike finding things getting ready for winter. This seemed to make sense to him, so the rest of the boys all gave him the same line. He made us write an essay on what we had seen and, after reading them, he said he would keep them as long as he lived to remember us by and we could go.

In those days Rev. Van Der Woude came to school every Tuesday after the last recess to teach us catechism. The weather was still beautiful and school was dull, and the woods were calling us again. We decided to go one more time before the weather changed, so off we went again but we forgot that it was Tuesday. When we returned late that afternoon the Rev. Van Der Woude was waiting for us, and there were no explanations to be made or excuses to write. After he got finished blasting us, and he knew how to do that, our parents were notified, and we got another blast from them. Result? No more nature hikes.

Still, confrontations with the teacher continued. If he made a rule one day, we would break it the next, and he became so frustrated he would break down and cry, poor guy, and even that did not impress us very much. Finally our parents and the school board decided enough was enough. Obviously we were not learning much and for the best of all, Old Mac better go.

One morning a man came riding over the school yard on a big motorcycle. He went into school and took his place behind the teacher's desk. His name was John M. Dickson. He made quite an impression on us boys. Then he made his inaugural speech. He said that he had been told we were not very well behaved kids, but he said, "I think we will get along fine. Just in case we have problems I have brought this persuader." He reached into his drawer and out came a rubber belt strap about two inches wide and eighteen inches long. "But," he said, "I don't think I will have to use it very often." It is amazing how fast a bunch of bad guys can change into a bunch of good guys again just by the presence of a new teacher who said, "You may try, but you won't get away with it." His prediction came true; a few were punished once, but they made sure it didn't happen again. He started us back at the beginning of the course and at the end of June almost everyone passed the exams. Mr. Dickson did not feel at home in the social environment of Neerlandia, so he did not stay long.

Then we got Mr. J. R. Long, and his wife who had taught here

Jenner. They stayed a few years, and then we got Mr. A. C. Ashers who stayed around for a long time, although not all the time as a teacher. Mr. Ashers loved sports, and he loved to be on the winning side.

One day a man came up our driveway just as we were going to have our noon meal. In those days anyone who came along at mealtime was invited to the table — that was the way of the frontier. There was no place where anyone could buy food and a person had to eat, so a meal was always shared with a wayfaring stranger, and there always seemed to be enough to go around. This man said he was a Syrian. I don't know where he came from or where he was going, but it did have me puzzled. I had heard my dad read from the Old Testament that the Syrians had made war with Israel, and some of them were very brutal. With my eight-year-old mind I just couldn't figure out how a Syrian could stray all the way from his homeland, walk into the middle of the promised land, and sit down at our table for a meal.

Mr. Obleghern lived on the homestead across the corner from our place. He was one of the oldest pioneers. When he died, Jack Ohlhue bought the homestead. Mr. Ohlhue had four sons, John, Bill, Fred, and George, and three daughters, Eva, Carrie, and Ann.

George was a bit older than I was, and we used to walk to and from school together. He was nicknamed Slim. He was tall, thin, and tough as rawhide. On the way home from school we would sometimes go through the woods to shoot rabbits with our slingshots. Slingshots were quite a fad in those days, and some kids, including Slim and myself, sometimes used them to shoot insulators off the telephone poles. This went on for some time until it affected the telephone service, and one day a Mountie walked into school. He said that he didn't know who had been doing this, but he was quite sure the guilty parties were in that room. He told us that this was breaking the law, and then told us what would be done to lawbreakers if this continued. That was the first time most of us had ever seen a policeman and we had no desire to see him again, so after that the insulators stayed on the poles.

In those days rabbits multiplied and decreased in cycles of about seven years. For a few years you would hardly see a rabbit. Then every year there would be more until at the height of the cycle they almost became a plague. They ate the bark off of most young poplar saplings and if anything was left in the garden by the first snowfall it was eaten in no time. They dug holes into the sides of feed stacks in the barnyard. On moonlit evenings we would go out to the feed stacks and kill them with clubs. Toward the end of the cycle they seemed to get a disease of some sort and they would die off, and the rebuilding cycle would start again.

Killing rabbits with slingshots wasn't too satisfactory and I wished I had a .22 rifle. There was one problem, though. A rifle cost money, and we didn't have any money. Still, if I had one I could shoot rabbits, grouse, and prairie chickens, which were all quite plentiful, and I could even shoot squirrels and sell the pelts. I talked this over with Slim, and one day on the way home from school we concocted a plan. We could trap weasels and squirrels that winter, sell the pelts in the spring, and have enough money to buy a new

rifle and enough shells to last for a year. Slim said squirrel pelts were worth about thirty-five cents and weasels were worth about a dollar-fifty, maybe even two dollars for an extra good one. Slim would teach me how to skin these animals, and how to make a stretcher board to dry the pelts on.

Slim had learned all these tricks from his brother Bill. I thought if Slim had been taught by Bill, he should be able to write a book about it. Bill was one of the best hunters in the country. I had heard he kept the family supplied with moose meat. I had seen a live young coyote chained to a kennel on their yard that Bill had taken live out of a trap and had taken home without getting himself all chewed up by the animal. And Bill made scads of money every spring trapping muskrats.

I was confident that with Slim as a trapping partner, my money problems would soon be solved. When I told my dad about my new venture he was not too enthusiastic about it. If I would go trapping every day after school, I wouldn't have time to help him with the feeding, and he wasn't about to give that up. I finally came up with a solution: on Saturdays I had to take the cows to the muskeg for water anyway — if I would do this on horseback, I could quickly go along my traps and be back about the same time the cows were back. He consented to this and even bought me six new traps.

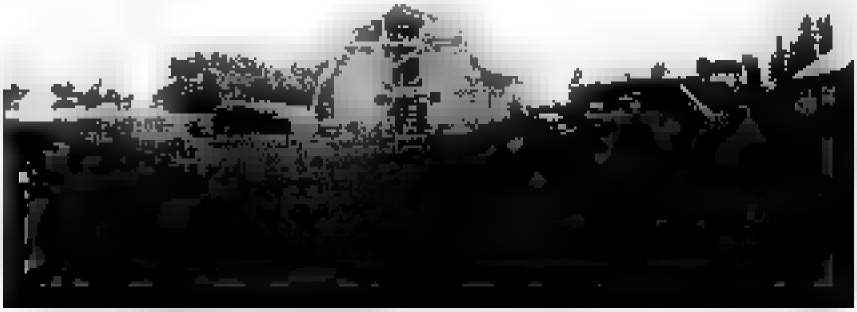
		No. 1 Ex. Large Fancy	No. 1 Large Extra to Average	No. 1 Medium Extra to Average	No. 1 Small Extra to Average
LYNX	Ordinary	$60.00 to 50.00	$50.00 to 45.00	$45.00 to 35.00	$35.00 to 20.00
MINK	Dark	35.00 to 30.00	30.00 to 25.00	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 15.00
	Brown	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 17.50	17.50 to 15.00	15.00 to 12.50
	Pale	20.00 to 17.50	17.50 to 15.00	15.00 to 12.50	12.50 to 10.00
Timber Wolf		50.00 to 45.00	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 25.00	20.00 to 15.00
COYOTE		30.00 to 25.00	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 17.50	17.50 to 10.00
MUSKRAT	Winter	3.00 to 2.60	2.60 to 2.20	2.20 to 1.80	1.80 to 1.00
OTTER	Black	55.00 to 50.00	45.00 to 40.00	35.00 to 30.00	25.00 to 20.00
	Brown	50.00 to 45.00	35.00 to 30.00	27.00 to 22.00	20.00 to 17.50
	Pale	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 25.00	22.50 to 20.00	17.50 to 15.00
SKUNK	Black	6.50 to 6.00	6.00 to 5.00	5.00 to 4.00	4.00 to 3.00
	Short	5.50 to 5.00	5.00 to 4.50	4.00 to 3.50	3.00 to 2.00
	Narrow	4.75 to 4.25	4.25 to 3.75	3.75 to 2.75	2.75 to 2.00
	Broad	3.00 to 2.75	2.75 to 2.25	2.25 to 1.75	1.75 to 1.00
MARTEN	Dark-Heavy	100.00 to 75.00	75.00 to 60.00	60.00 to 50.00	35.00 to 25.00
	Brown-Hvy	75.00 to 60.00	60.00 to 50.00	45.00 to 35.00	25.00 to 20.00
	Pale	50.00 to 40.00	40.00 to 30.00	30.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 12.00
BEAVER		50.00 to 40.00	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 15.00
FISHER	Dark		90.00 to 85.00	75.00 to 100.00	100.00 to 150.00
	Pale		50.00 to 45.00	40.00 to 30.00	50.00 to 40.00

The fur buyers in Edmonton sent out price lists during the winter, and every time a new one came out Slim told me prices were going up, and we should make pretty good. When spring came the first year, our fur parcel wasn't that big, and after splitting 50-50 with Slim I didn't have enough saved to buy my new rifle. So I had to save my money and try again next year. When I was ten I had enough saved to buy my rifle and I was the proudest ten-year-old in Neerlandia.

When the fur price lists came by mail, they also listed black cat pelts for about eighty cents. In March the tomcats would come to visit the neighbours' barnyards to see if they could get a love affair

going for a few days with the neighbours' pussycats. If a nice black tom came around, he didn't always live to go back home, but went to Edmonton in my fur parcel.

My dad and our neighbour Mr. John Gelderman used to help each other castrate pigs. In those days nobody was paid for helping a neighbour. They just helped each other for anything that help was needed for, and never kept track of a few hours more or less. When I was eleven or twelve years old, my dad thought I was big enough to help him with the castrating, and then he would not have to go to help John Gelderman any more. When we had finished castrating our pigs, he said, "Now you better go to Gelderman and help him do his." So off I went to the neighbour's. I told him my dad had said I should help him castrate his pigs. He looked at me as if he was thinking, "You snot kid, do you really think you can do that?" I told him I had just finished helping my dad do ours so I guess he thought, "It has to be done, and John Anema isn't coming, so we better give it a try." He must have been satisfied with my assistance, because when we were finished with the pigs he said, "Now we better do the cats. They have a habit of running away at this time of the year and sometimes they don't come back." I noticed he had two nice black tomcats and I thought, "Too bad, there won't be any black cat pelts in my fur bundle this year." He must have been satisfied with my assistance with the cats too, because then he said, "Now we better do the dog." When the dog was done, I thought, "I wonder who is going to be next?" but he said, "That's all for today."



Toward the end of September 1930 a man came walking up to our driveway. When he was asked to come in he told my parents that his name was Joe Slagboom. He had worked in the harvest in Nobleford and as harvest was finished there, he said he would like to work at our place that winter for his board. My father had built a new barn that summer which was not yet completed, and Slagboom said he was a handyman, so he could help with that. My father also wanted to cut some tamarack logs that winter to have sawn into boards at Menne Nanninga's place, who had a sawmill at that time. He needed these boards for the floor in the new barn. My parents discussed this situation. They thought there was enough food in the larder to feed an extra man, and it would be very handy to have a handyman around for the winter, so he stayed until the next spring.

Joe Hagboom wasn't rolling in wealth either, so he tried different ways to make a few dollars. He tried growing mushrooms. John and Raymond Visser had a root house on their farm and he got permission from them to use that for his mushroom project. I guess the temperature and humidity were not right in that root house because I never saw a mushroom.

Joe also did a little trapping on the side, and I'm not sure he didn't rob my traps once in a while. He also talked me into selling him my furs for about half their value. On one of the first warm days in February he came onto a skunk track. I guess hunger drove it out of its den in search of some food. Well, he caught that skunk, and managed to kill it without getting himself sprayed, so he took it home and started skinning. He had not had skinning lessons from Sam, and he severed the tube that goes from the scent sac to the outlet. He had the skunk lying on his lap when he did this and the terrible stuff ran over his clothes, thighs, and knees, and the poor guy had tears in his eyes, but he kept on skinning. Can you imagine having to sit beside him to eat for the next two weeks?

The Rawleigh man also played a big part in the early days. He made his rounds in summer with a team of horses and a covered spring wagon and in winter with a covered box on a sleigh. He often stayed at our place overnight when he was in the neighbourhood. At that time the Rawleigh man was like a travelling store. His ointment was good for chaps, burns, colds, dry skin, and everything else. Man and Beast Salve was the best for sores on animals, wounds, and sore teats on cows, and Rawleigh's Liniment was a cure-all for colds, congestion, stomach ache, and even depression. It was forty-eight percent alcohol, and was used as directed on the label — one teaspoonful in a cup of hot water. We were told that people in a nearby community made and drank moonshine, and some peddled their rot gut moonshine at their local dances. In Neerlandia no one would think of making or drinking that stuff, but I don't think there was a house that didn't have Rawleigh's Liniment.

During the first years, the homesteaders didn't have enough money to buy barb wire to put a fence around all their holdings, so they fenced the land they had seeded to crops to keep the cattle out. All the rest of the land was open range, and cattle roamed to wherever the pastures were greenest and best tasting. The farmers put bells around the necks of their cows and horses so they could hear the bells when they went to bring them home, and thus be able to find them. We had a saddle horse or cow pony named Maggie. Maggie was a wonderful pony. She was kept at home in a small pasture and was used every day in the summer to bring home the cows or horses. By the time I was old enough to get the cows, my father had leased the quarter section north of the homestead as a grazing lease for two cents an acre. This had been fenced at that time, so I never went farther than a mile to get the cows. I hardly had to drive Maggie. She would hear the bells before I would and round the cows up. If one strayed off to the side, all I had to do was to touch the rein and she would get after the straggler, giving it a good nip on the rump.

I never owned a bicycle, but I sure made many, many miles on Maggie. I am sure she could go from zero to thirty miles per hour in five seconds. I never lost a race on Maggie. She had only one fault. She would shy away from some imaginary object and jump sideways so fast that the rider would be on the ground beside her in an instant. She jumped from underneath my sister Della once. Della got her foot caught in the saddle stirrup, and was dragged along for some distance before Maggie stopped. As a result, Della's arm was dislocated. She had to be brought to a doctor in Westlock to get her arm-joint put back into its socket.

[illegible], George, c. 1929

Some of the early pioneers came to the homestead by ox team, but I can hardly recollect seeing a team of oxen pulling a wagon. R. J. and J. R. de Vries picked up the cream and other produce along their road every Monday morning for Fisher's truck. They did this with a team of horses and a wagon. One of the horses died so they were in big trouble. They had planned not to buy a pickup for a few years yet, and horses were on the decline at that time and not cheap to buy, so what to do now? After considering the matter for some time they came up with an idea. Why not hitch the bull to the wagon beside the horse? They broke the bull to pull and believe it or not, next Monday morning, R. J. de Vries drove into Neerlandia with a horse and bull pulling the wagon! And that's no bull.

One day when I was twelve years old, I saw a car go past our place. Cars didn't come by very often in those days; people who came by in cars were usually inspectors from the Department of Lands in Edmonton to check on someone who had applied to prove up his homestead. A short time after the car went by, I saw a man walking down the road toward our place, and I knew it was the inspector. His car was stuck in a mud hole and could we pull it out? We had a team of horses harnessed in the barn, and I took them out, hitched them up, got the chain, and went to the mud hole. After I had pulled his car out he gave me $1.25 and I was the richest kid in the world. I watched him drive off and hoped with all my heart that he would come back this way and get stuck again on the way back but, too bad, I didn't see him again.

There was always too much work to be done on the homestead. The only way to get ahead was to clear more land, grow more grain, keep more cows and pigs, and so increase the income, while at the same time keeping down the expenses. It seemed every dollar earned had to go back into the farm, and there was never enough for my mother to get something she needed in the house. When my sisters got older they went to the city and worked for a few dollars a month, saved every cent, and brought this home to buy a few desperately-needed extras. They also helped my father with the fieldwork, weeded and tended the big garden, and helped can hundreds of quarts of vegetables for the winter. As well, they picked many wild strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries to be used for dessert.

I can't remember ever being hungry or cold through the Depression of the '30s. We always had enough moisture to grow crops and gardens and enough feed for the animals. Every fall, sacks of potatoes, carrots, beets, turnips, and cabbages would go into the cellar under the house. This was a hole dug under the middle of the house, and dirt was banked up under the floor all around to keep out the frost. The entry was through a trapdoor in the floor of the kitchen.

In the fall my dad would butcher a cow and a fat sow of about five hundred pounds. The fat of the sow was rendered into lard and this was stored in big stone crocks in the cellar and was used for baking, frying, and deep frying. In those days it didn't have cholesterol in it either. Some of the meat was kept in a box in the "deep freeze" outside to be used through the winter. Some was smoked to be used for sandwich meat and the rest was canned to be eaten the next summer. The chickens kept us in fresh eggs and, if we had more than we could eat, we took them to the co-op and from there they went by truck to market.

My dad always milked some cows. This milk was put through a cream separator. The skim milk was fed to the calves and pigs, and the cream went to market. The cream cheque was the income. It came in steadily every week, and even though it wasn't big, it kept the family supplied with coffee, tea, sugar, and baking ingredients, etc. My mother also churned butter. Soon after the railway came to Barrhead, someone built a flour mill and my dad took a load of wheat there and we would get about fifteen hundred pounds of flour plus all the bran, shorts, and cream of wheat. My mother had enough flour for baking for a year. I can still taste my mother's fresh home-baked bread. It was delicious.

It seems every fall there was enough money to buy new warm underwear and jackets to keep us through the winter. Mother would knit socks, mittens, and sweaters for all of us, and could she make those needles fly. If she would settle down knitting she could finish a pair of socks in a day. I believe if a child gets enough to eat and can keep warm and has enough chores to keep him occupied, together with a loving family environment, he just has to be happy!

However, the Depression was tough for the farmers in Neerlandia. Eggs brought six cents a dozen or there was no market for them at all. I can remember putting eggs, shell and all, in the skim milk that we fed the calves. My dad had shipped pigs to the packers in Edmonton with the trucker Billy Quick and they brought five dollars apiece. The trucker and my dad each got half. I have been told that my Uncle Simon [illegible] bought cows on sale for eight dollars each.

At that time, most of the calves born on our farm had their throats slit because they just were not worth raising. I remember skinning some of them and sending the hides along with the trucker. They brought fifty cents each, twenty-five cents each for Mr. Quick and me.

The first threshing I can remember was done by Oscar

Bonstrom and Charlie Anderson of Vega. The grainfields were small yet. The first patches were cut out with a sickle and bundles were tied by hand. When the fields got a little bigger, several farmers got together to buy a binder. The grain was stooked to dry, and then my father and Mr Gelderman helped each other haul this to the barnyard and it was put into stacks to wait for Bonstrom and Anderson to come with their threshing machine. They pulled the threshing machine from place to place with horses. It was powered by a large stationary engine mounted on a heavy wagon also drawn by horses. This engine had two big flywheels about five feet in diameter. I wasn't going to school yet at that time, so I eagerly watched all this action going on. This engine was too big to turn with a crank, so Charlie Anderson would stand on the spokes of the flywheel to start it. For some reason it backfired and Charlie went sailing though the air, landing about twenty feet away. He must have had a soft landing, because he got right up and seemed none the worse for it.

One man had to cut the twines on the bundles of grain and feed them into the threshing machine a little at a time. There was a bag attachment where the grain came out and the bags of grain were carried away to our first little granary. The machine didn't have a blower, so a few men had to stand behind it to take away the straw and stack it.

By the time more land was opening up, Pete and Julius Boman had moved to Vega. They had a Rumely tractor and a new threshing machine that didn't have to be fed by hand and had a straw blower on it. Simon Tiemstra, Henry Kippers, and Menne Nannings also bought threshing machines. The grain was not stacked on the barnyard anymore but was brought directly from the fields to the threshing machine. Menne Nannings did our threshing for many years. The farmers he threshed for helped each other bring in the grain from the fields.

Boman's steam driven Rumely tractor.

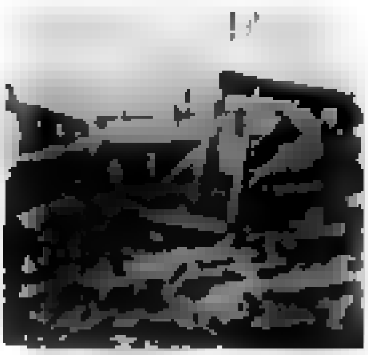
As more land was opened up, the threshing run became longer every year. I was allowed to stay home from school on the days the threshing crew was at our place. It seemed like a lot of fun to me and I couldn't wait until I was old enough to be a part of it. I graduated from grade eight when I was fourteen-and-a-half. By law a kid had to go to school until he was fifteen, but my dad could use me on the farm, and, since he didn't think I would ever become a professor anyway, he thought the eight grades I had achieved were quite adequate. That fall I joined the threshing crew. It was hard work for me, and for the first few weeks I was quite stiff and sore. We started at seven in the morning and it was often eight in the evening before we finished. The last several loads were done by the light of a coal oil lantern. Even working long days, it still took thirty days of threshing to complete the run that year. There was never a dull moment. We had a crew of more than ten men and everyone tried to outdo each other in telling stories and jokes. And you wouldn't believe the amount of food that was consumed by all those hard-working young men. Stacks of sandwiches, cake, and cookies for lunch, and at mealtimes we were ready for plates heaping full of vegetables and meat, and still had room for pie for dessert. I think what I ate in a day in those days would last me a week now.

From that time on I was a full-time helper on the farm and was responsible for most of the fieldwork and anything that was done with the horses. We had six fine, well-bred, good-tempered horses. Most of these had been raised and trained on our farm. My dad would have a few of his mares bred and each year for several years we raised one or two colts. At three years of age, these were ready for work. As our horses were trustworthy and would not go on a runaway, I started doing some of the fieldwork on Saturdays long before I finished school. I remember on a Saturday having to harrow a field my dad had plowed and plodding along through the loose soil. I also remember how I envied the colts that lay in the sun all day long, stretched out to full length without a worry in the world.

A few years before the Second World War, times started getting better for the farmers. Crops were good, and the prices of pork and beef went up and we had a few more dollars passing through our hands.

In the spring of 1940, we made an arrangement with our neighbour Bill Olthuis to buy a tractor together. We used the tractor, an Oliver 80, to do the heavy work, but horses were still used for seeding. Two years later Bill bought our share of the Oliver 80, and we bought a John Deere D.

More land had been cleared again and put into cultivation, and the M. Nanninga threshing machine could not handle it all any more. Six of our neighbours got together and bought a threshing machine. Some years later we added a combine and each of the shareholders swathed part of their grain and combined it. Then we bought a bigger self-propelled combine. The trend at that time was to have combines to get away from the drudgery of stooking and threshing, and farms were getting bigger. Sam Hovey had come in with a D8 Caterpillar tractor and was clearing and breaking land, and in 1952 our harvesting partnership was dissolved, and we were on our own for getting the harvesting done.



Sam Hovey's Caterpillar

In my teenage years I can also remember good times. In winter we had Young Men's Society led by Mr. Melle Ezinga. Our Choral Society was directed by Mr. Gelderman. For a while the

Choral Society had about fifty members, so a Junior Choral Society was organized under the direction of Cecil Tuininga. Every spring the Choral Society gave a concert which was attended by the whole community. In summer we had our ball games.

Mr. Dickson, the teacher, started us off on baseball, but as he didn't stay long and the next teacher, Mr. Levy, was not a sportsman, we were left pretty well on our own. When Mr. Ashley came to be our teacher, he also taught us a lot about playing ball. He loved sports and had played on teams before he came to Neerlandia. We had a tournament with Vega school several times and had no trouble beating them, but Vega had a much smaller school, and not nearly as many players to pick a team from.

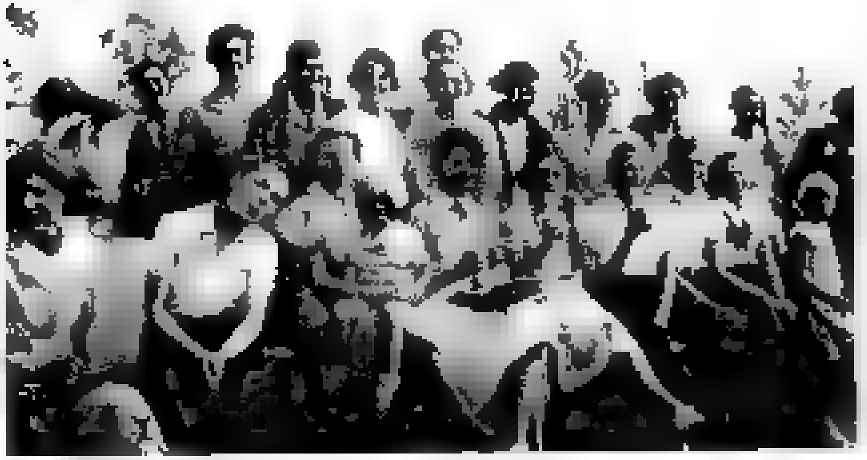
The first of July picnic has always been a major event in Neerlandia. I remember on some of the picnics we would play married men against single men. As the married men did not come out to practise much, we had no trouble winning those games. For some years the young people of the Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton would come to our first of July picnic. They came one year and we would go there the next year on an Edmonton civic holiday. On those days we would compete in races and other sports and also in a ball game. Sometimes Lacombe would also come to Edmonton and compete in a ball game. It was usually Neerlandia against Lacombe, and the winner against Edmonton. Well, we could win against Lacombe, but was against Edmonton a different story. They practised more than we did, and had some pretty nimble boys. There were two Winkelaar boys nicknamed Checks and Haas. I guess they called him that because a haas is a jackrabbit in Dutch, and he could run like a rabbit. In all competitions against Edmonton, Neerlandia boys didn't do very well. We couldn't beat them at a ball game either.

One spring a group of us boys got together to discuss our ball games. The Edmonton boys thought we were just a bunch of clodhoppers, and we thought we could be as good or better than they were if we got to work and practised. So we got together and practised twice a week. We thought we were getting pretty good and when you think you are pretty good you like to play against another team sometimes to see how good you are.

One day one of the boys was in Barrhead and got talking to someone from Bloomsbury. He asked if we had a ball team, and would we come for a game, so we got a team together and went to Bloomsbury for a ball game, and we won. That gave us courage, but not for long. The Rev. Van Der Woude heard about it and the next Sunday we heard from the pulpit that if young people of the covenant played ball with young people of the world, even though they won the game, they were bound to be losers in the end. Well, we were allowed to play against Edmonton, so we kept on practising and before long it was the first of July, the big day. We had another meeting about strategy. Somebody suggested that we should dress in old, torn working clothes and look like real clodhoppers. A vote was taken and the majority were in favour of the "uniforms". So there were no two ways to go, we had to win that game.

Our pitcher was going to be Bert Nanninga. Charlie Baker was the backup pitcher, but Bert had practised a lot, and we thought he was good. Cecil Tuininga was catcher, and he was good. He could throw that ball to second base so fast, not even a rabbit had a chance to steal second base. Jake Sturwold, the second base man, still has crooked fingers to prove the speed of Cecil's throws. John Ingwersen was first base. Corney Hiemstra played third. Corny Nanninga shortstop. I was in right field. Albert Elgersma left field, and George Baker centre field.

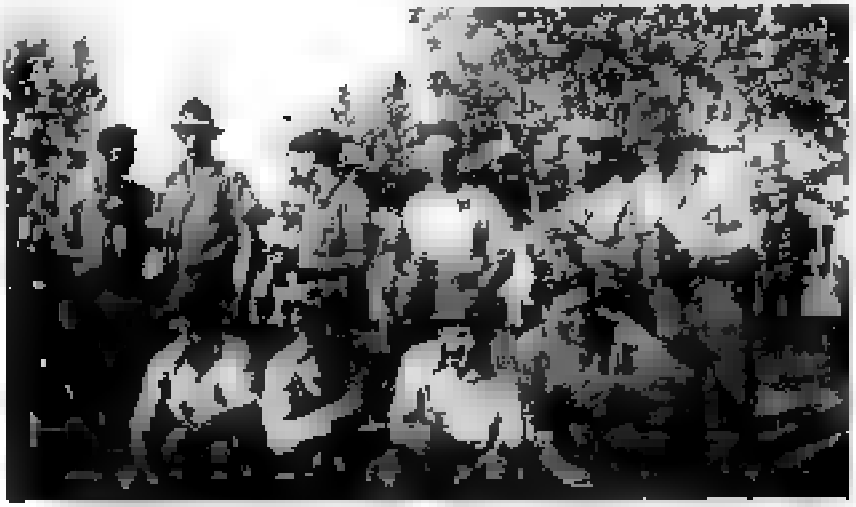
The game was close, sometimes they were a few runs ahead and we would catch up to them again. We made some good hits, but their fielders were able to catch all our fly balls. Bert lost control in the sixth or seventh inning, so Charlie took over as pitcher.



Crowd watching the game.

It was the beginning of the ninth inning and our turn to bat. The score was 7-7, and this was our last chance. We had one man on second and one on third base, and John Ingwersen was up to bat. He hit a line drive between centre and left field and we got two runs in, and that was it. Now we had to hang on to our lead. Edmonton had a man on first and a man on second. The batter hit a line drive right toward me in right field, but it was coming high. The runners on the bases thought I could never reach that one so they all ran and didn't look back. As the ball came over me, I leaped as high as I could and reached up as far as I could for the catch. I fell as I came back to earth, but had the ball in my hands. We got the ball to second base before the runners could get back, and we had three away. We won the game, and a great cheer went up for the clodhoppers. We were rewarded for all the practising we had done.

The first time I went to Edmonton for a sport-meet picnic, we made the trip in Billy Quick's truck. There may have been a few Model T Fords in Neerlandia at that time, but not enough cars to take the whole gang. Mr. Quick had put a plank along the outside of his old International truck for seats. A tarp was put over the top in case of rain. There was no pavement north of Edmonton yet. He managed to get through or around Morinville. There one wheel sank deep into a hole, and one of the truck's axles broke right in the mud hole. Mr. Quick got to a phone in Morinville, and as soon as



After the game. Back, Charlie Baker, Albert Elgersma, Corny Nanninga, George Anema, Corney Hiemstra, Bert Nanninga. Front, John Ingwersen, George Baker, Jacob Sturwold, Cecil Tuininga.

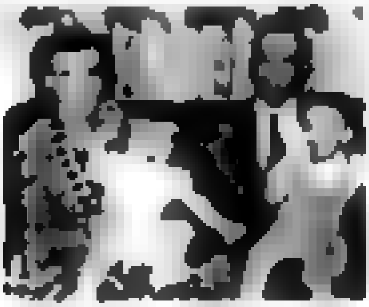
possible a mechanic came out from Edmonton with a new axle. The whole load of passengers came out and stood along the side and back of the truck box. We lifted it up high enough to replace the axle. Then we all gave a push and the truck came out and we continued our journey. We got to Edmonton a bit late, but still enjoyed our sports day.

Around the 1940s a lot of cars started coming into the settlement, and you could see people were beginning to enjoy prosperity from then on. The Co-op store was doing more business every year, and started branching out its services, including the building of a garage and service station to serve the community. About 1950, Al Munneke was hired as a clerk in the Co-op store. Mr. R. Stel and Mr. H. Dieterman were running the garage. They had all emigrated from the Netherlands shortly after the end of the war. Mrs. Munneke had a sister named **Tina** (Trijntje) **Velema**. She was a nurse, and had also immigrated to Canada. She had a nursing job at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. In the spring of 1951, she became employed with the Victorian Order of Nurses as a public health nurse. This meant she had to drive a car and, as she had never driven a car, she had to have lessons. She would come to visit her sister in Neerlandia on weekends.

My parents had retired from the farm and had built a house in the village, so I was on the farm by myself and that didn't go too well. I was not cut out to be a good bachelor. The Munnekes and Stels came up with a solution to the problem of the driving lessons: I was given the honour of teaching them. Early that spring the lessons began. The moon was full at that time, and after a few lessons Cupid even came along and it started getting quite romantic. In fact, it became so romantic that it grew into a love affair that still hasn't stopped growing to this day.

That summer Tina's parents came from the Netherlands for a visit, and we thought it would be nice if we could have our wedding while they were in Neerlandia so they could take part in it. I asked her father if I could have her for my wife, and on the 18th of July, Rev. Hanenburg asked, "Who gives this woman to this man?" and

Ina, George, 1951



Ina, Lou Anne, George, Harlan, c. 1967

he replied "I do." Farming went a lot better with her help. She cooked the meals, kept the house, gathered the eggs, and much more. In 1954, the Lord blessed our home with Harlan Philip Rodney (October 19, 1954).

The [illegible] had moved to Abbotsford, B.C., by that time and we paid them a visit at Christmas [illegible]. I got a big surprise when we arrived there; the grass was green, with a touch of frost at night, and beautiful sunny days. [illegible] drove us out to Harrison and Cultus lakes, and I couldn't believe my eyes. There was no ice on the water. When we got back, people asked me how I liked British Columbia and I told them I was quite impressed with it. Someone said, "Then I guess you're moving west." We had no idea of moving, but people kept asking and making offers on the farm, and in March [illegible] we sold our farm to [illegible] Nanninga, my brother-in-law, and we were on our way to B.C.

The first four years we lived in New Westminster and I worked first in a [illegible] mill and then in construction, building houses. In 1957 the Lord blessed us with a baby girl, Lou Anne [illegible] (February [illegible]). In [illegible] we bought a dairy farm in Matsqui. We milked there until [illegible], when we built a house in Abbotsford and I worked in construction again.

We are now both retired, and enjoy our children and five grandchildren, who also live in Abbotsford. Our dear lady, Monique Begin, has put both of us on her payroll.

George Aneme

KEES ANDRIESSEN

Kees (Cornelis) Johan Hendrik Andriessen (November 19, 1894) had immigrated to Edmonton from Winterswijk, Gelderland, the Netherlands, during the 1920s. He knew George Toebes and Anna Bouwman and that appears to be the reason he came to Edmonton. But he soon took up the SW 16-62-3-5 in Neerlandia as a homestead (November 1925). He put up a small log shack and cleared two acres of land on it. However, he did not get along with his neighbour, Hendrik Kannegieter, and in June 1926 he took up the NW 26-61-3-5, built a 14 by 16-foot log shack on it, and moved there.

Kees was a finely-built man. In the Netherlands he had played pipe organ and he served as church organist while he was in Neerlandia. He had taken a lot of sheet music along from the old country and directed the singing society. He would also organize small groups to sing on special occasions. Once he, Loe Reyse, and Hendrik Strydhorst were going to sing and Kees announced, "There will now be a quartet to sing a song." When Hendrik whispered to him that they weren't a quartet, Kees said, "Shh, they won't know the difference anyways."

Kees and another young fellow from the settlement were rivals for the attention of one of the local girls. One fall, after Kees went to Granum to work, his rival and two other fellows went into his shack and made a mess. When Kees returned from the prairies he called the RCMP out, but nothing came of the matter. After this Kees, who never had liked farming, left for Edmonton (1928-29).

On his homestead Kees had put up the walls for a stable, dug a well, made three hundred fence posts, and slashed twelve acres of land. After living in Edmonton for a short while, he moved back to the Netherlands.

AUBREY AND ELSIE (JONES) ASHLEY

The Ashleys arrived in Neerlandia early one wet summer morning in 1931. What should have been a routine trip turned into an endurance test. The truck carrying their belongings had to plough through mud from Westlock to Neerlandia. Aubrey had been to Neerlandia once before, to be interviewed for the teaching position by the Neerlandia school board. An agreement had been struck, and Aubrey was appointed principal of the two-room schoolhouse. Grades one to four were taught by female teachers, and Aubrey took grades five to twelve. What started as another teaching assignment carried on to become a long and pleasant association with the settlers of Neerlandia. But we are getting ahead of the story.

Aubrey C. Ashley was born December 1, 1900, in Oldham, Nova Scotia. It was not until 1920 that he came west to Lashburn, Saskatchewan, to help with the harvest. The West must have cast a spell on Aubrey because he was to return to Nova Scotia only for brief visits thereafter. After harvesting, he entered Normal School in Saskatoon and then moved further west to Alberta and took more education courses to earn a teaching certificate. This was followed by teaching assignments at Brighten, Sprucefield, and Radway before arriving in Neerlandia. Teaching was Aubrey's life and for twelve years, as the community grew and prospered, he saw many students pass through this country school. Unfortunately, teaching was not a highly-paid profession in those years, and when the opportunity for work in the Neerlandia Co-op Store arose, Aubrey took a job as accountant and later became the manager. It would be yet another thirteen years before the decision to move to Edmonton would be made. The move came in 1956. After a brief stint with Kenworth Truck, Aubrey returned to teaching at West Edmonton Christian School, where he remained until his retirement in 1971.

Elsie Isabella (Jones) Ashley accompanied Aubrey to Neerlandia in 1931. She was born at Burnside, Manitoba, on September 16, 1905, and shortly afterward the family moved to Edmonton, Alberta. Elsie's formative years were spent in Edmonton, where her grandfather Jones worked as a carpenter on the Alberta Legislative Buildings. It was later, when the Joneses moved to a farm north of Radway, Alberta, that Elsie and Aubrey met. They were married October 22, 1927.

Harold Aubrey was born April 1, 1930, in Radway and was already a year old when the family arrived in Neerlandia. Later he met and married Tess Lazowski of Innisfree, Alberta. After a brief stay in Edmonton, they moved to Calgary to settle down and raise a family.

Kenneth Ira arrived October 12, 1934. He

Farewell to the Ashleys: Klaas Tuininga, Aubrey, and Elsie

A dapper Aubrey behind Art Fisher and Harold, 1930s.

was born at the Barrhead hospital, which in those days provided the closest facilities. Ken later met and married Betty Vandervalk from Granum, where they currently reside.

Shirley Doreen was a redhead, born February 1, 1939, also at the Barrhead hospital. She later married Edward Piers from Neerlandia.

Elsie, Kenny, Harold, 1938

Harold writes, "As I think upon those years of growing up in Neerlandia there are interesting recollections of so many things. Many of those memories are about daily and yearly routines that we went through at home, at school, and in the community.

There were the noon hour sports activities that my father used to organize from which no one was exempt. These activities usually matched the seasons as well. For instance, in winter we would play soccer or, if there was fresh snow, probably fox and geese. In the wet spring we would play a game called anti-i-over. I remember my father as a teacher. He was a man who stood for honesty and fair play. He was a strong disciplinarian and loved to see his students achieve. Many long hours after school were spent in preparing lessons and correcting exams. I know because I was one of his pupils as well as his son.

Then there were the yearly Christmas Concerts that we used to spend time preparing for in order to put on a one-night show for our proud parents. This was followed by a rare treat that consisted of a brown bag containing a mandarin orange and various assortments of Christmas candy. Mom and Dad used to make homemade candies to add to these bags.

And then there used to be the annual field trip where we all got loaded into one of Fisher Brothers trucks. Art or Dick would haul us to a creek south of Neerlandia and all of us would hike to a spot where we would spend the day playing games, relaxing, and enjoying the outdoors complete with mosquitoes.

We used to spend a tremendous amount of time in our garden growing vegetables and flowers. Even more time was spent in the harvesting of peas, beans, corn, and beets which were prepared and canned for the long winter.

Then in the winter there were the many loads of logs that were brought to our home and sawed into blocks. In turn Dad, Ken, and I would split the blocks and pile the wood to dry for the coming year to burn in the cookstove and heater. It was a yearly ritual to have the chimney catch on fire with a roar. We would scurry around to find enough salt to throw on

Harold, Aubrey; Seated: Shirley, Elsie, Ken the fire to kill the flames. It was a wonder that our house never burned down. I remember having to go each evening to Schoonekampe' farm and pick up the milk. Some nights were so black that you could hardly see a hand in front of your face. On winter nights, with the full moon, the reflection on the snow made it so bright that you could almost read a book.

There are so many recollections that one could go on and on: the fun of harvest time in the fall with the binders, the stocked fields, the hayracks, and threshing machines, the skating parties on the frozen lake at Lievers; and the many years I walked to Lievers for Sunday School lessons before the church held services in English. I remember the catechism classes, first in school and then in the church basement on Friday evenings. I remember the summers I worked for John Ingwersen and Louis Nanninga on their farms. Many of the things that were treats for us in those days do not exist today or would be taken for granted now. Much of what we did was inexpensive and took only our effort and imagination to entertain us, for times were hard and everyone worked hard."

Harold Ashley

CHARLES AND BETTY (DE JONG) BAKER

Charles was born in Neerlandia in 1920. In 1922 the family moved to Edmonton and in 1925 Charles started school there at H. A. Gray. In the spring of 1926 the family moved back to Neerlandia to stay, so Charles started school in Neerlandia and continued until 1934.

School for Charles was something that had [illegible] finish school and start farming. Often his nature study was done swimming or hunting rabbits or just walking through the woods. His class had a different teacher every year and sometimes even more than one teacher in [illegible] year. All his school days he walked to and from school, which was not all bad since there were usually fish in the creek that could be caught! For the most part there were no roads, just a path, and through the muskeg areas his par- [illegible] Charles' tasks after school was to carry home [illegible] the. Those logs in the muskeg got very slipper[illegible] [illegible] home with a slippery, slimy bag of sugar or some other wet item.

[illegible]

rigour of farm life with him, he applied for farm leave and headed to Neerlandia to prepare a home and grow crops and raise hogs. On July 22, 1942, Charles made confession of faith in Neerlandia, and by coincidence Betty made confession of faith the same day in Vancouver.

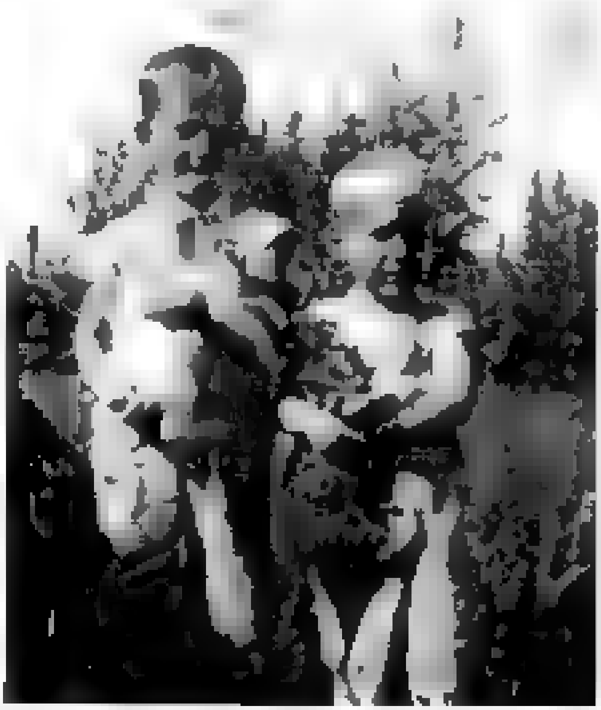
Charles and Betty were married January 12, 1944, in Vancouver and after a few days headed for Neerlandia, first by train and then by bus to the Barrhead depot, where Dad Baker met them with his car. The roads were very icy and Dad Baker hit the ditch so hard that he blew a front tire. Since it was war time, tires were rationed and hard to get, so there was no spare. They rode home on the rim. Dad Baker let Charles drive this time.

"Before we were married." Charles and Betty, 1943

Charles and Betty lived with Charles' parents for four months, then moved into their own little house. It was built on skids, ready to be moved to another location. They had pigs all around them, even under the house. An electric fence surrounded their lot, and Betty had to step over this to get water or wood. In August 1944 they moved the little house to the hamlet where Charles' folks moved to retire, and Charles and Betty moved into the farmhouse.

"Our first home, 1944

After the war Charles received his discharge from the army and took title to the school land he had previously leased. That was possible through the Veterans Land Act and a veterans grant. First Charles hired an Indian family to clear brush. Sometimes there would be one family, sometimes four or five families, and much of the time none. The clearing went much more quickly when John Molodowich and Sam Howey came in with their Caterpillar tractors, although the root picking was still left for Charles.



"Our sons David and Joe, 1954

In 1949 Charles and Betty welcomed **David** (born June 17, 1949) to their family. After his schooling in Neerlandia, David first tried hospital work as an orderly and later truck driving, but finally set himself to farming, especially raising hogs. He has now taken a share in the farm. On January 11, 1974, David married **Irene Reitsma** from Blackfalds. Irene was born March 6, 1953, in Lacombe. She worked on the family farm and as a secretary before her marriage. David and Irene have three children: **Randy**, born March 30, 1976, **Scott**, born January 13, 1978, and **Suzanne**, born April 16, 1980.

On January 19, 1952, **Joe** (Joseph) was born to Charles and Betty. After high school Joe studied at Dordt College. He married Heather Wierenga on May 12, 1973. After Joe's graduation they lived in Neerlandia with their children **Becky** (Rebecca) Jo, (April 15, 1974), **Jennifer** Marie (February 24, 1976), and **Reuben** Todd Donovan (July 2, 1980). In 1981 Joe and Heather and their family moved to Rocky Mountain House, where Joe has a teaching position in the local Christian School. Another son was born there in 1984.

Irene, Scott, Randy, David, Betty, Charles, Joe, Becky, Heather, Jennifer. Front: Suzanne, Reuben, 1983.

In 1984, Charles and Betty celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. They have had a happy life together. They experienced ups and downs, but through it all they must confess that God is good, and with His blessing they hope to retire.

Charles Baker

RAYMOND AND DELLA (ANEMA) BAKER

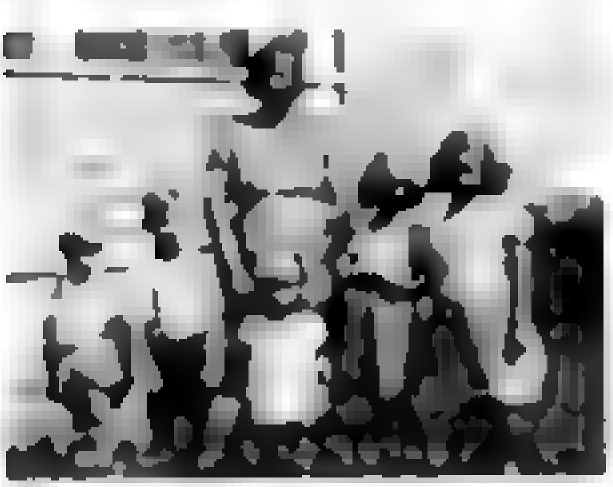
Raymond Baker was working in a cotton mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, in 1911, but he disliked both the work and standing in one spot all day to do it. At this time an article appeared in *De Wachter* extolling the virtues of Alberta as a place to start farming. This idea appealed to Raymond and he decided to go to Canada. When his parents saw that he was determined to go, they made the decision to go along with him. By July 19, 1912, Raymond had filed on the SW 22-61-3-5, but lived and farmed with his parents until his marriage to **Della Anema** on September 23, 1934.

Wedding picture: Raymond, Della, 1934.

When Raymond married, his parents went to live near their daughter Katie, and the newlyweds moved into the house. They enjoyed furnishing their home. They had purchased a stove and a large kitchen cabinet at a farm auction. In the cabinet Della put a set of china that she had received as a wedding gift, a set of silverware she had bought, and other kitchenware. A table made by Gaele Baker and a set of chairs which were a gift from Joe Baker were also in the kitchen. A Winnipeg couch graced the front room, and braided rugs were scattered about. Before her marriage, Della had stocked a hope chest with handmade items, and now her handiwork made the room cozy. [illegible] here and listen to hymns broadcasted over the radio.

Della had little time to sit though, because she soon had two little girls to care for: **Florence**, born August 8, 1935, and **Catherine**, born November 3, 1936. The girls were followed by two boys: **John**, born May 27, 1938, and **Gilbert**, born February 9, 1940. The family was com[illegible]

The Bakers were a happy family. Raymond [illegible] and a Model T Ford by the time he married. Later he traded the car off for a newer model. Then in January 1944, a sad event took place when Raymond died suddenly of heart failure. This left Della with the responsibility of looking after five children, the oldest of whom was eight. Not being able to drive a car or look after the farm by herself, Della decided a move to the hamlet of Neerlandia would be the best thing to do. There she would be close to the church, store, and school. She bought a small plot of land from Siebren Tiemstra and moved the house on skids to the location just northwest of the store. There the family lived for eleven years. During this time the farm land was rented to various farmers.



Della with her children Gilbert, John, Dorothy, Kay, Florence 1944

[illegible] up from which people who did not have their [illegible] about two dollars per month. If there was no rainwater available, Della also had to haul all the water necessary for her laundry. On laundry days Della spent man[illegible] man around the house, help was often sought [illegible]

[illegible] enough to try farming themselves. The house [illegible] who had a bedroom upstairs, was told to come [illegible] of plasterboard, which had rock wool insulation behind it, broke loose from the ceil[illegible]

Eventually the house was put on skids and [illegible] tractor, down the gravel road to the farm. [illegible] years, but then John and Gilbert began buying [illegible]

[illegible] leave home. Florence married George Visser in July 1956; Catherine married John Peters in November 1956, Dorothy married Simon

Tiemstra in March 1957; and Gilbert married Jeanette Wegner in October 1970. John remained single. He and Della bought a mobile home, sold the farm, and moved to the hamlet. John works in a sawmill in the winter and operates a manure-hauling business in the summer.

Kay, John, Gilbert, Florence, Della, Dorothy.

Although life was not easy for Della, she made the best of every situation and never complained. To others she always presented a calm demeanor. One day as the family was walking home, a thunderstorm began to rage. The children were afraid but their mother walked on calmly and resolutely. To them that exemplified her approach to life. She always seemed strong and brave.

Della is a big-hearted, out-going woman. In her younger days she shared her garden produce and baked goodies with anyone who could use it. Her favourite pastimes were knitting and crocheting. When the children were small, she would often get up early to stoke the fire and then sit and crochet until it was time to wake the children. Many people have her handiwork in their homes, as she always contributed more than her share to the annual bazaar. Della retired several years ago, but can still enjoy her family. She is thankful to God for keeping them all well and for sustaining her through the hard and lonely times.

Florence Visser

MEINDERT AND ANTJE (DE KROON) BOORSMA

Meindert Boorsma was born September 6, 1902, in Burgwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje De Kroon was born March 20, 1904 in Bakhuizen, Friesland. They were married in May 1928 and soon after embarked on their journey to Canada. They had heard much about Canada from friends and relatives who had left their homeland to make a new life in Canada, where it was said there was plenty for all — the land of milk and honey. On June 6, 1928, they boarded the *Montclare* at Liverpool, England. The journey across the ocean took ten days. It was ten days too many for Meindert, as he was ill a great deal of the time. He decided if he were ever to return to the Netherlands, he would find some method other than by water.

Meindert and Antje's wedding photo.

After arriving in Quebec, Meindert and Antje went by train to Edmonton, arriving there on June 20. The Immigration Department there placed them with a farmer in Red Willow who had requested Dutch farm workers. Since

they were both experienced (having been raised on dairy farms, Meindert and Antje were sent there. While working there they learned to speak some English. They also met other Dutch immigrants, one being John Elzinga, who told them they should take up a homestead as other immigrants were doing. He took them to visit Chris Leder in Edmonton. Chris got in touch with Siebren Tiemstra and Klaas Tuininga of Neerlandia, who helped the Boorsmas procure a piece of land (SW 17-62-3-5) in Neerlandia.

The Boorsmas went to Neerlandia with Siebren and Klaas on Billy Quick's truck, the only means of travel between Edmonton and Neerlandia at that time. They arrived here on a cold December day in 1928. A cabin and barn were soon built with the help of Henry Kippers Jr. and Henry Strydhorst. The logs were purchased from Hendrik Kannegieter. So Meindert and Antje began their pioneering life.

A great deal of the Boorsma homestead, it soon became apparent, was muskeg and quite useless. There were many thunderstorms at that time, and lightning set the muskeg on fire so it smoldered and glowed eerily at night. Coyotes howled nearby at night, and bears and other wild animals were also plentiful. It was a totally new experience for Meindert and Antje, since they had been accustomed to a more civilized way of life.

In 1931 their first child, **Joseph**, was born. He was born with spina bifida and had convulsions since birth. He died in the Barrhead hospital when he was three weeks old. On February 19, 1933, a daughter, **Katie** (Cornelia), was born, followed by two more daughters: **Aike** on December 10, 1934, and **Sophia** on October 3, 1936. A son, **Julius**, was born July 4, 1938 and another daughter, **Patricia**, on August 5, 1941. The first four children were born at home with Petertje Schoonekamp as midwife. The last two children were born in the Barrhead hospital.

During these years Meindert and Antje were busy clearing land, cutting wood, and raising cows, chickens, and pigs. The work was hard, money scarce, and the winters long and cold, but somehow they got by.

Hendrik and Mina Kannegieter became good friends of the Boorsmas, who visited them often. Mina was always happy to have the children over and they spent many happy hours with her. She had many magazines which she let the children cut pictures out of (the Boorsmas had no money for magazines). Mina also had handsome china cabinets in which she kept all sorts of beautiful china and jewelry. These items she would let the awed children examine piece by piece, much to their delight.

Julius, Meindert, Patricia

Meindert used horses for transportation to and from the store and church. He had a big black stallion named Tony and a small brown mare named Shorty. They were not very compatible when hitched to the buggy on Sunday mornings and Miendert had a couple of bad experiences when they decided not to cooperate. He had bought Tony in exchange for some farm animals from a horse trader who came around yearly. Tony may have had some racing background because he would not follow anyone. He had to get ahead of everything on the road. That was not too bad in the summer, when there was some passing room, but during the winter, snow was piled high on both sides of the road and the road was scarcely wide enough for two sleds to pass each other. One Sunday afternoon, when the Boorsmas were coming home from church, they came up behind a sled just as they were nearing Kannegeiters' farm. Tony attempted to pass the sled but he had to go into the snowbank to do so and the sleigh tipped over. The horses were going at a very fast pace and the sled was completely wrecked. The people in the other sled picked the family out of the snowbank and took them to Kannegeiters' where they all had hot chocolate and cookies. They were all a little upset for awhile, but after no serious injuries were found, they were taken home.

Katie and Julius on Shorty. Front: Alice and Sophie

Katie, Alice, and Sophie made the four-mile trek to school daily with the Bouwman and Strydhorst children who lived nearby. The children usually walked home too, arriving after dark during the winter. On several occasions, they encountered a mother bear with her cub. Rabbits, squirrels, and other small creatures were very intriguing to the children and slowed the journey home during the summer many times.

Finally in 1943 "living off the land" lost its appeal and Meindert and Antje with their five children moved into the hamlet. The Boorsmas lived on the northeast corner of the church lot with a wooded area between their house and the parsonage.

Meindert took a job as janitor of the two-room school. Later on a three-room school was built and two one-room schools were moved in from elsewhere. As part of the job, Meindert swept and cleaned the floors, carried water in from the Co-op store nearby, washed windows, and tended the wood-burning furnaces during winter months. During the harvest season, Meindert sometimes took jobs on nearby farms. Then Antje and the older children would clean the school. Since the work was being done by a woman, the wages were reduced.

The homestead was sold to Lambertus Jansen in 1945. All the animals had been sold before the move into town, but shortly after, they bought a milk cow and a couple of small pigs to fatten as there was plenty of room where they lived and no other homes in the immediate area. During the spring and summer Bessy the cow grazed on the open field, where there was lots of grass. Meindert served as the town's milkman for two years. Bessy delivered two full pails of milk every day. The milk was put into quart jars and delivered daily to the minister, the teachers, and a few other people living in town. Later on, when more people came to town and built homes nearby, Bessy was moved to the church barn and the Boorsmas no longer kept pigs. Bessy was eventually sold.

The Boorsmas kept an enormous garden close to an acre in size, behind the house. In it they raised raspberries and grew many vegetables and flowers. Antje had a green thumb when it came to flowers. In the fall, she always

Back: Julius, Katie, Meindert. Front: Sophie, Antje, Patricia, c 1954.

knew when it was going to freeze and the children were sent to pick the flowers and give all the neighbours a bouquet. Their little house, as well, would then be filled with bouquets.

Soon after their arrival in town, Antje became quite ill and was bedridden with rheumatic fever for some years. Due to her poor health and also to the fact that their wages had increased very little during the twelve years of janitor work while the cost of living had gone up drastically, they were forced to look for work elsewhere as they could not possibly live on the small amount they got paid. The Boorsmas chose B.C. because the climate was warmer and Antje had relatives there. In July 1955 Meindert and Antje and the three youngest children moved to Ladner. Their two eldest daughters had already left home to go into nursing and lived in Edmonton.

Meindert worked on farms in the Fraser Valley for a few years and finally settled in Ladner, where he worked for the municipality for a number of years. Wages in B.C. were very good in comparison to what the Boorsmas were accustomed to. Antje's health also improved vastly due to the milder climate. Meindert and Antje are residents of Ebenezer Senior Citizens Home in Abbotsford (1984) and are both in good health and enjoying life.

Boorsma Family

BERTUS AND HILDA (VAN DER HOEK) BOS

Bertus Bos was born February 9, 1899, in Oude Pekela, Groningen, the Netherlands. He served in the army during the Great War of 1914-18. After the war, he married Hilda (Hurgje) van der Hoek on December 12, 1919. Hilda had been born December 13, 1897, in Avereest, Overijssel. Bertus worked as a farmer and also did much hunting, which he enjoyed. But the Netherlands was not big enough for Bertus' dreams of hunting and trapping. He desired more freedom, so he and Hilda considered immigrating, either to New Zealand or Canada. After reading some articles praising Canada, they decided to immigrate there. Through an immigration agency, they were told about the Dutch settlement of Neerlandia, therefore they planned to go there.

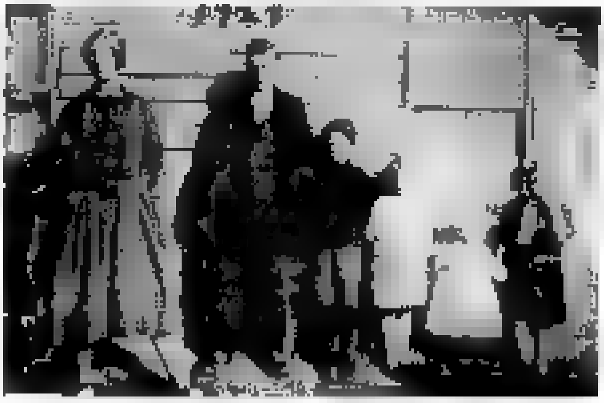
Bertus and Hilda and their three children, **John** (Jan, April 19, 1920), Laila (Lammigje, April 30, 1922), and **Elizabeth** (June 27, 1924), left Dedemsvaart, Overijssel, in April 1927. They sailed from Liverpool on the *Montrose*. On board, they met Rienk de Jager of Neerlandia who was returning from a visit to the Netherlands.

Elizabeth, Hilda, Bertus, Laila, John, c. 1927

From Edmonton the Bos family travelled by truck with Billy Quick. When they arrived in Neerlandia, they stayed with the Siebren Tiemstra family until they found a house to rent. After a few weeks they moved into van Ark's house and lived there for a year. During that year a daughter, **Grace** (Grietje, August 4, 1927) was born to Bertus and Hilda. Bertus did hunting and trapping on van Ark's quarter. At night he would check the traps using a lantern. One night he got lost and slept in a tree, awaking the next morning to find himself near Menne Nanninga's place.

Bertus wanted a place of his own, so he filed on the NW 22-62-3-5 quarter in the Vega district on March 5, 1928. On the homestead, Ben Lievers built a 14 by 22-foot house, one of the first lumber houses in Vega. The Bos family moved there in November 1928, soon after the house was finished. During the fifteen years they lived in Vega, three more children were born: **Ralph** (Roelof, February 8, 1932), **Betty** (Bertha Gerda, July 26, 1935), and **Bill** (William John, November 20, 1942). Bill was the only one of the children born in the hospital.

Bertus was the first mail carrier between Vega and Neerlandia. He began the job in August 1930. Every Friday he left Vega at 1:00 p.m.,



The new home, 1928. Hilda, Bertus, John, Liz, Grace, Lollie.

picked up the mail in Neerlandia, and arrived back in Vega about 3:45 p.m. He carried the mail on horseback in the summer and with horse and cutter in the winter. A few times when Bertus was not able to get the mail, Hilda filled in for him.

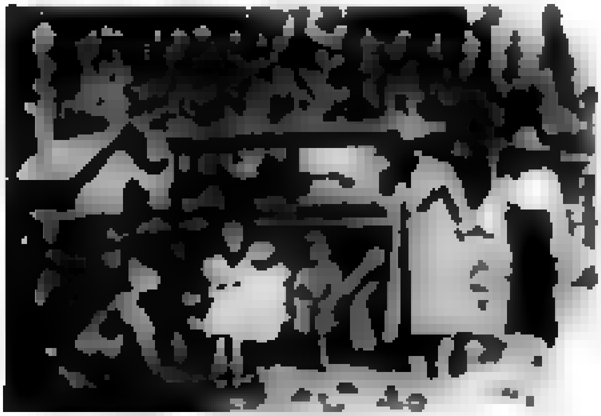
Bertus cleared many acres of land for himself and for others. It was all done by hand with an axe and grub hoe and sometimes with the help of horses to pull out the heavier stumps. Hilda often helped Bertus with the clearing. When he cleared for Hendrik Kannegieter, the children were left with Mina Kannegieter because the clearing was heavy and Hilda was needed to help. Bertus had a two-horse breaking plow, but reset it so it could be pulled by three horses. At first he borrowed horses from Bill Krikke and worked for him in return. Later, in 1933, he obtained three horses of his own.

One year, Bertus made a stoneboat. He was using it while clearing for Bill Oldegbers, when a thunderstorm came up. Bertus was on his way home when lightning struck very near. The horses scared and went on a runaway. Bertus was thrown off the stoneboat, but got tangled in the reins so he was dragged for some distance before he could stop the horses. He was not hurt seriously but was very muddy.

Another time Bertus was clearing with a double-bitted axe when it hooked on a limb above him and came down heavily, gashing his head. The wound bled quite badly and he came home with blood running down his face. Hilda was worried, but Bertus had no ill-effects except a scar and a bald spot for the rest of his life.

Since there was not much crop to harvest on his homestead in the early years, Bertus and others went to the prairies to help with the harvest. That was a good source of income. During the fall and winter, Bertus did what he enjoyed most — hunting and trapping. He hunted moose and deer and trapped through the Vega area. The whole family helped skin coyotes, foxes, weasels, squirrels, and other small animals. Hilda also learned to shoot with a double-barreled shotgun. She became a good shot and killed the hawks and owls that bothered the chickens. Once there was a weasel in the chicken coop, so Hilda loaded both barrels in the shotgun and took aim. She accidentally pulled both triggers at once, shooting the weasel clean in half.

The Bos family obtained groceries at Boman's store in Vega. Bertus often sold furs to the storekeeper there and received groceries in exchange. The Bos children attended school in Vega and usually had to walk there. The children attended Sunday school in Vega too, but the family belonged to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Since they lived four miles from the church, it was not easy to attend regularly, especially in winter. They took turns going because they had to share clothes. They used various modes of transportation: walking, horseback, cutter, wagon, and dog sleigh. They still managed to learn their catechism and do some socializing. When Bertus bought a 1924 Chevrolet coach in 1937 on one of his harvesting trips to the prairie, it provided easier means to get to church. It proved to be a good purchase because years later his son John made it into a truck and used it to haul firewood and the moose and deer which he had hunted.



Everybody is proud of the car, 1937. Pa in the car, Liz, Grace, Betty, Ralph, Hilda, John

In 1935 Bertus became a naturalized citizen and the three oldest children automatically became citizens as well. Hilda received her Canadian citizenship in [illegible].

Bertus was always active. He was a short man but powerfully built. In the Netherlands he had worked on canal boats, sometimes unloading one hundred kilo bags of fertilizer. His legs were muscular, partly a result of all the walking he did.

Hilda enjoyed visiting. She was good friends with Jennie Bakker, but there was never much time to visit. With a family, there was always work to be done at home. Besides her regular chores, Hilda knitted and sewed clothes for the family.

Bertus Bos began trapping in Swan Hills around [illegible]. He had a trapline there with George Baker. Bertus and George built a barn and a cabin in the area. The cabin was about fifty miles away from the homestead and Bertus usually walked to get there. The trip took him about two days, with an overnight stop halfway. He would be gone for weeks at a time, then come home for a week or two. Before Bertus left, Hilda would cook potatoes, then mash and freeze them. Bertus would take these along to the bush and chop off chunks to fry up as he needed. Flour, rice, beans, peas and dried fruit were also packed along. Bertus made sourdough bread himself and meat, of course, was available in the bush.

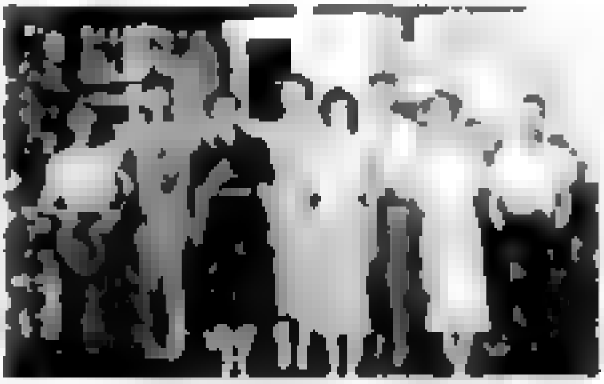
While Bertus was gone, the children helped Hilda with the chores. One time, when it was extremely cold, the wood pile was completely used up. Hilda put a log through a window into the house so John and Lutie could cut it inside.

Bertus hunted and trapped in Swan Hills for five or six winters. The last three or four years, he used a dog team on the trapline. Bertus had trained the four dogs, a mixture of Airedale, collie, and hound, to pull a sleigh. When Bertus went to the cabin, he put all provisions on the dog sleigh. He would walk behind the sleigh, guiding the team. Going uphill, he had to help by pushing the sleigh. Going downhill, though, he was able to ride. On the way home from the trapline, the load would be light and the trip would take only one day with the dog team. Besides hunting, Bertus also worked as a guide for other Neerlandia hunters.

John Bos moved to B.C. in 1939, then was drafted during World War II. He and his wife, Dorothy, have two children. They are retired and live in Vernon, B.C.

Lutie Bos married Pete Fisher of Neerlandia in 1943. That same year, Bertus sold the farm to them and the Bos family moved to East Pine, B.C. While there, Hilda became ill with stomach cancer and passed away in 1945 at 47 years of age. She was buried in B.C., but in 1970 her body was transferred to the Neerlandia cemetery. The Bos family returned to Neerlandia in 1946 and Bertus bought back his former farm.

After returning, the rest of the children left



Bertus, John, Lutie, Liz, Grace, Ralph, Betty, Bill, [illegible] home and eventually married. Elizabeth married Lambert A. Wierenga of Neerlandia. Grace married John Dielman in 1956. They have two children and live near Morinville. Ralph married Joan Olthuis of Neerlandia in 1957. Two years later Betty married John Fernhout of Fort William, Ontario. They live near St. Albert with their three children. Bill served in the navy for three years, then married Barbara Pudsy in 1964. Bill and Barbara and their two children live in Victoria, B.C., where Bill works as an electrician.

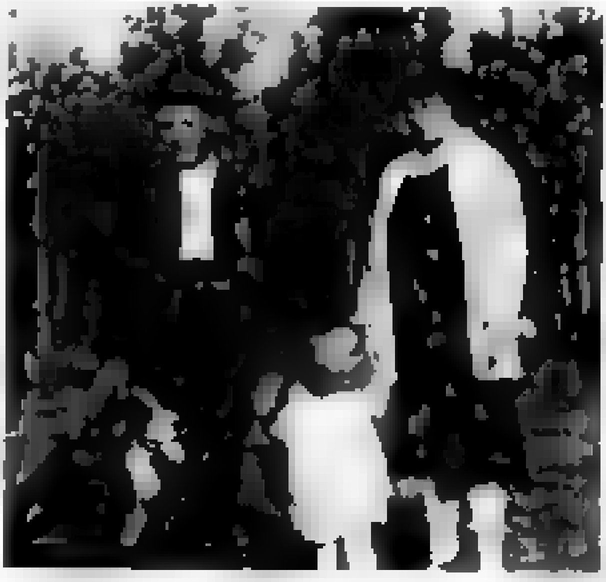
Bertus lived on the Bos homestead until he became ill in 1978. He entered the hospital and passed away December 12, 1980, at the age of 81.

John Bos
Elizabeth Wierenga

HENRY AND ALBERTA (CORTÉ) BOUWMAN

Henry Bouwman (January 12, 1899) came to Canada from Ootmarsum, Overijssel, the Netherlands, in 1924. His brother Bill was already living in Edmonton. Henry was a carpenter, but there were no jobs, except as farm labourer, in the Netherlands. After two years in Canada, he returned to the Netherlands on a cattle boat to make Alberta Corté his bride. Alberta (March 20, 1898) was of Huguenot descent and was also from Ootmarsum, where she worked in a factory. Henry and she had begun their courtship through corresponding with each other while he was in Canada. They were married July 26, 1926. Three or four days later they sailed to Canada and went to Edmonton where Henry worked at various jobs, among them digging ditches with George Toebes for Edmonton Water Works and milking in a dairy. During that time two daughters were born to the Bouwmans: **Jenny** Hilgonda on April 27, 1927, and **Margaret** Winny on August 17, 1931. Those were the Depression years and jobs were hard to come by, so Henry and Alberta decided to try farming.

Henry took out a homestead (SE 22-62-3-5) in the Vega area on May 25, 1933. The quarter was mostly muskeg and not good for farming, so their attempt at farming was unsuccessful. They returned to Edmonton in 1936, but there was no work available there either. Imagine their relief and thanksgiving when they learned of janitorial work available in Neerlandia School. They could rent a little house on the Schoonekamp yard for three dollars a month. So in 1939 they loaded their goods on Dick Fisher's transport truck and made the move north again. They arrived late in the evening, and Annie and Rikie Schoonekamp invited them in for tea and a snack, which was greatly appreciated.



Henry, Jenny, Alberta

Having attended Sunday school and Bible classes in Edmonton, Jenny and Margaret were glad to find Sunday school in Neerlandia. It was taught by Rieke Lievers in her home.

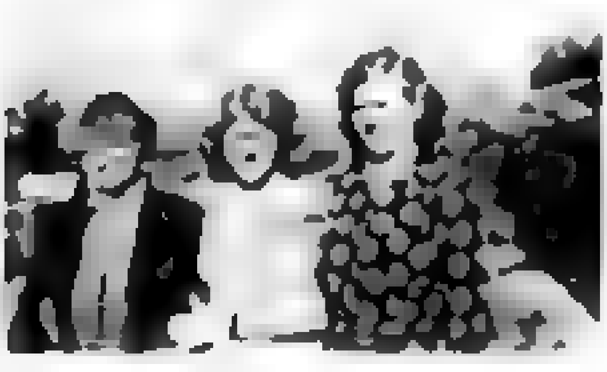
Little did the Bouwman family realize that a janitorial job in a country school required being at school by 7:30 a.m. to start the fires in the potbellied stoves on cold wintry mornings. The stoves devoured countless blocks of wood which the Bouwmans would pile to the ceiling of the cloakroom each evening. Henry would split the wood while Jenny and Margaret did other work inside the school. For all the janitorial work they did, the Bouwmans received nine dollars a month. Later this was increased to thirteen dollars.

Besides working as janitor, Henry took on many occasional jobs. Jenny often helped him whether it was digging basements, clearing, logging, or root picking. Sometimes she did the heavy work by herself if Henry was busy elsewhere. At home Jenny and Margaret helped do chores, haul firewood, or cut and pile logs for lumber.

It was a great day for the Bouwmans when they moved into their own house. Henry had built it in the hamlet, east of the garage on a two-acre plot of land that had been bought from Rev. Van Der Woude. Now they could have pigs and chickens and their own pet cow. Walter Wargacki, the blacksmith, was their neighbour.

While sawing wood at home one day in 1944, Henry had a serious accident. He put his right hand too close to the saw. As he jerked it back he nearly severed it at the wrist. With his left hand he grabbed it to stop the blood from spurting. Then a towel was used to help stop the bleeding. He remained conscious while Oene Piers, who had been helping him, took him to the Westlock hospital. The doctors did not remove his hand, but sewed everything together as well as they could. Henry was thankful that his hand, though partially disabled, was still usable for carpentry work.

[illegible] married Bert Michael who had had an eye on her all along. Margaret was a [illegible] of Alberta, took grades ten through twelve in the Barrhead high school. Then she entered the Faculty of Education at the U of A and received her temporary teaching certificate in 1951.



Alberta, Margaret, Jenny

During his years in Neerlandia, Henry built or helped to build several houses and farm buildings in the community. In 1947 he built a small house for Alberta and himself on the little lot where the blacksmith shop had been. Since the girls had left home the Bouwmans saw no need to keep animals anymore, so they sold the property to Menne Nanninga.

For many years Henry had no motorized vehicle; he would walk or, if weather permitted, ride his bicycle. Then in 1949 he bought a green Ford truck. In his first attempt at driving, Henry turned into Bert Michael's driveway. But instead of straightening out, he kept turning and drove right through the pig fence before the truck came to a stop. Henry was not hurt but the pigs sure were squealing!

In November 1950 Alberta discovered that she had neck cancer and needed to have an operation done in Edmonton. She endured its horrors and pain without murmur or complaint, [illegible] her heavenly home. She died August 7, 1951, at the age of fifty-three.

Margaret taught in Barrhead and Neerlandia from 1951 to 1954. Her classroom in Neerlandia was a one-room school where an outhouse had to be used, and drinking water had to be hauled in. In 1954 Margaret left Neerlandia to attend Calvin College where she obtained a B.A. degree. Later she taught in Taiwan, in the U.S.A., and in Edmonton.

Henry sold his house and went to Edmonton in 1955. There he found work making windows and doors for Edmonton Sash and Door. Later he bought a lot in Edmonton and built a house on it. When Margaret taught in Edmonton she lived there with her father. In 1974 she married Peter Younghans. Henry passed peacefully into the presence of His Lord on November 23, 1979.

Jenny Michael

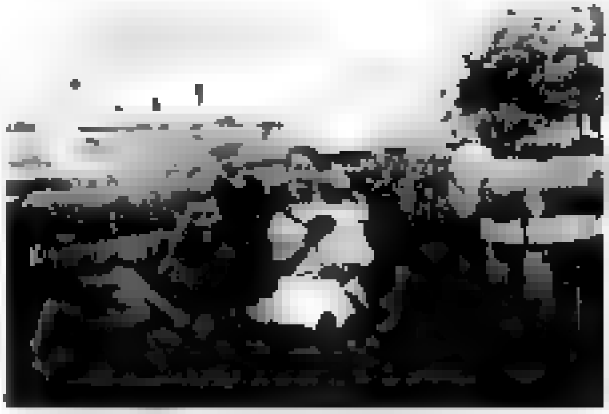
WILLEM AND ANNA (TOEBES) BOUWMAN

Willem Fredrick Bouwman was born in Tubbergen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on December 17, 1893. After serving in the First World War, Willem worked for an electrical company. He did not like carrying a lunch bucket to work every day, so he decided to take up farming as his father had. Canada held the future for him.

On April 25, 1899, Anna Christina Toebes was born in Winterswijk, Gelderland. Later her path crossed Willem's, and so on June 1, 1923 they were married. The Bouwmans set sail for Canada two days later.

After a short stay in Winterburn, the family moved to Edmonton. Here two sons arrived: **Henry** (1924) and **Ben** (1926). Willem worked for Edmonton Water Works.

In 1929, after the purchase of two horses,



Bill, Henry, Anna, Ben in Edmonton (Riverdale), 1927

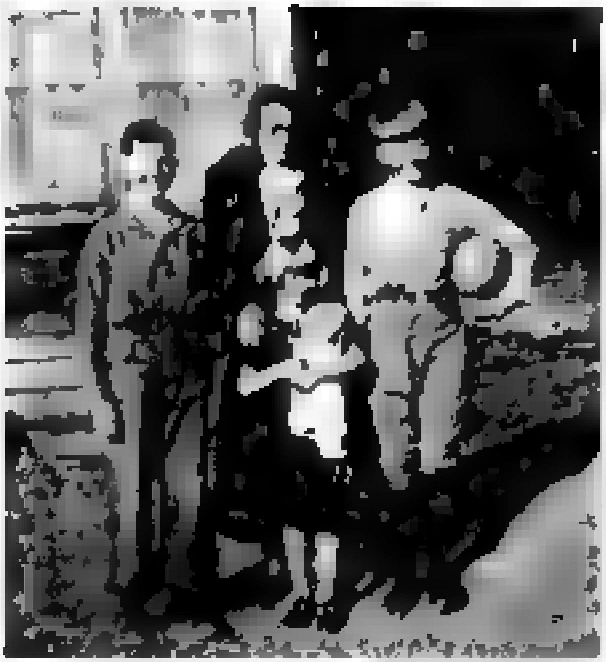
the Bouwmans moved to Neerlandia, eager to start farming. Upon their arrival, John Schuring helped them build a one-room shack that was just high enough to stand in. They spent one winter in it with their two small sons. The next year they built a house on their land, the NE 8-62-3-5. The living conditions were poor and wretched.

Two more children were born to the Bouwmans in Neerlandia: Grace on January 28, 1932 and John Henry on June 29, 1938.

Bill with the horses which took the family to Neerlandia, 1929

After many years of hard work and saving money, Willem was able to put a down payment on a Case binder. He later put down another deposit, but it was not enough to satisfy the company and the binder was repossessed.

Henry worked in the local Co-op store from 1939 to 1942. In January 1943 he joined the RCAF as air crew. In 1945, he was transferred overseas on Anti-Submarine Patrol and later to Transport Command. He was discharged in March 1946 with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Henry attended the U of A from 1947 to 1953 when he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine. He now resides in Edmonton with his wife, Terry, and their five children.



Henry, Anna, Ben. Front: Grace, 1938

In 1950, the Bouwmans sold their farm to Raymond Visser and moved to Rocky Mountain House. Willem died September 18, 1982. Ben with his wife, Seenie, and their five children continues to farm there. Anna resides in Rocky Mountain House, in the Senior Citizens Lodge.

Henry Bouwman

PETER DEN HARTOG

Peter Aart den Hartog (c. 1878) had been born in Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. He and his wife (c. 1882) had lived in India before coming to Canada. Peter filed on the SW 16-62-3-5 in October 1926. There were three sons and one daughter in the family, but none came to the Neerlandia area to live except **Peter Jr.**, who took up the SE 20-62-3-5 in 1933.

The quarter Peter filed on had a 12 by 16-foot shack on it and five acres of light clearing. For these improvements he paid twenty-seven dollars besides the ten-dollar filing fee. He had proved up the quarter by 1930, by which time he had 38½ acres cleared. He did not spend all his time on the homestead but also spent some months each year farming in the Edmonton district. Peter sold the farm around 1940.

REITZE AND AGNES (JANSSEN) DeVRIES JAN DeVRIES

Reitze Jan DeVries was born in [illegible], Groningen, the Netherlands, on February [illegible], [illegible]. Because of the crowded conditions that existed in his homeland, he left, coming to Canada to seek the space that he could not find at home. He left the Netherlands in March, [illegible] and, after a long boat and train trip, arrived in Lloydminster, Alberta. After working on five different farms in that area over a span of two years, he left there and came to Neerlandia. He had heard about Neerlandia when still in the Netherlands and yearned for a place to settle down and be close to a church. He filed on the NW [illegible] in [illegible].

In May, [illegible], Jan DeVries, born April [illegible], [illegible], arrived in Edmonton on his way to join his brother Reitze. He came to Neerlandia and homesteaded the SE [illegible]. Together Reitze and Jan started making a home for themselves on this new, unsettled land.

The first years proved to be difficult. In the fall of [illegible] both Reitze and Jan headed for the prairies (Saskatchewan) again to work on a threshing crew. They went because wages had been good the previous fall, and they hoped to earn some money to help them get started on the farm. But upon arrival they heard that wages had dropped to three dollars a day. Their trip cost them almost what they earned in wages. They did, however, have very fond memories of many of the people they met at that time.

The first pigs that the brothers sold in the early 1930's had to be chased to Neerlandia (nearly five miles), where they were loaded on [illegible] truck for the long trip to Edmonton. The group of three pigs that was sold at that time netted a total return of [illegible].

Sometimes the mosquitoes were so bad that it was impossible for Reitze and Jan to sleep in their shack. At those times they would "smoke up" a granary in the evening and go to sleep there.

The mosquito and fly problem led to another interesting arrangement. In the mid 1930's many horses in the area died from a disease spread by the mosquitoes and flies. Reitze and Jan had two horses that they used for, among other things, hauling cream to Neerlandia, where it was picked up by Fisher Bros. Trucking and taken to Edmonton. One of these horses died, so they decided to team the remaining horse with a Holstein bull they also had on the farm. This worked fairly well, until the other horse also died. Then the bull had to pull the wagon by himself. Sometimes a neighbour had a cow that needed servicing. When Jan came by with the bull and wagon, the bull would be unhitched and brought to the cow, then to be hitched up to the wagon again to continue the trip to Neerlandia. In June 1937 they got two horses from Klaas Krikke, so the bull could retire from the harness.

On January 26, 1941, Reitze married Agnes Janssen, who had moved to Neerlandia in May [illegible] with her parents, [illegible] and [illegible] Janssen. Agnes had been born on June 14, 1914, and raised in Edmonton. Reitze and Agnes had built a new house on the SW 7-62-3-5 and now settled there.

Reitze, Agnes holding [illegible], [illegible] [illegible].

Reitze and Agnes' marriage was blessed with the birth of four children. **Jerry Richard** was born on December 11, 1942. **Lambertus Terrance** arrived on the scene the day Japan surrendered during World War II — August 14, 1945. Reitze remembers walking along the streets of Barrhead that day – all ears were tuned to the radios. **Richard David** was born on December 19, 1950, and **Brenda Janet** on September 24, 1954.

Brenda, Dick, 1959

Life on the farm slowly became easier as mechanization occurred, and the farm produce increased in value after the Depression. Beginning in 1940, Reitze was able to devote some of his time to community work by serving on the board of directors of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. He spent many years on the board between 1940 and 1970.

The DeVries family had an eventful year in 1967. Jerry married Ann Elgersma in June. In August, Terrence married Janny Vaartstra of Edmonton and settled on the home place, in the house that was built in 1940. Reitze, Agnes, Jan and the two younger children moved to a house in Neerlandia, that had been purchased from Gerrit Beyers. Reitze and Jan slowly retired from the farm, but kept busy, as Reitze was janitor of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, a position he held from 1967 to 1983.

In November 1972 Brenda married Kenneth Strydhorst. They settled in the Neerlandia area and took up farming.

Richard continued his education at the University of Alberta, graduating with a Bachelor of Education degree in 1972. He taught in Lacombe Christian School for five years. In July 1975 he married **Johanne Boskers** (Joanne). Joanne was born on February 13, 1953, in Rocky Mountain House: her parents were also Dutch immigrants. She graduated from Red Deer College in 1974, and worked as a nurse in Red Deer Hospital. Joanne now works part-time in Barrhead General Hospital.

Richard and Joanne's oldest child, **Steven Glen**, was born on April 4, 1977, in Red Deer. That summer, they moved back to the Neerlandia area to begin farming, and in 1978 bought the N½ 2-63-3-5 in the Vega area. **Christine Joanne** was born on February 8, 1979, and **Andrea** Denise on February 3, 1982. On Christmas day, 1983, **David Michael Noel** was born.

Joanne holding Andrea, Christine, Richard holding David, Steven, 1984

In 1979 Jan moved to Hillcrest Home in Barrhead. Later, in 1982, he went to Barrhead Nursing Home, where he continues to reside (1984).

Reitze and Agnes still live in Neerlandia, where they enjoy their extended family. The Lord has truly blessed them and their family, and they are thankful for all the Lord has guided them through.

Richard DeVries

SJERP DE VRIES

Sjerp De Vries was born in Friesland, the Netherlands, on December 15, 1903. In his early

twenties he worked for farmer in Tzummarum, Friesland. When, however, a couple that he worked with, Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, decided to immigrate to Canada, Sjerp resolved to go with them. They all arrived in Neerlandia in April 1926.

On June 14, 1926, Sjerp filed on the NE 16-61-3-5. For several years he lived there in a shack, but later bought a small house that had belonged to Gaele Baker. On this quarter he made a meagre living. It was proved up in 1935.

Sjerp.

Sjerp never married and spent the last years of his life almost as a recluse, going out only for supplies. Jacob and Janke Hiemstra would visit him occasionally, and Janke and others would do small favours for him, such as making curtains or giving him baked goods. Moreover, the neighbourhood boys often visited him and were always welcome. But Sjerp returned none of these visits.

In spite of his solitary habits, Sjerp always knew what was happening. He had a radio to which he listened with regularity. Jelte Fisher, who walked to and from church services, invariably stopped to converse with Sjerp and to give him the weekly church bulletin on his way home. In addition, when anyone came to visit, the visitor would be asked about various members of the community. Sjerp could converse on a variety of topics and enjoyed debating the merits of different makes of tractors.

In his later years, the only visitors he had were men except for one. One day Lily Krikke had car trouble on her way to Barrhead. She stopped and knocked on Sjerp's door. In stunned surprise Sjerp said, "A woman for goodnessakes!" When he overcame his surprise he helped her on her way.

Sjerp in front of binder. Sitting on ground: Albert Mast, Clarence Mast, 1939.

In January 1968 Sjerp died of a heart attack, and was found about three days later by some neighbours. He was buried in Barrhead Cemetery on January 22, 1968. Because he left no will, his land was sold by the Public Trustee and the proceeds were sent to relatives in the Netherlands.

Jennie Fisher
Clarence Mast
Jennie Reitsma

ALBERT AND MABEL (ELZINGA) ELGERSMA

Albert Elgersma and Mabel Elzinga were married June 23, 1940, in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church with the Rev. H. Van Der Woude officiating. They took up farming on the SW 16-62-3-5 with two cows, one heifer, and two sows. The former owner, Peter den Hartog, had built a lumber house on it, but the east side of the house had no outside siding on it. That first winter, therefore, the water in the kettle on the cook stove would be frozen in the morning many a time. Firewood, however, was plentiful and so were the ashes.

The following spring, on Saturday, April 26, 1941, the heavy spruce bush on their neighbour Lucas Sturwold's land caught fire and the south wind blew the burning needles across the road into the straw stack just west of Albert's farmyard. It lit up like a volcano and so did the granary beside it, which contained all the cleaned seed grain. The rail fence of the pig yard, a few little sow coops, and two more granaries filled with grain also burned. Burning needles from the spruce trees kept coming and were all over the yard. Many men and women came and worked hard to prevent more burning and towards evening the wind died down. Everyone was happy and thankful the house had not burned. [illegible] kept on the smoldering fire as the wind came up, but the fire did not start up again.

A few days later, on April 30, Albert and Mabel's first child, **Sandra Anna**, was born. Albert bought his first machinery that spring. An International Farmall A tractor ($804), a two-bottom plow, a disc, and harrows were bought from the McCormick-International dealer, Frank Thompson of Barrhead, with no down payment. Albert greatly appreciated Frank's trust in him and made every effort to pay off the machinery as soon as possible.

It was always an eventful day on the farm when little piglets had to be hauled out of the straw stack to be weaned. The mother sows would dig long tunnels into the straw stack and make a comfortable nest there. But to crawl in and dig the little pigs out was not very safe, as the mother sow would not be cooperative. Using a tub, washboiler, or bags to keep the piglets in, Albert and Mabel would work at removing them. With feed in hand Albert would call and lure the sow away from the straw stack, while Mabel would crawl into the tunnels to grab the little pigs. Often the battle would be desperate as Albert would struggle to keep a mother sow away from the straw stack. On one occasion forty little pigs were hauled out and five mother sows were robbed of their offsprings.

Mabel holding Ann, Albert. Front: Andrew, Winson, Sandra, 1947

Andrew Simon was born May 23, 1942, and **Winson** Melvin on September 4, 1943. In 1943 Albert built a barn and later more buildings were added. In the spring of 1944 Albert and Mabel bought their first car, a 1936 Plymouth. The little Farmall A tractor had to pull that car through mud holes in the road many times.

More children were born to Albert and Mabel: **Ann** (Anna) Agnes (January 4, 1946) and **Simon** Albert (October 10, 1949). On December 17, 1952, twins were born: **Annette** Alice and **Melvin** Peter. The little son lived for three days before the Lord took him Home. The funeral was held December 23 and Rev. Mulder spoke on the theme, "Let the children come unto Me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Two more sons, **Melvin** Peter (February 20, 1954) and **Bertram** John (June 8, 1956) were born in the following years.

In February 1954 Albert had bought the NW 16-62-3-5 from Henry Kippers and in 1959 he bought the SW 21-62-3-5 from Melle Elzinga. During the summer of 1966, two sisters, **Gloria** Dawn (August 1, 1960) and **Susan** Elaine (November 29, 1961), were adopted into the family.

Albert and Mabel Elgersma farmed for thirty-one years. Once a severe hailstorm ruined the crop and the fields looked as if they had been disced. Two other years hail damage was experienced but not to the same extent.

Sandra married Henry Strydhorst of Neerlandia. Andrew married Henry's sister Alice in September 1962 and they lived in Neerlandia for three years. They now (1984) live in Edson with their six children. Andrew runs a trucking firm. Winson married Joyce Uiterdyk of Montana in August 1966. They and their four children live in Edmonton, where Winson is attending law school. Ann married Jerry De Vries, Simon married Eva Mast, and Annette married Bill Nanninga.

On November 12, 1976, Melvin married **Carol Cupido** (August 24, 1957) of Edmonton. They have two children, **Leanne** Dawn (January 23, 1981) and **Melissa** Laurette (June 30,

Back: Ann, Andrew, Winson, Sandra. Front: Annette, Mabel, Bertram, Albert, Simon, Melvin, c. 1960. Insets: Susan, Gloria, c. 1967

Carol holding Melissa. Melvin holding Leanne, 1983.

1983). Melvin and Carol farm on the SE 27-62-3-5

Bertram married Debra Bouwer of Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. They and their daughter live in Grand Rapids. Bertram is district manager of an insurance firm. Gloria and David Lenz are living in Barrhead with their son. Susan and her husband, Wesley Hiemstra, live in Neerlandia with their daughter.

Albert and Mabel moved from their farm to the hamlet in October 1971, into the house vacated by Anne Mast. Albert became councillor of District 7 of the County of Barrhead in 1980.

Mabel Elgersma

ANNE AND HAITENA (SCHMIDT) ELGERSMA

Anne Elgersma (July 23, 1893) of Schraard, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje Reinsma

(July 29, 1893) owned a large dairy farm in Friesland. They had two sons, Simon (Siebren, February 23, 1919) and Albert (March 13, 1920). In 1922 Antje died. Sometime later, Anne hired Haitena Schmidt (born October 6, 1895 in Holtrop, Oost Friesland, Germany) as a housekeeper. She had been working for a doctor in the Netherlands before she came to the Elgersmas. Then, about 1928, Anne decided to immigrate to Canada, but Haitena was not allowed to immigrate to Canada as a housekeeper. So, on March 11, 1928, Anne and Haitena were married. That same month they went to Germany to say farewell to Haitena's family and then the Elgersma family left for Canada aboard the *Rijndam*. They landed in Halifax.

[illegible]

After arriving in Edmonton the Elgersmas lived a short while in Tofield. From there they moved to Bluffton where Simon and Albert attended school for about six months. Haitena became sick with rheumatic fever which damaged her heart. Next the family moved to Edmonton. They lived in the basement of the Christian Reformed church building.

The Elgersmas made yet another move in 1929. On a fine spring day they set out for Neerlandia. Anne filed on the NE 18-61-3-5 on April 11, 1929, and bought the SW 17-61-3-5 from Jim Tuininga of Edmonton for $500.00. He had also bought a small herd of Holstein cattle, four horses, a wagon, household articles, and whatever else he thought was needed. This was all loaded on the train in Edmonton, and the family was full of optimism and anticipation as they boarded the train. It took much longer to get to Barrhead than they had expected, but they enjoyed the country scenery. After unloading at the Barrhead station, Anne and Haitena drove away with the horses and the wagon loaded to capacity.

Anne had instructed the two boys to herd the cattle home. Simon and Albert had no idea where they were and how far it would be to get to the homestead, but they encouraged each other as they followed the road they had been instructed to take. One cow, however, proved to be nasty and after about two hours of herding them along, the boys realized the nasty cow was in the process of calving. They tried to keep the cows together and let them rest while the cow calved. But some cows kept going and others lagged behind. It was too much for the boys, so they sat down on the road and cried. Several hours later their father returned with the wagon and team of horses, looking for the boys and the cattle. It was dark by then, but the boys did not mind walking and herding the cattle along since their father was there. The calf was put on the wagon and the cows followed. Eventually they reached their destination.

That first winter was a difficult one for the cattle. Because the Elgersmas had arrived during the summer they had been unable to make provisions for proper shelter and proper feeding for the cattle, so several cows and heifers died during the early spring of 1930. Anne became very discouraged and considered going back to the old country. He feared this to be a "God-forsaken country." But Haitena would not hear of it and after debating the pros and cons, they came to the conclusion to give it a try for five years.

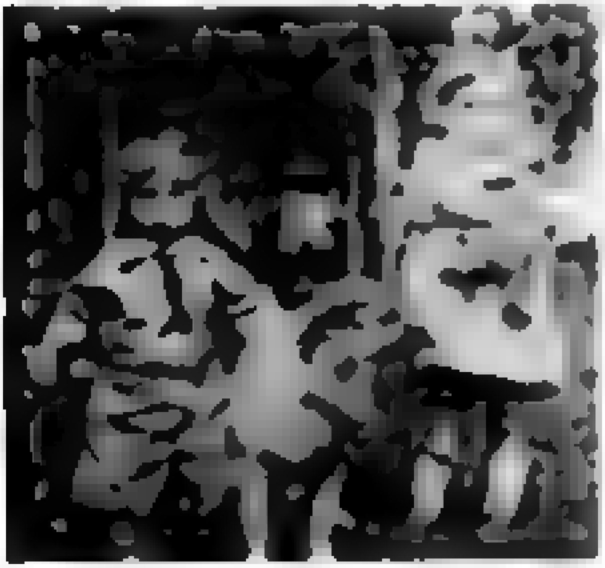
For a while the family lived in a house on the

SW 20-61-3-5, then moved into the house that had been built in the meantime on their quarter. The boys started subfreighting for Billy Quack. Every Monday and Thursday morning, Simon and Albert would leave early with a team of horses and wagon or sleigh to stop in at all the farmers along their way (and some out-of-their-way) to school. They would pick up [illegible] Neerlandia store. After school, they would deliver all the empty cream cans to the farmers as well as the groceries that the farmers' wives had listed for them to buy at the store. This added three dollars a week to the family income.

Simon and Albert quit school at ages fifteen and fourteen and went working at a lumber mill [illegible] the bush and get paid two cents per log. Their aim was to skid from ninety to one hundred logs a day with a horse. Considering those were the Depression years, the two boys made good wages and since they worked as one unit the family did well.

In 1936 Simon had an operation and spent one month at the General Hospital in Edmonton. He had a cyst removed from his liver and came home again in apparent good health.

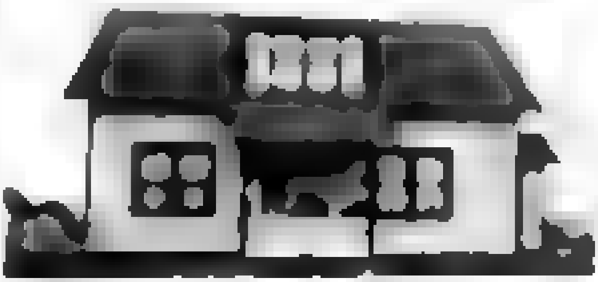
During those years, five children were born to Anne and Haitena: **Jurina** Akke (August 16, 1929), **Bert** (Bouke, July 18, 1931), **Hilda** (Hinke, June 9, 1933), **Tillie** (Mathilda, June 15, 1934) and **Agnes** Akke, July 12, 1935.



Bert, Jurina, 19[illegible]

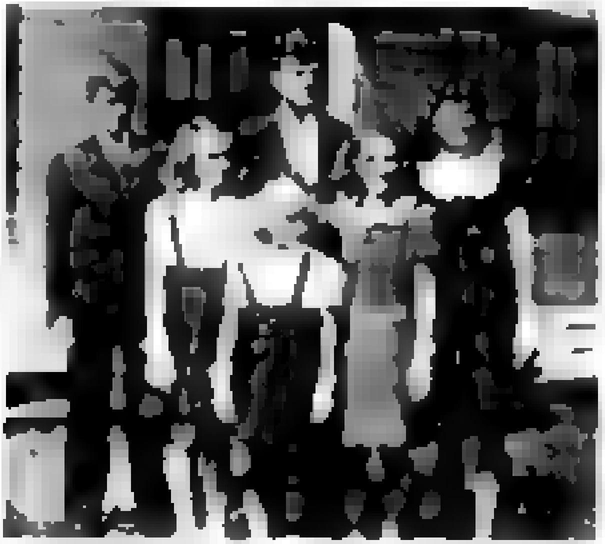
Then some sad times came to the Elgersma family. In April 1937, after suffering from pneumonia, little Agnes passed away in the hospital. Haitena brought her to the grave alone, since Anne was in the hospital with pneu[illegible] Haitena gave birth to another daughter, **Haitina** Katrina. But just twenty minutes later Mother Haitena died of a heart attack. Gezina Toebes wrote a letter to Haitena's family in Germany to let them know of the loss. At first Rieka Lievers stayed with the Elgersmas, caring for the children and doing the housework. Baby Haitina was brought to Catherine Holwerda, who was willing to take care of her. For the next two years, during the winter months, Jurina and Bert boarded at Emmerzaels' since it was too far for Bert to walk from school to his dad's farm. Jurina spent one night a week with Rieka, who taught her to sew.

During the fall of 1939, Simon remarked to Albert that he believed his previous illness was returning. In January 1940 he was admitted to the General Hospital in Edmonton. He was still there on his twenty-first birthday and, after weeks of suffering, he passed away April 26, 1940. It was a very wet spring and had rained for several days, so his body was taken by train to Barrhead and hauled on a wagon box by a team of horses to Neerlandia, since the roads were impassable for vehicles. The funeral was held May 1, 1940, a sunny day. That week Rev. Van Der Woude had received new dental [illegible] during the funeral service he had difficulty speaking and abruptly said, "Excuse me." He turned his back to the gathering, removed his dentures, and then went on with less difficulty. The service was very impressive, in spite of this little incident. The Lord spoke and comforted the family and the congregation.



[illegible]

In 1940 the Elgersma family moved to the SE 33-61-3-5, which Anne bought in 1943 from William van Ark. Rieka Lievers helped the family out by washing, ironing, and baking. She taught Jurina homemaking skills and in 1943 Jurina quit school to stay home and take care of the family. Hartina, who was nearly six, also came back to live with the family. Catherine Holwerda was a good mother and had taken good care of her, but the family wanted her back, though it must have been difficult for Catherine to give her up.



Back: Bert, Anne, Jurina. Middle: Matilda, Hilda. Front: Hartina, c. 1946

Albert married Mabel Elzinga. During the fifties, Jurina married Ryer Krikke, and Bert married Tjamke Moes. After Bert married, Anne lived with him and Tjamke for about one-and-a-half years, then bought a house from Gerrit Beyers. It was moved to the Elgersma yard and Anne lived there until 1969.

Hilda married Sam Aardema. They have five children and live in Edmonton. Tillie married Karl Hestermann. Hartina worked at Trudeau Cleaners in Edmonton after she quit school. After a year-and-a-half, she returned to Neerlandia and worked in the Neerlandia store. She married John Van Zalen on October 28, 1958. They live in Westlock, where John is a painter. They have three daughters. Anne Elgersma died of a heart attack on December 20, 1969.

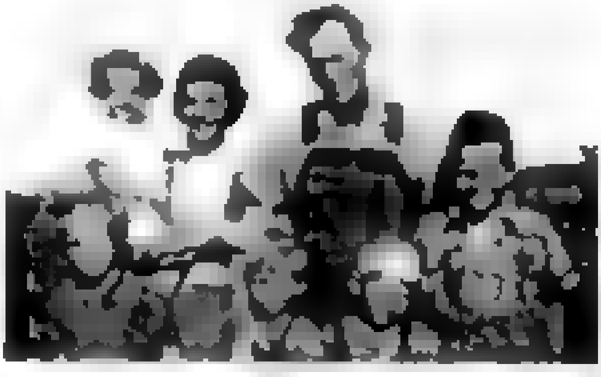
Albert Elgersma

ANDREW AND JENNIE (WIERENGA) ELZINGA

Andy and Jennie were married in Neerlandia on July 6, 1943, and settled on the SW 22-62-3-5 in a two-room house. They owned only five dollars and a couple of milk cows, but soon acquired a few pigs.

Their oldest son, **Winston Melvin**, was born June 15, 1944. Pete Fisher drove them to Barrhead and the roads were terrible! Often during the ride he would say, "Hang on, Jennie!" **Henrietta Louise** (August 2, 1945) was born in a car on a Sunday morning. This time Meije Elzinga was the driver. He said, "That's alright *stil maar, net als een klein pigje ... lekker warm houden* (just like a little piglet ... keep her warm)." Meije took his coat off and put that over them. **Lewis Henry** was born January 3, 1947. Jenny remembers "We had had a heavy snowstorm, one track to follow, so Andy stayed right in the centre en ja there came a car and hit the ditch, but we nicely kept going. When Andy went back the car and the driver were still there. The driver said, 'Some drunk so-and-so drove me in the ditch.' So Andy pulled him out and [the grateful driver] handed him five dollars too yet." **Melvin David** was born January 9, 1949.

With so many little children, Jennie needed help. It came in the form of a washing machine with a small motor bought in the Vega store. After washing on Monday, ironing on Tuesday, mending Wednesday and Thursday, cleaning house on Friday and Saturday, Sunday should have been a day of rest, especially in church. But not for Andy and Jennie, they took all the children along to church.



Back: Jennie holding Sandra, Andy. Front: Henrietta, Lewis, Melvin, Winston, 1951

Sandra Ann was born March 13, 1950. Shortly afterwards the Elzingas sold their farm to Ralph Krikke. They moved to Peers in 1951. Three more children were born there. In 1981 [illegible] home in Edmonton. Both are enjoying life in the Home.

Jennie Elzinga

MELLE ELZINGA

Melle Elzinga was born March 3, 1901, in Lioessens, Friesland, the Netherlands. He quit school when he was twelve, although he would have liked to continue and become a school teacher. There was not enough money for that though, and besides it was too far to travel to the city, where he would have had to take the training.

In 1924 Melle went with a group of twenty young men to Argentina. Melle's father wanted him to see what the prospects were for moving the family there. But since there was no established church and it seemed impossible to become landowners (a few large landlords owned most of the land), Melle decided to go to Canada. The Dutch Consul advised him to return to the Netherlands first, then go to Canada from there. [illegible] Argentina and back. Melle immigrated to Canada in 1926.

Melle's first employment was on a farm at Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. The farmer's wife, having been a school teacher in England, instructed him every night, and Melle mastered the English language very well. He also kept an English accent all his life. Although these people invited him to stay, Melle wanted to go to a place where there was a Christian Reformed Church. He went to Edmonton and then to Neerlandia in 1927. He first lived in John and Reka Gelderman's house while they went to Nobleford for several months. Melle looked after the livestock on the farm, and his pay was the weekly cream cheque. He did not accept this for himself, however, and to their surprise he had a little money to give to them on their return.

In the spring of 1927 Melle sent money for [illegible] took out the SW 21-62-3-5 as a homestead on May 20, 1927. John also took out a homestead, but it was later cancelled.

In the spring of 1928 Melle wrote to Calvin College, requesting admittance. But when his father came unexpectedly that year, he abandoned [illegible] twenty.

Melle did a lot of clearing on his quarter and his father's. It was usually done during the summer and done by hand, only one acre at a time, but every acre cleared meant they were a bit bigger farmers. Since they worked with horses, the days were not that long. Quitting time was 7:00 p.m. because the horses could not work any longer. In the evenings there was time to do gardening and read books.

Melle was always interested in church affairs and concerned about the welfare of the church. In 1928 he became leader of the *Knapen Vereniging*. Every Saturday afternoon he would meet with the twelve to thirteen-year-old boys and girls and give them Bible instruction. A few years later he became leader of the [illegible] Northern Alberta Young People's League. [illegible] society until he was forty years old, then joined [illegible] and taught catechism classes.

After his parents died, Melle remained on the family farm, although in 1962 he sold the NW 21-62-3-5 to Henry Strydhorst, Jr. He had sold the SW 21-62-3-5 in 1959 to Albert Elgersma. Melle had a lively interest in art, history, and literature, and enjoyed reading. He had a library of about 1700 books, but in 1971 his house and the contents burned down. A bungalow house was soon built on the farm for Melle to live in.

[illegible]

Even though he had always been somewhat handy with the pen, it was at the tender age of 74 that Melle began attending art classes and took up the paintbrush. He learned to paint in oils and sketch in pen and ink. Melle died suddenly on Sunday, October 9, 1983, in a car accident. He lived to be 82 years old.

Mabel Elgersma

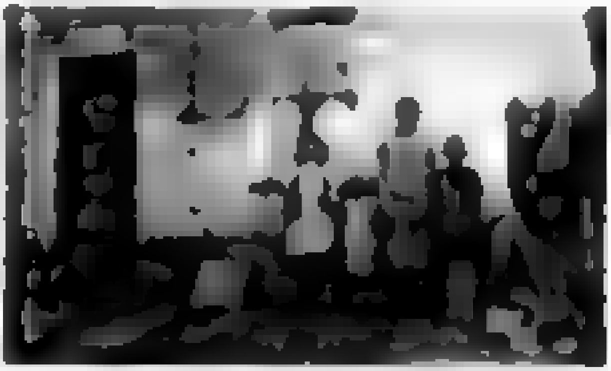
WIJNZEN AND SAAKJE (HANIA) ELZINGA

After their marriage on May 10, 1900, Wijn- [illegible] 1980) Elzinga rented a dairy farm in Anjum, [illegible] their large family. Four children died in childhood, two of drowning, one of whooping cough, and one of diptheria. Wijnzen knew it would be difficult to establish his five sons on farms and he did not want them to be labourers or store clerks, so in 1926 the eldest son, **Melle**, immigrated to Canada to see what possibilities [illegible] son, **John** (Jan, September 26, 1904), went to Canada as well. Wijnzen went in April 1928 to see the country for himself. In June he took up a quarter section (NW 21-62-3-5) in the Vega area, next to the one Melle had taken up.

Later that year Saakje and six of the children (Sandra, the oldest daughter, stayed behind) went by Batavier Line to England. From Liver- [illegible] -ding in Quebec City. They arrived at the CPR Station in Edmonton at 7:00 a.m. on Monday, September 17, 1928. They were met by [illegible] Neerlandia truck driver, to pick up the trunks from the station so that all could be transported to Neerlandia that same day. The family all looked on in awe as Melle conversed with the truck driver; no one understood a word of what was being said. That evening they arrived in Neerlandia at the Schoonekamp home, where [illegible] -zen had been waiting for hours for his family to arrive at Schoonekamps', whose hospitality was great and warm and never to be forgotten.

The Elzinga family moved into a little house close to the Schoonekamp home that had been [illegible] time, and Melle had arranged employment for all except the youngest. He also promptly changed their names to English ones. There was no delay — on Tuesday noon, September 18, Melle took his youngest sister, **Mabel** (Maaike, August 13, 1918), to school and made sure she understood her name was to be Mabel, not Maaike, explaining that otherwise everyone at school would call her Mike. He also elaborated on the beauty of Canada and on the grain that was being harvested. This was all beyond Mabel's comprehension, and she looked at her oldest brother, who seemed like a father to her, and said in Fries, *"Binne wy yn Kanaän bilanne?* (Did we land in Canaan?)"

Mrs. Levy was teaching grades one to four and taught Mabel her first English. The first few days were difficult ones. Mabel had long curly hair which was braided into two braids with a ribbon at the end of each. The braids were a source of much pulling and teasing. One day a larger boy was pulling the braids and saying, "What's the matter, Mabel?" repeated- [illegible] and explained the phrase meant *"Wat scheelt er aan?"* Rulse added a comforting word by saying *"Hij is nog dommer dan wat jij bent.* (He is even dumber than you are.)" Rulse was a great friend. Many times Mabel's braids and ribbons were put into the inkwell located in the centre of the two-seater desk behind her, and ink got spattered all over. Mrs. Levy soon put a stop to that, but still Mabel began to remove the ribbons from her hair as she went to school and put them back on neatly as she returned home.



Mabel, Rose Tamminga, Anne, Emma Tamminga, 1929.

After the harvest **Andy** (Anne, December 25, 1914) also came to school. Mrs. Levy was thorough and did not allow the *th* sound to be replaced by a *t* or an *s*. The English language has some inconsistencies that were a problem

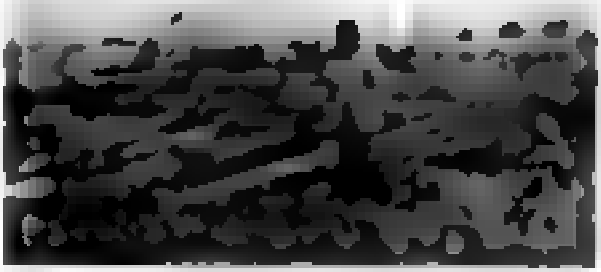
Mabel provided many a laugh for the class as [illegible] be brought. Eventually Mabel became [illegible]

[illegible] Peter (Pieter, July 14, 1903) and [illegible] plied, "You must really be homesick, if you [illegible] (Douwe, September 6, 1905), went to the city of [illegible] ber 17 1930, when he was gassed in a well while [illegible]

John Elzinga got a job driving truck for Billy [illegible] depending on the weather. John married Hilda [illegible]

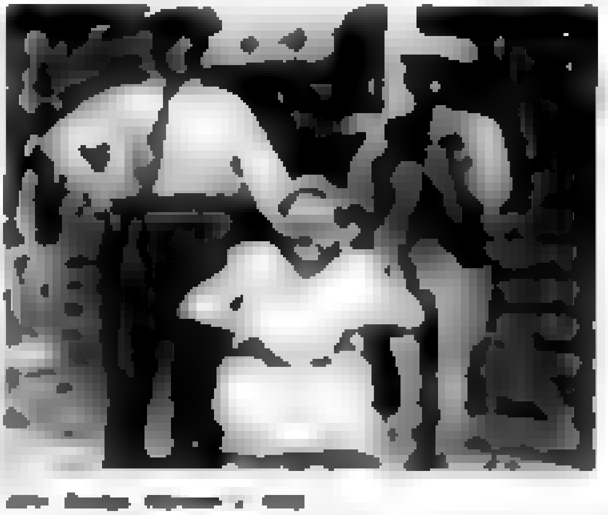
[illegible] enjoyed baking bread and became very good at [illegible] remarked, "*It is wol hwat taai* (It is a bit tough)." [illegible]

In the spring of 1929 the family moved to Douwe Terpsma's farm, which they rented for [illegible] pay a stumpage fee. They used the lumber for [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible] house were not very adequate. At first Saakje was not appreciative of having fires in the stoves during the night because she thought [illegible] done it in the "old country." Although Saakje had a green thumb and her houseplants [illegible] proved to be a calamity in the winter months as the plants would freeze. One time she had a beautiful hanging plant, a Bethlehem star, in full bloom. To protect this during the night from the frost, she covered it with a coat, securely fastening it all around the plant. One night Andy came home late from the city where he was employed and saw a silhouetted shape [illegible] cedure, he woke up everybody as he screamed out, "There is a man hanging here!" In the latter part of February, however, when the precautions were eased off, the plant did freeze



[illegible]

Saakje later became used to keeping a fire in the stove overnight.

Soon after they moved to the homestead, Wybren and Meile bought six cows at sixty dollars apiece. Since Wybren was a dairy man he was interested in building up a herd of good milk cows. To this end he bought [illegible] calves from John Ebbers in Edmonton. By 19[illegible] when he proved up his land, he had a herd of fourteen cattle. He also had five horses on the farm and was cropping twenty-nine acres.

It was five miles to church in Neerlandia and in the wintertime stones would be heated in the oven, put in the sleigh, and tucked in with blankets so it would be fairly warm going to church. Going home was different. On very cold days Meile and Mabel would walk to church in the morning, and Wybren and Saakje would come with the team of horses and sleigh for the afternoon service. In the summertime lunch was taken along, since they would then stay at church for both services and eat their lunch at noon in the church basement.

Mabel went to Girls' Society, which was every Wednesday afternoon from two to four o'clock. The Rev. Harm Van Der Woude would lead the girls the first hour in Bible discussion, and the second hour was needlework. During the summer months, on Thursday evenings, the young people would play baseball and after harvest, during the winter months, the Zang Vereeniging would meet on Monday evenings. When Albert Eigersma started dating Mabel, he would sometimes walk home with her after Zang Vereeniging, the five miles north, and then home again. Albert and Mabel were married in [illegible].

Andy married Jenny Wieringa in 1941. Alie studied at BBI and became a missionary. She served in Surinam and after about twelve years went to Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A., where she worked with Hungarian refugees. She also went to Japan, working in the mission field there for eighteen years. She is now retired and lives in Florida, U.S.A.

Wybren and Saakje remained on their farm until their deaths. Saakje passed away January 10, [illegible], at the age of 85 years, and Wybren passed away February [illegible], [illegible], at the age of 92 years. They had been very happy in Canada, seeing their children doing well in this free country. The fact that the quarter section of land was their own property was so rewarding to them that they enjoyed every moment of working and living on this farm.

Mabel Eigersma

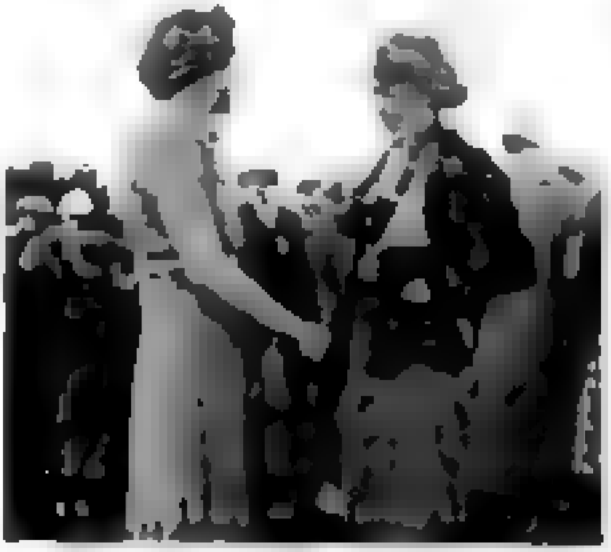
ART AND LULA (STRIKWOLD) FISHER

Arthur Fisher was born in the Netherlands in 1908 and came to Canada when he was five or six. After being educated in Edmonton, Art joined his family on the homestead in Neerlandia.

Lula was born in Michigan in 1913 and came to Canada with her family after spending short periods in Iowa and North Dakota. On December [illegible], [illegible], Art and Lula got married. They lived in a house they had built on the SW 10-61-3-5, Art's father's quarter.

Lu liked to recount the story of their marriage. The story as retold by their son follows.

At the age of twenty-five, Lula was a clerk in the Neerlandia store where she frequently saw Art. Early one winter she went to Edmonton for a short holiday and caught a ride with Art, who was hauling a load of hogs to town.



Lula (on right) during her clerking days.

On the trip to town Art was unusually talkative and he made a date to see Lula that evening. That night Art proposed and wanted to get married immediately. Lu accepted the proposal but said that their respective parents should be informed.

So Lula stayed in Edmonton with her sister Pauline while Art returned to Neerlandia with

the truck. Art informed his mother and Lu's father but didn't have the pluck to talk to Lu's mother.

Art and Lu were married four days after his proposal by a Presbyterian minister in Edmonton at 7:30 in the evening. Jim and Pauline Tuininga were witnesses and the four had supper at Johnson's Cafe following the ceremony.

Having no time for a honeymoon, Art changed his clothes after supper and together with his new bride headed back to Neerlandia in the truck, delivering cream cans on the return trip until 2:00 a.m. the next morning.

When they returned to Sturwold's farm Lu found that her father Toney had not told his wife about the marriage saying only, "Rulie, it won't surprise me if Art and Lu are married when they come home."

Art and Lu lived with their respective families until their house was ready the following fall. During this period only their parents knew they were married and when Art had a date with Lu he would say he was going to see his wife but was not believed. By the time they moved into their new home people knew they were married.

Five children were born to the Fishers: **Judy** (Judith) Lucille (March 4, 1940), **Tony** (Anthony) Arthur (July 11, 1941), **Rosalie** Thelma (March 22, 1944), **Marlene** Eunice (September 18, 1948), and **Dennis** (August 4, 1951). During this period Art was the local truck driver, first in partnership with his brother Dick and later on his own. Art also did the accounting for many of the local farmers and helped to install the local telephone system.

The family moved to Edmonton in 1958 and Lula still lives (1984) in their original house in Edmonton. Arthur died in 1973.

Tony Fisher

CORNELIUS AND ELIZABETH (PETERS) FISHER

Cor (Cornelius) Fisher, born in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia with his parents in 1927. He attended school first in Edmonton and later in Neerlandia. After he left school he worked for various farmers. In the winter of 1931-32 he worked at Chileen's lumber mill — a six mile walk across Shoal Lake. After this he stayed on the homestead to farm.

On June 12, 1941, Cor married Elizabeth Peters. They set up housekeeping on the NW ¼ of 35, which Cor had purchased from his father. Cor's parents lived in a little house on the yard, and Cor and Elizabeth cared for them till their deaths. Five children were born to the Fishers: **Betty** (Elizabeth), November 29, 1941; **Janet**, January 28, 1944; **Joe** (Jonathan) Wayne, March 7, 1946; **Wayne** Cornelius, July 4, 1949; and **Bernice** Tena, December 18, 1953.

Betty, Joe, Bernice, Wayne, Janet. Seated: Cor, Elizabeth. 1977

Cor farmed all those years raising grain, pigs, and cattle. Ducks were a pest in the fall, hundreds and hundreds of them would get in the stooks or swathes. They would eat about five percent and destroy about seventy percent of the grain. Sometimes as much as 5,000 bushels of grain would be destroyed in two or three days, Cor recalled. "In a few days, if they were left alone, they would gather by the thousands — mostly early in the morning before the sun was up. If we noticed this in time we would get hunters in from Barrhead who were only too glad to come. One hunter had the gall to charge me for the shotgun shells, so I charged him the same amount for the recreation and pleasure provided him. Some of these hunters had shells by the case. Next day they would complain of sore shoulders. Just never satisfied!"

When Wayne finished school he helped his father on the farm. During that time Cor was an Alberta Wheat Pool committee member and served on the seed-cleaning-plant board. He also belonged to the fish and game association. Due to ill health Cor retired in 1979 leaving Wayne to continue with the farming. Cor and

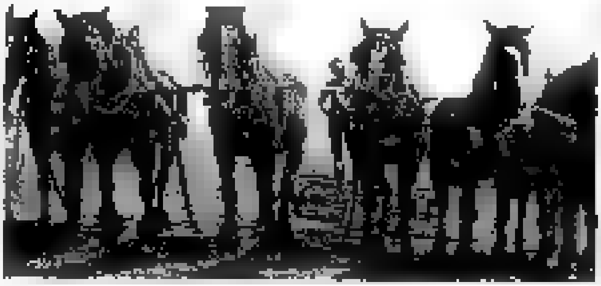
Elizabeth moved to the SW 10-61-3-5 where they had built a new house.

In the meantime the children grew up and went on with their own lives. Betty married Henry Gelderman. Janet married Richard Kambach. They had two sons. Janet and lives in Fort Nelson, B.C. Joe married Hilda Wierenga, and Wayne married Hilda's sister Hendrene. Bernice works at Craig Insurance in Barrhead.

Cor and Elizabeth Fisher

PETE AND LULLA (BOS) FISHER

Pete Fisher, born in the Netherlands and educated in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia in 1927. He farmed with his brothers and parents until 1943. Then he bought Bertus Bos' farm (NW 22-62-3-5) in Vega and married his daughter Lulla on September 22, 1943.



Pete discing, 1930s.

Lulla had also come to Neerlandia in 1927. After she finished grade ten and part of grade eleven in Neerlandia school, she would have liked to become a nurse, but for further education she would have had to go to either Barrhead or Westlock and board there. Her parents could not afford this, so she quit school and went out working. She did housework for a neighbour for ten dollars a month. Three years later wages for housework went up to twenty-five dollars a month.

After their marriage, Pete and Lulla lived in Vega for three years. Pete cleared a lot of land with an axe and a team of horses. Their first son, **Edward** Simon, was born September 10, 1944. In 1946 Pete and Lulla sold the land back to Lulla's father and bought Chris Leder's quarter (SE 4-62-3-5). While living there, they had four more children: **Hazel** Beatrice (November 6, 1947); **Geraldine** Elizabeth (September 21, 1952); **Bertrand** Peter (November 2, 1957); **Daylene** Joy (October 6, 1964).

Pete and Lulla's wedding photo.

Lulla always liked carpentering. Before her marriage, she and her sister Liz had made cupboards from v-joint boards for their father's house. Later, Lulla built herself some kitchen cupboards from spruce veneer and finished them with varnish. Pete enjoyed farming and fixing machinery, but Lulla did simple repair jobs around the house. Pete enjoys singing and, from the time he was a teenager, has always belonged to some choir.

In 1966 Pete and Lulla sold their land to Ryer Krikke and moved to the Mellowdale district, where they had bought the SW 18-60-3-5. All of the children except Bert are married.

Lulla Fisher

RICHARD AND KATHARINA (WIERENGA) FISHER

Dick Fisher came to Neerlandia in 1927. He first worked on the farm, and in the lumber

camps in the winter. In 1932, he went to work as a truck driver for Billy Quick. He was able to buy a truck and start his own business in 1934.

On June 2, 1935, Dick married Kay Wierenga. They were married on Sunday afternoon, and early Monday morning Dick left on his trucking route for Edmonton. It was a wet spring and the roads were very bad. Late Saturday night he returned home to his bride — not exactly the most romantic way to spend a honeymoon!

Dick, Kay

In 1936 Dick's brother Art became a partner in the trucking business, and Fisher Brothers Trucking Co. had its beginning. That same year, on March 18, a son, Wilbur **Richard**, was born to Dick and Kay. He was soon joined by two little sisters, **Hilaria** Katherine on May 8, 1937, and **Jeanne** Shirley on October 5, 1938. Seven years later, on September 17, 1946, another little sister, **Dianna** Karen, was born.

For the first five years of their married life Dick and Kay lived in a four-room house on the original Fisher homestead. In 1941 they moved to a new home on SW 10-61-3-5. About this time Kay became the proud owner of a new hand-powered washing machine. After fifteen minutes of frantic cranking back and forth, the load of clothes came out nice and clean. What a luxury, and it sure did save on knuckles!

Bill, Hilaria, and Jeanne began their school years at Shoal Creek Heights School. They walked one-and-a-half miles across the fields in all types of weather. In 1945 and 1946 they were bussed to Neerlandia school in Uncle Albert Tiemstra's school bus. In 1947 they again attended Shoal Creek Heights for one year, then were transferred back to Neerlandia School which they attended from 1948 to 1953.

In 1955 Dick dissolved his partnership with Art and purchased Vega Mercantile. On July 15, 1955, the family moved to Vega and Bill began trucking full-time. About this time Dick started a Massey-Ferguson dealership and built a shop in Vega.

On July 20, 1956, Hilaria married Philip Bryan of Vega. That same year, on August 17, Jeanne married Jack Bozak. On March 17, 1961, Bill married Faye Srigley.

With land being rapidly cleared and farming becoming more prosperous, business thrived, and soon many farms were decorated

Dianna, Dick, Bill, Jean, Kay, Hilaria, 1961 with red Massey-Ferguson machinery, a testimony to Dick's industrious salesmanship. In 1962 he was honoured as the second highest Massey-Ferguson Dealer in North America.

In 1965 the contract with Massey-Ferguson was terminated, but Dick, Kay, and Bill continued to be busy with the store and the trucking business.

In October 1972 Dick was diagnosed as having cancer. He underwent surgery in an Edmonton hospital and was able to return to his home in January 1973. Two weeks later he sat and watched helplessly as his store burned to the ground. Dick had two years remission from his disease and was able to enjoy a bit of gardening until his health failed again. He died January 23, 1975, at the age of sixty-five.

Kay sold her house in Vega in 1977 and moved with Dianna into the Avord Arms Apartments in Edmonton, where they still reside. Dianna has worked at the Edmonton Public Library for the past seven years, and Kay does volunteer work in various hospitals. She continues to enjoy good health.

Hilaria and Philip Bryan reside in Vega where they farm and have a gravel trucking business. They have four children. Jeanne and Jack Bozak also farm in the Vega area and are co-owner-operators of W.B. Logging Products. They have four children. Bill and Faye Fisher reside and farm in the Vega area also.

Richard Fisher

SIMON AND JENNIE (HIEMSTRA) FISHER

Simon Fisher was born in Edmonton and spent his first twelve years there. In 1927 he moved with his family to the Neerlandia district. As he grew older Simon farmed with his brothers Pete and Cor and was spare driver for Fisher Brothers Trucking.

In 1942 Simon joined the Royal Edmonton Regiment of the Canadian Army. After training in the British Isles, his unit was sent to Sicily and took part in the invasion of Italy. He was taken prisoner of war and kept in Stalag 7A, Bavaria, Germany, for nine months. He was suffering from malaria and starvation when he was rescued by the American Forces. When he arrived in England he, a man of 6'2", weighed 88 pounds. After recuperating a short while in England, he returned to Neerlandia in June 1945.

On December 28, 1945, Simon married Jennie Hiemstra and they began farming on the NW 16-61-3-5. They have five children. **Peggy** June was born November 24, 1946. Now Peggy Kearns, she lives in Barrhead with her three sons and works as secretary at the Barrhead elementary school.

Butch (Simon William Jr.) was born April 25, 1948. He married Brenda Matthews in 1971 and they live in Barrhead with their two children. Butch owns his own Kenworth and does various trucking jobs. Brenda is a Certified Nursing Aide, presently employed at the Barrhead Clinic.

Jennie, Peggy, Simon, Crystal, Barry, Russel, Simon, 1968

Russel, Ryan, Debbie holding Shelly, Tracy, 1984

Russel James was born December 1, 1951. He married **Debbie Morrow** on July 20, 1974. Debbie (born April 13, 1955) grew up in the [illegible] fore her marriage. She enjoys music and gives music lessons. Russel and Debbie live on the original farm where they do mixed farming. They have three children: **Ryan** Dean, born September 22, 1977; Tracy Lynn, born February 1, 1980; and **Shelley** Dawn, born May 9, 1984.

Barry Lewis was born October 8, 1954. He is also involved in the farming operation, but does road construction work during the summer months. **Crystal** Ann was born May 11, 1960. She is presently living in Edmonton and is employed at the Edmonton Bus Depot as a junior clerk.

While living in the Neerlandia district, Simon and Jennie were involved in various community activities. Simon and his sons are all avid hunters and fishermen. Though they travelled to Fort Assiniboine or Timeu to hunt, big game could also be hunted locally because there was more bush in those days. In fact, Jennie tells a story of Simon shooting a moose from the back stoop of the house during the 1960s. Word got around and the next time Simon visited the doctor he was called a lazy hunter. One bear that was shot got cooked for supper, but a diet of berries had made the meat sweet, and the family judged it not edible.

In 1978 Simon and Jennie retired due to Simon's poor health, and sold the farm, which [illegible] Russel and Barry. They are now enjoying life in Barrhead.

Jennie Fisher

WIEBE AND JISKE (WIERSMA) FISHER (VISSER)

Wiebe (Wybe) Visser was born May 13, 1874, in Tzummarum, Friesland, the Netherlands. His parents later owned a bakery in Perrega, where he grew up.

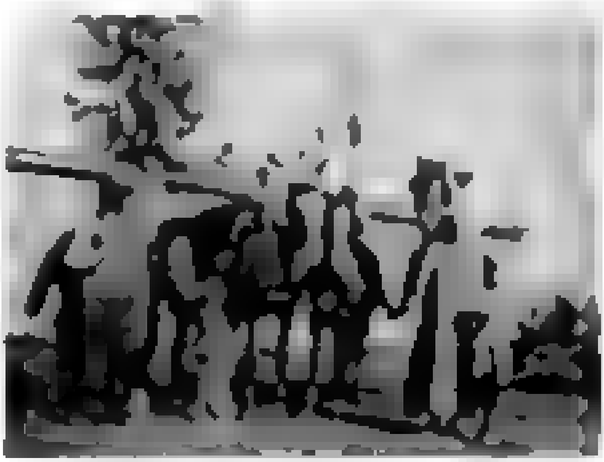
Jiske (Jiskje) Wiersma was born July 26, 1879, in Gaastmeer, Friesland, and lived there until she got married to Wiebe. Upon their marriage on May 22, 1902 they moved to Oude Bildtdijk where they had bought a bakery. Six of their children were born there. **Jelle** (Yelter) was born February 22, 1904; **Ed** (Edward) Ane on April 30, 1905; **Jennet** (Sjoukje) Anne September 27, 1906; **Art** (Ephe) on May 14, 1908; **Dick** (Dirk) on August 10, 1909; and **Peter** (Pieter) on February 17, 1911. Life was very busy those days.

Early in 1913 a brother of Wiebe came back to the Netherlands after he had immigrated to North America a couple of years earlier. He came back with high praises of Edmonton, a boom town, and persuaded his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Yelter Visser, who were then in their sixties, to move to Edmonton with the four children who still lived at home. So on April 20, 1913, the move to Edmonton was made, along with another brother and his family and two married sisters with their families. Vissers — twenty-eight of them — arrived in Edmonton on May 13, 1913.

When he came to Canada, Wiebe changed his last name from Visser to Fisher. It is thought that perhaps he did it because when he first came to Edmonton there was another man, George Visser Sr., with the same last name as his and with only one post office in Edmonton, there was potential for confusion. Whether this is the reason or not, the name was changed, though not officially. Ed was in the U.S.A. at the time and his name remained Visser.

The First World War started a year after Fishers came, and the big boom in Edmonton ended. By that time the family was living on a farm in Jasper Place and milking cows. Three more children were born to Wiebe and Jiske in Edmonton: **Cornelius** Ane was born June 12, 1914; **Simon** on September 8, 1915; and **Annie** (Antje) Emma on December 12, 1918.

It was also in Edmonton that a serious acci



[illegible]

Back: Art, Yelter, Ed, Jiske, Wiebe, Jennie. Front: Peter, Simon, Cor, Dick, 1918.

dent happened to Yelter, then a young boy. He was working on a mower while his younger brother Pete was holding the retarding spring lever. But unable to hold onto it any longer, Pete let go. It hit Yelter on the head and he suffered a broken skull. Through the work of many doctors, his life was spared, though he suffered epileptic seizures after that.

In the spring of 1925 Wiebe came to Neerlandia with his sons Dick and Pete, and bought NW 10-61-3-5. They had come with a team of horses, a hayrack, canvas and supplies for the summer. They began to clear land and also spent time patching up an old log house. Wiebe, Dick and Pete moved into the house, and the mice followed shortly after. Dick was a good shot and, as a form of recreation, would sit in one corner of the house with his .22 rifle and shoot the mice.

In the winter, Yelter came. He homesteaded the quarter just south of his dad's, the SW 10-61-3-5. Wiebe and the boys cleared and broke 120 acres by 1926. A few years later Dick took out a quarter by Shoal Lake, the NW 9-61-3-5.

In 1926 Wiebe sold the dairy business in Edmonton, and in the winter of 1926 Jiske and the rest of the children came to Neerlandia. Edward had gone to Washington State, U.S.A., and Art stayed in Edmonton.

In the fall of 1929 the Fishers had a fire. The chicken coop, the cow barn, some granaries, and even some stooks burned. All that was left was the old log house and a small log barn for horses. The first thing they did was make a

Back: Peter, Arthur, Edward, Yelter, Dick, Cornelius. Front: Annie, Jennie, Jiske, Wiebe, Simon, 1925 lumber barn for the ten milk cows. The pigs and other livestock wintered in the straw stacks.

Almost every year Jiske would take a trip to Edmonton to visit old friends, leaving the family to bach. Simon and Cor were elected to do the housework and cooking. One day they decided to make a treat. They filled a pot half full with rice and raisins and put it on to cook. The meal began to swell, and they soon had to get another pot and then another until they had used up almost every pot in the house. They had rice with raisins for days and still can taste it after fifty-five years. During Mom's absence the Rawleigh dealer came by and wanted to know if they needed anything. They did not, and he continued on two miles north to Jennie's place (Jennie had married Jerry Reitsma in 1929). Jennie asked whether Mom was home yet, and the dealer said that she wasn't but he figured she soon would be because the boys were mopping the floors.

Although there were hunting regulations, each man tended to make his own rules when it came to hunting. One law, for example, was that muskrats were to be trapped rather than shot. Shooting was quicker, however, and very tempting when a skin would fetch $2.50 (five times what one could earn working a day in the mill). Many people did it. Once Simon and his friend Andrew Heberling were caught by the Justice of Peace, C. K. Mast, and told to report at the egg grading station at 9:00 Monday morning. Well, they showed up — along with about thirteen other guys who were also guilty of shooting muskrats. When Cad saw the crowd, he told them he would let it go for this time.

Dick married Kay Wierenga in 1935. Three years later, Art married Lula Sturwold. In 1941 Cor married Liz Peters and Annie married George Terpsma. Two years later, Pete married Lula Bos. Simon and Jennie Hiemstra were married in 1945 and Edward married Tena Peters in 1946.

Wiebe remained on the farm until he passed away in May 1950. Jiske stayed for some years after that, living with her oldest son, Yelter, until he died in April 1958. Shortly after Yelter died, Jiske went to live with Annie. She died in 1960.

Fisher Family

WILLIAM AND MARY FOX

William Arthur Fox was of Irish descent. He was born in 1876 in Dosair, Manitoba. His wife Mary, was also Irish. She immigrated to Manitoba with her parents when she was two. After their marriage Bill and Mary moved to various places because Bill was a wanderer by nature and loved trying new ventures. One such venture brought the family to Neerlandia to try homesteading on the NW 24-61-3-5 in 1932. They stayed for about four years.

Tom, Bill, 1944

Jerry 1938

Manetta (August 10, 1911, Winnipeg) married James Johnman of Neerlandia. Ellen (November 21, 1913, Redcliff, Manitoba) married Frank Ciochetto of Naples. Mary (February 27, 1915, Winnipeg) married Pete Johnman, and they farmed in the Vega area until the war

Tom (January 24, 1917, Winnipeg) and **Jerry** (December 14, 1920, Foxwarren, Manitoba) attended school in Neerlandia. Both served in the army during World War II. Jerry was killed in action in 1944 while serving with the Royal Edmonton Regiment. Tom served with the Military Police. William and Mary's last child was born in Lethbridge in 1922.

Mary passed away December 13, 1939, in Edmonton. William lived to be 94 years old; he passed away in 1970.

Ellen Giochetto

SIMON AND CARRIE (OLTHUIS) GROOT

It was a cold February day in 1940 when the Groots arrived in Neerlandia. Si and Carrie were newlyweds and it was here they began their first home. They rented a house on the northeast corner of Neerlandia's Centre. This had been the home of the store manager and his family. Immediately west of the house stood the old Co-op store building. Both buildings had been vacant since the new store and manager's living quarters had been built just across [illegible]

[illegible] inquiries regarding the feasibility of setting up [illegible] buildings were ideally situated and could read[illegible] An agreement was reached and Si was given free [illegible] chine shop. He rented both buildings for ten dollars a month and set about making the necessary changes. Tools, equipment, and supplies were purchased and, by the end of February, the shop was ready to open for business.

Si, born March 1, 1913, was fourteen when he came to Edmonton from Andijk, North Holland, the Netherlands. First he farmed with his father. He had, however, also taken courses throughout the winter months for several years — along with on-the-job training at an Edmonton garage. By the time he came to Neerlandia he had his mechanic's license, a welding certificate, and a trained blacksmith apprenticeship card.

The move to Neerlandia was a new venture for both of them. Si began as manager and proprietor of the garage and blacksmith shop. (The Groots never did get around to giving it a proper name. It was, however, dubbed, "The [illegible] She had lived in Neerlandia before from 1919 to 1934, and received her formal education there. Moving to Neerlandia and establishing a home of her own proved to be somewhat different.

The Groot's first tasks were to set up a home and to get things in place for shop work to [illegible] and some repairs. Routines were quickly established for daily living activities. Water had to be hauled from the store as there was no well near the house. Shopping was simply done at the general store.

Money was soon coming in as a variety of work — ranging from soldering small items to [illegible] was handled at the shop. Many entries in the shop ledger listed ten, twenty-five, fifty cent and one dollar items. Si supplied free air by means of a hose outside the shop. That was often a busy area as customers filled soft tires on their vehicles. Things went smoothly from the start and the Groots were in business.

Both Si and Carrie enjoyed living at the Cen[illegible] lonely. People frequently dropped in to see [illegible]ing, one or two people invariably stopped by to wait — or after shopping was completed the ladies came by for morning coffee or afternoon tea while waiting for a ride home. Children on their way home from school knocked on the door to ask for a drink of water and then stayed on to chat and visit a while. From their living room window the Groots could watch the traffic [illegible] church, school, store or shop. They appreciated [illegible]

Living at the Corner had other implications as well. It was standard for traveling salesmen to stop there, and generally they needed a place to spend the night. The storekeeper had often supplied that need but he was growing weary of the whole thing. He suggested, at least on one occasion, that the Fuller Brush man try the Groot's door. Being naive and innocent, they agreed to let him stay. It meant not only getting his bed ready but also supplying sup[illegible] Word must have spread because there were several requests after that first one. As a result Carrie got many Fuller Brush, Watkins, and

Raleigh products that way — generally things she could well have done without.

While in Neerlandia, Si and Carrie learned interesting things about human nature. When in business, one has opportunity to see an otherwise hidden side of people. Occasionally a quibble occurred over job prices before agreement could be reached. At times requests were made to borrow shop tools, so that the person could do the job himself at home. These requests put Si in an awkward position. On the other hand, most transactions were amiable.

The Groots found most customers to be charitable and considerate. One man who frequently had difficulty in getting an engine for the water-pumping system started during cold weather months, first asked Si to come over to start it for him. When a bill was presented the man would say, "Now you can't do the job for that," and he would double the amount shown.

There were many who expressed appreciation for the work done in the shop in a variety of tangible ways. The Groots were invited to help themselves to garden produce. Gifts of farm produce from spinach to eggs, from cream to oven-ready chickens, were also brought.

After the Groots had closed shop in Neerlandia they sent out twenty statements for payment due, amounting in total to about [illegible] Only one of these was ever acknowledged — a definite sign of the economy at that time, no doubt. Carrie has in her possession the letter sent in answer [illegible] they received it almost twenty years later. It is postmarked Vega, stamped December 12, 1962, and bears a five-cent stamp. It reads as follows:

> Vega, Alberta
> [illegible]
>
> Dear Mr. Groot:
>
> [illegible]
>
> [illegible]

It was duly signed. "People are great!" wrote Carrie.

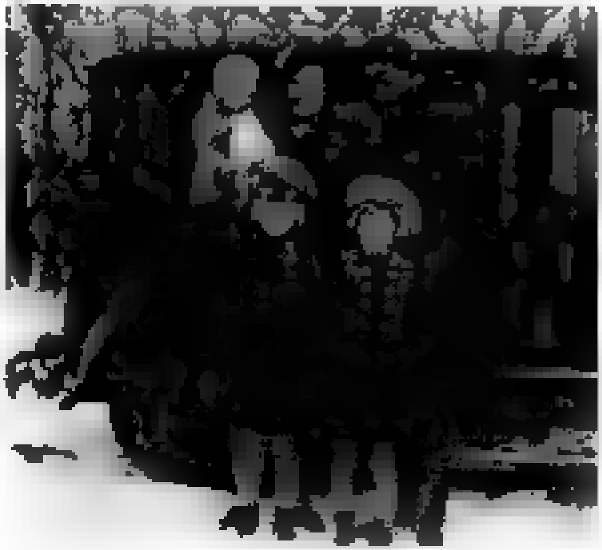
In 1941, the Groot's first son, **Edward**, was born. It was New Year's Day when they made their way to the Barrhead hospital. Carrie recounts the trip.

"The recent snow had laid a clean and bright covering over all. Hoarfrost had wrapped every shrub, tree, bush, post and wire overnight with a thick coating lending a majestic beauty to the outdoors. The sun arose as we drove along and it cast a marvelous pink tinge and sparkle to the entire panorama before us. The magnificent splendor observed on that quiet country morn has seldom been equalled anywhere for us since."

The Groot's son was the first baby to be born in that hospital after the new year. Carrie stayed [illegible] days before she was allowed to go home.

Carrie with Ed. 1941

One morning, after a rainstorm, the Groots woke up to find a puddle of water on their kitchen floor. The roof was leaking! It needed repairing before another shower came and they were asked to make their needs known at the next store board meeting. As Si was busy in the shop, Carrie was elected to attend that meeting. The men welcomed her and listened to her short request. They readily agreed to repair the roof. One board member remarked that this was the first and only time which he could recall that a woman had attended their meet-



Carrie holding Ed, Simon. Front: Elsie, Shirley Olthuis, 1942

ing. Incidently, after the roof was fixed, the rent went up to twelve dollars a month

In April 1943 the Groots decided to move back to Edmonton. They left by car but, since a road ban was in effect due to the spring thaw, their furniture and other belongings were left behind until the trucks could travel the highways again. They spent just over three years in Neerlandia and those times remain special and are indeed memorable

Brief Epilogue

Three months after the Groots left Neerlandia, their daughter Sherryn was born. Soon they learned that she was blind. This altered their lives considerably. In 1951 they moved to Vancouver because of the special education available for her there. They were blessed with two more children

In August 1965 Si suffered a massive stroke and passed away. After Carrie had attended the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, she and the children moved back to Edmonton in 1968 where Carrie taught grade one for seventeen consecutive years at the Christian School

Carrie Groot

ANDREW AND KATHERINA (KOHLER) HEBERLING SR

Andrew Heberling was born in Battaapati, Pohanegye, Hungary on November 9 1886. In 1910 he married Katherina Kohler, who had been born on November 20. 1891. A daughter, **Katherina** (Katie), was born to them in 1910

The Heberlings immigrated to Racine, Wisconsin, U S A , in 1912, leaving their daughter with her grandparents. In 1915 a son, **Andrew**, was born. About 1920 they went back to Hungary to get their daughter, but stayed for five years. They had thought that, after World War I, the small states in Hungary would unite and life would be better. When they found that the borders remained, they began to long for the greater freedom they had known in the U S A

Soon the call of America became too strong and they decided to come to Canada. Here they bet the government ten dollars that they could make a home on 160 acres of wilderness. Andrew filed on the NE 9-61-3-5 in 1926. On this homestead Andrew and Katherina's last child, **Louise**, was born in 1930

Back: Katie, Andrew Jr. Louise. Front: Andrew Sr. Katherina, c. 1957

In 1940 they sold the homestead to their son Andrew and bought the Peter Wagner homestead in Mellowdale which they farmed till 1952, when they retired to Barrhead. Daughter Katie married Lewis Bentz. They have one child. Louise married Helmut (Elmer) Bieiert

They have three children. Andrew Heberling Sr. died in October 1959. His wife Katherine died on August 22, 1981. Both are buried in the Pentecostal Cemetery in Bloomsbury.

Andrew Heberling, Jr.

ANDREW AND OLGA (BRUK) HEBERLING

Andrew Heberling Jr. was born in Racine, Wisconsin, U.S.A., on May 1, 1915. The first ten years of his life were quite unsettled. At the age of five years, his parents took him to Hungary. At about age 11, he came with his parents and older sister to the Neerlandia district.

As the homestead was situated half-way between Neerlandia and Mellowdale, Andrew Jr. was never quite sure where he belonged, but enjoyed both districts. He got his education in Neerlandia. He has many memories of walking to school with his pal, Simon Fisher. The first two miles were a bush trail, and they had to cross Shoal Creek on a log. With the creek full of fish and the bush full of furbearing animals it was sometimes hard to get to school on time.

In 1940 Andrew married Olga Bruk of Camp Creek. Olga had been born on May 7, 1923, in Rude, Poland, and immigrated to Saskatchewan in 1929. Her father had come in 1928, then returned to get his family. After a couple of moves Olga ended up in Camp Creek, where she met Andrew.

Andrew and Olga bought his parents' homestead in 1940. Two children were born to them there. A son, Edwin Joseph, was born in 1941. A daughter, Shirley Louise, was born in 1945.

In 1948 Andrew Jr. sold the homestead to Joe A. Wierenga and bought the Jim Dunn farm in the Leighton district. Barry Andrew, the Heberlings' third child, was born in 1954.

Andrew and Olga are now retired (1984) and live in Barrhead.

Andrew Heberling, Jr.

[illegible]

JACOB AND JANKE (BOONSTRA) HIEMSTRA

Jacob Hiemstra was born in Tzummarum, Friesland, the Netherlands, on July 30, 1899. Janke Boonstra was born September 20, 1901, in Noord Bergum, Friesland. They were married May 3, 1923, and worked for a wealthy landowner for several years. On the advice of an older brother Henry, who was already in Neerlandia, and after a great deal of planning, the decision was made to immigrate to Canada. Jacob had come to the conclusion there was not much of a future for them in the Netherlands. They decided to come to Neerlandia because they wanted to be near the church and because it was a Dutch settlement.

Jacob and Janke arrived in Edmonton in April 1926 and were met by Raymond Baker. Two days after their arrival, Jacob took up his homestead (SW 21-61-3-5). Jacob and Janke lived with Gaele Baker for the summer, and then moved to their own place. They started their new home with ten quarts of raspberries and ten dollars. Living conditions were harsh, and the Hiemstras withstood a great deal of loneliness because at first they had no means of transportation. When Jacob was gone working it was impossible for Janke to leave home with the children.

Jacob bought a cow from Klaas Tuininga for thirty-five dollars. In exchange he cleared ten acres of land for Klaas. Jacob built a log barn and a chicken coop in the second year of homesteading. The chickens were the sturdy gray birds called Barred Rocks and were raised for eggs and meat. After working in the harvest in Provost and at the Fluet's Sawmill in 1928, Jacob was able to buy two horses and a sleigh. They could then ride to church and the store and do some visiting.

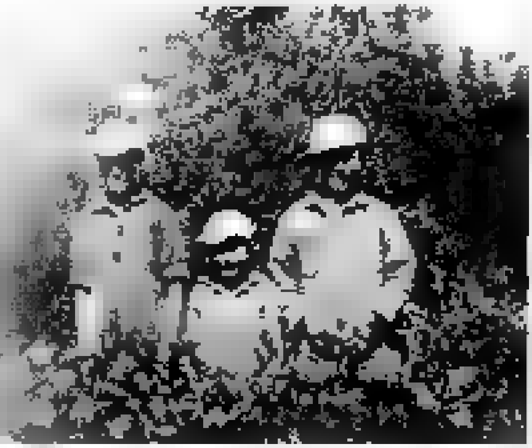
The July 1st picnic was a special highlight and much enjoyed. Blueberry picking in August was also a great adventure. Sometimes the family started off at four or five in the morning, went across the Athabasca River to James Fowler's place, and returned for afternoon chores.

All the berries and meat were canned in sealers. Strawberry jam was a real treat. Low bush cranberries were stored in crocks in the cellar and used as needed. In the fall Jacob took his grain to Manola and exchanged it for flour and cream of wheat.

All socks and mitts were knit at home, and most of the clothes were homemade. Overalls had to be bought and a pair of rubbers cost one dollar.

Jake (standing), Jennie, Janke, Henry, Arnold, Corny, 1935.

Father and son, Henry and Jake, c. 1938.



Arnold, Henry, Corny, c. 1938.

Butchering time, Jake, Arnold, 1938.

Jacob and Janke raised four children, who eventually married and raised families of their own. **Jennie** (Jantje) (February 24, 1924) married Simon Fisher. **Cornelius** (November 14, 1926) married Grace Tuininga. **Arnold** (Aage) (December 19, 1929) married Gerri Clements.

Henry (Hendrik) (November 29, 1933) married Jessie McCullough

Janke passed away in 1979. She had left all of her family in the Netherlands and never saw them again. Jacob now lives in the Barrhead Nursing Home. He says that it is only by the grace of God that they could have survived such an existence. In 1980 he took a three-week trip to the Netherlands with his daughter Jennie, his first trip home after 56 years of living in Canada.

Jennie Hiemstra

JOHN AND ETHEL (INGLIS) HOWEY

John Young Howey left Owen Sound, Ontario, and went to Abbey, Saskatchewan, in 1914 to live with his brother, Edward Howey. He then sent for his wife, Ethel Goldie, and four children, **Samuel, Margaret, Mary,** and **Robert**. Another daughter, **Bertha**, was born in Saskatchewan on January 4, 1918. That spring, John and Ethel Howey decided to move to Westlock, Alberta, where John's younger brother Archie lived on a farm. John got a job with Frank Edison, and the children went to school east of Westlock. Later they moved to a farm west of Westlock, where a son, **Archie** was born on September 5, 1921.

In the meantime, Sam obtained work at Chisholm Lumber Camp, where Tom Wilson of Neerlandia was foreman. This led to a decision on the part of the Howeys to move to Neerlandia. In October 1921 they set out. First there was a team pulling a hayrack with the family's belongings on it driven by Margaret. Robert drove a second team with a wagon box containing more belongings. Then came John and Ethel walking and chasing the cattle. They walked all the way, stopping one mile north of Highway 18, on the Naples road, to camp for the night.

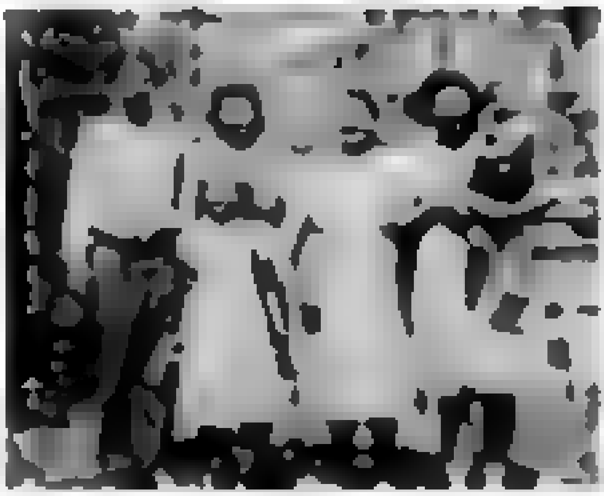
At noon the next day, they arrived in Neerlandia, where they settled in George Caughlin's house on the SE 27-61-3-5. George Caughlin had been killed by gas in a well several years before, so his house stood empty. They lived there till John Howey got a house built on the homestead (NE 21-61-3-5), which he had taken up for his son Sam and held for him till he reached 18 years of age.

On January [illegible] just as Charles Rewsma was going to bed, he happened to see from his bedroom window that the Howeys' house was on fire. Had he not warned them, the results could have been serious. As it was, no one was severely injured. The quick thinking of Robert who said, "Where is Ethel?" resulted in John and Mary rushing in to save the three year old girl. The house was burned, but the only injuries were burns to John's neck and forehead and to Mary's and Ethel's hands, and frostbite to Archie's feet.

Ethel, John, 1927

Margaret, Mary, Robert, Archie, and **Ethel** (who was born in Neerlandia on August 12, 1924) all went to school in Neerlandia. During this time, John and Ethel worked for the Wilsons on their farm, Ethel helped Elizabeth (Lizzy) Wilson in the house. Sam worked hard to help the family make ends meet. He worked in Chisholm Lumber Camp for several winters and later had a Caterpillar tractor. Margaret says, "I am very thankful that he was willing to help his parents the way he did." In 1950, Sam married, and he and his wife Vivian had one daughter, Wanda.

Margaret left home on May 4, 1924, to work for Martin Anderson of Barrhead, whom she married on August 4, 1927. Margaret and Mar-



Archie, Bertha, Ethel Sr., Ethel holding son Ernest. Front: [illegible]

tin had two daughters and one son. Her youngest daughter, Ethel, was killed in an accident while riding a pony when she was 13 years old (August 12, 1949).

Mary married Harlan Cox, and had three sons and two daughters. Both Mary and Harlan have passed on.

Robert never married and lives in Meadowview Apartments at Mitchener Centre in Red Deer, Alberta.

Bertha married Bill Lievers of Neerlandia. For a time, Mrs. Howey looked after Bill and Bertha's three children. Bertha is now (1983) in Hardisty Nursing Home in Edmonton.

Archie leased land in the Churchill district. He worked at different jobs and met his death on January 20, 1970, when a tree fell on him while he was working in the bush at Dapp, Alberta. He had never married.

Ethel was severely burned when a stove she was attempting to light with kerosene exploded. She died from these burns on July 23, [illegible]

John Howey died in May 1943. Ethel, his wife, had a stroke in June 1955 and also passed away.

Margaret Anderson

GERRIT AND GRACE (NANNINGA) INGWERSEN

Gerrit Ingwersen and Grace Nanninga were married October 31, 1937, during the Sunday afternoon service. Rev. H. Van Der Woude united them in marriage using as text, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." After the service it was snowing and the families got together at Nanningas' place for a little celebration. [illegible] new home on the homestead (SW 36-61-3-5) — no honeymoon trip in those days. The weather had cleared and the moon was out, but it was cold.

The house which Gerrit had built was of lumber and had two bedrooms. Gerrit had earned the lumber working with several other young men logging for Bill Williams, who had a [illegible] bought all their furnishings — beds, pots and pans, and whatever was needed — at an auction sale for the total cost of eighty dollars. That included a rifle. For a while Gerrit used his dad's machinery, but later he got himself a little John Deere H tractor, a two-bottom plow, a disk, and harrows. They also kept a few chickens, some hogs, a couple of cows, and a horse. Boy, they thought they were rich.

The first load of wheat that Gerrit brought to Barrhead had been frozen. The elevator man took one look and said, "I don't want it," so Gerrit took it back and used it for feed. He had borrowed money to get married so he asked the man he had borrowed it from, "Can you wait a year?" "Okay," he said. Wheat was selling at eighteen cents a bushel. The next year things were better and Gerrit met his obligations.

On October 18, 1938, the Ingwersens' first child, Elsie, was born at home. Petertje Schoonekamp was the midwife. Things were starting [illegible] cows and raising some chickens and pigs to [illegible] trapping on the side. This he had started when still at home with his folks. With his seven-dollar 30-30 rifle he would get the occasional coyote, whose fur could bring five dollars if prime. For meat they relied mostly on moose and deer, which they usually smoked. Moose in particular was delicious when smoked and dried. Deer meat was canned or, in winter, hung. It froze and you would "saw a piece off as you needed it." Then there were the prairie chickens, which were plentiful. Gerrit remembers the morning after they were married: "It was really cold and clear and crispy. We could hear these birds as they were sitting in the poplar trees talking to each other. I got the .22 rifle, opened the window, and dropped seven or eight of those lovely big birds. Boy were they good eating. We ate some and the rest Grace canned for future use." Occasionally they would kill a pig to supplement the wild meat.

About this time Gerrit and Grace got their first car. It was a 1927 Chevy Sedan, used, of course, but it ran well. It was a bit tricky to handle, however, and would sometimes take off without warning, either to the right or left. If Gerrit could not stop it in time he would end up across the ditch, sometimes part way up a bunch of willows or against some other obstacle. (Usually the family was not with Gerrit when this happened, as he drove quite a bit faster by himself.) Then he would fix it with wire and get it back on the road. It would be good until the next time the wire wore out.

Gerrit and Grace's second child, **Marjorie Helen**, was born April 13, 1940. As Petertje Schoonekamp was not available, Aaltje Baker had the honour of attending to the proceedings. [illegible] farming business was picking up slowly; they were raising more hogs, selling more eggs and cream, and [illegible] ing more land.

Then some farmers got the idea of forming a partnership and doing some logging and milling. Gerrit Ingwersen, George Anema, Corny Nanninga, and Gerrit Gelderman agreed to try it. They bought a timber berth, built a cook shack, put up a barn for horses, built a mill, and started business. Gerrit loved this work and helped saw many a log. At first the men hired cooks, but later their wives moved to the bush with them to do the cooking.

Gerrit stayed home for a while when **Ken** (Kenneth) was born December 18, 1942, in the Barrhead hospital. That same winter Ken developed double pneumonia and was very sick. They had a difficult time getting him to the hospital as the roads were badly drifted. But thanks to the Lord he pulled through.

The following year the whole family moved to the bush, Gerrit and Grace, three children, cows, horses, and everything. Corny and Sena Nanninga also moved lock, stock, and barrel to the bush. By this time the four men had quite a number of men working for them and their wives had the honour of cooking for the whole gang. They acquired a nice supply of lumber but [illegible] what they earned at the mill they lost on the farm.

Gerrit and Grace's fourth child, **Anita**, was born January 24, 1946. That year also saw them back on the old homestead starting over again. But prices were rising and hogs did well. Gerrit even bought a 65-foot windcharger at Cecil Tuininga's sale. It was homemade (of four by fours) except for the last ten feet which carried the charger. They took it down in one piece, hauled it home on two wagons, and put it up again on Gerrit's place — still in one piece.

On July 27, 1949, **Angeline** Grace was born. Gerrit had served a few years as deacon, but when he was elected as elder, he thought this beyond his capacity. Rev. Rubingh, however, [illegible] that he grew [illegible] and was [illegible] sufficient for him.

Cousin [illegible], Elsie, Marjorie, and Ken in front of [illegible] [illegible]

Anita, Gerrit, Marjorie, Ken, Elsie, Grace holding Angeline, c 1951

The day arrived that Ingwersens were going [illegible] Banff and Jasper were their goal, and they enjoyed the trip immensely. The mountains and wild animals were unforgettable. What a creation. They headed home again and went back to work, but now they knew that there was more to the world than just Neerlandia and its immediate surroundings.

By this time farming was getting quite prof[illegible] premium and grain prices were high as well [illegible] sight. Gerrit's parents and his sister Annie and her husband had moved to B.C. and Gerrit and Grace decided to visit them. They took their two oldest daughters along because they wanted to pick berries there.

Well, it was summer in B.C. and the Ingwersens were charmed by what they saw. Thoughts of moving started to tease them and [illegible] back that fall after the harvest and made a down payment on a farm of fifty acres. On October 25 or 26, 1952, they had their farm sale. The next day they loaded everything they wanted to take along on an old one-ton truck that Gerrit had bought and they took off.

Another son was born in B.C. In 1970 their sons took over the farm and Gerrit and Grace retired and moved to town. This was a difficult adjustment for them to make, but now they are settled in and Gerrit spends his time doing woodwork.

Gerrit Ingwersen

JOHN AND ROSE (TIEMSTRA) INGWERSEN

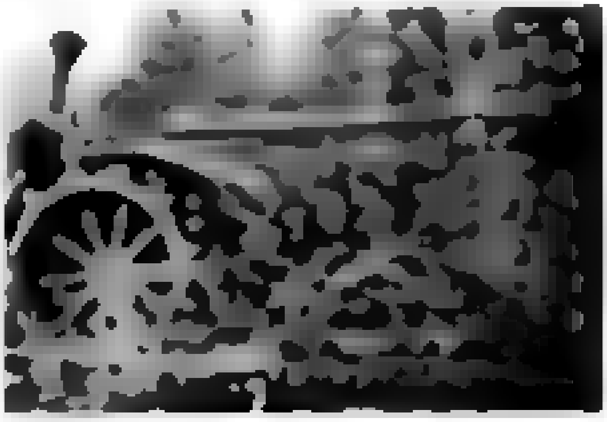
I, John Ingwersen, was born in 1918 on the Ingwersen homestead. I remember when I was three or four years old, waking up early in the morning and my back was sore. I felt the bed which I was lying on and all the straw in the sack had gone to the sides. I was lying on poles [illegible] back and the poles. Another time, I came out of bed in the morning and there were pots and [illegible] under the table, which was the only dry place. After giving me something to eat she told me to go outside. I could not believe that my mother would send me out while it was raining, but when I got outside the sun was shining and it was nice and warm.

Not too long after that, our family moved into a house built next to the second Co-op store. After we moved to our new home, things started changing quite rapidly for me and not exactly to my liking. In September I had to go to school, which was totally unexpected. My first teacher was Bill van Ark. He was a big man and able to mete out punishment very well. I can't remember all the teachers I had; most of them were quite dull. But one particularly stands out: McKitrick or Mac, as he was mostly called. What a whale of a time we students had in those four short months. When we found out that he was a real softie we really took advantage of it. Almost every day, especially when the weather was nice, we would take off for the bush. This always happened during noon hour. I was at a disadvantage because I lived close to school and I had to go home to eat. I would tell mother that I had to hurry up because we had special games to play, so she would help me along. Then I would go around the church and into the bush so Mac would not see me. The problem then was finding the gang. Sometimes [illegible] find them, not only because of the noise they made, but also because of the smoke, which one could smell a long way off. We used to take the long, green hair of tamarac trees, roll it in newspaper, and smoke it. We even thought it [illegible] C. Ashley. He was a good disciplinarian and a real sportsman. When it was recess or noon hour he was always out there with us to play [illegible] way to play and that was to win. Many a time the noon hour was extended when the wrong team was winning and I must say it was not too often when we came in that he, or rather his team, had not won.

When I was about eight or nine, we had a birthday party at George Anema's. It was in January and we were playing wild horse. I had a rope tied to my leg and was standing on slippery ice when someone yanked the rope and I fell on the back of my head. For just a minute I was unconscious but then came to. I felt sick so I went home, which was a mile of walking. After going a quarter mile, blood started coming out of both my ears. I made it home and they put me to bed. For two weeks I was in a sort of coma. I never went to a doctor, but survived. Later a doctor told me "You are lucky you are alive; your skull was cracked on both sides and if you hadn't walked home the blood would have gone on your brain and you would have died."

In the early days there were no fences around the farms so the horses and cattle could roam far and wide. They usually followed a creek or went to large meadows where there was a lot of grass. When I was not very old, it became my job to get the cattle or horses. We had a tame old horse called Pat that we used to get the cows. Pat, the dog, and I could usually find them because they had bells on. But when the horses were loose, Pat was with them and it was a different story. One time my brother Gerrit told me to get the horses. I went west about a mile, then south to the creek which went over Beaumont's place. Quite often they would be there, but not today. What to do? If I went further southeast along the creek, the bush became thick and there could be bears, and I was only ten years old. But, on the other hand, if I came home without the horses, Gerrit would call me a baby. Well, I certainly did not want to be called a baby! So on I went. After about another half mile I came to another large meadow and there were some buildings there too, a log shack and a small log barn, but no one was [illegible] knows about this, boy have I got a story to tell when I get home." I found the horses there also, feeding in the large meadow. I jumped [illegible] Pat and chased the others home. When I came home, I was all excited. I first told Gerrit, because he wanted to know what took me so long. He listened to my story and decided I was imagining things. At the supper table I told m[illegible] mont's as well, which it was: where Oene Piers later lived.

About 1940 brush cutters came into the district, first for use on an ordinary tractor. John used one with their John Deere tractor (This steel-wheeled tractor was bought new in 1937 for $1405). Even though the tractor had a lot of weight, it often got stuck. So they had to have another tractor available just for pulling the other one out. Cor Haemstra wanted some brush cutting done, so George Anema and John decided to try it. It did not work out well as John lost an eye from flying wood.



[illegible]

On October 24, 1941, John married Rose Hiemstra. They lived on John's dad's farm (NE 33-61-3-5). John started out working for his dad at twenty dollars per month. They got meat and milk and so on, but even so it was a pretty poor existence. In the summer of '42, Bill Olt[illegible] asked John to help him with well drilling. This John did, and their financial situation improved considerably. John would do the field work and the harvesting in the fall for his dad, and when that was finished he would go well drilling. [illegible] bought a sawmill, setting it up on John's place. They logged on Jake Schuurman's farm. Bill, John, and Jake hauled the logs out and, at the mill, sawed them into square timber, which was used for barns and other farm buildings. They also began custom-sawing logs, which they did for several years. Whenever the weather was suitable, they would saw lumber; the customer would come with two or more men to bring the logs to the mill and to take the lumber away. These people would all eat their noon meal at the Ingwersens so, along with their own gang, they would often have six or seven men eating at their place. (Lunches would also be brought [illegible] their children were still small, Rose used to have a hired girl. Most of the time this was Coleie Mast, who would work both in the house and also in the barn, especially when sows were farrowing. One night, after slabs had been burned close to the mill, a wind came up and the mill burned down. John and Bill, with some help and advice, rebuilt a better and faster mill. After three or four years, they sold the mill.

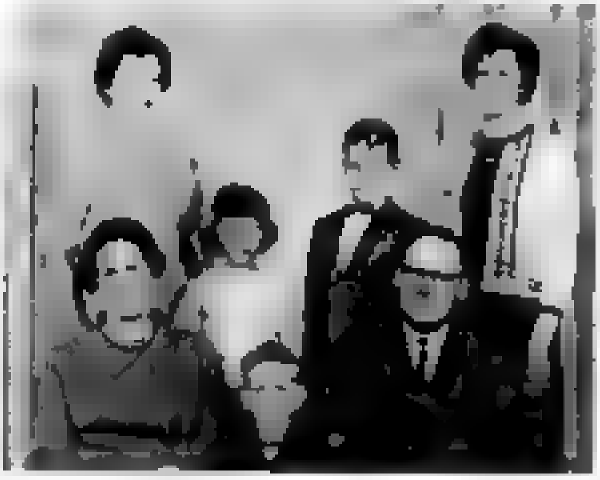
Sawing logs

In the fall of 1946, John and some others bought a D8 Caterpillar tractor with John Molodowich, although he sold them his share by springtime. They bought a brush cutter and piler for the Caterpillar and went to work clearing land. After a year-and-a-half of trying to farm and driving Cat, John sold his share and tried to stick to farming.

After 1947, John and Rose had several bad years in which they were hailed out, so John went back to what he knew best and enjoyed. He bought another mill, which was more portable than the previous ones, and went back to the bush. In 1959 John sold the mill and stuck to farming.

John skidding logs

John and Rose have five children: **Winnifred Rose**, born May 29, 1942, **Marion Evelyn**, born June 14, 1944, **Neil (Cornelius) John**, born March 2, 1950; **Myrna Maxine**, born June 11, 1955, and **Dale Stanley**, born August 6, 1958.



Back: Winnifred, Myrna, Neil, Marion. Front: Rose, Dale, John

In 1959 Winnifred married Henry Piers. Henry and Winnifred later went to California, but in 1965, when they came back to Canada, John and Rose decided to go into partnership with them. John and Rose sold their farm and, with Henry and Winnifred, bought a dairy farm in Abbotsford, B.C. Their daughter Marion had married Ken Piers in 1963, so the move to B.C. was made with the three youngest children. Four years later, they sold the dairy farm. John later worked for Cargill, an American company that raises hogs. John and Rose are retired and live in Abbotsford, B.C.

John Ingwersen

HARRY AND CATHERINE (HIEMSTRA) JANSSEN

Harry (Henry) Martin Janssen was born in Edmonton on September 27, 1917. Once, before Harry was born, his father, Bart Janssen, had attempted to make a living in Neerlandia, and he had tried again shortly after Harry arrived. Thus Harry recalls that when he was three years old, they left for Edmonton with all of the furniture loaded on the hayrack and the cows tied behind. The third time Harry's family came to Neerlandia it was 1938 and Harry was twenty years old. He was quite able to carry his load of

the work, and came to put in the crop before his parents arrived.

A few years later Harry met Tenie Hiemstra and they were married December 22 1942, when the new house which they were building on the NE 21-62-3-5 was ready. Harry was a farmer from the ground up and a great help to his father. But Harry owned only the south half of the quarter, and eighty acres was not enough to make a living on, so one and a half years later Harry and Tenie moved to B.C. That was to be a short stay, however, determined by Harry's mother passing away in 1948. Bart Janssen wanted his son to come back to Neerlandia, so while Bart went to the Netherlands for one year Harry took care of the land. This could not remain a permanent situation because there simply was not enough land for Harry, his father, and his brother Jack. In 1950 Harry and Tenie moved onto the Henry Hiemstra homestead (SE 20-61-3-5). They stayed there for five years. Then, because Tenie became ill, they followed her parents to Abbotsford, B.C.

Harry, Tenie, 1963

Tenie kept herself busy with handicrafts of all sorts and loved teaching Calvinettes. She died of cancer on November 12, 1978. Although Harry never stayed long in Neerlandia, he loved farming and the community life, and still calls it "back home." He appreciates the scenic country and continues to come for visits in the summer.

Harry Janssen

LAMBERTUS AND LILLIAN (TAYLOR) JANSSEN

Albert (Lambertus) Janssen (November 3, 1912) married Lily (Lillian) Taylor, who was a farmer's daughter, born April 26, 1917, in Namao. After she married Albert, they moved to Edmonton where they stayed for seven years. During this time their two oldest sons were born: **Bert** (Lambertus, September 7, 1937) and **Bob** (Robert) David (December 30, 1939). Albert was working for a dairy farmer for two hundred dollars a year.

Lambertus, Lillian, 1937

Neerlandia proved to be irresistible when it offered Albert the possibility of having a farm of his own. Albert and his brother Harry bought Fred Morin's homestead, the NE 21-62-3-5, in March 1944. Harry had the south eighty acres and Albert had the north. On May 1, Albert came out with his oldest son, Bert, and Bob joined him in June. Since the house was not finished yet, that wet summer they lived in two granaries — one for sleeping and one for eat-

Bob, Bert, 1941

ing. Soon after Lillian arrived, the third son **Jack** (Jacob) Wallace was born (August 24, 1944).

That summer a well was being drilled, but in the meantime the young family had to get water from an old shallow well. The goats slept on the shallow well, and Bert had to chase them off before he could draw water.

The granaries had been less than ideal for the summer, but by the time the end of October rolled around, they were unbearable because of the freezing cold. On Sunday, November 1, the Janssens moved into their unfinished 18 by 24-foot house. Heat was available from an airtight stove.

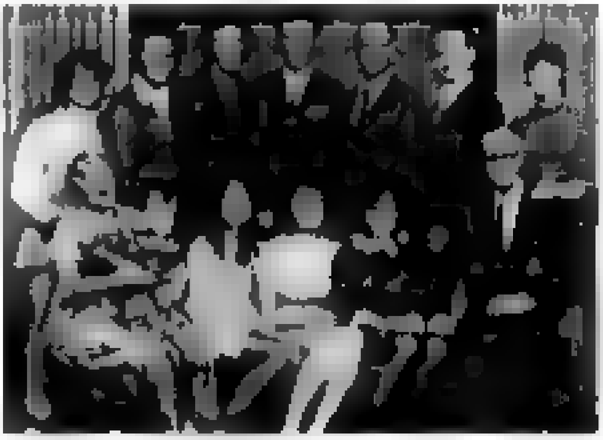
Albert began clearing the land by hand, grubbing the large trees and chopping down the little ones for the first seven acres. The next eleven were cut with a brush cutter and piled by hand, and the rest were cleared off with a Caterpillar by Bill Olthuis and Louis Nanninga. In all ninety acres were cleared.

Bert and Bob had begun school already when **Betty** (Elizabeth) Joan was born on May 14, 1946. Bert, Bob, and Jack began school in a small schoolhouse one-half mile north of their home. When Bert was in grade six, a new Vega school was built in the community. But in 1951 school buses started running and the Janssen children were able to attend Neerlandia school.

In March 1948 the Janssens bought their first tractor. A few months later, on July 12, **Martin** Harry was born. Then in 1949 Albert bought Harry's land and moved the barn to his own yard. He built an 18 by 24-foot garage as well. In December Albert bought his first car, a Meteor. During the next years Albert bought two more quarters and built larger barns.

Albert loved animals and had worked as an assistant to an old veterinarian in Edmonton when he was young. In 1950 the closest veterinarian was forty miles away in Westlock. Because Albert had had experience in this area, neighbours within a twenty-mile radius began calling him to help them with their sick or hurt animals. Albert and Lillian also built a three-bedroom home, landscaping it with trees and flowers, which they both loved.

Besides additions to their property and livestock, there were some additions to the Janssen family in these years. On January 31, 1952, **Viola** Wilhelmina was born. Close on her heels came **Ivan** Ross on September 6, 1953, and then **Nora** Agnes on June 5, 1955. Almost two years later to the day, on June 6, 1957, **June** Eunice was born, and she was followed in two years again by **Sylvia** Ruth on June 13, 1959. Finally on May 1, 1964, **Paul** Frances was born.



Back: Betty, Bob, Ivan, Jack, Bert, Martin, June. Front: Lillian, Paul, Nora, Vi, Sylvia, Lambertus, c. 1971

It was around 1950 that Albert hurt his back while root picking. This bothered him for the rest of his life. Only toward the end of his life

Back: Betty, Martin. Front: Ivan, Viola, 1954

did tests in Edmonton show that he had a severe rupture.

Albert received training and certification as artificial insemination technician and was soon busy. In 1958, Kit Robinson, the district agriculturist, and Albert began the Vega Artificial Insemination unit. From five hundred to one thousand cattle were inseminated each year. As the amount of work increased, Bob joined his father in the work. Albert was involved in it until he died in 1973.

Shortly after her husband's death, Lillian moved to the Neerlandia hamlet where she lives today. By then most of the children were married.

Bert married Bertha Strydhorst. Bob married Jean Utas from Fort Assiniboine. Jack married Gladys Kippers. Betty married Lambert Tuininga. Martin, his wife, and their three sons make their home in Spruce Grove where Marty is employed as an Equipment Operator for the Stuney Company.

Vi is married to Ed Fillion. Ivan and his wife, Janet, have two sons. Ivan owns a tractor and low boy trailer unit and now lives with his family in Millet, Alberta. Nora married Maynard Mast. June married Claus Langeveld. Sylvia lives with her son, **Skyler Allen** (November 28, 1977), in Edmonton. Paul also lives in Edmonton and is working in a sheltered workshop.

Janssen family

JIM AND MINNIE (FOX) JOHNMAN

Jim Johnman was born in Killearn, Scotland, on March 16, 1904. He and his brother, Bill, were the first of the Johnman family to come to Canada in 1921. In 1927 their father, **James**, left his sheep farm in Fifeshire, Scotland, and came to Canada with his wife, **Joan**, their son **Pete**, 17 years old, and Joan's father, **William Petrie**. They all came to Neerlandia at that time.

Minnie Fox was born in Winnipeg on August 30, 1911. She came to Alberta with her family and married Jim on July 21, 1934.

Jim, Minnie, c. 1934

Jim and Minnie farmed the S-½ 14-61-3-5 in Neerlandia. Jim also worked as a carpenter and helped build many homes and other buildings. He worked on the Neerlandia Church and Store, and also on the old Barrhead hospital.

All three brothers, Jim, Pete and Bill, enlisted in the army, their reasons being poverty and patriotism. Pete enlisted in 1940 and remained in the army for 4½ years. He trained in Grande Prairie and became instructor in the Ordnance Corps in Kingston, Ontario. Jim was Corporal of the Infantry in the Royal Edmonton [illegible] in the Royal Edmonton Regiment, and fought in Africa and Sicily. While in action his jeep was blown up. He was hospitalized, but recovered

After the army, Pete worked in the Neerlandia Co-op with Jan Koning. He helped to insulate the store and some homes in the area. Later he worked in a sawmill in Moose Wallow, and after that went to Edmonton to start carpentry work. Pete married twice, and had three daughters and three sons. He lived in the Wigetak Senior Citizens Home in Gunn until his death in March 1984

Jim and Minnie returned to the family farm in 1944 and continued to reside in Neerlandia until 1957. At that time, they sold their farm to Gerrit van Dijken and moved to Edmonton

The family consisted of five boys. The oldest son, **Bob**, was born January 26, 1936. He and his family live in Chilliwack, B.C. **Dan** (October 13, 1939) resides with his family in Germany. He is stationed there with the Armed Forces. **Dave** (April 3, 1938), **Bill** (October 7, 1946), and **John** (August 14, 1949) live with their families in Ed-[illegible]

Jim's brother, Bill, passed away in 1959 and is buried in Mellowdale, along with his parents James and Joan, and William Petrie. Jim Johnman passed away October 31, 1974. Minnie still lives in their Edmonton home

Willie Johnman

GERRIT AND CLARA (KRIKKE) KIPPERS

At six weeks of age Gerrit Kippers came with his parents to Neerlandia. There was never a dull moment for pioneer kids because [illegible] firewood, trapping, and cutting wood all the short days. One winter Gerrit and his father sawed the winter's wood all by hand with a [illegible] weasels, and skunks already when he was thirteen years old. He also shot rabbits for eating

In the spring of 1926, when Gerrit was only fourteen, he said to his teacher, "I'm quitting school – there is so much to do at home" The teacher replied, "I don't blame you", and from then on Gerrit worked on the farm. That summer he helped his father clear land with an axe and liked that far better than school

Sometime in the early 1930s, Gerrit, along with Abe Plantinga, Klaas H. Wierenga, and Roy and Stanley Morin, took a contract to clear and pile brush for Arie Rylaarsdam. They each cleared ten acres. Gerrit filed on SE 13-62-4-5 and cleared about twenty acres, but never lived there. There was no proper road to the quarter, and in 1950 he sold the land to Jake Schuurman

Clara Krikke was raised in Neerlandia. She was always active on the farm – a life she loved. When she was young, Clara was often absent from school in the fall because she was needed at home to keep the cows out of the grain. Her formal education ended in grade nine when she came down with whooping [illegible] many lessons, and Mr. Ashley knew she was indispensable on the farm, so he allowed her to quit. Clara went on with what she had been already doing on the farm, only now it was full-time. She milked four or five cows, stooked bundles, drove three horses for summerfallow-[illegible] was fond of horses and owned one which she rode around the countryside. Clara's parents were in poor health, and she became number one chore girl, until her marriage to Gerrit

Gerrit had an old Ford one-ton truck, 1928 Vintage, nicknamed Noah's Ark. Once while still courting, Gerrit and Clara stopped on their way home from Barrhead, picked a beautiful bunch of roses on a hill in Mellowdale and decorated Noah's Ark with them. When they drove into Neerlandia one resident teased them saying, "So you got married and didn't [illegible] February 8, 1942. They were the last couple to be married in Neerlandia by Rev. H. Van Der Woude before he moved back to the U.S.

About two weeks before the wedding Gerrit and Clara went to Edmonton, and for $210.00 they purchased everything essential for their wedding and home furnishing: a cook stove (less than $10.00), china cabinet, bed and table with chairs, groceries, wedding clothes, rings, cooking pots, and dishes. This all went into a little two-room house that they had moved to the yard of Gerrit's parents (NE 10-62-3-5). At a bridal shower held at Annie and Helen Emmerzael's home, Clara received a comforter, some dishes, and other useful items

Gerrit farmed with his father and brothers and also continued to trap in the winter. He [illegible] 35 cents for squirrels, $2.00 for weasels, and $15-20.00 for coyotes. His best coyote pelt was

Clara, Gerrit, 1939

sold for thirty-five dollars, but that was a rare price. Years after Gerrit sold a coyote pelt and could only buy a box of shells in return. He quit hunting coyotes after that.

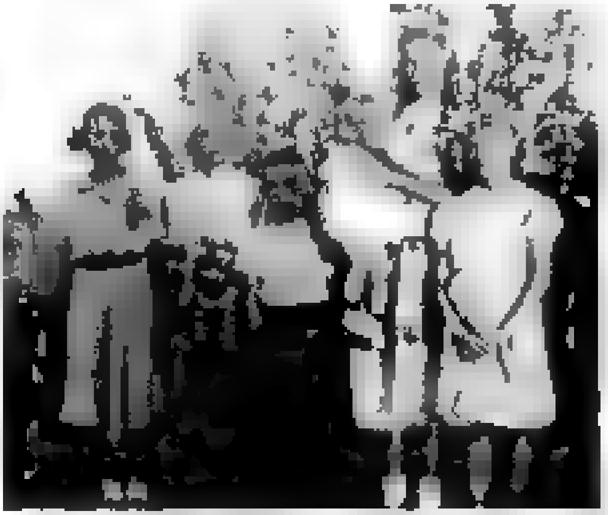
Cornelia Martina was born to Gerrit and Clara on December 10, 1942, **Jennie Rena** on July 8, 1944, and **Louise** Gertrude on January 14, 1946.

In 1947, Gerrit and Clara decided to move to NE 9-62-3-5, which Gerrit purchased from his father. The little house was moved to the new place when Clara was in the hospital giving birth to **Arlene** Claire (July 9, 1947). Their first son, **Bill** (Gerrit William), was born January 27, 1949. The children were growing fast. When Cor and Jennie were little, they were real climbers and would even climb into the separator bowl.

Gerrit built a new house in 1950. When they moved in the kids ran from one room to another like wild Indians, loving the space.

Gerrit slowly began buying his own machinery. He raised chickens and sold the eggs, milked cows for the cream, raised pigs and grew grain. In 1952 he had seventy acres with a nice crop of wheat, but a big hailstorm came through and that nice crop yielded only ten bushels in total. There was hail for three years in a row, and money was not too plentiful. So in 1955 Gerrit bought hail insurance.

Gerrit and Clara were blessed with five more children: **Gladys** Josephine (February 23, 1952), **Annette** June (February 3, 1954), **Faye** Lorraine (April 15, 1959), **Harvey** Arthur (February 11, 1961), and **Alfred** Clarence (August 29, 1963). None of the children were ever seriously ill. Clara always had a huge garden and canned over 1200 quarts of food yearly. She had time to do only a few chores such as gathering eggs, slopping hogs, or milking. In the fall she still helped with the harvest. Sewing and patching were necessary too. She was always busy.



Back: Jennie, Louise, Cor holding Gladys, Arlene. Front: Annette, Bill. 1956.

Gerrit enjoyed farming and began to expand his land base. In 1961 he purchased NE 18-62-3-5 from the government at a public land sale held in Barrhead. The quarter had forty acres cleared and cost $800.00. He also purchased NW 32-61-3-5 in 1966. Gerrit grew registered oats on some new breaking, and his records indicate that in 1962 he sold 1016 bushels for $438.80. In 1962 a new John Deere combine, pull type with power takeoff, which could handle an eight-foot swath, cost $2951.00. He also bought a John Deere 420 Crawler in April 1962. He used it, among other things, to break land, clear snow, and push brush piles.

In 1974 Gerrit and Clara sold the farm to Bill and retired. Bill had already bought the NE 18-62-3-5 from his father in 1964. He enjoys grain farming and also works for Zeidler Forest Industries Ltd.

On November 16, 1974, Bill married Bev

Meunier. Bev was born in Barrhead on December 15, 1956. When she met Bill she was working at Barrhead General Hospital in the sanitation department and continued working there until 1978.

Bill and Bev have a family of three girls: **Rae Jean** Amber (February 5, 1979), **Julianne Marie** (December 22, 1981), and **Ashley** Lynn (January 11, 1984).

Bill keeps very busy with his full-time job and the farm, but still finds enough time to play fastball with the Neerlandia Lakers. Bev enjoys plants, needlework, crafts and gardening. She will remember 1984 because that is the year she obtained her driver's license.

The children, except for one, live in Alberta. Cornelia married Leonard Hayes and lives in Mystery Lake. Jennie married Bob Nienhuis and lives in Edmonton. Louise is married to Robert Rietveld and resides in St. Albert. Arlene is married to Norman Vriend and lives at Houston, B.C. Gladys married a local boy, Jack Janssen, and they live in Vega. Annette married Eric Ronaasen from Mellowdale. Faye is single and lives at home. She attended Dordt College for two years and now works at Barrhead Pizza. Harvey also lives at home and is employed by Art Gibbs of Barrhead as an apprentice carpenter. Alfred married Shelley McKeever, and they reside in Mellowdale.

Gerrit and Clara Kippers

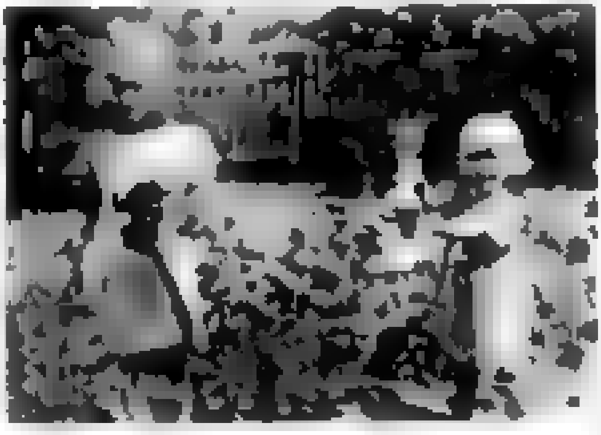
HENRY AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) KIPPERS

Henry and Sophie were married on August 18, 1935. That night it froze so hard that all the crops and gardens were gone. Their farmstead was located on N.W. [illegible]. Their first daughter, **Hennie**, was born September 18, 1936. Their second child was stillborn (February 1938).

Both Henry and Sophie enjoyed visiting but because they had no horses they were quite limited in whom they could visit. Often Henry carried Hennie on his shoulders and they all walked to Henry's parents' place. The Kippers also hauled their water because they had no well. Henry would haul water in two barrels. Once when Henry was pretty close to home one barrel tipped and all the water was gone.

Two more girls were added to the family: **Jean** on May 12, 1939, and **Tena** on May 30, 1940. The first three children were born at home. **Henry** (born June 3, 1941), as well as the rest of the children, was born in the Barrhead hospital. More girls were added to the family: **Grace** on September 17, 1943; **Gladys Lillian** on November 1, 1944, and **Linda** on August 18, 1946. By this time, things on the farm had improved. The Kippers' had their own water supply and a good barn with a hay loft.

Henry, Sophie, 1934



Hennie, Jean, 1941

A second son, **Lennert**, was born February 27, 1949. At this time a terrible snowstorm hit so they had to travel by sleigh over the fields to get to Barrhead. That same year, on a windy spring day, the Kippers' barn burned down. Two miles west of their place a bush fire was burning. The wind carried a spark to their [illegible] sparks got into the hay loft of the barn. Sophie [illegible] best to douse the fire with water but to no avail. She did manage to get the livestock out of the barn in time, though. The Kippers family was very thankful for the community's help in rebuilding what was lost through the fire.

On November 5, 1950, **Clarence** was born, followed by **Christine** on March 1, 1953. Henry and Sophie sold their farm in February 1954 to Albert Bigersma and moved west of Barrhead. Their last child, **Andrew**, was born October 25, 1954. Now the children have all grown up, married, and are busy with their own families and occupations.

In 1973, Henry and Sophie made another move, this time to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton. They are enjoying life in the home.

Sophie Kippers

JAN AND JACOBA (NAAFS) KONING

Jan Koning was born March 3, 1898, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In 1926 he immigrated to Canada. He went to Lloydminster, Alberta, where he got a job on a farm. This was a big change from an office job in the old country and he was inexperienced. Nevertheless, he had a small house to live in and a job.

In the Netherlands, Jacoba Maria Naafs (November 4, 1897) was waiting to be Jan's bride. In January 1927 he let her know she could come to Canada. Since in those days it was [illegible] faraway land to a boyfriend, they had decided to get married by proxy. Before Jan sailed for Canada he signed the legal papers at Amsterdam's *Stadhuis*. On January 13, 1927, Jacoba, Jan's brother Wim, and the wedding party also went to the *Stadhuis*. Wim stood up in place of Jan and Jacoba signed the papers and went through the ceremony. Thus Jan and Jacoba were married. After the trip to the *Stadhuis*, the rest of the ceremony took place in Jacoba's parents' home in Amsterdam. It was quite a normal wedding. Jacoba wore a lovely wedding gown which she had made herself since she was a seamstress, and she carried a lovely bouquet of flowers. Many relatives were there and they had a party after the ceremony. Everything seemed quite normal — only Jan, the bridegroom, was far away in Canada and did not even know the exact date and time of the wedding. While he was doing his farm chores he received a telegram from Jacoba informing him that they were now married. Jan told his [illegible]

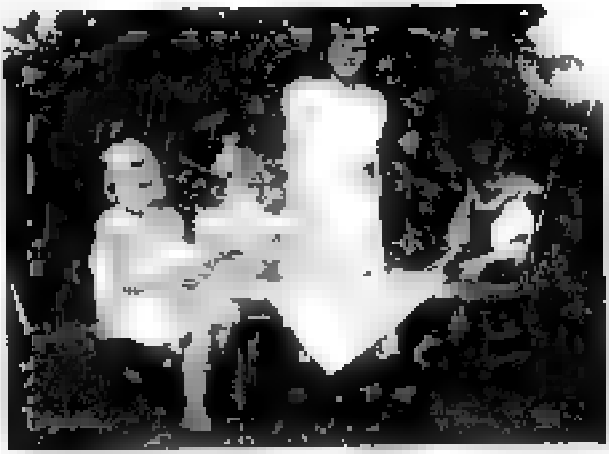
Soon after the 'wedding', Jacoba said good- [illegible] sailed for Canada. She knew only half a dozen words of English, but arrived in Lloydminster [illegible] Jacoba. She and Jan attended the Presbyterian Church there and, because Jan had missed the wedding vows, they went through the ceremony again so he would feel that he was actually married. On December 20, 1927, **Tena** (Albertina) was born and on June 5, 1929, **Betty** (Elizabeth) Christina was born to Jan and Jacoba.

After three years the family moved to Freeman River, where they were told a Christian Reformed settlement was to be started. Here Jan bought a farm and built a house and barn. He spent a lot of money, but all in vain. The fields had light soil and many rocks and would not produce crops. Jacoba made butter and cheese and sold it to neighbouring bachelors and to the local store at Fort Assiniboine, which was about twenty miles away. Jacoba stayed at home and often did not see another woman for [illegible] months at a time. Once in a great while the family would go by horses and wagon to Barr- [illegible] and sometimes almost impassable.

[illegible] Konings. Jan and some other men went hunting regularly and brought home moose, deer and bear for meat on the table. But the Christian Reformed settlement never did materialize.

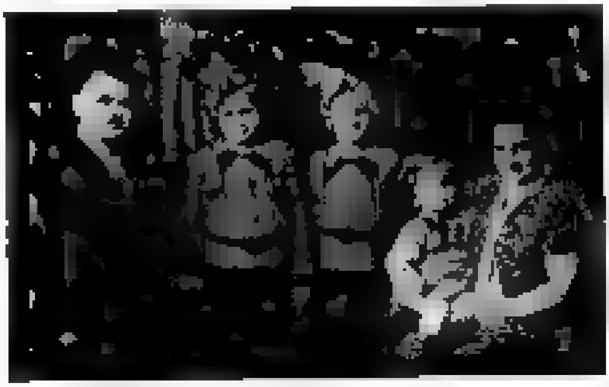
In 1933, Jan heard that the Neerlandia Co-op was looking for a new manager. He applied and got the job; that was a day of rejoicing. The move to Neerlandia was made just in time for Tena to begin school. Now finally they were living in a Dutch settlement with a Christian Reformed Church. On August 25, 1935, **Rita** (Maria) Jacoba was born in the hospital in Barrhead with Dr. Vereau in attendance.

Jacoba spent many hours helping in the store while Sophie Wierenga and Minnie Lievers minded the children. After the Konings were established somewhat better, they bought a car. Loe Reyse was a very good helper in the



Betty, Tena, Alice and Gerrit Lievers, 1933

store so the Konings were able to go on holidays to Sylvan Lake for a week one July. Sophie Wierenga went with them



Jan, Tena, Betty, Rita, Jacoba, c. 1937

The day when radios went for sale in the store was an exciting one. Soon many people were buying them. These were battery-operated radios and required a long aerial up on poles. Jan installed these as far as the Vega ferry to the north, Grandale to the east, and Mellowdale to the south. Betty and Tena often accompanied their dad on these trips.

Store business went well and a new Co-op store was completed in 1938. Konings lived upstairs in the new building and enjoyed battery-powered lights and running water for the first time in Canada. Jacoba spent many hours in the Post Office and also checking the McKaskey in the store each day

Bertha Wierenga minded the children and helped in the house. She accompanied the Konings on one of their trips to Banff. Sadie Reitsma, one of the girls who worked in the store, also accompanied them on two of the trips. On their first trip to Banff they were surprised that the car could make the steep hills, but it was not uncommon to have to put their thermos of tea in the radiator

Ready for vacation. Jan, 1930s

Jan and Aubrey Ashley obtained films from the National Film Board and showed them in the Neerlandia Community Hall. This was a big event and many people appreciated these educational pictures. Jan and Aubrey also showed these films in surrounding communities. The Koning and Ashley children all got to go along even though it meant extreme overcrowding in one car

On May 30, 1940, an important event took place: little **Johnny** (Jan) was born. Jan was so overjoyed that he treated all the Neerlandia school children to a chocolate bar and an orange.

For the store board meetings, which were held regularly, Jacoba would always prepare a plate of sandwiches and cake. One evening one of the girls brought the sandwiches downstairs, knocked on the door, and dropped all the sandwiches on the floor. A rather embarrassed Jacoba quickly made a new batch. Jacoba also welcomed the store clerks into her kitchen each day for coffee and tea. She always provided a big plate of bread and a can of jam for them.

Jacoba gave sewing lessons to the school girls twelve years and older after school. She did this once a week in her home and always provided a snack. She also organized an evening of entertainment by the girls which was put on for their parents. The highlight of the evening was a tableau entitled "Faith, Hope, and Charity." All the lights in the hall were turned off except the ones shining on the three girls who were holding the symbols representing Faith, Hope, and Charity, while the other girls sang a hymn offstage. Besides the tableau there were several skits, songs, and recitations.

During the war, many Neerlandia women joined the Red Cross Society, which met regularly in the community hall. At one of these meetings Jacoba was elected president. She was rather shocked and surprised as she was a quiet, shy person. She sought help from the Lord and He helped her to do a good job. The women knit many, many pairs of mitts and socks for the soldiers overseas.

The Koning family and the Pete Bootsma family of Barrhead had become acquainted when the Konings moved to Freeman River. Now they visited each other a lot and spent every Christmas and New Year's Day together. Jan and Pete spent hours playing checkers together.

[illegible]

In 1942, Jan sent Betty and Tena to Alberta College in Edmonton to take grade ten. They stayed in the dormitory and once they got over their homesickness they had a good year.

In the fall of 1944, Jan heard of a store for sale in Houston, B.C. He was very interested in a business of his own, but only in a settlement where there was a Christian Reformed Church. The Konings took the train to Houston to have a look and decided to move there. The Neerlandia people planned a surprise farewell party for them. The evening before the party, Elsie Ashley sent Kenneth over with a note for Jacoba saying, "Do up your hair tonight." The Konings enjoyed a lovely farewell and left for Houston in April 1945.

Jan became quite ill with heart trouble in 1952 and he died at the age of fifty-eight on April 10, 1956. Jacoba is eighty-six and still living in Houston, B.C. All four children are married and have their own families.

Betty Lieuwen
Tena Sturwold

FRANK AND SOPHIE (BOGACH) KOWALCHUK

Frank Kowalchuk (Kowalczyk) was born in 1902 in Kaluszw, Poland, where his parents lived on a little farm. In 1930 Frank immigrated to Canada with his mother, four sisters, and a brother. They settled in the Shoal Creek area because there were many Polish and Ukrainian settlers already homesteading there. Frank chose the SE 36-61-3-5 as his homestead. He was 28 years old at the time, and many days he cleared land from 4:00 a.m. until dark.

Sophie Bogach was born in Poland in 1912. In 1937 she came to Glenevis, Alberta, with her family. The next year, 1938, she and Frank Kowalchuk were married. They had four children: **Mary** was born in 1939, **Joseph** in 1943, **Raymond** in 1947, and **Victoria** in 1951.

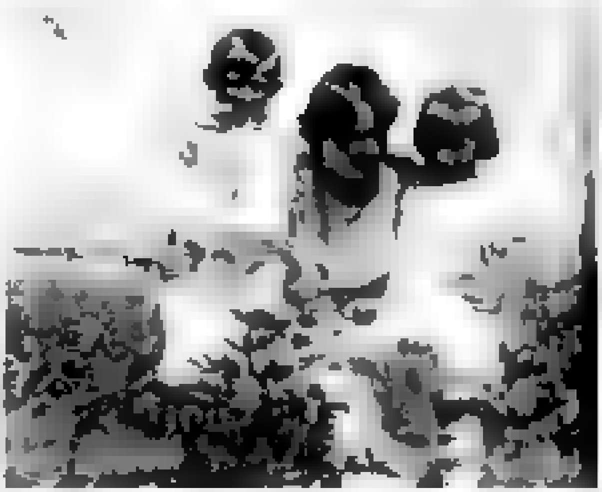
In 1956 Frank and Sophie purchased the NE 25-61-3-5, a quarter section of crown land adjoining their homestead. They farmed until their retirement in 1973, when they sold the farm to Victoria and her husband. Frank died in 1974. Sophie is now in Barrhead Nursing Home (1984).

Mary Kowalchuk married George Kostiniuk in 1956 and lives in Glendon, Alberta. Joseph worked part time at Neerlandia Motors from 1960 until his death in a car accident near Vega in 1963. Raymond disliked the bus ride to Barrhead, so he attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1962. He married Judy Kenely in 1967 and they live in Burnaby, British Columbia. Victoria attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1965. She married Frank Brunner of Vega in 1968. They sold the Kowalchuk homestead in the 1970s and are now farming near Fawcett, Alberta.

Raymond Kowalchuk
Victoria Brunner

JAMES AND THELMA (HARE) LEVY

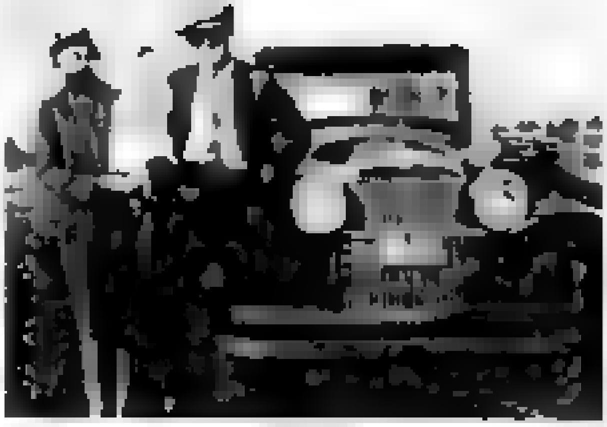
James and Thelma Levy both taught in Neerlandia on two separate occasions. Thelma came first, as a single woman in the spring of 1923. She had been born Lillie Thelma Hare at Fort Saskatchewan and attended Normal School in Edmonton. When school closed in the fall of 1923, she left the community.



Thelma with Wim and Zus van Ark, 1923.

In the spring of 1926 James R. Levy came to teach in Neerlandia. He boarded with the Toney Sturwold family. He, too, left at the end of the term. James Levy had been born April 2, 1899, at Waterville (now Vaughns), Nova Scotia, and was educated at Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

After teaching in Neerlandia, he met Thelma and they married July 23, 1927, in a Baptist church in Vancouver, Washington. While attending summer school at the U of A in 1928, they saw and answered an advertisement in the *Edmonton Bulletin* which indicated that Neerlandia was in need of two teachers.



Thelma, Buddy, Jim, 1928

In August, James and Thelma left for Neerlandia with **Buddie** (James) Myron, their three-month-old son. He had been born May 28, 1928. The Levys stayed with the Schoonekamps until they were able to move into the vacant Willem de Groot house. Minnie Lievers and Tena Anema cared for Buddie while his mother taught. Thelma quit teaching in December 1929 because she was expecting her second child. **Hugh** Carroll was born March 29, 1930, in the Immaculata Hospital in Westlock. The Levys left Neerlandia in 1930 to take up teaching positions in Boyle, Alberta.

Thelma Levy

CARL K. AND ANNE (NUSL) MAST

Carl Mast came to Edmonton with his parents in 1911. He first found work in a meat packing plant, but after his father, Koop, died in 1915, he went to help his mother, Minke, and brother Henry on the homestead. On June 11, 1918, Carl enlisted in the Canadian army, but the army was demobilized later that year since World War I was over.

Carl filed on NW 21-61-3-5 on August 15, 1919. He never proved this land up, however, and in fact was more interested in studying. Thus in the twenties he left for Edmonton to attend Alberta College where he stayed in residence. He was working for his teacher's degree, but he did not obtain his permit as there was no need for teachers with men returning after World War I and re-entering the teaching force.

After attending college Carl worked as a

truck driver between Westlock and Edmonton. While trucking Carl got arthritis very badly, and had to spend a long time in the Westlock hospital.

In Westlock Carl met Anne Mary Nusl. Anne had been born February 22, 1907, in Candace, Bohemia, Czechoslovakia. She came to live in Glenevis with her family when a young girl. When she met Carl, she was working as chief cook in the Westlock Hotel. On June 8, 1940, Carl and Anne were married.

Carl and Anne first lived in a little shack at the Neerlandia Corner. Later they built a house in the place where their shack had stood. Here Carl built a machine shed and became a dealer for Oliver and, later, John Deere machinery. Since his physical condition did not allow him to do heavy work, he found employment in various places. He worked for a time as a sub-agent with various insurance companies such as Mutual and Wawanesa, and later became an agent himself. He had a real estate business also. Besides this he was a Justice of the Peace. He had beautiful handwriting, and also served the community by writing legal letters for people. In the fall of 1939 Carl had become a trustee, representing the Neerlandia area in the Pembina school division. He served as trustee for many years.

Soon after they were married Carl and Anne adopted a girl, **Marilyn** Ann (May 15, 1941). They later adopted a boy whom they called **Kenneth** Carl (July 27, 1948).

C.K., Anne, Marilyn, c. 1947

Carl was a kind man and a helpful neighbour. Anne was also an asset to the community. Anne will be remembered for her superb cooking since she catered for many weddings and other celebrations. Her flower and vegetable garden was a joy to behold and she shared the produce with her neighbours at the Neerlandia Corner.

C.K., Ken, Anne, 1950

At the age of sixty-one, on December 26, 1956, Carl died of a heart attack. Marilyn married Jim Nanninga of Neerlandia. Ken married Donna Ogden of Barrhead. Anne remained in Neerlandia, keeping boarders and continuing the insurance business. After a few years, she moved to Edmonton. She worked a short time for the Canadian Institute for the Blind. Anne developed cancer of the liver and passed away December 31, 1972.

HENRY AND INA (HOLM) MAST

Henry Mast was born in Bergen, Friesland, the Netherlands, on March 11, 1898. His parents, Koop and Minke, homesteaded the NE 15-61-3-5. In 1926, while Henry was trucking freight from Edmonton to Freedom Store with his truck, he met his future bride, Ina Holm.

In a tiny Swedish settlement, Rökö Wörl, in Finland. Ina Holm entered the world on August 23, 1901. In May 1926, at age twenty-five, Ina immigrated to Canada. Freedom was her destination because she had acquaintances there and soon found employment at the Freedom store. Here their courtship began and on October 15, 1926, Henry and Ina were married by Rev. Van Der Woude. Henry took his new bride to the farm in Neerlandia which his father had homesteaded.

Henry, Ina, 19[illegible]

During the first year of his marriage Henry worked in the Chisholm logging camp. Ina stayed home and looked after their few pigs and cows as well as doing other chores. In 1926 Henry also purchased his first car, a Model T Ford. Henry and Ina were both quite proud of this purchase. Henry later worked in a few other sawmills.

The first years were lean ones. Henry and Ina lived off deer and moose meat. All they bought was flour to make their bread. Of course, Ina churned her own butter.

Once Ina made a housedress out of an old mattress cover and she made many clothes out of flour sacks, using the sewing machine left by Henry's mother.

Henry and Ina both worked very hard with axe and horses to continue the clearing of the land begun by Henry's dad. Slowly they got more land ready for farming.

In 1930 Jim Johnman helped Henry build a new house. A few years later Henry and Ina welcomed their only daughter, Rose, born June 5, 1937, who made their family complete.

When Rose was still quite small and wanting to help, she went out to the barn and milked a couple of cows completely dry on the floor. No milk for that day!

Rose on Rosie, 1947

Henry's interest turned to registered Hereford cattle and hogs, which he raised during the 1940s. He was an active member of the Barrhead and District Agricultural Society for several years. He also showed cattle at the Edmonton Exhibition and won championships with them there. In 1958 Henry Nanninga married their daughter Rose.

Henry and Ina lived on the farm until 1959 when he sold his farm to Joe Mast and retired in Barrhead. Henry lived there until September 15, 1962, when he died of a heart attack in the Barrhead Hospital at the age of sixty-four.

Ina still lives in the same house in Barrhead. She manages on her own with some help from Henry, Rose, and her grandchildren.

Rose Nanninga

ARTHUR MICHAEL

At the age of thirty-two Arthur Michael, a farmer from Nebraska, U.S.A., came to Neerlandia in February 1923 with his twenty-three-year old wife and their one child. He took up the SW 14-61-3-5 as a homestead. After moving to Neerlandia, he became known as "Muskeg Michael" (the quarter Arthur had taken up had a lot of muskeg on it) to keep him apart from "Dutch Michael" who lived north of the settlement.

Mrs. Michael would bring the cattle to a muskeg hole near their quarter to water them. One time she and Harry Wilson both came to water their livestock at the same time and a dispute followed. As a result, a hearing was held in the log church. The building was crowded for the occasion. Elizabeth Wilson spoke for her son, and Mrs. Michael also had her say, but the outcome is unknown.

On the homestead, Arthur built a dwelling worth thirty dollars, put up the walls of a barn, cultivated five acres of land, and dug a thirty-two-foot well. He also made four hundred tamarack fence posts. But the family left the homestead in April 1924 and moved to Idaho, U.S.A. Arthur wrote on the declaration of abandonment, "My reason for wanting to abandon the land, is that I was almost entirely surrounded by a Clan of Hollanders, which made it very undesairable from a Social standpoint, these people being of a very clanist nature."

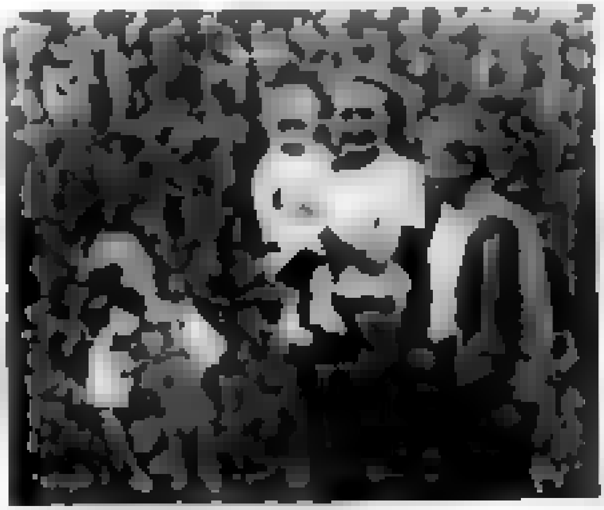
JOHN AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) MOLODOWICH

John Molodowich and Sophie Wierenga, daughter of Hendrik and Hilje, met in Barrhead while Sophie was working in the hospital. After they were married in February 1938, they lived in the Barrhead area. Their first child, **Hilda Johanna**, was born there on November 24, 1939.

Then in 1942 the family moved to Neerlandia, onto the NE 31-61-3-5. Their second child, **John Jr.**, was born October 10, 1942. John Sr. left to go trucking, so Sophie took care of the farm. She shipped cream from their two milk cows and also sold eggs. Henry Lievers picked up the cream and eggs and brought them to the Neerlandia store. Sophie's father and brothers would come to help, especially with putting up the hay. Sophie also raised some sheep and pigs.

John Sr. had bought the NW 5-62-3-5, but sold it to Sophie's father during the 40s. The family moved to Edmonton for a time, but returned to this area shortly after the war. John had bought a Caterpillar tractor with a brushpiler, and he used it to clear land in the district. He was one of the first in the area to use a Caterpillar tractor. He sold it to Sam Howey and later bought another one, which he sold to Bill Olthuis in 1947.

During those years, John Sr. had bought Jerry Reitsma's house but, after the family had lived in it a short time, he sold it to Sophie's brother, Joe. John then bought a house in the Centre from Siebren Tiemstra but sold that one also, to Sophie's parents. A third child, **Percy**, was born in September 1947.



Percy, Tena, Sophie, John Jr., c. 1954

The Molodowich family moved to Barrhead in the late 40s and, after many more moves, finally bought a farm in McBride, B.C., where they stayed. Another daughter was born in 1954. John Sr. has passed away, and Sophie lives in McBride.

Sophie Molodowich

ANDREW AND RULIE (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Andrew Nanninga was born in Edmonton but the family moved to Neerlandia the same year. Except for two harvests during which he worked in the Morinville area, he worked on the farm with his father and brothers until his marriage. In 1940 he purchased the SE 21-62-3-5 from Loe Reyse. It consisted of forty acres of broken land, leaving 120 to be broken by hand.

On November 26, 1941, Rulie Schoonekamp of Neerlandia became Andrew's bride and they took up residence in a two-storey house built by Andrew and his father and brothers.

Andrew and Rulie's first car, a 1927 Whippet

[illegible]

Sedan, is remembered for at least one embarrassing situation. Lies Bos and Rulie were at a shower in the church one winter evening. Since it was a cold night they had put blankets over the car hood to keep it from freezing. When they were ready to go home they discovered that the car's lights did not work. Rulie went to the Neerlandia garage for help, getting the [illegible] emphatically, "Your blanket is covering up the lights!"

In 1943 Andrew and Rulie's marriage was blessed with the birth of **Mark** on May 20. But, besides being the year of their firstborn, it was the year they were partially hailed out. That winter, because of crop loss, Andrew, Rulie, baby Mark, and a cow went to work in the Dutch Mill camp. The cow's milk was enjoyed by everyone in the camp, but it is unknown whether Mark's crying and diapers were appreciated by anyone, including proud Mom and Dad.

Almost two years after Mark was born, **Rose** (Primrose) arrived on March 16. The year 1945 was also notable in that Rulie filed on a homestead quarter (NW 14-62-3-5). Shortly thereafter they purchased the N½ 15-62-3-5 from Andrew Wierenga.

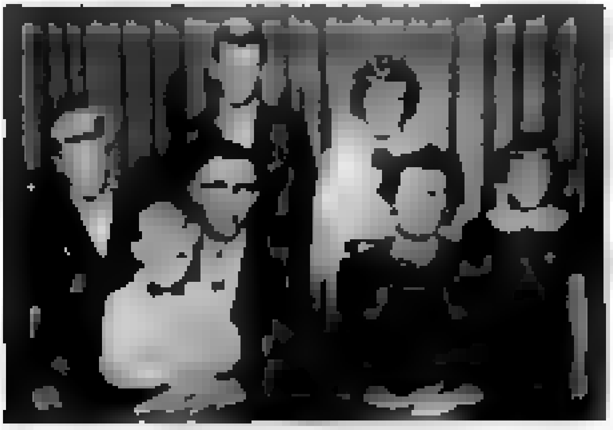
Rose was followed by **Arnold**, born December 14, 1946, **Judith**, born December 17, 1949 and **Kenneth**, born January 13, 1954.

Andrew and Rulie were hardworking. Andrew, a man of few words, was an ambitious farmer who enjoyed his animals. Rulie, a patient, quiet woman, kept busy about the house [illegible] chief disciplinarian, though her backup system [illegible]

The kids enjoyed endless games of tag in [illegible] kitchen became a place for acrobatics, and many a summer night was spent playing scrub [illegible]

Sunday between services was always a [illegible] enjoyed the regular feature in *The Banner* and *Pilgrim's Progress* was always a favourite.

Once the front room became a hospital ward when the kids had the measles and Rulie became a capable nurse. Another trying time



Back: Arnold, Mark, Rose, Judy. Front: Andrew holding Ken, Rulie, mid 1950s.

was when Andrew was in a body cast for his frequent back problems. Rulie took on the chores besides her regular work. When she had a few minutes she would play hymns on the pump organ.

Washing laundry was an exasperating chore, but with many interesting smells. The cranky gas engine on the washing machine took a lot of coaxing before it would perform and it would always leave a puddle of oil for revenge. Then hot steamy water and the acrid smell of lye soap irritated the nostrils. Yet the clothes came off the clothesline clean and smelling fresh. Soon the steam from the hot iron on the sprinkled clothes would permeate the kitchen and with it came a sense of accomplishment as the tea towels, hankies, and shirts were neatly stacked and ready for the cupboards.

Canning meat and rendering fat were routine tasks. Another duty was filling the holding tank in the house with water. To this day water is precious and never tastes as cold or delicious as that straight from the well.

Christmas celebrations included the School Christmas Program and exchanging gifts in the family on Christmas Eve. There was a family gathering with the Schoonekamps for a turkey supper on Christmas Day and always a gift from Grandma. Christmas was a time for new clothes, and lots to eat and always a piece of fruitcake.

Money was not plentiful but there was a congenial and secure home life. At night, after the children had been tucked in bed, Andrew would read the weekly church paper or the *Free Press Weekly* aloud while Rulie would catch up with the mending or knitting.

During the 1960s the Nanningas once again extended their holdings by purchasing the NE 14-62-3-5 from Fred Tansowny.

Mark took his schooling in Neerlandia and continued to farm with his father. On January 10, 1976 he married **Jo Ann Bakker** (December 3, 1954) of Edmonton. They have three boys: **Matthew** Dean (March 18, 1977), **Jonathan** Andrew, (February 2, 1980); and **Nathan** Todd, (February 4, 1983). They farm and have a broiler-breeder operation.

Mark, Jonathan, Matthew, Jo holding Nathan, 1983.

Rose attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead after which she began nurse's training at the Alberta Hospital. She returned to Barrhead to work in the Barrhead Clinic. In 1965 she married Clarence Olthuis of Neerlandia.

Arnold attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead prior to attending NAIT and working in Edmonton. After living in Edmonton for a few years, he returned to Neerlandia where he married Elizabeth Tiemstra.

Judy obtained her Registered Nursing Aide certificate after being educated in Neerlandia and Barrhead. On May 5, 1979, she married Allen Perry of Edmonton. They presently live in Drayton Valley with their two children.

Ken attended school in Neerlandia before taking his welding trade at W. P. Wagner school in Edmonton. On November 27, 1976, he married **Sylvia Runaasen** (July 23, 1956) of Mellowdale and they make their home in the Vega district (NW 5-63-3-5) with their two children **Ted Kameron**, (April 15, 1980) and **Lisa Karen**, (November 1, 1981). Ken and Sylvia farm and have a Caterpillar tractor service.

Ken, Sylvia, Lisa, Ted, 1984.

During 1973 Andrew and Ruse moved onto an acreage in Mellowdale on the SE 33-60-3-5. Since [illegible] they have come full circle from the two horses, three cows, and few pigs they started with to the two horses they have now.

Allen Perry

ANDY AND ANNIE (INGWERSEN) NANNINGA

It was on Sunday afternoon, December 4, 1932, that Andy Nanninga and Annie Ingwersen were united in marriage by Rev. H. Van Der Woude. After the service they had a family get-together and supper at Ingwersens'. Late that night, in 35-below zero weather, Andy and Annie went "honeymooning" with horse and sleigh to their home on the NE 2-62-3-5.

Andy and Annie's lumber home had only a cook stove, so it froze almost as hard inside the house as outside. The following day they went to the store to buy some groceries and a drum heater to heat their living room. The rest of the day was spent at Annie's parents' place where a wedding party was to be held that night for the young couple. Though the temperature went down to about forty below, the whole congregation came to celebrate with the newlyweds. When Andy and Annie travelled home that night they had not only the drum heater on the sleigh, but also two of Andy's brothers Louis and Ike, who were going to board with them until they too would get married.

Andy and his brothers had built the house and Andy's dad had made a table, a large buffet, and a kitchen cabinet with glass doors. In appreciation for playing the church organ for several years, the congregation gave Annie an organ as a wedding gift.

Things were pretty rough in the early thirties, but together Andy and Annie struggled through thick and thin. Many a cold winter night they sat in the barn together watching a sow giving birth to her piglets. One by one the piglets would be placed in a wash boiler with straw in it and covered with a gunny sack to keep them warm. After they had all arrived and had had a feeding, Andy would carry them into the house and set the boiler beside the kitchen stove. Andy and Annie would quickly go to bed and try to get some sleep, for in a couple of hours the piglets would be squealing for another meal and would have to be brought back to their mother.

Until the three Nanninga brothers could afford to buy a tractor, all the farm work was done with the help of horses. Often Annie would

Annie, Norma, Alma, Andy, 1948

milk the cows and feed the pigs and the hens while the men worked in the field until dark. In the forties things were getting a little better because the field work could be done with the help of tractors. But while his brothers had several sons to help on the farm, Andy and Annie had only two girls — **Hermina**, born June 13, 1934, and **Alma**, born March 13, 1939.

In 1946 Andy and Annie moved to Abbotsford, B.C., where they bought a twenty-five acre farm. After finishing school, both of their daughters worked in a bank until they married. Like their mother, they married farmers. Andy passed away in 1963 after suffering from bone cancer for four years. Annie and both of her daughters and their families live in Agassiz, B.C.

Annie Nanninga

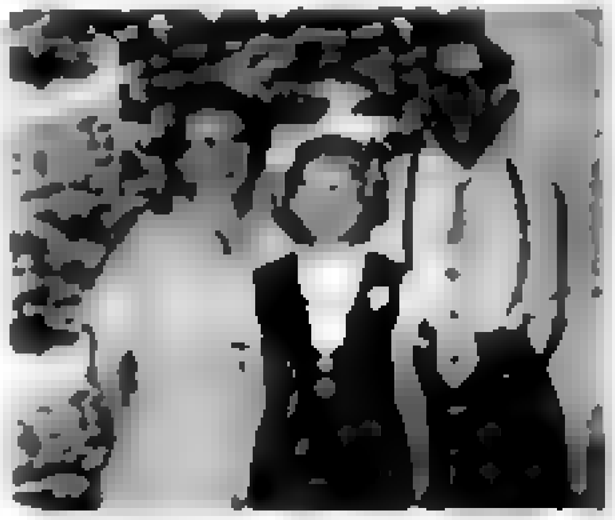
GERRIT AND CARRIE (MAST) NANNINGA

Carrie Mast was born in Neerlandia on October 8, 1915. Her father was often working elsewhere to make an extra dollar and so Carrie, as the oldest daughter, often had to stay home and help her mother. When her brothers and sisters were older, Carrie did some housework for the Wilsons, Bill Dieleman, Jim Fowler, and John Terpsma. She also did the wash and cleaning for Anne Elgersma on Mondays, not returning home until after dark. Later she did a lot of washing at home. In the wintertime there were many pairs of frozen combination underwear to struggle with, since she had so many brothers.

Gerrit Nanninga was born in Edmonton. The Nanninga family moved to Neerlandia and Gerrit farmed with his dad and brothers. Later he bought the NE 7-62-3-5, on which he built a shack. He lived alone there for a number of years until his marriage to Carrie on May 8, 1942.

Gerrit's dad and brothers helped them build a house. The fieldwork was done with horses and they had a wagon for transportation. Often they walked to the church and store, which was a distance of almost four miles. They bought their first tractor in 1945. One day, about two years after their marriage, Gerrit came with the tractor to take Carrie home from his mother's place. On their way home they met R. J. de Vries who asked, "Where are you going?" "Home of course," they replied. R. J. then said, "You don't have a home any more." It had burned to the ground except for the chimney when it was still standing. Gerrit and Carrie felt awful. All their wedding pictures and treasures were gone; and they never found out how the fire had started. Their brothers came with their wives and helped clean out the shack that Gerrit had bached in before. With their help Gerrit and Carrie began again. They built a house the next fall and converted the shack into a sow pen. They bought furniture and other necessaries with money they received from the fire insurance.

On September 14, 1946, the Nanningas were blessed with a daughter, **Everdina**. She was, and remains, the joy of their lives. When Everdina was three years of age she wandered into a field of sweet clover across the road from their home. Carrie looked all over for her and finally found her playing with her dog in the sweet clover. Everdina was then tied to the car with a piece of rope to ensure her safety.



Carrie, Everdina, Gerrit, c. [illegible]

Gerrit and Carrie worked in the field many times together and Everdina had a little place on the tractor to sleep. Once when Carrie was helping with the bindering, Everdina pushed the clutch of the tractor. Carrie had to jump in order to save her legs. The family left the farm in 1956 because Gerrit had a heart problem and was not allowed to operate the machinery.

Gerrit and Carrie first lived in the teacherage in the Centre and then bought the house of A. C. Ashley. Carrie worked as a clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op from 1956-63. Then they sold their house and property to Carrie's brother Carl and moved to Grande Prairie. Gerrit worked at CanFor Industries in a lumber mill and Carrie worked as caretaker for the Grande Prairie School District. They are both retired now. Everdina, who lives at home with her parents, has enjoyed working at Macleod's for the last eight years and is also the church organist.

Carrie Nanninga

IKE AND JENNY (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Ike Nanninga and Jenny Schoonekamp were married March [illegible] on a Sunday afternoon. Rev. Van Der Woude performed the ceremony in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed church. The next day they had a celebration in the church basement.

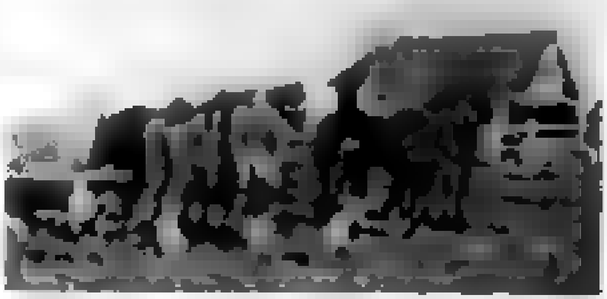
Menno Nanninga had reserved the NW 1-62-3-5 for Ike until he was old enough to file on it himself. On August 17, 1926, Ike filed on the land; he proved it up on May 22, 1931. Before his marriage, Ike had bached with his brothers Andy and Louis in a granary on his homestead. Then Andy got married, leaving Louis and Ike together. Now it was Ike's turn. When Ike and Jenny got married Louis moved in with them.

Grandpa Nanninga was a carpenter and he helped build a house for the young couple. The house was not completely finished off inside because Ike and Jenny could not afford to have that done. (The outside was unpainted and remained so for as long as they lived in it.) Ike's father also made some furniture for them. Ike bought a dresser with a big mirror on it for six dollars. It became one of Jenny's treasured possessions. At the bridal shower, which was held each time a young lady got married, Jenny received many useful items.

The first couple of winters that Ike and Jenny were married, Ike and his brothers went logging. They went by sleigh and returned home every evening. Jenny helped with the chores. She did not like the stinky pigs, but they were part of farming. Ike and Jenny did not have a good well when they were first married, so the cattle had to be driven to the end of the quarter where they could get water. In winter Jenny melted snow for household use. How happy they were when they finally got a good well!

Ike was a real go-getter. He worked hard and expected others to do the same. It was not all work though. In the evenings the Ike Nanningas visited with their neighbours, the Andy Nanningas, the Louis Nanningas, and others. Sunday dinners were taken at either the Nanninga or Schoonekamp parents because it was too far for Ike and Jenny to go home between services.

Ike and Jenny's first son, **Menno**, was born October 27, 1935. He was followed by **Henry** on March 26, 1938. At that time the Nanningas got their first car. Up to this time they had always ridden in a buggy or cutter, and were thankful for that. These vehicles were pulled by Rally, a speedy little horse. Ike liked to go fast, and Rally enabled him to keep ahead of most of the other vehicles on the road. Once he got the car, Ike could indulge his love of speed more than ever.



Ike with Menno

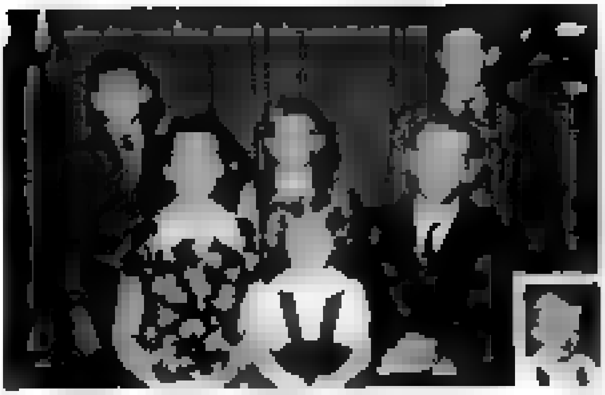
Ike suffered from ulcers and had an operation in which eighty percent of his stomach was removed. Then in 1939 he had an operation on his shoulder. A malignant growth the size of a loaf of bread was removed from his shoulder. Later several small growths were removed. As a result of the operations, Ike lost a lot of strength in his arm. Determined that he would not let this handicap him, Ike spent many hours in the garage trying to get his muscles back in shape. The cancer was not arrested though, and in 1948 the Nanningas drove to Rochester Clinic in New York to see if anything could be done to save Ike's arm. He was told that there was nothing to be done and that he had to have an operation as soon as possible. Sadly they returned to Edmonton where Ike underwent a quarter amputation. (This meant that the arm, shoulder, and shoulder blade were all removed). The operation was a success and, although the repeated operations had weakened his heart, Ike returned home where he was soon back at work.

Ike, 1958.

Louis had helped a lot whenever Ike had an operation. Now a young immigrant, Dan Vriend, was hired. He worked for Ike for about one year. Ike would not give up and soon was able to do most of the farm tasks. He showed great patience and perseverence in attempting to master a task but little things such as hard butter would make him angry because then he could not butter his bread without tearing it into pieces.

Alvin, their third son, was born May 27, 1940. The three boys were born at home with the help of Jenny's mother. **Patricia**, though, was born in an Edmonton hospital on August 11, 1944. The Nanningas' last son, **Ronald**, was born in the Barrhead hospital on February 24, [illegible].

In other ways too the family was making progress. To provide electricity, a wind charger was installed in 1945. It was a real pleasure to have electric lights and cold running water for the house and barn. The Nanningas built a new house in 1952. Although Grandpa Nanninga was retired by this time, he helped to build the house. To store their meat and other food, an icehouse was also constructed.



Back: Henry, Alvin, Manny. Front: Jennie, Patricia, Ike. 1948 Inset: Ronald, 1953

By this time Ike and Jenny had two quarter sections of land. In 1958 they bought a third quarter. Henry, who married Rose Mast, lives on this quarter. Manny married Lois Van Dyke in 1960. Alvin married Joanne Gelderman in 1963 and moved onto the home quarter. At that time Ike and Jenny with their two youngest children moved to Edmonton.

Nine months later, on May 19, 1964, Ike passed away from a heart attack. One year later Patricia married Peter Elzinga. Ron stayed with his mother until his marriage to Hazel Fisher in 1972.

Jenny Nanninga

LOUIS AND TENA (ANEMA) NANNINGA

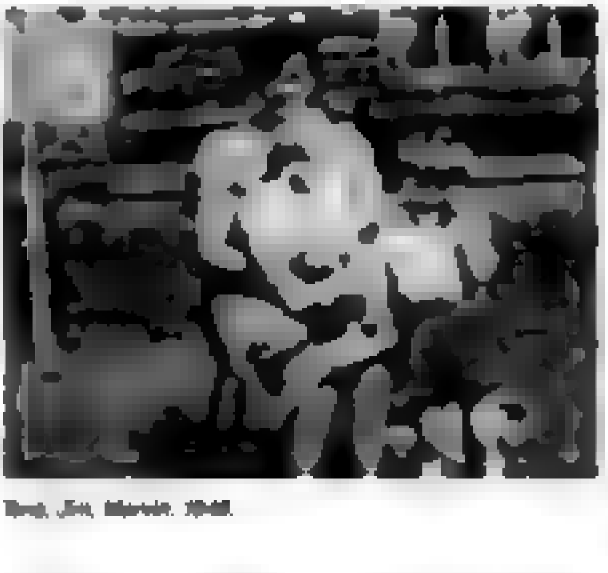
Louis Nanninga and Tena Anema were both raised in Neerlandia, and Louis courted Tena for about five years before their marriage on February 3, 1935, a beautiful winter Sunday. Their honeymoon was a two-and-a-half mile trip from the Anema farm to their new home. Louis had filed on the SW 12-62-3-5 in 1928 when he was eighteen, and had worked there clearing the land. By 1935 he had about fifty acres of crop land ready, and had built a lumber house and a barn with the help of his brothers and his dad, Menne Nanninga.

Tena's parents had given them a couple of cows. They also had four horses. They bought some pigs and chickens, and were on their way together. Groceries were inexpensive. Tena recals keeping account of everything they bought for the first year of marriage: groceries, twine, and work clothes for Louis amounted to ninety-four dollars.

Their first car, a Model T Ford coupe, was purchased in 1936 for sixty-five dollars. But it did not last very long. Then they bought a Model A Ford for three hundred dollars. That was a much better car.

Their first son, Marvin Louis, was born May [illegible] huge distended stomach. He gained no weight [illegible] Barrhead took one look at him and recommended a child specialist in Edmonton. Two specialists tapped and poked on his stomach and then just shook their heads. "Never saw [illegible] days." Somehow Dr. Eardley Allen, fresh out of medical school in England and specializing in surgery, got to hear about this baby with the huge stomach. He examined Marvin and decided, "We may as well try to operate and see what we can find. The baby is probably going to die anyway." So they operated and removed several large fluid-filled cysts that were attached to and feeding from the liver. The operation was successful and Marvin is a healthy man today. Dr. Allen called Marvin his "won[illegible]

Another son, James Andrew, was born January 7, 1939. Like his older brother, he was born at home. There were no complications this [illegible]



[illegible], Jim, Marvin, 1940.

At first Louis shared machinery with his brothers Ike and Andy. In 1940 the brothers bought a tractor, which not only enabled them to open up the land faster but made Louis' life more pleasant. Farming with horses was not always fun for him, as the following episodes bear out.

"I was never a lover of horses and this may be the cause of the trouble I had with the old grey mares. It could also be my poor horseman[illegible] curred while I was working with them. One spring day the garden was in the right condition to be harrowed. In those days we did not have any garden tools except a hoe. The harrows were first dragged over the driveway which was a bit noisy. That always put the horses on the alert. The garden was not very big and a lot of turning had to be done. Work horses usually had bridles with blinkers on so they could not see directly behind them, but in the turning process, one horse saw the harrows and me. He spooked and kicked over the traces. I tried to hold on to the lines, but one line broke and the other was pulled through my hand. Away the old nags went — through the road allowance with brush on it and through a wire fence. The harrows stayed on the fence as the evener broke, but the horses went for a good run for about three quarters of a mile into my brother's field. They stopped on his yard, somewhat tangled up in what was left of their harness.

"What this all meant (along with a temper tantrum) was repair. Repair eveners, repair harness with some other old harnesses and leather. Copper rivets were generally used to repair the broken parts. A lot of time was put into repair, because there was no money to buy new equipment. This was not the only time that horses ran away on me, there were many others. We had a team of horses that were used to help with the threshing. They were fine in the field, but when they came by the separator they would get excited and try to get away. If the lines were put tight so they couldn't go forward, they would go in reverse. To keep the team in their place, we put a logging chain around one horse's neck, and then around the wheel of the thresher. This prevented the horse from rearing up and from going either forward or reverse. It was something like a [illegible] docile as you see them on pictures, where they stand still when they are hooked to a plow, disc or harrow. Some have a wild streak in them, even after a day's work. Fortunately no one got hurt in all the runaways I had. I was not sorry to see the horses laid off when in 1940, we saw our way clear to buy a tractor. That meant no more frisky broncs to put up with," said Louis.

Meanwhile, Louis and Tena were also involved in community life. During Louis' first term as deacon, it was noticed that the bottom of the collection plate was coming loose. Someone repaired it, and Rev. H. Van Der Woude tapped the bottom with his knuckles and said "It sounds good — ready to be used again." It was Louis' turn to pass the plate around. At that time the offering consisted of large, heavy pennies and lots of nickels. Louis got about three or four benches down when the bottom fell out of the plate. Well, he calmly went to the back of the church and picked up a man's hat, which became the new offering plate. He remembers that he was neither thanked nor reprimanded. The new plate must have been acceptable.

Louis and Tena's first girl, **Eleanor** Kathleen, was born September 9, 1943. She was the first of their children to be born in the Barrhead hospital. Another son, **Gerald** Francis, was born two years later on November 17, 1945.

About 1945 Nanningas bought a neighbouring quarter (SE 12-62-3-5) from Klaas Wierenga. For this Louis paid about $5500. It was all good land, about three-quarters cleared. In 1948 Louis bought a share in a D8 caterpillar and worked with Bill Oshuis for about ten years. They did a variety of work such as brushing, [illegible] grading and breaking. They worked in Neerlandia, Vega, Mellowdale, Churchill, and Naples.

In 1949 the Nanningas built a new house. It was quite large and had central heating. They also had a light plant for power which ran on gas and wind. The old house was sold to Steve Abday. Their second girl, **Sharon** Darlene, was born in 1949 on August 17. By this time the two quarters where they lived were almost all cleared [illegible] grain, pigs, cows, cream, and eggs. The price of farm produce was good, and during this period farmers made considerable progress. In 1950 Louis constructed a fairly large hip roof barn. The main floor was for pigs and cows and the top two floors for chickens. For quite a few years they sold hatching eggs.

During that time Louis also helped to finance immigrants and others in their business endeavours. He was always ready to lend to those in need.

In the winters of 1954-55 and 1955-56, Marvin and his cousin Manny Nanninga attended the Vermilion School of Agriculture. They were the first boys from the area to go away to learn about some new farming practices. With two budding farmers, Marvin and Jim, coming up, Louis acquired another two quarters in 1956. This was the George Anema farm, Tena's former home.

Back: Jim, Marvin, Gerald. Middle: Sharon, Eleanor. Front: Louis, Tena, 1960

Louis continued to be active in community affairs. He served in several community boards and had an enjoyable time, though there were disagreements and Louis hated arguments.

[illegible] last land acquisition was the NE 11-62-3-5 in 1962. In 1967 Louis and Tena sold their five quarters, machinery, and all farming paraphernalia to Marvin. Because Marvin was unmarried, they continued to live and work there. They also travelled a little — to the Netherlands, Hawaii, and Alaska.

Meanwhile the children were growing up and leaving home. Jim went to work in Edmonton as soon as he graduated from high school. On March 31, 1959, he married Marilyn Mast. They have seven children. Jim is a partner in a Budget Rent-a-Car business. Eleanor married Ray Merkus in 1961.

After high school, Gerald took an electrician's course at NAIT. For a short time he worked in the city, but soon returned to Neerlandia to farm with Marvin. Gerald married Dora Plantinga in 1971.

Sharon was an athletic girl. She excelled in sports, especially in running, and won several medals in this field. After high school, Sharon enrolled in a Certified Nursing Aide course and got a job in Edmonton. There she met and married Victor Schappy in 1971. Victor is an optician practising in Edmonton. They have three children.

Marvin continued farming and now lives on the home place (SW 12-62-3-5). In 1964, Ted Reitsma, Jack Janssen, and Marvin obtained their private pilot's licenses. The following year they bought Neerlandia's first small airplane. The runway and hangar were on the Nanninga farm.

In 1974 Marvin went to work on an oil rig for the winter. Always curious, he found out what camp life was all about. He decided, however, that that was not where his future lay, and on April 25, 1975, he married **June Hultquist** of Edmonton. June was born in Ottawa, Ontario, on June 23, 1937. In the 1960s she came to Edmonton where she worked at a variety of jobs before she married Marvin. They have one son, **Timothy Louis**.

Marvin has other interests along with farming. He bought a gravel truck in 1976 and still owns one. He enjoys being on the road, especially with a payload. He also does a bit of commercial fishing. June is an excellent cook and always has a huge garden along with her chickens, turkeys, and other animals that she loves.

In 1975, Louis and Tena bought a mobile home which was moved to the hamlet one year later. They are happy to be retired in the community where they have spent their lives. Louis enjoys woodworking and doing crossword puzzles. Tena is a charitable person who visits the sick and shut-ins.

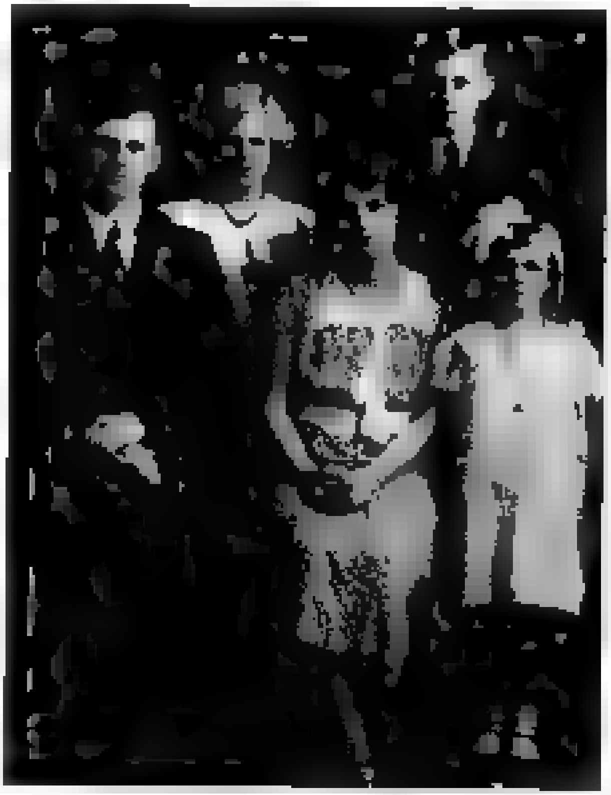
Eleanor Merkus

JOHN AND JENNIE (TUININGA) OLDEGBERS

John Oldegbers and Jennie Tuininga were married December 7, 1923. They lived for a time in Elke Jorritsma's house. Then, with help from the family, a house and barn were built on the SW 20-61-3-5, land owned by John. Here two children, Susie (Sjoukje, June 23, 1924) and **Albert Jan** (January 28, 1926) were born.

John and Jennie moved to Edmonton in 1929. There three more children were born. Sorrow came to the family when Jennie died of pernicious anemia in April 1941. Her youngest child was two years old.

John worked at a variety of jobs before he was hired by the Canadian Pacific Railway. He worked there till his retirement. He remarried in 1979 and lives in Edmonton.



John, Susie, Jennie, Albert, Clara.

WILLIAM AND CARRIE (TUININGA) OLTHUIS

William Olthuis, better known as Bill, or even Willie, spent most of his life in Neerlandia. There he learned the art of trapping, became known as one of Neerlandia's two best hunters (the other being Bill Lievers) and was at times the bane of a teacher's existence. Life on the frontier was a great adventure for him, but that was all to change

The hunter, 1925

The lady or the horse?

One day a strange thing happened to Bill; instead of admiring the fine lines of a horse he found himself admiring the fine figure of a woman. Before long he realized that one woman, Carrie Tuininga, was nicer than all the rest and he began to court her. The Tuininga parents, Klaas and Sjoerdje, were not sure what to make of this young fellow coming around. It was not that long ago that Klaas had had to reprimand Bill for spitting tobacco juice between the cracks in the church floor. One of Carrie's rascally younger brothers once shot Bill in the nose with an arrow, but no harm was done to the nose and Bill's ardour was dampened not a bit. Little by little Carrie's parents were won over as Bill showed signs of settling down.

When Bill asked for Carrie's hand in marriage Klaas said that he saw the potential that Bill had and knew he would be able to provide for her. He hoped, though, that Bill would stay home more than he had done in the past. With the blessing of both sets of parents Bill and Carrie were married March 11, 1934, in the Sun-

Courting days, Carrie, Bill, 1933.

day afternoon church service in a double ceremony with Joe and Catharina Holwerda.

Bill and Carrie settled on Jacob Olthuis' quarter (SE 34-61-3-5) which was more centrally located than Bill's homestead. Here, one half mile east of the store, Jim Johnman, a carpenter, had built a snug, warm house for them. It was twenty by twenty-four feet and had four little rooms — a bedroom, front room, utility room, and kitchen — on the main floor. The kitchen boasted tiny kitchen cabinets in place of the usual pantry. The upstairs, though unfinished, provided room for storage and beds. A cellar under the house provided storage space for vegetables and fruit. Times being hard and money scarce (these were the Depression years) Bill and Carrie bought only bare essentials, a new cookstove for thirty-eight dollars, a new bed with a mattress, and six unpainted chairs. Bill's father was handy and made them two tables. Bill and Carrie bought some aqua paint and painted the tables, chairs, and cupboards to match.

When Bill's parents moved to the city, John and Fred planned to stay and bach in Neerlandia, but that did not last very long. Soon Fred decided to join the family in Edmonton and John moved in with Bill and Carrie. For the next year the two brothers farmed together and then John too went to the city.

That winter **Shirley** made her arrival on a very cold winter day (December 22, 1934). It was [illegible] and cozy inside, and Bill and Carrie were very happy with their little family. They did not have much in the way of material things, but many other things in life made up for it. Because "we couldn't up and go and do this and that" a closer family relationship developed. The Olthuis family were usually home together except for an occasional visit to family and friends.

The following spring the Olthuis family again increased, but this addition was George, Bill's youngest brother, who came to stay with them and remained for four years — coming in spring and returning until November. He helped Bill on the farm and made the half-hearted attempts of most seventeen-year-olds to weed the garden. He was good with horses and pleasant to have around. He was a good baby-sitter. Carrie said that the girls listened better to him than they did to her.

A severe frost damaged most of the grain in August 1935. That was also the year the Aberhart Government came into power, promising every member of the family twenty-five dollars, and that looked pretty good at the time. **Elsie** also made her appearance that winter (December 23, 1935). When the new baby was about a week old, Carrie developed phlebitis in both legs. For four months she was not permitted to get out of bed. Gradually she improved and began to walk on crutches, but her legs continued to trouble her so that she required hired help many times through the following years.

Shirley, Carrie, Elsie 1936

"It was tough sledding the first years of our marriage," Carrie said, "but Bill was a person who tried his hand at many things." Bill took seriously the responsibility of providing for his family. He went to the bush to make lumber and traded or sold it. By supplying some of the lumber for the new co-op store that was being built in 1938, he was able to provide Carrie with the luxury of a gas-powered washing machine.

Then Bill heard that Pete Wijngaarden was selling his well-drilling outfit. Bill and his brother-in-law Jack Tuininga bought the outfit in 1940 and began drilling wells. They drilled year round except during seedtime and harvest. Cold weather did not stop them. Among the eighty-five wells they drilled was a flowing well drilled for Alex Bain of Shoal Creek. The deepest well they drilled was 485 feet deep and drilled for Roelof Krikke.

In the meantime the family grew. **Joan** was born August 8, 1938. When Bill and Carrie got married they had a small buggy just right for the two of them, but now with three children it was too small, so when they went out, Shirley (four) and Elsie (three) had to stand behind the seat while Carrie held baby Joan on her lap. In this fashion one day they were returning from visiting *Pake* and *Beppe*. Carrie was no doubt telling Bill all the latest news when Shirley quietly said, "Elsie fell off." Sure enough, there was Elsie picking herself up without a howl or a scream. She was unhurt and soon the family continued on its way.

Ready for a buggy ride: Shirley, Elsie, 1939

While Bill provided well for his family, he did not heed his father-in-law's advice about staying home. This meant that Carrie frequently had the responsibility of doing chores. On one such occasion while stepping out of the chop bin with two pails of chop she twisted her ankle so severely that she was unable to walk. She sent the girls to get their little wagon. When she clambered into it they pulled her to the house. After a few days Carrie was getting around by pushing a chair on which she could rest her injured ankle. Another day when Carrie was milking, a cat kept scampering under the cow, frightening it and causing it to kick. Maybe Carrie was wishing that Bill was home or maybe her legs were bothering her again. At any rate she grabbed the cat and threw it with more strength than accuracy toward the barn door. The cat hit the wall and fell to the floor, knocked out cold.

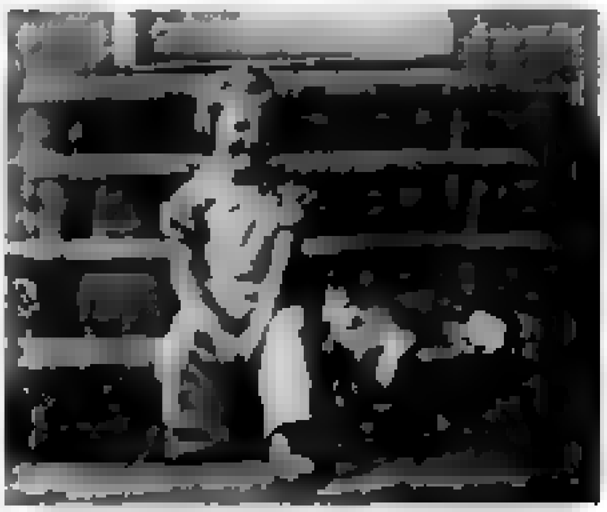
After three girls, the boys began to arrive. **Jack** Clifford was born August 25, 1940, and **Clarence** William on March 18, 1944. By this time the little house was getting rather crowded so Bill decided to build a new one. It would be erected northwest of the present house — nearer the church and school. The basement was dug with a tractor and scraper. The cement was mixed in small cement mixers and poured by the wheelbarrow-full. It took two days to pour. Bill's dad, a carpenter, spent the summer with the Olthuis family and put up the frame. Henry Bouwman Sr. helped with the finishing. The house had hardwood floors throughout. Bill scraped them, and then Frances Anema and Carrie did the sanding and varnishing.

Elsie, Jack, Carrie, Bill, Joan, Shirley, c. 1942

Bill drilled his last well on the new place and then sold the outfit to Klaas Wierenga. If Father Tuininga thought that finally Bill was going to stay home, he was to be disappointed. Bill never was a farmer at heart and was always looking for new challenges. In partnership with Jack Tuininga and John Ingwersen, Bill bought a D8 Caterpillar tractor in 1947. With it they cleared and piled many acres in Neerlandia, Vega, and Naples. After a year Louis Nanninga and George Anema bought Jack and John's shares. For ten years Louis, George, and Bill worked together. They hired men to work for them and kept the "Cat" going twenty-four hours a day during the summer. Then Bill bought the other partners out and was sole owner until he sold it in 1964.

Bill often worked in partnership with others. His first tractor, an Oliver 80, was owned with John Anema. At times this machine too worked day and night. The threshing machine was owned with his brothers-in-law Charles Tiemstra and the Tuiningas.

In the meantime three more children were added to the family: **Frederick** David on January 7, 1948; **Stanley** Lorne on December 14, 1951; and **Linda** Karen on September 12, 1953.



Linda 1954

Both Carrie and Bill delighted in their children and eagerly anticipated and welcomed each new arrival. Although Bill always felt too awkward to handle them during their first year, once they were a little older he enjoyed giving them horseback rides and wrestling with them on the floor. Rainy days were especially cozy for then the whole family would play games or put jigsaw puzzles together. Sunday evenings when there was no company the family would often sing hymns, and for some years once a week the family would gather in the front room for Bible study.

Twice each Sunday the family went to church. Often, though, someone had to babysit whoever was the youngest at the time. Between services Bill and Carrie generally lay down for a nap. When she thought it was time Carrie would get up and, when everybody was nearly ready to go, she would wake Bill and he would come out of the bedroom stuffing his shirt in his pants, and grabbing his hat — no hair to comb — he was ready to go.

Bill and Carrie had different musical tastes. Bill, who enjoyed cowboy music, would demonstrate his appreciation for classical music by howling a few bars of the "Messiah" for Carrie — much to the children's amusement.

The Olthuis children were expected to do well. It was not just to be hoped for — it was expected. After a Christmas concert, for example, the children were praised for doing well, but if one had forgotten to stand up tall or had mumbled the words while speaking, he would hear about that too.

As the girls grew up they were a big help to Bill. He often remarked that they were as good as boys for doing chores and helping with the harvesting. Elsie drove the tractor and Shirley ran the binder while Bill did the stooking. They helped shingle and paint the house and garage roofs. Later the boys took over these kinds of tasks, much to Elsie's dismay, and the girls went on to high school and university.

Fred, Clarence, Joan, Jack, Elsie, Shirley. Front: Stan, Bill, Carrie, Linda. 1959

Bill was courteous and soft-spoken. The strongest expletives his children ever heard him use were "Blasted!" and "Judas Priest!" This mannerliness stood him in good stead when he served as county councillor and had to deal with (sometimes unreasonable) people on a daily basis. In 1955 Bill was elected to represent the Neerlandia district in the newly-formed Municipality of Barrhead, and he continued to be re-elected as representative (of District 7) when the municipality became a county. For twenty-five years Bill held that position, serving on many council committees as well as on the Sturgeon Unit Health Board, the Barrhead-Westlock-Thorhild Auxiliary Hospital board, and several local boards. Who would have thought that young Willie Olthuis would become a community leader, respected for his levelheadedness and sense of justice. Father [illegible] was not staying home with Carrie. [illegible] Everyone was welcome there and treated to a cup of coffee accompanied by some home [illegible] kids helped — and canned hundreds of quarts of fruit and vegetables each year. Carrie, who had grown up in poverty, wasted nothing — saltless porridge could be eaten, as she would demonstrate to her reluctant sons, black toast could be scraped and eaten too. And when anyone complained of the lack of variety of [illegible] kids, we could have butter or jam — not both — [illegible] prepared meals, making good use of leftovers. [illegible] burden of bringing up the children was on Carrie's shoulders.

As the boys grew up, Jack was the hero of his younger brothers; they would eat only what [illegible] them. Jack was handy and made a little wagon which he would attach to the tricycle to give Clarence a ride. He was the family's handy [illegible]

After completing high school in Barrhead [illegible] year in Vega before going to Calvin College where she met Norman Matheis. They were married August 23, 1957, in a double ceremony with Shirley's sister Joan and Ralph Bos. Joan had quit school after completing grade nine and stayed home to help Carrie, who was busy with the three boys and Linda. Norm is now head of the art department at Dordt College and Shirley works in the drama department there.

Elsie followed in Shirley's footsteps and also became a teacher. She married Henk Navis. Jack graduated from Calvin College and taught for one year at Toronto Christian High School and one year at a girls' school in New Zealand. After his return to the U.S.A. he started an implement business, Olthuis Equipment. He [illegible] in Big Rapids, Michigan, where Gloryann does [illegible]

After graduating from high school, Clar[illegible] ways busy in his job as councillor. He married Rose Nanninga. Fred attended Trinity Christian College where he met Sandra Wichers. They were married in 1973. Stan followed Fred to Trinity but later went to Toronto where he graduated from the Ontario College of Art. He and his wife, Joanne, live in Toronto with their daughter. Stan and Joanne have their own business, where he works as an agent for commercial artists and photographers and she does graphic design for advertisements.

Linda remains a child. The hardest decision Bill and Carrie ever made was to take Linda to the Deer Home (Michener Center) in Red Deer, Alberta. It was a dark day in their lives, [illegible] they will never forget. It was March 16, 1967. Besides being such a sad day already, Bill's dad passed away that day, and there was a blizzard [illegible] will always be grateful to them for going with us [illegible] remains in the Deer Home where she continues to be well-cared for.

"We have had our ups and downs, our joys and our sorrows, but God has blessed us abundantly and our hope is still in him to help us" is their testimony.

The stiffness and slowness that come with old age were not welcomed by Bill. For many years he would say, half-humorously, "I could still stook circles around those young guys!" — but he couldn't and he knew it. Finally, in 1980, he took his father-in-law's advice and is staying [illegible]

Olthuis Family

GERHARD PAAS
JAN AND EBELTJE (DALING) PAAS

In 1926, at the age of forty-one, Gerhard Paas immigrated to Canada. He first worked for a farmer in Nobleford and later moved to Coaldale, where he heard about Neerlandia. He took up a homestead (SE 15-62-3-5) there in December 1928

Gerhard built a little 10 by 16-foot frame shack and started clearing some land. After seeding it and raising wheat, he sold the [illegible] more acres cleared, however, the market had [illegible] Gerhard cleared land in the winter and worked out in the south during the summer

Gerhard standing in front of his shack, 1930s

Gerhard had one brother in the "old coun- [illegible] and before World War II kept in contact with him by writing regularly, though not often. He hoped one of his nephews would [illegible] He had a heart attack in the early forties [illegible]

Meanwhile, Jan (February 23, 1919) and Ebeltje (July 1, 1918) Paas had been married in October 1945, and were farming with Jan's brother and his wife and also living in the same [illegible] Canada, they were eager to go. Their unc- [illegible] old daughter, **Diekina** (July 16, 1946). On June [illegible] sailed to Canada. They were six days on the ship and three days on the train, arriving in Edmonton on a Sunday night. Tjeerd Visser of Edmonton was at the station to pick them up, and they stayed at their home overnight. The [illegible] Barrhead. Norm Toebes was on the bus with them, and the Toebes family was in Barrhead with a car to take them to Neerlandia. Jan and Ebeltje were the first immigrants to come to [illegible] brides

The next day was the First of July picnic, and they had to go there, although Ebeltje and the baby were still sick from the trip. They were made very welcome at the picnic, and that day Mrs. Rubingh and some other ladies took Ebeltje to the store and bought some things for them that were needed in their household. A few days later they were given a surprise party at Albert and Mabel Elgersma's. Jan and Ebeltje were very impressed with the generosity of the people and the welcome they received

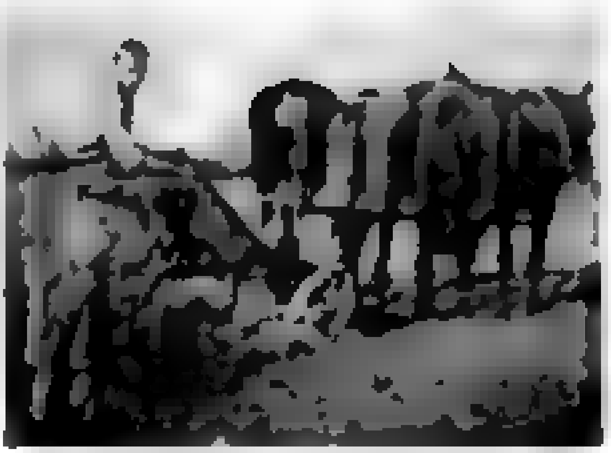
Although Gerhard had rented Kippers' farmhouse for them to live in, he had also bought Cecil Tuininga's house, but it had to be moved yet. George Toebes and Albert Elgersma prepared it for moving. It was put on two good skid logs, and in the fall Sam Howey moved it with his Caterpillar tractor to the southwest corner of Gerhard's land. Gerhard had a small barn which they moved near Jan's house. The Paas family moved into their house before the winter. At the time they came to Canada they could take only one hundred dollars per person. So they had three hundred dollars — still one hundred more than Gerhard had. That first winter was very lean. They bought two milk cows and shipped some cream, and off and on Jan helped some neighbours getting firewood. On the average they had no more than five dollars a week for groceries, but they managed

There was another baby on the way, and of this Jan writes: "My wife expected the baby in late May 1948 and our neighbours, the Janssens, were going to take her along sometime to [illegible] never happened. That year was a very late spring, the first day of May there was still snow in banks on the roadsides. Sunday morning, May the second, the baby started knocking. It was about four o'clock in the morning (at that time my uncle was living with us in the house, so he could look after our little girl). Our road was flooded so no car could get there. We hitched up old Queenie on the buggy and went to Janssen's place and got them out of bed, and they decided that Jack should take us to Barrhead. Jack was twenty at that time. The roads were bad but we got to about four miles south [illegible] out. There was a big gap in the road. So Jack got to the nearest house and borrowed a ladder to get across and get help from the Fisher boys. When they came back the hole had got a bit bigger already, and it was not safe to get across anymore, so they put a rope on Jack for safety to come back over. But then we had to decide what to do. Then Jack said, 'Old Mrs. Schoonekamp used to be midwife, maybe we should see her.' So when we came back to Neerlandia, I got Schoonekamps out of bed. When I talked to Mrs. Schoonekamp, she was very reluctant to come with us. But when she realized that my wife was in the car, she said, 'Why don't you bring her in here, we got a spare bedroom,' and that was done. My wife was very cold and getting real close. It did not take long before the baby was born — a healthy boy, Tjabel. But then there was some complications. At the time the Ingwersens had a nurse visiting, Ina Ingwersen, and we got her to help, but she could not manage it. Then the doctor was called. Dr. Keir came but he got stuck with his car. The Fishers took him to the creek in a truck and they rafted him across, then took him in another car to the Schoonekamp's place. By that time my wife had lost a lot of blood already. But the doctor got things straightened out. My wife stayed at Schoonekamps' for nine days, I think. She was very weak from loss of blood, but the Schoonekamps were very good and generous. When I wanted to pay them, they did not want anything, but I could bring them a load of firewood the next winter. We are still thankful when we think about them. That was the most memorable thing that happened to us."

That fall Gerhard Paas died of a heart attack. Jan found him on a Monday morning (September 15, 1948) in his shack. He had been to church yet on Sunday.

A second son, Steven, was born to Jan and Ebeltje on November 27, 1950. There was about a foot of snow that day, and since they still did not have a car Pete Emmerzael took them to Barrhead.

The summer of 1951 was cool but with enough moisture so the crop did well, although it ripened late. On the twentieth of September Pete Emmerzael and Jan were cutting barley at Pete's place. It was very cold and the next morning there was six inches of snow on the ground. The next couple of nights the temperature was down to twenty degrees Fahrenheit and a lot of crops were not ripe yet and froze badly.



Jan mowing hay with horses c. 1949

Jan, Ebeltje holding Steven, Tjabel, 1951

That summer Jan and Ebeltje had made the decision to sell the place and move to Ontario. The winters were too cold and long in Neerlandia and if they stayed they would have to get some land cleared and build a new barn, and that was an investment they were not prepared to make. They sold the place to Evert Wever in December 1951. Jan wrote: "We have many fond memories of Neerlandia, especially the people, it was just like we had a lot of family there."

Jan Paas

JOHN SR. AND ELIZABETH (BUZINGA) PETERS

John (Johannes, August 15, 1891) and Elizabeth (January 10, 1888) Peters lived in

Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, with their five children: **Tena** (Trientje, July 24, 1917), **Dela** (Dieuwerke, May 13, 1920), **John** Jr. (Jan. October 14, 1921), **Elizabeth** (November 9 1923), and **Hilda** (Hilje. November 21, 1925) John worked as a farmhand. Some families of Uithuizen, one of them John's brother-in-law Hendrik Wierenga, were planning to immigrate to Canada. John was eventually persuaded to go too. The families left Uithuizen together, but the John Peters family left Rotterdam about a week later. On April 3, 1928. they left on the *Nieuwe Amsterdam*. The voyage took ten days

Elizabeth, John, 1916

After arriving in Edmonton the family went to Tofield, where John worked for farmers again. They lived out of town, but every Sunday would take the horse and buggy to attend church services in Tofield

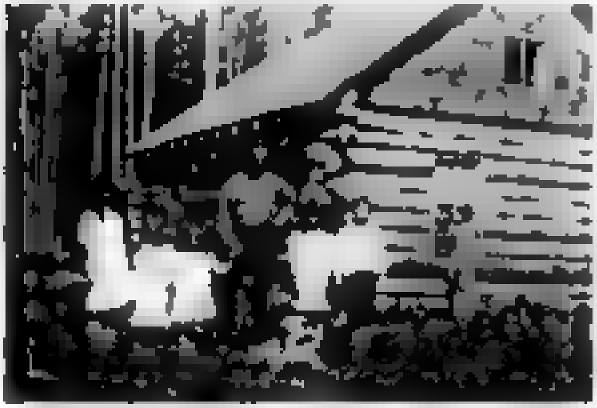
John wanted land of his own, so he came to Neerlandia in the fall of 1928. The family moved into an old log house on the Kampnar place The old saying goes. "Don't let the bedbugs bite" but the Peters family had no choice — the place was full of them. Elizabeth was at this time nearing the end of her pregnancy with another child

Siebren Tiemstra and Menne Nanninga helped John and Hendrik Wierenga look for suitable homesteads. There were some available northeast of Neerlandia, but the men wanted land that was closer to where they were living, so when Menne mentioned there were two homesteads open near his quarter, they went to have a look. They looked suitable, but the one quarter had heavy bush on it while the other had more brush and some of the timber burnt off. John and Hendrik pulled sticks, and John got the quarter with the lighter brush. He filed on it (SE 31-61-3-5) in November 1928 After clearing a little land John, with the help of Andy Nanninga. started building a log house He walked back and forth every day from the Kampnar place to the homestead

It was in the Kampnar log house that the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, but unfortunately it was not meant to go well with her. The child was stillborn, and Elizabeth was brought to the Edmonton hospital with complications. She died there six days later (December 1928). The Peters children stayed with the Ingwersens during that time but John soon took them home again

It was a very difficult time for John. Being in a new country and not having much money, he had to work out to make ends meet and now he also had to take care of the children. He became very frustrated at times and felt like giving up. But Andy Nanninga encouraged him not to. and John did carry on and made it through those hard times. In the spring of 1929, after their log house was finished (it had cost him seventy-five dollars to build), John moved his family to the homestead

John got his first milk cow from Hendrik Schoonekamp and did clearing for Hendrik to



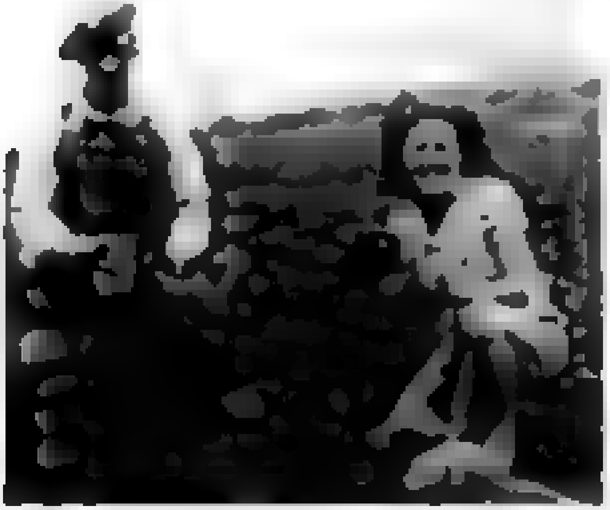
Tena, Elizabeth, Hilda, John Sr. Dela, John in front of their log house 1930 pay for it. He made the same arrangement with [illegible] for his first farm. He also did clearing for other farmers, among them were John Gelderman and Charlie Reitsma. In those days there were no fences to keep cattle in, so in the morning John would often have trouble finding his cows. Some days he would start out at 4:00 a.m. to look for them. Sometimes he would come home in between to wake the children up to go to school and then start looking again. Then he would put in a long day clearing his own land or working for other people clearing land or building roads.

At first Minnie Lievers had come to help out with housework, doing the washing and baking. But when the children got a little older, they started helping. Tena was about twelve years old when she took over the household chores before and after school. She would have to rush through the housework, then run the two miles to school to get there on time. John would bring Elizabeth and Hilda to Menne [illegible] in the morning before he started his day. The other children had to walk all the way. When Tena was fourteen she quit school and had to work at home helping [illegible] for the family. John Sr. would do the garden work, though. In 1934 Tena left home to work in Edmonton, Pibroch, and Westlock, and Delia took over at home.

In 1936, when John Jr. was 15, he quit school to work out clearing land, making 'big' wages of one dollar a day. John thought that the bigger the axe, the quicker the job would get done, but found it hard and tiring to lift that big axe all day. John Sr. could now spend more time at home, which made it easier for him. In the 1940s, when the first Caterpillars came into the district, the clearing of the land became easier and faster. It was also in the mid-forties that John Sr. and his son bought their first tractor, a 35 h.p. Allis-Chalmers, for $1200.00. That was a big improvement over walking behind the plow and harrows all day.

In the 1950s John Jr. first worked for Sam Howey and later for Bill Olthuis and Louis Nanninga, clearing land with a Caterpillar tractor. John Sr. had purchased the NW 31-61-3-5, which was right next to the homestead, so they now had a half section of land. In 1956 John Jr. married Kay Baker and they moved onto the family farm.

John Sr. continued living on the farm the rest of his life, taking an active interest in it and helping out wherever he could. He started raising varieties of pheasants and different kinds of chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys as well as peacocks. For the ringed-neck pheasants he had to renew his permit every year and pay a ten-dollar fee. This always annoyed him because he either had to pay it or let the pheasants fend for themselves and he did not think they could make it on their own. He later sold all the pheasants and raised mostly peacocks.



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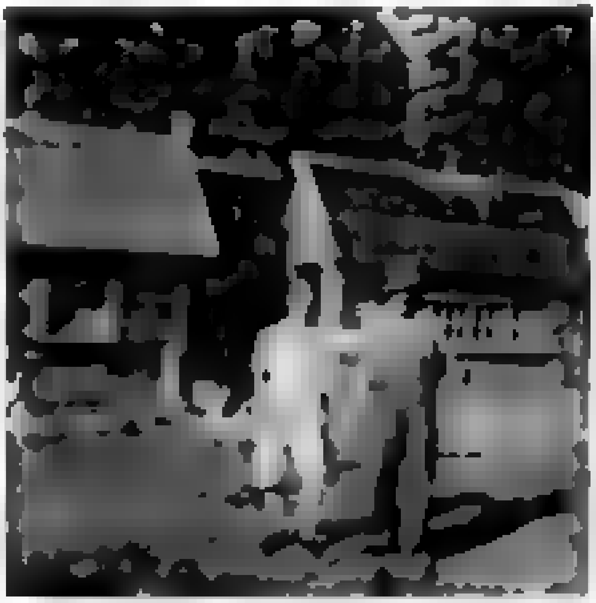


[illegible]

[illegible]

John Sr. was taken to his Lord on September 28, 1979, at 86 years of age, after a short illness. Delia was also taken Home on July 8, 1983, after a lengthy illness. She had one son, **Phil Novikoff** (June 25, 1953). The other three daughters also married. Tena to Ed Visser, Elizabeth to Cor Fisher, and Hilda to Joe Wierenga, son of Andries and Rika.

John Peters Jr.

OENE AND GRACE (WIERENGA) PIERS

The town of Marum in the province of Groningen, the Netherlands, was the birthplace of Oene Piers. There he lived from March 27, 1900, until 1927 when he immigrated to Canada. Here he lived first in Saskatchewan, and then he and Reitze De Vries each took up a homestead in Topland, Alberta. Together they cleared twelve acres on one of the quarters, but soon realized that there was no future for church life there. They were aware of the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia and visited there from time to time. On these occasions they stayed at the Tiemstras. These must have been more than just social visits, because soon Oene Piers bought the SE 28-61-3-5 from Siebren Tiemstra. Reitze and Oene bached together, living in the log house that was on the property [illegible]

Then two things happened. First, the quar[illegible] became available as a homestead lease, and second, Oene met Grace (Grietje) Wierenga. Reitze and Oene discussed which one of them should apply for the homestead, but it appears that Reitze saw the handwriting on the wall, and decided to take a homestead farther north. Oene took up the SW 28-61-3-5 in August 1929. On December 25, 1931, Grace and Oene were married, and she replaced Reitze as Oene's companion in the little log house.

Before marrying Oene, Grace had worked as a housemaid in Tofield, Granum, and Edmonton. She had always given her wages to her parents, and had only twenty dollars when she got married. This, however, did not bother Oene who said that he wanted her, not her money.

During their years in the log house, three sons were born to Oene and Grace. The first, **Peter**, was born October 16, 1932. He was followed by **Bert** (Lambert) on November 8, 1933, and **Henry** (Sid) on January 31, 1935.

Life was difficult in the early years of Grace and Oene's married life. Only a few acres of land could be cleared each year. Trees were [illegible] broken with a breaker pulled by six horses. When Oene was busy clearing, Grace would bring him lunch. Sometimes she would have to cross small sloughs. Then she would tuck little Peter under one arm and tramp through water up to her knees. For part of the second year of their marriage, Oene worked out during the week, clearing land with Joe Holwerda. Grace stayed at home to look after the farm, doing chores in addition to her housework. A couple of cows and a few pigs were the only livestock housed in the little log barn, but since Grace had not been used to farm work, she gained satisfaction from successfully milking the cows and caring for farrowing sows.

Those first years the Piers family did not have money to buy the necessary clothing for the boys, so Grace made new clothes from old: an old coat of hers was turned into a new jacket for Peter. In spite of the difficult times, God's blessing was evident in their lives. Though poverty was the order of the day, there was always plenty of food to eat. Though the winter nights were so cold that ice formed on the water containers, the evenings were cozy. With Grace knitting, the little boys sleeping snugly in their beds, and Oene resting after a hard day's work, there was contentment in the log house.

In 1936 a new house was built with the help of Jerry Reitsma. On October 17, 1936, a new baby was born in the new house — another boy,

whom they named **John**. In 1938, Grace and Oene expectantly awaited the birth of their fifth child. On December 23, **Edward** was born. Three years later, friends and relatives eagerly awaited news on the arrival of a sixth child. They thought that this one would surely be a girl, but on June 13, 1941, **Kenneth** made his appearance in the household. Each of the boys was born with the assistance of midwife Aaltje Baker.

John, Edward, c. 1948.

Ed leading the chickens.

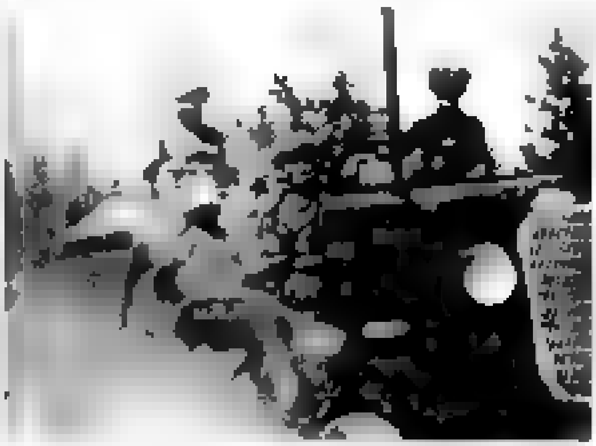
Six boys kept Grace Piers busy, but in 1943 the time drew near for yet another baby to join the family. It was decided that Grace should go to the Barrhead hospital for this birth. There, on February 1, **Hilda** arrived. What joy there was in the family when God finally blessed them with a girl!

In order to keep up with the work in the house, Grace established a schedule: wash clothes on Monday, iron on Tuesday and patch on Wednesday. There was always lots of patching to do. The rest of the week was as carefully structured. The two oldest boys helped their father on the farm, but Henry was often pressed into service in the house to help his mother who suffered from backache. There was lots of work to be done and as the other boys grew up they, too, had to help their mother. Every morning sandwiches had to be made for school lunches. Then when the boys returned from school another loaf of bread would be sliced, spread, and devoured. To keep up with her sons' healthy appetites Grace had to bake bread every day.

Hard work, but also a lot of playing, characterized life on the farm. The boys had great fun playing together in the evenings. On crisp, winter evenings, they could be heard from afar, not only playing hockey, but keeping a running commentary in true Foster Hewitt fashion. The Piers brothers played so vigorously that cut lips and chipped teeth were a common occurrence. On one occasion Bert had a whole tooth knocked out.

"The Mafia." Back: Bert, Peter, Henry. Middle: Ed, John. Front: Hilda, Ken, c. 1950

The farm slowly expanded into three quarter sections of land. An Oliver 70 tractor purchased in the early 1940s was a great help. Later, in 1948, a John Deere D was bought. Oene's brother, John, who had just emigrated from the Netherlands, was impressed with this tractor. He said, *"Dat is een heel handig ding."* (That is a real handy thing.) Of course, anyone who knows the John Deere D realizes that it was



"Our first tractor and our boys." Oliver 70: Ed, Peter, Ken, John

Grace, Oene, 1958.

anything but handy. Nevertheless it served the farm well.

As the boys grew up and were able to do more of the farm work, Oene was able to devote more time to community life. He served numerous terms on the church council, the school board, and the store board, as well as on municipal boards.

In 1959, Oene and Grace Piers retired from farm life. They purchased a house from Klaas Tuininga Sr., and settled in the hamlet. During their retirement years together, they spent some time visiting and travelling. Suddenly on February 22, 1972, Oene suffered a fatal heart attack, and went home to be with the Lord. Grace continues to live in the house, and enjoys visiting her children and grandchildren.

Though Grace and Oene worked successfully to provide a good life on the farm, only one of their children, Peter, followed in their footsteps. Bert, who married Joanne Van Dyken, is driving truck in Ripon, California. Henry and his wife, Winnifred, live in Abbotsford, where he works for Ritchie-Smith. The next three sons are all educators. John is principal of Neerlandia Public School. Dr. Edward Piers, who has a Ph.D. in chemistry, teaches at The University of British Columbia. He married Shirley Ashley in 1959, and they live with their two sons in Richmond, B.C.

Dr. Ken Piers also has a Ph.D. in chemistry. He is chairman of the chemistry department at Calvin College. He married Marion Ingwersen. Since their three children are grown, Marion has become a registered nurse. Hilda married Robert Daughty on December 28, 1962. They live in Calgary with their two children.

John Piers

AEBE AND MINNIE (BAKER) PLANTINGA

Aebe Plantinga (born November 22, 1910) came to Neerlandia from Franeker, Friesland, the Netherlands, in April 1929 at the age of 18. He had been driving truck between Haarlem, Franeker, and Leeuwarden for some years, but as he saw no future for himself in the Netherlands, he began thinking of emigration. Since his cousin Jake Hiemstra had immigrated to Neerlandia three years earlier, that also became Aebe's destination. After arriving in Neerlandia, Aebe boarded and worked at Jake's for about a year, then hired himself out to Raymond Baker. He worked there for about two years, and at the same time began dating Raymond's niece, Minnie. The two had met some years earlier when Aebe had gone with Jake Hiemstra over to Minnie's parents' farm to borrow a sack of flour. Aebe soon stole Minnie's heart.

It was in May 1932 that Aebe and Minnie heard that a dairy farmer in north Edmonton had work for a young couple. They were interested, and Aebe went to take a look. The job looked promising, so Aebe and Minnie decided to get married and move to north Edmonton They were married in Neerlandia on June 19 1932, and despite the Depression, were full of hope and ambition

Two days after their wedding, Aebe and Minnie started work. They had to be up at 4:00 a.m. to milk the 28 cows by hand. "Only one of us was a good milker, the other was fair" wrote Minnie. The milk had to be carried to the milk house, cooled, and ready at 7:00 for the truck. Then water for all the animals had to be pumped by hand (a two-person job) from a deep well. When this was all done, the day began: Aebe usually worked in the fields and Minnie scrubbed down the dairy utensils and helped the boss' wife in the house or tended [illegible] when it was too dark to see. The boss proved to be a hard taskmaster

At harvest time when the boss insisted that Minnie get into the field and do the stooking, things came to a head. Aebe demanded a $10 a month raise (they made only $35 a month between the two of them), and the boss refused. He said he couldn't afford the raise, and if Aebe did not like it, he and his wife could leave "right now". That night Aebe found another job at a cattle buyer's farm a few miles east, and never even missed a day's work

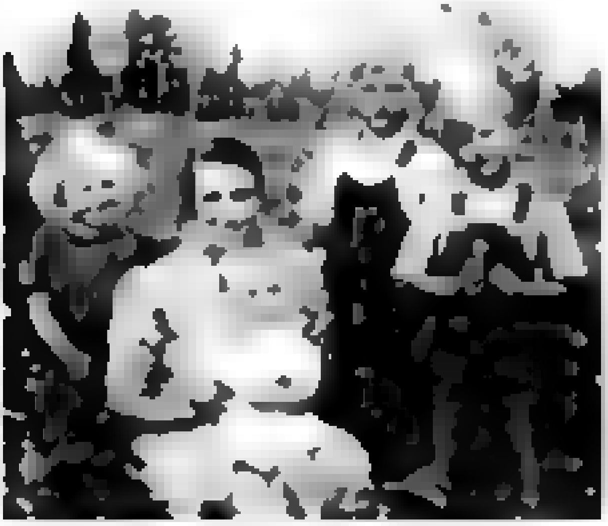
The new job had shorter hours, but less pay. In compensation milk, vegetables, meat and potatoes were free, and all Minnie had to do was help with milking five to twenty cows each day. All went well at their new job until Aebe slipped and fell on the ice while trying to start a pump engine. The fall put a few bones out of place in his lower back, and he was confined to [illegible] chiropractor who put the bones back in place. Although Minnie kept milking, the boss had to find another man to replace Aebe. Later, Aebe tried to find other work, but without success. A decision was soon made to return to Neerlandia, where they had a quarter section (NW 32-61-3-5) with a twelve-foot square shack on it. Aebe kept busy for the rest of the winter doing odd jobs. He and Minnie also kept a cow, a few chickens, and some lambs on the homestead

On July 31 1933, a son arrived. He was born in the shack Aebe and Minnie called home. They named him **Stewart** (Sjoerd). He proved to be good company for Minnie, who was home alone most of the time while Aebe worked for local farmers clearing, haying, and harvesting [illegible] Aebe's field work (what little there was), or give him groceries or farm animals. Cash was almost non-existent during those times. After a few years, Aebe and Minnie had built up their homestead so that they had more livestock and buildings than before and also some small machinery. It was quite a struggle for several [illegible] from the flour ground at the grist mill. All would go well, the dough rising as expected until it got hot in the oven, down it would go and come out looking like two-by-fours. But they ate it! Three other children were born to Aebe and Minnie during the Depression — **Joe** (Jouke) on December 7 1934, **Annette** Ruth on May 3, 1937 and **Gilles** on November 2, 1939

Aebe, Joe, Stewart, c. 1938

In the fall of 1938, Plantingas' homestead [illegible] almost everything, including buildings, grain [illegible] erything went so fast! All Minnie could drag to the road in the short time before the fire burned the house was the family's best clothes, a few pans, and a chair with their 1½-year old daughter tied to it. Aebe and Minnie found refuge for a few days with Minnie's parents, and then rented a house owned by Neerlandia Co-op that stood where the Service Centre now landia (1984). That winter proved to be one of the coldest winters Aebe and Minnie can remember so cold that water from a boiling tea kettle quickly froze when it spilled on the floor.

The next year, towards spring, the Plantingas bought a small house and with the help of others had it moved on skids to their homestead. Soon, an addition to the house and a small barn were built and the Plantingas were able to start over. They worked hard to develop the homestead. The children were a lot of help as they grew up, even if they did pull up the tomatoes instead of the [illegible] in the garden. On February 17, 1942 **Ella Catherine**, Aebe and Minnie's second daughter, was born.

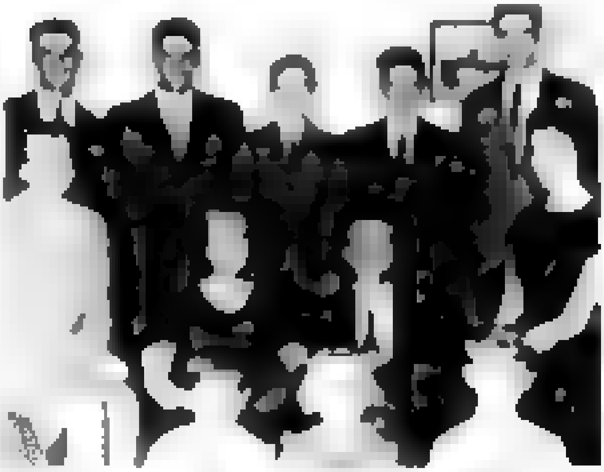


Annette, Minnie holding Gillian, Stewart, Joe. c. 1944

After the Second World War, the Plantingas sponsored Aebe's sister, **Richtje**, her husband, **Harm Elsinga**, and their two children, **Anne** and **John**. Harm had owned a trucking firm in the Netherlands, which had been confiscated by the Germans during World War Two; now he wanted to make a new start in Canada. The Elsingas arrived in Neerlandia in 1946 and lived with the Plantingas for several months. Later that same year, Aebe's brother **Henry**, sponsored by Charlie Baker, also arrived in Neerlandia. Henry was a registered nurse, a rarity in Canada at the time, and soon found work at Oliver Hospital outside of Edmonton. Harm Elsinga found a job at the same hospital as grounds keeper and handyman.

One year later, the call came from the Netherlands to sponsor yet another of Aebe's family, brother **Jacob**. Upon coming to Neerlandia, Jacob Plantinga worked for Neil Lindquist of Mellowdale and John Gelderman. Then, a few months later, Aebe's aged parents, **Sjoerd** and **Anna**, responded to the lure of their children in the promised land and arrived in Neerlandia. Aebe had bought a small house from John Visser Sr. and had it moved to the hamlet for his parents to live in. The old folks however, never did adjust to living in this new land. Aebe's father was a city person, used to going for strolls in the lovely parks of Franeker and visiting his many friends and acquaintances. In comparison, life in Neerlandia was quite lonely. Moreover, Aebe's parents thought it was primitive with no phones, no electricity and no running water. Unhappy here, they decided to move to Edmonton. In 1949, Aebe's father suffered a stroke, and upon a doctor's suggestion, the old people moved back to the Netherlands. Immigration had just been too much for them.

As time went on, Aebe and Minnie acquired another half-section of raw land (E½ 35-61-4-5), and by now they had a tractor and some larger machinery. About forty acres of their original quarter had been cleared, and crops were fairly good. Moreover, they had [illegible] sheep until the coyotes began killing them. Then they went out of the sheep business altogether. The two oldest boys, Stewart and Joe, spent a lot of time working out. The farm's cropland increased and they built up a nice herd of milk



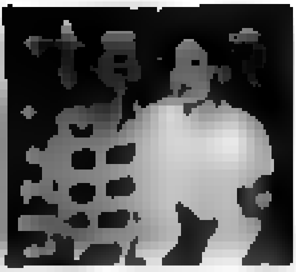
Back: Joe, Stewart, Albert, Richard, Gillian. Middle: Annette, Aebe, Minnie. Front: [illegible] cows. The cream cheques that came in weekly as a result sure were welcome.

Also welcomed by the Plantingas during these years were new arrivals to the family: **Richard** Henry (September 19, 1947), **Albert** Charles (December 5, 1948), **Dora Kathleen** (April 12, 1952), and twins, **Duane** Philip and **Donald** John (November 22, 1953). Aebe had been concerned for some years that Neerlandia did not have enough land available for his sons to start up on their own. So in 1953, after reading an advertisement about available land, Aebe, Stewart (21), and Joe (19) went north to have a look. In the Blueberry Mountain area, there were acres of land for the taking, and by the time they returned to Neerlandia, Stewart and Joe each had chosen a half section in Forest Creek. Aebe helped them get started and they have been farming there ever since. Joe was the first of the Plantingas to get married. He married Cathy Solomons in 1964 and they have five children. Two years later, Stewart married Doris Ebens; they have two children. Gilles was also attracted by the good land at Blueberry Mountain and soon followed his brothers. He married Margaret Jensen in 1977. They have three children.

Aebe and Minnie continued to live on their old homestead with their children until 1960, when they purchased the Ralph Kooy homestead (W½ 5-62-3-5). This farm had good running water and electricity, something the Plantingas had not had in their previous home. Then in May 1966, Aebe bought Paul Kaimbach's farm in Mellowdale (E½ 35-60-3-5, NE 26-60-3-5) and sold his other land. Because the Mellowdale farm had better land, it was here that Aebe harvested good crops for the first time. Aebe and Minnie continued to live there until all of their children had moved out or married. In 1976, they retired to the hamlet of Neerlandia, leaving the home place to their son Albert. Albert had married **Grace Dunsmore** the previous year. Grace, who had been born on September 17, 1952, was raised in Telkwa, British Columbia. After high school she had gone to Dordt College and, following graduation, taught in Lacombe Christian School for two years.

Albert and Grace's daughter, **Malinda** Grace, was born on August 11, 1976. Their first son, **Brian Ashley**, was born on August 20, 1978, and their second, **Donald** John, on September 6, 1981.

[illegible]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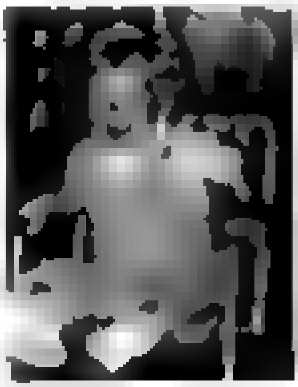
Aebe and Minnie's son Donald also farms in the Neerlandia area on the NE 11-62-4-5. He married Marilyn Elgersma on November 29, 1974. They have two daughters — **Trina** Marie, born on April 24, 1978, and **Tami** Lynn, born on March 16, 1983. Their son, **Laval** Don, born on April 5, 1980, died of cancer on March 21, 1984, after a lengthy illness.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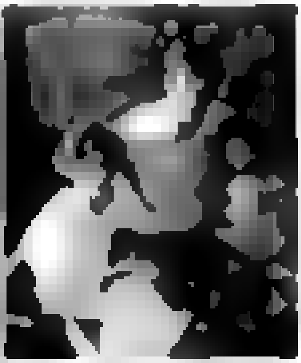
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Aebe and Minnie's other children also married and have gone on to start families of their own. Annette lives in Burnaby, British Columbia, with her husband, Frank Vink, and their three children. Frank works for Woodwards. Ella married Walter Land in 1964, and they reside in Lacombe with their three children. Walter owns Land's Wash and Lube and Ella is vice-principal in Lacombe Christian School.

In 1970, Richard married Genevieve Bergstrom, and they presently (1984) reside in Terrace, B.C., with their two children. Richard is a corporal in the RCMP. Dora married Gerald Nanninga of Neerlandia. Duane attended Dordt College, where he met Sherry Schootenboom, whom he married in 1974. They live in Red Deer, Alberta, with their three children; Duane is principal of Red Deer Christian School.

Minnie Plantinga

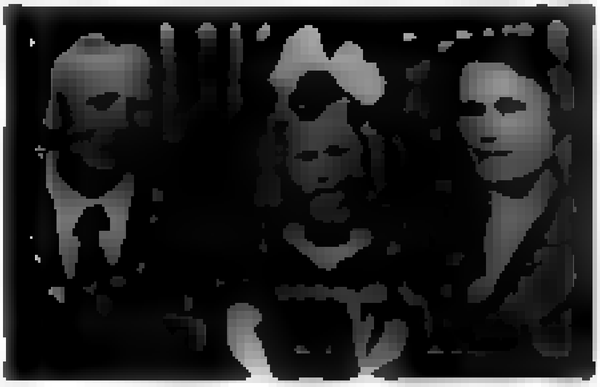
CHARLIE AND BERTHA (KAMPNAR) REITSMA

Charlie (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born in Oostermeer, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 9, 1901, the oldest in a family of ten children. By 1926, two members of the Reitsma family had immigrated to Canada. One of Charlie's younger brothers, Jerry, and a cousin, Ted, were both in Neerlandia. Now Charlie decided to join them. He sailed on the Veendam, sharing a cabin with three strangers. The "meat and potatoes meals" served on board met with his approval. Charlie also discovered a bar where alcoholic beverages could be purchased, and as Charlie said, "I had a few dollars in my pocket." On his arrival in Neerlandia, Charlie made his home with his cousin, Ted, and his family until the cabin on his homestead was ready. He had filed on the NW 16-61-3-5 on April 21, 1927, and patented it in 1937. This quarter was later sold to Art and Dick Fisher. To make ends meet, Charlie worked in logging camps in the winter, and later contracted to farm the Kampnar land for Bertha Kampnar, who was left in charge when her father died in 1926.

Bertha, who was now living and working in the U.S.A., returned to Neerlandia several times to see how things were going. Charlie began courting her, and on March 8, 1933, Charlie and Bertha were married and moved into her house (the old Kampnar store) on the farm. They also purchased the Pete Louws farm.

Charlie and Bertha worked together to build up the farm. Bertha enjoyed the outside work and often looked after the stock when Charlie was busy elsewhere. One fine August day Charlie was in the field one-half mile from home, trying out a tractor he had just purchased. Bertha was attending to a sow that was farrowing. Then tragedy struck. Charlie happened to glance toward the yard and saw smoke billowing up. Bertha too looked up from her task and was horrified to see the house ablaze. By the time they reached the yard the fire was so far advanced that nothing could be saved. All the Kampnar records and keepsakes were destroyed in the fire. The Reitsmas lost both their home and their possessions, but the community rallied around them. Tom Wilson supplied a shack for them to live in and others gave them enough supplies for them to manage on their own until Charlie and his brother, Jerry, built a new house.

Shortly after the completion of the house, Charlie and Bertha, who had no children, adopted a little girl, Margaret Patricia Mae (born March 13, 1942). Although Bertha had agreed to the adoption, she became apprehensive when the time came to go to Edmonton. Therefore, on April 13, Charlie made the trip alone. Once in Edmonton, his sister Grace accompanied him to the adoption agency. He was immediately charmed by the first baby he was shown and soon headed home with the month-old little girl. A neighbour lady, Mrs. Marinus Hoogers, came in every morning for about a week to help Bertha care for the baby. Mae was an attractive, curly-haired baby. She was a special source of pleasure to her father and, as she grew up, often accompanied him on errands. She is now married and lives with her husband in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Charlie, Mae, Bertha, 1945.

The banks of the Shoal Creek, which ran through the Reitsma farm, provided an ideal hill for winter sliding. Many of the young people of that time remember sliding down the hill (on sleighs, cardboard, and makeshift toboggans) with what seemed like lightning speed, sailing down onto the frozen creek and up the bank on the far side. When they were tired they relaxed over hot cocoa and goodies provided by Bertha.

In 1945 the Reitsmas sold their farm to Andries Wierenga and moved to Edmonton. Bertha died on August 5, 1975. Charlie continues to live in Edmonton.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skorzow

JERRY AND JENNIE (FISHER) REITSMA

Jerry (Jurgen) Reitsma was born in Oostermeer, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 26, 1903. There he spent his childhood. As a youth, Jerry picked up carpentry knowledge while watching and helping his father who was [illegible] freight boats that transported freight within the Netherlands. When he sold, Jerry decided to immigrate to Canada.

In April 1924 Jerry borrowed money from his father and sailed on the Veendam. His destination was Viking, Alberta, on the advice of someone at the immigration office in the [illegible] month, Jerry went to work for a farmer for a year and was able to earn enough to repay his father the fare to Alberta — $185.00.

Jerry wrote his cousin Ted Reitsma, who subsequently encouraged him to come to Neerlandia. Jerry made the move in 1925 and [illegible] Raymond Baker. He also took up a homestead (NW 21-61-3-5). That fall he went to Edmonton with Charlie Tiemstra to work in the Black Diamond Coal Mine. In Edmonton Jerry met his future wife, Jennie Fisher.

At the time Jennie met Jerry, she was working in a biscuit factory taking the hot biscuits off the trays. She also ran the machines for making chocolate eclairs and for icing the cookies. In 1927 the Fisher family moved to Neerlandia.

In the meantime Jerry had done some clearing on the homestead and built a small 20 by 20 foot lumber house. In the fall of 1928 Jerry started to help as a volunteer on the building of the church and parsonage. Later Menne Nanninga hired him for two dollars for a ten-hour day. So, as Jennie says, "Then we could afford to get married." They were married February [illegible]

Jerry and Jennie settled happily in their lit[illegible] built on. Their first son, Arthur, was [illegible] November 16, 1929. Life on the homestead [illegible]tinued with Jerry often away, building for six [illegible]

Jerry, Jennie, [illegible]

ninga, and Jerry often worked as a team. Two more sons joined the family: Bill (William, December 23, 1932) and Ted (May 1, 1934). The only daughter, Joyce, arrived August 1, 1937.

[illegible] ter, Jennie kept the home fires going — doi[illegible] inspector was always coming around. By 1938 [illegible] time to help with the chores.

Once in a while Jennie would announce to the children that they were going for tea that day to Alice Baker's. Eagerly they would get ready for the walk across the field. When they came to Baker's, their dog was always already there. There were no telephones, but the dog forewarned Alice that visitors were coming.

Jerry built a new home, but they lived in it only until June 1946 when they purchased SE 21-61-3-5, and the family moved there. Joe H. Wierenga bought their former house and moved it to his home quarter.

By this time Jerry was not working out much anymore. After the church burned down on November 11, 1948, however, Menne Nanninga came to ask Jerry if he would help him supervise the building and work on a new church.

This he agreed to do. Due to his age and health Menne was not able to do much. He usually came about every ten days to see how things were going and would say, "You're doing fine, keep it up." The church was completed in 1950.

In the meantime, Jennie became active with the Red Cross group which was formed in 1942 in Neerlandia. She was also Neerlandia's correspondent for the *Barrhead Leader* until 1978. Jerry served as a member of the executive of the Rural Electrification Association and later Jennie did.

Back: Jennie, Ted, Jerry. Front: Art, Joyce, Bill, 1940

The children were married in the years 1955-1959. Art married Helen Boonstra, Joyce married Gerrit van Dijken, Ted married Carol Howie, and Bill married Elsie Dotzlaf. Bill remained on the home place and Jerry and Jennie lived in a small house on the yard.

The farm was sold to Bill in April 1964, and Jerry and Jennie moved to Barrhead in August 1964. Jerry still went to his workshop on the farm and did an occasional building job until his death in July 1968. Jennie still lives in her own home in Barrhead.

Jennie Reitsma

LOE REYSE

Lodewijk Fransiscus Reÿse was born in Amsterdam, North Holland, the Netherlands, on August 1, 1905. He was an office worker when he decided to immigrate to Canada with his cousin Kees Stoové in 1926. They came to Neerlandia, where their maternal uncle Case Ingwersen lived.

Loe took up the NE 9-62-3-5 as a homestead on July 15, 1926. With the help of the Ingwersen boys he built a 16 by 20-foot shack on the place. Later that year Loe's brother **Willem** (September 19, 1901) immigrated to Neerlandia, as did another brother **Conrad** some years later. The brothers lived together for awhile, but Conrad and William soon went their separate ways. Loe lived on his homestead for about two years. During that time he broke seven acres and cropped thirteen; dug two wells, one twelve feet and the other sixteen feet deep; and put up 1½ miles of two-wire fence. These improvements were valued at $342.

Loe could sing and whistle beautifully. He sang in the choir and at many wedding receptions. He could imitate almost any bird with his whistling. Loe tried his hand at hunting, but one fall day around 1930 he got lost while hunting and fell through the ice of a creek. His legs were soaked, and he stopped at the first homestead he came to, that of Ben Lievers. Loe's legs were badly frozen, and he stayed at Ben and Alice Lievers' all winter while he recuperated.

Loe worked for Billy Quick from 1927 to 1931. In 1929 he managed the store for six weeks while his Uncle Case made a trip to the Netherlands. Loe worked for the Neerlandia Co-op from 1932 to 1938. During this time he lived in a shack close to the store. He also boarded at Ingwersens' for a while.

Loe married Emma Boman of Vega in 1937. He bought the Vega store from his father-in-law Julius Boman in May 1938 and sold it again in 1940. Loe and Julius and Pete Boman built the first telephone line from the Neerlandia store to the Vega store in 1939.

Loe and Emma had two daughters born to them while they lived in Vega. After leaving there in 1941 the family moved to many places in Alberta and B.C., either operating a dairy farm or a general store. Two more daughters were born during those years. In 1963 they moved to Kelowna, B.C. Loe bought a truck-mounted vacuum system and travelled around

Loe, Emma, 1938.

cleaning out furnaces and duct systems. He also came to Neerlandia and cleaned out the Christian Reformed Church's duct system.

In his later years Loe changed his name to Lewis Reese so people would not have as much difficulty pronouncing it. Loe had great concern for his fellowmen regarding their spiritual welfare and was especially concerned about young people. He died June 10, 1980.

John Bos
Emma Shunter

JOHN AND EMMA (ROSSIN) ROTH

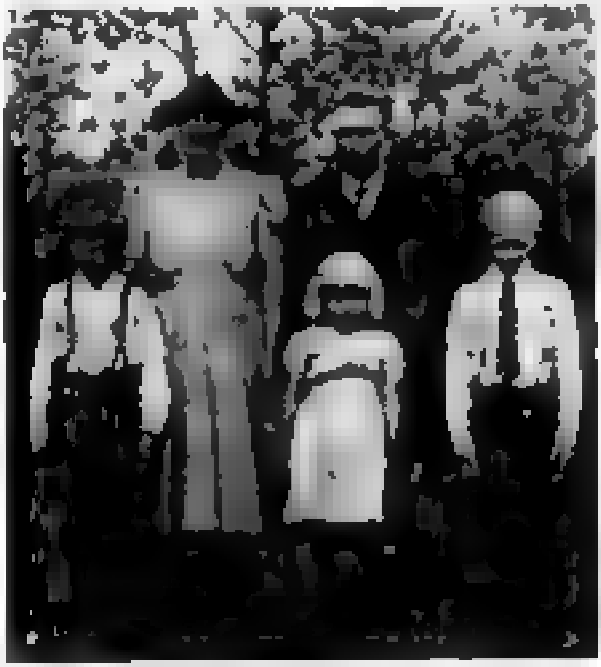
Just before the turn of the century, on November 6, 1899, John (Johann) Roth was born and registered in Besedak, Hungary. Almost 26 years later, on July 20, 1925, he immigrated to Canada, going with friends to Bruderheim, Alberta.

Later, John worked in the Leduc area for Daniel Wetter, but his friends from Hungary, the Heberlings, encouraged him to come to the Neerlandia district where they had settled. On May 26, 1928, he took up as his homestead the S.W. 15-61-3-5. During that summer, he cleared enough land for a house and garden, and also built a one-room house. At harvest time, he returned to Leduc to work. There he met Emma Rossin.

Emma, the youngest daughter of Gustav and Louise Rossin, was born on December 24, 1897 in Russia. She came to Canada in June 1928 to join her parents, who were homesteading in Bruderheim.

John and Emma were married on March 12, 1930, in Bruderheim Lutheran Church. After their wedding, they came to their homestead in Neerlandia. In the fall, John once again returned to Leduc, where he helped with the harvest. This way he raised enough money to buy two cows and two horses. In the meantime, Emma was busy on the homestead. When the harvest was completed, John and Emma worked together to clear the land. These were the depression years and times were tough. The Roths experienced many years of hard work and hardships.

Three children were born to John and Emma Roth. Henry was born on April 19, 1933. Two years later, Paul made his arrival on September 10, 1935. Finally, on April 27, 1937, a daughter, Katie, was born. With three children, the one-room house was too small, so in the early forties an addition, including a porch, was built onto the original structure.



Back: Emma, John. Front: Paul, Katie, Henry, c. 1944

In the 1950's, times became a little easier. John bought the S.E. 4-61-3-5 from Joe Bruks. The electric power also came in the 50's, so

there was no longer any need for lanterns or lamps.

In 1964, John and Emma retired and moved to Barrhead, and Henry took over the family farm. Paul married Grace Crowie of Hanna. They live in Wetaskiwan, where Paul is manager of Blue Flame Propane. Paul and Grace have two daughters and one son. Katie married Otto Kakoschke, an evangelist. They live in Kelowna, British Columbia, with their son and daughter.

John and Emma lived in their home in Barrhead for 15 years. In 1979, John had his leg amputated because of sugar diabetes. Since his wife was unable to care for him, he entered Barrhead Nursing Home, where he remained till his death on August 16, 1982. On December 13, 1982, Emma entered Barrhead Nursing Home, where she still resides (1984).

Erna Roth

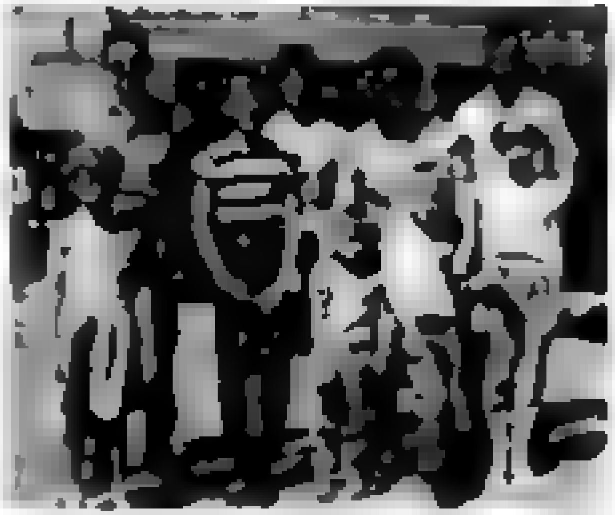
CLARENCE AND JENNY (KIPPERS) ROWAAN

Clarence Rowaan came to Neerlandia in 1937 and worked for several farmers. In 1938 he made profession of faith. That same year his brother Ko joined him in Neerlandia. They each leased a quarter of the school section (11-62-3-5). Clarence leased the southeast quarter. The two brothers lived and worked together, clearing a little land each year.

In 1941 Clarence married Jenny Kippers. Clarence writes, "I met a very nice girl, the youngest daughter of Henry Kippers. We fell in love with each other. At the same time I had a home to go to. Home, sweet home!" Their first son, **Henry**, was born June 8, 1947, and baptized by Rev. Rubingh. **Jeanette** Ann was born September 29, 1949, and was baptized in the store hall by a minister from the U.S.A. Five more children followed: **Jim** (James) Edward, July 29, 1951; **Nancy**, March 11, 1954; **Gertrude** Alice, January 24, 1956; **Arie** Clarence, August 20, 1957; and **George** John, January 28, 1959.

The Rowaan brothers did a lot of work with Andy, Ike, and Louis Nanninga — "three very fine neighbours". They helped each other with sawing firewood, cutting logs for lumber building, and land clearing.

On his farm Clarence milked cows and shipped cream, and raised and shipped pigs. He also grew grain, most of which was fed to the livestock.



Leaving for Ontario, July 1963. Back: Clarence, Jeanette, Jennie, Henry. Front: Gertrude, James, George, Arie, and Nancy.

Later the Rowaans moved to the SE 14-62-3-5. They left Neerlandia for Ontario in July 1963.

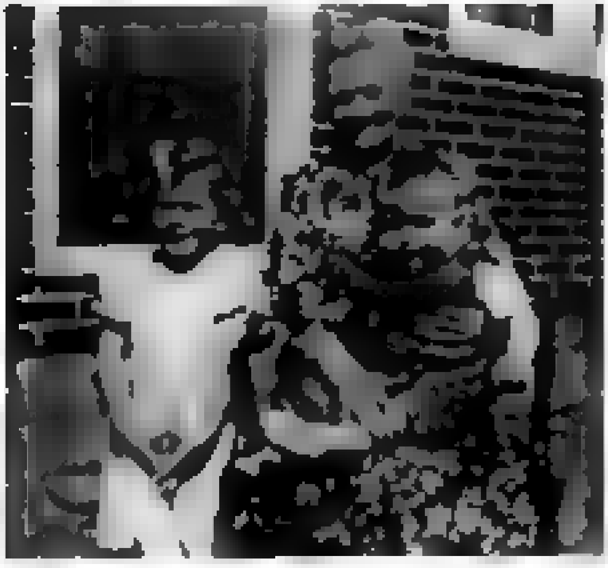
Clarence Rowaan

HENDRIK AND NIESKE (APOL) ROWAAN

Hendrik (April 16, 1878) and Nieske (August 28, 1878) Rowaan left Oldenzijl, Groningen, the Netherlands, aboard the *Volendam* on April 4, 1927. With them were their three sons, **Joe** (Jozua, August 26, 1909), **Ko** (Eiko, May 9, 1911), and **Clarence** (Klaas, February 22, 1915). After a nine-day trip they docked in Halifax where they boarded a train for a five-day trip to Winnipeg, Manitoba. There Hendrik had a market garden. After two years they moved, first to Shackleton, Saskatchewan, where there was a Christian Reformed congregation, and then to Beechy, Saskatchewan.

Rowaans farmed in Saskatchewan for ten years, but did not make much progress because it was at the beginning of the Depression years. To make matters worse, those were the years called the Dirty Thirties or the Dustbowl years. The first dust storm they experienced was in spring and they will never forget it. It got so dark in the house that they had to put the light on. They thought the world was coming to an end. The last year in Saskatchewan they had a fair crop and were able to save some money to get out of that country.

Ko and Clarence were in Neerlandia by that



Nieske with her grandchildren Norma, Edward

time, so in the spring of 1940 Hendrik, Nieske, and Joe moved there too. They rented a half section of land (E½ 18-61-3-5) from Anne Elgersma. Hendrick died in June 1941. Joe had married Johanna Wierenga, a daughter of Lammert. After her husband's death, Nieske went to live with them, while Ko and Clarence bached together. When Ko got married in 1943, Clarence bought a house and Nieske came to live with him. Although Clarence married in 1943, his mother remained living with them for many years. When there were too many little Rowaans for the house, Nieske went to live with Ko and Alice. She died in March 1963.

Ko Rowaan

KO AND ALICE (KIPPERS) ROWAAN

Ko Rowaan and his brother Clarence left Saskatchewan for Lacombe in the mid-thirties but while Clarence moved to Neerlandia in 1937, Ko did not come until the following year. At first the two brothers bached together, but in 1940 their parents and brother, Joe, moved to Neerlandia also. Of this time in their lives Ko wrote:

"Our parents and brother Joe, the oldest of the three, worked the farm. That left Klaas and myself to roam. And roam we did. We worked then here, then there. We did any kind of work we could lay our hands on, but mostly farmwork. We stayed as much as possible close to the centrum, because our feet were the only transportation we own. As good boys we wanted to keep up the good tradition of our fathers, so we went to the Christian Reformed Church faithfully every Sunday. As we were both single, we were looking for excitement. We (tried) our luck with girls. Two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kippers fell for our charms. After three years, I married Alice."

In 1939 or 1940, Ko obtained lease to the NE 11-62-3-5, part of a school section. He worked hard for two years and, with the help of his neighbours, cleared thirty-two acres and built a house with the lumber from the land he cleared.

Ko and Alice married January 18, 1942. After they had been married for nine years they got their first child, **Norma** (December 7, 1949). "She was the sweetest baby ever," wrote Ko. "Our second baby, a boy (we named him **Edward**) didn't wait that long in coming — about three years. He was two weeks old when we met up with him." Ed was born August 7, 1952.

Norma, Ko, Alice, 1950

Ko and Alice made progress on the farm. They did mixed farming. After they had cleared all of the original quarter they bought the NW 11-62-3-5 from Pete Emmerzael. In 1962 they sold their farm and Ko went out working. After two years he got tired of that and decided to move to B.C. where he bought a twenty-five acre farm. The Rowaans are thankful to Louis

Ike, and Andy Nanninga for helping "with anything you can think of"

Ko Rowaan

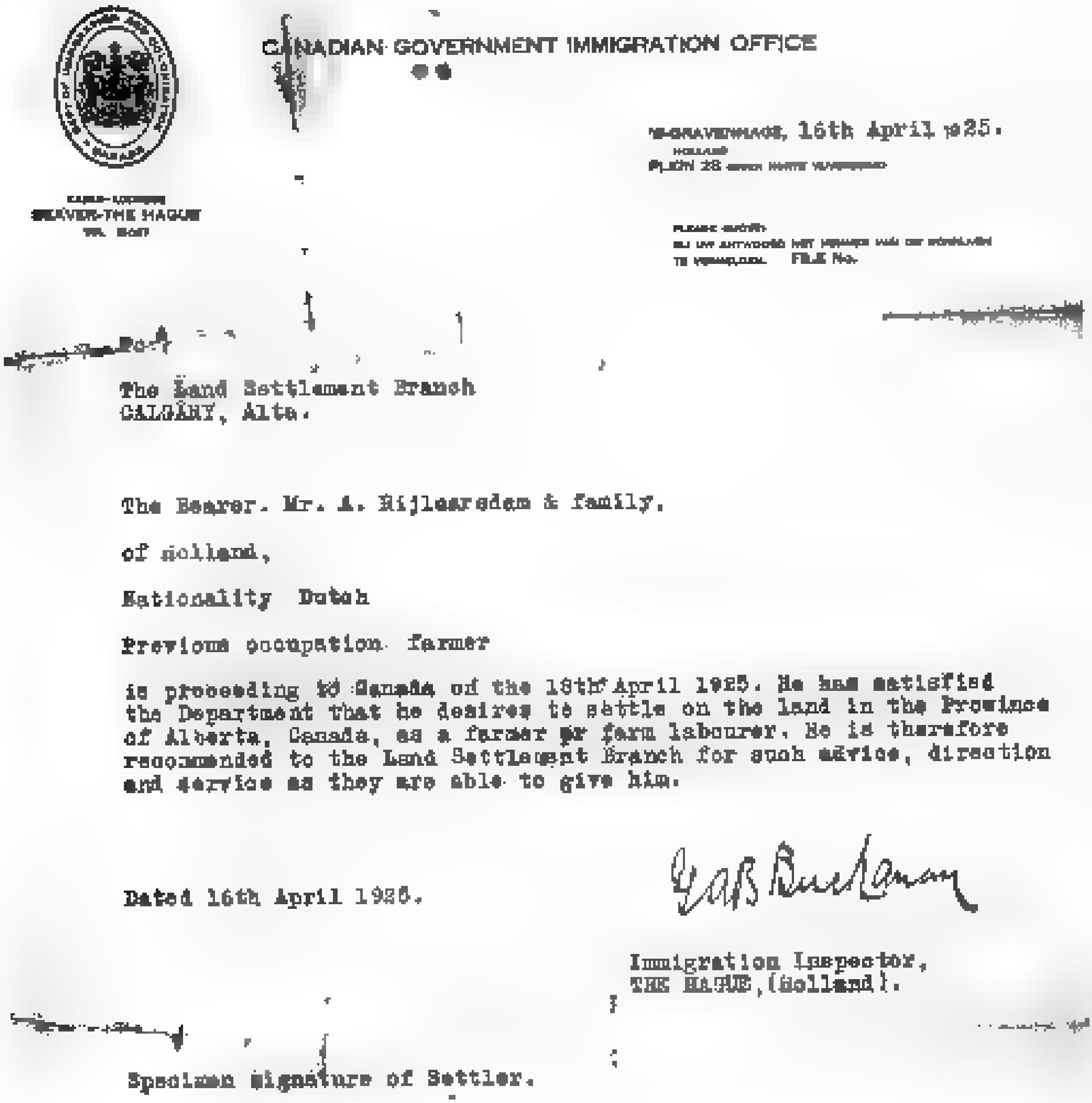
ARIE AND JAAN (KOK) RYLAARSDAM

A big house in Holten, South Holland, the Netherlands, was the home of Arie and Jaan (Bastiaantje) Rylaarsdam and their five children. Arie had graduated from an agricultural college and now had a dairy farm. Jaan was an accomplished cheesemaker. Arie played pipe organ in the local *Gereformeerde Kerk*, and Jaan, who had a beautiful soprano voice, sang in the choir. Since Arie had an inheritance from his father, there were few financial worries. A hired man and woman were permanent members of the household.

Back: Servant and maid. Front: Arie, Adriana, Gerry, Pleun, Jaan, Eva, Anna standing at her mother's knee. 1925.

Then the cattle contracted hoof-and-mouth disease and had to be destroyed. This disaster so discouraged Arie that he decided to take his family to Canada. Jaan did not want to go, but in those days a wife had little voice in making such decisions. Arie applied for immigration as a farmer. Because he wanted to produce sugar, his desired destination was southern Alberta.

The Rylaarsdam home in Holten. Arie, Eva, the maid, Gerry, Jaan holding Pleun.



CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IMMIGRATION OFFICE

CABLE-ADDRESS
BEAVER-THE HAGUE

'S-GRAVENHAGE, 16th April 1925.
HOLLAND

PLEASE QUOTE
BIJ UW ANTWOORD HET NUMMER VAN DIT SCHRIJVEN TE VERMELDEN FILE No.

The Land Settlement Branch
CALGARY, Alta.

The Bearer. Mr. A. Hijlaarsdam & family.

of Holland,

Nationality Dutch

Previous occupation farmer

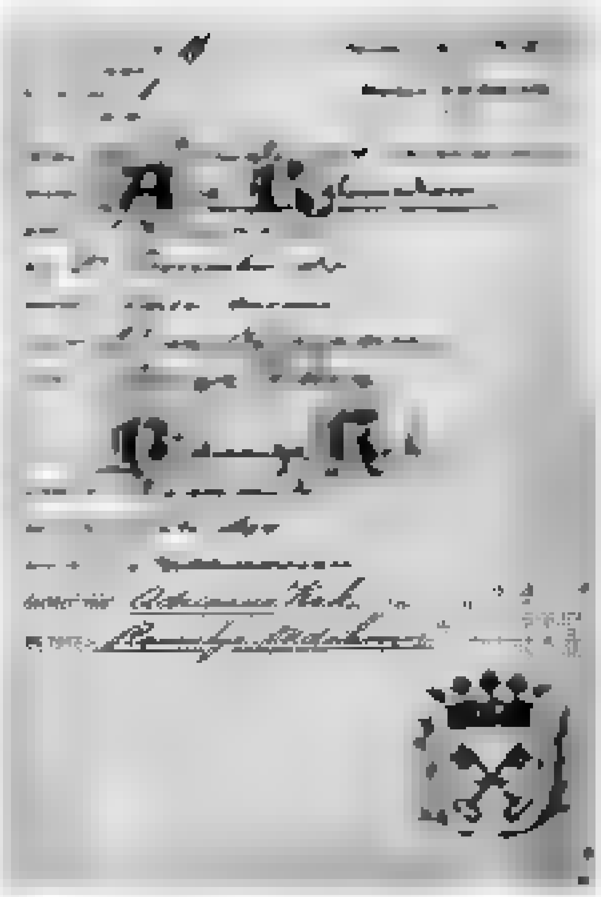
is proceeding to Canada on the 18th April 1925. He has satisfied the Department that he desires to settle on the land in the Province of Alberta, Canada, as a farmer or farm labourer. He is therefore recommended to the Land Settlement Branch for such advice, direction and service as they are able to give him.

Dated 16th April 1925.

G A B Buchanan

Immigration Inspector,
THE HAGUE, (Holland).

Specimen signature of Settler.



On April 16, 1925, the Rylaarsdam family boarded the *Montcalm* and set out for Canada. The family consisted of Father Arie born November 8, 1890, at Zevenhoven, South Holland, and Mother Jaan Kos, born July 10, 1894 at Hazerswoude, South Holland, and their five children: Eva, born July 2, 1915; Gerry (Gerrigje), born October 4, 1916, Pleun Adriaan, born March 29, 1918; Adriana, born November 3, 1919; and Anna, born January 18, 1922. Gerry tells the rest of the story as excerpts from a diary.

April 16, 1925

We are leaving our homeland to come to Canada — to come up in the world, so Father said.

May 10, 1925

It has taken us about two weeks to reach our destination — Lethbridge. (Lots of Hollanders there, Father had said.) Father found employment quite readily with a large rancher at Coaldale, Alberta. Mother is quite ill. Father moved us into a three-room shack. The heat, dust, and mosquitoes are unbearable and the water is almost unfit to drink.

July 11, 1925

Our brother Arie was born today, but Mother is still very ill so Dad is taking her to the Lethbridge hospital. Our infant brother is left in the care of [illegible] sister Eva, who is [illegible] years old, so Father has to leave early every morning to work on the ranch.

September 10, 1925

Eva's growing up real quick. The rest of us aren't being much help to her either in this terrible situation. They had to take Mother's gallbladder out and it took Mother a long time to come home. She is still very weak.

April 19, 1926

This first winter has been terribly cold. Father's job ran out so we moved to some land at Lethbridge, but living conditions are worse. There is no relief from the wind and dust. Mother is failing in health. Today Father came home and told Mother that in the spring we are moving again.

March 13, 1927

We are preparing to travel by train to Edmonton, then to Westlock, Alberta, which is as close as the train can get us to our destination — Neerlandia — where the grass and the trees are green, and there is lots of good water. Mother is filled with new hope. Father told Mother that there is a store, a school, and a church there, and that most of the people are Dutch. How Mother longs to be among Dutch people again. Everyone is anxious to get there.

March 21, 1927

Father is making a few trips to Freedom with some of our belongings while we wait at Westlock. Mr. and Mrs. Pete Hoofdakker and two children, Peter and Josephine, are travelling with us.

March 24, 1927

Father and Mr. Hoofdakker found what looked to them to be an abandoned house. They moved us into that [illegible] house without asking who owns it. We are staying at Freedom for a few months because Father and Mr. Hoofdakker have found some work picking roots for a family named Poirier. On Saturdays we chil-

dren also help in order to earn much-needed cash.

We have been told that all children over age six have to attend school at Freedom, or we could be in real trouble, so Eva, Pleun, Adriana, and I trot off to school every day, and we really enjoy that. Mother is getting worried, wondering if we will ever get to Neerlandia where we are going to make a new start.

June 4, 1927

Yesterday we started out for Neerlandia with a cow behind the wagon. Dad said it would only take a day; it must have been a long day. We got stuck — horses, wagon, cow, and all — in a mud hole, by Henry Mast's place. We have met some Dutch people, such as Tiemstras and Anemas, along the way. That gave Mother a little chance to speak to someone that she could talk to, and so her spirits are lifting a little.

And now we have finally arrived at the hamlet and sure enough, there is the store, school, and church. Father tells us that we will be going to that school there in September.

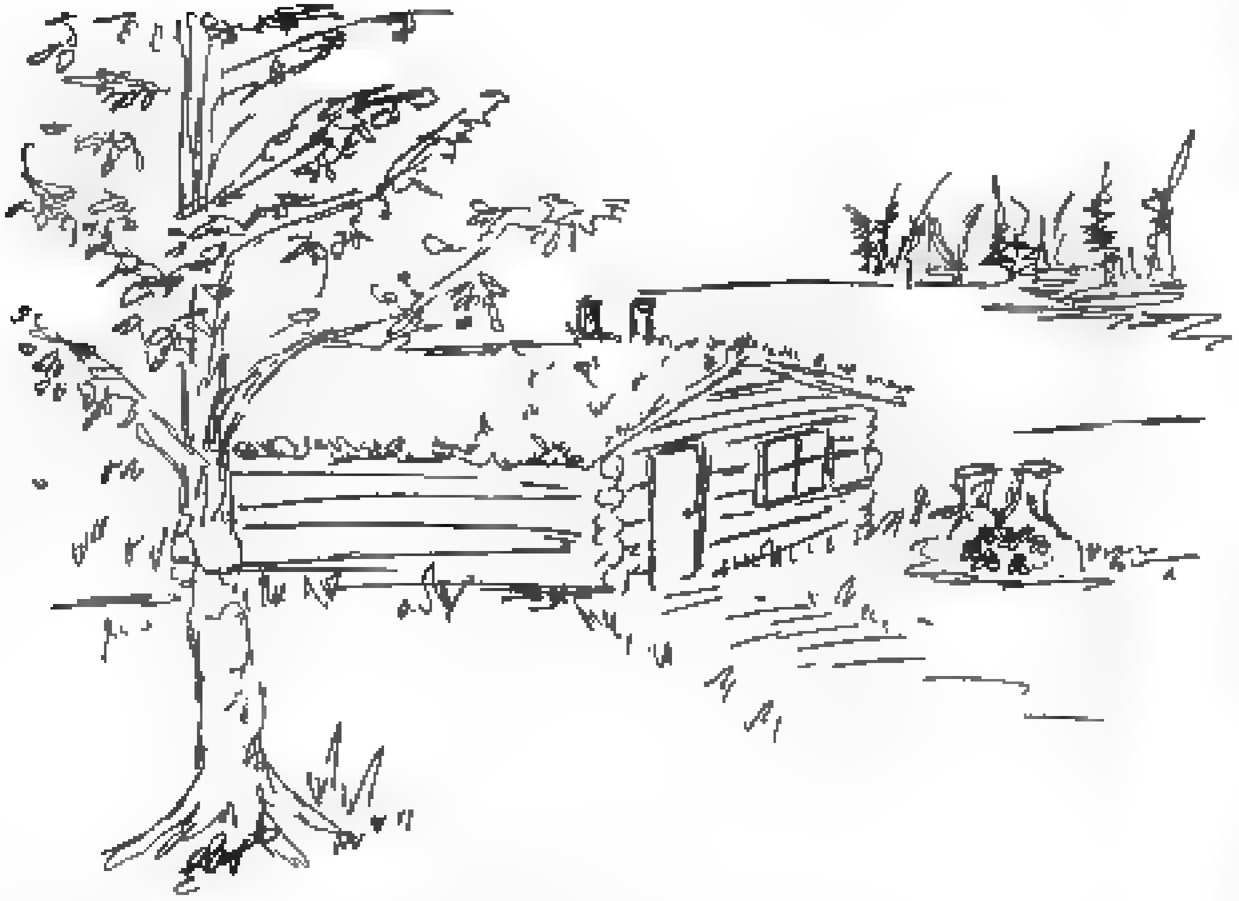
July, 1927

We are finally settled on our quarter, two miles further north from the store. We live on the SW 15-62-3-5. The Hoofdakker family moved to the quarter one-half mile north of us. We are suffering untold hardships. Fortunately we met Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter, who are helping us out a lot. They are very kind. I will never forget them.

Dad is planting a garden. He already built a make-shift log cabin. My father is many things that are good, but a carpenter he is not! He built that cabin with the biggest green poplars he could see right close by. Well! We could only lift them five logs high, all of us helping all we could. At that point Mother said that she wished she was dead. Dad said, "We are on the frontier and things will soon get better." He put a sod roof on that cabin as we didn't have money to buy tar paper. Well, we moved in, and he has gone away to work around Freedom. Mr. Hoofdakker went with him.

July 27, 1927

Dad and Mr. Hoofdakker are still gone, and



more troubles are here. The monsoon season hit us; the rains kept coming down for days without stopping. The sod roof is not waterproof and the rain soon started dripping through. Mother tried to keep us dry, even put up an umbrella in the house. We were getting soaking wet and so was everything we owned. Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter worried about us, they came to look and see if we were okay. They moved a lot of our belongings into some of their empty granaries.

The Hoofdakkers have a real neat log cabin with a decent roof that doesn't leak. Mother moved us into their cabin, and I don't know how that was possible as there are seven of us, Mother with us six children, but she did it. It is really crowded in the cabin, but Mrs. Hoofdakker never complains. As for Mother too, it just makes me wonder about the patience she has and, not being in the greatest health, she really must have some great strength inside to carry her and us on.

August 6, 1927

The rain keeps on. Father and Mr. Hoofdakker are back. He says they came walking home in the mud and rain. When Father popped his head into our cabin, he got a surprise to find it empty, with wife, children, and all the household goods gone. He knew we couldn't have gone very far. After a time he found us at the Hoofdakkers.

August 14, 1927

Today we moved back to our dugout cabin. The rain stopped and everywhere outside it's drying up, but not inside. We had to bail all the water out by hand first.

August 20, 1927

We all have colds because of the rain. I'm surprised none of us are dying of pneumonia or something worse. Mother cries at night, and sometimes during the days too. Father's spirits haven't faltered. His strength is really amazing, because, like Mother, he was born in a middle-class family and is used to lots of comforts that we don't have anymore. But Mother is just having a hard time getting used to living out here. She was an only child, raised and taught under church laws in Holland, and was held in high esteem there. The difference between their attitudes confuses us at times, and sister Eva really has a big load to bear, still caring a lot for little brother Arie, packing him around like she is his mother. Mother can't take care of him her heart is breaking.

September, 1927

Father told us when we first came we would be going to Neerlandia school, but now we can't. Father didn't know then that our land is in a different school district. We aren't allowed to attend in Neerlandia, and the Vega district where we are supposed to go doesn't even have a school. So we don't go to school at all.

We have met a lot of nice kind people who have been helping to make things more pleasant for us. Otherwise life is hard. We have learned to pick wild strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries. We sometimes can sell some, earning an extra twenty-five cents here and there. Every little bit helps out.

September 15, 1927

We're in big trouble again, bad trouble. We just found out that that house in Freedom we stayed in belonged to somebody and now he's come and he tells us that we owe him a whole pile of money for back rent. So Father quick went to Freedom this morning to try to earn some money to pay the debt.

September 18, 1927

Some man came to the farm today to seize some of our possessions to pay for the debt. He wanted to take Mother's sewing machine, one of the horses, and some other things. Mother started crying and the man finally left without taking anything. Now Mother and Eva are on their way to Freedom to get Father and what money he has. I hope that man doesn't come back before Father gets here.

October 6, 1927

Well, our bad situation turned out all right, at least we don't owe the money any more. Mother and Eva got Father, but he didn't have nearly enough money to pay the man, and what he had we needed desperately for ourselves. Someone told the people in Neerlandia Church about our troubles and the church people got together and paid the debt for us. I'm really grateful to them all, but I hardly dare to be because Mother and Eva are so very upset about it all. It's like their pride is hurt, having to depend on others for charity after once having plenty.

July 12, 1929

Today I had to walk to the grocery store for a few things. It was a very hot day and I was tired when I got there. Mr. Ingwersen is the manager. He saw I was hot and gave me a big juicy orange! I ate it slowly under a tree. It was so good! I almost never get to eat an orange so it was a real treat.

September, 1929

We are finally going to school in a real schoolhouse! We haven't gone to real school since we went in Freedom. This summer in July and August we began having classes, but they were held in a little log house owned by Pete Boman. Then they finished building our Vega school and twenty-two other children come too. Our teacher is Miss Muriel Willis.

August 2, 1930

I have a job of my own now! Yesterday I left home to come to a farm here in Ardrossan, Alberta. I milk cows and do other chores for twenty dollars a month. It seems like a miracle to be able to earn that much money in one month. Father found work too, with a gravel-crushing crew at Didsbury, Alberta, and Eva is working in Edmonton. Things are really looking up now.

September 14, 1930

A terrible tragedy struck our family today. My littlest sister, Anna, is only eight years old but today she died. She was accidentally shot in the chest while everyone was on the way to go blueberry picking. Pete Boman rushed her by car to the hospital and Dr. Verreau came to meet them, but they were too late. Anna died in Mother's arms.

September 18, 1930

Anna was buried today. We had the funeral service in the Christian Reformed Church, and buried her in the Neerlandia cemetery. There was no place we could buy a casket from, so Ben Lievers made one for us, and our teacher

Buried in the [illegible] padded it with cotton batting and white satin. The funeral cost twenty dollars

November 1, 1930

The family are all grief-stricken, but Anna's death is especially hard on Mother. Mother loved to sing, but no one is allowed to sing in the house now. Because of the effect of the tragedy on her life it is becoming more difficult for all of us

March, 1932

Our family continues to suffer hardships, but we keep learning to get by. Sometimes all we have to eat is pannekoeken. Only flour, salt, and water does the trick, but when mother can she adds milk and eggs which make them taste better. When she does that I can eat thirteen of them! We also eat wild game, including deer and bear. Father brings fish from the Athabasca river. Pleun and I sometimes go with him. We walk all the way from our homestead, across Bill Bouwman's land, and through the bush to the river on the corner of the NW 22-62-4-5. There we sleep on the sand and rocks and wake at daybreak to start fishing. Father is an expert fisherman

August 24, 1935

We live in the Balm Hill area of Vega now having moved here a month ago. Father said there were too many sow thistles on the other place. Besides here he is closer to the river for fishing

August 30, 1945

Father is experimenting with fruit trees. He is a wonderful gardener and sells [illegible] apple trees to other people in Neerlandia for their gardens

August 1, 1964

My sister Eva, my brother Arie, and myself are all that is left of our family, and we are very close. We often talk about all the things that happened to us. Life in Canada was not kind to Mother. She died a little every day, one tear at a time. She passed away August 1, 1964, at 70 years of age. Our sister Adriana was 38 when she died June 12, 1958. Pleun died of cancer on July 28, 1971, at the age of 53

I never look back. I am glad we came to Canada, and Father always said that if you were poor and poor-looking, you had better be worth something else, like putting on the elbow grease and getting to work. Life wasn't easy for father either. He was quite deaf and it was difficult for him to carry on conversations with other people. His best friend was Melle Elzinga, who would come and talk with him over the many years.

Father loved life in Alberta — the adventure, the hunting and fishing. He didn't care about material things, and was happy with what he had. He almost never missed a Sunday fishing trip. He liked to be by himself and of his weekly fishing trips he said that then he was with his God. He liked to go fishing to be alone with his thoughts. Father passed away February 19, 1972, at 81 years of age

Gerry Bozak

JOHN AND ANNA (ELZINGA) SCHURING

John (Jan) Schuring was born January 28, 1901, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands. His parents were farmers. John liked it on the farm but had a great desire to immigrate. His father had gone to the U.S.A. in 1889 to make a permanent home there, but his family had called him back. He must have passed his dreams on to his son, because in 1926 John applied for immigration to the U.S.A. There was a waiting list, however, so instead John chose to go to Canada

John travelled on the *Rijndam* and arrived in May 1926. He took a train to Toronto where a friend had secured a job for him on a farm. He milked cows and fed pigs. After three months, John decided to go with his cousin, Steve Bergman, to see other parts of Canada. They travelled with other eager young men on the annual "harvest train" to the West. The fare was twenty-five dollars for a return ticket. John and Steve went to Gadsby, Alberta, where they were hired to stook grain for four dollars a day. They worked ten days and then a snowstorm struck. They thought this meant the end of stooking and quit, not realizing that it was not yet winter. They went to Edmonton and got a job on the railroad for thirty cents an hour. They were sent to Entrance, Alberta, where they had to clean up rocks after blasting was done. That job lasted only one month, and after that John and Steve decided to head further west. They caught a train to Vancouver, where it rained the entire five days of their stay. They decided it was too wet in that part of the country and headed back to Edmonton. They sent their suitcases on to Edmonton while they caught the freight train. A railroad employee found them hitching a free ride and asked where they were going. On discovering their destination, he advised them to jump off the train at New Westminster, because they were on the freight train to the States. So they jumped off and hopped on the next freight train heading east. On that train a kindly caboose man let them ride in an empty car instead of on top. At the employment office in Edmonton they got a job on the "B&B Extra Gang" another railroad, where they installed culverts under the rails until freeze up.

Until now John had carried his church papers in his pocket [illegible] Van Der Woude and Bill Bouwman. They told Steve and John about the new Dutch settlement, Neerlandia, so they went there to have a look. Christmas 1926 found John and Steve getting to know other Dutch people at the Schoonekamps'. They left their church [illegible] munity atmosphere immediately.

John's first job in Neerlandia was a contract to clear fifty acres of land for George Toebes at ten dollars an acre. After this he and Steve Bergman cleared for John Gelderman, George Anema, Henry Michael, Henry Kannegieter, and Bill Bouwman. They boarded at Bill [illegible]

The fall of 1927 came, and again John and Steve wanted to make extra money on a harvest crew. Here they parted company, with Steve going to Saskatoon and John going to Weyburn, Saskatchewan. After harvest John worked in a sawmill near Entwistle for three dollars a day. Late that winter John was back in Neerlandia and the next spring he cleared land for Simon Tiemstra. It was Simon who went with him to file on a homestead (NE 1-62-3-5) in 1928. The price was thirty dollars because there was a log cabin already on the quarter. John started clearing his own land right away.

In 1930 John was busy clearing trees when something snapped in his back. His backache was so severe that he could not look after himself and he crawled on his hands and knees to [illegible] he walked to Winston Elzinga's place, where he rested and recuperated for several days. The reason he walked to the Elzingas' was that he was courting Anna Elzinga.

Anna Elzinga had moved to Neerlandia with her family in 1928. She was working in Edmonton doing housework, first for fifteen dollars and later for almost thirty dollars a month.

Cooling off with ice cream, July 1, 1929. John Schuring, Anna Elzinga, Hilda Westerbaan, John Elzinga

John and Anna were married November 29, 1931, by Rev. Van Der Woude. They lived in a twelve by fourteen-foot shack with a lean-to for a bedroom. John fashioned a table from spruce lumber. In addition they had two chairs, a couch, a bed, a stove, and a box heater. If visitors came, blocks of firewood were used for extra chairs. By this time John had about seventy [illegible] wagon, sleigh, and some farming machinery.

[illegible] little house: Cornelius, born September 22, 1932, and Wilbert, born August 6, 1934. Farm prices were poor then. When Cor was born [illegible] In the spring of 1932 the Schurings bought eggs [illegible] hens to set on them, and raised twenty-three chicks. Two fat pigs were sold for $2.50 each. Their first tractor, an Oliver 70, was purchased for $1,215.00 in 1940 from C. K. Mast. It was brand new, complete with rubber tires and headlights. John was glad to have a rubber-tired tractor because it was much easier on him physically and he could work longer hours be- [illegible] one disadvantage. John was plowing with the

Oliver and when he came to the fence he cried "Whoa!", but the tractor kept going, right through the fence.

Anna holding Cor, John, 1932.

By 1940 the Schurings had a mixed farm which included pigs, cattle, chickens, one hundred ewes, and grain. Anna also liked to work outside with the animals. Their first car, a 1941 Chevrolet, was purchased in 1942 for nine hundred dollars. In 1945 the SW 7-62-3-5 was purchased from Grandale, and Anna also took up the SW 1-62-3-5, first as a grazing lease and later as a homestead. In 1944-45 they also built a new house and barn.

John and Anna's chosen daughter, **Jentien**, arrived June 14, 1945. John was a trustee on the school board at Grandale School and the boys attended there until grade eight.

The whole family worked hard and in 1954 they purchased SE 1-62-3-5 from Sneider. In 1957 the SE 11-62-3-5 was acquired.

In 1959 John, Anna, and Jentien moved to Barrhead, and Corny and Wilbert each farmed some of the land. Cor had married Lena Vander Zouwen, and soon thereafter, Wilbert married her sister, Willie. John and Anna were, however, not quite ready to retire. John first worked on construction and later at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Anna worked at Barrhead General Hospital for five years and at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Both John and Anna remain very active.

Cornelius, Wilbert, John, Jentien, 1946.

JAKOB AND GRACE (BULTSMA) SCHUURMAN

Jakob Schuurman was born on November 8, 1908, in Bierum, Groningen, the Netherlands. In 1927, Jakob immigrated to the Granum, Alberta district. As a young man of 18 he wanted to see Canada and planned to stay just one year. He came as a farm labourer and later rented a farm. On September 27, 1937, he married Grace (Grietje Jacoba) Bultsma. She had been born on September 15, 1911, in Wolvega, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1916, at the age of four, she had immigrated with her parents and two brothers to the Foremost, Alberta area.

Jakob did not particularly like irrigation farming and hence Jakob and Grace sought land in northern Alberta. In 1944, they purchased the S.E. 13-62-4-5 from Gerrit Kippers.

Jakob and Grace, with their two children **Henry** (Hendrick Teake) and **Bessie** (Beeuwkje Jantje), moved to Neerlandia in the fall of 1944. The first winter was spent in George Baker's

[illegible] E gersma now lives (1984). In the spring they [illegible] very muddy, so they used their John Deere D and hayrack to move their possessions. They had a milk cow tied behind. It was quite exhausted by the time they reached Pete Mast's corner (four miles down the road). There it became bogged down in the mud. The cow decided that was as far as it was going, so it was left there till morning.

Later that summer, a bush fire was burning near the Schuurman's house. They spent one very anxious night in fear that the house would burn up, but the fire bypassed it.

That first fall, Jakob used his combine, which he had brought from Granum. He had trouble getting the grain in, due to many roots. The fact that it was a wet fall did not help. He was advised that a combine would never work in this northern climate. He decided to sell it and used a threshing machine the following [illegible]

About 1950, **Bill** Olthuis, Louis Nanninga, and Jakob attempted to excavate a coal mine in the southwest corner of Schuurman's quarter. The project was abandoned because they could not cope with the water coming in. The project [illegible] kids spent many happy hours swimming in the [illegible]

Over the years they purchased two more quarters and cleared most of the land. In 1961 they built a new house on the home place. On this farm, four more children were born — **Tom** (Teake Albertus), **Jennie** (Jantje Jacoba), **Edna** Joan and **John**. Jakob and Grace continued to farm until the spring of 1977, when they retired and moved onto an acreage in the Vega district. On this acreage they pursued their farming interest on a smaller scale. Since his parents' retirement, John farms the home place. Jakob enjoyed helping John and Tom farming, even in his retirement. On February 11, 1982, Jakob passed away as a result of a heart attack. Grace [illegible] health (1984).

Henry was born on May 22, 1942. On April 10, 1970, he married Judy Schultz of Fawcett. At present they reside on their farm in the Frisco [illegible] involved with his logging company, Schuurman [illegible]

Bessie was born on July 9, 1944. After High School graduation Bessie trained as a registered nurse at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. She is noted in her family for her wanderlust; she has worked and travelled over much of the globe. Bessie now lives in Nelson, British Columbia, where she nurses.

Tom was born on May 4, 1946. On September 6, 1975, he married **Nancy Pozniak** of Mellowdale. They own a farm (S.E. 18-62-3-5) in the Neerlandia area. Tom is involved with his draglining and logging truck business. They have two children: **Randall** Bryan, born on April 9, 1979, and **Tamara** Dawn, born on May 19, 1981.

Jennie was born on February 10, 1948. She resides on her acreage in the Vega district with her two daughters, **Cherie** Lynn, born on June 5, 1970, and **Kristina** Renee, born on January 8, 1983.

Edna was born on May 2, 1951, and married Lenard Jennings. They reside on an acreage in the Linaria district. Edna and Lenard have three daughters.

John was born on January 31, 1955. On October 2, 1976, he married **Josephine Pozniak** of Mellowdale. They live on the home farm. John manages a hog operation. They have three children: **Jason** Dale, born August 27, 1979; **Lance** Lane, born on October 9, 1980; and **Amy** Jo, born on December 25, 1983. Josephine is a registered lab technician and works in Barrhead General Hospital.

Grace Schuurman

KEES AND BERTHA (TUININGA) STOOVÉ

Kees (Cornelis) Stoové, born March 15, 1905, spent his childhood and youth in Hilversum, North Holland, the Netherlands. He worked in a bakery there for several years, but soon Canada beckoned. Kees immigrated to Canada with his cousin Lodewijk Reyse. They arrived in Neerlandia at their uncle and aunt's place (Case and Hermina Ingwersen) in 1926.

Because there was no work for Kees in [illegible] he had the opportunity to buy the trucking [illegible] got the contract from the Co-op to haul cream to Edmonton and take groceries back. The road conditions, along with the economic situation did not make trucking a very pleasant or prof-

Kees, Bertha, 1927

itable business, so a year later Kees sold the truck to Billy Quick.

Kees met Bertha Tuinenga and married her on May 14, 1927, in Neerlandia. They set up their home in the Centre, in Jennie Oldegbers' little house. Here their first child, Susie, was born March 6, 1928. After Kees sold his truck the family returned to Edmonton where he started a bakery. After the birth of their fourth child, Bertha was discovered to have a brain tumor. They subsequently moved back to the Netherlands in 1935, in the hope that she could be helped there. This was not to be, and she died August 4, 1936, leaving Kees with a family of children ranging from four to eight years of age. Kees later remarried and now lives in Australia.

Carrie Olthuis

HENRY SR. AND GLADYS (KIPPERS) STRYDHORST

Henry (Hendrik) Jacob Strydhorst was born September 8, 1902, in the city of Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. When he was thirteen years old he quit school and began to work with his dad making furniture. He knew, however, that he did not want to make furniture for the rest of his life, and after three years he left home to work on various farms in the Netherlands. But he actually wanted the chance to have a farm of his own, and so in 1923 he decided to go to Canada.

At this time CPR and the Department of Colonization and Immigration in Canada had a program whereby farmers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan could ask for workers from the Netherlands. Sponsored by a farmer from Ceylon, Saskatchewan, Henry rode on a CPR boat to Quebec City and then took the train to Ceylon. He stayed with the Saskatchewan farmer for eighteen months. Since the farmer was an English-speaking Canadian, Henry had an excellent opportunity to learn the new language.

In December 1924 Henry went to Calgary, Alberta, where he was out of work for six weeks. The hotel in which he stayed charged $3.50 a week, and offered both hot and cold running water. Finally he got a job baling hay from a stack in Airdrie. At that time hay was cut in the summer and baled in the winter. The next summer he worked for another farmer, and the following winter he again baled hay.

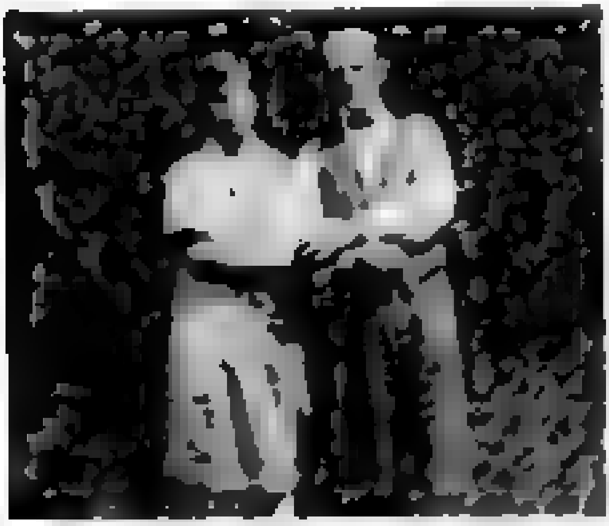
While still in the Netherlands, Henry had heard about Neerlandia from an acquaintance who had a cousin, H. J. Michael, there. The farmer Henry worked for in Airdrie had a big map of Alberta on the wall, and sometimes Henry would look at it and try to locate Neerlandia. The trouble was that Henry forgot the exact name of the town, and was looking for Hollandia. A few weeks later he suddenly remembered the correct name was Neerlandia, and then he spotted it on the map.

When Henry contacted Mr. Michael he was told that homesteads were available. Such information was welcomed by Henry and he moved to Neerlandia in June 1926. Ben Lievers and Hendrik Kannegieter walked with him to help choose a place. All the homesteads were numbered on iron pegs so they could tell which quarter they were walking. Henry saw one piece of land that looked as if it was already cleared, but he was told that it was muskeg. Soon he made up his mind and on June 24, 1926, he filed on the SE 17-62-3-5.

Henry started cutting down trees right away. With the help of his neighbours Peter den Hartog and his son Pete, and Hendrik Kannegieter, he built a shack. Then the clearing began. Five years later Henry raised his first crop on thirty acres. The land was proved up on July 3, 1933.

Henry did not consider bachelorhood to be all that great. Although he usually got bread, milk, and butter from Mina Kannegieter, Hendrik's wife, he still had rough times. One time he baked bread himself. It was so hard that when he threw it against the wall of the shack, it did not even crumble. The next time he went to his friend Joe Holwerda's place, he took the bread along and fed it to the pigs. It was not fit for human consumption.

Often Henry would go to the Henry Kippers' farm to visit the boys, but of special interest was their sister Gladys. Henry and Gladys became engaged in 1927, and five years later they were married. For a wedding present Mr. Kippers gave Henry and Gladys four heifers. Henry kept these cows and their offspring, and they formed the basis of the milking herd that he later sold with the farm to his son Jake.



Ain't love grand! Gladys, Henry, c. 1931

The newly-married couple moved into a fourteen by twenty-foot log shack, and lived there for five years. In the summer when the shack was too hot they slept in a granary. During these five years Henry and Gladys had three children: **Jenny**, born August 5, 1933, **Anna**, November 6, 1934; and **Henry**, March 19, 1936. They were born at home with Petertje Schoonekamp as midwife. Ben Lievers built the Strydhorsts a lumber house in 1937.

Anna, Henry, Jenny, Gladys holding baby Henry, 1936.

When Henry and Gladys were first married they did not have a cream separator. Instead, they had a big can with a little tap near the bottom. They would let the milk sit until the cream had all come to the top, about twelve hours. Then they would drain the skim milk out of the bottom and hang the cream in the well to stay cool. Once a week it was brought down the road to Toebes' place where the mailman would pick it up.

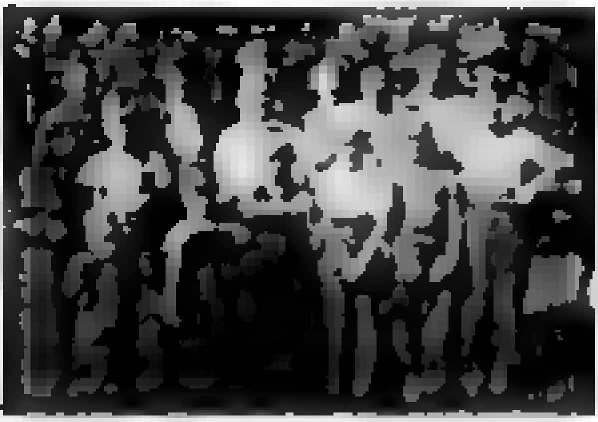
By marrying Gladys, Henry had certainly secured for himself a supply of good, soft bread. Mind you, he had to sell his double-barrelled shotgun for it once. He had bought the gun from Henry Michael for five dollars before he was married, but when the flour ran out and there was no money to buy more, the gun had to go. He sold it at Koop Mast's trading post for the same amount. Henry spent $3.50 to buy a hundred pounds of flour, and had $1.50 left over.

Henry and Gladys had a large family. After Henry was born, **James** followed on July 2, 1937. Then **Alice** was born October 13, 1938, and **Bertha** December 17, 1939. The two girls were followed by three boys: **John**, born June 5, 1941, **George**, June 20, 1942, and **Jake** (Jacob), November 20, 1943. Along came one more girl, **Gladys**, born February 10, 1945, and then again three boys to fill the quiver: **Cor** (Cornelius), born September 16, 1946; **Andy** (Andrew), January 11, 1948; and **Ken** (Kenneth), September

Back: Gladys, Alice, Bertha. Front: George, John, Jake, 1948

21, 1950. All but the last three boys were born at home.

With so many children, a hundred pounds of flour did not go very far. As the children were growing up Gladys would bake six loaves of bread every day (except Sunday) in her wood stove. Henry and Gladys recall that at times they bought a thousand pounds of flour at a time. Henry would load the hundred pound cotton bags on the wagon and then store them upstairs in the house. The family used about a hundred pounds of flour every two weeks.



Back: Henry, Anne, James, Jennie, Alice. Middle: George, Bertha, Gladys, Henry. Front: Ken, Andy, Cor, Gladys, Jake, John, 1964

Farming was a hard existence for the Strydhorsts. They were the last in the community to get electricity (1960). A couple years later, in 1962, they got running water in the house. They bought their first tractor in 19[illegible]. Henry Jr. and James worked in a lumber camp to earn extra money for the family. In 1954 their earnings were spent on a truck, the first motorized vehicle the family owned. Before this they had relied on horses with a wagon or sleigh for transportation.

Gladys was a thrifty, hard-working woman. Providing for her family took most of her time. She sewed most of the children's clothes. She even made caps for the boys. Every year she had a huge garden and canned hundreds of quarts of vegetables. When the wild fruit was ripe the children would pick strawberries, raspberries, high-bush cranberries, saskatoons, and blueberries to be canned for winter use. The Strydhorsts never bought fruit.

There was little time for relaxation. Gladys would have loved to do embroidery or crocheting but there was never any time. She had to stay up late at night to knit the needed garments for her family.

It was 1968 when Henry sold the farm to Jake. Henry and Gladys continued to live on the farm, however, until 1973, when Gladys' stepmother died. Then they went to live in the Centre with Henry Kippers, who died in 1977. Always a determined woman, at fifty-eight years of age Gladys decided to learn to drive a car. She got her license and soon was seen driving her white car along the roads going to visit friends and relatives or to shop in Barrhead.

John holding Heather, Rya, Janet, Sarah-Anne, 1984

Nine of the Strydhorst children live and farm in Neerlandia. In 1977 Jake married **Sya Spronk**. Sya was born in Her-en-Boecop, South Holland, the Netherlands, on July 11, 1950. Her family came to Edmonton in April 1951. Sya was introduced to Neerlandia and Jake by friends. Jake and Sya have three children. **Jared** Henry, born October 31, 1978; **Sarah Anne Klazina**, born January 18, 1980; and **Heather** Nicole, born February 26, 1984.

John married Margaret Peters of Clairmont in 1964. They live in La Glace and farm with their four children. George married Pat Zuerski of Edmonton in 1966. He is a carpenter and has a hobby farm in Whitecourt. They have four children. Gladys married Art Reitsma of Lacombe in 1965. They farm in Lacombe and have five children, one of whom died in 1983, at age 17, of the Bangkok flu, complicated by a rare blood disease.

Henry and Gladys still live in the hamlet where Henry grows several rows of brown beans every summer and Gladys now has time to read and crochet.

Ken Strydhorst

LUCAS AND ANNIE (EMMERZAEL) STURWOLD

Lucas Sturwold, son of Toney and Roelofje came with his family to Neerlandia in 1916. Lucas attended school till he was fourteen years old, then stayed home to help his father with the farm and blacksmithing work. Toney used to go to the neighbours with the crusher to crush grain. He also had a wood sawing outfit and would go around the community sawing firewood. In 1932 Lucas obtained the NW 9-62-3-5 as a homestead. He continued living with his parents until his marriage to Annie Emmerzael on June 27, 1943. Before he got married, Lucas had built a house on his father's farm. He and Annie lived there for two years, and then the house was moved to Lucas' farm with a Caterpillar tractor driven by Johnny Molodowich and a tractor driven by Bert Michael for extra traction.

Lucas and Annie had six children: **Reta** (May 5, 1944), **Martha** (September 6, 1945), **Tom** (January 17, 1948), **Arlyn** Percy (September 18, 1950), **Rodney** Wayne (August 4, 1953), and **Sherri** Lee Anne (October 10, 1958).

Like most Neerlandia farmers, Lucas raised grain. The grain was cut in the fall with a binder

Lucas, Annie

and tractor. When they were old enough, the children took turns driving the tractor. Sometimes the cutting would go quite well, but often there would be a breakdown with the binder. The pitman broke a number of times. As the family grew up, the children helped to stook the grain.

Threshing time was a special event. If the weather was nice and the threshing went well, it was an exciting time for all. The men worked hard but so did the women. At noon the crew would come into the house, where a large dinner had been prepared for them. Annie and the girls always ate their dinner after the men had left the house. Soon a large lunch would be prepared and sent out to the field for the men's afternoon tea. Special baking was always done for the men, and the children enjoyed the different foods. Many hot and cold drinks were also sent to the field for the thirsty men.

When Lucas first started farming, he was in a threshing crew with Bert Michael, Arie Krikke, and Jake Sturwold. Then for quite a few years he was with Gerrit Kippers and the Strydhorst men. When Tom, Arlyn, and Rod were old enough they joined too.

Lucas, with the help of his family, milked cows for many years. The milk was separated.

and the cream was stored in the well pit, where there was always cold water. Henry Strydhorst Sr. would come with his horses and wagon every Monday morning to pick up the full cans [illegible]

When they were first married, Anne [illegible] scrub board for washing clothes. A ye[illegible] she got a wooden handwashing machine which she used for five years.

For many years after they were first married, Annie used a wood cook stove in the kitchen. Attached to the side of it was a reservoir which could be filled with water. Since the stove was almost always in use, the water would stay hot and Annie could use it for washing dishes. The kitchen used to get quite hot when Annie was heating water, canning vegetables, or baking bread. The children enjoyed [illegible] able that they often fell asleep.

As well as the wood stove, there was a wood heater in the living room that could be used to warm up the house. In the winter, though, the [illegible]airs would get pretty cold. Things improved when the Sturwolds got a coal furnace. It provided more central heating, but it could cause problems too. When the coal was damp it was hard to get a fire going. Also, before the coal started burning properly it could emit some strong-smelling fumes which hurt one's eyes. The coal smoke made the walls of the house a dirty grey. The oil furnace that replaced the coal furnace gave more reliable heating. Sometimes in the winter, though, the oil, which was kept outside, would stiffen and had to be heated up before it could be used. And there was no less work for Annie in cleaning the walls; they got dirty just as quickly as with the coal furnace.

On the farm, things slowly improved. Sturwolds' first tractor, a little red Farmall A, was bought in 1949. It did not have much power and [illegible] Sturwolds did not have a car at this time, they even used the tractor for transportation on [illegible]casion. Around 1955, Lucas bought a John Deere B, which was a big improvement over the Farmall, and was used until he quit farming in the late 1960s.

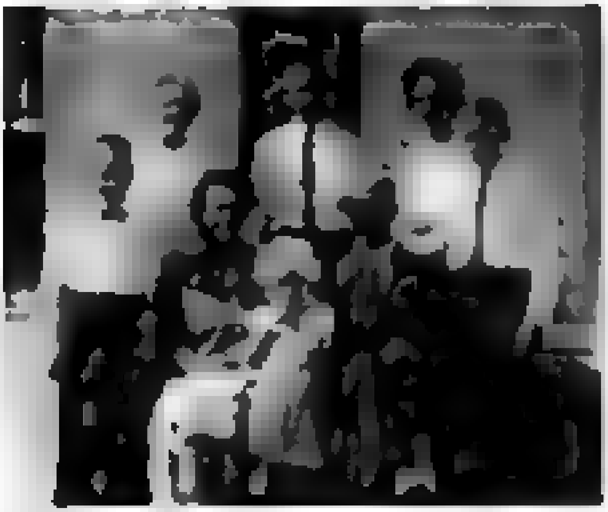
For many years, Lucas and Annie used their horses with a buggy in summer and a sleigh in winter for travel. In 1951 the family got its first car, a small green Morris-Oxford. But in the 1950s the roads were in such poor condition in the spring that the car often got stuck. Occasionally the Sturwolds would leave the car on the main road, as the road to their place was unpassable.

By the time Reta began school, the school buses had been in operation for about two years. The Sturwold children rode on the Vega bus; it began its run in Vega, picked up children north of Neerlandia School and then went on to Barrhead. The children had to walk a half mile to and from the main road every day. They used to walk with the Albert Elgersma, [illegible]mond Visser, and Henry Strydhorst children. For some years this was such a large group that the bus filled up quickly when it stopped at that corner. There was no rule about only three students to a seat; in fact, one was lucky if one could find a seat at all. Children would often have to stand in the aisle all the way to school. Due to the poor road conditions, the bus did not always arrive at the stop at the same time every morning. The Sturwold children often had a long wait in rainy or cold weather. One winter Lucas pulled a little building to the main road and set it east of the road so that the children could have a little protection from the [illegible] time, when the roads were breaking up, the bus did not run at all. The children would then have to walk the three miles to and from school. Often by the time they got home, they would have red rings around their legs where the top of the rubber boots rubbed them.

Lucas' homestead originally had many trees on it. The first two years he and his brother Jake did some logging on it and later sawed the logs into lumber on Lucas' yard. One stand of trees remained in the middle of the quarter for many years, and fire went through them a couple of times. In the late sixties the land was cleared by a Caterpillar tractor. The Strydhorst brothers were renting the land so they picked the roots. By the time Lucas sold the land, it was all under cultivation.

Electricity came to the Sturwold farm in 1956. After that Lucas and Annie bought electrical appliances for the house and motors to run the pump.

The Sturwolds got a phone in 1969. Both Annie and Reta worked on the phone exchange in Carl Maat's house. When Reta worked there



[illegible] Lucas, c. 1963

the pay was $.25 an hour. Annie worked there from May 1967 through December 1969.

Reta Sturwold married James Strydhorst in 1968. Martha studied nursing at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton, where she is now head nurse in the emergency department. She married Chris Birrell in 1968. Tom attended Dordt College for a year after completing high school. He married Gerda Versteeg in 1970. They live in St. Albert with their two daughters. Tom works in construction. Arlyn lives in Edmonton, where he is a salesman for Kirkland and Rose. He has two children. Rod married Cathy Wallace in 1982. They live near Campsie and Rod drives for Barrhead Truck. Sherri and her husband, Gordon Kuschminder, live in Barrhead. They were married in 1981. Gord works in construction.

Lucas and Annie sold their farm to James and Reta Strydhorst in 1972 and moved to Barrhead. Annie worked in the Barrhead Nursing Home for twelve years and still lives in Barrhead.

Annie Sturwold

JOHN AND ANNA (CONSTANTYNOVICH) TANSOWNY
FRED AND JOAN (LOBLEY) TANSOWNY

John Tansowny was born October 18, 1902, near Devon, Alberta, to Polish immigrants. Anna Constantynovich was born September 14, 1897, in Poland and later immigrated to Canada. John and Anna were married November 23, 1925. They first farmed near Devon, then moved to Westlock in 19[illegible] and two years later started up a sawmill in Linaria. During those years four children were born to John and Anna: Fred on August 26, 1926, Walter on February 10, 1928, Hazel on September 16, 1929; and Andrew on March 30, 1931.

On July 6, 1931, John took out the SW 13-62-3-5 as a homestead, and Anna took out the SE 13-62-3-5. The area was heavily timbered, but John cleared enough land for buildings, moved his sawmill there, and squared up enough logs to build a house and a barn. The family moved onto the homestead in the fall of 1932. John did more logging that winter so that he could make lumber. Settlers from Neerlandia and Vega also brought logs to be sawed.

By 1935 there were so many logs that his 18-36 H.P. Hart-Parr tractor was too small for the job, so John bought a 50 H.P. Case steam engine that had enough power to run both the mill and a homemade shingle mill, which cut many thousands of shingles from jack pine and white poplar. John also used the engine to run his threshing machine. There were several runaway teams of horses when the steam valve blew from too much pressure or when the steam engineer would blow the whistle for lunch.

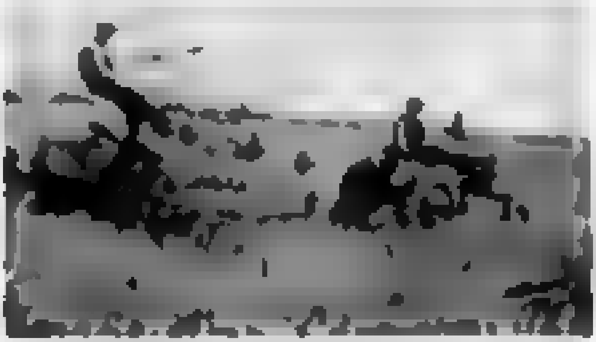
Threshing with the steam engine, [illegible]

In 1935, John had a setting west of the de Vries homestead and between there and his home, John sawed over one million feet of lumber. When Fred was twelve years old he helped his father at the mill and learned how to scale lumber. Andrew Wierenga was the tail sawyer at the mill at that time and was paid $1.25 a day. He would write down the size of each log in a scribbler, and in the evening Fred would calcu-ate the total number of board feet sawed that day for each customer. Fred helped with all kinds of outside chores and many times would help Anna with housework, setting the table and washing the dishes. John always had hired men and at times some of the customers would eat there also. Henrietta Wierenga and later her sister [illegible] worked for Anna. As years went by, lumber got scarce, so John sold the mill and the steamer in [illegible].

John's sawmill [illegible]

When Fred was old enough to go to school, John and Anna made arrangements that he board with Mr. and Mrs. McKinty, who lived close to the Shoal Creek school. But when John took Fred there, he would not stay. He says that maybe he was scared of their girls. So Fred did not start school till he was ten years old. Then he went to Neerlandia school which was nearly six miles away. In the summer John would take Fred, Walter, and Hazel to school each morning, and they would walk home after school. Sometimes they could catch a ride with one of the Nanninga or Wierenga families. In the winter they used a closed-in sled and horse. Anna would put a good-sized rock in the oven overnight, then put it in the sleigh in the morning to keep the children warm. The children would leave the horse at Walter Wangacki's blacksmith shop, which was close to school. Walter took care of it most of the time. Then John purchased a buggy so the children could use it in the summer. In 1939 the Grandale School was built on the NW 6-62-2-5, so Fred finished his last year of school there. After moving to the Neerlandia area John and Anna had two more children, Billy (William), born May 7, 1936, and Cecilia, born February 17, 1939.

After Fred quit school he worked with John on a threshing crew. In the winter of 1941 he worked at Boman's sawmill in Vega for five dollars a month with room and board. The following winter he drove truck for an Edmonton trucker for seventy-five dollars a month, hauling rails from Shoal Creek. It was hard work with long hours. On return trips they would bring a load of coal back to one of the many schools in the Westlock-Barrhead area. The trucker had the school contract for supplying the coal for heating. There would be times when Fred would not get home till midnight, after unloading that dirty stuff into sometimes crowded quarters.



Fred on tractor, John on grader, 1943

John bought a trucking route in 1943. Since the boys were grown up, they helped operate the trucking business, hauling livestock and merchandise for the Shoal Creek, Linaria, Woodmore, and Freedom districts. They also operated a gravel and sand pit business from their farm for many years.

In the summer of [illegible] Joan [illegible] of Sundre came to teach at Grandale School. The first year she boarded at Bill Tarasowny's. The next year she stayed at John Tarasowny's. Fred and Joan got to like each other and were married July 26, 1945. They lived with Fred's parents for the first three years, then moved to Shoal Creek. Fred and Joan have four children. Joan taught at Neerlandia in 1968-69. Fred is presently (1984) working for Merit Stores in Barrhead and Joan worked at the Government Liquor Store there from 1974-84.

Walter worked for the Department of Transportation since his early twenties and lived on a farm near Westlock. He married Mary Millar on December 29, 1949. She taught in Neerlandia from 1955 to 1957. Hazel married Kazik Wichinski, and they are presently semi-retired on their farm acreage northwest of Neerlandia. Andrew had a hardware and furniture business in Stettler but is now retired. Billy has a trucking business and lives in Edmonton. Cecilia married Irvin Lorentz and they live in Edmonton. Cecilia is confined to a wheelchair with multiple sclerosis.

In 1944 John built a new house, which was one of the first in the district to have running water and electricity. All the material was bought from the Neerlandia Co-op store.

Tanasowny house built in 1944

As time went by, the family grew up, and in 1952 John rented the farm out to Walter. He and Anna moved to Barrhead so the two youngest children could easily walk to school, the Grandale School having closed for lack of a teacher. John wrote, "Later on that fall they put in a school bus in that district. Carl Mast was on the school board and got me to drive that bus to Barrhead. I drove for nine years and many of those children are now fathers and mothers and still remember me as their strict old bus driver."

John and Anna sold their homesteads to Klaas Piers in 1962. They moved into Hillcrest Home in Barrhead in May 1980. Anne was confined in the hospital for three months after suffering a stroke, and passed away August 18, 1983, at the age of eighty-five. John is still living in the Home.

Fred and John Tanasowny

HARM AND GELSKE (TALSTRA) TEN HOVE

H. J. (Harm Jan) Ten Hove and his bride came from the Netherlands in [illegible] and settled on a farm in the Lacombe area. They were involved in establishing the First Christian Reformed Church of Lacombe and the local Christian school. There they had their family of two boys and two girls: **Jean** (1930), **Eb** (1931), **Dick** ([illegible]), and **Betty** ([illegible]).

One of the highlights of each summer was a visit from Henry and Jennie Kuipers of Neerlandia. It was no doubt on one of these visits that H. J. heard about the managerial position that was open in the Neerlandia Co-op store. Was it possible that merchandising was a better occupation for him than farming? H. J. and his wife pondered that question. Perhaps it was because H. J. loved meeting people that he decided to apply for the position. After some weeks of eagerly waiting for the Board to choose the right applicant, the Ten Hove family received word that H. J. was to be the new manager.

On March 24, 1945, there was a farm sale in Lacombe. Ten Hove's land was rented to the Brouwers, and a few days later Art Fisher came from Neerlandia with his three-ton truck to move the family's belongings. There was an overnight stopover at the King Edward Hotel in Edmonton, where the Ten Hove children were impressed by city life — especially the noise of traffic that drowned out Papa's evening prayer.

While H. J. went through a two-week training period with the Konings, who were still living above the store, the Ten Hoves were warmly received by various families who provided places for the family members to stay

Back: Jean, Gelske, Harm, Eb. Front: Betty, Dick, 1946

When the Konings left, the Ten Hove family took up residence in the apartment above the store. What excitement it was for the children to peek into the town assembly room! This room, where meetings and community social events were held, was also above the store and could be seen through a doorway in the hall of the [illegible] toilet! Nevertheless, when one of the younger members heard that a former occupant had flushed that toilet, and it plugged and overflowed into the warehouse below, she preferred the outhouse.

Jean remembers that in Neerlandia she was considered old enough to go to Young People's [illegible] thrilled to be suddenly considered grown-up.

One day a certain gentleman stopped at the gas pump at the store to fill his car. Dick and Betty said their folks had closed the store for a few hours while they went away on business. The gentleman, however, being a Co-op member, felt entitled to get his tank filled and, persuading the children to do it for him, left content. It was not long before he discovered that the cap to his gas tank had been misplaced and was gone forever. That little cap certainly caused a stir; the gentleman was so provoked about the lost cap that it was even brought up at the next Board meeting, and the children were rebuked for pumping gas.

Mail came to the Post Office in the store on Tuesday and Saturday evenings, so these were special times when most of the community people gathered; the older people shopped and [illegible]

Another exciting event for the Ten Hoves was the arrival of the freight. That was just like Christmas, with boxes of many sizes waiting to [illegible]

Each day H. J. had to check the McKaskey cash register to keep all the accounts straight. Each night someone had to go downstairs and shut the power plant off. It was an easy task that even Betty could do, but the trip back upstairs in the dark was a bit unnerving with large, dark, unrecognizable objects to pass by on the way.

One Sunday evening three district young people joined the Ten Hove young people in [illegible] They sliced a little bit of bologna from the long roll and ate it.

Despite all the happy times, the family left Neerlandia to return to their farm at Lacombe after just four months. They had discovered that Co-op stores have too many bosses and that merchandising was not better for them than farming.

H. J. Ten Hove passed away in December 1977. His wife, at 86 years of age, is in Red Deer [illegible] times in Neerlandia. The four children are all farming in the vicinity of Lacombe.

Jean Bust

GEORGE AND ANNIE (FISHER) TERPSMA

George Terpsma was born in Neerlandia, but his parents moved to Edmonton just before the Depression. In 1935, at age nineteen, George decided to move back to his parents' farm (SW 35-61-3-5). He set out in April with a team of horses and a sleigh, and a hayrack loaded with machinery. The bridge at Manola was bare and wet, and a farmer there had suggested he stay overnight and leave early in the morning when the bridge would be icy. George [illegible] [illegible] with them or the sleigh [illegible] some time he bought a house from Loe Reyse, dug a cellar, and moved it onto the place. For a couple of years George worked in a sawmill in the winter and for Henry and Ina Mast in the summer. In 1936 his brother Norman came to the farm to assist him. Later Norman bought that quarter and George moved onto his father's second quarter (SW 26-61-3-5).

On the land some buildings built by the former owner, George Caughlin, were situated on the edge of a bush. One Sunday afternoon a bush fire burned all the buildings on the place. George managed to save his sow and her little pigs. A neighbour, Tom Wilson, gave George a large granary to live in and a shed for his pigs. In the meantime George summerfallowed the fifteen acres that were broken on the quarter. He later built a small house, a log barn, and other buildings on the south end of the quarter.

In 1939 George began dating Annie Fisher. They were married April 6, 1941, by Rev. Van Der Woude. Five children were born to George and Annie while they lived in Neerlandia: **Jean Bernice** (January 9, 1943); **Douglas** (August 22, 1945); **Wayne Richard** (January 4, 1947); **Arthur**

Back: Annie holding Roy, Joan, George. Front: Wayne, Jim, Douglas. 1957

John (December 17, 1949), and **James** Lewis (February 11, 1952).

Annie was often bedridden because of varicose veins, ulcers, and phlebitis. Doctors advised George to move to a warmer climate because of what they thought was arthritis in his spine. So in 1955, the Terpsmas sold their farm and moved to the Okanagan Valley, B.C. There doctors found the real cause of George's problem, and he had spine surgery in 1957. Another son was born there in 1956. In 1959 the Terpsmas moved back to Alberta, to the Rocky Mountain House area, where their sixth son was born in 1962. He lived for only two days.

Their oldest son, Doug, was murdered August 24, 1983, by a shotgun blast to his chest. He and his family were living near Vernon, B.C. George and Annie live on a farm in Rocky Mountain House, where they raise horses.

Annie Terpsma

JOHN AND HARDA (LIEVERS) TERPSMA

John Terpsma immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1911 and filed on the NW 26-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911. Although he continued living with his parents on their homestead, he built a 16 by 24-foot log shack on his homestead in 1914. He also built a log barn, dug a well, and put up 1¼ mile of wire and rail fencing. He received the patent to the land in 1921. In 1920, he had cropped twenty-two acres on the quarter and owned fifteen cattle, five horses, and six hogs.

John Terpsma married Harda Lievers in June 1928 in Edmonton, as Neerlandia had no minister at that time. John had sold his homestead to Andries Wierenga, so he and Harda lived in a tent on the Kooy homestead the first summer. That fall they moved to a log house on the SW 26-61-3-5. The next year, on July 20, 1929, John took up the NW 36-61-3-5 as a homestead. When he filed, he paid $125.00 for the improvements on it: a log shack, a well, an unfinished stable, three hundred fenceposts and twelve slashed acres. This homestead was the Terpsma home for the next twenty years.

John and Harda's wedding photo

John and Harda had eight children: **Dewey** (Douwe), December 29, 1928; **Jennie** (Jansje), December 3, 1930; **Betty** (Betsje), November 1, 1934; **Tena**, January 19, 1936; **Harry** (Hendrik), July 9, 1937; **Katie** (Kaartje), January 25 1940; **John** (Jan), March 2, 1941 and **George**, February 18, 1942. All except George were born at home with the help of midwife Petertje Schoonekamp. George was born in the Barrhead hospital. For Harda, sitting in a tiny log house with little children winter in and winter out, when there was almost seven months of snow, was almost unbearable. She often wished they could leave and move somewhere where it was not so cold.

Raising a family during the Depression years was difficult. Since they had cows and chickens, there was always enough food, but there was not much money for clothes and shoes or grocery items such as sugar and salt. As long as they could sell some cream and eggs, the Terpsmas pulled through. There was always a lot of wild fruit available. Harda picked and canned raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, and cranberries until all the bottles were full. After their third child was born, John bought Harda a gas washer, which was a blessing.

Another good thing that happened was when they finally got a well drilled. Before that, during the winter, they would have to haul snow in the house and melt it all — enough for the family, the wash, and the livestock. One winter they melted snow each day for four cows and two horses as well as for the family. Later John built a brick furnace outside and they melted snow in the tub on the furnace; it was quite an invention. When they got a well drilled, though, it was a real luxury. It was less than one hundred feet deep and nearly a running well. But it cost them one of their best milk cows. Jack Tuininga and Bill Olthuis drilled the well, and after everything was done Jack said to John, "You know, John, if you want to square up we could have one of your cows." John wanted to get straightened up too and said, "You pick which one you want." Well, didn't the best cow in the barn get picked; not only that, but she was the best milker too!

John worked to prove up the land and received the patent in 1939. He had thirty-nine acres in crop by then and all of it was fenced. A new lumber house had been built in 1937, but they still burned wood to heat the house and never had electric power. During the 40s, when conditions improved, John bought a Chevy car. But he did not know much about cars and it ran out of oil — no more car after that. Much later, they finally bought another car.

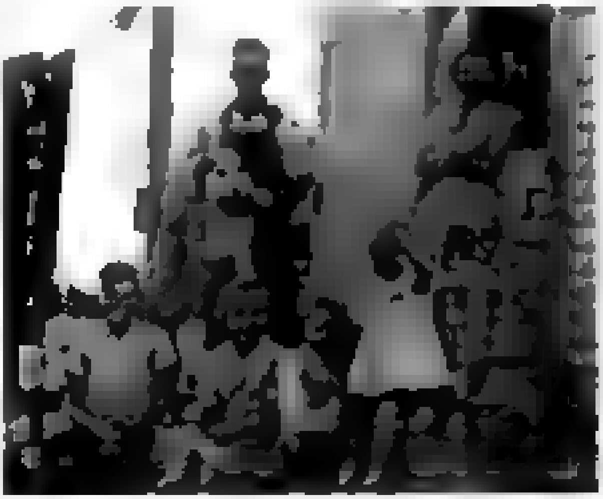
Harda wrote: "In all the years we lived there [Neerlandia] we did not have too much material things, but we lived together like one big happy family helping each other when it was needed. The one thing that held us together was our faith in God." John and Harda sold the farm in 1949 and moved with their family to Burnaby, B.C., where the climate was much warmer. John has since passed away. Harda is living in New Westminster, B.C., with her brother John.

Harda Terpsma

Back: Jennie, Denny, Tena, Harda, John, Betty. Front: Harry, John, Katie, George, c. 1940

NORMAN AND EILEEN (WIERENGA) TERPSMA

Norman bached on his father's homestead (SW 35-61-3-5) from 1937-1943, when he married Eileen (Elie) Wierenga. They were blessed with five children: David, born June 7, 1944; Betty Anne, born June 7, 1946; Lawrence Lam

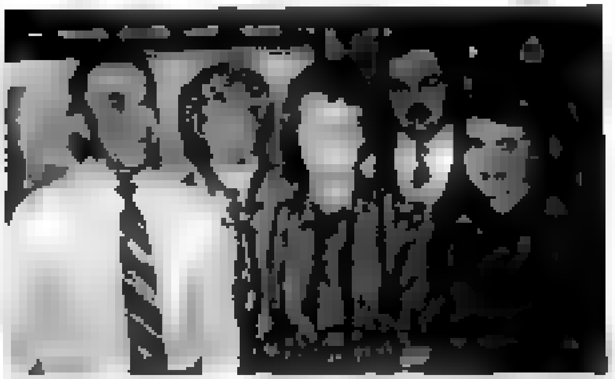


Back: Norman, Elie. Front: David, Betty, Lawrence, Roxanne 1950.

bert born June 27 1948; **Rosanne**, born June 14, 1954; and **Florence Irene** born September 18, 1960. Florence was "called home" in her infancy: she died of crib death on January 28, 1961.

Norman and Elie worked hard together at their mixed-farming operation, milking cows, raising and feeding hogs, and managing a small cow-calf operation. A second quarter, the NW 36-61-3-5, was purchased from Albert Mast Sr. in 1967. The original log house on the homestead was taken down during the sixties and the logs were used in erecting a small cattle shelter which is still being used. The old log barn was taken down in the 1970s.

Betty married Walter VanderZyl on February 9, 1968, and they live in Edmonton. They have two children. David married Gerrie Vanderhorst on August 15, 1969, and they live in Abbotsford, B.C. They have five children. After Lawrence quit school, he stayed at home and worked on the farm with Norman. He married **Lucille Duker** (March 5, 1958) of Edmonton on June 18, 1976, and lives on the homestead. Rosanne lives at home with Norman and Elie and works as a teller in the Barrhead Toronto-Dominion bank.


Norman, Lucille, Elie, Lawrence, Rosanne, 1984

In 1975 Norman and Elie built a new house on the homestead, where they still live. Norman retired in 1979, selling the farm to Lawrence. Lawrence and Lucille continue to farm, managing a hog farrow-to-finish and a cow-calf operation.

Norman Terpsma

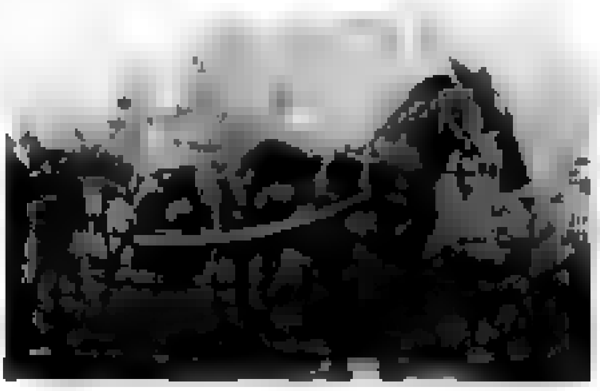
ALBERT AND TENA (WIERENGA) TIEMSTRA

Albert Tiemstra married Tena Wierenga, daughter of Hendrik and Hiltje, on March 1 1931. They had two sons: **Simon Albert**, born January 31, 1939 and **Harold Albert**, born June 11 1946. Albert took out the NW 13-61-3-5 as a homestead on August 5, 1926.

Courting Days. Albert and Tena at Anarmat, 1930.

After the wedding. Albert, Tena, 1931

Albert and his brothers, Gerben and Joe did a lot of road grading and snow plowing for the county in the 1940s and early 1950s. The county supplied the grader and the snowplow, but the Tiemstras had to supply the tractor. It there had been a bad snowstorm, the only way to get through was with two tractors pulling the snowplow and one pushing.



Simon and Joe Tiemstra out for a buggy ride

Albert was the first person to bus children to school in Neerlandia, starting in 1946. The bus was Albert's truck, with an open box on it in which the children stood. Each morning, Albert would begin the route by picking up children in his own neighbourhood, then go west to Fishers', and from there north to school along the main road. The parents paid him, at first he received about six dollars a day. In 1948 Albert bought a more modern bus: a new truck that had a box with a roof and three windows, one on the front and one on each side. Inside Albert put some homemade benches. Now he was paid by the school division and, besides his old route, he also had a route to the west. Albert used this bus until 1950 when he sold it to Frank Visser.

From 1957 to 1967 Albert operated the county road grader. During the winter he sometimes worked almost day and night to keep the roads snow plowed.

The horseman, Albert Tiemstra

Simon, Albert, Tena. Front: Harold, 1950

Simon married Dorothy Baker in 1957 and they started farming with Albert and Tena. Harold married Wally Fehr on February 19, 1968 and moved to Edmonton where he is a partner in an insulation manufacturing firm. He and Wally have three children.

Albert and Tena retired in 1963 and moved to Barrhead, where they built a new house. Albert passed away June 18, 1967, of a heart attack suffered during the church service. Tena continued to live in their house until 1980 and now lives in Golden Crest Manor in Barrhead.

Simon Tiemstra

CHARLES AND SADIE (TUININGA) TIEMSTRA

Charles (Tjeerd) Tiemstra was born in Bolsward, Friesland, the Netherlands. There he attended school until he completed the sixth grade. For a time he helped his father, Ulbe, on the farm. Then he worked for a dairy farmer until 1920, when he decided to go to Canada since he did not see any future for a farm labourer in the Netherlands. His half brothers Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema were already in Neerlandia, so that was his destination. When Charles made up his mind to go to Canada, his brother, Ike, and his father decided to go too. In June 1920 they sailed from Antwerp, Belgium, on an English steamship.

The Tiemstras travelled third class, but the beds and meals provided were good. Third-class passengers did not get tea and cookies in the afternoon, so at teatime Charles and [illegible] other fellow in his cabin would go up to the [illegible] enjoyed the excitement of sailing and would often stand on the deck during stormy weather, watching the ocean waves. After eleven days they landed in Montreal. From there they had a four-day train trip to Edmonton.

The first night, the Tiemstras stayed at the Immigration Hall. The next day they walked to the CPR station. Charles and Ike were each carrying a large, full suitcase. When they showed their tickets, the officials there tried to explain that the Westlock train did not leave from there. It was to no avail, because the Tiemstras knew no English. That night they slept at the Immigration Hall again, and returned to the CPR station the following day. Finally one of the officials called a taxi and they were brought five miles away to the Dunvegan Line Station. Charles thought the taxi ride was [illegible]ch better than walking with that suitcase. [illegible] culties. When they got to Westlock that [illegible] ning, Marshall picked them up by stage from the station, in accordance with arrangements made by Siebren Tiemstra. The arrangements included a stay at a Westlock hotel and a ride farther the next day. Marshall tried to explain this to the three totally bewildered Dutchmen. Finally, Ulbe suggested that they begin walking. After walking six miles, they slept overnight in a farmer's barn. They ate breakfast at the farmer's house the next morning, then started walking again. It was a hot day and the mosquitoes were bad, too. The farther they went, the heavier the suitcase seemed. At Freedom they bought some crackers, butter, and a piece of sausage. Once in a while, when they saw a log house, they would ask directions to Neerlandia. The last place they stopped was [illegible] Dutch and also knew Siebren, so gave them further directions. After walking another seven miles, the three men, very tired and hungry, finally landed in Neerlandia at seven o'clock that evening.

Now the language was no problem. Among [illegible] Charles stayed at Jan Anema's that summer and did learn some English from the Anema children. He worked for Jan, clearing land with an [illegible]

That fall Charles and Ike worked with a road gang, regrading the road from Clyde to Barrhead. Their job was to pick the rocks and tree roots when the grader was working and throw them into a ditch across the low places in the road. Then they had to fix a wooden culvert in the low spot. The crew worked eight hours a day. They had to provide their own blankets and towels and slept on some hay in a big tent, about nine or ten men to a tent. Frank Thomp[illegible] of Mellowdale was the foreman and his wife, Elsie, did the cooking. She made all kinds of pie for dessert, which Charles and Ike feasted on — in the Netherlands they had been [illegible] ng with the crew. Charles learned English quickly.

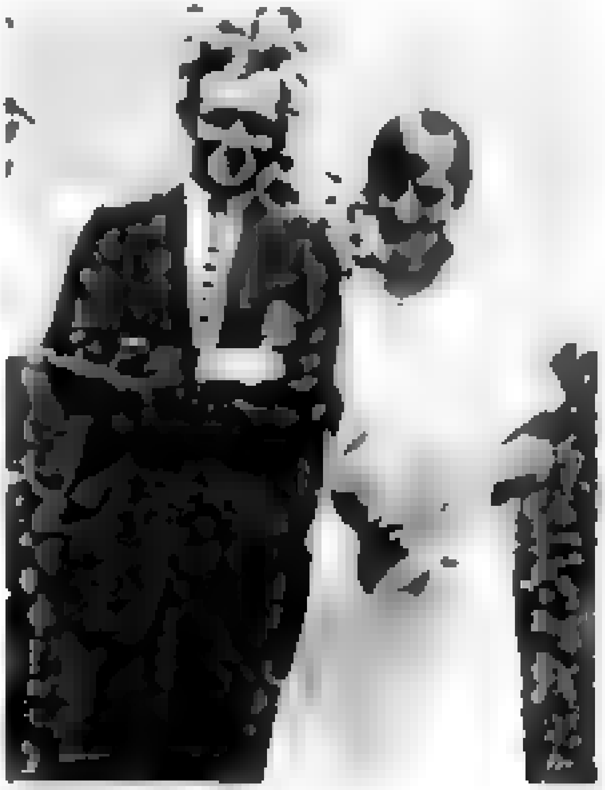
After freeze up, the two brothers returned to Neerlandia. They helped Jan and Siebren haul firewood and bring home the hay that they had made that summer a few miles east along the Shoal Creek. The following spring Charles found work on a farm near Killam, earning forty dollars a month. There he learned to drive horses, since he had to use them for plowing and harrowing. Every other Sunday he went to visit his brother, Ike, and Ted and Ida Reitsma, who worked about eight miles away. After the fall work was done, Charles and Ike and Ted Reitsma went to Edmonton and found employment in a coal mine, where they worked during the winter of 1921-22. Shovelling coal was hard work, but the relatively warm temperature in a mine during the winter more than compensated. Charles was paid for each car loaded and could average five dollars a day, a very good [illegible]

However, when spring came Ted went home and Charles and Ike found a job in the B. J. Little Brickyard. They rented a shack on Fraser Flats for five dollars a month. In the fall they went on the move again, working along with Ted Reitsma for Saskatchewan farmers. In the winter they returned to Edmonton. During the summer of 1922, Charles had bought the George Wing homestead (SE 27-61-3-5) for $1400. It had twenty acres under cultivation, a log house, and a twenty-foot deep hand-dug [illegible] had enough work on his farm clearing land. In the spring of 1923, he bought a bed, a cook stove, a few chairs, and a tin heater which he took to the homestead along with a homemade table. His meals were the bachelor's usual fare: raw, sliced potatoes fried up in fat, fried eggs, pancakes or bread with jam. He also bought dried apples or peaches (in twenty-pound boxes) which he [illegible] for dessert.

After spending the whole summer clearing, Charles went to work in the coal mine again for the winter of 1923-24. The next spring, with his savings, he bought two horses with harness and again went to the farm for the summer. With the help of Ben Lievers, he built a 20 by 30-foot barn. It had a hip roof which provided a loft in which hay could be stored. When winter came he left his horses with Siebren and went back to the coal mine for the fourth and last time. The following spring, just before he left Edmonton, he bought a high-wheeled wagon, three sections of harrows and two more horses with harness, all for eighty dollars. He loaded the harrows onto the wagon in preparation for the trip to Neerlandia but Dave Tuininga, who was running a truck from Neerlandia to Edmonton, warned him that the horses would break their legs unless they were shoed, since the roads were covered with ice. So for twelve dollars Charles had a blacksmith shoe all eight legs of his horses. The shoes had props that could be screwed in so that the animals would not slip. At eight the next morning Charles set off. He was fortunate that his wagon had a spring seat on the grain box, since the entire [illegible] was [illegible] with many deep ruts. Charles stopped overnight at a farmer's home along the way, and reached Neerlandia after a day and a half.

Charles now had forty acres under cultivation, so he bought a sixteen-inch sulky plow. With his neighbour, Elke Jorritsma, he bought a used seed drill with wooden wheels at a farm auction. It had levers that had to be pushed down by hand, so one had to stop everytime we came to the end of the field. Elke also owned a binder for cutting the crops. Since Elke was not mechanically inclined, an arrangement was made whereby Charles did all the cutting and Elke did the stooking. The next year though, Charles bought his own binder. He continued to clear and break land between seed time and harvest. In the summer of 1927 Bertus Bos helped him to clear and by the end of that summer he had eighty acres cleared.

Charles was a member of the local Christian Reformed Church which he attended faithfully. He went regularly to Young People's Society meetings. Sadie Tuininga, one of the many girls of Klaas and Sjoertje, came to Society also. She came on horseback and Charles began accompanying her home after meetings. [illegible] he bought a new buggy to make the ride home more cozy. After courting Sadie for about two years, Charles married her on a Friday afternoon (January 16, 1928) in the home of her parents. Rev. A. Selles of Edmonton officiated. For a married couple, childbearing was considered to be not only a privilege but a command of the Lord. Any method of contraception was strictly forbidden. For that reason most parents had many children. The Hiemstras were no exception, children were soon born.


Charles, Sadie, 1928

Albert Ulbe (May 31, 1929), **Clarence** (Klaas, December 31, 1930), **Cecelia** (September 29, 1932), and **David** (August 5, 1934) were born during the early years of the Depression. After Clarence was born, Sadie had Hilje Wierenga help for nine days. Hilje worked for one dollar a day, which the Tiemstras could hardly afford. Raising a family during those years was hard. After Charles and Sadie were first married, Charles had bought some cows so they could have their own milk and butter. The only money they got was a weekly cream cheque of seven dollars, which they used to buy groceries. Some sows were also bought in order to raise pigs for market. When the Depression hit though, the markets for farm products were not good.

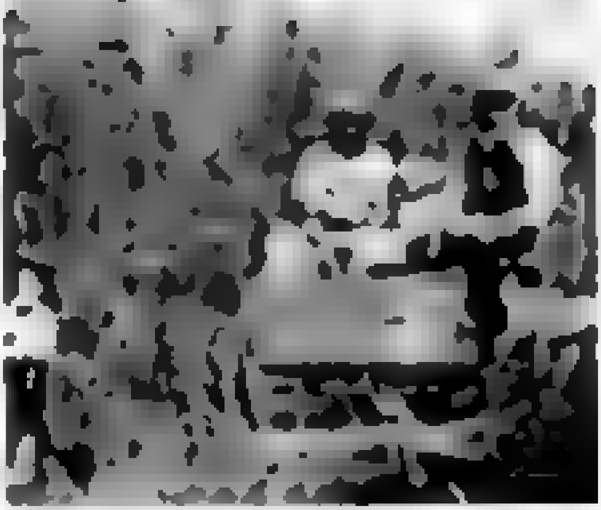
Even if Charles and Sadie did not have very much money, the family had enough to eat. Their food was mostly the same: potatoes, vegetables, and meat or eggs. They never saw oranges or apples. To make ends meet, Charles and Sadie made do. Wheat was crushed in the grinder and used in baking and cooking; barley was roasted in the oven and ground for coffee; peppermint leaves were picked and dried for tea. In the early spring, Sadie gathered pigweeds and cooked them up like spinach. Charles and Sadie also made their own sausage and liver sausage, smoked dried beef, and made head cheese and (regular) milk cheese.

Sadie was kept busy making clothes for the family. From flour sacks she would make underwear and many other things. Charles and the boys all wore bib overalls and the girls wore dresses. Sadie was never idle, besides sewing there was knitting of socks, mittens, and so on to be done. Charles kept some sheep so Sadie could make wool quilts, which helped the family keep warm in the old drafty log house.

In May 1936, a daughter was stillborn to Charles and Sadie. Another daughter, **Evelyn**, was born November 5, 1937. She was the first of the children to be born in the hospital. Sadie still did the wash on a rubbing board, standing all day to wash. On a typical weekday morning, after breakfast, Sadie would take care of the babies first, then do the dishes, clean the separator and milk pails, and sweep the wooden floors, all before coffee time. **Susan** arrived October 19, 1939.

In all, Charles and Sadie had twelve children. **Ernest** (June 1, 1942), **Lillian** (February 7, 1945), **Edwin** Lloyd (September 5, 1946), **Caroline** (February 21, 1949), and **Peter** (July 23, 1951) also joined the family.

In August the Tiemstra family usually made a trip to the sand hills along the Athabasca River for blueberry picking. With many good berry pickers in the family, a short day of picking [illegible] blueberries. At the same time, it was a holiday for the family. In early September the high bush cranberries would ripen. Sadie made sauces and jellies from them.

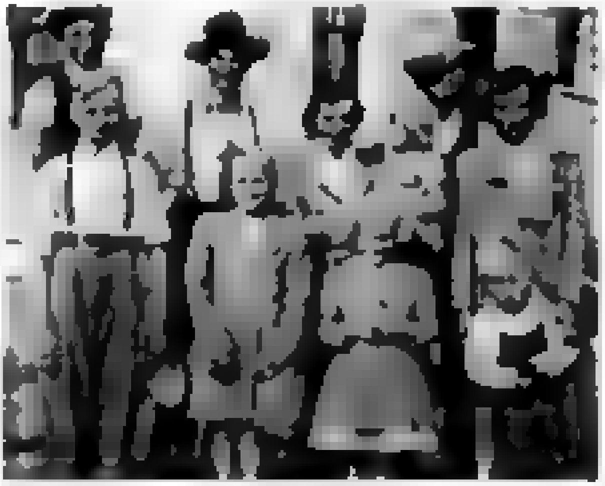


July First Picnic, early 1940s. Sadie, Charles, in wagon

[illegible]

The Tiemstras purchased their first radio, a small battery-powered Marconi, in 1940. It needed a long outdoor aerial strung between two high poles in order to pick up the radio waves. The radio gave access to news, weather, and prices of farm products, but was also a new means to entertainment. Some of the programs the family listened to were "The Lone Ranger" and "The Green Hornet". On Saturday nights there was usually a squabble between the boys who wanted to hear the hockey games and the girls who would rather listen to "Search for Talent".

Charles bought his first tractor in 1942. It was a two-cylinder John Deere H and immediately replaced the horses for pulling all farm machinery. The motor was started by rolling over the flywheel. After the motor had warmed up, a valve was turned so that it used distillate rather than gasoline. It proved to be a reliable machine and Charles used it for many years.



Back: Clarence, Albert, [illegible] holding Lillian, Charles, Cecilia. Front: [illegible] David, Evelyn, [illegible], [illegible] c. [illegible]

About this time also, Charles bought his first car, a used Hupmobile, for forty dollars. It was a four-door sedan and comfortably held the whole family, so they could all sit in it to go to church. A few years later he bought a 1938 Studebaker, which was more modern as it had an electric starter.

In 1944 Charles built a bigger house, of lumber this time, for his growing family. Since it had a basement it could be centrally heated by a furnace that burned wood and coal. That was a big improvement over the old wood heater.

The Tiemstra family went through many good times, but also through bad. When Dave was fifteen, he was diagnosed as having ankylosing spondylitis. When he was nineteen, he contracted meningitis. After a three-and-a-half month stay in the hospital, he came home but was very weak and could not do heavy work anymore. As a result of the high fevers, he now has leaky heart valves. Lillian contracted polio when she was in grade five, during a polio epidemic in the province. She spent about seven months in an Edmonton hospital. The disease paralyzed one of her legs, so she had to learn to walk with a brace. When Peter was 17, he too was found to have ankylosing spondylitis and was diagnosed as having Crohn's disease as well.

Evelyn, Susanne [illegible], Cecilia, Lillian, c. [illegible]

In the late 1940s Charles began poultry farming largely through the influence of Albert, who had gained considerable experience in the business. When Cecil Tuininga sold his farm, Charles bought his large two-storey chicken coop. Sam Howey moved it on skids with a Caterpillar tractor along the dirt roads about four miles to the Tiemstra farm. Charles bought registered poultry (New Hampshires) and shipped hatching eggs for a number of years. Although there was a lot of work involved to feed and water the birds, collect and mark the eggs with the band number of the bird that laid it, as well as clean the roosts regularly, it proved to be a good business. However, when his flock was found to have pullorum Charles was no longer permitted to ship hatching eggs. Since commercial egg production did not pay well he decided eventually to quit farming and move to the city. After subdividing the farm, he sold the acreage with the buildings to his son Clarence and the rest of the quarter section to Joe H. Wierenga. A quarter that he owned east of Neerlandia was sold to his son-in-law, Arie Krikke.

In 1958, Charles and Sadie moved to Edmonton with their four youngest children. Albert had married Betsy Merkus in 1952 and Clarence had married Anne Strydhorst in 1958. Cecilia attended school until grade eight, then helped on the farm and later found work in Barrhead and Westlock. In 1953, she married Arie Krikke of Neerlandia.

David was the first in the family to attend high school in Barrhead, when the county began centralization. After graduation, he took up accounting. He married Bertha Weenink of Lacombe on December 18, 1959. They have three children. Dave works for the Federal Government while Bertha teaches at West Edmonton Christian School. Their home is in Edmonton.

Evelyn had also graduated from the Barrhead high school, then trained at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton and became a registered nurse. While working in Vancouver she met Fred Van Laare, whom she married August 21, 1964. They live in Coral Springs, Florida with their children. Fred works for the Shoppers Drug Mart firm.

Susan had attended school until grade nine and later took training and graduated as a certified nursing aide in 1959. She found work in Grande Prairie where she met Gerald Prinsen, whom she married October 18, 1963. They have

Back: Cecilia, Dave, Clarence, Albert, Evelyn. Front: Ernie, Lillian, Sadie holding Peter, Carol, Charles, Susan, Edwin. 1952 three children. The family lives in Edmonton where Gerald works for the Grocery People

Ernest had quit school in grade nine and then, after various jobs, learned the automotive mechanic trade at Schultz Motors in Barrhead In 1969 he married a widow, Irene Kooi, who had three children. A girl was born from their marriage The family lives near Stony Plain Ernie works for E & G Trenching

When the Tiemstras moved to Edmonton, Charles found employment in a machine shop, steam cleaning old motors He stayed with the company, Taylor, Pearson and Carson, until retirement in [illegible] Both Charles and Sadie had worked hard during their lives. Retirement allowed them the freedom to take a trip to the Netherlands and many shorter ones to visit friends and family But it did not mean retirement from work, because they had learned that there is much satisfaction to be gained from it

Charles and Sadie both learned basket weaving and made many woven items, including collection plates for Christian Reformed churches in Smithers and Edmonton. Sadie continued to do a lot of baking, knitting, crocheting, and sewing, and also learned some new crafts. Charles took a course in upholstering, at which he became very proficient In spite of two heart attacks, he remained relatively healthy and continued upholstering until he was nearly eighty The belief that children are a blessing of the Lord has proved to be a reality in Charles and Sadie's lives. Their children and grandchildren were and are a source of much comfort and enjoyment

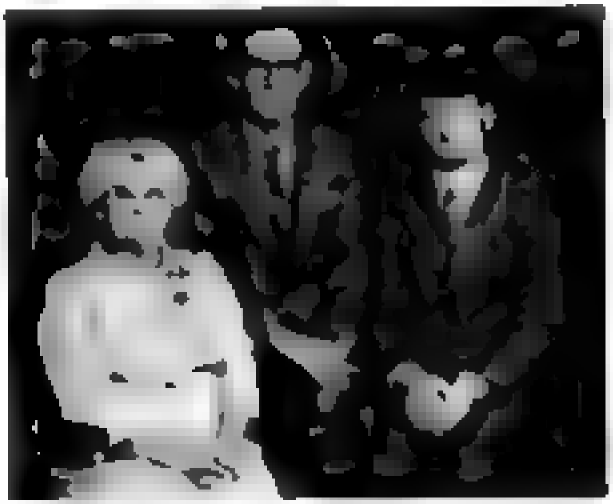
In January 1983 the Tiemstras celebrated their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. Then Charles became ill. After about two weeks in the hospital and celebrating his eightieth birthday there, Charles died peacefully on January 31. The life of another Alberta pioneer had come to an end

Dave Tiemstra
Sadie Tiemstra

GERBEN AND TENIE (WIERENGA) TIEMSTRA

Gerben Tiemstra came to Neerlandia with his family in 1913. When he grew up, farming became his main occupation, although his natural ability in carpentry was also an asset

Gerben married Tenie Wierenga, daughter of Andries and Hendrika, on December 25 1931, with Rev. H Van Der Woude officiating As was the custom in those days, weddings were conducted during the afternoon church service and a reception was held during the week That first winter they lived in den Hartog's shack, which was on a quarter close to the homestead Gerben had taken out in 1928 (NE [illegible]). They had to haul water from their nearest neighbours, the Kannegieters. The next year Gerben built a house on his father's yard, and they moved there Gerben farmed with his father and brother Albert until his father retired, then he and Albert each got half the farm Gerben built another house in 1947



Tenie, Gerben, John, 1982

In 1949 a son, **John** (born November 20), was brought into the family at the age of two months. Gerben and Tenie retired and moved to Barrhead in 1960 They sold the farm to Gerben's brother Albert In Barrhead they became active in the Meals on Wheels program They are members of the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church where Gerben has served as elder. With thankfulness to God for years of changes, trials, and progress, they observed their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1981

Wilma Wierenga

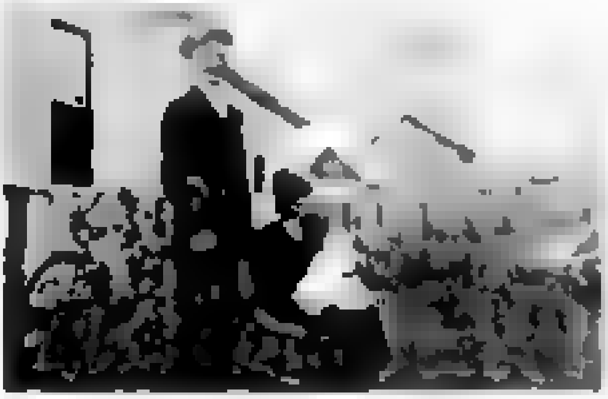
GEORGE AND GEZINA (HUISKAMP) TOEBES

BILL TOEBES

Gerrit Jan Toebes was born in Winterswijk Gelderland, the Netherlands, on December 23 1891 He immigrated to Canada, the land of opportunity, in 1912 and spent his first three years in Edmonton working at odd jobs while living in a tent on Fraser Flats. He had always had plans to go farming, so in 1914 he moved to the Dutch settlement of Edam, Saskatchewan and worked for a farmer. But after two years, the dry and dusty conditions there did not look like good farming to Gerrit and he returned to Edmonton.

Around that time the federal government and the C.P.R. were encouraging the colonization of the B.C. interior. Gerrit and a few friends from Edmonton went by train to Vanderhoof, B.C., hoping to start a Dutch community. But after digging a well and putting up a few log buildings, they soon gave up the idea of farming in that area and all of them returned to Edmonton. In 1917, Gerrit got a job with the Edmonton Water Works, where many other Dutch fellows worked as well.

In 1920, Gerrit wrote to his wife-to-be, Gezina Fredrica Huiskamp, (born February 24, 1888) from Borken, Germany, to come to Canada. They were married that same year. Also that year, on December 24, Gerrit became a naturalized Canadian citizen. At that time he changed his name to George John. Four sons were born to George and Gezina. Their first son, Henry, died in infancy. Next came **Bill** (William, Henry, born August 11, 1923); then Raymond **Norman**, born November 14, 1925, and lastly, **Frederick** George, born April 9, 1928.



In Fraser Flats. George, Gezina holding William

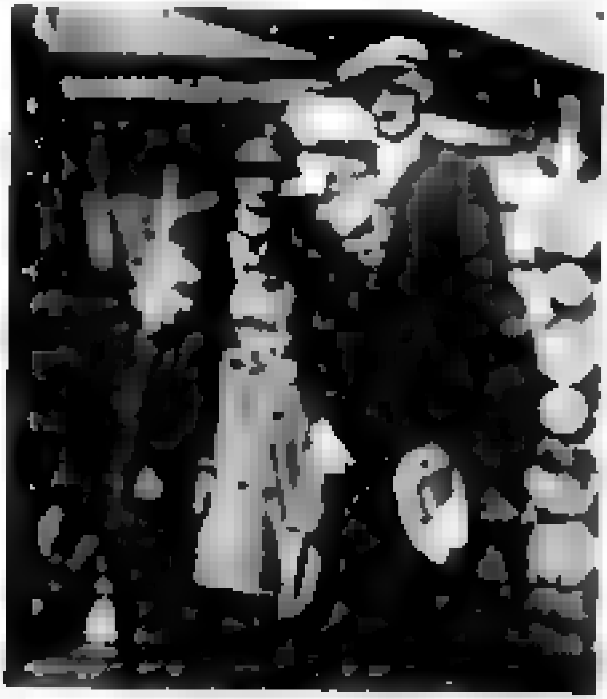
George took up a homestead (NW 10-62-3-5) in Neerlandia on December 4, 1926. He continued to work in Edmonton for a couple of years, but then in March 1929 moved to the homestead with the family. They stayed with the Schoonekamps at first, and later that year moved into a new 14 by 30-foot frame house built for them by Ben Lievers and Menne Nanninga. The house had a kitchen and living room downstairs and two bedrooms upstairs.

A few acres were already cleared on the homestead when George took it up. With the help of his sons he eventually cleared most of the quarter section by axe and grub hoe. The last six acres were cleared by bulldozer. Like most Neerlandia farmers, George kept some cattle, chickens, and hogs, and depended on the cream cheques through the difficult years of the thirties.

George also owned horses which were used for work and pulling the wagon or sleigh. One Sunday, after church, it was raining and Petertje Schoonekamp lent Gezina her umbrella for the ride home. The Toebes family had never owned an umbrella, and young Fred was fascinated with it. After the ride he got off the wagon and began to investigate how it worked. George had just helped Gezina off the wagon when Fred popped open the umbrella. This spooked the horses, and they took off towards the gate, turned, and proceeded to run along

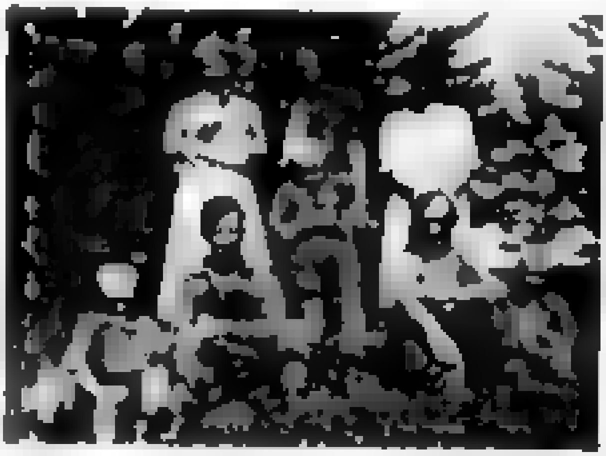
the fence one horse on each side. By the time they came to a stop at a granary along the fence line the barbed wire was tangled up around the wagon wheels and all the fenceposts were broken. Fred does not remember if his father fixed the fence that Sunday, but he does remember that he got a licking.

The Toebes family lived just north of the Sturwolds, which was rather convenient since Toney Sturwold owned a grain crusher. Whenever Gezina was out of flour, she would ask one of the boys to walk over with a pail of wheat and trade it for a pail of wheat flour. This Gezina used to make bread and other things, including the wheat porridge the family ate for breakfast each day. (Sunday breakfasts were special to the children because then they could have sugar on their porridge.) Every fall Toney Sturwold would come and cut logs into blocks with his portable saw. Bill enjoyed chopping up the blocks and would work at it steadily, soon having the winter's supply of firewood for the house chopped up and piled along the fence.



Norman, Gezina, Fred, William, George, c. 1930

Many people stopped at the Toebes home on their way north to Vega. Since it was about halfway, it was convenient to stop there to warm up and let the horses rest. Many of the Vega people were German and enjoyed talking to Gezina who, of course, also knew German. Gezina, being of Lutheran background, instilled in the children the importance of Reformation Day; no playing of pranks was allowed on Hallowe'en. George had many religious discussions with Pieter Hendricks, who was of a more evangelical persuasion, and who stopped by the Toebes place about once a week on his way home.



Back: Jennie and Alice Kippers, Gezina. Front: Bill, John Kippers, Norman, George, Fred. 1935

Gezina suffered many years from arthritis. Norman and Fred helped her do the heavy housework since that was too difficult for her. Many mornings she would soak her hands in warm water to soften the stiff joints in her fingers. In 1942 George built three more rooms onto the house, and also put in plumbing, running water, and a 32-volt power light plant. These conveniences were a new and great blessing for Gezina. George was a cheerful person. He often sang as he worked, so Gezina and the children could hear him coming from a long way off.

In 1949 Norman left to study at RBI. He married Beatrice Vanderveide in 1951. They have seven children and live in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., where Norman works as a machinist.

Gezina died of a stroke in 1950. After Fred married Sena Konynenbelt in 1952, George left the farm and built a house in the Centre where he moved with his son Bill. George and Bill enjoyed gardening and had many beautiful flowers around the house. Bill sometimes

George, Gesina

worked out stooking and root picking for farmers. He also sold Christian literature from Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses, an enterprise he took over from Arie Emmerzael. Bill would walk all over the settlement carrying a flour sack containing the boxes of cards and the books he had for sale. Many people received birthday cards from Bill who, once he had been told, never forgot a birthdate. He loved to sing, and sang in the church choir for a number of years. George died in 1972, and after that Bill moved to Barrhead Nursing Home where he still lives.

Fred Torbes

CECIL AND ANNIE (SCHOONEKAMP) TUININGA

Although Cecil and Annie have lived away from Neerlandia since 1947, their roots are firmly embedded in its history. Both were born in Edmonton in 1915, and came to Neerlandia shortly after with their respective parents. Both were raised in log cabins to the tune of howling coyotes and cold winds.

They were married in 1940, and began farming on the NW 28-61-3-5, known then as the old Beaumont farm. Cecil's father, Klaas, had bought it for one thousand dollars in 1937 or 1938. Cecil and his brother Pete constructed all the farm buildings. The seven years spent on the farm were good ones. Prices were going up by leaps and bounds, and crops were good. Three children were born there: **Klaas**, November 7, 1943; **Henry**, November 13, 1944, and **Pearl**, November 6, 1945. Cecil directed choir and was church organist for eight years. The memories of these years are unforgettable. But suddenly, when Cecil was walking home one day, the Lord called him to the ministry.

In 1947, Cecil was the first Neerlandian to take up studies in the ministry. Convinced that this was the way the Lord wanted them to go, Cecil and Annie began the preparations which took one and a half years to complete. Finally the house was sold to Gerhard Paas, the garage to Joe Tuininga, and George Baker auctioned off the rest of the possessions. Then the family moved to Hospers, Iowa. Cecil attended school in nearby Hull for one year, taking grade ten. He was thirty-two years old at the time, and had been away from school for eighteen years. All the other students were fifteen or sixteen years old — all total strangers. After that Cecil studied in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for seven years. That part of their life was not easy, but God worked out the details. The family in Neerlandia was supportive of Cecil's efforts by words of encouragement and financial aid. After leaving Neerlandia, four more children were born to Cecil and Annie.

After Cecil graduated from Calvin College and Seminary, the family returned to Canada. Cecil ministered to congregations in

Standing: Klaas, Annie. Seated: Cecil holding Bill, Donald, Pearl, Henry, c. 1950

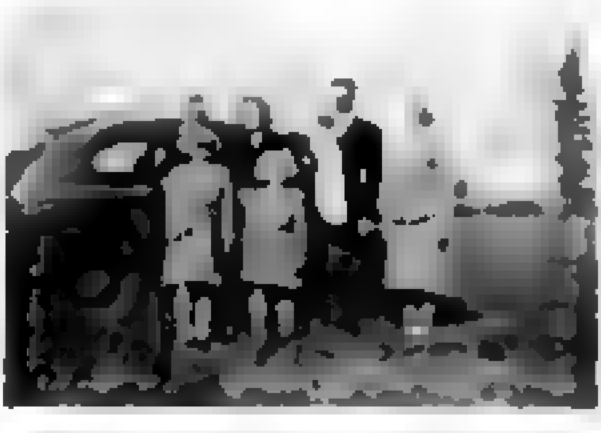
Williamsburg, Ontario, and Ladner and Telkwa, B.C. In each of these places, he was the first full-time minister. Then the Tuiningas moved to churches in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Grande Prairie, Alberta. Twenty-five years were spent in the ministry, all of them in Canada.

In a way, Cecil and Annie's life has come full circle. They are now retired and again live in Edmonton. Both enjoy it there, and have no doubt to move again. From this perspective they see how wonderfully God has blessed and prospered them.

Cecil Tuininga

JACK AND MARGARET (STURWOLD) TUININGA

Jack Tuininga and Margaret Sturwold were married [illegible] by Rev. Van Der Woude. Five children were born into their family: **Kenneth James** (December 16, 1936), **Ruth Margaret** (March 3, 1938), **Beatrice Joan** (May 19, 1940), Iris **Lorraine** (April 4, 1945), and **Marilyn Lois** (June 21, 1951.)



Back: Kenneth, Margaret, Jack holding Marilyn, Ruth. Front: Beatrice, Lorraine. 1952

The Tuiningas farmed on the NW 20-61-3-5 until 1959, then moved to Edmonton. Kenneth married Loretta Torpy of Edmonton in 1961. They had two children. Loretta died in 1983 and Kenneth lives in Hamilton, Ontario. Ruth married George Friesner of Vega in 1960. They have three children and are living in Edmonton. Beatrice died October 29, 1953, and Lorraine died July 10, 1960.

Jack worked in real estate and mortgages until he retired. He and Margaret are living in Edmonton.

Margaret Tuininga

JOE AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) TUININGA

Joe Tuininga was born in Edmonton in 1913 and moved to Neerlandia with his parents in 1916. When Joe was sixteen years old he had a ruptured appendix which gangrened, and he spent four months in the Barrhead hospital. When the doctor operated, he told Joe's dad that he had better get the undertaker because Joe would not live. Everyone in the family came to see him, and he asked his dad, "Why does everybody come to see me?" Joe's dad told him he might not live, but Joe said, "I won't die." After a long convalescence he recovered.

Joe married Sophie Wierenga on December [illegible]. They received a wedding gift of four cows and a pig from Joe's folks. When they got married, he went to thank the minister for performing the ceremony.

"You fellows all get off so easy," Rev. Van Der Woude said. "At least you have the courtesy to come and thank me, but that'll cost you $2.50."

Joe and Sophie settled on the NE 28-61-3-5, which at that time had sixty acres open. This land was bought from Hendrik Kannegieter for $800.00, at payments of $100.00 a year at six percent interest. They built a house on it which cost about $250.00. To build a barn they used lumber from Joe's father's old house. Joe bought a thousand feet of rough lumber for the roof for ten dollars.

[illegible] the first litter of pigs from the sow his parents gave them. She had seven pigs. He kept one back to raise [illegible] and shipped six, for which he received ninety dollars. "Boy," Joe thought, "That's a lot of money."

The first year Joe was married, he used his dad's machinery. In 1939 he bought his own tractor, a Farmall "A", for $850.00. He paid twenty percent down and got the balance from the bank in three installments at eight percent interest. He went custom crushing and sawing with this outfit at $1.25 per hour. Joe and Sophie bought their first car, a Hudson, in 1940 for $250.00.

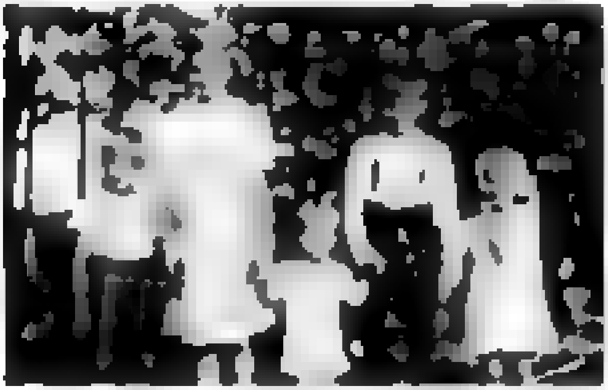
When Neerlandia built a new school, Joe and his brother Cecil bought the old two-room one and used it to build each of them a garage.

Funny thing — both of these garages later burned down. When Joe and Sophie's burned down, it was quite a financial loss since Joe had quite a few tools, a power plant, and an almost-new Fordson Major tractor in it. The Tuiningas carried no insurance. But they were thankful when the community came to their aid by replacing the garage and tractor.

Joe and Sophie were one of the first to have electric power. They first had a thirty-two volt windcharger with a set of sixteen batteries to hold the charge, but soon found out they had to have a thirty-two volt power plant to supplement the charge. They were also one of the first to have running water, made possible with a stock tank elevated up about six feet.

Joe was a jack-of-all-trades. He helped build the first garage in Neerlandia as well as the three-room school and the third church. One thing stands out in the building of the church: it had a high steeple and only a few dared to work up that high, among them Joe's brother Cecil, Tom De Groot, and Joe himself.

Joe and his brother Cecil used to sing as a duet. Joe remembers the first song they sang was, "God's Way is the Best Way". They were nervous and wondered how it went. They soon found out, as the applause was terrific. Later they formed a male quartet with the Wierenga brothers Ite and Ekke. They used to perform programs at the church, sing for shut-ins and old folks, and even had a recording made.



Andrew, Reta, Sidney, Clifford, Sharon, c. 1950

Joe and Sophie had a family of seven children. **Reta Bertha** was born September 28, 1939. She became a school teacher. On July 15, 1960, she married Gary Haarsma, a farmer. They have five children and live in Winterburn.

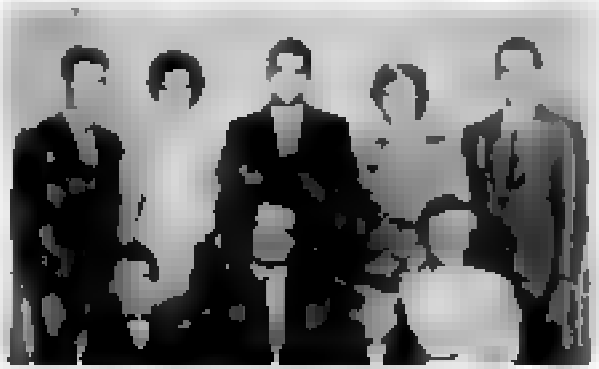
Clifford John followed Reta on July 11, 1941 and **Andrew** arrived March 18, 1944.

Andy worked for a building contractor in Edmonton for some years, then he moved back to Neerlandia to farm. On February 25, 1977 he married Rosie Froma. They have three children: **Derek** Andrew born April 8, 1978, **Charmaine** Dorinda born November 18, 1980; and **Lance** Joseph born June 10, 1983.

Sharon Gladys followed her brother Andrew on October 11, 1945. Sharon became a nurse and married Art Degner on July 10, 1967. They have three children and live in St. Albert. Art has a backhoe operation. Following Sharon, **Sidney** Joe was born July 17, 1948.

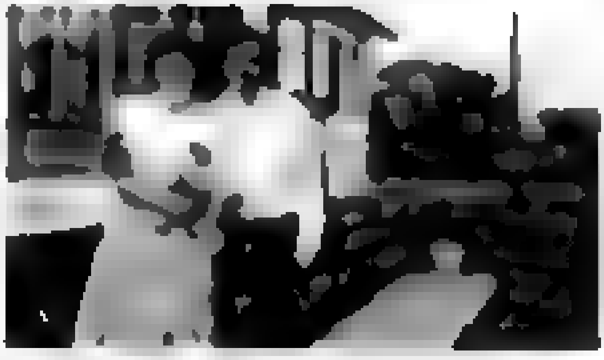
Four years later, on June 26, 1952, **Cecil** Herman arrived. Cecil worked as a welder for Wayward Steel. He married **Marilyn Dukes** of Edmonton on November 26, 1983, and they now farm in Lunaria.

Last of all, on August 28, 1955, came **Alfred** David. Alfred married Dora Froma on March 23, 1981. **Karen** Stacie was born to them on March 23, 1983. They farm in Neerlandia.



Back: Andrew, Sharon, Clifford, Reta, Sidney; Front: Cecil, Joe, Alfred, Sophie, 1963

Whenever there was a fire in the country people thought of Joe Tuininga. Joe was a dangerous neighbour to have in the fall because, as far as he was concerned, any little clump of dead grass had to be burned. One time he nearly burnt out their neighbours, Oene Piers, and had to work one whole Sunday to keep the fire from spreading. Another time he was burning brush piles with Cliff, using waste oil and gas to make the piles burn. When a new pile burst into flames, so did Cliff. Joe jerked his coat off and quickly wrapped Cliff with it and there was no harm done.



[illegible]

One fall Joe and Cliff were combining. Joe was standing on the back of the combine behind the grain hopper, observing. Clifford shifted gears and then, looking back, he saw his dad's shoes coming around with the leveling auger in the grain hopper. He had fallen forward into the grain tank with the jerk of the shifting. Clifford was almost too scared to go up the combine to look at what had happened to his dad. But he gathered his wits and ran up the ladder. There he found his father with his jacket, shirt, and T-shirt all wrapped around his arm so tightly that the bicep muscle in his left arm was being pinched off. With a jackknife Cliff cut through the clothing to free Joe, and then took him to the Barrhead hospital where he stayed for some days. After a number of weeks Joe was able to use his arm for which the family was very thankful to God.

Joe and Sophie moved about a bit. After living on the NE 28-61-3-5, they bought the NE 26-61-3-5, which had a better house and better buildings. Next they bought the S½ 28-61-3-5 from Henry Piers. As times progressed, they bought more land until they acquired nine quarters of land, which they farmed in partnership with their sons. When they retired it was on an acreage on their original quarter.

On December 18, 1983, Joe and Sophie celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. Joe says the Lord has been good to them, for which they are thankful.

Joe Tuininga

PETE AND TENA (VISSER) TUININGA

Pete (Peter) Tuininga is a man who pursued a variety of interests throughout his life. It all began when he bought a truck and started hauling freight from Neerlandia to Edmonton. Because there was a lot of snow during the winter of 1926 the roads were often impassable. When the snow began to melt in spring it was no better, so after a few months he quit trying to truck to Neerlandia.

Pete married Tena Terpsma in 1927 but, after a marriage of only eight months, she contracted polio and the Lord took her home. Pete had left school when he came to Neerlandia at the age of twelve. Realizing that he should finish his schooling, Pete now went to Edmonton to attend Alberta College. When he finished his course he once again began trucking, but this time between Edmonton and Barrhead. While in Edmonton he met Tena Visser. Tena had been born in Anjum, North Holland, the Netherlands, on January 31, 1910. She had come to Edmonton with her family in 1911. After leaving school she did housework and worked in a factory.

Pete and Tena were married in Edmonton [illegible] was born March 14, 1931. A couple of months later Pete quit trucking for good, this time to become a farmer. He moved his family to Neerlandia to live on the SW 20-61-3-5 which he had bought from his brother Jack. On this property there was a three-room house surrounded entirely by bush. Nevertheless, Tena, a city girl, was not lonely because, in addition to her husband and baby, there was a boarder — Pete's brother Jack, who stayed with them for five years. Furthermore *Ome* and *Moeike*, Pete's uncle and aunt, lived just a quarter mile away.

Tena happily set up housekeeping in the [illegible] blue paper. Rising on a winter morning to find ice in the water pail, she would soon have a fire crackling in the wood stove. Then she would thaw ice to get water for coffee and start a pan of crushed wheat porridge which she would serve with sugar and all the milk one wanted. She also served her home-baked bread. After breakfast Pete would set about the seemingly endless task of clearing the land.

Pete and Tena had married during the Depression when money was not easily obtained. Pete traded his car for cattle and horses, which were of more use to him on the farm. By 1933 things had improved enough that Pete could buy an old Buick for $150. A second daughter, Sylvia, was born on December 18, 1933.

The quarter on which the Tuiningas lived had very poor soil. An old Indian who lived on the narrows of Shoal Lake told Pete that the Indians had burned the timber on that land. Originally there had been a heavy stand of big [illegible] Lake, a couple of miles to the north. The Indians got tired of going through this timber to hunt, so they set it on fire. The repeated burning of the land had damaged the topsoil.

The problem with the soil led indirectly to Pete beginning another venture — the hatchery business. It started like this: when Pete was still trucking, a man in another community did not pay a freight bill he owed Pete. After repeated visits to collect the debt Pete accepted two broody hens and two clutches of eggs in payment. These Barred Rock hens and the resulting chicks formed the basis of a flock of chickens which supplied the Tuiningas with [illegible] chicken. When the district agriculturist came from Westlock in response to Pete's request for advice about his soil, the D.A. asked, "Where did you get those purebred hens?"

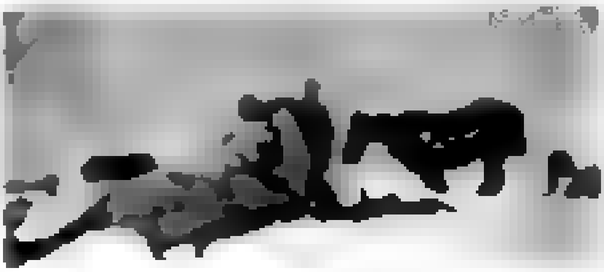
"Those are just scrubs," Pete replied.

"Well," said the D.A., "if those are scrubs I'd like to see purebreds." He went on to advise Pete to contact the Provincial Hatchery and ask them to blood test his chickens so that he could sell hatching eggs. Pete took his advice, and that was the beginning of an involvement with [illegible] Pete produced hatching eggs, then he went [illegible] cubator and began hatching eggs on the farm. Later he began a hatchery in Barrhead. He sold the hatchery in 1955, but continued in the commercial egg business.

[illegible] ring on the Tuininga farm. A new frame house which Tena soon made into a cozy home, was built in 1935. Joan (Georgine) was born May 8, 1937 and Klaas on September 18, 1938. Pete suffered an attack of appendicitis and had to have an operation. While in the hospital he also contracted pneumonia, possibly because of too much chloroform. He was in the hospital for ten days. When he was released Jack picked him up with the horses and sleigh. Because it was winter he was able to take a shortcut across Shoal Lake instead of going over the road. Tena's parents were concerned that Tena had too much work to do with Pete being sick, so they helped her to acquire a gas-powered wash[illegible]

Roads in the forties were low and easily drifted in. One year Clarence and Pete Tuininga shovelled out the road from their homes to Henry Hiemstra's place, a distance of one mile. They used big shovels which enabled them to [illegible] the way. The job took them a whole week to complete. A few days later another blizzard blew the road full of snow again. Often it was necessary to travel part of the way through fields because the roads were impassable. At other times the cars were left at Baker's Corner.

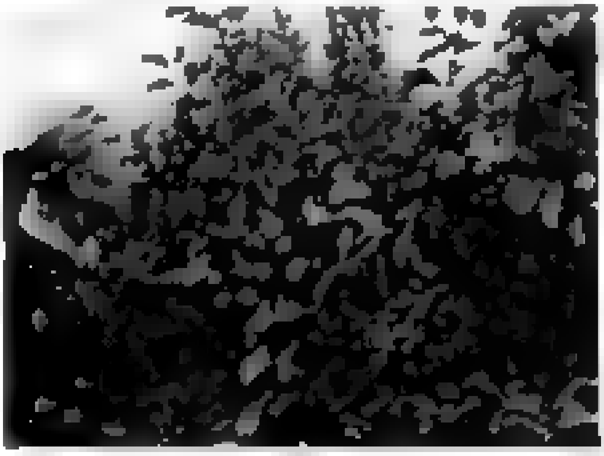
As the time for the 1940 Christmas concert drew near, Sylvia, who had been home from school for two weeks because of illness, begged her parents to take her, and they promised to [illegible] earlier than usual in order to get there on time. Every once in a while Pete would have to stop and shovel, but eventually they got to the church — only to discover that the concert was over. Sylvia did get the annual treat of a bag of candy and an orange, so the trip was not entirely useless.



[illegible]

When the war began in 1939, sugar was soon in short supply. That led to another endeavor for Pete — a love affair with bees. He raised bees to produce honey. Tena baked and canned with honey, and the family used honey [illegible] received jars of honey from Tena, who always gave generously of whatever she had. Even today Pete would like to keep bees, but he has Parkinson's disease and is too shaky to handle the bees without alarming them. He is knowledgeable and is more than willing to share his expertise.

About thirty years ago a salesman from the Alberta Nursery at Bowden came to Neerlandia and sold Pete his first apple trees. Pete, who inherited the Tuininga love for plants, was soon producing more apples than the family could use. Tena was once again giving the surplus to friends and relatives.

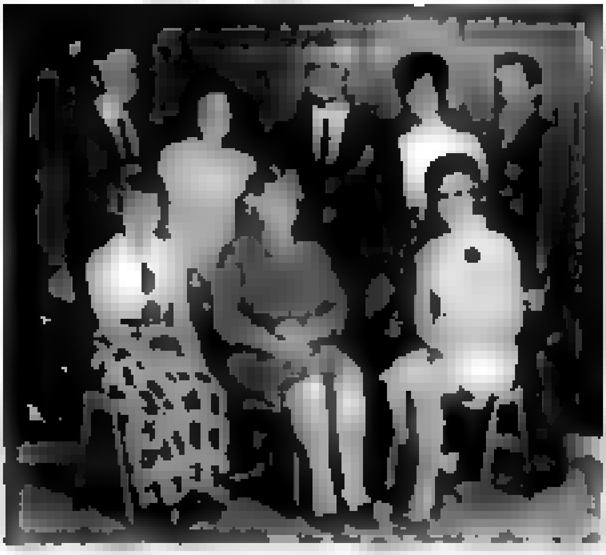


Pete the apple man, 1980

Two more children were born to the Tuiningas: Lucille on November 27, 1942, and David on September 21, 1946. With six children there is always some excitement. Once when Grace and Sylvia were small, Grace gave Sylvia a haircut. This made Sylvia look so much like a boy that her parents began to call her Don, a nickname that stuck throughout her childhood. Lucille, at four years of age, inquisitively reached up for a jar on the table, spilling thick honey all over her face. Sylvia quickly wiped her nose clean to keep her from suffocating, and Tena cleaned up the mess.

Time went on and all the children grew up and married. Grace married Corny Hiemstra. Sylvia married Henry Elzinga of Edmonton on June 29, 1955. They live on a farm near Sherwood Park. On August 26, 1959, Jean married James Olthuis, now of Toronto. Jim teaches at the Institute for Christian Studies. Jean is coordinator of church activities. Klaas married Esther Nanninga. Lucille married John Piers and David married Alida Vandergrift.

Pete gradually retired as his sons were able to take over the work. Then he became interested in yet another activity: woodworking. He makes toys for his grandchildren, and carves delightful figures of people and animals.



Back: David, Grace, Pete, Sylvia, Klaas. Front: Jean, Tena, Lucille, 1972

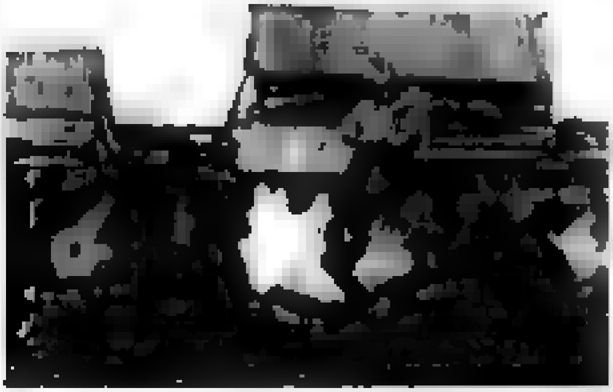
Pete and Tena are still living on the farm on which they started. The bush is gone now and things have changed tremendously since 1931. The Tuiningas are happy in Neerlandia where God has been so good to them. They say, "It's a great place to live!"

Lucille Piers

SIMON AND BERTHA (WIERENGA) TUININGA

In the summer of 1919 two seemingly unrelated events took place — one in the Netherlands, the other in Canada. On June 23 in Uithuizen, Groningen, a thirteenth child, a girl who they called Bertha, was born to the Lammert Wierenga family. In Neerlandia, on July 11, a boy, also thirteenth in the family, was born to the Klaas Tuininga family. They named him Simon. Both were born into very poor families. In the Netherlands the Wierengas were raising a family on the very low income of a farm labourer, augmented by the little that the older members of the family could contribute. In Neerlandia the Tuiningas waged the tough battle all immigrants faced to get started, made more severe by being a large family with many small children, having no farming experience, and living on a farm with poor soil.

However, neither of the children noticed the poverty. In 1929 the Wierenga family moved to Neerlandia and for the first time the two children were members of the same district and



Simon on the original homestead, c. 1921.

When Bertha was a girl. Bertha, Elle, Lammert, Jenny Wierenga, 1928.

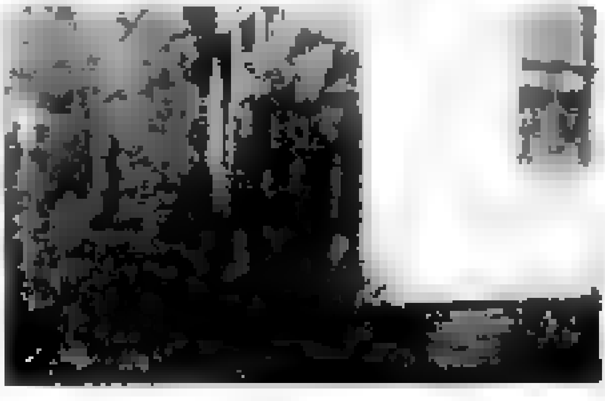
attended the same church and school. In 1925, when he was six years old, Simon had to walk three-and-a-half miles to school along trails across country. On the way there he and his siblings usually joined the Joe Baker or Menne Nanninga children, depending on which trail they took. This situation improved for him when his parents moved to the NW 27-61-3-5, less than one mile from school. When the Wierengas arrived in Neerlandia, Bertha had to walk four miles to school, usually joining the Kippers children who lived one mile west of them. Later she had to walk this long distance back and forth to Young People's Society and to catechism. Matters improved for her when she started working for Mrs. Koning, the storekeeper's wife, and Jan Koning bought her a bike, the first new one in the district.

Simon's most vivid memories, of when he was in the 7-10 age bracket, are of the annual pilgrimage of the Indians from up north to Lac Ste. Anne to collect their treaty money. They travelled with covered wagons, followed by men on horseback and many dogs. They often camped across the road from the Tuiningas. When they left, Simon used to race over to see if there were any arrowheads or spears lying around.

During these years Simon had his first space flight. He and his nephew Albert Oldegbers climbed up a huge spruce tree and remained high in it while his brothers chopped it down. Fortunately neither of them was seriously injured, but the space flight program was halted immediately.

Simon continued his studies at school and completed grade ten, which was unusual at that time. He then began what he considered the drudgery of farming: milking cows, clearing land by hand, and root picking. The only break was in the summer on hot Saturday afternoons or evenings when many boys and some married men would meet at the Shoal Creek by the Wilsons' for their weekly swim.

On January 8, 1942, Simon was called up by the Government to report to the basic training camp at Camrose. For a young man who had never been in a train or bus, and had never been to a barbershop, this was indeed a traumatic experience. From Camrose he was posted to the Queen's Own Rifles at Moose Jaw and later to the 14th Infantry Brigade Headquarters in Terrace, B.C., as a clerk. On January 4, 1944, he volunteered for training as air crew and was



Simon home on leave, 1945.

accepted. He received his wings in 1945 but as [illegible] overseas. On August 23, 1945, he was discharged from active service but remained in the RCAF Reserve.

In the meantime Simon had been courting Bertha and they were married in 1945. Simon [illegible] marriage were still the horse-and-buggy days, [illegible] purchased their first car, a hard-to-start Edson.

To augment their meagre income Simon bought scrap iron, much to the chagrin of his mother who said that in the Netherlands that work was reserved for the lowliest of the Jews. Simon likes telling of the time at the Reitze de [illegible] bargain over some old scrap, and his little son Jerry said, "Dad, does he have to pay us to clean up our yard?"

Simon had always been keenly interested in trapping and became quite successful at it, even supporting his family by it for several years after the war. He spent his winters trapping and hunting. It was not an uncommon sight in the Tuininga house to find a string, hanging full of frozen animals, tied from one wall to another above the kitchen heater. They had to be thawed out before they could be skinned. No room for squeamish women in those days. One day when Simon was shooting [illegible] to meet first Mr. and Mrs. Bert Nannin[illegible] ing squirrels. He had thought this was a man's [illegible]

In 1954 Simon started his own trucking and livestock-buying business. He also built a large three-storey barn. On the lower floor he kept hogs and six milk cows. The rest of the barn was used to house three thousand laying hens. At first most of the work of gathering the eggs by hand and then brushing each egg to clean them for the hatcheries fell to Bertha for four or five days per week. She also milked the cows, sepa[illegible] the milk pails. Fortunately, business soon picked up and some men could be hired to help [illegible]

Also about this time, the farm was strip-farmed so it could accomodate three hundred breeding ewes. Plans were to gradually switch the entire farming operation to the raising of purebred sheep. When the Government sheep specialist purchased, at top price, all the Tuiningas' ram lambs for breeding purposes, it [illegible] family struck — it was discovered that the [illegible] winning ram which Simon had pur[illegible] scrapies. The Tuiningas had to dispose of all their sheep to the slaughter houses in Edmonton.

For several years Simon and Romke Steil ran the trucking business and the garage at Neerlandia in a successful partnership named Steil-Tuininga. They also had the John Deere dealership which they purchased from Arie Mast. Simon, however, did not like the machinery business so, after several years, the partnership was dissolved. Simon kept the trucking business, and Romke kept the garage end of it. Later Simon sold his trucking business to Case Van Beek and Clifford Tuininga.

In 1961 the Tuiningas expanded by purchasing land eight miles west, and in 1968 they incorporated under the name Lazy S. T. Farms Ltd., named after their brand. In the middle sixties, Lazy S. T. Farms purchased a farm in Bloomsbury and on it built a three-hundred sow farrowing unit. But in 1971 when Simon learned that he had leukemia he sold it [illegible] his son, Bruce, was too young to manage it. Also in 1971 Simon was nominated by the Social Credit party to run for a seat in the Provincial Government, but his endeavour was not [illegible]cessful.

Simon and Bertha have five children. The eldest, **Sheila Rose** (October 23, 1945), graduated from Dordt College and taught in Thunder Bay, Ontario, where she met Louis Ypma. They were married July 14, 1972, and farm in the Taber area with their five children. **Joanne Mae** (December 23, 1946) married Harry Boessenkool, a banker, on June 21, 1968. They live in Lethbridge with their five children. **Caroline** (October 10, 1949) married Peter Werkman. **Bruce** David (February 24, 1953) married Davida Kuik. **Bernice** Joy (January 1, 1966) [illegible]ried Martin Peters.

Members of the Christian Reformed Church since birth, Simon and Bertha joined the Canadian Reformed Church in 1965 and have both been active in church life, involved with [illegible]

Back: Joanne, Sheila, Carol, Bruce. Front: Bertha, [illegible] Simon, c. 1986

mittees and societies. Simon has served as an elder and has been a delegate to Classis and Synod. Simon and Bertha love to travel and have visited several countries.

Simon Tuininga

HARM VAN DER WOUDE

Harm Van Der Woude was born February 16, 1876, in Noezyl, Groningen, the Netherlands, and went to the U.S.A. in April 1897 on the Veendam. He worked in market gardening in Chicago and later moved to Michigan, where he raised potatoes. He made confession of faith in 1910 and a year later he entered Calvin College and Seminary. When he graduated in 1921 he was forty-five years old. He served as a minister first in Cutlerville, Michigan, then accepted a call to be home missionary in Edmonton and Neerlandia and was installed in Edmonton in January 1924.

During the following years Harm became acquainted with the Neerlandia people. He sometimes stayed with the Ingwersens when he was here and Case Ingwersen wrote the following in his memoirs:

"His Calvinist preaching was powerful and he stressed the sovereignty of God and free grace. He would fulminate against people that exalted themselves, such as sleepers in church. Then he was no respecter of persons. If it was an elder that was rather sleepy, he would turn toward the consistory's bench and say, 'If you don't stop that I will mention you by name.' His preaching was not methodical; his ingenious spirit would come to expression and he would wander over the platform as if in the clouds.

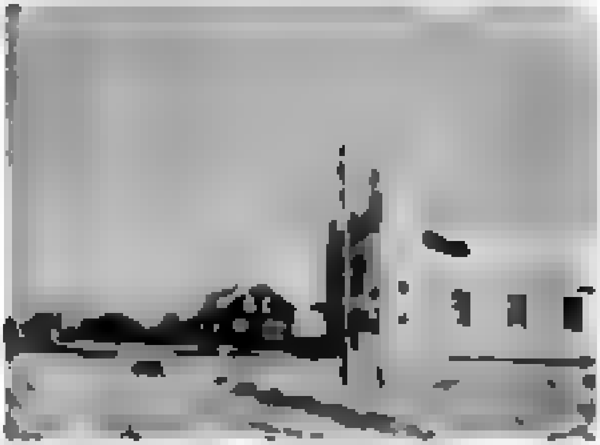
Once he preached about Samson who killed a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. During his spirited speech he stepped off the platform and was suddenly standing among the people. Waving his arms he shouted, 'With a jawbone of an ass here a score (killed),' — then pointing to those on his right, 'There a score,' — and motioning left again, 'with a jawbone of an ass killed a thousand men.'

In the very first years, when he was home missionary for Edmonton and Neerlandia, he sometimes came to Neerlandia for three months at a time. He boarded with the storekeeper and was so enthusiastic about the Neerlandia settlement that he also, even though it was to help someone else out, bought a piece of land and, full of zeal, began to work the land. Carrying an axe on his arm, he would go in clean, white clothes to his property and clear the land. At night he would return, black and with a torn shirt, and [Hermana Ingwersen] would say, 'But *Dominee*, that shouldn't be; surely that isn't work for a *Dominee*?'

'*Ach, missus, het gaat toch zoo mooi* (Ah missus, but it goes so nicely),' he would reply. He did not keep the property long but gave it away for a song to someone with less than he had. By nature he was very gentle, which he showed in many ways.

The farmer with whom he stayed had a haystack close to the house. To prevent the hay from becoming completely ruined by the numerous rabbits, the farmer had dug a pit beside the haystack and covered it with sticks and straw so that the rabbits would fall in. During the evening the *Dominee* heard the crying of these animals and said to the [farmer's] sons, 'Come on boys, let's have a look. Oh, how terrible, let's let the poor animals go free again,' and one, two, three — all of them were let loose.

One time, during the winter, the *Dominee* and an elder went on *huisbezoek*. That was by sleigh, of course. Of the team of horses, one was very fast and the other very lazy. Without using the whip, it was impossible to get the lazy horse to trot. But using the whip was against the principles of the *Dominee*. So they went



Harm (left) close to the church

along at a footpace. "[That horse knows better than we what is best]," said the *Dominee*."

Harm left Edmonton and Neerlandia in 1927 to serve in Hoboken, New Jersey. In 1929 he accepted the call to be full-time minister in Neerlandia. A new parsonage had just been built so that became Harm's home. He enjoyed living in the country and bought some land across the road from the parsonage. On it he built a barn and a chicken coop. He kept chickens and sold the eggs to buy groceries. On his plot he had a patch of raspberries and he also raised a garden each year. Annie and Jennie Schoonekamp would sometimes help him pick raspberries. Harm would pick the green ones as well as the ripe ones and tell the girls, "I just keep pulling until they come off."

At that time the congregation was relatively small and, since Harm was a bachelor, the whole congregation became his family. He hired the Schoonekamp girls to do the housekeeping for him. First Jennie worked there for three or four years. She was paid fifteen dollars a month and would come every day at 7:30 a.m. She would first make pancakes for breakfast — Harm loved rich, sweet foods and also, being a typical Dutchman, loved potatoes. Besides cleaning house, Jennie would serve a warm meal at noon and also make supper ready for the *Dominee*. After Jennie, Annie did the housekeeping. When Annie married, Harm hired Mrs. Wagelaar of Edmonton. She was a widow with grown children and stayed at the parsonage while she worked there. Mr. McKitrick, a teacher, also boarded at the parsonage while he was teaching in Neerlandia.

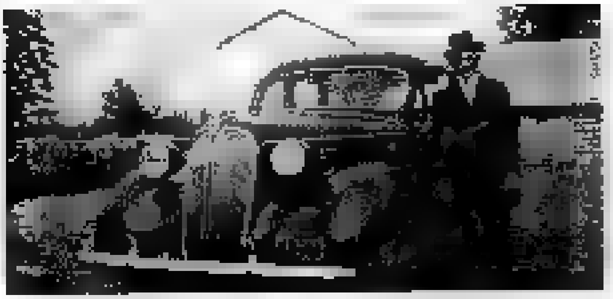
John Wierenga, Harm

Harm enjoyed smoking *sigaren*. He would sometimes smoke one as he paced up and down the hallway and kitchen of the parsonage preparing his sermon. He said that he could prepare his sermons in his head. At night, he usually slept with a cap on because his head got cold.

Harm often visited the families living in the Centre. Even though he was known for his "isolationist" views, he was good friends with the Asheys, who were not members of the church, and gave presents to them on special occasions. Harm also enjoyed visiting the Neerlandia farmers and understood their problems. As well, he often had company over at the parsonage — ministers such as the Revs. Botes and de Kroon would come to visit him.

Soon after coming to Neerlandia Harm bought a used car, an Essex. Many times he drove people of the community to the hospital in Barrhead or in Edmonton. For instance, he took Hilligje Bos to Barrhead when she had to have her teeth pulled and also brought Janke

"My barn and chicken coop, Neerlandia."



Harm, 1937

Hiemstra to the hospital when she was sick with pleurisy (1934).

A friend of Rev. Van Der Woude's, Rev. E. Kooistra, who had known him since his student days wrote:

> He was a very ordinary person and deeply serious, with a sober and practical view of life. He was a man of prayer. He stayed away from all modern habits and he disliked it if we were too "city-fied." He appreciated good humour, but never have I heard him gossip or tell "shady stories".
>
> He felt much more at home in Neerlandia with the farmers than with the Amsterdammers, the "city-bred" and the Dutch-American members of Hoboken. He was not forward and had a humble character and easy-going nature. He was a Groninger with most of the good qualities of that people, among them a strong faith, honesty in dealing, uprightness in walk of life, knowledgeable in the Reformed doctrine. However, as a burden to himself and to others, he was too stiff and stubborn in his own chosen way.
>
> He preached what he believed and he believed what he preached. He walked with God, he was a man of prayer, he trusted with childlike simplicity in his Lord and Saviour. He was a good preacher, a faithful servant, and a warm friend. Loneliness, disappointments, and sufferings were his share too, especially the last years of his life.

Harm suffered from diabetes and eventually he had problems with poor circulation in one foot. In February 1940 he informed the Neerlandia consistory that he was sick and would have to leave soon. He received honourable emeritus a year later and left Neerlandia in March 1942. He retired to Illinois, where he had relatives. It became necessary to amputate his leg and he died February 1, 1950 as a result of the operation.

[1] Excerpts taken from an article written in Dutch in the March 14, 1950, issue of *de Wachter*.

JOHN AND SUSAN (ANEMA) VANEE

John (Jan) Lubert Vanee was born April 14, 1903, in the province of Drenthe, the Netherlands. His parents were farmers. When he left school, John first worked on the farm for his father and then as a horse-and-buggy chauffeur for an uncle. In 1927 he immigrated to Canada.

John chose Alberta because of an advertisement in the Netherlands offering free farmland in Alberta — and John wanted to farm. After arriving in Canada, John worked for a number of farmers in southern Alberta, learning the English language and familiarizing himself with the country.

John Vanee knew only one person in Neerlandia, John Schuring. He came because of this and his dream of being a land owner. In 1931 he filed on NW 28-62-3-5 in the Vega area.

With the three thousand dollars he had saved up on working in the oil fields, John purchased the necessary equipment and supplies for the farm and home. He also built a barn for his livestock. His livestock — a couple cows, a few pigs, and some chickens — came as a wedding gift from his in-laws, John and Froukje Anema. Prices for farm produce were very low at this time. The cream check usually paid the grocery bill.

In January 1933, John married Susan Anema. Susie had worked in Edmonton and also helped on the Anema farm prior to her marriage.

John and Susie, 1933

Just one month after John and Susie were married, as they were heading home after church, they were overtaken by a runaway team of horses. The cutter was upset, and John was trampled by the horses. He was unconscious and taken to the Barrhead hospital. Dr. Verreau took John to Edmonton for examinations. John remained in a coma for a month. During this time the livestock were brought to the Anema farm and Susie stayed in Barrhead with John, living with the Pete Bootsma family while John slowly recovered. They were back on the farm by spring. Friends and relatives helped with farming and other chores while John was recovering. Susie did a lot of outside work too.

On June 4, 1934, John and Susie's first child, Frances, was born. Wilma was born June 23, 1937.

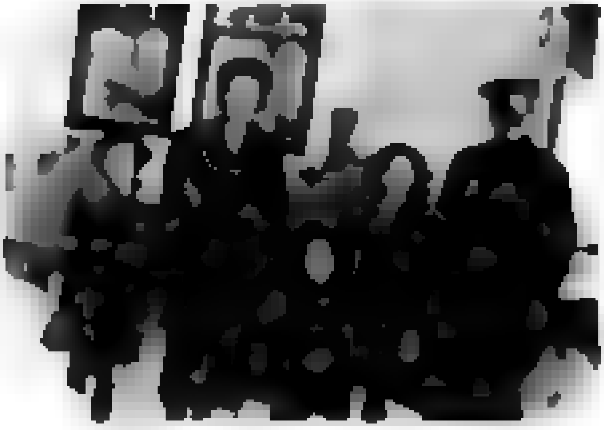
The family outing was on Sunday. John and Susie had two bikes. They would each take a child on their back and bike the seven miles one-way to church. They would arrive early enough to go to Susie's parents for coffee, stay for church and maybe even lunch, and then bike back home again.

By the year 1939, prices for farm produce began to improve and the Vanees [illegible] a new house. They also bought a 1930 Model A car, which had a rumble seat in the back. The girls found it delightful in the summer, but very cold in winter.

On April 25, 1941, a daughter, Doreen Catharina, was born. Three girls, but no boys, to help on the farm.

In the fall of 1941, the Vanees nearly lost their new home to fire: the filling of the gas lamp was left until dusk — with a burning coal oil lamp standing nearby. The gas fumes ignited [illegible] flames. The fire was extinguished with the evening's milk and water that was stored in a barrel. Susie's clothes caught fire and she was badly burned, resulting in a month's stay in the Barrhead hospital. Frances stayed with the Bert Bos family so she could attend school in Vega. Burn treatment consisted of washing with salt water and recovery was slow. Susie's sister Annie stayed with the Vanees during this difficult time, helping inside and out. Susie could not walk unaided for a time.

The next few years were more prosperous, but John did not [illegible] farming with the [illegible]



Wilma, Susan, Doreen, Frances and John, c. 1944

daughters. He also disliked the cold Alberta winters and wished to seek a climate more like his native country.

In the spring of 1946, John and Susan sold the farm to Ewald Stoik. After selling all their belongings by local auction, they moved to New Westminster, B.C. It was here that their son was born in 1947. John and Susan have retired in North Vancouver, yet their roots are in Neerlandia.

Frances Churchill Vanee

PETER AND VICTORIA VAN HOOFDAKKER

Peter van Hoofdakker (c. 1892) had been born in Ijzendoorn, Gelderland, the Netherlands. He took up the NW 15-62-3-5 in April 1927 and moved there with his wife, Victoria (c. 1895), and their two children **Peter** (c. 1923) and **Josephine** (c. 1921).

Peter Sr. had proved up his land by 1934. He had cleared thirty-seven acres, and owned three cattle and four horses. In May 1927 he had built a 14 by 16-foot log house. Later he built a 16 by 14-foot frame granary and a 14 by 26-foot log stable, had dug a 25-foot well, and put up two miles of fencing.

The Hoofdakkers were Catholic and not well-accepted by the Neerlandia community. In 1947 they sold their farm and moved to Sylvan Lake. Later they moved to Saskatchewan.

JOHN AND JOHANNA (INGWERSEN) VISSER

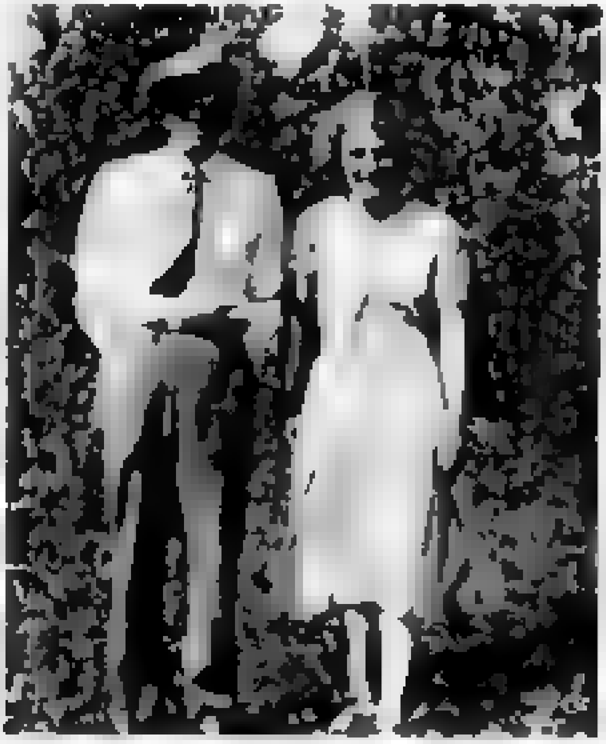
John Visser and his younger brother Raymond came to Neerlandia in 1928. Their father had taken up land much earlier, but as he had a good job in Edmonton and Mother Visser was not too interested in farming, the two boys were sent to work the land. They were still quite young — John was 15 and Raymond was 14, but coming from a large family, work was quite natural to them. The location of their land was the NE [illegible]. Their father had built a small shack on the place so the boys took up batching. During the winter months they would return to Edmonton, until they got some cows and horses and had to stay to feed them.

John and Raymond's main task was to clear the land and this kept them busy from morning till night, as there were many trees on their land. Young as they were, they were conscientious workers and those trees steadily came down. During the summer months one of their sisters would come and keep house for them; sometimes even Mother would stay for a few months. These were good times for John and Raymond, as they themselves were not very good cooks. When alone they usually ate bread and rice or for a change, barley. They soaked the barley in water and added some raisins for flavour. Frouke Anema, who was a close neighbour, baked their bread and did their laundry.

By this time the pioneer days were pretty well over and the Visser boys did not experience the hardships the earlier settlers went through. With the help of their father they soon acquired some horses and the necessary machinery to work the land. After a few years they also got some cows, chickens and pigs. With the addition of animals, their work increased, and now they also had to milk the cows, separate the milk, and feed the pigs among other chores.

It was not all work for them though. Many evenings were spent with the young people of the community, playing ball or doing some other activity. When John was 18 he became interested in a girl named Johanna Ingwersen and after a four-year courtship, they were married. The wedding was on a Sunday afternoon, October 28, 1934. Rev. Vander Woude tied the knot. The bride was beautifully dressed in a $4.98 dress ordered from Eaton's catalogue. Those were the days of the Great Depression and money was as scarce as hen's teeth. Hogs were then only worth a few dollars on the market, and milk and eggs were hardly worth shipping. But on the farm no one went hungry.

there was always plenty of eggs, butter, and cream. Wheat was finely crushed and used for breakfast cereal, or Johanna made it into brown bread.



John, Johanna, July 1, 1933

After the Depression was over, farming became more progressive. Tractors began to replace horses. John kept up with the times, and soon bought a new Oliver 80 tractor. That was quite an improvement. He no longer needed to feed, water, and harness five or six horses. All he had to do was fill the tractor with gas and go to work.

When Raymond married Annie Tuininga in May 1937, he and John divided the land. Raymond took the north half and John took the south. After a few years, Raymond sold his half to John. In the meantime, John had rented Bill Oldegbers' quarter directly to the south, and a school quarter from the government.

In 1935, a year after John and Johanna were married, they were blessed with the birth of a son. They named him **George**, after Grandfather Visser. He was their only child, since a rare blood condition prevented them from having any more children. In 1944 they decided to adopt a baby girl. After writing to the adoption agency, they soon received word that a child was available. She was a tiny baby of only five pounds at two weeks of age. They named her **Linda**. She brought a big change to their lives, and George, who had ruled the roost for eight years, was not too happy with the turn of events. But Linda soon became part of the family, and John and Johanna were happy they had taken that step.

John, George, Linda, Johanna, c. 1947

John was always active in community affairs, serving terms as a member of the consistory, the store board, and the school board. He always enjoyed these activities, and they added variety to his life on the farm. Johanna kept active at home, spending her days cooking, cleaning, and gardening. Her joy was flowers and Johanna put much time and energy into beautifying their home and farm. Sometimes she would even draft John into helping her transplant shrubs about the place.

As George became older he helped with the chores, and when he was 16 he quit school to take a more active part in farming. In 1956, he married Florence Baker. They took up residence in the farmhouse, since John and Johanna had built a new house a few rods farther north. At that time John and George became equal partners and remained so for 21 years.

Meanwhile, Linda finished high school and went to Dordt College, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She married a fellow teacher, Henry Heinen, who is vice-principal in Lethbridge Christian School. Henry and Linda live in Picture Butte, Alberta, with their three daughters.

As George and Florence's family grew up and took an active part in farming, John decided it was time to leave the farm and did so in 1977. This did not necessarily mean he stopped working. He bought 12 acres of land in the hamlet of Neerlandia, built a house on one plot, and subdivided and sold the rest. He also worked for Plains Western Gas Company obtaining easements. He enjoyed this job as it enabled him to meet many people. Later he became a salesman for Paramor Hog Equipment. Since John's retirement, he and Johanna tend the shrubs and flowers which grace their yard.

Johanna Visser

RAYMOND AND ANNIE (TUININGA) VISSER

Raymond came to Neerlandia in 1928 when he was fourteen years old. He and his brother John made improvements on the SE 3-62-3-5, which had been filed on by their father. The quarter was split up with each brother getting eighty acres.

Summers were spent picking roots and grubbing [illegible] for one dollar per day. For the first few winters the boys went back to Edmonton, but soon some livestock was purchased and that meant full-time baching in Neerlandia. A few dollars could be made in the winter by skidding logs with a team of horses in the bush. The pay for this was two dollars a day.

In the winter of 1926, Raymond worked at Bill Williams' lumber mill. He sawed lumber on permit and received some lumber in trade for wages. He had enough lumber to build a home for himself and his new bride at the cost of $380.00.

The lucky girl was Annie Tuininga. Her father, Klaas Tuininga, had given her thirty-five dollars to get ready for her marriage to Raymond. With this she purchased her dress for eleven dollars, her shoes for six dollars, and a pretty headband for seventy-five cents from the [illegible]. A good [illegible] was five dollars and then there was money left for curtains for some of the windows. The rest of the windows had to have flour-sack curtains.

Raymond and Annie were married May 2, 1937, in the afternoon church service. There were no frills and there was no honeymoon. It was time to think about spring planting, so the first week they fanned grain with a hand-driven fanning mill. They had no well but gathered rainwater from the roof for the wash. The first summer the rain water was yellowish from the new yellow shingles.

Calvin, George, Frank, Suzanne, Grace. 1948

Raymond and Annie's first son, George Raymond, was born in the Barrhead hospital on June 10, 1938. Annie was brought there by Ike Nanninga, who had a car. Baby clothes and other laundry were washed on the scrub board. Two years later, June 18, 1940, Calvin was born. Many of the babies were still being delivered at home so Raymond and Annie decided Calvin could be too, but it was a breech birth, and Dr. Rockham from Westlock had to come out to the farm to deliver him.

Raymond and Annie had little money, so in order to buy a gas-powered washing machine they borrowed from Raymond's sister Lucy. The washer was eighty dollars, but free carbon monoxide fumes came with it. Care had to be taken not to operate it in an enclosed area.

Raymond milked five or six cows, and the cream [illegible] to paying for the groceries. He also bought his first [illegible] eight hundred dollars. Raymond bought the tractor primarily for breaking land, but it did not have enough power so he traded it with Klaas Wierenga for a Cockshutt with more power.

On May 24, 1942, a third son, Allen Frank, was born. One year later Vissers purchased the S½ 20-62-3-5 from Pete den Hartog Jr. for twelve hundred dollars. The two quarters had only fifteen acres of cleared land, but several local men now owned a Caterpillar and dozer, making clearing much easier.

Susanne was born June 14, 1945. She had a birthmark shaped like a V and *Pake* Tuininga said it was V for victory in World War II. The next year Annie had a serious operation on her womb performed by Dr. G. L. Whistle in Immaculata Hospital, Westlock. God was with Annie and her life was spared.

Their second girl, **Grace**, was born August 4, 1948. In 1950 they bought the E½ 8-62-3-5 from Bill Bouwman, who moved to Rocky Mountain House. The purchase price was sixteen thousand dollars, and the land was almost all cleared. They moved in April (1950) to a house with a power plant, running water that did not run (the pipes were frozen), and a real bathtub. What luxury! The yard was landscaped, and there were trees and even raspberry bushes on it. The other place was sold to John Visser.

Raymond and Annie, 1935

For the first years on the new place, the crop was almost completely dried out, and what was left was hit by hail. There was no hail insurance program either. Grain was bought to keep the animals for the winter, and the money from the pigs went to pay the feed bill. There was no getting ahead those years.

In the summer of 1950, on August 11, **Betty Jean** was born. It was too bad for the hired girl, Sophie de Groot, who was left to can two tubs of green beans when Annie left for the hospital. It turned cold and froze hard that week. Annie was knitting mitts in the hospital, and Dr. W. Kier said, "You'll need them." The year 1950 also brought the first family allowance cheques, so that helped a little to feed six hungry mouths.

Vissers canned hundreds of jars of food for the winter. All the vegetables were canned — green beans, peas, carrots and sauerkraut being favourites — as well as beef and pork. Then Annie canned wild strawberries, saskatoons, blueberries, rhubarb and about two hundred jars of raspberries. There was no shortage of work.

In 1955 Raymond bought another two quarters (N½ 17-62-3-5) from Albert Tiemstra Sr. Every fall he was expected to make a payment to Albert, and with the last payment Albert brought a bottle over to toast the new owners.

Two more children were born: **Ronald** on December 10, 1953, and **Valery Anne** on February 7, 1955. That made four of each kind — a well-rounded family. By this time (1955) the house had been rewired for Calgary Power and timesaving appliances such as an electric stove and a refrigerator plus the self-cleaning separator made life much easier. None of the children experienced serious illness — just the minor scrapes and bruises of childhood. The children often played with the neighbouring Strydhorsts, with whom a favourite pastime was swimming in the nearby creek.

Ron and Betty, 1955.

Valerie and Ron, 1958

One day in 1963 Raymond and Annie were driving near Barrhead when they saw a Beaver Lumber Company pre-fab house. Their old house was too small, and they sure could use a new one. That drive cost Raymond twelve thousand dollars, but he got a lovely new home out of the deal. Annie was very happy with the new house and all the room.

Meanwhile the children were growing up and leaving home. George went into radio tele-communications, working mostly in airports until his health forced him to quit. Calvin bought land in Vega (W½ 9-63-3-5) in 1972 but left later for Victoria, B.C. Here he became an apprentice carpenter and also met his future bride, **Rita Schalkwyk**. Rita was born Hendrika Johanna on February 12, 1956, in Krimpen aan de Lek, the Netherlands. Her father is a minister and immigrated with his family in 1958 to Vancouver Island. Rita had attended Geneva College near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., and taught in Victoria for one year. Calvin swept her off her feet and they were married August 13, 1978.

Calvin and Rita moved to Vega in April 1979. They have three children: **Matthias** Ryan (June 14, 1979), **Hannah** Joy (December 19, 1980) and **Hilary** Hope (January 9, 1983). Calvin operates Calvin R. Visser Construction as a contractor, rents his land out, and has some livestock. He loves hunting. Rita is involved with La Leche League in Barrhead and also loves to read and sew. On the side they raise Balinese purebred cats.

Frank spent many winters working in lumber mills in the area and farming in the summer. He got the N½ 17-62-3-5 from his parents and put his money back into his land for brushing and breaking. He now farms full-time and lives in a trailer. Susanne took a RNA course and worked in Barrhead and later in Lethbridge. In Lethbridge she met Luke Hummel and married him in 1967. They live in Nobleford and have three daughters and a son.

Grace also went into nursing, working in Barrhead and Edmonton, and then in London, Ontario. She married Robert Docherty in 1975, and they live in Windsor, Ontario. They have three boys. Betty worked in Edmonton keeping records in a medical centre. She married Ed Reus in 1973. Betty and Ed live in Millwoods and have two girls.

Ron met Sally Clark while attending the Barrhead high school. Sally had been born in Rocky Mountain House on July 6, 1955. Her father was a game warden with Alberta Fish and Wildlife in Barrhead. While Ron was working for Barr Construction, Sally was working as

Back: Calvin, Rita. Front: Hannah, Hilary, Matthias, 1983

Back: Greg, Ron, Papa. Front: Pam, Sally, Neil, 1984

waitress at Trail Esso (now Pelletier). They were married June 1, 1973, and moved to a trailer on the home farm. Ron began farming with his father, and together they built a farrowing barn for hogs. The chicken barn built six years earlier was converted into a hog barn. Ron and Sally continue to farm on NE 8-62-3-5. Their children are **Raya Dawn** (June 5, 1974), **Gregory Dale** (January 2[illegible], [illegible]), **Neil Patrick** (May 1[illegible], [illegible]) and **Pamela Megan** (February 5, 1982). Ron enjoys hockey and plays for the Neerlandia Homesteaders. Sally enjoys sewing, reading, and visiting.

Valery followed in her sisters' footsteps and went into nursing. She worked at [illegible], Coaldale, and Westlock. She married Garry Message in 1980, and they live on a farm in Pickardville with their one son. Valery continues to work at Immaculata Hospital in Westlock.

In 1977 Raymond and Annie moved to Barrhead. Since then Raymond has worked as custodian for Barrhead United Church and at other odd jobs. He often drives to Neerlandia to assist his sons. Annie worked for Preventive Social Services for five years. She no longer works out but remains active in swimming and art classes, and sings in the Blue Heron Choir. The Vissers attend the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church and are happy to be healthy, useful citizens.

Annie Visser

ANDRIES AND HENDRIKA (WERKMAN) WIERENGA

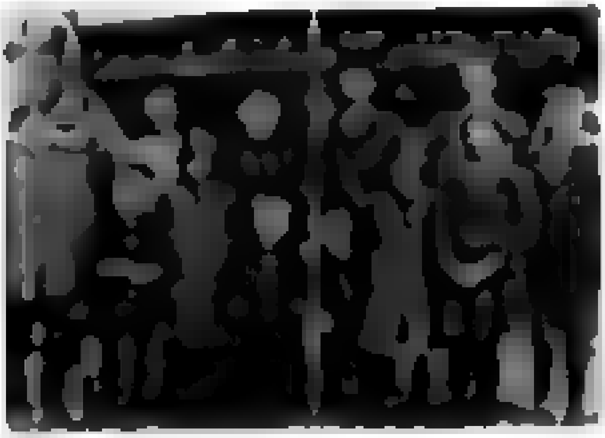
Andries Wierenga (May 26, 1883) and Hendrika Werkman (April 4, 1882) were married May 12, 1906, in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, where they had both been born. Andries was a foreman of farm labourers. Besides working himself, he was paid for each worker he had. The family also operated a store in their house; Hendrika did the clerking. They were doing well financially, but for their twelve children the prospects for future advancement were dim.

Then some agents came from the U.S.A. and Canada. Alje Vandermaan, a rich American businessman, first swayed Andries by showing him all his money and telling him that the U.S.A. was a good place to get it. Then in the winter of 1927 Bill van Ark came. He was a Canadian agent (and former Neerlandia resident), and Andries organized a meeting for those who were interested in hearing him. They were told that there would be jobs and houses ready upon arrival in Canada.

Andries decided to immigrate. Hendrika

Andries, Hendrik, and Lammert Wierenga families on the [illegible], [illegible] preferred not to leave but did not have much say about it. Their oldest son, **Herman** (April 14, 1907), had immigrated to the U.S.A. in 1927 and that is where the family hoped to go. But immigration to the States was restricted so they settled for Canada. Andries' brothers Lammert and Hendrik also decided to immigrate to Canada with their families.

In preparation for the trip Andries and his son **Klaas** (April 24, 1908) took English lessons, but Hendrika refused and never did learn to speak English. Andries paid cash for his family's fare — six thousand *gulden* for eleven children, Hendrika and himself, their clothing, and some furniture. On March 28, 1928, they left Uithuizen. When they were ready to board the *Rijndam* they were told that the boat was very full and the only places left were in first class. Everyone was astonished at the good food they received aboard; it was different than the Dutch "meat and potatoes" they were used to. But Hendrika and many of the children could not enjoy anything since they were terribly seasick. They arrived in Halifax on April 7. From there they took the train west, arriving in Edmonton on April 12. They had expected to go to Camrose, but were told they had to go to Tofield. Hendrika was desappointed and was sure that "we just threw our money into the sea." On April 15 they arrived in Tofield, a small settlement with only a few houses. Nothing had been arranged as was promised, so th- [illegible] Andries found work with a farmer they were given a house to live in.



Just landed. 1928 Back: Albertje, Tinie, Hendrika, Andries. Klaas, John, Fred, Ben, Lambert, Gladys, Henry, Joe [illegible]

During that time Rev. Seiles was the travelling pastor for immigrants. He advised them to go to Neerlandia since a Dutch settlement had been established there. Acting on that advice Andries, his son Klaas, and his nephew Ite decided to have a look. In October 1928 they arrived at the Siebren Tiemstra home. They were somewhat shocked by the primitive conditions compared to their home in the Netherlands, but when Siebren showed them the cellar where provisions for the winter months were stored, new hope arose.

Siebren took them around and showed them which homesteads were still available. They decided to move to Neerlandia, although people in Tofield tried to discourage them by telling of the very wet land and poor conditions in Neerlandia.

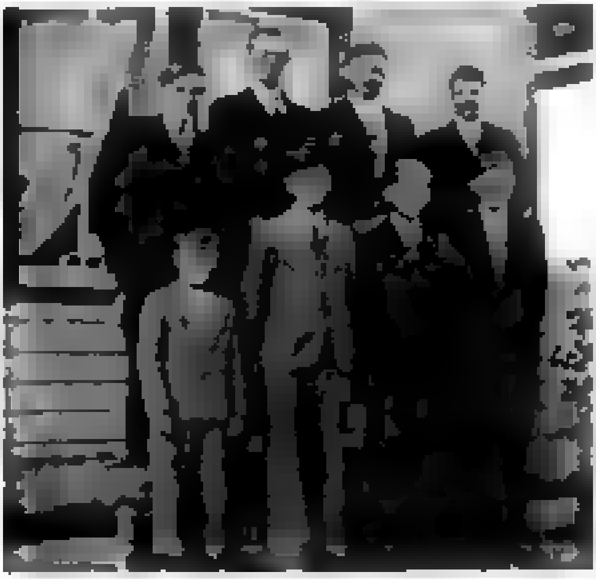
Besides taking up a homestead (SE 12-62-3-5) in 1928, Andries bought the NW 26-61-3-5 for six hundred dollars from John Terpsma. It had sixty acres cleared and a 24 by 30-foot log house on it. The remainder of the family arrived on December 6, 1928, except for two older daughters, **Albertje** (April 22, 1909) and **Trientje** (March 28, 1910), who had found employment in Edmonton.

One of the first times Andries and his brother Lammert were in the Neerlandia Co-op, they were mistaken for Italians. Melle Elzinga went home and told his family about the Italians he had seen, so two of his sisters promptly went to have a look at the strangers.

For Hendrika, the conditions in Neerlandia were quite different from what they were used [illegible] the warm weather came the mosquitoes were [illegible] her legs under her stockings to keep from being bitten. Another son, **Martin**, was born May 28, 1929. A son, **John** (Jan, December 9, 1913), drowned in the Athabasca River on August 11, 1937, while on an outing with a Young People's group. His body was found a number of weeks later in a log jam at Chisholm. One day in April 1939 **Gladys** (Klazina, October 24, 1918) was cooking when the stove exploded. She was severely burned and the house was destroyed. Gladys died in the hospital six months later (October 26, 1939).

Ben (Berend, July 2, 1912) had taken out the NE 26-61-3-5 as a homestead in 1931. In 1941 Andries bought the N½ 22-61-3-5 for his son

Back: Albertje, Hendrika, Tante. Front: Jenny holding Alie Sonnema, Sophie, Geesje, 1938.



Back: Ben, Klaas, Herman, Andries. Front: Martin, Joe, Henry, Lambert, 1938.

Herman, who was planning to move to Neerlandia. He later obtained the N½ and SW 23-61-3-5 to help his sons begin farming.

Andries served in consistory and also on the school and store boards. In 1950 Andries and Hendrika retired to Edmonton. The brothers, except Ben who also moved to Edmonton, farmed seven quarters cooperatively. Andries passed away April 29, 1952, due to cancer. Hendrika passed away August 26, 1955.

Klaas farmed for a number of years in Neerlandia, then moved to Lacombe to farm. He married Grace Swaanefeld, and they have a family of ten children. Albertje married George Sonnema of Edmonton, and Trientje married Gerben Tiemstra. Ben is living in Neerlandia with his sister, **Sophie** (Siepke, November 19, 1916), and her husband, Joe Tuininga. **Jennie** (Jantje, February 2, 1915) lives in Edmonton with her husband, John Olthuis. **Lambert** (May 1, 1920) married Elizabeth Bos and moved onto the homeplace. **Henry** (Hendrik, November 24, 1921, married Rulie Wiegers. **Joe** (Johannes, October 23, 1922) married Hilda Peters, daughter of John and Elizabeth. Martin and his wife Wilma Visser of Edmonton, moved onto the NW 23-61-3-5.

Wilma Wierenga

CLARENCE AND HELEN (EMMERZAEL) WIERENGA

Clarence (Klaas) Wierenga came to Tofield with his parents in 1928, but when they moved to Neerlandia Clarence went to Edmonton. The Tofield butcher for whom he had been working helped him get a job in Burns packing plant. After two years there, Clarence went to Neerlandia where he filed on the NE 7-62-3-5 in July 1931.

On June 11, 1942, Clarence married Helen Emmerzael. They lived in the one-room shack

Clarence breaking in the late 1930s.

that had been Clarence's home, but pulled a granary close to it to serve as a bedroom. At that time the road ended at Clarence's farm — only a path trailed through to the farms west of them. Although Clarence had a Model A coupe, the Wierengas had to make their honeymoon trip to the farm with horse and wagon because rain had made the road, which was full of holes, impassable for a car. That summer the Wierenga's housing was improved when they bought the William [illegible] house and moved it to the farm. To this two-room house Clarence added a lean-to kitchen and pantry.

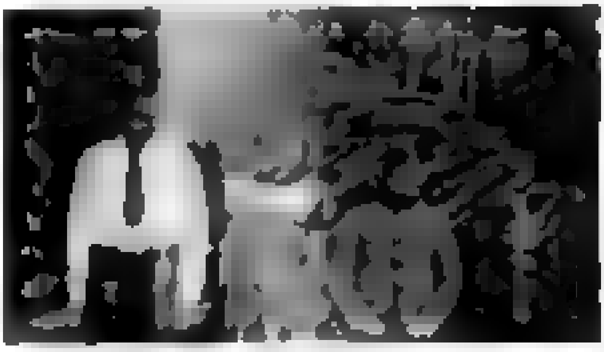
During the 1940s Clarence bought a six-volt generator to provide electricity. Later he upgraded the system by buying bigger generators and a wind charger.

Clarence began well-drilling to supplement his farm income. He bought a rig from William Olthuis in 1943. For the next twenty-five years he drilled many wells. The two wells that meant the most to Clarence were the ones he drilled for Home Oil and Clarence Mast. In 1958 Carl Mast, who operated the telephone switchboard, came with a message that Home Oil wanted Clarence to drill a water well in Swan Hills. Clarence took the job and drilled the well for them. It always amused him that a company that was in the drilling business was unable to drill a simple water well. Turning the tables on them, Clarence drilled a well that produced gas. He was drilling for Clarence Mast and was down about four hundred feet but had not struck water. Thinking it was a dry well he let it sit for a couple of months. Finally he decided that he might as well pull up the rods. When he got about a hundred feet of rods out, the well blew. Water and natural gas spouted sixty feet in the air. Sad to say, after about six weeks the well stopped flowing. Clarence put in a cylinder and rods as in other wells.

Clarence did custom breaking with a steel wheeled tractor. Helen helped on the farm and, on June 1, 1949, she also took up a homestead, the NW 2-62-4-5.

Six children were born to the Wierengas: **Henry** William, February 14, 1943; **Marjorie** Johanna, January 16, 1944; **Arthur** John, January 22, 1945; **Frankie**, December 22, 1945; **Leonard** Joseph, August 20, 1948; and **Carolyn** Hilda, April 3, 1952. Frankie was born one month premature; he had an open spine and lived only forty-four hours. Carolyn was also

Marjorie, Clarence, Henry c. 1947



Henry, Marjorie, Art, ca. 1950

Helen (seated) visiting Carolyn in Calgary hospital, 1957 born physically handicapped and lived in the Red Cross Crippled Children's Hospital in Calgary from 1954 to 1964. Then she went to the Glenrose School Hospital in Edmonton. While there she graduated from high school.

When Henry started school there was no bus service but since Clarence went out drilling every day he could take him to school. He made an arrangement with Reitze De Vries and Jake Schuurman, who also had school-age children, that he would take their children along if they would pick them up after school. This was done until the first school bus, a one-ton truck, took over the job.

The children are grown now. Henry married Lena Ribar. Marjorie married John De Kam on May 13, 1963. Three children were born to them but their oldest son, Randy, was killed in a traffic accident in 1975. The following year they adopted a seven-month-old baby. They live on a farm near Barrhead. Arthur married Dorothy Walsh. They have three children but the marriage ended in divorce. On August 20, 1982, he married Yvonne La Bonte. They live with her two children on a farm in Bloomsbury. Leo's home is in Westlock, but he has worked in the Arctic since 1974. Carolyn now lives on her own in Edmonton and prepares floral arrangements for various occasions.

In the spring of 1964, Clarence was diagnosed as suffering from cancer and died August 1, 1975. After his death Helen worked and lived in Barrhead for a few years but then moved back to the farm.

Helen Wierenga

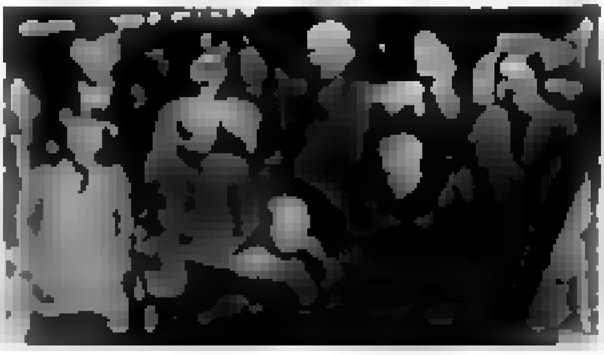
HENDRIK AND HILJE (PETERS) WIERENGA

Hendrik Wierenga (January 26, 1886) and Hilje Peters (May 14, 1889) were married in May 1911. They lived in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, and seven children were born to them there: **Clarence** (Klaas, February 26, 1912); **Tena** (Trientje, April 26, 1913); **Kay** (Katrien, December 16, 1914); **John** (Jan, June 6, 1916); **Sophie** (Siepke, September 17, 1917); **Joe** (Johannes, May 29, 1921); and **Lambert** (May 11, 1924).

Owning only a small place in the Netherlands along with a few pigs, cows, chickens, and ducks, the dream of owning more land and having more freedom was very appealing to Hendrik and his two brothers, Lammert and Andries. They had heard about Canada, the land flowing with milk and honey. With great expectations, in the spring of 1928, the three families set out for Canada on the [illegible], not knowing what was in store for them and what obstacles would have to be overcome before their dream would be a reality.

During the voyage, Hendrik was seasick most of the time. For the Wierenga children, though, the trip was an adventure. They used to wander over the decks and investigate the many interesting things on the ship. One day two of the [illegible] discovered a big bathtub, something they had never seen before. They had a great time in the tub ... until they were discovered. There were dances on board the ship but being good [illegible], none of the Wierengas were allowed to watch.

During the train trip, Hilje usually sat with her sister-in-law Hendrika. As they looked out, Hendrika would say, "Look at those [illegible] (huts) and that's what we will have to live in." The immigration agents had shown them [illegible] [illegible] women were discouraged. The families had taken sausages and bread along to eat on the train. They eventually landed in Tofield, Alberta, where they stayed at the hotel for three weeks before a place was found for them. Hendrik and his family [illegible] [illegible] house but it was [illegible]. Hendrik soon found another house. It was divided in two and [illegible] lived in the other half with their [illegible].



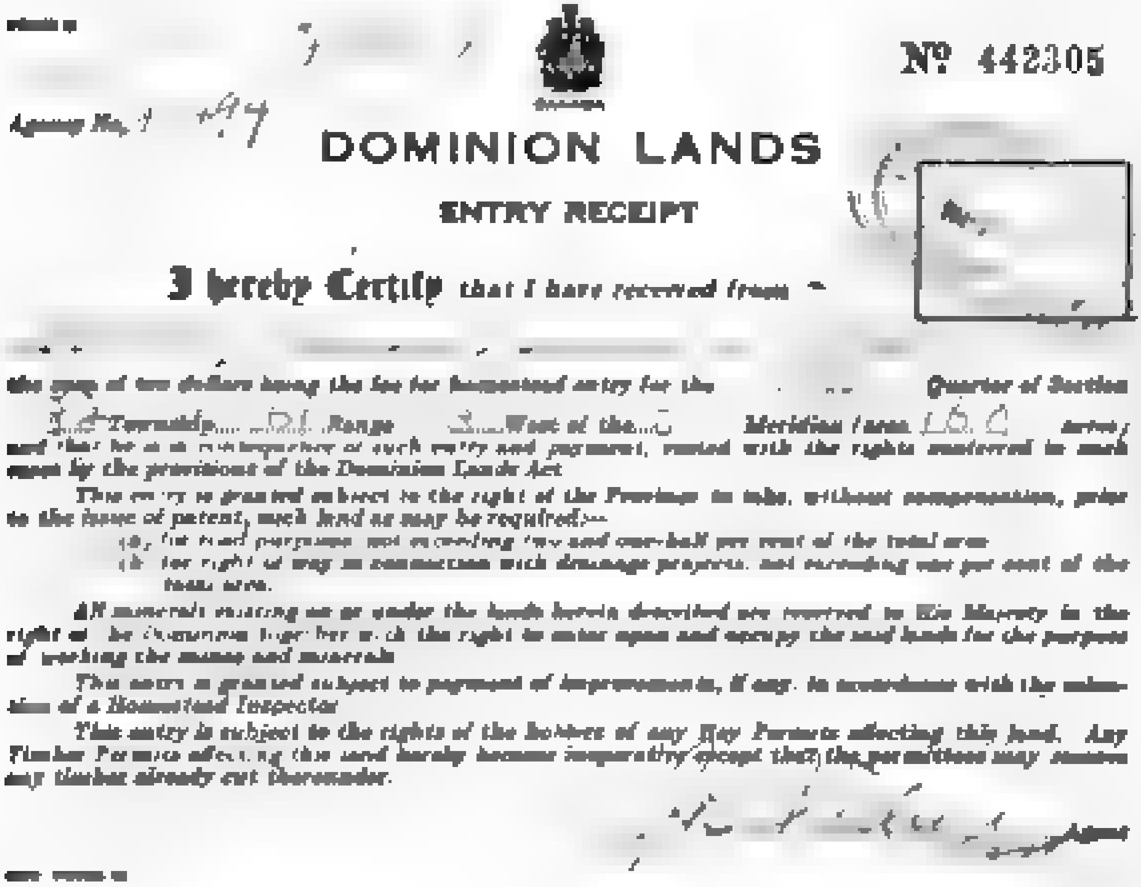
Back: Klaas, Tena, Hendrik, Hilje, Kay. Front: Sophie, John, Lambert. Jan. 1926.

Hendrik found work with farmers in the area. Tena and Kay managed to find jobs for about ten dollars per month. The language barrier made it difficult for them and also meant less pay, since those who could speak English made fifteen dollars per month. Hiltje had difficulties taking on new tasks as well as household duties. While chopping wood using a double-edged axe, she swung it back too far and struck herself on the head, causing a deep cut. The neighbours patched it up for her so she saw no need to go to a doctor.

After the Wierengas had lived in Tofield for six months Rev. Selles, a visiting preacher from Edmonton, told them of the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia and encouraged them to move there. With new hope the family boarded the train for Barrhead. (Their son Clarence moved to Edmonton.) Upon their arrival in Neerlandia, they set up temporary residence in an old store building on the Kampnar place. The family became part of the Neerlandia community and attended the Christian Reformed Church. Hendrik took up a homestead (SW 32-61-3-5) and, while the family lived in the old store building, built a small lumber house on the homestead. Hendrik easily lost his sense of direction, so instead of going cross-country, he walked along the creek from Kampnar's to the homestead to ensure he would not get lost.

Times were tough. Hendrik cleared land for others to make money for groceries. He and Hiltje made their own cheese and also their own coffee by roasting peas or grain. In their lunch buckets, the children would get brown bread spread with lard and some salt and pepper added. When the Siebren Tiemstras butchered a hog, they would give Hendrik the head and Hiltje would make head cheese, which was a treat. When Hendrik worked on a threshing crew, he would sometimes bring his apple home and divide it among the four youngest children. The family lived frugally, but there was always enough to eat. Often, though, the children would not have adequate footwear during the winter. Albert Mast often gave the family a ride to church on his democrat, since they had no way of getting to church at first.

After about one-and-a-half years, the family



Agency No. 447

№ 442305

DOMINION LANDS

ENTRY RECEIPT

I hereby Certify that I have received from

the sum of ten dollars being the fee for homestead entry for the Quarter of Section 32 Township 61 Range 3 West of the 5 Meridian (area 160 acres) and that he is in consequence of such entry and payment, vested with the rights conferred in such cases by the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act.

This entry is granted subject to the right of the Province to take, without compensation, prior to the issue of patent, such land as may be required:—

(a) for road purposes, not exceeding two and one-half per cent of the total area.

(b) for right of way in connection with drainage projects, not exceeding one per cent of the total area.

All minerals existing on or under the lands herein described are reserved to His Majesty in the right of the Dominion together with the right to enter upon and occupy the said lands for the purpose of working the mines and minerals.

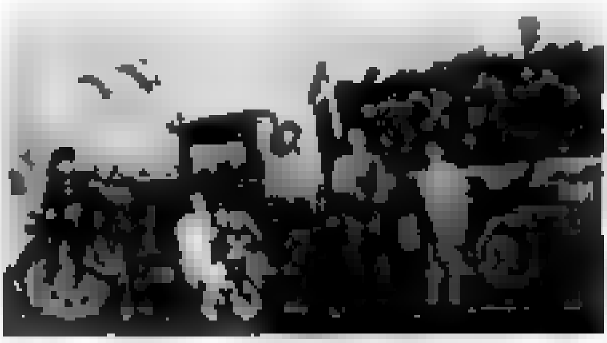
This entry is granted subject to payment of improvements, if any, in accordance with the valuation of a Homestead Inspector.

This entry is subject to the rights of the holders of any Hay Permits affecting this land. Any Timber Permits affecting this land hereby become inoperative except that the permittees may remove any timber already cut thereunder.

Agent

moved into their house on the homestead. At first drinking water was taken from the creek but later several wells were dug using a shovel. One well was dug around seventy feet deep. The dirt was lifted out with a rope and pail. Hendrik had a narrow escape while digging one well when the rope broke while the boys were lifting the pail out of the well and a full pail of dirt fell, just missing him. Another time he returned to continue digging a well and after jumping in, discovered that a porcupine had found its way into the hole but had not found its way out. He was not sure if it would have been worse to encounter a live porcupine or a dead one, as the stench was almost unbearable.

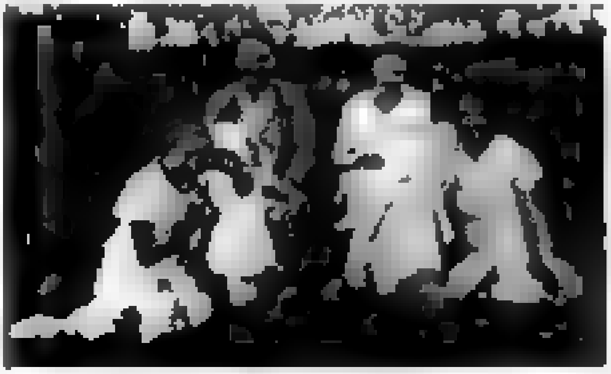
One time while clearing land Hendrik had an accident. He had been climbing up the trees with a large chain which he wrapped around each tree in order for a team of horses to pull it over (after cleaning the dirt away and chopping the roots). While climbing one tree he slipped and fell. The chain and the fall broke several of his ribs and injured his shoulder. He managed to walk home despite the pain, and did not think it warranted a trip to the doctor. Many of the trees that were cleared were used to make fenceposts which were not only used for fencing but were also traded for secondhand machinery brought by a trucker from Camhoo



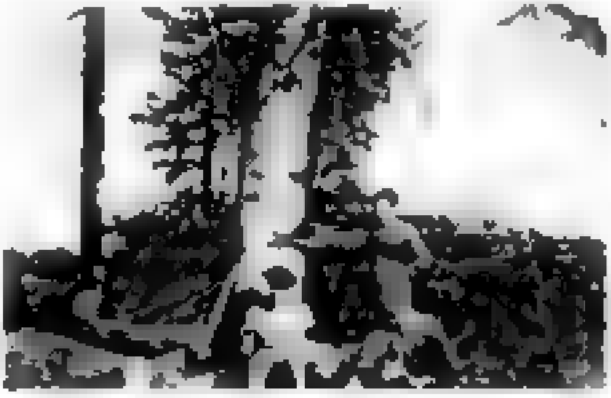
Trading fenceposts for machinery: Lambert, Hendrik, Tenie, Sophie, Johanna, John, Hilje, c. 1937

A quarter mile of corduroy road was built over a stretch of muskeg between the Wierenga homestead and the Centre. Hendrik cut and laid the roadbed of logs and, through councillor Joe Holwerda's influence, the M.D. of Shoal Creek supplied the dirt to finish the road.

Tenie married Albert Tiemstra in 1931. Also in 1931, Sophie began working for the Koning family, which she continued to do for about four years. Around that time, Hendrik took the contract to clean the two-room school. He would have to chop the wood and bring it in. Sophie helped clean, since she was staying at Konings'. Some of the money was used to pay off taxes. Hendrik worked as janitor until 1936. Kay had married Dick Fisher in 1935, and Sophie married John Molodowich in 1938.



Sophie, Johanna, Hilje, Kay holding Bill, Tenie, 1938



Joe, John, Lambert standing, c. 1938

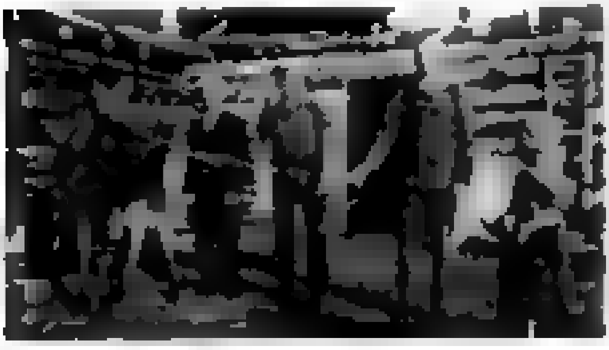
Hendrik made many of his own tools which he needed such as punches, chisels, and wood planes. He was very athletic and, even though he was short and stocky, could outrun many a younger man.

Hilje was always busy scrubbing and cleaning, as well as mending and patching clothes. For meals, she would cook up big pots of soup or potatoes. After the morning service on Sunday, some of the Lammert Wierenga family often came over since it was quite far for them to go home between services. They would have dinner at Hendrik and Hilje's and then they all would go to church in the afternoon. Another daughter, **Johanna**, was born December 14, [illegible]

Hendrik worked out to obtain some livestock usually paying for the animals by clearing land for others. When he got a horse he made his own harness, but did not put any breeches on it. As a result, if he was in the cutter and pulled, the cutter would push up against the horse's heels. The cutter was also homemade. Hendrik had made a removable cutter box so it could be taken off the sleigh during the week when the sleigh was needed for other things. The cutter box sat in a frame on the sleigh.

One winter day, when Hendrik was coming from the store with the horse and cutter, he realized that they were going at too fast a pace to make the bend that went south in the road just before Menne Nanninga's. So he pulled on the reins to slow the horse, but the more he pulled the faster his horse went. They went around the bend at such a clip that the box came right off the sleigh and Hendrik was under it. When he came from under the box, the horse and sleigh were out of sight. After that Hendrik bolted the cutter box to the sleigh.

Once Hendrik was bringing a boar home in a wagon box with boards across it to keep the boar in. Hendrik rode on the wagon too. But soon the boar was pushing the boards up with his snout and it appeared he would not stay in for long. So Hendrik figured he would fix that boar and sat on top of the boards to keep him in. But to no avail — within a short time Hendrik was flying through the air and landed on the roadway. The boar soon followed. Another time, Hendrik had to fight off an angry sow. She attacked him while he was in the field and to keep her away, Hendrik had to hit her with her piglets — she finally backed off, but by that time all her piglets were dead.



Lambert, Joe, Bert Nanninga, Johanna, John [illegible] Jr. with the moose, Daisy, c. 1945

In 1942 the Wierengas became the proud owners of a newborn moose calf, whom they named Daisy. Daisy became a real pet for everyone, especially Joe and Lambert. She soon graduated from the milk bottle to the milk pail and would often cry for her milk. She loved to follow the family around the yard, nuzzling them affectionately. On one occasion the dog nipped Daisy in the heel while she was following Hendrik during chore time. She nearly cleared Hendrik, but one hoof clipped him on the head, knocking him flat to the ground. Just to try Hilje's temperament, Daisy would often walk up to the kitchen windows, licking them all over as she looked in. She also loved to help herself to the cabbage patch, taking a nip out of each cabbage. When she was not making a nuisance of herself, one of her favourite pastimes was walking along the furrow behind the plow.

"The Brotherhood." John, Lambert, Joe, 1946

About 1940 a large stucco house had been built. In 1947 Joe married Grace Tuininga and John married Agnes Zwaaneveld. Lambert married Sophie Anema in 1949, and took over the family farm. At that time Hendrik retired so he, Hilje, and Johanna moved into a house which they had purchased at the Centre. Johanna later married John Kostelijk. Hendrik [illegible] of age from a heart attack. Hilje moved into the Barrhead Nursing Home in 1974 and passed away September 17, 1975, at 86 years of age.

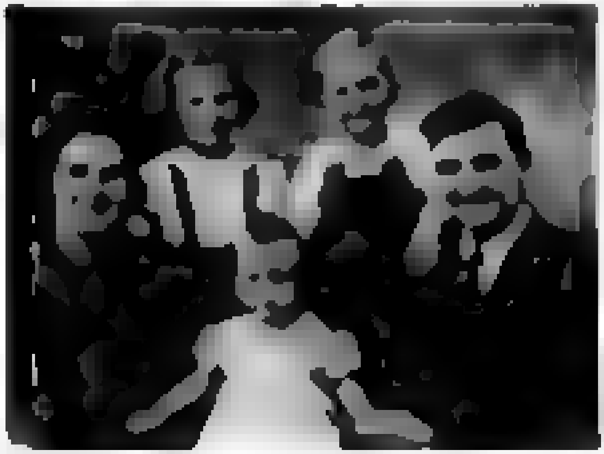
Lambert Wierenga

HERMAN AND HARRIET (WESTRA) WIERENGA

Herman and Harriet Wierenga lived in [illegible] They moved to the area in 1942 from Randolph, Wisconsin, where Harriet, born April 10, 1916, was raised. In 1934 she married Herman, who was orginally from the Netherlands.

It was not easy to leave Wisconsin with three young children, but they were motivated by Herman's parents, Andries and Hendrika Wierenga, who farmed in Neerlandia. Herman and Harriet had been renting a farm in Wisconsin and were confident they would have a better chance of owning land in northern Alberta.

Herman and Harriet arrived in Neerlandia with their children Dixie (Edigna, August 27, 1935), **Andrew** John (December 2, 1937), and **Gladys** Hendrena (August 10, 1940). They lived on Herman's father's farm until March 1943 even though they had their own little home on the property — a cedar-sided house they had bought near Barrhead and had moved on skids to the farm.



Harriet, Dixie, Andrew, Herman, Gladys in front, c. [illegible]

Like most people in those days, they managed to get by without electricity or running water, cooking their meals on a wood stove. It was different from what Harriet had been used to in Wisconsin, but that did not worry her too much. She was young, had her little family about her and, because she believed things would get better, was ready to put up with anything.

The land Herman bought in March 1943 was known as the Wilson farm (NE 22-61-3-5). The Wilsons had a telephone, which the Wierengas [illegible] few country people enjoyed.

[illegible] **Peter** was born December 31, 1945. Since Barrhead was without a doctor for a while that year, he was born in the Westlock hospital.

The Wierenga children were happy and healthy in Neerlandia although their daughter [illegible] frost stayed on the inside walls throughout the school day. The children wore heavy ski pants which they had to keep on all day.

Women had little chance to participate in activities outside the home; they were just too busy. Harriet remembers all the canning she did — a tremendous amount. She canned hundreds of quarts of beans from their garden as well as fruit from B.C. All of that work was done on a wood stove! The only thing Harriet was unable to learn was splitting wood, even though all the other women seemed able to do it.

With the increasing flow of immigration from the Netherlands, Herman became involved in the work of finding new homes for immigrant families. In 1948 he started working for the Immigration Society of Canada, which was sponsored by the Christian Reformed Church. He tried to keep up with his work on the farm as well, but eventually found it impossible to manage both.

Although the Wierengas enjoyed life on the farm, Herman sold the farm to his parents in September 1949 and he and his family moved to Edmonton. In the years following, they bought a house there and had two more children. Herman worked hard for the Immigration Society, believing that in this way he could make his contribution to society.

It was in the course of his work that God took Herman from this life. On July 3, 1954, he

was returning to Edmonton with an immigrant family to whom he had been showing a farm near Camrose when he had a head-on collision at Nisku, near Edmonton. Herman was killed along with three of his four passengers — a young mother and her two children. The driver of the other car died too.

Harriet tried to carry on as well as she could and, with the help of the Christian community, raised their six children. But there was a further trial awaiting the family. On August 11, 1963, a head-on collision on a dusty road north of Neerlandia took the lives of Harriet's daughter Gladys and son Andrew and Andrew's wife, Carolyn. The only survivor was Gladys' fiancé Jerry Jolderama. The two couples had been driving in the area on their way to visit relatives. Andrew and Carolyn left behind a two-year old son, Mark, who was not with them. In 1974, Harriet moved into an apartment in St. John's Parish Hall, where she works as a housekeeper for a priest.

Harriet Wierenga

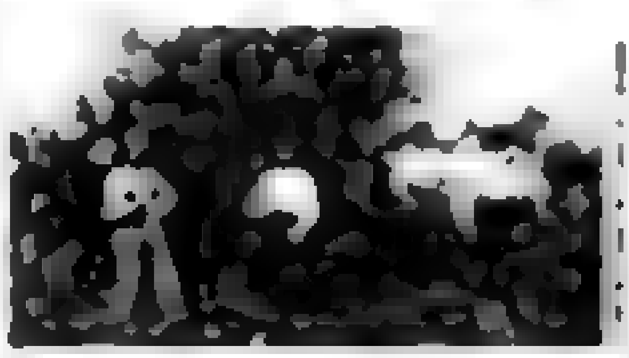
LAMMERT AND HENDERTJE (OOSTERHEERT) WIERENGA

Lammert (March 7, 1875) and Hendertje (June 25, 1879) lived in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, with their family of fifteen children. Lammert was a farmhand, and even though he got the hardest jobs and highest pay, it was not enough to keep such a large family clothed and well fed. As the older children grew up they began working and bringing money home too. In 1928 some CPR agents from Canada held a meeting in Uithuizen. Their talk was smooth and silky: in Canada one could eat meat everyday — as much as one wished, there would be work available for the men and girls, and there would be houses ready to move into. Lammert was uncertain about emigrating, but his brother Andries wanted him to come with them and offered to lend him some of the money for the trip. The *burgemeester* offered to lend money as well. So a decision was made. It was not made lightly but with prayer for the Lord's guidance.

Back: Jantsen, Catharina, Sophie, Klaas, Hendrik, Grace, Bo, Trientje, Johanna, Frank, Jenny, Lammert holding Hennie, Elsa, Andries, Hendertje holding Eke, Bertha, c. 1925.

[illegible] and furniture, and packed their personal be- [illegible] ies that were leaving Uithuizen. Lammert and [illegible] behind and whom they did not expect to see [illegible]

[illegible] thirteen children boarded the *Rijndam*. After [illegible] Camrose, Alberta, where jobs and houses were [illegible] where they were welcomed by cold weather [illegible] moved to Tofield House, where a [illegible] (March 17, 1915) and **Andrew** (Andreas, [illegible] 1909), **Catherina** (Catrien, April 12, 1910), **Jantien** (August 14, 1911), and **Johanna** (February [illegible]



[illegible] Andries Wierenga, Sr. Lammert clearing [illegible]

Sometime later Rev. Selles of the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton came to visit the new immigrants and held services in the Tofield House. He told them about the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia. In the fall of 1928 the Wierenga men went to Neerlandia and took up homesteads. Lammert took up the NW 12-62-3-5 in November 1928. That winter Hen- [illegible] rented house in Edmonton, and the older girls went to the prairies (Nobleford and Granum) to work for Dutch farmwives who wanted Dutch girls to help. The girls made twenty to twenty [illegible] time. He worked on a dairy farm in Edmonton.

Lammert and Ekke worked on the homestead and built a log house. One day when they were clearing, Lammert was scraping dirt off some roots with a shovel and Ekke was chopping the roots with his axe. Somehow they got too close, and Lammert's hand was cut. They first went to Henry Kippers' house. There they found Lammert's brother Andries — with a bandaged hand. One of his sons, too, had accidentally cut him with an axe and Andries had made a visit to Dr. Verreau in Barrhead. Lammert also had to go to Dr. Verreau to have his hand bandaged, but he had to stay in the Barrhead hospital for nine days.

When the log house was ready in the summer of 1929 Hendertje and the children came from Edmonton. Hendertje did not mind the homesteading life and never complained about the conditions. She fixed up the log house so it was cozy, and it kept the family warm. Klaas Tuininga Jr. saw Wierengas when they first ar- [illegible] curring, that some Frenchmen had moved into the area. Hendertje always told the children that they had descended from an Indian princess.

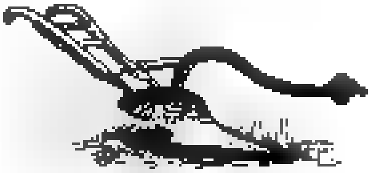
Soon after Lammert came to Neerlandia, Henry Kippers gave him a piglet. After feeding it Lammert sold it for thirty-nine dollars. Then the Depression came, and market hogs sold for only three dollars. The girls, though, sent all their money home, and that helped to buy horses, cows, and things that were needed on the homestead. He also moved to the homestead to help with the work. All the clearing on the quarter was done by hand. He took out the NE 12-62-3-5 in 1930. Three years after coming to Canada Lammert had paid back all the money which had been borrowed for the trip. The older Wierenga girls soon married. Grace to Oene Piers in 1931; Trientje to Klaas Tuininga Jr. and Sophie to Henry Kippers Jr. in 1932. Catherina to Joe Holwerda in 1934; and Jantien to Nick Vriend.

In the early forties a lumber house was built on the homestead. Hendertje died December 14, 1943. During the forties more of the Wierenga children married. Johanna married Joshua Rowaan in January 1941. In 1943 **Jennie** (Jantje, April 1, 1918) married Andy Elzinga, and Elie (Ieltje) Margaretha (July 4, 1924) married Norman Terpsma. **Bertha** (Lambertina) Hendrika (June 23, 1919) married Simon Tuininga in 1945. Andrew married Rene Janssen in November 1942, and Ekke married Egberdina Norden in July 1948.

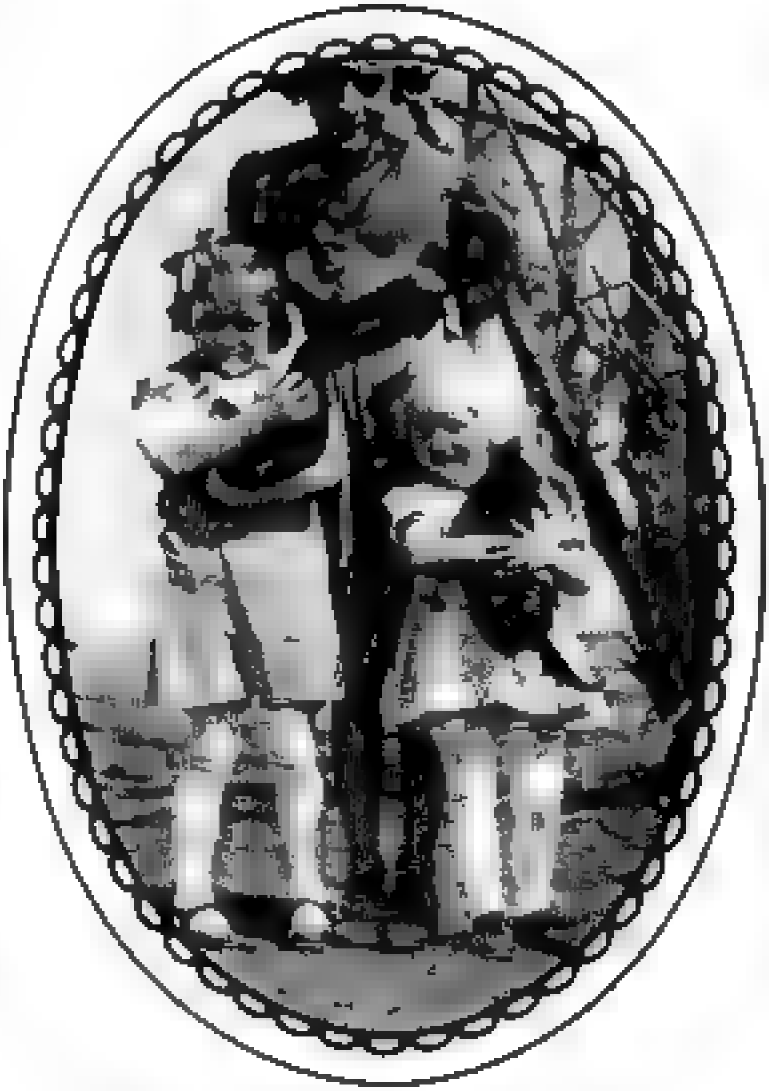
Ite married Henny Bartels in 1951. They moved to Ontario, where Ite died in October 1956. **Hennie** (Hendrika, January 3, 1921, remained single and lives in B.C. with Catherina.

Lammert never felt at home in Canada. He was fifty-three years old when he came, and never mastered the English language. He went back to the "old country" twice and would have stayed there had it not been for his children living in Canada. He died August 4, 1962.

Wierenga Family



You know you're an old-timer if you can remember
— bamboo binder whips.
— a use for last year's catalogue
— where Anema's corner is
— when skidding meant dragging logs with a horse and not sliding sideways with your car on an icy patch
— when an angry glare from Rev. Van Der Woude could silence you.
when everyone wore their best clothes to the July First picnic
— when playing cards was considered a sin
— when the only recreation for dating couples was parking on a lonely road
— the night the church burned down.
— going to school barefoot
— a slate as something to write on and not as a floor covering
— when you had to sit through a reading of all of Psalm 119
— how cold the outhouse was in winter
threshing crews coming down the road and being able to identify the teams
— when you took piano lessons on the organ
— going to the creek on a class hike or for a wiener roast
— the difference between a one-holer and a two-holer.
— when horsepower meant how many horses you had.
— when five children made a small family.
— what Rev. Van Der Woude said, and quote him to prove a point



1946-1984

1946-1984

Beginning in 1946 Neerlandia entered a new era. The Second World War was over and the soldiers were returning home, some with their European brides and others with the girls they had met and married during their training in B.C.

Then came the postwar immigrants from the Netherlands. Though many stayed for only a short time, several made Neerlandia their home.

The young people born in Neerlandia in the previous decades were also marrying and making their homes there. With the increased mobility of modern transportation, there was more communication with other Reformed churches. The young men of Neerlandia brought home their brides from Edmonton, Lacombe, and Nobleford. As other young people began attending colleges in the U.S.A., more bonds were formed and more young men and women began a new life in Neerlandia.

The experiences differ but together these are the people who help to make the community of Neerlandia. It is their stories which are told in this section.

"THERE IS NO PLACE ANYTHING LIKE THIS PLACE ANYWHERE NEAR THIS PLACE SO THIS MUST BE THE PLACE"

I, Sandra [illegible] Wilhuis, was born in Chicago, Illinois on December [illegible], 19[illegible]. I grew up in Bradenton, Florida, having moved there with my parents in 19[illegible]. I graduated from Manatee High School in 19[illegible] and attended Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois from 19[illegible]. It was during this time at Trinity that I met Frederick Gerald Wilhuis and as they say the rest is history.

It was May of 19[illegible] when I was first introduced to life in Neerlandia. What I had expected and anticipated it to be as a town and future home of Fred and me as a married couple turned out to be mere imagination on my part. The Neerlandia Highway seemed an endless stretch of bush (having since been to Jasper I now know what real bush are) and the light at the end of road seemed so far away. The road itself was a mystery, for who had ever heard of paving a road with oil. Our street in Bradenton was paved with shell which is also unusual but, having grown up with it, it was accepted as normal and not deviated from this norm. This biased thinking towards my new life in Neerlandia took years to be replaced by acquiring Neerlandian viewpoints towards life within and without the community.

The William Wilhuis home was one half of a mile east of the Neerlandia crossroads and if you have grown up with streets and avenues you know this giving mileages and directions is a little useless method for finding one's way around. Now of course I see it is the only way to navigate in the countryside. No doubt it would not have taken me two months to remember which side of the road the farm was on if I had been more open minded and had not construed Neerlandia as being upside-down.

When Fred and I arrived at the farm and got out of the car I immediately noticed a peculiar smell in the air. This was unexpected because Fred had told me that it did not smell. Fred's parents were waiting up for us in the kitchen and while this appears insignificant it was my first introduction to visiting at the kitchen table. In our home the only activity done at the dining table was eating. In accordance with our normal living pattern we only ate three times a day and I had no conception of morning and afternoon lunches. In the two months that followed it was great being on the receiving end of the huge delicious meals and all the home baked goodies. I had never prepared a full course meal by myself and the only baking I had done was with prepared mixes. Little did I realize what it would be like to provide and be responsible for the preparation and sometimes the delivery of this same fare for my husband three months hence. I remember my feelings of despair when I went to the store to buy frosting for a cake. I could not imagine that the Co-op did not stock this essential. The feelings worsened when I went home and tried to make the frosting myself with ordinary sugar. I soon came to the conclusion that my college education was not going to help me in becoming a homemaker. Poor Fred learned to cope with four pound pies, raw sausages, vegetables and various burnt offerings. It took eight years and the help of a dear friend before I seriously undertook baking bread from scratch. Fred must have been tearful, because for years he had been served rusk biscuits and undoubtedly was not as anxious to have store bread.

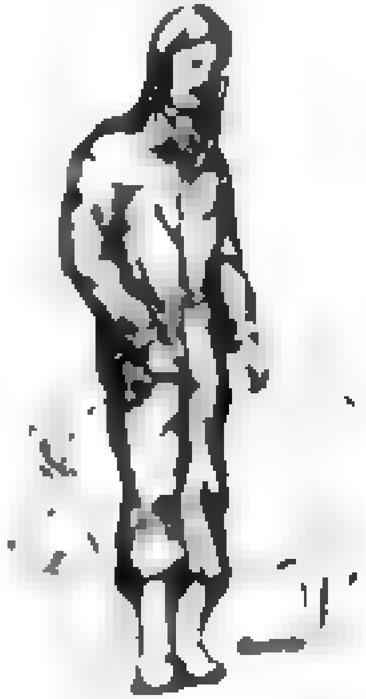
My first visit to the center took only 5 minutes but it was a shocking experience — a culture shock. I wondered where the wooden sidewalks were. Neerlandia was a western town and where Fred's office was. Being a county councillor, I knew he must have an office. I later saw his chair in the county chambers in Barrhead and I saw his secretary every few [illegible]. The Christian Reformed Church building looked quite large and impressive on the outside but once inside I was disappointed in its plainness. My hometown church was a big [illegible] and [illegible] cement block structure so I was just hoping for something special. Over the years I learned to appreciate it for the Word presented there and saw it as the meeting place it was. I was impressed by the fact that everyone went to either the Canadian Reformed or the Christian Reformed Church. Westerman's Garage seemed quaint as did the homes, and the school was just a plain old school. The Neerlandia Co-op was the center for the [illegible] and I enjoyed going there for the mail and found it a great place to shop without money.

As is the case when you move anywhere new, there were a lot of people to meet. The first people I met were Fred's family. Fred was the youngest one at home, and [illegible] everyone married and was older. Coming out of a college campus situation and from a family where all but one were at home, it was strange to go visiting and also to visit families. I tried to remember Fred's brothers and sisters, to who was married to whom, how many children they had and how far away they each lived. As time passed each had a special place in my memory for what they had taught me and I often wonder how they had the patience during that transitional stage from a know-nothing to a know-it-all. This was especially true with Fred's parents who lived on the same yard. Initially I thought this arrangement very undesirable but as it turned out I could not have survived without them helping and teaching me whenever I needed them. This matching of people to marriage partners, number of children, and farm location was also the way I kept everyone else straight. Since almost everyone was a farmer the few that were not were the easiest to remember. It appeared that everyone was either a Tuininga, Westerenga or Nanninga. I was never sure who used to be which before marriage but I was sure that they were all related. It was common to distinguish the various people with the same familiar surname as "[illegible]", "[illegible]", "[illegible] from Ralph", etc. It was not long before I concluded that visiting was the favorite pastime in Neerlandia and it was an easy one that everyone shared. It was easy to engage in because of the every-day familiarity with everyone's work and family, and there were not that many other social outlets.

My father sold frozen foods and we never had a garden so I had to get used to the idea of home grown vegetables and fruits. It was interesting to see how things grew above ground and in the ground and how each vegetable was picked and then frozen or canned. This learning process for acquiring the skills and knowledge for planting and preserving initially seemed a burden and at times I thought if I had to learn one more thing I would scream. I remember going with

Rose (Wilson) and her children to pick apples. When we got home and she volunteered to demonstrate how easy it was to make applesauce, I relented and passed the apples on to another person. I was never fully persuaded that all the results were worth the effort; it tasted any better than store bought. Or maybe in terms of dollars and cents it is more economical to have the wife invest her time in gardening rather than buying everything at the store. Another Pennsylvanian natural resource which it took me awhile to get used to was the water. Fred's dad would run the faucet until it was ice cold and then take a drink and pronounce the water the best anywhere. Needless to say, I thought he was crazy. First of all he was wasting the water and secondly because I thought it tasted awful. Through experience I also learned it was best to run the water for awhile because it allowed the natural gas which came out with the water and caused it to shoot out at the most inopportune times, to escape. The water also fizzed which confirmed my suspicions that it was not as good as my water. Later we learned that you could not waste the well water because you did not pay for any water. Besides that dad had dug the well himself and eventually I did acquire a taste for the water.

I was impressed by the life and abilities of the farmer, particularly those of Fred whom I married on July [illegible]. It appeared that he could do everything, whether it was fixing or working with the machinery, of which there was an endless variety, or handling the many aspects of a hog operation. I had no idea he had so many animals and it was obvious that he needed them all. Never having been around animals and much less a pig, I found these creatures with their peculiar habits quite amusing. Known to eat almost anything, they were ingeniously employed as garbage disposals through the use of the slop bucket, a cage of an empty ice cream pail for kitchen garbage, a burn barrel for other waste, and a third container for tin cans and bottles was a novelty to me since I had grown up with back garbagemen who came to the back door for our garbage cans. [illegible] Fred [illegible] his feeder barn [illegible] he ran a few sows outside and housed his feeders in an old barn. The barn was dark and foreboding with dangling spider webs and it was very smelly. It was not my favorite place to be but when you are someone's shadow you go wherever he goes. I adopted a pair of old coveralls and often helped Fred with his chores. I thought it was fun when the pigs got out and we had to chase them back into their enclosure. I soon learned through Fred's verbal commands that there was a right and wrong way to get pigs to go where you want them to. One adventure I remember was when a sow had farrowed by the far fence line and I obediently went down there with a pail to put the little pigs in. I thought this was cruel and heartless but who was I to make another assignment. The sow was not too fond of the idea either but fortunately I was on the right side of the fence and Fred soon had her coaxed back to the pen for a happy reunion. There was also the time Joe Van Buren came to haul a boar which had tusks. After about an hour of chasing, Fred and Joe cornered the beast, decided to leave the boar [illegible] up the ramp and later that week we got a [illegible] truck. Another misadventure was when I was helping Fred take out a litter. Again through Fred's



verbal barrage I surmised that there was a right and wrong way to do this job. When the chain is wrapped around the fence post and the command is given to "pull" this does not mean to dish on a wrenching tug. "Should I help it if the tractor jerked when I let up the clutch too quickly?" The gradual tightening of the chain is also essential when one is pulling another vehicle with the tractor. The job is no less difficult when one is in the driver's seat of the vehicle being towed. Watch the chain, watch the hand signals, keep a steady foot on the clutch, be ready to brake, and make it all a smooth operation. Somehow driving a tractor was not the same as driving a car. To this day whenever Fred asks me to help pull him out or tow him with the tractor I shudder.

The only livestock on our farm were hogs, but one summer we had a horse and colt fenced in our back yard. This set started me yearning to have a horse and reinforced Fred's dislike of them. I never knew a horse could train a human but every time we went away and came back she would whinny for her feed and water. I remained afraid of horses but did manage to somewhat overcome my fear of dogs. Fred's parents had a Doberman pinscher and after walking around her the first two weeks, I accepted the fact that she did not bite. She was very affectionate and the two puppies which she gave us were adorable. We kept one male pup for ourselves and commenced training him. Although he was good company and an adequate watchdog we hoped training a child would be easier and more rewarding.

Some of the facts of life in the country that made an impression on me and also at times frightened me were the total darkness at night, the quiet, and the howling of the coyotes. These three things in combination were enough to send an occasional chill down my spine. For this same reason, if I had to be outside alone at night, I would call for the dog and focus the flashlight on my path rather than taking the chance of seeing something scary to the left or right. I would run from the car to the house at night and as this was more likely to happen in the winter, I also lessened the chances of getting a chill from the cold. On occasion, before and after our marriage we would go for a drive to the river. It was on the first of these drives that we pulled off of the road and stopped for a look. First I was surprised to see that this particular spot on the bank was used as a dump. The second thing I noticed was how very quiet it was and, as a matter of fact, we were whispering. On another occasion we had my parents to this location and suddenly heard coyotes howling. This was a very eerie sound and was equated in my mind with the cry of a wolf in a horror movie. I was glad to get back to the safety of the car. Thereafter the howl of a single coyote was not so frightening.

Going to college in the North acclimatized me somewhat to all the seasonal changes one goes through in Alberta. However, the college was in a suburb of Chicago where all the streets were paved and a custodian took care of the work involved with the yards, sidewalks, etc. I would say August 1973 was the beginning of my initiation into the spring and shifting as a fact of life with rain, snow and cold weather in a rural setting. A supper was given by Gordon and Marjorie Jennings and ourselves at Vega Hall by friends and family who could not attend our weddings in British Columbia and Florida respectively the month before. I cannot remember if it was raining or had just rained but the grounds were quite muddy. Marjorie and I had decided to wear our wedding dresses and it was quite an accomplishment to get into the hall with them still spotlessly white. I think everyone had a good time that evening but after a trip to the bathroom, I did not feel like celebrating. I cannot say using a pit toilet with a wedding dress on a fun experience. In retrospect this was a minor inconvenience but then it was yet another thing to be endured. The rest of the evening I wondered how I could go home and still remain married to Fred. The thought of having Fred carry me to the car was and is the only good that ever came from mud. After our children came along and as I removed their boots to place them alongside their boots for wet snow, dry snow, and the barn, I would try to see the fun of mud and farm life from their perspective. There is a lot to be said for patience and sunny climates. The driving skills needed for snow, mud, and ice all had to be acquired. My first muddy road was en route to Clarence Gilbert's farm. After much slipping and sliding I left the car halfway down the road and ran crying to the house. This was understandable but years later when I tried to drive our 4 by 4 truck through three feet of snow as Fred would drive his tractor through it, that was unforgiveable. Some things only experience can teach you and as one woman put it, "Never feel bad when something goes wrong because you always learn from your mistakes."

Another idea I strived to adopt was the concept of deriving pleasure from work. In my upbringing summers were holidays but in Neerlandia there was always work to do and with the hours of daylight exceeding those of nighttime it is a workman's paradise. It took a long time to get used to Fred working all the time in the summer. As soon as I comprehended how the change of seasons affected his work load, as well as mine, I would look forward to the coming of winter.

Fall I found beautiful with the leaves changing and disappearing as [illegible]. Autumns were also busy, exciting, and fulfilling, and the sense of accomplishment, relief, and thankfulness when the garden and field crops are in cannot be matched. The celebration of Thanksgiving Day took on a whole new meaning and dimension for me.

After the first lasting snowfall and freeze, when the leaves you never got around to raking are covered and long gone and the field work is done, it's a good feeling to slow down and settle down for the winter. However it does not take long for a smart wife to deduce that the talents and energies so wonderfully displayed from April through October can be used to her advantage in the home during winter. It only makes sense for the husband to engage in making the house our home while the wife works to improve herself and better her skills. This was effected through numerous winter courses offered by Barrhead County and ranged in my case from sewing to calligraphy. I cannot tell you how impressive all these acquired skills sound to those back home and others I write. Otherwise all my seasonal letters seem filled with the same events year in and year out.

I always thought it was a joke that Alberta was called "Sunny Alberta" when I had come from the "Sunshine State" and could see little similarity in the amount of sunshine. Of course, Florida experiences little seasonal change at all. In Florida the rain in no way hinders your work because it does not reduce the temperature and the sun usually returns soon after a rainfall. On a farm, I discovered it makes a great deal of difference in terms of planting and harvesting and the quality of the crops and gardens. Always looking for the positive side of things I found out that rain can be welcomed in spring, summer and fall as an excuse for an outing to Edmonton. Planning for a holiday is a real tricky endeavor as there's never a "good" time to go because of the chores and other work, but the need for one usually develops for the same reasons.

The revelation of the quality of life in Neerlandia did not come upon me the first six months of our married life. The first one-half year together I went everywhere with Fred. After fall work, however, he got a construction job in Barrhead and I was left alone during the day. I hated going out in the cold and snow, and with only two people in the family there was not much work involved in looking after us or the house. Providentially, I was hired as the first official librarian for Neerlandia School. I discovered a whole new world going on one-half mile from the farm. What a challenge learning how a library works and how to catalog books. Working in the school was a great way to get involved with the community by learning who everyone was and it also became a basis for socializing. The children seemed a rowdy bunch and did not readily comprehend that a library is supposed to be "Quiet!" I deemed it my duty to teach them, pushing to the back of my mind recollections of a library as a great place for visiting with friends. I remember the day some boys decided to inspect Fred's car engine during recess. I was appalled and wondered what would become of these children. Reading to the Grade One class was my favorite task as they were good listeners and showed some respect (or was it fear?). I worked in the library for one and one-half years, until November 1975, and retired, so to speak, to await the birth of our first child. At a school assembly the students and faculty gave me a parting gift and I was very touched by that.

* * *

The Patter of Tiny Feet

One night during our first year of marriage, Fred and I were lying in bed when we heard a familiar scratching in the wall. Although it was reassuring to know that there was no way that the scratcher (a mouse?) could get through the wall and into our room, we knew we would not rest until the problem was eliminated. Fred, with his innovative mind, discovered a unique solution to the problem. He filled a pig syringe with Creolin and injected it into a nail hole in the wall. Surprisingly, we heard no more annoying sounds coming from the wall.

* * *

Our son Seth David was born January 5, 1976, in Barrhead. The Barrhead hospital was undergoing renovations at the time and I remember frost on the baseboards, a cold room, and ice forming when they washed the hallway floors. I was surprised to see that my son looked exactly like his Grandpa Olthuis. I guess he did not know he was supposed to be a Wichers. Not to be deterred by this fact we still took him home to Florida to meet my family in April. I found myself as ill-equipped for caring for Seth as for all the other duties I had assumed the past two-and-one half years. I never realized a baby did not sleep all day and night and would not want to. I distinctly remember my youngest brother asleep like an angel in his crib. Also implanted in my memory was going for walks with the baby carriage. I found this was impossible in the winter because of the snow, next to impossible in the spring because of the mud, and only occasionally possible in the summer and fall because of the time factor and the mud. On the one hand we could not wait for him to grow up, and on the other hand each stage of development was so interesting we never wanted him to change. Helping to solve this dilemma, Erin Michele was born January 16, 1978 in the new hospital wing. While revelling in the joys of being a real family, we were amazed to discover how different siblings can be. By this time I had discerned that a person's work, no matter how pleasurable, is never done.

1978 was a busy year and found us more involved with the community. In January Fred was elected to the Neerlandia Co-op Board of Directors. He also served as one of the local delegates on the provincial board of the Christian Farmer's Federation. In the summer of 1978 I began serving on the first Refugee Committee of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and was its secretary until 1981. This was an enriching and enlightening experience in terms of becoming acquainted with the refugees and working with others from the community. Aside from this I belonged to the Christian Reformed Church's choir before Erin was born and taught Sunday School for one term in 1979 and 1980. We were now fully emerged as a family in Neerlandia and its way of life.

Our third child, **Zachary** Ashton, was born July 2, 1981 in Barrhead. Our home was now merrier and noisier and I changed my work theory to say that one's work is never done but it does not matter.

Fred, Sandra, Seth. Front: Erin, Zachary, 1984.

This has been my experience to date and I find our life revolving around the family, farm, church, and community following the patterns dictated by the seasons and the traditions found in Neerlandia. The quotation at the beginning of this story was given to us as a poster when I had been in Neerlandia only one year. At the time I thought in a derogatory way "You can say that again," but now in an approving and complimentary way I can say "There's no place anything like this place, anywhere near this place, so this must be the place!"

Sandra Olthuis

CASE AND JENNIE (BROUWER) AARSEN

As a boy growing up in Lacombe, **Richard** Aarsen always had dreams of becoming a farmer. When in 1976 Richard's father Case (Cornelius) saw an ad for a two-man pig farm in Bloomsbury, they decided to try farming together. The home place in Lacombe was sold, their goods were packed, and the family, composed of Case and Jennie and their children Richard, **Jan**, **Brian** and **Corinne**, set out for Bloomsbury.

Not having farmed on this scale before, there was much to learn. Much was done "by the book", but the Aarsens also accepted advice from seasoned farmers of the Neerlandia community.

Although they lived in Bloomsbury, the Aarsen family attended church and school in Neerlandia and soon felt a part of that community.

Richard married **Carolyne Dykstra** of Edmonton on November 20, 1976. A city slicker, Carolyne had a romantic idea of farming, but the realities of smelly manure and squealing pigs made her realize that it had disadvantages as well as advantages. Carolyne's education on the farm included learning to give pigs shots, clip their tails, and chase sows, as well as learning to cook just like mom.

The next year Case moved to Fort McMurray. A year later, after considering the good times and the bad, the Aarsens sold the farm. Jan and Richard took up carpentry. Then the Aarsen wanderlust struck, and Jan was off for a one year sojourn in Israel, where he worked at the Nes Ammim *moshav* (kibbutz). Later, Jennie Aarsen moved to Edmonton, taking Brian and Corinne with her.

Richard tried his hand at a number of things, including an attempt to start hog farming on a smaller scale (thwarted by local and provincial boards) and doing carpentry work. In 1980, Richard and Jan began Aarsen Carpentry and soon had their hands full. Busy as they were, Jan still found time to court **Corinne Dubbeldam**. They were married June 1, 1984. Richard too found time for his own pursuits. He and Carolyne have three children — **Jesse** Jan (July 27, 1978), **Cheyanne** Grace (August 8, 1980), and **Fern** Cherith (February 17, 1983).

Back: Richard, Carolyne, Fern. Front: Cheyanne, Jesse. 1984

Jan, Corinne, 1984

The Aarsen wanderlust seems to be under control, both Richard and Carolyne and Jan have found life in the unique Christian community of Neerlandia good and spiritually strengthening, as they give and receive the benefits which they in Christ possess.

Carolyne Aarsen

STEVE AND TINE (BOUMA) ABDAY

Tine (Tryntje) Bouma was born in Jakarta on the island of Java in Indonesia on March 28, 1917. Her father **Sijtse** (December 6, 1886), was a missionary teacher on the island. In 1934 Sijtse, his wife **Jantje** (June 25, 1892), Tine, and three brothers returned to the Netherlands.

Steve Martin Abday was born July 28, 1920, at Saksenhill, Saskatchewan. He grew up on his father's farm with four brothers and six sisters. During the Second World War he joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He was sent overseas and served four years in the army as a mechanic and truck driver. He was one of the soldiers who liberated the Netherlands. Tine Bouma came to Canada in May 1947 where she married Steve in the United Church in Melville on July 10, 1947.

On September 4 they arrived in Neerlandia where Tine was to teach. The people of Neerlandia gave them a welcome shower of household items including fresh and canned fruit, vegetables, and meat. A pleasant surprise! They boarded at George Anema's, where George's sister Anne did the housekeeping and cooking.

Steve and Tine, 1947

John Van Riper, the school principal, and his family lived in a little shack which was the only teacherage in Neerlandia. But in November a larger white house was pulled in on skids and placed behind the shack. The Van Ripers moved into the "White House" and Steve and Tine into the shack. Tine sent a picture of the two houses to her parents, and her mother got the impression that Steve and Tine lived in the white house. She wrote back, "If I were you, I'd have that old little shack in front of my house broken down and removed." Tine did not write that the 'old little shack' was their home.

The Abdays needed many things such as blankets, cutlery, and towels, which Tine's parents sent from the Netherlands. But they had a great laugh when one day they received a shoe box full of onions that Tine's dad had sent because he thought no onions would grow in this [illegible]

The School Division had provided a McClary kitchen stove, a drum heater, and a bed in the little teacherage. The drum heater in the living room always frightened Tine. When the tamarack blocks ignited in the middle of the night they gave a big bang and lifted the lid, which then came down again with another bang. It made Tine jump up in bed, asking Steve "What was that?" His answer: "Oh nothing, just the tamarack blocks igniting. I'll put some sad irons on it tomorrow before we go to bed." The following night there was a greater bang followed by heavy clangs! The lid had lifted up again and had sent the sad irons flying through the room.

A greenhorn has to learn so many things about Canada. She wanted to sleep with the bedroom window open as she had in the Netherlands. "That is healthy," she said. Steve said, "Not in Canada," but she insisted. One morning they woke up with a pile of snow on the bedroom floor and snow on the blankets. The window stayed closed until the spring.

The old teacherage had dry rot in the floor, and once Tine stepped through the floor, hurting her leg badly. The Abdays shared that little teacherage with numerous mice which ran over their feet at night. It also had shrews living in the little hole under the kitchen floor, where they stored their potatoes. The shrews managed to eat most of the potatoes.

That first fall Steve helped with the threshing [illegible] and she started teaching forty-five pupils in grades four, five, and six.

Some of Tine's grade six pupils were John Piers, Wilfred Holwerda, Henry Gelderman, Lambert Tuininga, Tillie Egersma, Florence Baker, Tina Jorritsma, and Betty Terpstra. They gave her the regular teacher's treatment, such as garter snakes in my desk drawer and bugs and a mouse in a bottle." The pupils were surprised when she let the garter snake glide around her arm and threw the bugs and mouse out of the window.

"Aren't you afraid of such things?" one of the grade six boys asked in surprise.

"Not at all," she answered. "I was born and raised in Indonesia where lizards crawl on the wall and sometimes fall in your hair or neck. Every morning you shake the giant centipedes and bugs out of your shoes before you put them on."

Tine's monthly salary was $92. Their store bill was about $40, and Tine paid $30 for their housekeeper, Anne Piers, a sister of Klaas Piers. So Abdays had $22 left for some extras!

In the spring Steve started working for William Olthuis and Louis Nanninga, driving their Caterpillar tractor. Tine quit teaching April 30, 1948, because she was expecting a baby.

When the baby was on the way into this world, Steve drove his Model A Ford over the corduroy road past the Mast and Tiemstra farms to take Tine to the hospital. It was a horribly bumpy ride since the rain had washed away the mud on and between the tree trunks. On June 11, 1948, their first son, Sydney Martin, was born. They were very happy, and so were Tine's parents with their first grandchild.

Tine holding Sydney in front of teacherage, 1948

In the fall Tine's parents wrote saying that they longed so much to be with them and the [illegible] Her two brothers also were very keen to come, so the family was considering immigration to Canada. The Abdays were perturbed. This country was not for elderly people who had lived in comfort! Moreover, the little teacherage could not hold all of them. The roof was so leaky that they could see the sky here and there through the rafters. Steve had fixed the roof as best he could, but in the winter it was still very cold. Also, Steve and Tine would have to sleep in the attic to make room for her parents.

Steve and Tine advised them not to come, but come they did — with four enormous boxes which contained furniture and other things for both families. The day they arrived in Neerlandia, it had already rained heavily for two weeks and the roads were muddy and rutted. They had never seen anything like it.

In the meantime Steve had obtained the NE 17-61-5 through the Veteran's Homestead Lease. He paid Cor Hiemstra $2700 for improvements on it. Steve and Tine had bought Louis Nanninga's old house, but unfortunately the new house which was being built for Louis was not ready by the winter, so the Abdays and the Boumas moved into the drafty old Hiemstra house.

Sjoe, Jordje Bouma, 1951

That winter 1949-1950 was very cold. Tine's father slept with his long johns wrapped around his head like a turban and her mother had a toque on. They were often sick with colds and so decided to go back to the Netherlands. On March 21 Albert Elgersma brought them by car to Edmonton to board the train.

It was a sad farewell. Tine was never to see her father again; he passed away one-and-a-half years later. Jim and John stayed for half a year and then they went back too. In the spring the house purchased from Louis Nanninga was pulled onto Abday's land and Steve and Tine moved in. A barn had already been moved there in the fall. Steve kept busy working on the Caterpillar and also clearing some of his own land. Nights were short and working days were long for him. Tine had started teaching again. Jan De Groot's sister Sophie stayed with them, taking care of Sydney and keeping house when Tine was at school.

In the meantime Abdays bought pigs, horses, cows, and chickens, and truly began to farm. At night Tine helped clean the eggs and separate the milk, and in the morning she, along with the children of Klaas and Pete Tuininga, rode to school in Frank Visser's old truck, which came to Baker's Corner. To get to and from the corner she had to walk.

It was a cold walk in the winter, and the road was muddy in the spring. Big clods of mud clung to one's boots and made walking difficult. Often the road was transformed into a lake which stretched out from the corner to Simon Fisher's farm. When this happened Steve would wait for Tine at the corner, take her bag, and carry her home piggyback.

The Abdays also made an agreement with Klaas Tuininga: whenever possible, Klaas would get the students and Tine from the corner with horse and buggy in the summer, and Steve in turn would get them with the sleigh and horses in the winter. Tine was very scared of the horses, especially when the Tuininga boys clapped their hands to make the horses go faster!

Steve and Tine liked living on the farm, and

Steve the horseman, [illegible]

would have stayed on had she not contracted tetanus when she scratched her hand on a rusty nail while whitewashing the chicken coop. She spent four weeks in the hospital and was very weak when she came home. In May 1963 they sold the land to Simon Fisher. Steve then started to work for Dick Fisher, a Massey-Ferguson dealer, and later went to SAIT and NAIT to obtain his Heavy Duty Mechanic Licence. Abdays bought a plot of land west of Neerlandia store and moved the house there. Steve worked as a fieldman and mechanic for Massey-Ferguson until 1967. Then he became a mechanic in the Co-op Service Centre in Neerlandia.

In 1966 Tine's mother, Jantje, and her brother John came to Neerlandia again. John taught here for three years and then returned to the "old country". In 1968 Jantje was hospitalized as a result of a fall. She remained in the hospital until she died of cancer on March 3, 1971.

The Abday family was blessed with two more boys, **Cedric Charles** (November 24, 1955) and **Robin** Steve (March 18, 1958). Sydney married in April 1970 and has four children. With a degree in environmental ecology, he got a job with the Alberta Government in that field. Robin finished his studies in electric computer engineering at NAIT in Edmonton and has a job with Johnson's Computer Controls in Edmonton. He married in June 1981. Cedric is very musical and is still finishing his studies toward a Master of Arts Degree at the U of A.

Steve holding Robin, Sydney, Cedric, c. [illegible]

Tine retired from teaching in 1980. The Abdays were truly blessed and looked forward to Steve's retirement in 1986, but it was not to be. Unexpectedly, the Lord took him to his eternal Home on February 2, 1984. Steve will be remembered by many for his cheerfulness and helpful nature.

Tine Abday

GILBERT AND JEANNETTE (WIESE) BAKER

Gilbert Baker spent most of his childhood in the hamlet of Neerlandia. Gilbert's father, Raymond Baker, passed away when Gilbert was four, so the family moved from the farm to the hamlet. Since the skating rink was only about 150 feet from the Baker home, Gilbert spent a lot of time skating and playing hockey with the other kids around the center. He also spent a lot of time with his brother, John, at their uncle George Anema's place. When Gilbert was fourteen the family moved back to the family farm and after a couple of years began to farm it themselves. In the winter Gilbert and John took turns working away from home. In 1967 Gilbert and John bought two quarters of land from Julius Betke. They farmed it for five years and then sold it.

In 1970 Gilbert married Jeannette Wegner (nee Wiese). Jeannette Winnifred was born December 14, 1943, in Herbert, Saskatchewan. When she was three years old the family moved southwest of Barrhead. She married Edward Wegner on July 7, 1962. They took over the Wegner farm (SE 13-61-3-5) in the Naples area and were blessed with three children: **Karl** Edward, born April 6, 1963; **Connie** Jean, born June 21, 1966; and **Timothy** Todd, born November 14, 1969. Then on March 12, 1970, Edward was killed in a farm accident. Jeannette's brother Larry helped her on the farm that year. Gilbert and John had to go past the Wegner farm to get to the Betke place. When Gilbert went by he would stop in to see if Larry needed any help. As time went on Gilbert stopped by more often. On October 31, 1970, Gilbert and Jeannette were married. They were blessed with three more children: **Raymond** Scott, born January 26, 1972; **Kelly** Gilbert, born November 25, 1974, and **Brian** Steven, born April 15, 1979. Gilbert and Jeannette were also foster parents to ten children over a period of six years. The Wegner farm was bought from the estate by Gilbert and Jeannette in 1973 and they still live there.

Back: Carl, Gilbert. Middle: Raymond, Connie, Jeannette, Kelly, Timothy. Front: Brian. 1982

Over the past years the Baker family has been involved in many activities. Gilbert had been a Boys Scout Cub leader for five years. Tim, Raymond, and Kelly were also involved in the scouting groups. Through the scouts, Tim had the opportunity in 1981 to attend CJ (Canadian Jamboree) 81, a worldwide jamboree held at Kananaskis Valley, near Calgary. Gilbert, Karl, Raymond, and Kelly are involved in hockey — Gilbert as coach and his sons as players. Karl is goalie for the Neerlandia Knights. Jeannette has taken advantage of several county courses and enjoys many handicrafts. Connie and Jeannette have also been involved in the Calvinette program of the Christian Reformed Church. Jeannette served for ten years as counsellor. Jeannette and Connie are both enrolled in the beauty culture program in the Barrhead Vocational School. Karl is employed at Champion Feeds in Barrhead.

Jeannette Baker

JOHN AND LEONA (MAST) BAKKER

John was born June 25, 1953, in Edmonton, approximately two years after his parents had emigrated from the Netherlands. The family first lived in Namao and later moved to the Barrhead area.

Leona Mast spent most of her childhood years in Neerlandia. She met John at a Young Peoples' Rally held in Edmonton. They were married March 22, 1974.

John worked as a hired man for approximately eight years for farmers in the Neerlandia district — first for Case and Adrian Hamoen, then for Simon Tuininga, and finally for Simon Elgersma. After John had worked for Simon for two years, he and Simon went into partnership, calling themselves B & E Farms. Under this arrangement John and Leona bought the NW 18-62-3-5 in 1982 and put up a farrowing operation. The quarter they had purchased was all bush, so they had to do some clearing before they could build.

Back: John, Leona. Front: Jeffrey, Calvin, Ramona, 1984

The Bakkers have three healthy children: **Calvin** John (November 22, 1974), **Ramona** Lucille (July 20, 1977), and **Jeffrey Dwayne** (May 29, 1980).

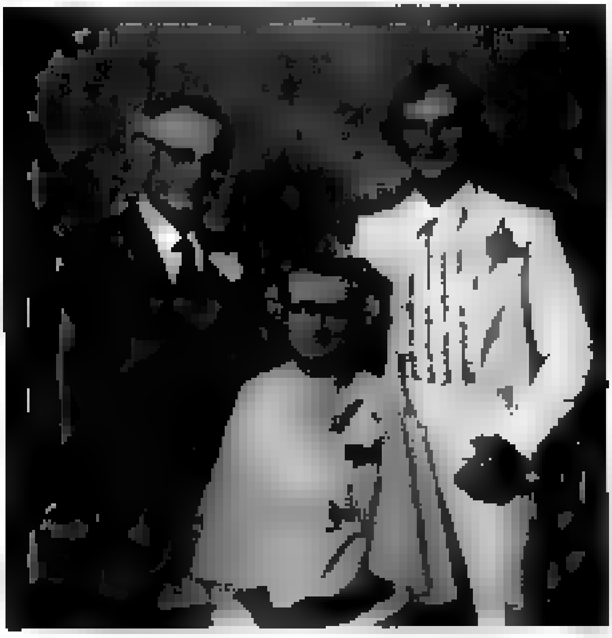
John and Leona both enjoy various hobbies. John enjoys hunting, fishing and trapping. Leona enjoys sewing and sports, and has recently begun taxidermy. The whole family enjoys living in the bush, where they often see wildlife.

Leona Bakker

HENRY AND JO (KRIKKE) BENDER

Jo (Johanna) Krikke was born in 1919 in Neerlandia. In 1933, when Jo was fourteen and had passed grade nine, she, like everyone else, quit school. A few years later grade ten was added to the school, so Jo went back to be taught by Mr. Ashley. Lulla Bos and Jo were the only grade ten students that year. Jo and her sister Gladys did the janitor work in the two-room school during that time.

After passing grade ten, Jo went to Sunnybank, Alberta. She and her friend, Annie Lievers, worked for room and board plus clothing on a farm there. While working, Jo also took grade eleven in the local school. On completing that grade, she came back home to take grade twelve by correspondence and private study. Her father, Klaas, paid eight dollars for each of the four correspondence courses. After nurses' training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton, Jo became a registered nurse in 1943. After working hard to get through school, it was a pleasure to get a monthly paycheck!



Henry, Jo, David, 1978

Back: David, Debbie. Front: Trina, Dayna, 1983

Jo was nursing in the Barrhead hospital when she met Henry Bender. Henry had been born May 24, 1908, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and come with his parents to Mellowdale in 1909. Henry later began farming the NW 34-60-3-5.

Henry and Jo were married February 13, 1952, and then settled on Henry's quarter. One son, David Carl, was born to them on November 21, 1952. Dave took his schooling in Barrhead. In 1966, he quit school to take up farming with his father. Dave married **Debbie Ras** of Edmonton on June 17, 1978. Two daughters, **Trina** Danielle (May 6, 1981) and **Dayna** Shantelle (September 22, 1982) have been born to Dave and Debbie.

Jo Bender

GERHARD AND WILHELMIEN (SCHUURMAN) BEYERS

The Beyers' story begins in the Netherlands where Gerrit (Gerhard) was born September 1,

1928. He was raised on a farm just outside the city of Winterswijk, Gelderland, near the German border. In the early fifties the Canadian government was giving agricultural immigrants priority over other labour immigrants, as there was a shortage of farm labourers. Gerrit wanted to own his own farm and, since he had heard there was plenty of land in Canada, he felt this was a good opportunity.

Gerrit arrived in Edmonton in May 1952, where he was greeted by Henk and Jean Lievers. His initiation into the English language was immediate: Jean did not know any Dutch. Ben and Aace Lievers, the old folks, were the original sponsors, but Henk and Jean took over sponsorship when Gerrit came.

Gerrit had left his fiancée, Wilhelmien Schuurman, in the Netherlands and the year that followed was a lonely one. In 1953 Wilhelmien arrived, and they were married within the month (June 20, 1953), as the law required. Wilhelmien had been born (December 21, 1930) and raised in Winterswijk and had enjoyed all its modern conveniences. As Gerrit carried her through ankle-deep mud to their first home, he realized that it was not going to be easy for her. Here there was no running water and, of course, no indoor plumbing — something they had taken for granted in the Netherlands.

Wilhelmien had hardly ever been to a farm and was terrified of farm animals. But she was a seamstress who had no sewing machine, and that motivated her to act out of character — she decided to make money by raising pigs. Bert Michael had rid himself of what he considered a nuisance when he sold Gerrit a nasty lame [illegible] The sow was in pig and bore nine healthy piglets. Wilhelmien helped raise them and got enough money for a sewing machine, but since then never wanted anything badly enough to use this method of raising money again.

Gerrit spent the winter months in the lumber camps. This meant that Wilhelmien was alone for two-week stretches. Isolated from her family, she had long, lonely weeks. Letters from the Netherlands eased and at the same time increased this loneliness.

Gerrit worked for several different farmers. He had started out with Henk Lievers and later helped George Anema. At George's, he built his own small house and moved it to Simon Terpstra's when he started working there. On March 23, 1955, their first daughter, Shirley Elenora, arrived. In November 1956, Gerrit was offered a job with the Neerlandia Co-op for an unheard-of $230.00 a month. The extra money was certainly welcome, as their second daughter, Winnifred Rosalie, had arrived that fall on October 13. The family moved again, this time to the hamlet. The house was not fancy — several women, in fact, came to offer Wilhelmien their condolences because of the poor accommodations. But it was all they could afford.

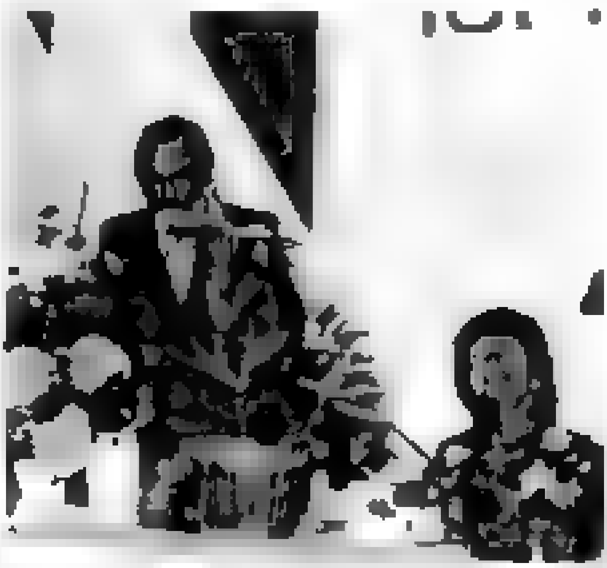
Wilhelmien raising pigs.

As a clerk in the Co-op, Gerrit worked under Bart Vander Wal and later under Mike Vanderkeemel. On October 24, 1962, Gerald Lambert was born. One year later, Gerrit became the manager of the Co-op. The highlight of his career was the Gerrit Beyers Dinner and Roast, celebrating his twenty-five years with the Co-op.

Gerrit never did buy the farm he had dreamed of while still in the Netherlands. God had other plans. The Beyers consider themselves richly blessed in their adopted country.

The Beyers' children no longer live in

First trip back to the Netherlands. Back: Wilhelmien, Gerald, Gerhard. Front: Winnifred, Shirley, 1965



Being roasted. Wilhelmien, Gerhard

Neerlandia. Shirley and her husband, John VanNeck, live with their three children in Spruce Grove. John works as a x-ray technician. Winnifred works as an accountant and is married to Ernie Kotylak. Ernie owns a backhoe operation in Edmonton. Gerald took business administration at NAIT. He is married to Cindy Burnside, who teaches the mentally handicapped. They also live in Edmonton.

Wilhelmien had a heart condition in the last years of her life. On March [illegible] 1984 she passed away after a short illness.

Gerrit Beyers

RALPH AND JOAN (OLTHUIS) BOS

It was a cold day in February 1932 when the stork flew over the Vega district, directly over the farm of Bertus and Hilda Bos (NW 22-62-5-5) and dropped a small bundle into the snowbank. Bertus and Hilda were delighted. It was a bright blue-eyed baby boy, and they named him Ralph (Roelof). Ralph was the fifth in line of seven children in the Bos household.

During Ralph's youth he was active and inquisitive as are most young boys. He and his sister Betsy spent much of their time together, and they often went out exploring the homestead. One day Ma Bos took the two of them out strawberry picking. En route to the strawberry patch they had to pass through a spruce windbreak. Not content to walk on the path, Ralph and Betsy went darting in and out among the trees. Unfortunately there was a low hanging spruce branch which housed a hornet's nest. Ralph ran directly into it — and a great commotion started. Ralph stood in the midst of the furious hornets, yelling hysterically, and Ma Bos had to rush in and grab him out. They all ran home where Ma dabbed the swelling stings with vinegar. This was almost as excruciating as the stings themselves. Needless to say, there were no strawberries to show for it all.

On another adventure, Ralph and Betsy discovered an owl's nest about twenty feet up in a dead tree. They thought it would be fun to capture a young owl and make a pet of it. They quickly gathered together some sticks for Betsy to throw at the mother owl if it came near while Ralph climbed the tree. Everything was going smoothly until Ralph was about three feet from the nest. Then, pow! Something hit him on the head and took his cap off. The mother owl dodged the flying sticks and got in a second attack. Blood started to flow down Ralph's face from the claw marks on his scalp. Ralph was down the tree in a flash and the two ran home empty-handed.

During the winter Ralph's fun and imagination came alive at sawing time. Pa Bos would haul loads of wood out of the bush with his horses and sleigh. Henry Erickson from Vega, taking along some other men, would come with his saw — powered by a Model T motor — to saw the firewood. Ralph and his brothers and sisters enjoyed building houses and forts from the wood blocks. It was all fine when they could pack the wood around for fun, but they complained profusely when they had to go out in the freezing cold to bring the wood in for the stove.

Ralph had most of his schooling in Vega School, but in grade eight he attended Neerlan[illegible] and he quit school.

When Ralph was eleven years old he began to work occasionally for their neighbour, Andrew Nanninga. In 1948, Andrew advised Ralph to file on some land, as there was some available in the Misty Ridge area. Andrew assisted Ralph in selecting a quarter section. Ralph was not old enough to file for land, so his sister Elizabeth took up the quarter (NW 15-62-4-5) in 1949. The first year William Olthuis cleared ten acres of Ralph's land with his D8 Caterpillar.

Ralph began working in Edmonton at [illegible]ous jobs during the winter, living and working [illegible] the second year, Ralph built a twelve-by-six[illegible] tin stove from the Eaton's catalogue for cookin[illegible] canned weiners and beans and canned strawberries. After a tiring day of picking roots, [illegible] spring cot. One spring when he came home [illegible] bear had got in through a window and had also found comfort on it.

Meanwhile, Joan Olthuis was growing up in [illegible] Neerlandia. She has many fond memories of the walks home from school with her sisters and friends. For one thing, they found things [illegible] hips became part of their daily diet. If Evelyn or [illegible] get a special treat of spruce gum. Not only were [illegible] they were also very good at chewing the spruce [illegible] of the other children could do. Thus they did the first chewing for almost everyone. The children also liked to hunt for bird's nests, play hopscotch on the hard road, or throw stones at the telephone lines to see who could make them sing.

Although Ralph and Joan had known each other for many years, they did not become interested in each other until the summer of 1954. Joan's sister Elsie was working in Edmonton and when she came home she talked about her friends there — one of them being Ralph Bos. Joan was intrigued.

After having heard about Ralph from Elsie, Joan had opportunity to see him at George erpsma's farm sale (auction) on May 6, 1955. Here was her first clue to his strong addiction to auction sales - which has not weakened over the years. It was here they planned their first date, which was to attend the wedding party of Gerrit van Dijken and Joyce Reitsma that same evening. So began their two-year courtship [illegible] humid evening, Ralph and Joan, and Joan's sister, Shirley, and Norman Mathers exchanged their marriage vows in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev. J. Piersma officiated. A reception followed in Neerlandia School gymnasium, with Joan's uncle Simon Tuininga as the master of ceremonies. The reception ended abruptly with a severe thunderstorm. Despite the storm, Ralph and Joan fled to Jasper where they had previously planned to spend their honeymoon.

After the honeymoon, Ralph carried Joan [illegible]he threshold of a little white house he had rented from Fred Toebes. In the summer of 1959, Ralph brought Joan to his homestead. Being a handy kind of guy, Ralph had converted his garage into a cozy home with a white [illegible] consisted of a large bedroom and a spacious living room and kitchen, but no indoor plumbing. Joan did her best to make it homey. She made cloth skirting around the kitchen cabinets and frilly white curtains for the windows. Several hand-braided rugs brought warmth to the floor. The only source of heat came from an airtight, wood burning heater, and on cold [illegible] eral times to stoke the fire.

Throughout the years the Bos home has been furnished by a variety of articles purchased at auction sales. Ralph would come home with anything from fine bone china to a load of junk and an old cupboard full of chicken nests. When Joan questioned Ralph as to the value of paying money for a bunch of old chicken nests, she was soon informed that the cupboard contained some valuable oak boards which would be used for repair work in the future. After some investigation Joan discovered that although they had been rearranged to house chickens, all the parts of a buffet were still there. After hours of elbow grease, sandpaper and a bit of Swedish oil the "chicken nests" became a beautiful piece of furniture.

The farm, which trimmed the south of the Athabasca river, presented a spectacular view and was never a dull place. Often wildlife would wander around the yard or could be seen passing through the fields. The most frightening visitors were the bears. They would saunter around, sniffing the animals and, on one occasion, they tore sheets of plywood off the barn. The pigs and cows were set out to graze in a fenced-off area of the forest, and often the pigs were attacked by bears and would return home with bloody scratches and gouges in their backs.

Living "up west" was a long drive from Grandma's house and the Centre so in the winter of 1966, when the Plantinga farm (W½ 5-62-3-5) just two miles from the Neerlandia centre, was posted for sale in the Neerlandia Co-op, Ralph and Joan took a great interest. There was much prayer and discussion in the Bos home as to whether they should try to purchase the farm. Finally it was decided that in order to live their lives and bring up the family in a way pleasing to God, they should choose the Plantinga farm. Although the homestead was often missed, there were no regrets about this decision.

After the family moved into their new home Ralph went right to work fixing up the house and installing an indoor bathroom. Throughout the years the little house had many renovations and additions. Today it is a comfortable home with white siding and bright blue shingles.

Ralph worked on road construction for the County of Barrhead and farmed the half section while Joan and the older children cleaned the Neerlandia School. This life-style proved to be very much of a strain on family life. In the fall of 1978, Ralph became ill with myasthenia gravis, a disease causing loss of muscle control and in Ralph's case badly affecting his vision. Although there is no known cure, the disease was in remission for five years. It is now increasingly limiting Ralph's activity again.

Glen, Wendy 1961

On May 16, 1958, **Wendy Lee** was born. She married Adrian Aamoutse on August 7, 1981, and they live in Edmonton with their son. Adrian is part owner of Rainbow Eavestroughing.

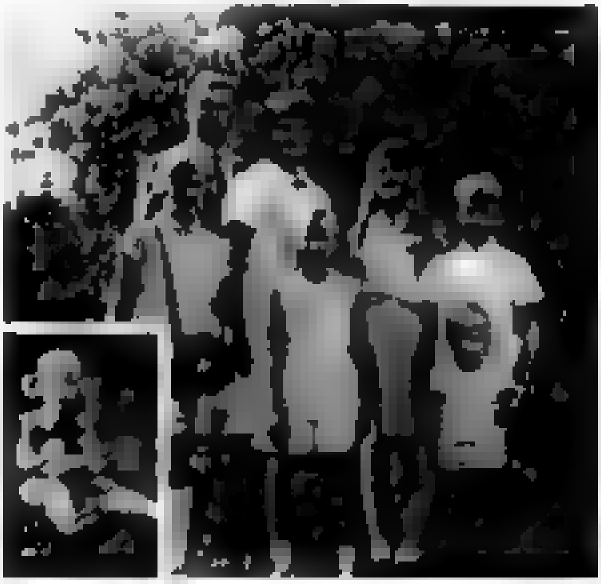
As the first snow fell on November 1, 1959,

Glen Miles joined the Bos family. Glen attended NAIT and has completed his fourth year as an electrician.

By the time January 5, 1961 rolled around, **Shelley** Joan brought joy to the Bos family. Shelley decided to make farming her career and has gone into the dairy business with her dad.

In the year of 1963 **Karen** Hilda made her appearance into the Bos family on May 24. She is attending Dordt College.

The summer of 1967 is a time the Bos family will never forget — all the heat, the dry thunderstorms, and the numerous brush fires. During that summer, on August 11, **Sheldon** Bertus joined the family.



Ralph, Joan, Wendy, Glen. Front: Shelley, Karen, Sheldon, 1970. Inset: Stephanie, 1978

On August 3, 1974, the Bos family experienced the happy occasion of the birth of **Stephanie** Jayne, who made the family complete.

Joan Bos

TEAKE DOUWE BULTSMA

Teake Douwe Bultsma was born on March 31, 1880, in Wolvega, Friesland, the Netherlands. In May 1905 he married Beeuwkje Hoekstra. In 1916 they immigrated to Canada and raised four children on a farm south of Burdett, Alberta. In 1945, his wife passed away. About 1949 Teake came to Neerlandia to be near his daughter Grace Schuurman and her family. He resided on the lot in the hamlet presently owned by John De Gier (1984). In 1967 he passed away and was buried in Lethbridge. He is remembered by many for his habit of migrating south for the winter. When Teake Bultsma headed south (to visit his family in southern Alberta), one knew winter could not be far behind. One humorous incident comes to mind regarding Teake Bultsma. A teacher once asked her pupils, "What are the signs of spring?"

She received the following replies:

"When the snow melts."

"When the robins come back."

And one particularly astute lad replied, "When Mr. Bultsma comes back."

Grace Schuurman

WILLIAM AND MARIA (HOFING) DE BOER

In June 1951, the De Boer family left the Netherlands and boarded the *Volendam* for the voyage to Canada. The family included William, born November 1, 1915, in Wester Nijkerk, Friesland; Maria Theodora, born November 10, 1912, in Rinsumageest, Friesland; and their children: **Arny** (Akke), born in 1938; **Richard** (Rindert), born in 1939; **Ruby** (Romkje), born in 1942, and **John** (Jan), born in 1948. Work for William was available in Coaldale, Alberta, with a sugarbeet farmer who was sponsoring them. William, even though he had been raised on a farm, was not a farmer at heart. In the Netherlands, he had worked for the government, but had decided to emigrate because he disagreed with the post-war government's interference in economic affairs.

The family arrived in Canada on June 26 and were soon aboard a train headed for Alberta. When they arrived in Winnipeg, however, they were informed that their sponsorship had been cancelled, and were directed to Edmonton. From there, they went to Pickardville where William got a job working on Louis Lambert's farm. In March 1952, their youngest child, **Ann Marie**, was born.

In June 1952, the De Boer family moved to Barrhead where William worked in Barrhead Creamery for a few months. While there, he met Jerry Reitsma of Neerlandia, who informed him of a position available at Neerlandia Co-op. William was appointed to fill the vacancy, taking over from Alle Munneke.

The De Boers arrived in Neerlandia in the fall of 1952 and occupied the living quarters upstairs in the Co-op store building. Since they were used to urban living in the Netherlands, Maria especially had difficulty in getting used to the rather isolated situation here, more so since they could not afford a car. It also soon became apparent to William and Maria that career possibilities for their children in and around Neerlandia were not promising. They did not look forward to staying behind here while their children moved to the city. For these reasons their stay in Neerlandia was rather brief.

Three years after the De Boers' arrival, their oldest child had already moved to Edmonton, and they decided to make the move as well. From [illegible] William was business administrator for the Edmonton Christian Schools, then was appointed assistant manager of Edmonton Christian Credit Union Ltd. He held that position until his retirement in [illegible].

Although the De Boers' stay in Neerlandia was brief, they will never forget that period of their lives. William had the privilege of serving for about two years as elder in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, while Rev. Lambertus Mulder was pastor. They appreciated the many friends they made during that time. The people of Neerlandia contributed much to their adjustment to Canadian life and customs.

William De Boer

JOHN AND ALICE (LAM) DE GIER

John (Jacobus Johannes) De Gier was born in Waarder, South Holland, the Netherlands, on the 20th of November 1925, the second child in a family of four. After John trained in business management and bookkeeping, he got a job with the *Christelijke Boeren Tuinders Bureau* (Christian Farmers Greengrocers Bureau) in Utrecht. Through this work, he met Alice (Alie) Lam, whom he married in 1953. Alice had been born in Amersfoort, Utrecht, in 1923.

John had served with the Netherlands Marine Corps in Indonesia for three years, and on his return to the Netherlands had found his homeland too small and overcrowded. In addition, houses were hard to come by, so in May 1953 John and Alice took their honeymoon on the *Veendam*, enroute to Canada.

After their arrival in Alberta, they worked in many small towns before settling in Neerlandia in 1963. Earlier that year, while working as a bookkeeper in a furniture store in Edson, John had read in the *Calvinist-Contact* (a Christian weekly newspaper) about an accounting job at the Neerlandia Co-op. He went for an interview, got the job, and a month later moved to Neerlandia. By now it was not just John and Alice, however. Little De Giers had arrived one after the other. There were now six children: **Mary Jane** (1954), **Bert** (Gysbertus, 1955), **Evelyn** (1956), **Jeanette** (1958), **Grace** (1959) and **Connie** (1963).

Back: Bert, Evelyn, Mary-Jane. Front: Jeanette, John, Grace, Alice, Connie. 1966

The only place for them to live was in the house over the store. With six children, ranging in age from six months to eight years, Alice had her hands full. They would ride their three-wheelers around the kitchen table, bounce balls, jump off the steps, and generally make a racket like children do. Meanwhile, downstairs in the office, Gerrit Beyers, the store manager, and John would try to get their work done. At least once or twice a day, Gerrit would run upstairs to tell Alice to keep those kids quiet once and for all, but to no avail. Several times he would come up to ask Alice whether she had the stove fan on, because the store smelled like sauerkraut. Somehow, they managed to get along through the years.

One day, it was so windy that Alice's wash — diapers, sheets, and all — had blown around the clothesline. When Carl Maat, who worked as the gas truck-driver at that time, noticed Alice's fruitless efforts to turn it back, he jumped into his truck and drove it under the clothesline. He stood on top of the truck and rescued the wash by straightening the mess out with a long stick

When Connie was four years old, her playmate was Gerald Bevers. In all of their school years, no one ever let them forget the locally famous "flour-shed incident". One day, Gerald and Connie saw the door of the flour shed open, so they went in. They found a jack knife and proceeded to rip open a couple of bags of nice, white flour. They laughed and began throwing it all over each other. When Gerrit walked out of the store, he saw great white clouds billowing out of the shed. Was he upset! He sent Gerald and Connie both straight home. Connie did not dare walk in, so she knocked on the door. When Alice answered, she did not know who it was. Connie was white from head to toe!

There were many Hallowe'en pranks that young people used to play around the store. Three young boys were so strong that they could push John De Gier's rabbit coop right over, with rabbits and all. The boys did not turn out too bad after all, as today (1983) one is a teacher, one a deacon in the church, and another a fine citizen and father of four.

Presently, John and Alice reside in Neerlandia [illegible] as postmaster and bookkeeper. John takes pride in his mathematical skills and ability to remember the details of financial transactions. He is Neerlandia's answer to the computer age. Throughout the years, John has retained his military bearing and can be seen striding briskly around the hamlet; riding his bicycle in the summer, or, in the winter, cross-country skiing for miles on end. His physical fitness level would put a younger man to shame, as he has often demonstrated while helping to unload the truck delivering groceries to the Co-op. Alice, meanwhile, goes quietly about her housekeeping tasks, though she may be seen biking with John or busily involved in other community activities.

[illegible] Mary-Jane [illegible]

Mary-Jane is living in Edmonton, where she enjoys a hairdressing career. Bert has his own house in Vega and works as a carpenter. Evelyn works at Edmonton International Airport. Jeannette attends Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grace is teaching home economics at Edmonton Christian High School. Connie lives at home and works for Barrhead Recreation Department as a secretary/programmer.

Alice De Gier

SIMON AND HENRIETTA (TUININGA) DE GROOT

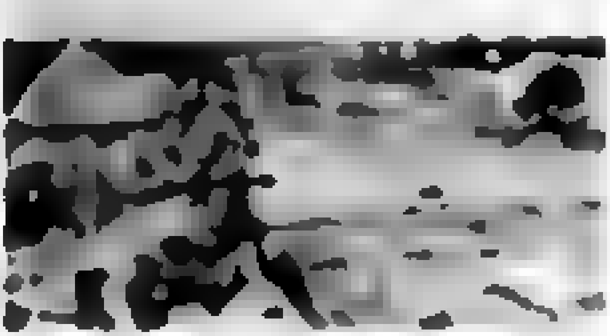
The family of Auke and Trientje de Groot lived in the small village of Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1948 there was much talk about immigrating to Canada. Father Auke decided that perhaps his son Siebren should immigrate because Siebren's younger brother Ulbe was coming home from Indonesia and there was not enough work on the farm for both of them.

So on August 16, 1948, Siebren stepped on the [illegible] and steamed across the ocean. Nine days later at 10:00 a.m., he arrived in Quebec City, and set out again that evening on a four-day train trip to Edmonton. From there he left by train for Barrhead, where he had relatives waiting for him. His cousin Gerben Tiemstra took him to his home in Neerlandia, where he stayed with Gerben and his wife Trientje.

Since Siebren arrived just in time for harvesting, there was plenty of work waiting for him: [illegible] be very tiresome work, and he had a hard time keeping up. Once he was familiar with the work, he found that he was enjoying himself

But my, did that bed look inviting after a day's work.

For the first three months of 1949, Siebren did farm chores for Herman Wieringa, who was very busy as a fieldman for the Immigration Committee. Then in April, Siebren went to work on the farm for Gerben Tiemstra. That summer he also spent many days working on the new Christian Reformed church building, after the second church building had burned down in November 1948. The next two years Siebren worked in the bush during the winter, and did odd jobs during the summer.



Putting up the first rafter of the church. Simon, 1949

Beginning in 1950, Siebren lived with his brother Tom and his family. He got to know the Clarence Tuininga family, as they were Tom's closest neighbours. Many times Siebren rode with Jelle and Lambert Tuininga to Young Peo[illegible] tionship started to grow between Henrietta Tuininga and Siebren.

During the years of 1952 to 1955, Henny worked as a clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op and for part of the time Siebren was working for a construction crew building on the six-room school. Siebren and Henny went to work together. There were times when they had to walk to work because of poor road conditions or flooding. One spring Siebren carried Henny over several washouts in a field. They did not stick to the highways as the shortcuts were much shorter and more interesting! Siebren and Henny set their wedding date for October 21, 1955, so Siebren's parents could attend because they were coming from the Netherlands in August to visit. The first year-and-a-half the couple lived in Edmonton where Siebren worked. In June 1956 Siebren became a Canadian citizen and officially had his name Canadianized to Simon. On September 26, 1956 their first child, **Christina** Irene, was born at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton.

At this time, Henny's uncle Simon Tuininga had a quarter and a fraction of land for sale (SE 26-61-4-5, NW 26-61-4-5). Simon and Henny bought that land and moved back to Neerlandia in March 1957. They also bought a small one-room house from Uncle Simon Tiemstra which was moved to the farm on which Simon's brother Tom was already living (NE 19-61-3-5), since Simon and Tom farmed together. A bedroom and porch were built on to their small house. Light was provided by gas lamps that had to be pumped up every hour. On February 26, 1958, their son, **Alfred** Charles, was born. Those were the days of hauling water and wood for the cook stove. Most of the time they had no problem keeping the one-room living quarters warm. But on New Year's Day 1959 the temperature dropped to 35 degrees below zero with high winds. That night Simon slept (or did he?) on the kitchen floor with his feet under the [illegible] it was time to stoke the fire. The children slept in the bed with Henny. A bottle of Eau-de-Cologne on the dresser froze solid that night. By February 1959 they were hooked up to Calgary Power.

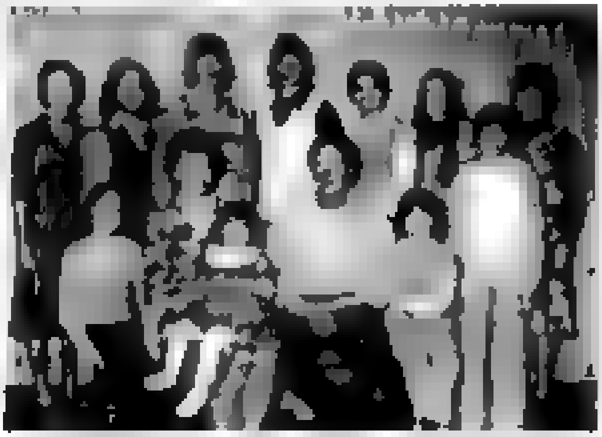
On April 15, 1959, Simon and Henny were blessed with the births of twin boys, **Clifford** and **Clayton**, and the one bedroom was bursting at the seams. The de Groots learned that Joe and Sophie Tuininga had their home for sale, bought it, and moved it to their location.

During the next five years, Simon and Henny's family was enlarged with the births of three girls, **Teresa** Jane (July 11, 1960), **Emma** (December 26, 1961), and **Rita** Arlene (February 23, 1964). Every time the family grew, more living space was needed. They bought a new house to hold the increasing family. Until that time they did not have the convenience of running water. It was in 1968 that the benefits of [illegible] the house. How delightful that first tub bath was.

Three more boys were added to the family: **Eugene** [illegible] **Jarvis** Glenn (November 28, 1967) and **Timothy** James (August 23, 1969). With this family of ten children, the pains and trials of sleepless nights

Cliff, Alfred, Clayton, [illegible], Teresa, Simon, Christina, Emma, Henry, 1983

were endured often, due to every conceivable communicable disease that hit the country: colds, flu, measles, ringworm, trench mouth, impetigo, pinkeye, mumps, chicken pox, the fifth disease (some kind of rash), and others



Back: Rita, Alfred, Clayton, Clifford, Christina, Rita, Emma
Front: Jarvis, Henry holding Carla, Simon, Timothy, 1977

Carla Simone was born July 6, 1975. Timothy had started school by this time, so Carla's presence was much enjoyed by her dad and mom.

All of the children attended the Neerlandia School through grades one to ten. Then they went to the Edmonton Christian High School for grades eleven and twelve.

After high school, Christina went to Dordt College for one year and then worked five years in Edmonton at the Christian Credit Union. On July 6, 1979, she married Robert Koole, a teacher in the Edmonton Christian High School. They live in Edmonton with their two children.

After completing high school, Alfred returned to the farm to help his dad. He did some travelling before settling down with his wife **Rita Boender**. Rita was born June 10, 1957 in Edmonton. But for the first eighteen years of her life she lived on a dairy farm in the Ellerslie area. After receiving her B.Ed., majoring in Special Education, Rita applied for a position as a counsellor at Rehoboth summer camp for handicapped children. Here she met Alfred. Their courtship consisted of one week per year for four years — and this week was always spent at camp. After the week was over they said their goodbyes; Alfred would return to the farm and Rita again taught native children with special needs from the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve in the St. Paul area. On July 30, 1982, Rita and Alfred married and she is back on a dairy farm again. Alfred is operating a dairy business on a quarter of land (NW 20-61-3-6) he bought from Simon. A baby girl, **Lisa Maria Trientje**, was born to them December 20, 1983.

Alfred, Rita, Lisa, 1984

Clifford attended Dordt College for four years to obtain a political science degree. He then worked for one year in Edmonton at Edmonton Potato Growers and is presently in Toronto at the Institute for Christian Studies furthering his education in politics.

After school, Clayton took one year at Old's Agriculture College but quit when he married his high school sweetheart, Jackie Zylstra [redacted] March 20, 1981. They are presently living in [redacted] Oudsten with his pig operation.

Teresa took a two-year course at NAIT in biological science and is presently working at the U of A as a lab technician doing research in juvenile diabetes.

Emma took a one-year sewing program at [redacted] Den Oudsten, from Lacombe. They were married in November 1981 and have a flourishing pig farm. They have one son.

Rita took one year of general courses at The King's College and is presently taking a two [redacted] diploma at Grant MacEwan. She is engaged to Timothy Schouls. Eugene is attending Vermillion Agriculture School (Lakeland College).

For many years Simon and his sons worked together on the farm, milking cows and selling hogs. In 1966 a new cow barn was built and milking machines were introduced. In August 1980 the milk was put into a bulk tank and sold as fluid milk. What a relief it was not having to wash the separator any more. In November 1982 Alfred took over the dairy business and started on his own. This left Simon to tend his hogs, calves and some beef animals. This lighter work load is enjoyed by Simon, as he is getting older and there are not as many helping hands around.

Henrietta de Groot

TOM AND IDA (TYMSTRA) DE GROOT

Tom (Thomas) De Groot was born January 16, 1919, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Ida (Itske) was born March 30, 1920 in Makkum, also in Friesland. They were married September 19, 1945. Two children were born to them in the Netherlands. **Arthur** (Auke) on November 7, 1946, and **Hilda** (Hiltje) on October 31, 1948.

Both Tom and Ida grew up on farms and felt a kinship to the land and the life of a farmer. But they lived in Alkmaar, North Holland, where Tom was employed by the City Police Force. In 1948 they made up their minds to immigrate to Canada, where there were greater possibilities [redacted] wrote to his uncle Simon Tiemstra about their plans. Soon they received a letter from the fieldman, Herman Wierenga, that George Anema was to be their sponsor and that they should begin preparation for immigration to Neerlandia, Alberta.

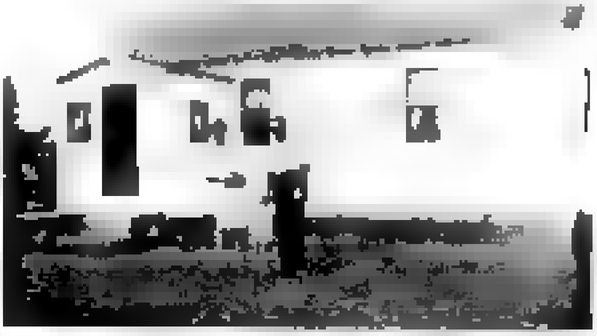
The family left the Netherlands on March 26, 1949, with the *Edam* of the Holland-America line. The trip was great, the De Groots did not experience seasickness as so many others did. They landed in New York on April 8 and from there travelled by train to Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and finally to Barrhead. They were very happy to be off that train, and to see Tom's brother, Simon, and Gerben Tiemstra, who were there to welcome them.

After staying at Gerben Tiemstra's place for a week, Tom, Ida, and family moved to a little house in the hamlet of Neerlandia. Tom started working on building the new church. He worked there until the fall of 1949, and then helped Albert and Gerben Tiemstra with the harvest.

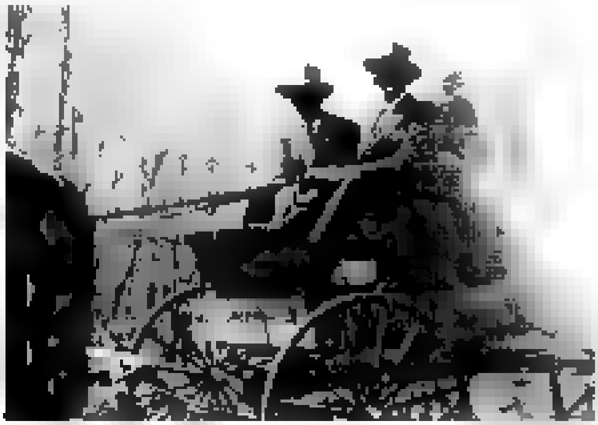
With winter approaching, Tom and Simon [redacted] agreed to sell them the N ½ 19-61-3-5. A deal was struck and the papers were signed. Tom and Simon were landowners, and the farming worries began. The first task was to go to the bush for poles and rails to make a fence.

When winter came Tom and Simon went to work at the Imperial Lumber camp about forty [redacted] there all winter. Ida was left to manage on her own. Water was hauled from the store, and milk from John Ingwersen. Most of the time little Arthur and Hilda would go along, but when it was very cold Ida decided they must stay home. At these times Arthur was tied down tight on the cot, and Hilda tied in her bed. This was to protect them from the dangers of the burning-hot wood stove.

In the spring of 1950, Tom decided they would move to the farm. The house was put on skids and moved to the farmstead. Summer quickly turned to fall, and in return for having their grain threshed, Tom and Simon helped the Tiemstras again.



Gerben brought us to the store, where he had bought a little house for our family that was standing at the place where Marinus old house now is.



For going to church we had the team of horses and the buggy. In the summer time this was nice to have a ride with horse and buggy. But when it was getting colder we had warm stones in the grain box, with canves over the box. Between church time, lots of people invited us over for dinner, what we greatly appreciated.

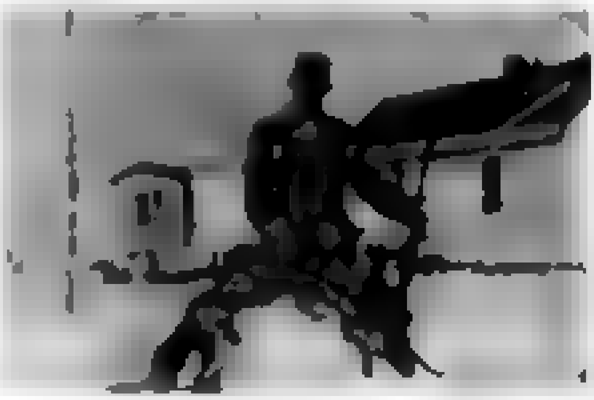
I could start working, with helping to build a new Church in Neerlandia the old church was burned down in the Fall of 1948

In the spring of 1950 we came back to the store. The first we did was to get a little house on skids and moved it to the NE 19-61-3-5. We got a old Mc Cormick tractor on steel wheels with a breaking plow, so that we were able to do some field work and also some breaking.

The next picture you can see the threshing outfit in operation also the old school bus (truck), which Albert Tiemstra was driving that time. At harvest time Frank Visser was doing it for Albert. Theresa, Harold, Simon Albert and Tom on the load pitching bundles in the thres machine

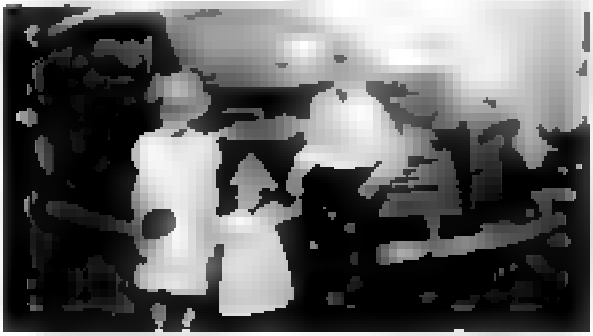
In the fall 1960 we where keeping the Thomases again for the [illegible] Albert [illegible] taking care of Steve and the boys while the [illegible] was working at the Neerlandia [illegible]

Winter 1961 Simon was working out [illegible] taking care of the family and during the chores. At [illegible] time we had the [illegible] mostly running rond on the yeard. You can see the porkyes like to help me whyle i was making clean some frozen fish. Little Arthur also has a look



There were lots of cajoute rond that time. When they came too [illegible] as you can see on the picture. [illegible]

After the harvest of 1960 John [illegible] Bert [illegible] [illegible] have to build a bunkhouse where we could eat and sleep.



In the spring 1963 we bought a old car from Ronnie [illegible] (Neerlandia Garage) but we had bought somebody else troubles. Soon we traded them off for a better car in Barrhead. This was a great improvement compared with the horses and buggy

More people means more food consumers so once in a whyle we have to buch a porkje.

The family start growing up and there came marriage in the family. Here is the whole family together at the wedding from Arthur in California August 1973. Tena, Arthur, Hilda, Ida, Tom, Patricia, Alice, Rose (1973).

In 1961 we decided to build a new house and in 1962 the first March we moved in. It was sure a big change for our family. This move had good results. On Canada day 1963, Patricia came to join our family.

Spring 1977 Tom start driving the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, till near the end of 1983. I was injoying this job going round in the country seeing what all the farmers where doing.

Editors' note: Tom De Groot wrote the captions for his own pictures. With his permission we have written them exactly as he submitted them.

Tom's sister **Theresa** came from the Netherlands in 1950. She worked at Tiemstras and Abdays for a few years before marrying Klaas [illegible]

After the harvest of 1950 Tom and Simon along with several others, did some logging north of Vega to make lumber for their own use When that was done it was back to Imperial Lumber for the rest of the winter with Ida and the children again staying by themselves on the [illegible] bring Ida two barrels of water each week, because there was no well on the farm. The Klaas Tuininga family also provided Ida and the children with transportation to church

In the spring, Tom and Simon arrived back home from the bush camp only to find Albert Tiemstra and John Ingwersen waiting for them They were needed to help haul the sawed lumber from the bush north of Vega. It was March [illegible] ting very soft so it was important to work quic[illegible] and they got stuck more than once with the loads. It took two days and two nights of steady working to get that lumber out no rest periods By Sunday morning the job was done and John said that he would take Simon and Tom by car as far up their road as he could. There were high snowbanks on the sides with deep ruts down the centre and soon the car could go no further. Simon and Tom started walking home, but they were just like drunks from the exertion of the past two days They sat down on a snow bank for a rest and neither knew how long they sat there — the howling of the coyotes finall[illegible] into bed, and slept the rest of the day, not waking up till Monday morning

That summer was a busy one: the new lumber was made into a barn for cattle and pigs, and some fencing was done Winter came too soon that year and one quarter had to be left in stooks in the field. But by April 17, 1952, they were able to complete the threshing. That spring the family increased in size too. **Tena**, their first Canadian, was born May 7, 1953. The temperature was around 70 degrees above, and about two days later the trees were full of leaves.

The next winter Tom stayed home to care for the family and feed some pigs and cattle On February 3, 1956 the De Groots rejoiced when another child **Alice**, was born. That year they also bought two quarters (NW 26-61-4-5, SE 26-61-4-5) from Simon Tuininga

Tom and Ida were happy with Canada, so the next step was citizenship. On the cold, windy February 21 1957, they became Cana[illegible] De Groot moved from Edmonton and began farming with Tom and Ida on a fifty-fifty basis That meant they could farm more land, so in 1958 an adjoining quarter, the NW 20-61-3-5, was purchased from Jack Tuininga

The family kept growing too. Another girl, [illegible] house was getting too small, so plans were made for a larger one On March 1, 1962, they moved into their new house and on July 1, 1963 **Patricia** was born

The family grew up all too fast All the children left Neerlandia. Arthur, Alice, and Tena are married Arthur and Alice and their families live in B C. Arthur teaches in the Christian School at Abbotsford He received his BA degree at Dordt Tena and her family live in Edmonton. The other three children are single and live in Edmonton Hilda is an RNA at the Royal Alexandra hospital. Rose is a doctor's assistant at the Lincs Associates Clinic, and Patricia works at the Bank of Montreal

In 1976 Tom sold his share of the farm to Simon, keeping only the yard site and a few acres. A retirement job — driving the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op — became available in 1977 Tom enjoyed delivering fuel and seeing what all the farmers were doing But, as Tom said, "On everything here on earth comes an end." Tom and Ida, senior citizens, are retired They look back and are thankful for the many blessings they have received; they look ahead to far greater blessings

Tom De Groot

MARTEN AND HILDA (TERPSTRA) DE JONG

[illegible] Schamegoutum, Friesland, the Netherlands, arrived in Canada for the first time in 1928. His first impression was that Canada was big and it was cold Marten lived in Edmonton in a boarding house and worked the late shift as a baker at McGavin's. After a few years in Canada, Marten went back to Friesland and married Hilda

Terpstra, who had been born September 24, 1905, in Lollum.

In the Netherlands eight children were born to Marten and Hilda: **Nellie** Winnie (June [illegible] 1931), **Winnie** Nellie (January 15, 1933), **Adrian** Willy (July 30, 1934), **Mike** Douglas (August 9, [illegible] and **Alan** (September 30, 1939), and **Pat** Juliana (April 30, 1946).

On August 16, 1948, Marten de Jong [illegible] destination was Neerlandia, where their sponsor, Pete Tuininga, lived. Marten liked Canada the first time, and that's why they came back. They travelled on the boat *Tabinta*, which had once carried troops. As soon as they docked in Quebec they went to the train station for their three-day trip to Edmonton.

The train they travelled on had a steam engine and it was filthy. The de Jongs even found sand between their sandwiches. On Saturday the family arrived in Edmonton and took baths at the Immigration Office. The water instantly turned black; it took at least two baths just to get the dirt off. For the weekend they stayed at the George Visser and Frank Stiksma homes.

On Monday morning the de Jongs boarded the train for Neerlandia. Pete Tuininga met them at the train station in Barrhead. He drove the family to Neerlandia and showed them their house which was located on his chicken farm. On September 1 Marten started to work for Pete on the farm.

The de Jongs were only in Neerlandia a few days when there was a knock on the door, and there stood a couple and their seven children: the Kippers family had come to welcome them. This was very nice, but Marten could not understand why they took all their children along. This was something that had never been done "back home."

It was quiet and roomy in Neerlandia com- [illegible] de Jongs found it hard to adjust to the change. The chickens, though, were unbearably noisy. Marten used to tell his children "all they do is yack and yack but they don't tell me [illegible] other thing the family had to get used to. The chickens used to wear steel blinders so that they would be able to look straight ahead only and could not pick at each other.

The de Jong children would often see men pick celery, carrots, and corn out of the garden and eat them raw. The children did not understand how the men could do this and did not even know what it was the men were eating. To them it was all new.

Marten recalls when his ninth child was born, "On October 28, 1948, our ninth child decided to arrive. We didn't have a car so I got on one of our bikes and went to the Hiemstra's. They had a car and could give Hilda a ride to the hospital in Barrhead. Arnold, one of the Hiemstra's sons, drove me back to our house to pick up my wife. This boy was nineteen years old and he was petrified that the baby was going to be born in the car. He had good reason to worry because our ninth child, **Jenny** Folkje, was born only ten minutes after we arrived at the hospital. For six weeks after Jenny was born, my wife was critically ill with inflamed [illegible] but she survived and healed very nicely."

Winter came, and the de Jongs had only their Dutch bikes for transportation. One Sunday Winnie, Adrian, and Marten got out the bikes and started to bike to church in all the snow. When they were halfway there the Hiemstras stopped and gave them a ride. [illegible] day the grader would plow the roads and on Sunday they were totally blocked with snow again.

Marten was earning seventy-five dollars a month for a family of eleven people, but managed to save twenty dollars a month since they [illegible] Jongs' stay in Neerlandia came to an end because Pete's daughter Grace was getting mar- [illegible] de Jong's house. So the de Jongs packed up their things and moved to Edmonton. There Marten first worked in Alberta Bakery and soon afterward started his own bake [illegible] other daughter was born in Edmonton.

Marten de Jong

JERRY AND ANN (ELGERSMA) DeVRIES

Jerry DeVries was born in Barrhead Hospital on December 11, 1942. He went to school first in Neerlandia, then in Barrhead, and finally to the University of Alberta in Edmonton. After one year at university, he decided that was not the place for him. He returned to Neerlandia,

Jerry holding Ryan, Evelyn, Ann, Jason, Beatrice, Larry, 1980

where he spent the majority of the next five years on his father's farm

On June 16 1967 Jerry married Ann Elgersma, then they started a farming operation on the S.W. 8-62-3-5 Here Jerry and Ann raise hogs and cattle

They have been blessed with five healthy children. **Beatrice** May (June 22, 1968), **Evelyn** Rose (October 24, 1969), Larry Grant (October 23, 1972), **Jason** Edward (September 18, 1975) and **Ryan** James (November 13, 1979)

Jerry DeVries

TERRENCE AND JENNY (VAARTSTRA) DE VRIES

Terrence de Vries and Jenny L. Vaartstra August 20, 1946) of Edmonton were married August 4, 1967 in the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton They began farming on the de Vries family farm. Their five children **Patricia** Grace (October 1, 1968), **Susan** Wendy (September 15, 1969), **Robert** Jay (April 1, 1971), **Sandy** Lee (June 2, 1972), and **Beverly** Jean (December 6, 1974) help on the mixed farming operation which is located on the SW 7-62-3-5

Jenny de Vries

EDWARD AND JOANNE (HULSMAN) DOORNENBAL

Ed (Edward, Cornelius was born May 24, 1955, to immigrants from Utrecht, the Netherlands. After graduating from Lacombe High School, Ed spent two years at Dordt College and four years at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he earned the title of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1979

During Ed's last years of schooling he began courting Joanne Hulsman. Joanne had been born February 11, 1955, to immigrants from Overijssel, the Netherlands. After graduating from Ponoka High School, Joanne worked for the provincial government for two years. She then attended RBC and after graduating from there, entered Royal Alexandra Hospital School of Nursing in Edmonton

Meanwhile Ed had accepted a position with Long-Muir Veterinary Clinic of Barrhead in 1979. He was attracted to the Barrhead area because of the proximity to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed community, where he was acquainted with a few Dutchmen

When Joanne graduated as a registered nurse in 1980. she also found work in Barrhead Ed and Joanne were married on November 28, 1980. and settled in a rented home in Bloomsbury

Since then, they have been blessed with **Brent**, born October 13, 1981, and **Kendra** born July 12, 1983 Ed became a full partner in the veterinary clinic in 1983. and the business name was changed to Barrhead Vet Services. Ed enjoys his work and also loves sports Joanne is working part-time at Barrhead Nursing Home In 1984 they purchased an acreage on the NE 24-61-4-5 in the Neerlandia district

Joanne Doornenbal

WILLARD AND MARGARET (VELDHUISEN) DYKSTRA

Willard and Margaret Dykstra moved to Neerlandia in 1978, just a few weeks after they were married Willard is originally from Owen Sound, Ontario, and Margaret from Emo, Ontario

They met in Calgary, where Margaret taught in the Calgary Christian School and Willard worked at various jobs. One weekend, they came to Neerlandia to visit Liz Esselink, a relative of Margaret, and to see more of Alberta at the same time. Since they were impressed with the community and wanted to get out of the city, they decided to move to Neerlandia. Willard found employment with Clay-An Industries, a local construction company.

Willard, Margaret, and their two sons, **Nathaniel** Nicholas (December 27, 1978) and **Theodore** Adriel (May 20, 1981), live on an acreage purchased from Lambert and Gordon Tuininga (N.E. 24-61-4-5).

Margaret holding Theodore, Willard holding Nathaniel, 1981

BERT AND TJAMKE (MOES) ELGERSMA

Bert (Bouke) Elgersma and Tjamke Moes were married on September 3, 1954, in Beverly Christian Reformed Church. At that time Bert and Tjamke were both working in Edmonton, Bert at Swift's Feed Mill and Tjamke at Hotel Macdonald.

Bert had bought the SE 33-61-3-5 from his dad in 1949, and now the young couple worked hard to pay it off. After a two-week honeymoon they came to Neerlandia to harvest the crop. Then they went back to the city to work until spring, when they returned to put the crop in. For two years Bert and Tjamke made this biannual migration but in 1956, with a baby on the way, they decided to live full-time in Neerlandia.

Since Bert's father, Anne, and his sister Haitina were still living on the farm, the farmhouse was shared by the two families. When **Marilyn Grace**, Bert and Tjamke's first daughter, was born on November 8, 1956, Anne began to realize that it was time for him to move out. Therefore he bought a little house into which he and Haitina moved in 1957.

While working in Edmonton, Bert had studied the inner workings of the feed mill. After his return to the farm, he used what he had learned to construct a grain elevator which automatically conveyed grain from his storage bins to the crusher. At a time when everyone else in Neerlandia was shovelling grain from granary to truck box and from truck box to crusher, Bert had provided himself with a set-up which required no manual labour at all.

When Bert and Tjamke married, Bert's father was concerned that Tjamke, being a city girl, would not make a good wife for a farmer. Determined to prove him wrong, Tjamke learned to milk cows, though she was afraid of them, to judge the quality of a crop, though at first she could not distinguish wheat from oats or barley, and to give sick pigs a shot with a hypodermic syringe. In short, she proved to be an excellent helpmeet for Bert.

Back: Rodney, Beatrice, Anita, Marilyn, Andrew. Front: Bert, Tjamke, 1980

Through the years more land was purchased and **Anita**, who was born on January 6, 1960, quickly grew up and became her dad's right-hand man on the farm until her marriage, on November 23, 1979, to Norman Spronk of Edmonton. They have two sons. A third

daughter, **Beatrice** Carol, was born on December 18, 1961. All of the girls are married. Marilyn married Don Plantinga, and Beatrice married Rick Visser. Both of them live in Neerlandia with their husbands.

After the three girls, the farm boys came along. **Andrew** Glenn, born on July 3, 1965, is now farming with Bert and is also raising his own hogs. **Rodney** Bert, who was born on November 28, 1970, also enjoys working on the farm.

Tjamke Elgersma

SIMON AND EVA (MAST) ELGERSMA

Simon Elgersma married Eva Mast on November 19, 1971. When Simon's father, Albert, retired in 1971, Simon bought the farm from him. With his new bride, he began farming on the S½ 16-62-3-5. Simon raises hogs and cattle. Prices were poor for hogs when he first started out, but they gradually improved to provide to provide a comfortable living.

Simon enjoys working and keeps busy on the farm. Eva's favourite pursuits are gardening and other outdoor work. Simon and Eva have three children: **Nelson** Miles, born November 22, 1977; **Simone** Alexandra, born October 1, 1979; and **Vanessa** Adrienne, born April 7, 1982.

Eva Elgersma

Back: Simon, Eva. Front: Nelson, Simone, Vanessa, 1984.

PETER AND EVE (GERRITSEN) EMMERZAEL

Peter was born, raised, and schooled in Neerlandia. At the age of twenty-one, in August 1941, Pete was called into the army. He enlisted in active service with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC) in September 1941. In March 1942, he was sent overseas to England for training and manoeuvres. This lasted until October 1943, when the RCASC were sent to Italy to help the American Eighth Army. In the beginning of 1945, they were sent to join the rest of the Canadians in the Netherlands. Soon after, the war was over.

Pete, 1945.

While in the Netherlands, Pete met Eve Gerritsen. Eve (Evertje) was born in Arnhem on August 21, 1921. Eve and Pete's meeting occurred because her mother had agreed to do laundry for Pete and a friend. Pete and Eve became engaged in July 1945. Pete left the Netherlands in October 1945 and came back to Canada in December. He was discharged from the army in January 1946.

Eve.

Eve regarded her next move in life as an adventure. She took a train to Sweden and then boarded the *Grypsholm*, a Swedish ship bound for New York. From there the train took her closer to her destination — Neerlandia. She arrived in May 1947. Pete and Eve were married June 6, 1947, in Neerlandia by Rev. John Rubingh. It was just a quiet ceremony in the Neerlandia parsonage. Life in Neerlandia was a complete change from the city life of Arnhem, but Eve adapted well and was never homesick.

The Emmerzaels built their home in 1948 on the NW 11-62-3-5, which was part of a school section. Sam Howey helped clear the land by doing the Cat work. (Cutting cost was approximately $15.00 per hour and piling $14.00.) Thus, Pete's mixed farming operation began. Their oldest son, **Fred** (Frederick Leonard), was born April 29, 1948. He was followed by **Bill** (Arian William) on January 16, 1950.

From 1952-57, Pete sold Watkins Products. This new venture was started because of a crop failure the previous year. Furthermore, Pete had fallen and hurt his hand, which was already missing a few fingers due to an accident in his youth with a grain crusher.

In October 1953 Eve's parents **Frederik** and **Hendrika**, immigrated to Neerlandia. Canada, however, and Neerlandia, in particular, was not to the Gerritsens' liking so in 1955 they returned to the Netherlands.

A daughter, **Barbara** Joan, had been born to Pete and Eve on November 10, 1954. After staying on the farm one more year they moved to Barrhead, which was more convenient for Pete's business. In 1957, the Emmerzaels moved to Hinton where Pete worked in a pulp mill. **Bob** (Robert) Peter was born there April 2, 1957, and Henrietta **Marlene** on April 29, 1961.

In August 1963 the Emmerzaels moved back to Neerlandia, but in March 1964 they sold their farm to Ko Rowaan and bought the Mellowdale Store. They operated the store for about four years and the post office until about 1969.

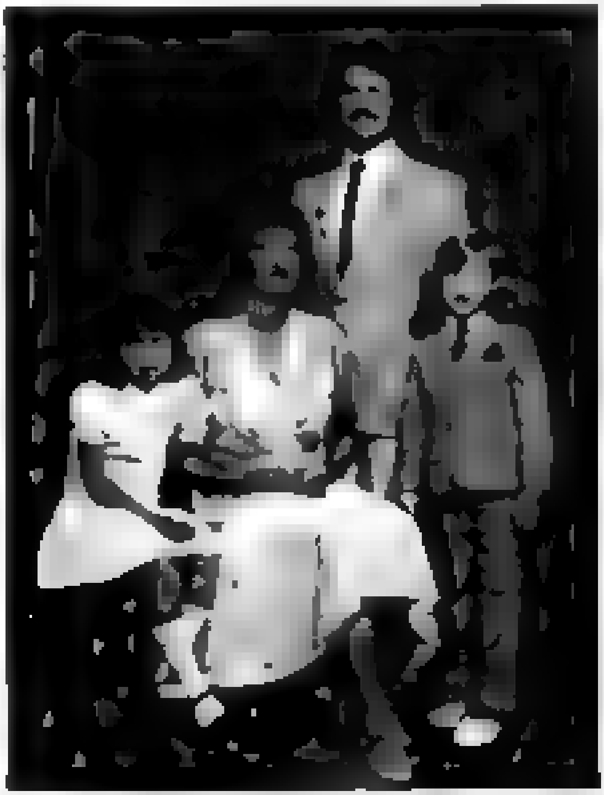
Pete and Eve took three trips back to the Netherlands to visit family and friends. During their last trip in 1982, Eve contracted Creutzfeld-Jacob disease. At present she is in the Barrhead hospital. Even through this trial, Pete says that God has been good to them in all their years.

Pete Emmerzael

EDMOND AND VIOLA (JANSSEN) FILLION

Edmond Fillion was born April 27, 1948, in Matane, Quebec. He came to Calgary with the Canadian Army, which he had joined in 1973. Soon after being released from the army, Edmond met Viola Janssen. They were married August 30, 1975. In 1976 Ed and Vi were able to purchase a vacant farmyard consisting of eight-and-a-half acres, formerly owned by Arnold Hiemstra, located on the SE 25-61-4-5. The following summer, on August 10, 1977, **Kelly Guy** was born to them, and **Tammie** Jo came to join their family in 1980. They now have a modern hog operation on their acreage.

Viola Fillion



Tammy, Vi, Ed, Kelly, 1984

JOE AND HILDA (WIERENGA) FISHER

At seventeen years of age, Joe Fisher started truck driving for his uncle Dick Fisher. He hauled livestock to Edmonton, and groceries from there for the Vega Mercantile store. Four years later, in 1967, Joe became truck driver for his cousin Ted Reitsma and bought the business from him in 1970.

Joe married Hilda Wierenga, eldest daughter of "Henry by the Creek" on July 3, 1970. Later in that year Hilda became treasurer of the Neerlandia Credit Union and did this work for 9½ years. The job was done at home and the starting salary was $50 a month. Joe and Hilda have three sons — **Marlo Jay** (August 3, 1971), **Derek Jonathan** (March 30, 1973), and **Shawn Jason** (May 21, 1976). The family lives on an acreage on the N.W. 9-61-3-5.

Hilda Fisher

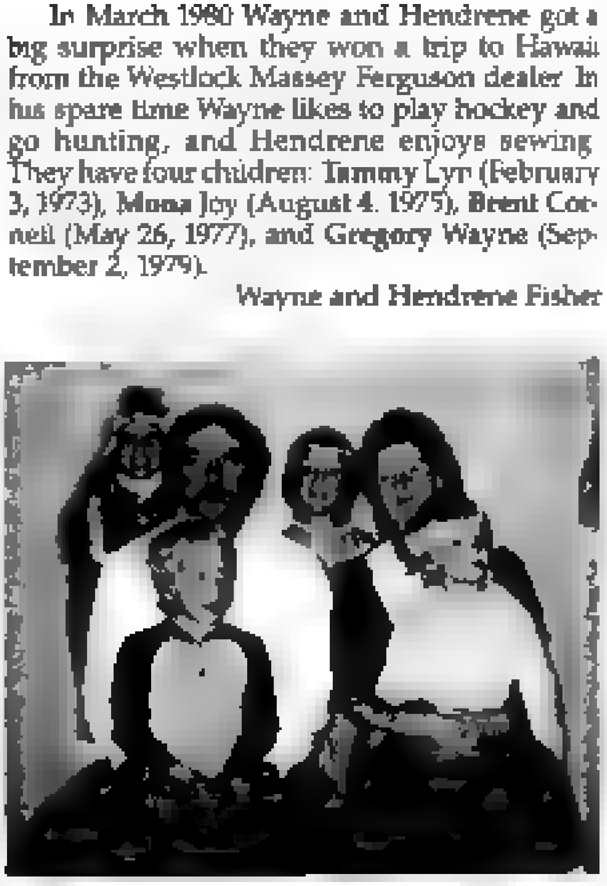
Back: Hilda, Joe. Front: Marlo, Shawn, Derek, 1984.

WAYNE AND HENDRENE (WIERENGA) FISHER

Wayne Fisher helped his father, Cor Fisher, on the farm after he left school. He also drove truck for Joe Fisher Trucking, his brother's company. On October 7, 1972, Wayne married Hendrene Wierenga. They first lived in a mobile home on Cor Fisher's yard on the NW 10-61-3-5. Then in March 1979 Wayne took over the farm and the family moved into the farmhouse.

In March 1980 Wayne and Hendrene got a big surprise when they won a trip to Hawaii from the Westlock Massey Ferguson dealer. In his spare time Wayne likes to play hockey and go hunting, and Hendrene enjoys sewing. They have four children: **Tammy Lyn** (February 3, 1973), **Mona Joy** (August 4, 1975), **Brent Cornell** (May 26, 1977), and **Gregory Wayne** (September 2, 1979).

Wayne and Hendrene Fisher



Back: Tammy, Mona. Middle: Wayne, Hendrene. Front: Brent, Greg, 1983

GERRIT AND HILDA (NANNINGA) GELDERMAN

Gerrit Gelderman and Hilda Nanninga were married on the cold, crisp, bright December 19, 1946. Before his marriage, Gerrit had worked with his dad, John Gelderman, on the farm, was a partner in the Dutch Mill, and also served in the Army. He was released from the Army on VE day (1945) and was glad to be home on the farm again. In 1946 the Gelderman family purchased the NE 2-62-3-5. This was to be Gerrit's farm. Hilda Nanninga worked at Neerlandia Co-op for three years previous to her marriage. The wages at that time were eighty dollars per month. She also played the organ in church and directed the church choir for a time.

Gerrit and Hilda's home life started out in the usual way. They bought all used furniture. A table and four chairs were purchased for eighteen dollars at a Shoal Creek auction. Ger rit did not have to buy any machinery because he continued to farm with the Geiderman family. He raised cows, pigs, and chickens.

Gerrit and Hilda had five children while on the farm. They are **Audrey** Hilda (May 25, 1949); **Ruth** Grace (January 22, 1951), **Martin** John (May 27, 1955). **Jerry** Gerrit (August 26, 1956): and **Neil** Henry (January 18, 1958).

In the summer of 1949 Gerrit began building a large two-storey hip roof barn. It would later house 800 laying hens. They also had close to forty sheep and sold the wool and lambs.

In 1957 Gerrit and Hilda sold the farm to Ike and Henry Nanninga and started in the garage business with Fred Toebes in Vega. Gerrit apprenticed as an automobile mechanic under Fred and attended school in Calgary for six weeks every year for four years. During this time the family lived in a house on the Toebes farm. In 1960 Fred and Gerrit purchased Neerlandia Motors and moved their business to Neerlandia. They worked together at the Centre until 1962 when Fred moved back to Vega. The Geiderman family then moved to the little house by the garage and Gerrit became sole owner.

One day a fellow filled up his gas tank at the garage and drove over and parked at the Co-op store. What he [illegible] was that his gas tank was leaking [illegible] that a [illegible] men were talking beside the garage. One lit a cigarette and threw the burning match to the ground [illegible] the gas [illegible] the gas trail across the road to the car parked beside the Co-op. Fortunately the men were watching (probably with their mouths wide open) and quickly doused the flames and pushed the car out of danger's way.

As the children grew up, the boys began helping in the garage. The girls were kept busy with babysitting. Audrey also worked for C. P. Mast on the switchboard and Ruth had a Saturday job in the Co-op.

Gerrit was an active member of the community; he served on the local school board, credit union, store board, and in consistory. He also was involved in the development and building of the local skating rink. Because he was in the centre of the hamlet, he became a contact person for a proposed curling rink, asking people to donate time and money. There was, however, a fair amount of opposition to this project, and the community as a whole did not support it sufficiently for it to become a reality.

Back: Martin, Jerry, Ruth. Front: Hilda, Neil, Gerrit, 1967

In the fall of 1966 Gerrit and Hilda made a trip to southern B.C. It was November, snowy and cold in Neerlandia, but warm, sunny and green in Abbotsford. Quite a contrast! [illegible] tempting. The garage business was not all [illegible] paid their accounts promptly, and Gerrit, an easy-going person, [illegible] lacked the administrative skills which are an important part of a successful business. All things considered, Gerrit took the job offer.

There were some things to finish in Neerlandia, so it was August 1967 before all the family — except Audrey, who was studying to be a Certified Nurse's Aide in Edmonton — moved to Abbotsford. Gerrit worked for Avenue Farm Machinery, first as mechanic and then as foreman.

Gerrit and Hilda have been back to Neerlandia many times to visit, but are content to be surrounded by their family where God has placed them, in Abbotsford.

Gerrit and Hilda Geiderman

HENRY AND BETTY (FISHER) GELDERMAN

Henry John Gelderman, the youngest son of John and Reka Gelderman, was born on September 11, 1935, on the farm where he presently lives. On August 12, 1960, in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, he married Betty Fisher, daughter of Cor and Elizabeth Fisher. They purchased the Gelderman homestead (NE 35-61-3-5), where they maintain a mixed farming operation.

From their marriage four children were born. **Pearl** Ellen was born on May 24, 1961. After graduating from high school, she attended Dordt College, where she met her future husband, Glenn Vander Lugt. On August 14, 1981, they were married and now live and farm with their daughter in Edgerton, Minnesota.

Dale Wesley was born on July 12, 1962. Since August 1981, he has been employed by Paddle Plumbing Ltd. of Barrhead.

Randall Wade was born on February 11 [illegible]. He is currently working at home. Randy and his cousin, Howard Gelderman, won gold medals in the Alberta School Association Provincial Badminton finals. In 1982 they took first place in the intermediate class at Lethbridge, and in 1983 they took first place in the senior class at Calgary.

Kevin Lyle was born on April 22, 1968. All three sons are talented in badminton and hockey. Henry and Betty are loyal sports fans.

Randy, Kevin, Pearl, Dale, Henry, Betty, [illegible]

They are involved in other activities as well. Henry has served on community boards. Betty is well-known for her success in growing plants. Their home is filled with plants of many kinds. Each summer she has a large vegetable garden and a beautiful display in her flower beds. Her floral arrangements have won awards at the Barrhead Blue Heron Fair. She has given instruction in dried flower arranging and other crafts.

Henry and Betty are happy to be part of the community of Neerlandia. They are thankful to the Lord for his ever-present nearness and salvation for them and their family.

Betty Gelderman

HERMAN AND LULA (KRIKKE) GELDERMAN

Herman Gelderman wed Lula Krikke on her birthday, June 27, 1953. Prior to their wedding Lula had worked at the Neerlandia Co-op for six years and Herman had worked for his dad. Herman and Lula bought the SW 36-61-3-5 from Gerrit Ingwersen and started their life together.

Marcia Carol was born April 7, 1955. Lula came home with her just before a blizzard confined them to the farm for a month. During that month the doctor's book was the complete source of medical advice for the minor complications of a firstborn. After high school Marcia obtained a degree in special education from the [illegible]. She married Henry [illegible] in Edmonton on August 2, 1975. She taught at the North Edmonton and Calgary Christian schools until their son was born in 1982.

Rosalie Lynn was born July 19, 1956, during a hot summer. Her birthday was always during the busy haying time. Not only was it rare that she had a birthday party, but one year her birthday was forgotten until a gift-bearing uncle drove on the yard. After high school Rose continued her education at [illegible], where she received a BA degree in sociology. This led to an internship as a community organizer in the Chicago area. She returned to Edmonton in 1980. Since then she has held a number of social service-related jobs.

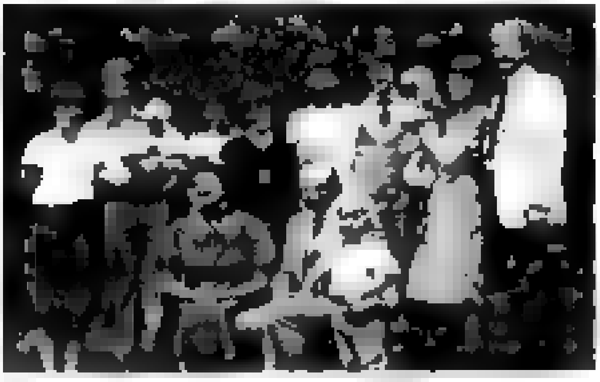
John William, his grandfathers namesake, was born April 27, 1958. After working at carpentry in Edmonton, he married **Patricia** Jeanette Van Eck on September 2, 1977. Pat had been born in Edmonton on February 28, 1958.

After their marriage John and Pat moved to Neerlandia living first in the hamlet. In February 1983 John and Pat with their sons, **Michael John** (October 26, 1979) and **Nicholas Joel** (April 7, 1982), moved into their new house on the SE 35-61-3-5.

Wendell Allan, born April 5, 1960, aspired to become an Indian and pitch his teepee in the back of the field. He has since changed his mind and became first a plumber and then tried his hand at carpentry.

To carry on the Indian tradition, when the fifth child was born (June 18, 1962) her parents stopped enroute to the hospital to watch a lynx cross the road. They soon changed her name from Running Lynx to the more feminine **Karen Joan**. Karen is working toward an education degree.

Howard Glenn, baby of the family, was born August 30, 1965. After a year at The King's College he transferred to the U of A where he is working toward a degree in physical education.



Back: Rosalie, John holding Nicholas, Pat, Karen, Wendell, Howard, Marcia holding Timothy, Henry Stikema. Front: Lula, Herman, Michael, 1983.

In addition to raising their own family, Herman and Lula have made a home for four foster children for periods of time from two months to one-and-a-half years. They are thankful to their covenant God for His blessings, and hope and pray that they and their children will remain faithful to the Lord.

Gelderman Family

ADRIAN AND EEF (VAN ROON) HAMOEN SR

Adrian (Adrianus) Leendert Hamoen, born August 13, 1903, in Utrecht, Utrecht, the Netherlands, married Eef (Everdina) Van Roon from the same city on February 21, 1927. Eef had been born July 7, 1907. They had three children: **Annie** born November 19, 1929; **Adrian** (Adrianus) Leendert, born March 29, 1940, and **Kees** (Cornelius), born October 11, 1943. Adrian owned a milk and milk products store in Utrecht but was bothered by government restrictions. Through a Reformed immigration society he heard that there was a Dutchman from Canada visiting Groningen. There the Hamoens met Andries Wierenga, who told them about Neerlandia.

In Utrecht, just before coming to Canada. Standing: Annie. Seated: Adrian Sr., Adrian, Kees, Eef, 1948.

Adrian and Eef decided to move to Neerlandia and on April 8, 1948, they boarded the ocean liner *Kota Inten* with their children. The *Kota Inten*, originally used for carrying troops, had been converted into an immigrant ship and did not make for an entirely enjoyable trip. At one point Adrian asked another man on the ship where he was headed. The man said, "Canada." That was logical — so was everyone else on the ship. This man though, like Adrian, was headed for Neerlandia. His name was Dick Froma.

After disembarking at Halifax on April 17, 1948, the family boarded a train for Edmonton. That trip was about as bad as the one by boat. The immigrant trains were filthy and gave one the impression of being converted cattle liners. The trip was four days and three nights of jostling, soot, and smoke Upon arrival at the Immigration Hall, the family headed immediately for the bathrooms where there were bathtubs

After a night's rest in the Immigration Hall, the family boarded the train for Barrhead. This trip took a whole day. At the train they were met by Andries Wierenga, whose son Herman was the fieldman. The first thing Andries did was take them to the Neerlandia Co-op to buy rubber boots. It was a wet, late spring and Neerlandia was a big mud hole

The Hamoens intended to stay at Andries Wierenga's place for four to five days, but this [illegible] supposed to work for a farmer in Westlock, but the roads were impassable After waiting three [illegible] and travelled to Morinville From there the farmer picked them up and they went to Westlock Adrian learned all about picking roots — quite a change from being a merchant in Utrecht

But Westlock was a long distance from church and the wages were very low, so in August the family moved back to Neerlandia There Adrian began to work for George Anema. In February 1949 Adrian bought a quarter of land from John Terpsma (NW 36-61-3-5) and started farming He began with six cows, five sows, three horses, and some chickens

In 1958 Adrian sold the farm to Albert Mast who had married Annie, and the rest of the family moved to Vega where they had bought three quarters of section 31-62-3-5 from Wanda Janz. They had made their plans on the hopes of receiving the then-current price of about forty dollars per hog. However, the price plummeted [illegible] pinching and an awful lot of hard work became all too familiar

On August 10, 1959, the Lord in His unsearchable wisdom called Eef Home. For fifteen months Adrian Sr and his sons were on their own Housework was shared Adrian Sr. did the cooking (wheatlet porridge for breakfast and dessert), Adrian Jr did the housework, and Kees did the baking Kees loved to make pies for Sunday dinner but, much to his disgust, Adrian Jr loved to eat the filling on Saturday nights. Johanna Kuhn, a neighbour, did the laundry

On October 28, 1960, Adrian Sr married **Henrietta** (Hendrikjen) **Selles** of Edmonton **Henrietta had been born January 11, 1905 in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands.** She was a widow when she immigrated to Canada in 1953 with her four boys. The youngest son, **Bill** (Willem), came to Vega with her. The other three boys were already married

In 1965 Adrian Jr married Lies Pieffers. Kees married Dinie Vogelzang in 1967 Bill Selles moved to the city and now lives in Spruce Grove where he works in construction. He is married to Gretchen Boonstra and they have three children

In 1972 Adrian Sr. retired from active farming, and his sons took over the farm Adrian Sr and Henrietta remained in their own home on the farm. On April 5, 1978, Adrian Sr. died Henrietta stayed on the home place until 1984 when she moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton

Lies Hamoen

ADRIAN AND LIES (PIEFFERS) HAMOEN JR.

Adrian Hamoen and Lies Pieffers were married August 11, 1965, in the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale, Alberta. The bride's father officiated at the ceremony After their honeymoon, Adrian and Lies settled down on Adrian's farm (NE 1-63-4-5) in Vega. A small house already on the property had been renovated, and two barns and a garage had been added

On April 5, 1967, the Lord blessed the marriage with the birth of a daughter, **Evelyn Rietta**. Later that summer a bigger house was moved onto the place. It too needed renovations, but was finished in time for the arrival of a second daughter, **Geraldine Phyllis**, on May 5, 1968

[illegible] **Leonard** Adrian was born and another ha[illegible] **Judy** [illegible]tina was added to the family

Adrian Hamoen Sr retired in 1972 and for a number of years his sons farmed together. Besides the home quarter, Adrian also farmed the NE 36-62-4-5 and a section in the Fawcett area In 1983 he bought the SE 6-63-3-5 from Philip Bryan of Vega

The family built a new house on the home quarter in 1977 That winter Adrian was busy trying to build the house as well as doing his own work and visiting Lies in The University

Back: Geraldine, Evelyn. Middle: Leonard, Adrian, Lies. Front: Ronald, Jody, 1979

Hospital in Edmonton. Lies was having trouble with a pregnancy, but January 24, 1978, saw the birth of a healthy boy, **Ronald** Keith. On March 10, 1978, the family moved into their new home, leaving the old one to Lies' brother Henry and his wife Christine, who had been living with them since November 1977. Christine had been looking after the Hamoen family while Lies was in the hospital.

On March 31, 1979, God took Leonard unto Himself after a tractor accident at home. The Hamoen children attend the Covenant Canadian Reformed School in Neerlandia, where Lies teaches typing and supervises classes during their library periods.

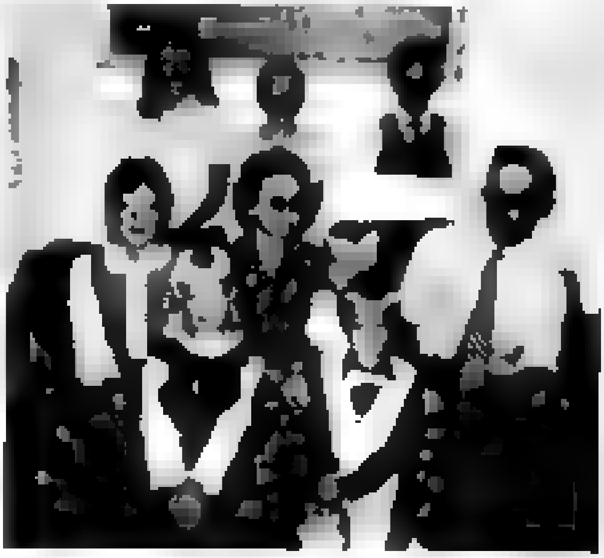
Lies Hamoen

KEES AND DINIE (VOGELZANG) HAMOEN

On June 9, 1967, Kees Hamoen married Dinie (Gerritdina) Vogelzang of Barrhead. She was born in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on June 18, 1944, and immigrated with her parents to Edmonton in 1951. From there she moved to Rocky Mountain House, Fawcett, and last of all to Barrhead.

Since the wedding was in June, the families had hopes of beautiful warm weather. Instead there was a regular snow storm in the morning. By afternoon everything was muddy. Even the suit of the officiating minister, Rev. G. Pieffers, had to be brushed off before the ceremony because it was caked with mud.

In March 1967 the building of a small house had been started on Kees' farm. It was finished on June 9. At the time of his marriage Kees was farming with his father in dairy and hogs. Kees and Dinie live on the NW 31-62-3-5 and also own the S½ 31-62-3-5.



Back: Joanne, Helena, Adrian. Middle: Elaine, Dinie, Darlene, Kees. Front: Marie, Kenneth, 1982

In the next four years, **Elaine** Rita (May 27, 1968); **Adrian** Walter (April 26, 1969); **Joanne** Gail (July 10, 1970); and **Helena** Rosanne (December 17, 1971) were born. When **Marie** Lynn (April 21, 1974) was born, the house became too small and three bedrooms were added. In 1976 **Kenneth** Neil (February 7) was born, and two years later **Darlene** Joyce (July 20, 1978) was added to this richly-blessed family.

In 1971 the dairy cows were sold and Kees went into hog production. In 1972 he went into partnership with his brother Adrian. In 1979 a new house was built as the old one was bursting at the seams again. In 1982 Kees and Adrian dissolved the partnership except for the equipment, which they still share.

Dinie Hamoen

KARL AND TILLIE (ELGERSMA) HESTERMANN

Tillie Elgersma left Neerlandia in 1951 to go to the city (Edmonton). In the winter she did housework and in the summer she came home and helped on the farm until her brother Bert got married. Then she got a full-time job at C. W. G. and later at Hotel Macdonald. Tillie met Karl (Karlheinz) Wilhelm Hestermann in 1956. Karl, born in Wattenscheid, Germany in 1930, came to Canada by himself in 1952. He was the adventuresome type and thought five years in Canada might be good. But that period was extended when he met Tillie. On December 6, 1957, they were married in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church.

They lived in Edmonton where Karl worked as a labour foreman with Christianson Mcdonald Construction for nine years. After that he worked for Pool construction. In 1964 they bought the NE 18-61-3-5 from Tillie's father, Anne Elgersma, who wanted to retire from farming. In 1974 the Hestermanns bought the E½ 23-61-4-5 from Bill Reitsma, and a year later decided to move to Neerlandia and make farming a full-time job. They started off with mixed farming, and five years later were able to go into dairy — their original plans for farming.

Karl and Tillie have three healthy children. The oldest, **John** Karlheinz, was born September 7, 1958. John now has a job with Esso in Swan Hills. On July 26, 1980, he married Cheryl Petrunia of Calgary. They have one child.

Haitina Elizabeth was born July 22, 1968, and **Andrew** Karlheinz arrived November 9, 1971. As did John, Haitina and Andrew help their parents with the milking and looking after the calves. They share their mother's love for horses and spend many hours breaking and riding them. The farm is also shared with three dogs who are appreciated most of the time.

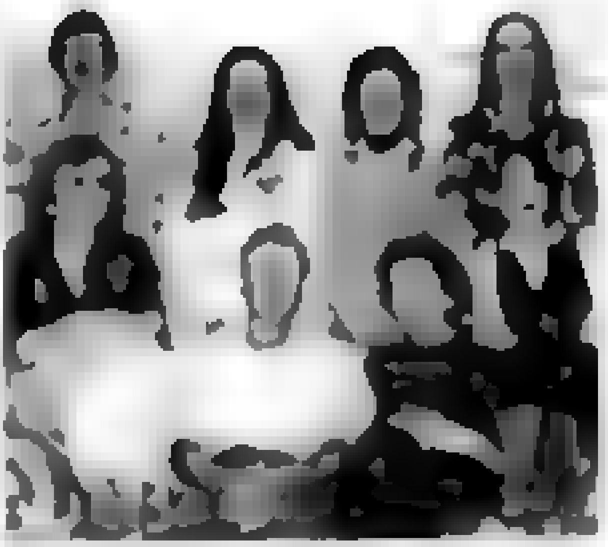
Tillie Hestermann

ARNOLD AND GERRI (CLEMENTS) HIEMSTRA

Arnold was born in Neerlandia and went to school there until the age of fifteen, when he went to work on farms in the area. Arnold took up as homestead the SW 25-61-4-5 in 1952. He married Gerri (Geraldine) Clements of Provost, Alberta, on June 24, 1953. Gerri had been born December 27, 1935. Arnold and Gerri have six children. **Leslie** Arnold born July 9, 1954; **Gwendolyn** Joyce born July 3, 1955; **Jeanne** Marie born June 12, 1956; **Rosalie** Anne born August 2, 1957; **Lori** Lynn born May 21, 1959; and **Debra** Lee born February 2, 1961.

Arnold and Gerri left Neerlandia in February 1968. They moved to Barrhead, where they could both get work and where the future looked better than on the farm. They live on a small acreage eight miles north of Barrhead. Arnold drives truck for the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool. All of the children are married.

Gerri Hiemstra



[illegible] Arnold, Geraldine, Debra, 1979

COR AND JENNIE (SEINEN) HIEMSTRA

Cor Hiemstra, born and raised in Neerlandia, joined the Canadian Army in April 1942 and left for England in June 1942. He was stationed in several different countries in Europe and was involved in the liberation of the Netherlands. Cor returned to Canada in January 1946 with the rank of Signalman. He helped on the farm for one summer but his love for the

Cor.

mountains, which he had acquired in Italy compelled him to leave for B.C. where he worked for various sawmills, logging firms and the CNR.

Cor ended up in Houston, where he met Jennie Seinen whom he married April 7, 1948. Together they returned to Neerlandia to try farming once more, taking over the SE 20-61-3-5 from Cor's father, Henry. Farming still did not satisfy Cor, so he returned to the army in January 1952, serving as a communicators operator. After serving in Vancouver, Whitehorse and Namao, he retired in April 1971.

God has been very good to the Hiemstras. Their marriage was blessed with seven children. Since retiring from military life, Cor has been employed in Edmonton by the Department of National Defence as a communicator. Cor and Jennie reside in Sherwood Park.

Cor Hiemstra

CORNELIUS AND GRACE (TUININGA) HIEMSTRA

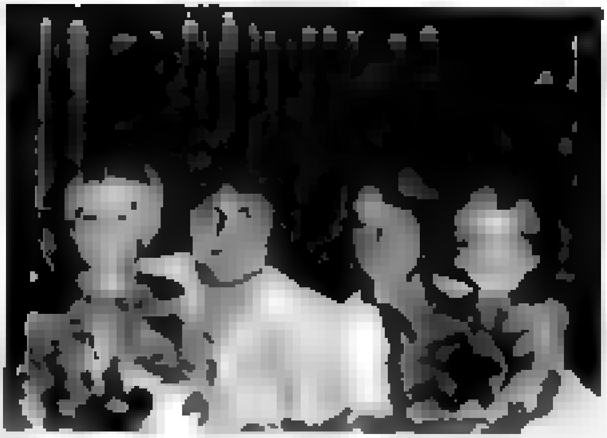
Corny (Cornelius) Jakob Hiemstra, son of Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, married Grace Tuininga in December 1948. They first lived in a small house on Corny's parents' yard. Later they moved to the SW 19-61-4-5, which Corny farmed for a few years.

Corny and Grace moved to Edmonton in 1954, but returned to Neerlandia two years later. This time they purchased a lot in the hamlet onto which they moved their farmhouse. Corny began working as a truck driver for Simon Tuininga, while Grace looked after their home and family.

By this time there were two little Hiemstras. **Richard** Jacob had been born on June 30, 1949. He had been followed by **Bernard** Peter on September 22, 1952. A third son, **Donald** John was born on May 15, 1956, and a fourth, **Wesley** Cornelius, on December 5, 1959. On October 28, 1963, the last of the boys, **Kevin** David, was born.

In 1965 Corny and Grace and their family moved back to Edmonton. On December 3, 1969, their only daughter, **Charlene**, was born. Grace and Corny continue to live in the city (1984).

Donald is the only child who has returned to live in Neerlandia. On July 19, 1975, he married Grace van Dijken. Don worked at a variety of jobs until he and Grace purchased Bill Fisher Trucking in 1980. They operate the business, which they renamed Graydon Trucking Ltd., from their home. They live on an acreage on the NW 24-61-4-5, and have two sons: **Christopher** Don, born on January 31, 1976, and **Shannon** Cory born on September 25, 1978.

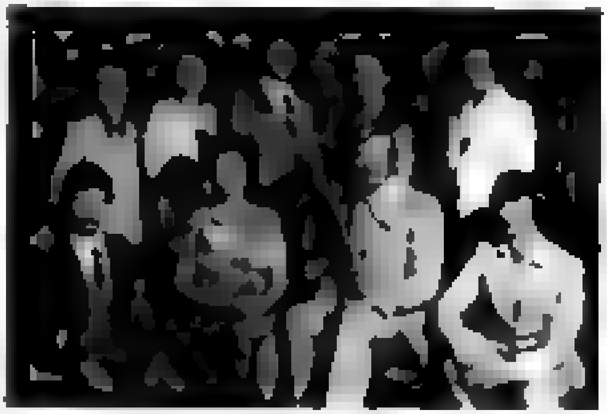


Shannon, Don, Grace, Christopher, c. 1982

Jenny Fisher

HENRY AND JESSIE (McCULLOUGH) HIEMSTRA

Henry Hiemstra was born and educated in Neerlandia. He married Jessie McCullough of Holmes Crossing on October 14, 1955. Jessie had been born September 11, 1936. Her father was a cook and later worked in steel construction in Edmonton. Henry and Jessie live on the original Jacob Hiemstra homestead. Henry is presently employed by Alberta Transportation. Henry and Jessie have a family of five boys and two girls.



Back: Bradley, Patricia, Ronald, Beverly, Kenny. Front: Jacob, Jessie, Henry, Douglas, 1983

Ronald Henry was born May 13, 1956. He married Pauline Grosschmidt of Camp Creek on July 17, 1976, and they have two children. They make their home in Norman Wells, N.W.T., where Ron is employed by Esso Re- [illegible]

Douglas [illegible] He married Pauline's sister Nancy on June 3, 1978. Doug and Nancy have four children. Doug is employed by Esso Resources and they live in Swan Hills.

Kenneth Ellen was born February 22, 1959. On July 17, 1982 he married Geradine Gosselin of Longlac, Ontario. They make their home in Swan Hills and are both employed by Esso Resources. They have one child.

Patricia Ann was born June 25, 1960. She married Warren Bready of Fort Assiniboine on July 11, 1981. They have one daughter and live in Swan Hills. Warren also works for Esso Resources.

Jacob James was born August 28, 1961. He married Wilma Selles of Barrhead on September 18, 1982. They have one daughter. Jacob is employed by Home Oil and they live in Swan Hills.

Beverly Jean was born January 18, 1963. She married Arley Currie of Swan Hills on May 19, 1984, and works there at the Derrick Motor Inn.

Bradley Wayne, born June 9, 1964, works in Swan Hills for Swan Hills Trucking as a mechanic.

Jessie Hiemstra

HAROLD AND NELLIE (DE KRUYF) HOLLANDER

In the spring of 1962, Harold Hollander received a call to be the pastor of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. At the time he was the first pastor of two small churches in Alliston and Orangeville, Ontario. These two churches had developed to the point where each one could have their own pastor, hence it was a good time to consider seriously a call from another field. The thought of serving the Lord in the far north was intriguing to him and he felt led to accept the call.

Harold and Nellie made the move by loading their furniture in a boxcar to be shipped by rail. The family and the dog, a fox terrier, were piled in a black '59 Plymouth Fury. The Neerlandia consistory had graciously given Harold time to fulfill his obligations to the Classis Ontario, which had delegated him to attend the annual Synod at Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was eager to do this because he was still young enough (43 years) to believe that his insight and wisdom were needed in Grand Rapids and, besides that, this was the first time he had been conferred this honour.

By the time Synod was over, he looked for- [illegible] they travelled to northwest Iowa, where both he and Nellie had been born, had received their early education, and had survived the Great Depression. Life had been rugged then, but they had learned many lessons in the art of survival which stood them in good stead in their early years in the parsonage.

The Hollander family made their arrival in Neerlandia in August. Their oldest son, Mario, had preceded the rest of the family, having moved to Edmonton. The three youngest children, **Howard** Leon (June 20, 1944), **Sharon** Ruth (February 7, 1948) and **Clarice Joan** (September 1, 1950) came to Neerlandia with their parents.

Harold wrote, "We were all royally welcomed into the community by the entire church, young and old. A reception supper was [illegible] following night a reception was held in the school gym. Everyone attended. There were songs, readings, skits, and speeches — every- [illegible] table occasion. Klaas Tuininga, vice-president of the consistory, gave an unforgettable speech. The evening was marked by vim, vigor and vitality. There was participation by young [illegible] there were good possibilities for this congregation."

[illegible] everyone agreed with what their pastor said or did. He was not as enthusiastic about the Association of Reformed Scientific Studies as some wanted him to be. There was much discussion and tension mounted.

In June 1966 Nellie had a small dark spot removed from the skin of her leg. This proved to be a dangerous form of cancer — melanoma — and required extensive surgery. Harold had been struggling for four years with stomach ulcers. When he received a call to Wellsburg, Iowa, he came to the conclusion that his work in Neerlandia was finished.

One addition was made to their family during these years: a son, **Timothy Jay** (March 5, 1965) was added by adoption.

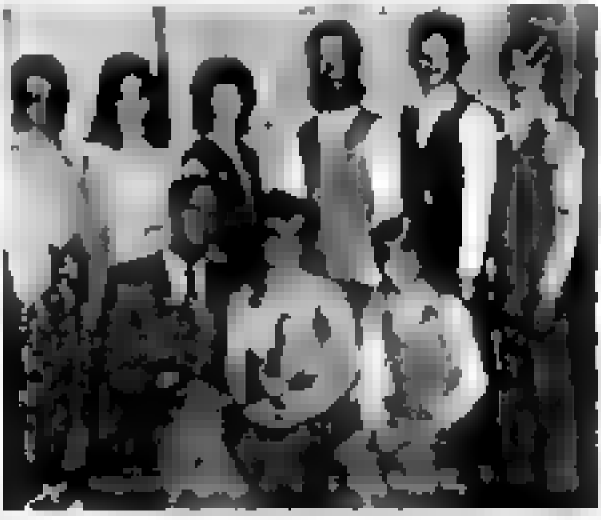
After serving in Wellsburg for nine years Harold and Nellie went to Harrison, South Dakota. They retired in 1983 and intend to make Lynden, Washington, their home.

Harold Hollander

WILFRED AND HILDA (PETERS) HOLWERDA

Wilfred Holwerda married Hilda Peters on May 6, 1955. After their marriage, they lived one year in Neerlandia, then moved to Edmonton and later to Cherhill. They returned to Neerlandia to work for Simon Tuininga for three years and afterward lived in Bloomsbury and Campsie. From 1971-79 they lived in Neerlandia on the NE 36-61-3-5, where they raised hogs.

The Lord blessed their marriage with seven children: **Harold** (November 30, 1955), **Vivian** (September 19, 1957), **Carolyn** (September 2, 1959), **Valerie** (December 26, 1962), **Brian** (October 26, 1965), **Colin** (August 27, 1969), and **Randal** (March 3, 1973).



Back: Valerie, Carolyn, Vivian, Harold, Brian, Colin. Front: Wilfred, Hilda, Randal. 1984

Wilfred has done many things in his lifetime, including farming. There is a saying, "So father, so son" and Wilfred, like his father, enjoys serving the public. He is presently working as a salesman in the agricultural field employed by Daco Feeds.

Harold married **Jane Nijenhuis** of Fergus, Ontario. They have four children: **Heather** (February 7, 1978), **Kevin** (February 3, 1980), **Clayton** (September 4, 1981), and **Charlotte** (May 4, 1983). Harold is presently working for Simon Tuininga. The three Holwerda girls are also married. Vivian married Terry Hoeksema and they have three children. Carolyn married Louis Haan. Valerie married John Vanderdeen. They have two children.

Wilf Holwerda

HANS AND INA (ROOSTEE) INGWERSEN

When the Second World War began, Hans (Johannes, May 20, 1915) and Ina (December 8, 1915) Ingwersen and their daughter, **Ieke** (December 20, 1937), were living in the Netherlands. Hans was studying in Germany, but had to flee when the Germans invaded the Netherlands. Since he could not get back to his country, he found his way onto a Holland-Amerika Line ship. He first scrubbed floors, then worked himself up until he became the ship's purser. After becoming ill, he was taken ashore in New York, U.S.A., where he continued working for the Holland-Amerika Line. After the war he was reunited with Ina and Ieke whom he had not seen for seven years.

Ieke, Hans, Ina, 1950s

Hans was interested in returning to America, so he wrote to his uncle Case Ingwersen of Neerlandia. Consequently, in 1947, Hans and his family immigrated to Canada, sponsored by John Ingwersen. Since John's Dutch name was also Johannes, it was decided to call cousin

Johannes by the name Hans. While in Neerlandia, the Hans Ingwersen family lived with the John Ingwersen family. Hans had never been on a farm before, but he learned how to milk cows, harness horses, and work with a tractor. Ina, a registered nurse, wrote an exam in Edmonton and then got a job in the Barrhead hospital. After staying here for about nine months, Hans moved east to work while Ina continued working in Barrhead. Hans soon went to New York, where he wanted to study, and the family was reunited there. After completing his studies, Hans became a college lecturer, while Ina continued nursing. They are now both retired and live in Tennessee, U.S.A.

John Ingwersen

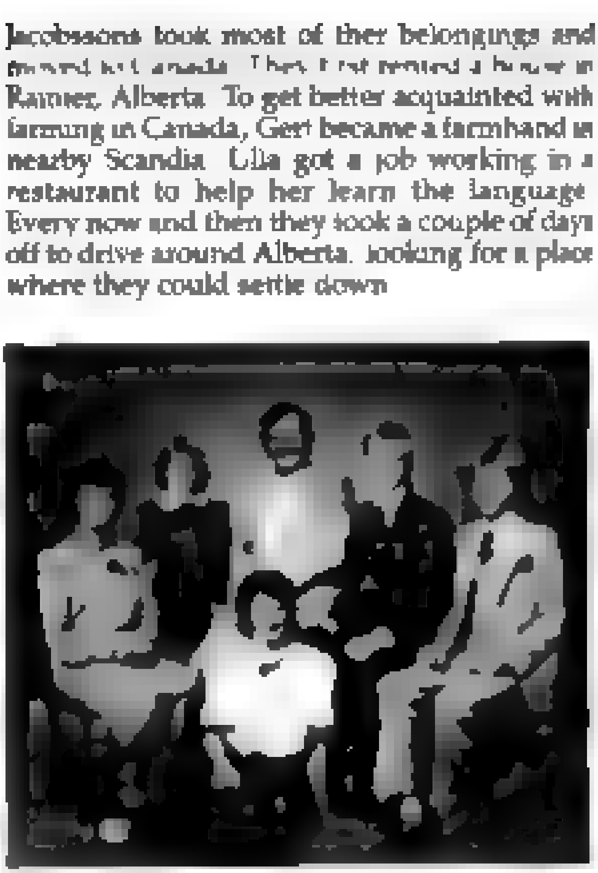
GERT AND ULLA (CARLSSON) JACOBSSON

Gert Erik Jacobsson was born March 20, 1942, in Landskrona, Sweden, where his father worked for a big shipbuilding company. When Gert was four years old the family moved to a small rented farm. Two years later they moved again to rent a bigger farm where Gert and his three brothers grew up. Gert belonged to the Lutheran Church, to which ninety percent of the Swedish people belong.

Ulla Carin Carlsson was born October 2, 1946, in the small village of Silvakra, Sweden, where her family had a small farm. When she was five years old the family moved to another village where they bought a smaller farm. Here Ulla's father became a carpenter and with his wife raised their six children. Like Gert, Ulla belonged to the Lutheran Church.

Gert and Ulla were married October 29, 1966. They rented a farm in Havgard, where Gert **Johnny** was born on February 4, 1967. **Ralph** Erik was born the following year on January 30. In 1969 the family bought their own farm in Alested. Here Suzanne Ulla **Carina** was born on June 15, 1969. Another daughter, Anna Cecilia, was born May 31, 1975. On this farm the Jacobssons grew potatoes and raised hogs.

Soon it was time for the family to move again, but this time they decided to move to another country. They chose Canada, in particular western Canada, which held special interest for Gert. Two holidays were taken to Alberta to see if it would hold a good future for the children and for farming. Finally, on February 25, 1981, after two years of planning, the Jacobssons took most of their belongings and moved to Canada. They first rented a house in Rainier, Alberta. To get better acquainted with farming in Canada, Gert became a farmhand in nearby Scandia. Ulla got a job working in a restaurant to help her learn the language. Every now and then they took a couple of days off to drive around Alberta, looking for a place where they could settle down.



Ulla, Cecilia, Gert, Johnny, Ralph. Front: Carina

Upon coming to Neerlandia, they were very impressed by the well-maintained farms and nice surroundings. The Co-op Store and Service Centre were other advantages. When they came to the Clarence Olthuis farm they knew this was the place they had been looking for. The Jacobssons purchased the farm, located on NE 31-61-2-5, in April 1982.

The family did not know at the time that just about everyone in Neerlandia had a Dutch background, but it did not take them long to find out. The Jacobssons say: "[illegible] this has not been a problem, the other way around, everything and everybody in Neerlandia has been very good and willing to help, and the family likes it very much here."

Jacobsson Family

BERT AND BERTHA (STRYDHORST) JANSSEN

Bert (Lambertus) Janssen and Bertha Strydhorst were married in Neerlandia on June 10, 1966. They went to live on the old Jake

Witzke homestead in Vega on the NE 6-63-3-5. The only things on the place were a few beat up broken-down, battered, bruised, and good-for-nothing log buildings, including the house which had been built twenty-four years previously by Grampa and Harry Janssen for Harry and Tine. Later the house had been bought and moved to its present location by Joe Witzke. Bert and Bertha had no windbreak except for a few scrub trees (which were only eyesores anyway) and, consequently, the hill on which the house stood must have been the coldest one south of Alaska. There was no phone, gas, or running water. The only convenience was electricity. The house was heated by a coal furnace.

On May 25, 1967, **Brendon** Lyle was born. At this time the Janssens had an "excellent" well which put out one gallon of water every three minutes. On wash days Bertha spent hours waiting for water. To help speed up things a bit she took diapers to the well, which was unaffectionately known as The Drip, to rinse them out instead of packing water to the house.

In April 1968, Bert took a half a day off to get some trees from Bill Fisher to plant on the barren hill. Then in June of the same year, Bert's brother Ivan brought some five-foot spruce trees and some small maples. The maples did well, considering the land was quite run down and would only produce thirty bushels of wheat per acre. What a joy to have a windbreak.

Norine Ruth was born August 2, 1969. The same year Bert built his first barn after trying unsuccessfully for three years to raise pigs in the cold, uninsulated shacks which "decorated" the yard. The barn was built with the help of neighbours who were paid one dollar an hour.

During some of these early winters, Bert and Bertha were drifted in for days at a time. On one occasion Bert packed water over the drifts to his neighbour Vladymir Bukseda, who had no well and whose son was unable to climb over the drifts to Bert's well to bring water home. To get to church one Christmas, Bert and Bertha walked nearly a mile with the kids to a corner where Bert's dad could pick them up.

Verndel Faith was born October 7, 1971, and her diapers were washed at the same water system, The Drip. However, the pigs now drank from a new dugout.

The "great divide" happened in 1972 when Bert and Bertha split up with his folks. Until this time they had farmed together. **Marlene** Dale was born July 11, 1974.

Until 1975 the Janssens were hailed out many times but the worst came on July 27, 1975, when a bad hailstorm and a tornado claimed every bit of hay, grain, and garden. The grain grew back and Bert made silage from it. Minimal damage was done to the buildings.

Back: Norine, Bert, Brendon. Front: Bertha, Marlene, Verndel, 1979. Inset: Jacqueline, 1982.

In January 1981, with the family growing, it became necessary to replace The Drip with a well drilled by Big Iron. What a blessing to have enough water! On July 7, 1981, **Jacqueline** Carmen was born.

At the present time Bert and Bertha still live in the same house, though they have been renovating since they moved in. All of the other shacks have been replaced with good buildings. They farm the one quarter and milk thirty cows.

Bert and Bertha Janssen

JACK AND RUTH (SCHOENROCK) JANSSEN

Jack was born June 17, 1928, in Edmonton, where the municipal airport is now located. His father, Bart, operated a dairy farm right next to the original airport, using the land around the existing runways as pasture for his cattle. Jack spent the first years of his life watching the planes come and go, which resulted in a life-long love for airplanes. In 1938, with war on the horizon, an expansion of the airport was imminent, so the farm was sold to the city and the Janssens moved to Neerlandia.

True Love: Jack and his dog, 1938.

Jack began school in Neerlandia when he was ten years old, getting into the usual fights and mischief which were so prevalent among children who had to walk long distances to school. During the summer he and his dog spent long hours herding cattle along the roads or on summer fallow. Sometimes they were so busy playing they forgot to watch the cattle who were busy eating grain. As Jack grew older, he helped his father and his brother Harry on the farm. Horses were still the order of the day but Jack dreamed of the time when tractors and trucks would take over the work done by horses.

In 1948 Jack's mother died. By this time, all Jack's brothers and sisters were married, so Jack and his dad felt the loss all the more. It was while the two men were baching that Jack met Ruth Schoenrock.

Ruth, born in Ponca, Nebraska, on March 15, 1931, had come with her parents to the Barrhead area in 1935. She came to Neerlandia in April 1949, just three days after writing her last examination at the U of A, to teach grades three and four. She first met Jack at the local post office, which at that time stayed open [illegible] evenings. Ruth had to sign for a parcel and, quite typically, could not find her pen. Jack offered her his pen and from then on their relationship grew. They were married in the Trinity Lutheran Church in Westlock on March 29, 1951, and Ruth subsequently moved into the Janssen family home.

Jack's family had always been fond of animals, especially dogs. Ruth, on the other hand, viewed animals differently; she did not mistreat them but neither could she fuss over them. This sometimes caused some friction as Jack allowed the dogs in the house and Ruth desired otherwise. One day Jack's dad came home from the auction mart with yet another animal — a goat. Jack promptly named him Skipper and enjoyed his antics, but Ruth and the goat were constantly at war. He would butt her as she walked across the yard, chew off her flowers, and jump on cars. One day when Ruth had to do chores, she accidentally locked Skipper in the chop house. The next morning he was dead, his greediness for chop doing him in. To this day Jack claims that the goat was deliberately locked in. Though Ruth claims differently, you may be sure she did not shed any tears.

Another thorn in Ruth's life was the old black cook stove. No matter how she stoked and poked and prodded, it simply would not bake. She was sure it had a personal grudge against her. It did not improve matters when her father-in-law claimed it was an excellent stove — that she simply did not know how to stoke it. What a happy day in her life when it was sold and a brand-new gleaming white propane stove was installed in its place.

Jack and Ruth's first child, Karen Hope, was born September 9, 1954. That year the store clouds gathered again and the crops were flattened by hail. Even after the hail, the rains came and came. Finally, in October, after the rains stopped, an attempt was made to salvage a bit of grain. Jack had no combine but his neighbour Fred Toebes had one and he offered to help them. Because the ground was still very soft, two tractors were put in front of the little pull-type combine. Everyone worked. Fred operated the combine; Jack and Sena, Fred's wife, each drove a tractor; and Jack's dad drove the truck and unloaded the grain with a shovel, managing to keep up with the combine. Meanwhile, Ruth cooked the meals and looked after nine-month-old Janice Toebes as well as their own newborn baby. After a week of this, the crop was finally harvested — 580 bushels of grain, an average of five bushels to the acre, requiring four people working five days! Even though prospects looked bleak, there was some good in all this: it was the beginning of a lasting friendship between the two families.

Christmas, 1954. Ruth, Jack, Karen.

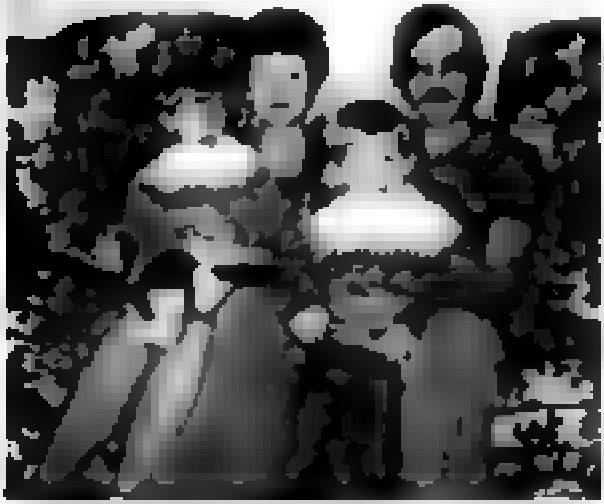
One Farmer's Day on the way home from Goose Lake, where the Janssen and Toebes families had spent the day, Jack and Fred decided it would be fun to float down the Freeman River in the boat. Sena and Ruth (and the kids of course) were sent ahead by car to wait for them at the Fort Assiniboine bridge. They waited and waited, long after the expected arrival time, but no voyageurs appeared. As the children became more tired and cranky, the women became more worried. Hours later the two men appeared, but not by boat. The water had been so shallow that the boat had to be dragged most of the way. Finally, they had beached the boat and then walked to a farmer's home. He drove them to the bridge. Sena and Ruth hardly knew whether to be joyful or angry after all the worry they had gone through.

As the years passed, two more children joined the family. Virgil Wayne was born November 12, 1959, and Scott Henry on June 22, 1965. Jack's dad, by this time, had moved to B.C., but all three children were fortunate to have their grandfather live with them during the summer months. He spent many hours talking to them and listening to their problems. Certainly their lives were enriched by the many stories he told of pioneer days. Everyone felt a great loss when Grandpa passed away in 1978.

Karen, Jack, Ruth, Virgil, Scott, 1976

The passing of the years brought other changes. Jack got his bus driver's license in 1960 and worked for the Barrhead County, first as a spare bus driver and then as a regular driver. A few years later he fulfilled one of his dreams when he was able to take flying lessons and buy a share in an airplane.

In 1974, Karen went to work in Terrace, B.C., where she met Myron Kellogg, whom she married a year later. Their first child, Alana Dawn, was stillborn on February 28, 1978. She was buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. After living in Calgary several years, Myron and Karen moved out to Neerlandia. They now live in the original farmhouse on the Janssen farm. They have two boys, Shea Andrew, born February 19, 1979, and Darcy Grant, born May 25, 1981. Myron works for Paddle Plumbing in Barrhead and Karen works in the Neerlandia Co-op store.



Karen, Myron, Darcy, Shea, 1983

Virgil moved to Calgary after completing high school. He began work in a service station where he became assistant manager. Scott plans to attend The King's College in the fall of 1984.

Jack and Ruth still live on the farm as they continue at their respective jobs — driving school bus and teaching. Ruth is also assistant principal at Neerlandia School. Both are members of the Christian Reformed Church. They are thankful to God for enabling them to be a part of the Neerlandia community and for having given them a good life together.

Ruth Janssen

ROELOF JANSSEN

On August 21, 1960, Roelof Janssen was born in Ter Aard, Drenthe, the Netherlands, the eleventh and youngest in his family. His father had a mixed farm.

One year, Dick Barendregt came from Canada to board at the Janssen's while he attended Teacher's College in Groningen. He and Joanne Viersen planned to get married in Neerlandia in 1979 and Roelof resolved to attend their wedding. He made arrangements to work and board at Viersen's. On July 4 he arrived in Neerlandia and was pleased to discover that the Viersen children spoke Dutch. The next day a truck came on the yard and Roelof was a little shy when the driver came toward him. He expected a real Canadian and thought he would speak English, but the man said, "*Goede morgen, is je baas er ook?*" (Good morning, is your boss here?) Then he gave him a hand and said, "John Van Assen." Roelof was surprised and thought, "Maybe everybody still talks Dutch here." Later he heard that John had known he was coming.

During that summer Roelof helped build the addition and gymnasium onto Covenant School. This gave him a very good impression about the way people worked together in the service of the Lord. He enjoyed his stay in Neerlandia so much that, as soon as he was back in the Netherlands, he made short work of immigrating. On April 30, 1980, he was back in Neerlandia to stay.

After working for John Van Assen for the summer, Roelof started a phonograph-record business. In October 1981 he started travelling throughout Alberta and was soon sold out. A trip to Ontario brought similar results. Because his records came from the Netherlands there was often a long delay before he could obtain replacement stock. Since then the initial problems have been solved.

He enjoys living in Neerlandia where, by means of another job — driving gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, he is able to maintain contact with the farmers. Roelof appreciates the many friendships he has made in Neerlandia.

Roelof Janssen

SAM AND ALICE (LIEVERS) KIFFIAK

Alice Lievers was born in Neerlandia in 1920. She had two brothers just a bit older than she and three sisters quite a big older than she. Later she had three younger brothers too, so she really was a loner in the family. But she survived and passed grade eight by the time she was thirteen. After that there was no more school for her because grade eight was the highest taught in Neerlandia at that time.

After her schooling, Alice was needed at home to help Mother Lievers since her older sisters were out working and most of the boys were still at home. That meant getting up at 5:00

a.m. to do the work. All the overalls and other dirty clothes had to be washed by hand with the water hauled from the well. Once a week fourteen loaves of bread had to be made and then baked in the wood cook stove — hot weather or not. In the winter, the men would be off to the bush logging or getting out firewood, so they were hungry and needed lunches each day.

The Lievers' home was always open to preacher and peddler alike. Alice can recall that except for one week, their guest room was once in constant use for a whole year. Mother Lievers was noted for her hospitality, and all were welcome to her home. This was true even during the Depression years when the family had to struggle to make ends meet.

Alice, Sam, c. 1942

In 1941 Rieka and Alice went to a Bible camp at Lac La Nonne, where Alice met the man of her life — Samuel (meaning asked of God) Kiffiak. But it was during the war years, and Sam still had four years to serve, so their courting was done by letter. When he was discharged, he took two years of study at Three Hills Bible College, Three Hills, Alberta. It was June 5, 1948, before Sam and Alice were married. They first lived in Neerlandia on the Lievers' homestead. Sam worked for Sam Howey and John Molodowich driving a Caterpillar tractor and brushing. Their oldest son, **Gerald**, was born December 18, 1949.

After about three years the family moved to Edmonton where Sam got work with Import Tool. After thirty-two years Sam is still working there. Another son was born in 1954.

Alice Kiffiak

JOHN AND LUCY (POST) KIPPERS

John Kippers came to Neerlandia with his parents in 1913. He first lived with them on NE 16-62-3-5. Later he built a house there for himself, but he only lived in it for about one year before moving back to live with his parents. Baching was not an enjoyable way of life. In the 1940s when John's parents moved to the hamlet of Neerlandia, he would live with them during the winter months and on the farm in the summer.

In February 1948, Lucy Post came to Neerlandia. Lucy had been born August 2, 1911, in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. She was distantly related to John and had been writing to him for some time. She came and never looked back. John and Lucy were married March 23, 1948, and that same year John bought NE 10-62-3-5 from his father.

Front: Lucy and John. Their chaperones, Mrs. and Rev. Rubingh, 1948.

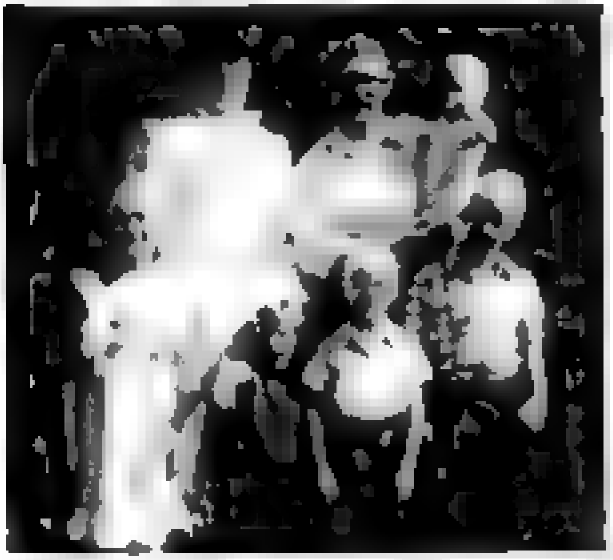
Until his marriage, John had bought farm machinery with his father and brothers, Henry and George. When his father retired the boys split up, each buying his own machinery.

John and Lucy were blessed with two children. **Tena** was born December 17, 1949, and **John** Henry arrived January 15, 1952.

Tena, Lucy, John Sr., John, 1964

After high school Tena took training for a nurse's aide in Edmonton and then worked for three years in Barrhead General Hospital. She married Bert Wierenga in 1971.

John H. married **Alida Van Dasselaar** on April 19, 1973. Alida was born May 14, 1953, in Amerstoort, Utrecht, the Netherlands. She spent most of her growing-up years in Carman, Manitoba. In 1975 John H. and Alida bought the two quarters of land owned by his father. They and their five children live in a trailer on the NE 10-62-3-5.



Alida, John, and family

After retirement, John and Lucy continued to live on the farm and enjoyed themselves taking trips to the Netherlands and across Canada to visit relatives. In 1980 John passed away at the age of seventy-two. Lucy enjoys good health and lives on John's farm.

Kippers Family

ARIE AND CECELIA (TIEMSTRA) KRIKKE

Arie Krikke was born at the home of his parents, William and Cornelia. He was very shy and scared when he began attending school. The first days were spent at the side of sister Clara, who was in grade five. Mr. Ashley tolerated that for only so long, and then Arie received a paddling on the seat of his pants and was brought into the class of Miss Boer.

After nine years in school, Arie went into full-time farming. Farming was a busy life, but there was always time for berry picking in the summer. That was where Arie met Cecelia Tiemstra, in the blueberry patch. Arie kept his eye on Cecelia — he had long ago forgotten his shyness — and proposed marriage to her. They were married in a triple wedding ceremony on June 17, 1953, and made their home on the NW 3-62-3-5. Later they purchased two quarters in the Shoal Creek area. In winter Arie enjoyed hunting, fishing, and trapping, and used these means to supplement the farming income.

Back: Sheryl, Emily, Wendy, Arie. Front: Vernon, Christina, Cecelia, Warren, c. 1974

Arie and Cecelia have six children, all born in Barrhead: **Sheryl Aileen** (November 16 1954), **Christine Mae** (November 23, 1956), **Emiline Susan** (February 14, 1959), **Wendiliese** (July 27 1961), **Warren** (also July 27 1961), and **Vernon Arnold** (June 19, 1965)

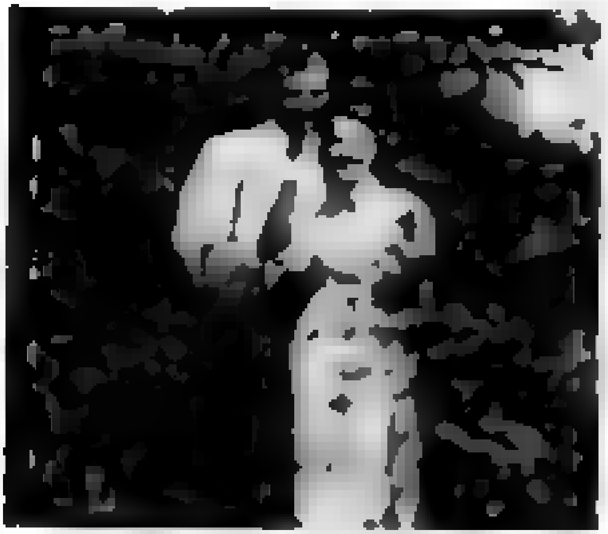
In 1974, Arie and Cecelia rented out their farm in Neerlandia and moved to Spruce Grove, where Arie had a job at Lilydale Broiler Farm. They sold their farm in 1979, and bought a home in Edmonton where they live today (1984)

Three of the children are married and all remain in Edmonton. Arie and Cecelia are doing janitorial work in the city

Arie Krikke

RALPH AND RITA (GELDERMAN) [illegible]

Ralph Krikke was born and raised in Neerlandia. When his education in school was completed, Ralph worked on his father's farm, clearing, and breaking the land. He also worked for other farmers in Vega and Neerlandia for fifty dollars a month, often working twelve-hour days. He worked at clearing the land with a Caterpillar tractor. Brushing, piling, and bulldozing with a Cat now became the way the land was cleared. In 1951 Ralph bought a quarter of land (SW 22-62-3-5) in Vega from Andy Elzinga. With this land and an agricultural lease on the quarter next to it (SE 22-[illegible]) Ralph started farming on his own



[illegible]

Rita Gelderman also worked at home after her education at school. She did housework in other homes in Neerlandia and Edmonton as well. On June 17, 1953, Ralph and Rita were married and moved onto Ralph's farm. Dairy farming became the prime interest in their lives for many years though they added beef cattle as time went on

Six children were born to bless the Krikke home. **Kathleen** Joy, born October 16, 1954, became a registered nursing assistant and works in the Barrhead hospital. On April 25, [illegible] Ann entered the world, and later took up a career as a registered nurse in Edmonton. A third daughter, **Trudy** Carol, was born July 31 1958. Trudy had various jobs as a clerk in stores and worked in a bank in Edmonton. She married Otto Schlosser in 1980, and they have one daughter. They now live on an acreage near Stony Plain. In 1961, on May 28, **Jocelyn** Joan was born. She became a computer operator, working in Edmonton and Calgary. Jocelyn and Alan Tupper were married in [illegible], and reside in Edmonton where Jocelyn works as a tape librarian. Another girl, **Colleen** Ruth, was added to the family on March 6, 1966. Though very happy with their family of girls, Ralph and Rita were pleased when a son, **Karl** James was born to them on October 2, 1968

Rita Krikke

RYER AND JURINA (ELGERSMA) KRIKKE

Jurina Elgersma was born in Neerlandia. She had her schooling there and was quite determined to go everyday whether it was sunny, rainy, or cold. The children had to leave for school early in the morning. One day Jurina started off, although her parents thought it was too cold. But when she got to Henry Hiemstra's place, a mile down the road, they sent her back because [illegible] of these children were going. She returned home — crying at first, but she soon quit because the tears froze on her cheeks

After Jurina quit school she worked for several years in the Neerlandia Co-op. Besides working hard, she and Lula Krikke had many good times there

Ryer Krikke was also born in Neerlandia. He, too, had his schooling there but often, as a lad, had to stay home to help his father crush grain, harness horses, and do field work since his father had trouble with asthma. Ryer worked at Pete Visser's radiator shop in Edmonton several winters, until he married Jurina on October 30, 1952. Ryer and Jurina then started farming on the SE 9-62-3-5, which his father had bought from Wouter Groothuis.

Born to the Krikkes on November 12, 1954 was their son **Richard Clarence**. After his schooling he followed in the footsteps of his father and proved to be a true farmer at heart. On March 21, 1981, Richard married **Margaret Dykslag** of Lethbridge. On November 11, 1982, their daughter, Alicia Dawn, arrived.

Rosemarie Harina was born April 18, 1958, and after her schooling had a year of university. But she preferred the country and found work in the Barrhead Hospital as an admitting officer. On June 12, 1982, she married Albert Wierenga. They live on a farm east of Barrhead.

Donald Andrew came along on June 2, 1960. He was another farmer to help Ryer with the farming operation and a hunter as well to [illegible] yl Jaarsma of Houston, B.C.

Then, on a very stormy day, February 18, 1965, **Darryl** John came upon the scene to enrich the Krikkes' lives still more. He also has gone into farming full-time.

July 15, 1968, brought much excitement and joy to the four Krikke children as well as their parents. On this day their dark-haired baby sister and daughter, **Annemarie** Joan, was born.

Back: Darryl, Richard, Rosemarie, Donald. Front: Jurina, Annemarie, Ryer, 1977

On July 5, 1982, after suffering from [illegible] for six months, Ryer was taken home to be with the Lord. He died having enjoyed almost thirty years of marriage and the many other blessings God had showered upon the Ryer Krikke family.

Jurina Krikke

GERBEN AND ROELFKE (ALGRA) LAND

Gerben and Roelfke Land came from Buitenpost, Friesland, the Netherlands, in 1948 with seven children: **Albert, Walter, Anna, Clarence, Jenny, Peter,** and **Bill**. They were sponsored by Melle Elzinga.

Gerben was a mechanic, and work was found for him in Walter Bell's garage in Barrhead. The family first lived in Barrhead in a garage. This was less-than-adequate housing, and Melle asked Albert and Mabel Elgersma if they could help. Elgersmas had an old house and they helped Lands to make it liveable. [illegible] garage managed by Ed Visser. He accepted [illegible] his house just south of the Centre. While in Neerlandia another son, **Henry** (October 22, 1949), was born to Gerben and Roelfke.

Lands left Neerlandia in 1949 for Edmonton, where Gerben hoped to provide a better life for the family by starting a garage of his own. Gerben died in a car accident in 1963, and Roelfke passed away in 1982.

CLAUS AND JUNE (JANSSEN) LANGEVELD

Claus (Nicholaus Antonius) Langeveld was born on July 7, 1952, in Amsterdam, North Holland, the Netherlands. He was tenth in a family of eleven children, and was raised on a dairy farm. After trade school he also completed agricultural school. In May 1975 he immigrated to Canada, and worked on a dairy farm in London, Ontario, for one year. After that, he worked at odd jobs and travelled throughout Canada. Before he left Ontario a friend had said, "If you're out that way, pay a visit to my cousin, Case Van Beek, in Neerlandia." Claus did just that and the Van Beeks quickly made him feel at home. The longer Claus stayed in Neerlandia the better he liked it, so when Case offered him a job he accepted it. In the fall of 1977 he began working for Case, who owned Neerlandia Transport. On July 1, 1978, Claus took over the business from Case. Claus married June Janssen on June 12, 1981, and they now live on the N.W. 26-61-3-5 (1984).

Claus Langeveld

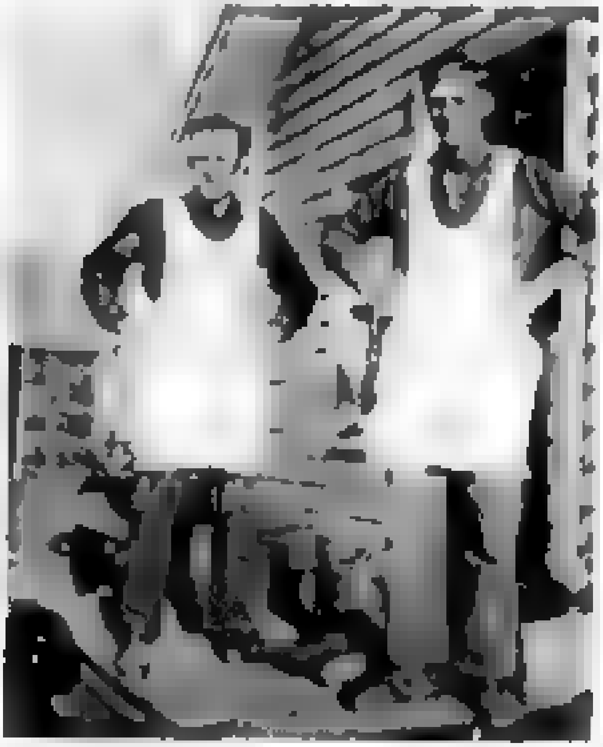
June, Claus

BEN AND MAUDE (FLINT) LIEVERS

Ben Lievers was born in 1923. His first recollections are of sleeping upstairs in the old Lievers house on a wooden bunk with hay for a mattress! Ben was soon old enough to work on the farm. He had cows to milk before and after school and as he grew older there was bush to clear using an axe, a chain, and horses. He was often too tired to learn at school so he did not go far in school.

In 1938, at the age of fifteen, Ben got a ride on the back of a truck to Edmonton to his first paying job. He arrived with fifty cents in his pocket at the dairy farm where he was to work. There he worked from 5:00 a.m. till 9:00 p.m. for fifty cents a day. He did not get home again for a year. He worked until the war broke out. Then, since his brothers Bill and Henry were called up to serve, Ben came back to help farm the five-and-a-half quarters they had. Although farming was a busy life, there was still time for fun. Once at threshing time a cowbell was tied to the threshing machine shaker and when the machine started the boss yelled "Whoa, there is a cow in the machine!" Ben stayed on the farm until the war was over.

When his brothers returned, Ben went back to Edmonton to work for Hook Signs and did carpentry as well. A year or two later he did brushing in the Neerlandia area for two years driving a Caterpillar tractor, first for John Molodowich and then for Sam Howey. By that time he had a lease on the NW 5-62-3-5.



Ben, John

Ben married Maude Flint on August 30, 1952. She had been born January 24, 1927, and grew up on a farm near Paradise Valley. Ben had bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from his dad and built a house there. He and Maude tried farming that land as well as that of Ben's brother John. In three-and-a-half years they had been dried out, rained out, and frozen out, so in the spring of 1956 they sold out and moved to Paradise Valley. During their stay in Neerlandia their two oldest children were born: Karen on November 15, 1953, and Janet on April 14, 1955.

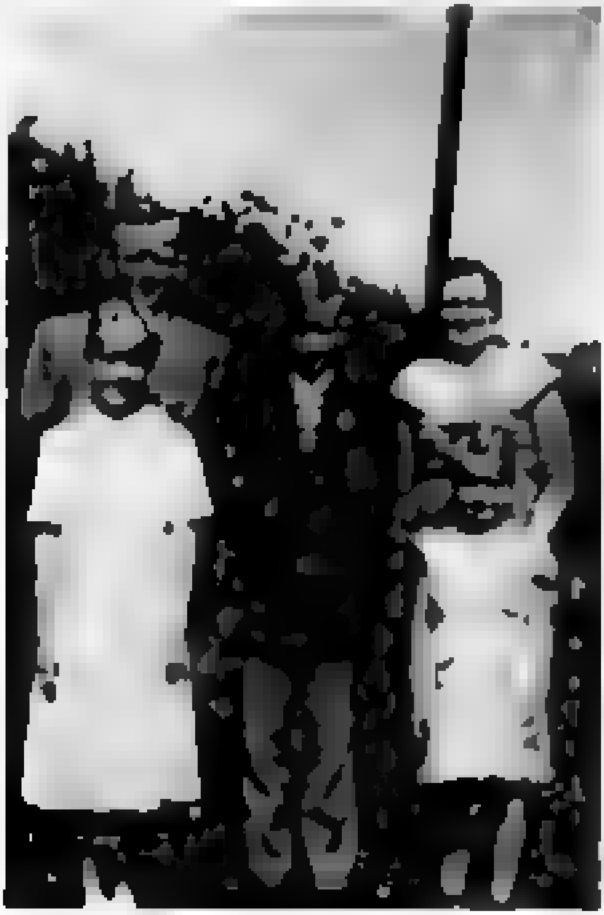
Ben and Maude farmed in Paradise Valley but with the same lack of success! They sold the farm in 1959 and moved their house into the town. Ben bought a lumber yard and, combined with his carpentry, the business went well. Four more children were born to them. Maude taught school in Paradise Valley but had to quit due to heart trouble. Ben is semiretired but still does carpentry part-time.

Maude Lievers

BILL AND GWEN (BROADHEAD) LIEVERS

Bill Lievers, son of Ben and Alice, went to school in Neerlandia to grade five. He bought his father's second homestead, the NE 32-61-3-5, and on it raised cattle and grain. He married Gwen Broadhead (born April 15, 1907) of Waseca, Saskatchewan, on June 11, 1946. They have three children: **Kenneth** was born April 24, 1947, **Kathleen** on November 13, 1949, and **Elizabeth** on May 18, 1953. In 1957 the family moved to Vega, where they also farmed. They moved again, first to Highridge in 1962 and then to Westlock in 1967, where Bill and Gwen still live.

Maude Lievers



Back: Bill, Gwen. Front: Kathleen, Kenneth, Elizabeth, 1959

ALBERT AND ANN (HAMOEN) MAST

In April 1948, Annie Hamoen came to Canada with her parents and her two brothers. They lived first in Westlock and then moved to Neerlandia in 1949, where Adrian Hamoen Sr. bought the John Terpsma farm on NW 36-61-4-5.

Annie stayed at home to help with the farm work, but also worked for women in Neerlandia from time to time. When threshing time came around she went along with the threshing crew, helping the women cook and bake, and bringing lunch out to the field. This was a time she enjoyed very much.

In the fall of 1948 Annie met Albert Mast. Cars were not so easy to get in those days, so during their courting days Albert and Annie often walked. Then Albert made a truck out of an old car. He had taken the back off the car and all that was left were the floorboards and the cab with no roof. Annie found her first ride in it quite exciting, but that mode of transportation lost its appeal when it was raining and she was getting soaked to the skin and the mud was flying around her ears.

On April 25, 1952, Annie married Albert Mast and moved to Barrhead because Albert was driving truck for Bredo Transport. Albert drove to Swan Hills which was just opening up. The roads were often so bad that Albert was gone from home for days at a time. During those years four children were born to the Masts: **Eva (Everdina) Hendrika**, born March 9, 1953, **Leona Audrey**, born June 8, 1954, **Albert**, born November 9, 1956, and **Thelma Ann**, born February 21, 1958. In 1958 Albert and Annie bought her father's farm because Albert was tired of being away from home so much. Unfortunately, starting to farm was not easy, so in order to make a go of it Albert had to go out working again. He began driving school bus in 1960. Annie did the yard work, a task she enjoyed though it was not easy to manage with three small children. They loved to play around the water barrel by the pigs though they had been told to stay away because of the danger of falling in. Like all youngsters, they found playing in the water much more exciting than listening to Mom and Dad. One bright and sunny day they were at it again, but this time Dad was home. He came up behind them and each one got a good dunking in the barrel. That cured them of playing in that dangerous spot. As the children got older they had to help weed the garden, a task that young Albert detested. One day he had the bright idea of using a stick and scraping the weeds out. The result was that there were no carrots left either. Oh well, at least he finished his row before his sisters did theirs.

Albert had to give up the bus driving in 1966 due to illness. He underwent brain surgery to remove cancerous growth, but the cancer was not arrested and in 1967 he passed away. Albert and Annie had already sold the farm to Norman Terpsma and rented a house on the NW 35-61-3-5. Annie had obtained employment at the Co-op store on September 1, 1966, and worked there until May 1970. Once again things were not easy for Annie, but it was a great comfort to her that God was always beside her. With that security she could always go on.

As the girls were reaching their teens, the boyfriends started coming around. Eva suddenly developed an interest in U.F.O.'s. Then she started taking out the garbage, and at night even when there was hardly anything in the can. That made Annie suspicious and soon the truth came out — Eva was meeting Simon Elgersma. That was the start of their courtship.

Annie's daughters were not the only ones being courted. Annie had been invited to a wedding in Vega. There she met Fred Dofka who came visiting two weeks later. He lived across the Athabasca River and sometimes the ferry was not in operation. Then Fred would come courting in his airplane which he would land in either Norman Terpsma or John Visser Sr.'s field. On July 17, 1970, Annie married Fred Dofka in the Lutheran church in Mellowdale. Annie and Fred moved with Albert and Thelma to Fred's farm across the Athabasca River. They had to make use of the Klondike Ferry in the summer, and cross on the ice in the wintertime. When neither could be used, they went across by basket or airplane. Albert and Thelma had to walk one-and-a-half miles to catch the school bus. When the river was too high in summer, the basket could not always be used, then Fred had to fly Albert and Thelma across to catch the bus.

Eva married Simon Elgersma in 1971. Leona married John Bakker in 1974. When Albert graduated from high school he obtained work at the I.G.A. in Barrhead and worked there till April 1976 when he was hired by the Neerlandia Co-op. In 1977 Albert took a trip to Iowa and met Karen Jaarsma who was attending Dordt College. Karen had been born February 21, 1960, in Houston, B.C. After corresponding for [illegible] months Karen came to Alberta to be near Albert. They were married in Neerlandia on August 24, 1979. They live on an acreage on the NE 11-62-3-5 which they purchased from Marvin Nanninga in 1984. Since her arrival in Neerlandia, Karen has been employed as a secretary for the County of Barrhead No. 11, first in Barrhead and since 1981 in Neerlandia. Albert continues at the Neerlandia Co-op. In his spare time he enjoys hunting, fishing, and trapping, a love inherited from his father. Albert and Karen are both active in community activities. Thelma, the youngest daughter of Albert and Annie, married Percy Ogden in January 1982.

Karen, Albert 1984

On July 10, 1975, Annie and Fred had a baby girl, Mona Lee. In 1972 Annie took over the Vega Post Office from Henry Erickson, and stayed until 1977 when the family moved to Grande Prairie. In 1981 they returned to Vega where Annie is again operating the Post Office.

Annie Dofka

CARL AND AGNES (MUIR) MAST

Carl Peter Mast quit school after grade four to help clear land and pick roots. When he was [illegible] so that Masts could hire someone to break the land for them with the breaking plow. In 1928 he worked for the summer months in Nobleford. He earned forty-five dollars — just enough to pay off Rev. Harm Van Der Woude who had lent him money to buy false teeth for his mother.

During the winter of 1930 Carl worked in the bush for the Chisholm Lumber Company. Wages were poor. That same year, he took up a homestead, the SW [illegible]-65. He built a shack and lived there to prove up his quarter. For some reason, unknown to him, the shack later burned down. Carl still owns this land but rents it out.

Carl had once fallen from a tree while breaking land, and he began to have trouble with his back. Doctors could not find the cause. It grew worse, giving him much pain and preventing him from doing his usual work. In the 1940s he worked setting up machinery for his uncle Carl K. Mast, a John Deere agent.

One day his uncle invited Carl to a farm show in Edmonton. Before the show they stopped in at Dick Baker's place. Dick said right away to Carl, "You are a sick man." Soon the bone specialist Dr. Fred Day was called. Carl had a serious case of tuberculosis in the spine. He was given a body cast and had to spend two years in the Royal Alexandra Hospital. It was there, however, that he met the woman who would later become his wife.

Agnes Muir was born March 13, 1908, in Saskatchewan. Her father had come from Scotland and her mother from England, and they had met in Canada. Thomas was a cabinet maker by trade but in Canada he farmed and did other construction. The open prairie they lived on was much the opposite of the landscape of Neerlandia. The 1930s with its dust storms and grasshoppers sent Agnes looking for work in Edmonton. She came in 1948 and started work in the Royal Alexandra on the housekeeping staff. At work she met Carl. "It was love at first sight," says Carl. Agnes continued work until November 19[illegible]. The next month, on December 30, they were married.

Carl and Agnes first lived in a little house beside the Abdays in the hamlet. Carl drove the school bus for twenty-two years. They both worked as janitors in the school for a while and Carl drove the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, first part time and later full time, for a total of twenty years.

When the store wanted to get rid of the telephone switchboard, Carl and Agnes took over and had the switchboard moved to their house. They started with three customers. In 1961 they bought the Asheys' property and house in the Centre. Again the switchboard was moved. By this time many more people were getting phones and A.G.T. wanted to put in a 24-hour service. With the extra workload, Masts had to hire operators to help out. Carl and Agnes operated the switchboard for twelve years. When underground cable arrived in December 1969, they retired. They received two service awards for their work.

Agnes, Carl, 1950

In 1971 Carl took the job as treasurer of the Funeral Society and held it for thirteen years. Agnes took over after him. Both are members of the Christian Reformed Church and enjoy the fellowship of the community.

Carl and Agnes Mast

CLARENCE AND GRACE (DOP) MAST

Clarence Mast was born in Neerlandia. When he was six years old, his family moved to Edmonton, and in 1926 the family returned to Neerlandia. Clarence remembers they lived in a chicken house which had some granaries added onto it for bedrooms. In the winter they slept under some horsehide blankets, and often there was snow on top of them which had sifted in through cracks in the walls.

Clarence spent most of his time outdoors

Although there were chores to do and wood to cut and haul, there was time for hunting, fishing, and trapping with his brothers

Clarence was a very persistent person he would never give up. One time when he was in his early teens he was hauling firewood home from the bush with a horse While hauling the last load, the horse refused to pull anymore Clarence just walked home and left the horse hitched to the load It was getting dark and he thought that if the horse got hungry enough he would return home or spend the night in the [illegible] that he was fighting a losing battle and he soon [illegible] horse was no match for Clarence

[illegible] the army. He spent two years in Europe as a [illegible] overseas. He also brought home many interesting souvenirs of his adventures — one of them being his wife Grace (also known as *Moeke*)

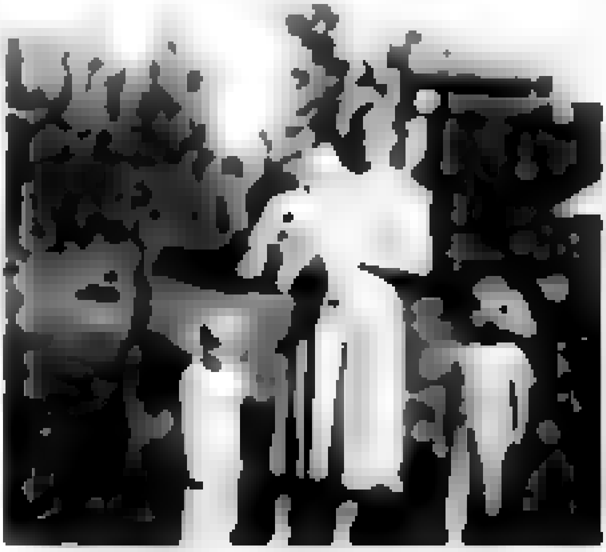
Grace (Grietje) was born December 23, 1921 in Zwolle, Overijssel, the Netherlands When she was thirteen years old her family moved to Utrecht. Life in the city at that time was very pleasant. People enjoyed many conveniences [illegible] were many opportunities for bettering oneself Grace was able to attend swimming lessons, piano lessons, gymnastic training, and dance classes. At school students learned the usual three R's, an assortment of languages, and even handicraft work. This early training was a great [illegible]

After completing grade seven, Grace quit [illegible] ment of a home decorating store That was where she learned her sewing skills. and many people today have drapes in their homes which were made by her

When Grace was eighteen, the war came and her life changed drastically Suddenly hunger and fear replaced a happy, carefree existence Later her children listened in awe when she told some of those wartime experiences

Just when Grace thought things would never improve, she met Clarence. They were married March 6, 1946 Grace travelled t[illegible] da on a ship called *Aquatania* with hundreds of war brides from various European countries They landed in Halifax, and from there she travelled by train to Edmonton. There she was met by Clarence, who had returned to Canada three months earlier. and some strangers who were her in-laws They were no stranger than anyone else. but she had never met them before.

Clarence and Grace began farming on the [illegible] so Grace found herself "in the sticks." Life was quite different from what she had known There was no electricity. and the only way to get running water was to get a pail and run for it to the pump. Now there was no longer a milkman [illegible] milk a cow, although she did feed many pigs in [illegible] had to learn to grow vegetables The worst part [illegible] learned to bake bread she learned how from her mother-in-law (with some help from Clarence). Their first home was quite small, but Grace made it very cozy with homemade [illegible]tains. clothes, and handicrafts That house was later converted to a garage

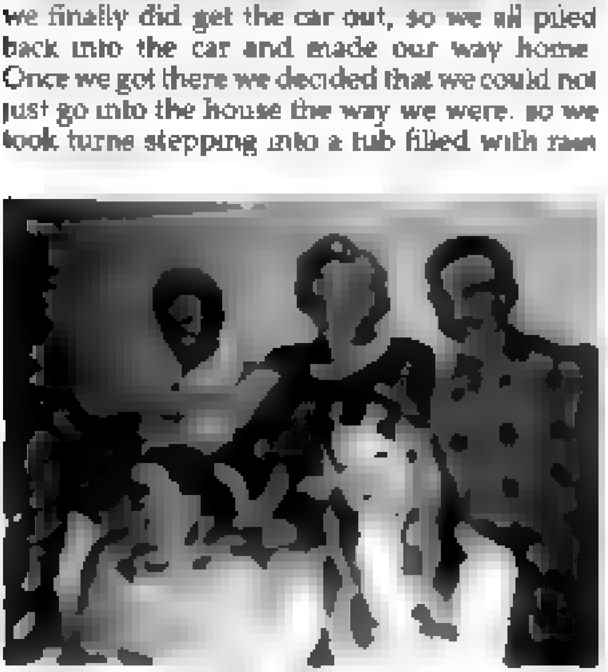


Meet "Cees" our first [illegible]. Jack, Grace holding Donna, Lydia, 1962

Clarence was always an early riser In summer he would get up with the sun and retire long after sundown. Grace would busy herself with her knitting or other handicrafts by her coal oil lamp. Somehow they managed to have five children. **Lydia** (Audia) Aawena was born

September 24, 1947. She married Raymond Sturwold (now Seinen) on May 10, 1968. **Jack** Mitchell was born September 22, 1949. He later married Pat O'Dell in August 1970. **Donna** (Evelyn Diane) was born January 1, 1952. She married Andrew Strydhorst on November 27, 1970. In 1956 **Rosalea** Jean was born February 2. She lived only a short while and passed away July 28 of that year. She had cerebral palsy and spent most of her life in the hospital. On July 23, 1957, their last child was born, Don **Clifford**. He lived to be nineteen years of age, when he was suddenly taken Home in a highway accident on July 28, 1976.

Although the family experienced some sorrows, they experienced many joys as well. [illegible] the lake with *Moeke's* brother Harm Dop and his wife, H[illegible]e, and their two sons Hans and Jack. The time at the lake was very pleasant but on our trip back home we had to go over a very muddy road. Oom Harm was not used to this sort of driving, and before long we found ourselves stuck. Everybody had to get out and push. The mosquitoes were thrilled and proceeded to help themselves to all these people. [illegible] all our exposed skin with mud, an old Indian [illegible] we finally did get the car out, so we all piled back into the car and made our way home. Once we got there we decided that we could not just go into the house the way we were, so we took turns stepping into a tub filled with rain water. All was well until *Tante* Hilbe stepped in – right on top of a big frog! She gave a loud shriek, but we told her it was her own fault for playing in the mud."



Back: Jack, Grace, Clarence. Middle: Lydia, Clifford, Donna. [illegible]

Over the years many new immigrants found their way into the community. Some, for whom it was a big adjustment, discovered that they could pour their hearts out to Grace. She would listen and nod sympathetically because she understood their problems — she had experienced them too. Many people received a warm welcome at their home, and that is why Clarence and Grace now have many "adopted" children who fondly refer to them as *Pa* and *Moeke*.

Donna Strydhorst

JOE AND MARION (POSTMA) MAST

Joe (Johannes) Mast is the youngest of a family of eleven born to Albert and Everdina Mast. For the first six years of his schooling he and his brothers and sisters walked three miles to school and back. Later on they used a dogsled to travel back and forth. Their favourite dog named Sport used to pull Joe and his brother Albert home with some groceries in fifteen minutes. During his last two years at school, Joe travelled in a covered truck.

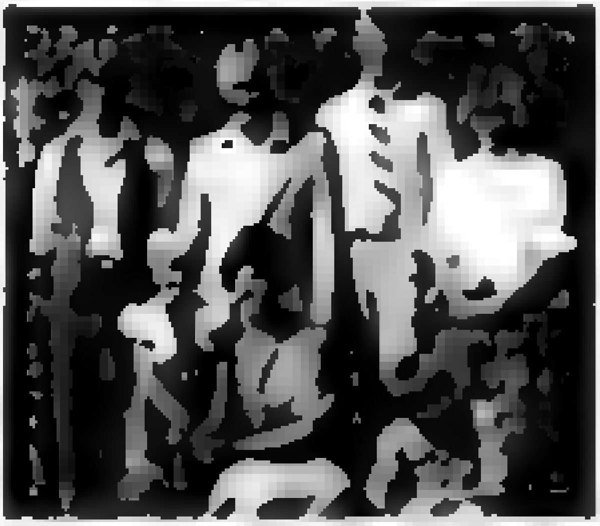
After he finished school Joe stayed home and farmed with his dad until 1954, when his dad passed away. In 1953 Joe bought the SE 23-61-3-5, which was crown land, and cleared it as the years went by. He lived and cared for his mother on the home place (SE 22-61-3-5) till [illegible]

Marion (Maryke) Janke Postma, born March 21, 1938, immigrated with her family from Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, to Toronto in June 1953. Not knowing any English, the only jobs she could get were cleaning houses and taking care of children. After working out for a few years and learning to speak English, Marion worked for the Toronto Dominion Bank for about nine months. Then a girlfriend who was going to the west to visit her sister for a year [illegible] unattached, the two set out for Calgary. Instead of one year it became three years in Calgary and Marion was then transferred to a branch of The Royal Bank in Edmonton in 1961. She attended a Young People's rally in Neerlandia in [illegible] year, July 6, they were married.

In the fall of that year Joe's brother Bill moved to Grande Prairie and sold his land (NE 13-62-4-5, SE 24-62-4-5) to Joe. The next spring Joe also bought Uncle Henry's land next to the home quarter (E½ 15-61-3-5).

On May 31, 1963, **David Allen** was born and was followed by **Ronald William** (July 12, 1964). Those years Joe and Marion worked hard. They put the boys in a box in the barn when they were milking. They fed steers, sows, and fatteners. In the spring during lambing season they had to take care of the special sheep. Also goose eggs had to be collected to prevent them from freezing, and brought out again later when the goose was ready to sit. Mixed farming made for a busy life but there was always "new life" in the spring; the sheep with their lambs, the cows with their calves, and the geese with their goslings. On March 13, 1967, Centennial year, **Ramona Marie** was born, and on November 20, 1970, **Trevor Johannes** came along. Eight years later daughter **Renate Maryke** was born January 21.

Around 1972 Joe's horse fell over backwards on him and pinned his leg down. Joe developed blood clots and had to elevate his feet for three weeks. It was haying time. Deacon Joe H. Wierenga put a notice in the bulletin that Joe Mast needed help. In response, many men of the community came with their trucks and wagons. They brought the hay from Joe's other quarters and in one day put it up — an instant haystack.



Back: Ronald, Joe, David, Ramona. Front: Renate, Marion, Trevor. 1983.

In 1977 the Masts put up a dairy barn; they quit shipping cream and started shipping milk. They milk about fifty to sixty cows, which along with the hogs, the beef, and the sheep, keep them busy. Father, mother, sons, and daughters all pitch in to do the work.

After completing high school, David attended The King's College in Edmonton for two years and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for one year. He is now at [illegible] in preparation for the ministry. Ronald is farming with his dad and set up a farrow to finish hog barn.

The Lord has blessed the Masts richly with a healthy family. Theirs is a busy but good life. They are thankful to be part of the Neerlandia community.

Marion Mast

JOHN AND MINNIE (VANDERMEULEN) MAST

John Mast was born and raised in Neerlandia. When he was old enough to leave the school bench he went to work on the family farm. In the winter he supplemented his income with other work. He tried his hand at various jobs, including working in a lumber camp, [illegible] and [illegible]. In August [illegible] John married Minnie Vandermeulen in the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church. At that time Minnie was working as a housekeeper in Barrhead and John was driving truck for [illegible]. In the fall of [illegible] the Masts moved to the [illegible] Nanninga farm [illegible] and tried their hand at farming. By then they had two children, **Allan** (March [illegible]) and **Bernice** ([illegible]). A few [illegible] daughter **Bonnie** (November [illegible]) was born.

When John and Minnie had moved onto their farm they lived in a [illegible] house and a granary. Later they bought a house and had it moved to their place. [illegible] sleeping in cramped quarters.

In January of [illegible] **Lorne** was born and in December [illegible] **Dianne**. After moving in [illegible] a barn was bought and moved onto the farm. The shack became a garage and wash house. In 1965 a large hog barn was built and the Masts had [illegible] as well as [illegible].

In April [illegible] **Wayne** was born. In the fall of [illegible] they had a devastating fire which burned the cow barn, the cattle shed, and the winter's supply of hay. But thanks to all their neighbours, especially Henk and Elsie Navis, they managed to save the house, garage, and hog barn. They did, however, lose their feeder hogs, which ran into the fire. The house had been completely emptied, and all its contents brought to neighbours. After that some of the glow went out of farming.

On May 9, 1968, the Masts were happily surprised by the birth of twin sons, **Kirby** and **Curtis**. Shortly after they had another fire. This time the fire was not as bad, but a lot of time was spent putting it out. The neighbours again came to their aid and emptied the house. Hennie writes, "At times like that you really find out that people care."

After that second fire John went into trucking to make money to get ahead again. Hennie and the children did the chores on the farm. In January 1975 John and Hennie moved to Barrhead. Since then many changes have taken place in their family. Their four oldest children are married and have families of their own. John is driving school bus and works part-time at Kramm Construction. Hennie is working as a teacher aide in Barrhead Elementary School.

Hennie Mast

PETE AND GLADYS (KRIKKE) MAST

Pete and Gladys were both born in Neerlandia. They attended school in Neerlandia until grade eight, as was the custom, and then worked at home. Pete helped with the clearing, breaking, root picking, and other farm duties. In the winter he usually went to the logging camps. In 1942 he entered the army and served for two years. He was discharged due to a severe case of rheumatic fever and was in the hospital six weeks.

Gladys worked in the Westlock hospital for two years as a ward aide. She earned fifty dollars a month, out of which she had to pay board. She still managed to save a few dollars, but she finally decided she could better do housework in the city, where she would not have to pay board and could save more. She returned in the summers to help with work at home.

Pete and Gladys were married March 25, 1949. While they were celebrating the event some young men entered their house by p[illegible] open a window. They were, however, unable to get the window completely closed again and put a piece of tin in front of it to keep out [illegible] came home they immediately noticed the tin so began to check to find out what tricks had been played on them. They found that the pranksters had put horsehair clippings in the bed — a good shaking solved that problem — and stuffed the stove and chimney with bags and rags. "Must have been fun for them," Gladys sai

Pete and Gladys lived on the SE 18-62-3-5, which Pete had bought from Dielemans. The house had been purchased from Gerben Tiemstra.

Maynard Allen, Pete and Gladys' first son, was born February 28, 1950. They could not have the baby baptized right away since there was no minister in Neerlandia at the time. In April a visiting minister was scheduled to come out. That Saturday evening there was a bad snowstorm, but on Sunday the Masts set out anyway. They got as far as Roelof Krikke's place where they had to be pulled out of the drifts. They never did get to church that Sunday and had to wait to have Maynard baptized until the minister came again.

[illegible] was impossible to get through them with a car [illegible] sleigh. Most of the neighbours rode along. The drifts were so hard that they drove right over top of them. It took Bill Olthuis' big Cat to clear the roads that year.

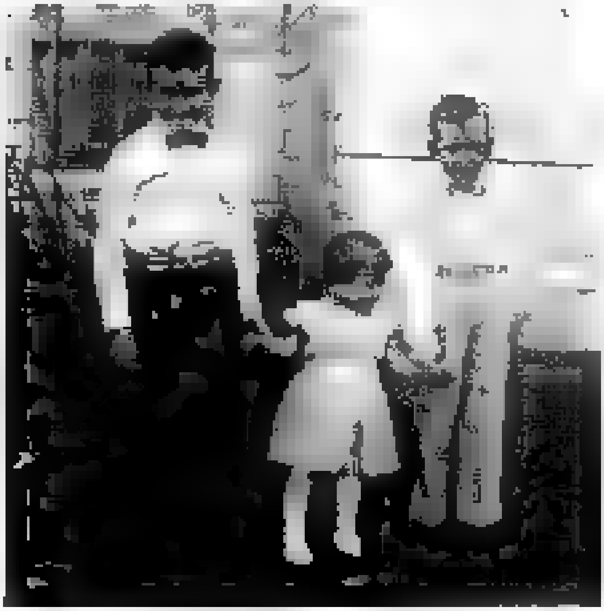
The first years of their marriage Gladys helped Pete with the bindering. She drove the tractor and he was on the binder. "I was a lousy driver," she said, "either I'd be too far from the [illegible]ain or right in it. Pete would holler, and after a [illegible] John Deere tractor. Pete would have fired me on the spot, but he didn't have much choice as he couldn't afford to hire anyone." While bindering they would put Maynard in a box on the tractor, where he usually fell asleep.

Pete and Gladys had some hard years. One year the crops froze and another year they drowned out. In the fall it was so wet they could in no way get on the land. In the meantime their second son, **Klaas**, was born (March 30, 1953).

In the winter Gladys would sew clothes for the boys, making secondhand clothing over into garments for them. One winter Maynard needed a winter coat, but Gladys had nothing

to make it from. She reluctantly decided that she would have to use one of her own for that purpose. Meanwhile Pete had gone to the store for groceries and the mail. When he came back he had a big box from California. It was full of clothes. There were clothes for everyone, and even a coat for Maynard. A friend, Cobie Leder, had sent them. Gladys always felt that this was God-sent.

A daughter, Viola Janeth, was born June 30, 1956. She was named after Gladys' mother, Janna.



Maynard, Viola, Klaas, 1958.

Pete used to cut hair for most of the neighbours. People just didn't think of going to the barber in those days. For awhile Pete was cutting hair for fifteen people. The Masts enjoyed the company too.

Ten years after their marriage, Pete and Gladys moved to Mellowdale and had to start all over. They bought the old Davis place on the SE 3-61-3-5. The first summer they were there their old log barn burned down. Klaas and one of the neighbour's children had found a bee nest between the logs and decided to kill them by burning them. Their efforts were successful — they burned the barn as well. Pete bought an old barn for five hundred dollars with the help of some neighbours. Pete and Gladys were very thankful for that help. From then on things began to pick up for them.

Gladys, Pete, 1973

Maynard married Nora Janssen on June 10, 1972. They are farming in Bloomsbury and have five children. Klass is farming and living at home. Viola married Vern Mahar on July 27, 1978. They live on an acreage in Campsie with their two children.

Gladys Mast

HENRY AND GRACE (RUNIA) MEETSMA

Henry (Hendrik) Meetsma was born January 13, 1917, in Zandbuiten, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1920 his family moved to Ter Apel, Groningen. Thus Henry mastered *Fries* as well as *Grontings* and, since his father owned a garage, he became an all-round mechanic.

Grace (Grietje), daughter of Arend and Pietje Runia, was born March 25, 1918, in Bolsward, Friesland. Henry and Grace were married in 1944. From then until the end of the war, they were in hiding in Blija, Friesland because Henry had refused to register with the Germans as a military man. After the liberation Henry worked at a Chrysler garage in Leeuwarden. On the way to work in the morning he would meet Romke Stel on his way to his job at Ford, but Romke left for Canada in 1948.

The Meetsmas immigrated to Canada too, in 1953. Henry and Grace felt that Canada held a better future for their children Gerald (Tjidsger, April 25, 1945), Arnold (Arend, May 2, 1947), and Pat (Pietje, April 2, 1950). When the family arrived in Canada, they found their sponsorship had been cancelled, so through fieldman Herman Wierenga they came to Barrhead. During their twelve years there, **Henry** C. (July 1, 1954) and **Richard** Quentin (July 23, [illegible]) were born.

Henry worked in several garages and, through his work and the church, the Meetsmas came into contact and made friends with many people in Neerlandia. Their first visit to the hamlet was to the Romke Stel family. When Gerald and Arnold were in their teens, they went to Neerlandia for catechism and Young People's activities. But in 1965 the family moved to Calgary, where Arnold wanted to study. Gerald stayed in Barrhead, since he had a job there.

Grace's father came from the Netherlands for a visit in 1969. Arend had been a close friend to Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra, but they had lost contact after the Tiemstras had emigrated. His friend Siebren Tiemstra had passed on, but he went to see Willemke, who was still living in Barrhead. What a meeting that was after sixty-four years! It was during that visit that the idea of buying the garage in Neerlandia first came up. The garage, which belonged to Gerrit Gelderman, had been empty for a year-and-a-half and looked quite run-down. After much deliberation and with the mediation of Melle Elzinga, a deal was made. Ted Reitsma, who had moved the family to Calgary four years before, hauled their belongings back to Neerlandia, where they were unloaded into the little house next to the garage. The children all pitched in to make the place livable and Meetsma Motors opened for business on September 7, 1969.

Gerald, Henry

After the garage opening, Arnold and Pat went back to Calgary to their studies. Gerald had already married, so only Henry Jr. and Richard were living with their parents. After his schooling, Henry joined the Canadian Armed Forces. Richard left in 1973 to study mechanics. While Henry and Grace lived in Neerlandia, all their children and grandchildren loved to visit and often as many as sixteen people were crowded into their little house.

Ever since he immigrated, Henry had hoped to run his own repair shop. He kept busy in the garage and enjoyed the work. He put his knowledge of *Fries* and *Gronings* to good use in his contact with the customers. After seven years, the Meetsmas sold their garage to the Co-op. The community gave them a farewell at a potluck supper in the church basement. After leaving Neerlandia, Henry worked in a service station in Calgary. In 1978 Henry and Grace took a job as caretakers of an estate, where they worked until retirement in [illegible]. They thank the Lord for a richly blessed life of which their time in Neerlandia stands out as something very special.

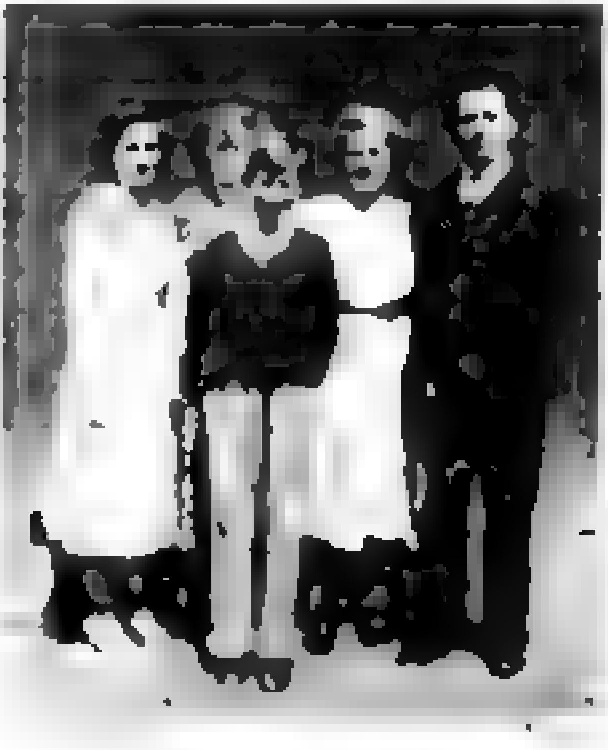
Grace Meetsma

JIM AND ELIZABETH (FENNEMA) MERKUS

World War II was over and Jim (Ymke) Merkus of Marrum, Friesland, the Netherlands began to wonder about the future of his family. There was much talk of emigration among the townspeople, and Jim's brother John, who had left for Neerlandia in 1947, encouraged Jim to leave. Finally a decision was made: on June 4, 1948, Jim, his wife Elizabeth (Lysbert), and their children, **Betty** (Elisabeth, March 27, 1932), **Hilda** (Hielkje), June 30, 1934); and **Ray** (Rinze, June 21, 1938), left for Canada aboard the Ken then. They arrived in Quebec City on June 16 and boarded a train for Edmonton. From Edmonton they took a bus to Barrhead. There brother John greeted them and took them to Catherine Holwerda's place, where they were warmly welcomed.

Jim worked for Catherine till fall, when he, Elizabeth and Ray moved to Westlock where Jim and Elizabeth worked for a bachelor farmer. Their daughters, Betty and Hilda, stayed in Neerlandia and worked in the homes of families who needed help. On the Sundays that the Neerlandia congregation celebrated the Lord's Supper, the Merkus family was brought to Neerlandia by members of the congregation.

After about one year in Westlock, Jim lost three fingers of one hand in a sawing accident. This changed the course of his life. The Merkus family moved back to Neerlandia where Jim became janitor of the church. For six hundred dollars he bought a vacant house from Clarence Mast. Jim and Elizabeth bought a lot in the hamlet from Sieberen Tiemstra. They dug a cellar by hand, repaired the cracks in the walls and repainted the house, gradually transforming it into a cozy home.



Betty, Hilda, Ray, Elizabeth, Jim, 1951

Soon the children found life partners. Betty married Albert Tiemstra. Hilda married Daniel Berkhout on November 28, 1958. They live in Edmonton with their six children. Ray married Eleanor Nanninga. In the meantime Jim and Elizabeth were busy with their own lives. As part of his duties when he served in the consistory, Jim taught catechism — a task he enjoyed. They grew a fine garden, and Elizabeth canned many vegetables for herself and her daughters. In 1979 Jim and Elizabeth left Neerlandia for the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton, where they enjoy the fellowship of other elderly people. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on May 28, 1981. In looking back, they see that the Lord has been faithful through the years and blessed their lives richly.

Betty Tiemstra

JOHN AND CATHERINE (BOUMA) MERKUS

John and his wife, Catherine, were both born in Twijzelerheide, Friesland, the Netherlands. John, younger brother of Ymke, was born October 30, 1911, and raised on a small farm. Catherine Bouma was born June 29, 1912, the oldest of eleven children. Her father was principal of *De School met de Bybel* (The School with the Bible), and raised his family in the schoolhouse.

John and Catherine were married April 29, 1943. The next year, on April 13, **Catharina** was born and on November 18, 1945, **Raymond** (Rinse) was born.

Several articles in the newspapers encouraged immigration to Canada, so in September [illegible] the Merkus family left for Canada. A distant relative, Gerrit Dyk of Westlock, sponsored them but, since he did not have much work for them, he took them to Neerlandia as soon as possible.

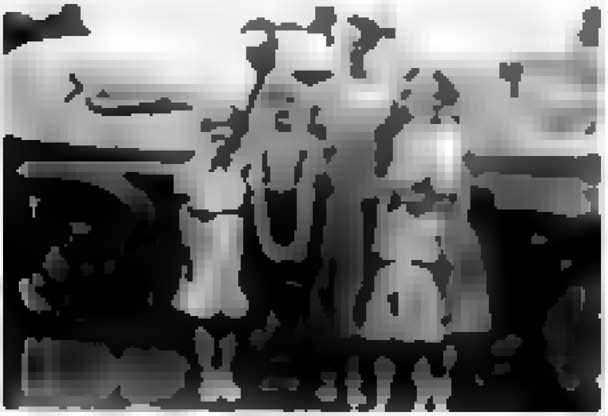
In Neerlandia, threshing was in progress and John started working for Andries Wierenga. Later they moved to Catherine Holwerda's place, where John worked with Ekke Wierenga. A house was bought and moved to the Holwerda yard. What followed was a winter they never forgot: the snow was as high as the fence posts and a Caterpillar tractor had to come and open up the roads.

During World War II, in the Netherlands, the Merkus family had to use ration coupons [illegible] food. Per person, they could get fifty or [illegible] hundred grams of each food item such as sugar flour, and meat a month. When they came to Canada, coupons for certain foods were still in effect but what a contrast: each person could get twenty-five pounds of sugar [illegible] that [illegible] ity. They were advised to buy all of it, plus [illegible] hundred pounds of flour and more foodstuffs as well because they might be snowbound for the winter! So they stocked up and felt they had landed in *Luilekkerland* (land of Cockaigne).

There was more. In Catherine's words: "What a surprise the Ladies' Society of Neerlandia had for us." Some immigrant women were invited, supposedly to attend Ladies' Society. But when they arrived in the room above the store, it look more like *Sinterklaas*. "The parcels were stacked to the ceiling and we felt overwhelmed and almost choked in our word of thanks. It was [illegible] such a hearty welcome." The next morning John had to use the grain box and a team of horses to bring all the goodies home.

After a year, more immigrants arrived and the Merkuses had to move on. Oene Piers found work for John at Henry Bender's in Mellowdale and Dick Fisher came with the truck to move out their few belongings. Although it was the end of May, everything was still soaked and the roads were still very rough due to the spring break up.

Every Sunday, one or two elders from Neerlandia picked the Merkus family up for worship services held in an Anglican church in Barrhead.



[illegible] Hilde Grace, Raymond, [illegible]. Front: Margaret, 1958

John picked roots all summer and also found out how bothersome mosquitoes can be. Working for Henry Bender, John received one hundred dollars a month. Several immigrants envied this wage. At harvest time John received seven dollars a day, an enormous amount in his eyes. When winter came, the family could stay rent-free in their house and there was plenty of good firewood, but no work. Herman Wierenga came to the rescue: John could cut some brush along the roads at fifty-five cents per hour.

On April 3, 1949, a daughter, Hilde Grace, was born. Later that spring John found work in Barrhead and the family moved there. Another daughter was born to them there. On January 15, 1966, Raymond died of meningitis. John died of a heart attack on February 7, 1979. They both are buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. Catherine now lives in Edmonton.

Catherine Merkus

RAY AND ELEANOR (NANNINGA) MERKUS

Growing up in a small town in Friesland, Ray Merkus spent his childhood jumping canals, floating boats, attending school, delivering papers, and having fun with friends. But at nine years of age, Ray left all that behind. The Merkus family moved to Canada. Here they had [illegible] to a new language, other customs, and harsh living conditions. The words learned first were not necessarily the best.

After several moves, the family settled in that part of Neerlandia known as the Corner. This put them near the skating rink, and that became one of Ray's favourite places. He and the other boys from the Corner cleaned the rink many times so that they could skate and play hockey. Soon the controversy began in the settlement: should we or should we not play hockey in Barrhead against other teams? Fortunately Ray was given permission by his parents to join the [illegible] in Barrhead.

Against his father's wishes, Ray quit school at age sixteen and went to work in Edmonton. The prospect of a weekly paycheck was much more inviting than that of perfecting the three R's. After obtaining a variety of jobs, Ray worked out a routine. In the fall, he worked as poultry inspector for the Alberta Department of Agriculture. When that was completed, he worked at the Barrhead Hatchery until the end of the season. He continued this routine for five years, living either at home or in Barrhead.

While attending Neerlandia functions, Ray caught sight of a young miss by the name of Eleanor Nanninga. They dated two years, and were married February 18, 1961.

Ray and Eleanor's first house was a little two-room affair in Barrhead, with another little house out back. Eleanor also worked at the Barrhead Hatchery. Their first two children were born in the Barrhead hospital. **Clark Douglas** was born September 30, 1961, and **Crystal Rose** on October 30, 1962.

In November 1962, the Merkus family moved to Grande Prairie. Ray had taken out a homestead in a romantic-sounding place called Blueberry Mountain. There, a second son, **Glen Allen**, was born June 26, 1965.

After having moved about twice a year, the Merkus family settled down in the Sexsmith area for ten years. Both Ray and Eleanor held a variety of jobs there. Ray always told his wife, however, that if anyone would buy his farm in Blueberry Mountain, the family would move south. Sure enough, someone came along and wanted the "stump ranch". Ray made good on his promise, and in 1976 they moved to Lacombe.

In Lacombe Ray and Eleanor owned and operated Glendale Trailer Park and did other jobs as well. During these five years, in addition to keeping track of their three active teenagers, Ray and Eleanor provided a home for eight different foster children. Both consider that a very rewarding experience.

In 1981 the trailer park was purchased by the town of Lacombe, requiring the Merkus family to move yet again. Where to now? The logical place seemed to be the Barrhead area, so in August 1982, Ray, Eleanor, Clark, and Glen moved back to Neerlandia. Ray, who had worked at seed-cleaning plants before, had long considered a mobile seed-cleaning unit. Now his chance came. In partnership with Clark, who was then twenty years old, this unit was bought at the end of 1981, and began operation in the beginning of 1982.

Clark got tired of travelling back and forth to Lacombe, so on September 9, 1983, he and **Vicki Jane Heistad** were married. Vicki was born in Raymond on July 2, 1961, but moved with her family to Blackfalds when she was two years old. Before her marriage she drove a gravel truck for her father for four years. Clark and Vicki purchased a mobile home and live on the SE 14-62-3-5. Clark enjoys the grain-cleaning business, and Vicki is employed at the Neerlandia Co-op. Crystal married René Hoekstra from Cobourg, Ontario, and they live and work on a dairy farm in Lacombe. Glen lives at home, but plans to attend SAIT in Calgary to become an aeronautical engineer.

Crystal, Glen, Clark, Eleanor, Ray, 1982

Ray and Eleanor love travelling and meeting people. Each move represents a new challenge and reward. They wonder what the Lord has in store for them in the future.

Eleanor Merkus

BERT AND JENNY (BOUWMAN) MICHAEL

After a courtship of three years, Bert Michael married Jenny Bouwman on June 13, 1945. A new house was built on the Michael homestead (NE 4-62-3-5) by Bert and his father and Henry Bouwman. The old house was converted into a garage for the John Deere H tractor, bought in 1942 from agent C. K. Mast, and the 1935 Chev car purchased in 1943.

Bert and Jenny were blessed with five children: **Herman** John, born April 26, 1946; **Annette** Elizabeth, born October 19, 1947; **Gerald** Albert, born September 12, 1949; **James** Peter, born September 11, 1952; and **Marwynn** Mildred, born July 28, 1956. Grandpa Michael lived with the family until he died in 1960.

Back: Bert, Henry holding James, Gerald, Jennie holding Marwynn. Front: Herman, Annette

There was no room for expansion in Neerlandia, so Bert and Jenny sold the farm in 1963 to Jacob Sturwold and bought three quarters in the Sunniebend district. The Michael children all married and have families of their own. In 1973 Bert and Jenny had to sell the farm due to Bert's poor health and bought an acreage in Hazel Bluff, where they still reside.

Jenny Bouwman

RALPH AND MARY (VAN HUIS) MOES

Ralph (Roelof) and Mary (Mietje) Moes had lived for some time in Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands, when they began to consider emigrating. Their daughters **Tjamke**, **Grace** (Grietje), **Ida**, and **Mary** (Mietje), and sons, **Hugo** (Huike), **Ben** (Bernardus), **Ron** (Romke), and **Walter** (Wieger), were still fairly young and Ralph and Mary wanted to provide a good future for their children as they grew older. They had been planning to go to Australia but, after hearing many stories about Canada and realizing that life in Australia would not be so good, they changed plans to immigrate to Canada instead.

In March 1952 the Moes family left Rotterdam on the *Zuiderkruis*. From Holland to Halifax the travelling was rough due to a bad storm. All their children were seasick, except the youngest daughter, Mary, who at that time was nineteen months old. She was in a little walker that rolled across the cabin with the wildness of the ocean. The captain would laugh, watching her walking up and down the decks with her little wooden shoes on her tiny feet.

Ben, Tjamke, Hugo, Walter. Seated: Ida, Roelof, Grace, Mary, Mary, 1952

It was not a good trip, but they made it, arriving in Neerlandia on March 17, 1952, and living there for about three months. The Moes family's trip to Canada was sponsored by Oene Piers, and their oldest daughter, Tjamke (June 27, 1934), who was seventeen, went to live and work at the Piers home. The Moes family did not like the way they were all separated and spread about in different places at first. Ralph, Mary, and little Mary stayed at the minister's house. Grace and Ida joined Tjamke at the Piers' home, and the four boys were split up, two at one place and two at another. Ralph worked in farmers' fields threshing, and then went to work for Lucas Sturwold making lumber at a sawmill.

When there was no more work for Ralph, he went to Edmonton to look for a job and a house for the family. Tjamke also went to work in Edmonton, and later married Bert Elgersma. When Ralph and Mary first moved to Edmonton, they missed Neerlandia because the people there had been so good to them. Trying to feed eight children was difficult when they had little money, but the family did not starve. The people of Neerlandia provided them with plenty to eat, bringing them meat and other things, for which they are still thankful.

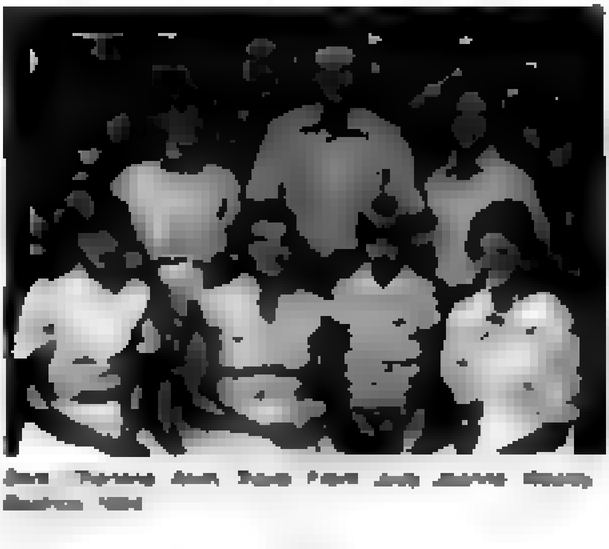
Ralph and Mary are now retired and live in Edmonton. The children are all married and have families of their own.

Mary Moes

ALVIN AND JOANNE (GELDERMAN) NANNINGA

Alvin Nanninga and Joanne Gelderman were married August 16, 1963. They moved into the house in which Alvin had grown up. Alvin and his brother Henry farmed together, sharing the machinery and the fieldwork. Before their marriage Joanne had attended RBI for two years.

Alvin had always worked at home so in 1970, when he had the opportunity to manage a turkey farm at Gibbons, he was eager to try it. He felt that this would give him a chance to broaden his horizon. At this time Alvin and Joanne had four children: **Charlene** Ann, born October 24, 1964; **Beatrice** Elaine, born May 28, 1966; **Travis** Jay, born June 5, 1967; and **Judy** [illegible], born October 4, 1968. The Nanninga family lived in Gibbons for three years and then returned to Neerlandia. Henry had maintained the farm in their absence. Two years later on [illegible] their [illegible] **Bradley** Dean, was born.


[illegible]

The Nanningas maintain a mixed-farming operation with one unique facet — that of raising chickens for other farmers. The farmers supply the chicks and Alvin and Joanne raise them till they are ready to lay.

Sports play a big part in the Nanninga family's leisure time. Badminton and horseshoe are the favourites. At the Alberta Summer Games, held annually, Alvin, Joanne and Travis have won gold and silver medals in horseshoe. Travis placed fourth in the junior division of the Canadian Horseshoe Championships held in Regina in 1984.

Life is busy and satisfying for the Nanningas. They are happy to be part of the Neerlandia community.

Joanne Nanninga

BERT AND BERTHA (GELDERMAN) NANNINGA

Bert Nanninga went to Neerlandia school until he was legally allowed to quit, then worked at home on the farm. On February 5, 1942, Bert enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces. He took his basic training in Camrose, Alberta, then transferred to Nanaimo, B.C. He spent the next few years serving in western Europe and as a prison guard in [illegible]. He was discharged on February 8, 1946, and that same year he bought the farm (SE 32-61-3-5) from his dad.

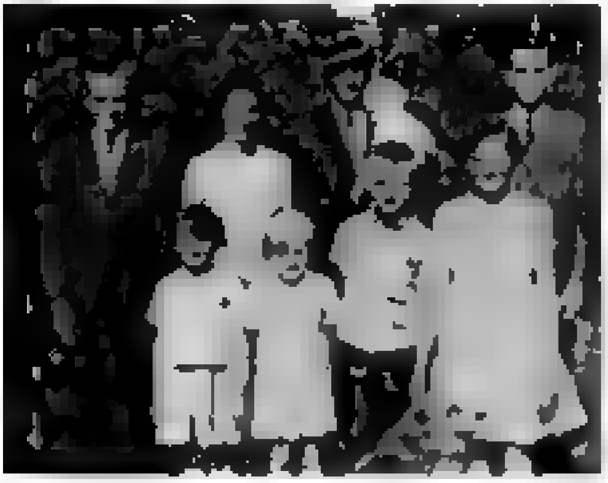
On June 17, 1947, Bert married Bertha Gelderman. Their first home was the Nanninga farmhouse, built in 1920. The first years Bert and Bertha's means of transportation was a 1938 Dodge truck. When the roads were bad they took out the horse and buggy or sleigh.

Soon the Nanningas were blessed with two children, **Edward**, born April 3, 1949, and **John**, born August 26, 1950. Bert and Bertha bought Dick Fisher's house in 1956 and hired Fishburn Moving Company of Edmonton to move it to the farm.

Ed and John loved playing by the creek. One day when Ed was four and John was three years old, Bertha had looked out the window and seen the boys playing on the bridge. But the next time she checked them John was lying on the edge of the bridge and Ed was nowhere to be seen. Bertha immediately suspected that

Ed had fallen in. She went outside and could hear them calling for help. In some miraculous way John had caught hold of Ed's hand and held him until help came. There was not a lot of water in the creek at the time but, unknown to the Nanningas, a hole about four feet deep had washed out at the point where Ed had fallen in. The boys had certainly learned their lesson — the next time Ed and John brought Dad lunch in the field, they did not stop to play on the bridge but, one behind the other, keeping close to the centre of the bridge, dashed across.

Five more children were born to the Nanningas. **Phyllis** was born February 1, 1954. **Larry** came on May 12, 1956; **Ruby** on January 13, 1959; Fern on December 1, 1960; and **Bradley** on October 2, 1963.



Back: John, Bertha, Bert with Bradley, Ed. Front: Ruby, Fern, Larry, Phyllis, 1966

Ed works as an electrician for Barrhead Electric. On September 23, 1971, he married Ingrid Ronaasen of Mellowdale. For one year they lived in Inuvik, N.W.T., where Ed had a job. Five children were born to them. On March 22, 1983, their three-year-old son, Nolan, was attacked by dogs. In spite of efforts to save him he died the next morning.

On June 15, 1974, John married Jean Wierenga. They are working with John's father on the farm and for many years lived in a trailer on the yard. In 1982 they moved into the old farm house while Bert and Bertha moved into a new house a short distance away. John and Jean have four children: **Amanda** Jean, born April 25, 1976, **Clinton** John, born July 7, 1978; **Willis** John, born January 6, 1983; and **Charlotte Jean**, born June 9, 1984.

Jean, Willis, John, Amanda, Clinton, 1983.

After graduating from Dordt College with a major in biology, Phyllis worked as a laboratory assistant in the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. A two-year course at NAIT enabled her to become a laboratory technician in Barrhead. Phyllis enjoys painting with oil and water colours in her spare time.

Larry married Tribue Wierenga, a sister to Jean, on July 9, 1976. They built a house and a hog barn on the NW 33-61-3-5, which Bert had purchased several years before. They have two children: **Tara** Ruth, born August 3, 1977, and **Maria** Beth, born July 31, 1980.

Ruby married Eugene Tiemstra on May 27, 1979. Fern married Brad Wierenga on October 27, 1979.

Bert and Bertha's youngest son, Bradley, was born a "special child". At age seven he attended Winnifred Stewart School in Edmonton. He stayed at Norman Prins' during the week and came home on weekends. After one and a half years in Edmonton he attended the School of New Hope in Barrhead. In the sum-

Bob, Larry. Front: Marie, Tena, 1960

ments he enjoyed the one week stay at the camp sponsored by Rehoboth. He participated in sports competitions held in Red Deer and Peace River, and won several awards. Bradley also enjoyed watching animals and birds of all kinds. He and the dogs were fond of each other and often went out hunting for mice, gophers, and skunks. On August 18, 1980, Bradley went to be with the Lord. While crossing the road he was hit and instantly killed by a gravel truck.

Bradley with his two dogs, Louie and Tucker, 1979

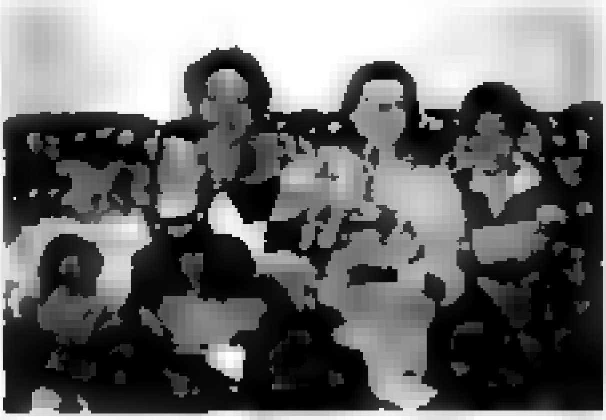
On March 8, 1981 the Nanninga's hip roof barn burned down and with it several hundred hogs perished. With the generous help and financial contributions of relatives and community, however, a new barn was built the same spring. The help given was indeed a blessing, lightening the burden of their loss. Through the past years the Nanninga family has enjoyed the sustaining grace of God and the fellowship of the Neerlandia community.

Bertha Nanninga

BILL AND ANNETTE (ELGERSMA) NANNINGA

Bill (William) Nanninga, son of Corny and Sena, was born June 14, 1949, and grew up in Neerlandia. He married Annette Elgersma on December 8, 1972. Before their marriage, Bill had worked as an apprentice and a mechanic in Edmonton for seven years. Annette had trained as a Certified Nursing Aide, and in 1971 she began work at The University Hospital in Edmonton.

In 1973 they moved to Neerlandia, and in 1975 they moved to their present farm. They live on the NE 6-62-2-5 where they began a new farmstead on land purchased from Bill's father.



Nicole, Bill holding Margo, Annette holding Troy, Justin, 1984

Bill has a mixed-farming operation which includes raising hogs and grain. Annette enjoys handiwork and gardening, and both enjoy raising a family and being a part of the community. Their four children are **Justin Robert** (May 28, 1974), **Nicole Andrea** (April 11, 1976), **Margo Renee** (May 21, 1979), and **Troy Merlin** (May 23, 1982).

Annette Nanninga

DENNIS AND PATRICIA (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Dennis Nanninga was born January 9, 1947 to Corny and Sena Nanninga and grew up in Neerlandia. After graduating from the Barrhead high school, he moved to Edmonton where he earned his license in the specialized branch of carpentry concerned with acoustics.

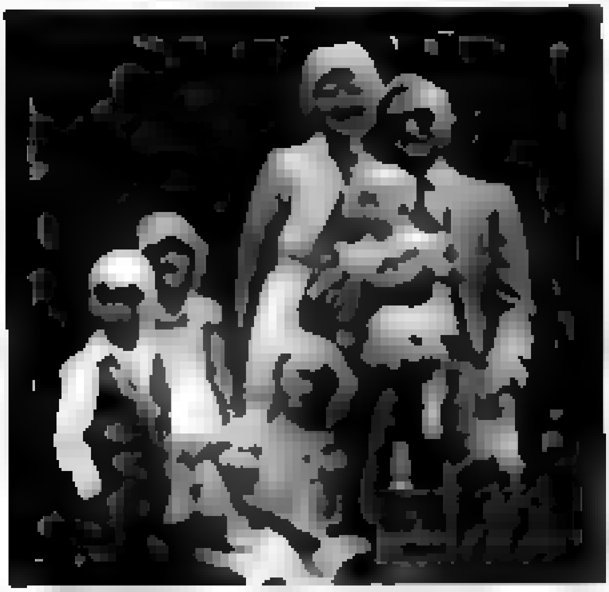
Dennis and Triss (Patricia) Schoonekamp were married June 6, 1969, in the First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. They continued living and working in Edmonton until the spring of 1970. Then, because Dennis wanted to farm, they moved back to Neerlandia to join Dennis' family in a mixed farming operation. Their home is the [illegible] Dennis and Triss have four children: **Quentin** Lee, born April 30, 1971, **Laura** Dawn, born January 21, 1973; **Daniel** Grant, born April 8, 1976, and **Lindy** Jean, born July 18, 1980.

Besides farming, Dennis is also involved in various committees and enjoys sports. Triss enjoys sports and is interested in gardening and painting.

Patricia Nanninga

GERALD AND DORA (PLANTINGA) NANNINGA

After graduating from the Barrhead high school, Gerald Nanninga moved to Edmonton. He worked for one year, and then attended NAIT for two years, studying electronics. In 1967 Gerald moved back to Neerlandia and worked on the family farm. He married Dora Plantinga on December 27, 1971, and they settled on the NW 35-61-3-5, which was originally homesteaded by Gerald's grandfather, John Anema.



Paul, Kirsten, Dora, Gerald holding Heather. Front: Rachel 1982

Gerald and Dora's first child, **Kirstin** Ruth was born March 12, 1974. Next came **Paul Jason**, who was born April 13, 1977. Their third child, **Rachel** Leanne, was born June 18, 1978, in Edmonton, about two months premature. After a month in the hospital she was able to join the family at home. Then **Heather** Diane was added to the family on November 25, 1981.

Gerald and Dora are both actively involved in church and community activities.

Gerald Nanninga

HENRY AND ROSE (MAST) NANNINGA

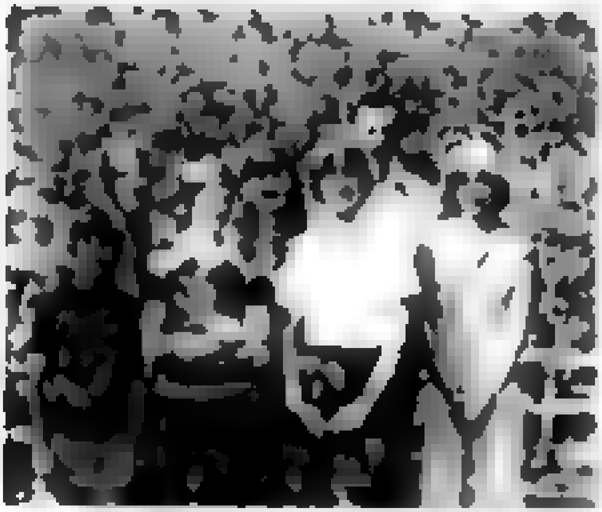
Henry Nanninga was born and raised in Neerlandia. After working for a few years in Edmonton for Edwards Hatchery, O.K. Construction, and Canada Packers, he returned to Neerlandia.

On September 3, 1958, Henry married Rose Mast. They took up farming on the NE 2-62-3-5. Henry and Rose continued with chicken and grain farming and used the two three-storey hip roof chicken barns built by Gerrit Gelderman, who previously owned the land. The years brought changes to the Nanninga farming operation. Henry at one time added a 40 × 146-foot two-storey barn, heated by a coal stoker, which later burned down, chickens and all. Henry now farms one section.

Henry and Rose have five children. **Irene** Ina, born April 16, 1959, now lives in Edmonton. **Barbara** Rose came along on August 12, 1960, and married Ron Bester in 1981. They reside in Bloomsbury. Another daughter, Corinna Fay, was born December 16, 1961. She lives in Barrhead. Finally two sons were born. **Dale** Henry, on April 12, 1965, and **Steve** Allan, on December 5, 1967. The boys are still living at home helping with the farming and going to school.

For the past several years Rose has worked for the *Barrhead Leader*. She works in the production of ads and also in the darkroom enlarging pictures.

Henry has a great love for the outdoors. He is very active in hunting with both rifle and bow



Back: Barbara, Rose, Henry. Front: Dale, Steve, Corina [illegible]

and arrow. In the fall he goes out guiding Americans who [illegible] moose along the Athabasca. One particular group of six Americans have come since 1966 and Henry has been their guide since 1981. They come to hunt moose for trophies but always give the meat away to be eaten.

During the summer the Nanningas often take their Argo and all go travelling through the bush, camping out overnight. On these trips they fish and take pictures of wildlife and scenery. Wintertime finds Henry busy in the bush, falling trees until spring breakup. Then it's back to farming in the spring.

Rose Nanninga

MANNY AND LOIS (VAN DYKE) NANNINGA

Menno Nanninga was given a Dutch name after his grandfather, but he was soon called Manny. He attended Grandale School the first three years and then Neerlandia until grade nine. There was no school bus and walking to school meant wading through mud and water holes in the spring and climbing over hard snowdrifts in the winter. Manny and his brothers rode bikes when they could and on Monday morning they would ride with Ike, either in the sleigh or wagon, as he drove around to pick up cream cans and egg crates for shipment to the city.

Manny learned to skate and play hockey on a pond on the farm, and later enjoyed the community hockey games as a player. Manny quit school after grade nine to stay home and help on the farm because his dad was suffering from cancer. During the summer of [illegible] Manny drove a small road grader for the County of Barrhead. From [illegible] he attended Vermilion School of Agriculture (now Lakeland College) in the winters.

After that Manny worked in Red Deer and Edmonton for a time. In [illegible] and Manny bought the Neerlandia Egg Grading Station. Manny enlarged the business and installed a modernized egg washer enabling him to handle more cases of eggs per hour than before. Approximately 150 to 250 cases of eggs were shipped per week from the station. A case holds 30 dozen eggs, so Manny was definitely an egg handler.

While he was working in Edmonton Manny met his future wife, Lois Van Dyke. She had been born in Edmonton on April 14, [illegible]. Her mother, Grace [illegible], was a teacher in Neerlandia school in the thirties. Lois trained as a beautician at Marvel Hair Styling School. Manny and Lois were married [illegible] and rented a little house from Marvin Nanninga. Lois [illegible] to open Lois Beauty Salon in her home.

On June [illegible], **Heather** [illegible] came to bring them happiness. In early [illegible] the egg grading station was closed because eggs were [illegible]. Manny and Lois then moved to Edmonton where Manny worked at several jobs before starting his own general construction business in [illegible]. They were blessed with four more children and now live near Edmonton.

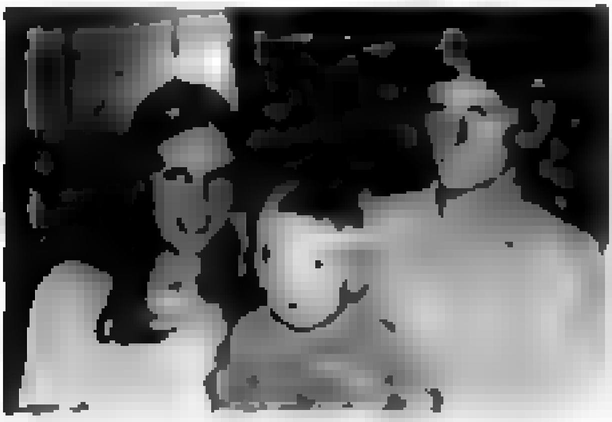
Manny Nanninga

RONALD AND HAZEL (FISHER) NANNINGA

Ron and Hazel returned to Neerlandia in August 1973. Both had grown up here but had been gone for several years. Now Hazel had a teacher's certificate and the Neerlandia school offered a new job: a half time teaching position, part-time librarian for the new library, and instructor for a remedial reading program the county was starting that year. Here Hazel worked for two years taking a leave of absence when their first child was born and also giving up the position of librarian. Ron was hired to operate the maintainer in the Neerlandia-Vega area. District #7

Nanningas had planned on moving a house trailer onto the county site just behind Bomer's teacherage in the hamlet but when Bill Olthuis offered another site on SE 14-62-3-5, they moved there. There they stayed for the next five years.

The heavy snowfall made their first winter in Neerlandia a busy one for Ron. Their driveway was a narrow lane between tall snowbanks which continually needed to be plowed out. That had to be plowed out last of course, after miles and miles of country roads. That spring the melting snow caused much flooding.



Hazel, Keith, Ron, 1975

Nanningas' first child, **Keith Ryan**, was born that winter on Valentine's Day, 1974. **Michael Ross** came November 4, 1975. By then Ron had started working in Barrhead as an apprentice mechanic. **Lynn Carmen** arrived March 2, 1977. About a year later the Nanningas moved their trailer into Barrhead, where Ron is now shop foreman for A. Miller Farm Equipment Ltd. Since then they have been blessed with two more boys.

Hazel Nanninga

HENDRIK AND DENA (VAN HAARLEM) NAVIS SR.

There was great rejoicing in Zuidwolde, Drenthe, the Netherlands, on March 19, 1930, and again on April 11, 1932, for it was then that two sons, **Bill** and **Henk**, were born to Derk Hendrik and Dena Hendrika Navis, who till then had a family of only girls — seven girls. From then on, life centered around the boys, and the aim of the parents was to make a good life for their sons. World War Two devastated the Netherlands, so when immigration to Canada became possible, Derk contacted his cousin Alice Lievers in Neerlandia. The Lievers family agreed to sponsor them. Therefore, on March 12, 1948, Derk and Dena, Bill and Henk, and the two unmarried daughters **Siny** and **Lily** set sail from Rotterdam on a converted freighter, the *Kota Inten*.

After arrival in Halifax, they embarked on a long, tiring train trip across Canada with other immigrants. At one stop, Frank Hessels, who was also headed for Neerlandia, got off the train to look for some milk for the baby and, to everyone's consternation, almost got left behind. The Navis family arrived by bus in Barrhead on a cold March 28, where they were met by the Lievers, with their car. Snow was everywhere, with big banks along the road. Just before they arrived at their destination, the car swerved into one of those banks and the immigrants had to walk the last few yards to their new home. What a change for the Dutchmen! When they left the Netherlands, the grass was green and the cattle were out grazing.

On arrival in Neerlandia, the family was housed in an 18 by [illegible] house which the Lievers family had built for them on their yard. This house was uninsulated, as custom was in those days, and lacked storm windows. Many a winter morning Henk woke up to find frost on his blankets. At first, the boys worked by the day on the farm, earning one dollar a day and that for only the days worked — there was no pay for a rainy day.

In 1949, Derk and his sons built a tiny house on skids and moved it to the SE 18-62-3-5. They rented this quarter for three years from the Lievers, paying them one-third of the crop. Here they lived kitty-corner from Clarence and Grace Mast, with whom they became friends. Grace says the boys were so shy that no matter what she asked them, they blushed and replied, "I don't know." To help make ends meet, Siny and Lily soon found work in Edmonton.

Renting land with no prospect to buy was not Mr. Navis' idea of providing a better life for his boys, so in June 1949 when Oene Piers and Albert Egersma offered to take a group of immigrants to look for land in Peers and Rocky Mountain House, Mr. Navis went along. The road to Peers runs through muskeg and cat spruce. At that time, very little land there was under cultivation. The bleak aspect of the land did not appeal to them. Then, it was on to Rocky Mountain House. There it had rained, [illegible] had to stop and scrape the gumbo off the [illegible] prospect! Was this what they had left the Netherlands for? Later Mr. Eigersma said to his wife, *"Wat verder wij gingen, wat meer de kinderen van Israel mumureerden!"* (The farther we went, the more the children of Israel murmured.) They returned to Neerlandia, with [illegible]

That same year Bill and Henk bought the SE 11-62-4-5 from 'The Big Three' — George Anema, Louis Nanninga, and William Olthuis. In 1951, they moved the little house to this quarter. [illegible] and wagon, leaving at 8:30 a.m. in order to be [illegible] or four years Henk had the cream haul. This entailed stopping at each farm on the road to pick up cans of cream and take them to the truck, which was waiting at the store. In order to meet the truck at 9:00 a.m., Henk had to leave home at 7:00 a.m. During this time, Henk and Bill took turns going out to work in the winter, either in Edmonton or in James Tkachuk's lumber camp.

On June 5, 1959, Henk married Elsie Olthuis and thus began a new chapter in the Navis family chronicle. Bill bought an acreage in Bremner, Alberta, and took his parents to live with him there till he married Alice Rodermond and moved to Edmonton. Later, Bill returned to Bremner and built another house on the same property. This way the old folks were able to be independent till Mr. Navis' death on May 12, 1980, at the age of 97. His wife died two years later on April 20, 1982, at the age of 88. They had lived to see their desire to provide a better life for their children fulfilled and, having lived [illegible] to live with Him.

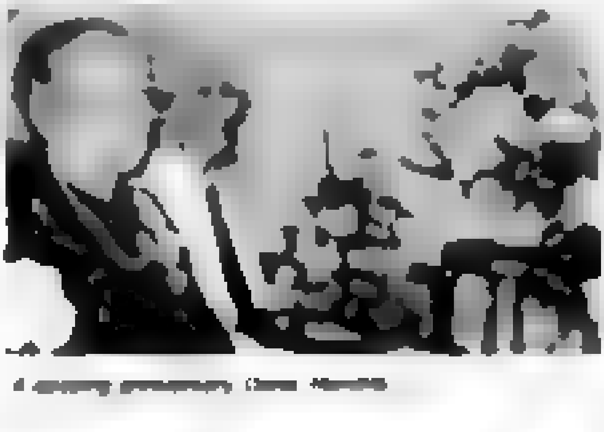
Bill and Alice continue to live in Bremner. Four children were born to them. Their son Albert died at the age of 14 on May 20, 1977 from lymphoma, a rapidly growing [illegible] bring the family closer to each other and to the Lord.

Elsie Navis

HENK AND ELSIE (OLTHUIS) NAVIS

On June 5, 1959, Derk Hendrik and Elsie Olthuis were married in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Van Dyken was the officiating minister, and in the course of his sermon he stated that Henk was to be king in his house. Whether or not Elsie was to be queen was left unsaid. Needless to say, Henk has never forgotten this statement and has made good use of it.

Elsie, though a teacher, had grown up on the farm and enjoyed doing farm work and chores. Doing chores together was a lot of fun, as each milked three cows. Whoever finished their three first sat on the opposite side of the last cow to be milked and helped finish it off. If you are a milker, you will realize that these must have been good-natured cows. One wonders sometimes if milk production suffered when early marital adjustments were made by means of loud, albeit friendly, arguments during chores.



[illegible]

Henk, Elsie, July 1, 1967

At first Henk and Elsie had two tractors: an old steel-wheel-brute used only for breaking and an International WD 6. Sometimes both Henk and Elsie would be out in the field, each with one tractor. There was also haying to do with Elsie on the tractor and Henk on the baler, other times cutting grain with tractor and binder had to be done. Lunch times were the most fun of all. In those days there were still straw stacks for leaning against while eating, and for amusement afterwards. But it was not all fun. Elsie learned some strange new words from Henk when a root got stuck in the baler and bent the knife. Where a good Christian boy learned such words she could not imagine — must be from his lumber camp days.

One disappointment marred those first years. There were no children. After prayerful [illegible] God had some other task in mind for them. To that end, Elsie took up her education again by means of night courses, summer school, and correspondence, and finally achieved her Bachelor of Education degree in 1961. She continues to teach in Neerlandia Public School where she along with the rest of the staff, strives to provide Christian education.

In the meantime, Henk farmed on the three quarters of land he had by now acquired. Of these, only the home quarter had any land broken on it when he bought it. After bringing most of it under cultivation, he looked for a new challenge. This he found in the Neerlandia Co-op Service Centre, where he became manager in 1982. Henk and Elsie built a house in the hamlet and moved there. Having no son to leave the farm to (and desiring to help a young farmer get a start), they sold the farm to Don and Marilyn Plantinga, who began farming it in [illegible] Don is continuing to farm the land in a stewardly way. Henk is pleased too with his parents' choice of Neerlandia as a home — a caring Christian community where, though the winters are cold, the hearts of the people are warm.

Elsie Navis

CLARENCE AND ROSE (NANNINGA) OLTHUIS

The Clarence Olthuis family history began June 9, 1965, when Clarence married Rose Nanninga and settled on the SE 14-62-3-5, better known as Sparky's. At first life went smoothly for them but during the first winter the largest structure on the farm, an old log hip roof barn, burned to the ground. A neighbour, Bert Wierenga, noticed the smoke and gave the alarm and, thanks to the neighbours, most of the animals were saved. Some grain had been stored in the barn and in an attempt to avoid the [illegible] his rear half had burnt along with the outer two inches of grain. He was dead.

After two-and-one-half years, Clarence and Rose moved to the NE 31-61-2-5. In the transition from mobile home to house their son Kurtis, exhilarated by all the space, ran happily from room to room slamming doors.

Clarence immediately began to prepare this farm for a farrowing operation to which he later added a finishing barn. From this venture he was able to sell breeding stock throughout Alberta and into B.C. As well as raising hogs, he built a poultry barn which he used to raise broilers, Cornish hens, and other poultry.

Kurtis Alan, born June 15, 1966, was to furnish Clarence and Rose with many and varied experiences. A playmate for him arrived two years later on June 8, 1968, when **Warren** Drew was born. They remember in particular the summer of 1970 when Warren, a toddler, ate half a bottle of candy-coated pills. Even though he was rushed first to Barrhead Hospital to have his stomach pumped and subsequently to Edmonton because of a collapsed lung, he remained unconscious for two days. But within ten days God had completely restored his health. Later that same summer Kurtis was bitten in his cheek by their pet dog and required stitches; the dog did not remain in the family.

The following winter, on January 16, 1971, **Tracey** Lynn joined their family, and **Graham** Matthew arrived December 26, 1974. For the children, the days and years were filled with many new activities and learning experiences such as riding tricycles, bicycles, mini bikes, and dinghies as well as attending school, catechism, swimming, music lessons, and sports [illegible] carpenters were awarded the "Baby-sitting Award" as the kids, always wanting to see the action, would hang around the big barns being built while Mom picked berries and canned vegetables.

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home

Standing: Warren, Graham, Kurtis, Rose. Seated: Tracey, Clarence.

quarter to Gert and Ulla Jacobsson. Clarence and Rose bought the NE 13-61-3-5, which had been Bill Olthuis' homestead, from Clarence's dad, Bill. There they built a house and poultry barns near the creek that winds through the property.

Clarence is active in local affairs and in the larger community as both a director and delegate of Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and Lilydale Co-operative Poultry Processors.

Rose Olthuis

ART AND HENNY (BULTENA) PETERS

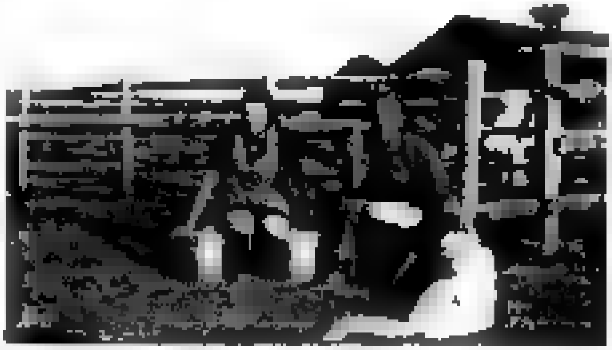
As a young boy of six, Art Peters moved with his family to Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands. He grew up in the 1930s, when times were tough everywhere. At thirteen years of age, he started working for farmers in the area, at a wage of nine cents an hour for a ten-hour day, six days a week. In 1946, he went to serve in the army, but was dismissed eight months later for health reasons.

hockey. It was decided to do it the easy way with the tractor. This job was never completed because the tractor fell through the ice! What a mess! No one was injured, but the enthusiasm for hockey diminished for a while.

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home

Henny (Hendertje) Bultena had been born on February 19, 1926, in Roodeschool, Groningen. Art and Henny were married in January 1948. In April of that year, they made their honeymoon voyage aboard the *Kota Inten* to Canada, hoping to make a new life for themselves and any offspring the Lord would choose to give them. They arrived in Edmonton on May 21, and spent their first night in the Immigration Hall.

The next day, a Sunday, they were met by their sponsor, Albert Tiemstra, and brought Neerlandia. The summer of 1948, Art worked for Albert, who had built a little shack on his yard for the young couple. In the winter of 1949 the shack was moved to Albert's north place, the NE 17-62-3-5, where Art did some land clearing. In the summer of 1950 Art worked on the new Christian Reformed Church building, and later he helped Henry Kippers build a new barn to replace one that had burned down.



Henny and Art doing chores on A. Tiemstra's place, 1948.

Art and Dick Froma bought Harry Proverb's place (SW 35-61-4-5) in 1950 and began farming together. In 1951, Art moved his shack to his father's place and worked out wherever he could. In the meantime he applied for his own homestead. In 1952 he obtained the NE 3-62-4-5. Once again he moved his little shack. Art farmed with Dick Froma until 1967, when he started in the dairy business with his family.

Art and Henny were blessed with five children: **Henry** (Hendrik), born on July 16, 1949; **Jenny**, born on September 2, 1952; **Martin**,

Art, Henry, Henny c. 1956

born on January 7, 1956; **Anita**, born on April 1 , 1959; and **Erwin**, born on April 21, 1964

Henry married **Grace van Huizen** in 1975 Grace had been born in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, on April 5, 1952 She had immigrated with her parents to Winnipeg [illegible] and, before her marriage, had worked as a nursing assistant Henry and Grace were blessed with three children. **Michelle** Elizabeth was born on July 31, 1976, and **Melanie** Rose on April 10, 1978. Their son **Arden** Arthur was born on July 3, 1981, and died in infancy

Soon after Henry and Grace were married, the old shack which had been home for so many years and which had been moved and built on to several times, was finally replaced by a duplex Art and Henny and their youngest son, Erwin, moved into the one side and the newly-weds moved into the other

[illegible] married [illegible] youngest daughter of Simon and Bertha Tuininga, in [illegible] They have four healthy boys. **Marcel** Bruce, born on September 25, 1977; **Trevor** Scott, born on October 10, 1978; **Curtis** Dale, born on April 27 1981, and **Randy** Alan, born on March [illegible] 1983

Jenny lives in Langley, British Columbia, with her husband, Bert Koning, and their five boys Anita married Jake Oussoren and they reside in Edmonton with their daughter and son

The three sons of the family continue to work together with their father on the dairy farm Henny, too, continues to be actively involved in the business She has worked hard for many years alongside her husband and her sons to make the operation a viable one She still milks the cows morning and night

"Art Peters and Sons" now farm four quarters and their crops are used for feeding the dairy herd. In 1979, they had a 2590 Harvestore system put up for haylage This made the work easier for the men But it paid off for the wives as they did not have to [illegible] as many years as when their men had handled many bales of hay or straw

Art enjoys doing carpentry in his spare time He did much of the finishing work in Covenant Canadian Reformed School as well as in the basement of the parsonage

[illegible] welding He looks after much of the general maintenance and repair of the farm vehicles and machinery

Without the providential care of the Lord, in whom they trust, the families of Art and Henny Peters would never be what they are today He continues to lead and guide them in the ways of the truth

Grace Peters

HENRY AND MARTJE (BANNINGA) [illegible]

HENRY PETERS JR.

Hendrik (August 8, 1903) and Martje (September 22, 1904) were both born in Uithuizen Groningen, the Netherlands, and were married May 19 1923 In 1928, in Uithuizen, there was a lot of talk about immigration The Hendrik Peters family, along with the families of his brother Johannes, his brothers-in-law Marten Banninga and Hendrik Wierenga, as well as two other Wierenga families, were planning to go to Canada. They were, in fact, all in Rotterdam ready to board the ship, when Hendrik Peters found that he was not allowed to leave. His immigration papers were not in order His father, Jan Peters, had come from Germany illegally, and now Hendrik was considered a staatsloze (displaced person). Much to their disappointment, Hendrik and his family had to return to Uithuizen

Immigration to Canada, however, never left Hendrik's thoughts in the following years, so he set about getting the proper papers. Meanwhile, the family had grown to include twelve children — seven girls and five boys. After World War II, when immigration was possible again, Hendrik and Martje once more made plans for going to Canada. Their older sons, John (Jan, August 29, 1923) and Art (Ate, March 8, 1926), each had a girlfriend by this time, and their oldest daughter, Corry (Kornelia, October 25, 1924), was being courted by Dick Froma. John and Art were interested in immigrating as well, but at that time no single girls were allowed to immigrate. So on January 29, 1948, in Uithuizermeeden, three couples were married: John to Sina Poel, Art to Henny Bultena, and Corry to Dick Froma. In April 1948 Hendrik, Martje, and the family, as well as Dick and Corry Froma, boarded the *Kota Inten* for Canada. After a long boat trip, they landed in Halifax. From there they took the train to Barrhead, and arrived in Neerlandia on April 23.

Art and Henny's papers took longer to come through; they arrived in Neerlandia a month later. John had medical problems, so he was not allowed to immigrate unless he had a lifetime sponsor (to guarantee to the Canadian government that he would not become a burden in the future). It took two and one half years before John, Sina, and their daughter, Reta, sponsored by father Hendrik, came to Neerlandia. They stayed for only two years before moving, first to Barrhead and later to Edmonton.

In the fall of 1948, Hendrik (Henry) bought the Harry Lievers homestead (SE 6-62-3-5). He farmed it with help from his sons Joe (Johannes), born January 15, 1932; Henry Jr. (Hendrik), born February 4, 1933; and Rieks (Henderikus), born September 28, 1935. During the next few harvests, the boys worked on various threshing crews; in the winter they worked in lumber camps.

In the Netherlands, Henry Sr. had been a licensed electrician, skilled in residential and rural wiring. But once in Canada, he had to take an exam in Edmonton to obtain his Canadian license. The first time he tried, he took along a minister from Edmonton to translate for him. But because the minister was unable to translate the technical terms, Henry had no success. The second time, young Fred Toebes came along. Fred and his father had done some wiring for power plants, so Fred was familiar with electrical terms. He translated for Henry, although in a few instances he also did not know the correct Dutch terms. In those cases Fred would tell him which answer to check. This time, Henry passed and got his license.

In the following years Henry Sr., with the help of his son Rieks, did most of the wiring in Neerlandia for power plants and for hookups to Calgary Power. For about eleven years Henry sold both Beatty equipment, which involved items such as gutter cleaners and water pressure systems for barns, and Fairbanks Morris household appliances. The item was chosen from a catalogue, then Henry would pick it up in Edmonton and install it for the customer. Meanwhile, Henry and his sons continued to farm. Joe bought his own farm in 1962 and some years later Henry Sr. went into partnership with Rieks and Henry Jr.

Art, John, Rieks, Joe, Henry

Marge, Hinie, Pat, Ann, Tienie, Corrie, Johanna, c. 1980

Through the years, all of Henry and Martje's children, except Henry Jr., married. Their daughter **Martje** (June 1, 1930) married Dick Vander Veen of Edmonton, and they raised twelve children. Joe married Fredrika Vogelzang. **Trena** (Trijntje, May 8, 1934) is the wife of Peter Stikema of Edmonton. They have five children. **Rieks** married Henny Kippers of Neerlandia, and they moved to Edmonton after the family farm was sold to brother Joe. They had four children; one of them passed away. **Anje** (March 4, 1937) and her husband, Koos Duker of Edmonton, raised six children. **Hilda** (Hilje, March 24, 1938) married Wilfred Holwerda of Neerlandia. **Johanna** (July 8, 1939) and her husband, John Werkman, live with their four daughters in Edmonton while **Pat** (Pieterdina, March 22, 1942) and her husband, Sid Oostenburg, with their three children live in Mission, B.C.

Martje Peters died March 13, 1973, after a stroke. In the spring of 1973, the family farm was sold to son Joe and Hendrik Sr. retired. He married Jacoba Boonstra-DeBoer on May 10, 1974, and moved to Edmonton where he still lives (1984).

Henry Jr. owns the SW 2-62-4-5 and the NW 36-61-4-5, and rents the land out. He has done custom breaking with his Caterpillar bulldozer and now works at W. B. Forest Products. His favourite sport is hunting and he is well-known among local hunters for his imitations of moose calls.

Art Peters

JOE AND FREDRIKA (VOGELZANG) PETERS

Joe, the third son of Henry and Martje Peters, married Fredrika Vogelzang of Barrhead on August 31, 1962. Fredrika had been born on April 17, 1939, in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, and had immigrated with her parents to Edmonton in 1951. Joe and Fredrika bought the SW 18-62-3-5 from Peter Mast, and farmed there for ten years. Then they sold to Joe Van Assen and bought the dairy farm (SE 6-62-3-5) from Joe's father and brothers in 1973.

Joe and Fredrika have five children: **Harry** (June 29, 1963), **John** (June 13, 1965), **Marvin** (July 25, 1967), **Richard** (July 2, 1971), and **Rose** (September 21, 1973). The family manages a dairy operation of about fifty milking cows and raises crops of oats, barley, and alfalfa.

Joe Peters

JOHN JR. AND KAY (BAKER) PETERS

John bached with his father for quite a while before he got married, and was not too interested at that time in making improvements on the farm. He worked out, getting jobs on the oil rigs or driving Cat. He married Kay Baker on November 21, 1956, and they began farming on the Peters homestead. They have one son, **Roger** Don, who farms with John.

After they got married, John and Kay worked on improving the farm. They had a well drilled and electric power put in. They built some new barns and also built up a better sow herd for their farrow-to-finish operation. They grow enough grain every year on their one-half section land to feed their hogs, unless they get hailed out (as happened in 1983).

John, Kay 1957

John suffered a heart attack in 1969 but, after taking it easy for a year, is doing well and works just as hard as he did before. Besides working on the farm, he works part-time for the County as road grader operator. Kay has worked in Neerlandia Co-op for about fourteen years, the

Roger

first six years full-time and the last eight years part-time.

Kay Peters

GERRIT AND LIES (SCHEELE) PIEFFERS

Gerrit (Gerhardus Philippus) Pieffers was born January 10, 1906, in Gouda, South Holland, the Netherlands. Lies (Elizabeth Catharina) Scheele was born March 15, 1908, in Axel, Zeeland. In 1927 Gerrit Pieffers was admitted to the *Theologische Hoogeschool* of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in Kampen, Overijssel. After having to interrupt his studies for a number of years, he passed his candidate examination in 1939, and was admitted to the ministry. On July 18, 1940, he was united in marriage to Lies. In Zuilichem, Gelderland, two daughters were born: **Lies** (Elizabeth) Catharina on December 6, 1941, and **Tineke** (Albertina) on March 9, 1943.

From 1943 to 1946, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bergentheim, Overijssel, where both he and his wife became deeply involved in the Resistance Movement. Gerrit spent three weeks in *Kamp Erica* (a work camp). He managed to escape and the Germans did not capture him again. Shortly before the liberation of the Netherlands in 1945, another daughter was born: Joke (Johanna).

From 1946 to 1952, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bussum, North Holland, with a two-year release from this congregation to serve as army chaplain in Indonesia. This was work he loved: working with the boys on the fields or wherever duty called. In Bussum a son was born on September 15, 1947, **Henk** (Hendrik).

In 1952 the Pieffers family boarded a plane for Canada. They arrived in Montreal, then went by train to Alberta, where Rev. Pieffers was installed as minister of the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale. After 1963 Gerrit suffered three strokes which left him unable to continue the work in Coaldale.

Yet God gave him work to do. Gerrit and Lies and Tineke moved to Neerlandia in 1966, into the parsonage. Tineke had had to undergo open heart surgery (as a result of rheumatic fever she had a damaged heart) in June 1965, and because of infection on the artificial valve six weeks later, she could not take up the teaching position to which she was appointed. She had graduated in May 1965 from the U of A. Now she worked as substitute teacher for one year in Barrhead and Neerlandia.

Lies, Gerrit, 1967

In Neerlandia Rev. Pieffers preached once a Sunday, gave catechism classes, made sick visits, and family visits. Although it often hurt him that he could not preach more often, he was very thankful he did not have to sit idle "twiddling his thumbs." How he used to be jealous of ministers, older than he, who could still fulfill all their duties. After a trip to the Netherlands in 1967, the first thing he said on his return was, "*Ik heb lekker een keer drie keer gepreekt* (I nicely preached three times one Sunday)." On Sunday, March 24, 1968, Rev. Pieffers still led the worship service. On Thursday, March 28, God took him home.

Lies went to live with Adrian and Lies Hamoen after Gerrit's death. On March 20, 1969 the sad message was received that God had also taken Tineke unto Himself. She had been teaching in Smithville, Ontario. In August 1970 Lies Pieffers was admitted to the Barrhead hospital and there she died December 3, 1970.

On April 30, 1971, Henk married Christine Kippers, daughter of Henry and Sophie. They live in Vega where they operate a hog farm.

Lies Hamoen

JOHN AND LUCILLE (TUININGA) PIERS

John Piers was born on October 17, 1936, the fourth son of Oene and Grace Piers. At about two years of age, John suffered from an illness which appeared to be an inability to tolerate the heat of the sun. After a three week stay in a darkened room in an Edmonton hospital, he recovered. His parents were instructed to keep him in a cool environment. Although the illness reappeared the following summer, John gradually outgrew it and was able to take part in farm activities.

Life on the farm involved doing a lot of chores — feeding the hens, carrying water into the house, splitting and piling firewood, filling lamps and lanterns with coal oil, and last, but not least, milking cows by hand. Once, John, who had just learned to milk, was proudly displaying his skills to his brothers. The cow became annoyed with the vigorous activity and kicked John, the pail, and all across the gutter, much to the amusement of the brothers.

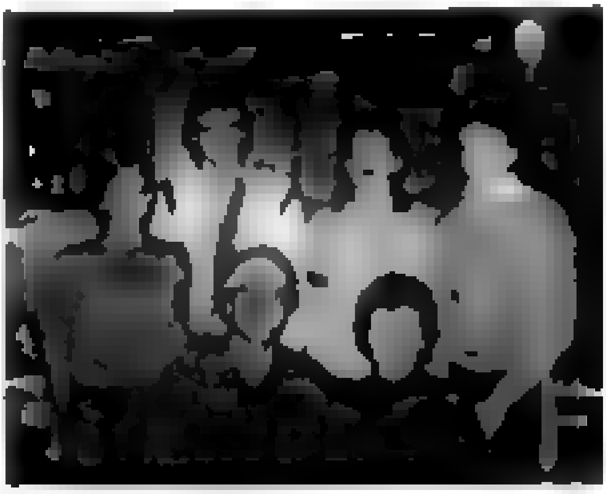
The coming of electricity to the farm was a time of great excitement. The house and barn could now be "magically" lit up with a flick of the switch. John and his brothers were delighted to have no more lanterns or lamps to fill up and carry around.

Things could get rather hectic at times when John and his five brothers played together. Both outdoor and indoor games could lead to physical battles. The Monopoly game met a fiery demise in the coal furnace when Mom got fed up with the frequent skirmishes. In spite of the squabbles, there was always a strong bond of love among all the family members.

John enrolled in the University of Alberta in Edmonton in 1955, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree four years later. He then attended Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for one year, majoring in Education. In September 1960 he began teaching in Neerlandia, where he became principal in 1962.

On November 1, 1963, John married Lucille, daughter of Peter and Tena Tuininga. Before their marriage, Lucille had worked at the Neerlandia Co-op, where her starting wage in 1960 was $85.00 a month.

John and Lucille's wedding day was a beautiful day with no snow, but when they returned from their honeymoon, snow lay everywhere — including on their unfinished house. They had to move in with Lucille's parents for a few weeks. [illegible] though, they took up residence in their house in spite of no well or indoor plumbing.



Back: Maureen, Brian, Kelly, Crystal. Front: John, Lucille 1984

God blessed this union with four children: **Brian** John (January 18, 1965), **Crystal** Joy (April 1, 1967), **Kelly** Dean (July 18, 1969), and **Maureen** Denise (January 13, 1972). Lucille is working as teacher's aide in Neerlandia Public School, where John continues as principal (1984).

John Piers

JAN AND ELIZABETH (STUIVE) PIERS
KLAAS AND TILLY (ZUIDEMA) PIERS

Jan Piers and his wife, Elizabeth, were not so young anymore when they decided to leave their farm in Doezum, Groningen, the Netherlands. Jan, born on August 16, 1894, and Elizabeth, born on [illegible], were only renting anyway, and the fact that 200 people had applied to rent the land they left [illegible] about the situation there at the time. Besides, Jan's brother Oene Piers was already living in Neerlandia. He said land was available, and he would sponsor Jan and his family if they wanted to come.

On April 26, 1948, Jan and Elizabeth left the Netherlands with their son **Klaas**, born September 2, 1925, and their daughter **Anna**, born January 16, 1934. They sailed on the *Tabinta* from Rotterdam and landed in Quebec City on May 6, 1948. From Quebec they travelled by train to Edmonton, and were picked up there to be brought to Neerlandia.

When they arrived in Neerlandia, Klaas worked for Jack Tuininga, while Jan and his wife worked on his brother Oene's place. Anna worked for awhile at Andy Elzinga's place, and also for Steve Abday, taking care of Sydney while Tena Abday was teaching.

In November 1948, having a job already secured, Klaas moved to Ladner, British Columbia. Half a year later, the rest of the family followed. Klaas worked for a farmer who did mixed farming. Jan took odd jobs until 1951 when he and Klaas started dairy farming together.

Not so long after that, in 1954, a blonde girl from Ferwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, came to Canada. Tilly Zuidema, born on November 4, 1929, decided to visit her brother Berend Zuidema in Woodstock, Ontario. Though she intended only to visit, she had followed advice given to her to immigrate so that she would have the option of staying in Canada if she later wished to do so.

The same adventurous spirit that brought Tilly to Canada soon led her into something deeper. Through friends, a correspondence with Klaas in Ladner began. And later, when he came to visit, she found herself going west with him. As the saying goes, "In love and war, strange things do happen." Tilly got a job in [illegible] and on March 21, 195[illegible] Klaas Piers and Tilly Zuidema were married in First Christian Reformed Church of Ladner. Klaas kept working with his father for four years. During that time **Annette** Margaret (December 6, 1958) and **John** William (April 17, 1960) were born. But Klaas still had Neerlandia on his mind, and when the family took a vacation in [illegible] it was to see the relatives and check whether perhaps there was a suitable farm for purchase.

In the fall of the same year, they returned and bought the farm of John Tansowny on the SW 13-62-3-5. Then in March 1961, Klaas and Tilly and their two children moved to their new farm in Neerlandia.

The new farm brought some excitement of its own. In the fall of 1967, Klaas learned from their neighbour Alex Tansowny that their brush piles were smoking. They had burned the brush the year before, and had assumed that the winter snow and spring water had killed the fire. To be safe, they thought they ought to go out and throw a few pails of water over the piles. After that, it looked as if the fire was out and they decided to have tea before getting more water. By the time tea was over, however, there was a roaring fire which eventually destroyed a chicken coop, the old barn, three full granaries, part of the swathed crop, and a 500-gallon fuel tank full of gas. Only the neighbours' coming over to aid with wet sacks saved the new barn that was just in the process of being built. To their relief, the house was untouched.

Back: Tilly, Bradley, John, Annette. Front: Elizabeth, Klaas holding Ronda, Alister. 1980

While in Neerlandia, four more children were born to Klaas and Tilly. **Bradley** Clayton was born on July 9, 1961. He helps on the farm in the summer and works in a logging camp and sawmill during the winter. **Elizabeth** Arlene was born on August 5, 1964, and is training for nurse at Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. **Allister** Ivan was born on May 5, 1966, and **Bonita** Yolanda on January 26, 1969. John is working as a mechanic in Neerlandia Service Centre. The Klaas Piers family is still enjoying a happy and healthy life in Neerlandia.

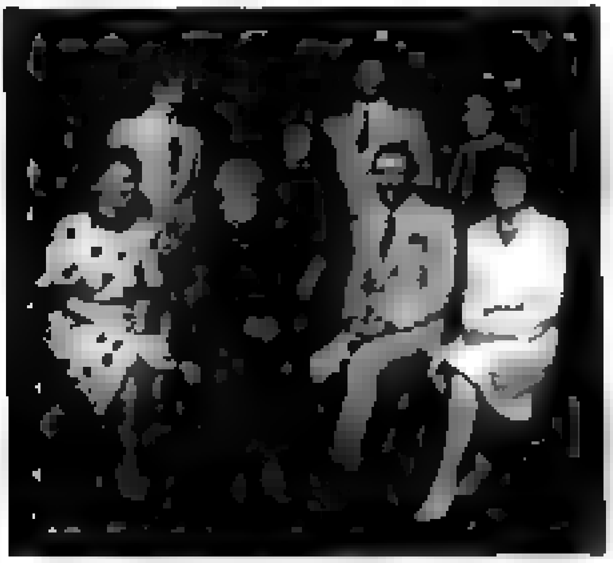
Klaas' parents remain in Ladner and on May 5, 1984, celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary.

Klaas and Tilly Piers

PETER AND GRACE (VISSER) PIERS

Peter Piers and Grace Visser, second daughter of Frank and Rachel Visser, were married July 23, 1958, in First Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton.

They began farming on the S½ 26-61-3-5, formerly owned by George Terpsma, only a mile from where Peter was born and raised. Seven children, one of whom died in infancy, were born into the family.



Back: Keith, Michelle, Greg, Pamela. Front: Judy, Grace, Peter, Colleen. 1984

Judy (Judith), born on September 28, 1960, is a medical lab technician and lives in Edmonton with her husband, Mike Slomp. **Pam** (Pamela) Maureen born on February 4, 1962, lives in Edmonton and is a data co-ordinator in a credit union. **Greg** (Gregory) Scott, born on November 16, 1963, is farming with his dad. **Colleen** Beverly, born on November 2, 1965, is engaged to marry Bernie Tiemstra. **Keith Nelson**, born on July 19, 1969, and **Michelle** Andrea, born on August 2, 1971, make up the rest of the family.

Peter and Grace are thankful to God for His covenant faithfulness and the many blessings which he has given them.

Peter Piers

FRANK AND MARION (WIERENGA) RAYMENT

Arthur Frank Rayment was born on January 9, 1953, in Cambridge, Ontario. His family was of English origin. They attended the Brethren Church. In 1977 Frank graduated from the University of Western Ontario in London. In the fall of that year he came to Neerlandia to be the physical education teacher in the public school. By coincidence Frank's father, Charles Rayment, who had always loved the West, had homesteaded for a short time in the 1930s near Flatbush, not far from Neerlandia.

All that Frank knew about Neerlandia before he arrived was that it was an isolated community made up of people of one ethnic group and one religious denomination. He anticipated that it would be similar to a Hutterite colony, and hoped he would be able to endure teaching there till Christmas. Because of his preconceived notions and his own religious background, Frank wore his best suit complete with a tie the first time he attended the local Christian Reformed Church. As a newcomer he was noticed by everyone, but mainly because of his formal attire — many of the other young men wore blue jeans at that time. It did not take long for Frank to shed his erroneous ideas along with his suit and tie. He soon became involved in many community activities.

On July 25, 1980, Frank married Marion Wierenga. Before their marriage, Marion had attended both Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, and The King's College in Edmonton. While attending Dordt College, Marion was operated on for acute appendicitis. She remembers the loneliness of being hospitalized so far from home, but the concern of the community expressed even at that distance, made her stay in the hospital bearable.

In July 1982 Frank and Marion began to develop an acreage they had purchased from Ralph Bos (N.W. 5-62-3-5). On December 1, 1982, they were blessed with the birth of **Meredith Renee**. When Frank first arrived in

Marion holding Meredith, Frank, 1984.

Neerlandia he contemplated changing his name to Van Raymentsma but he now feels as much at home at anyone with a Dutch surname.

Marion Rayment

ARTHUR AND HELEN (BOONSTRA) REITSMA

Art Reitsma attended school in Neerlandia from 1935 to 1945 and worked at home on the farm until 1950. He then moved to Edmonton until 1953, when he moved back home to farm on the NW 24-61-4-5.

Art married Helen Boonstra on April 6, 1956. Helen was born October 31, 1935, in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, the daughter of a mechanic. She came to the Barrhead area with her family when she was sixteen.

From this marriage came six children: **Arlene** Joyce, born March 10, 1956; **Brenda** Jean, born October 24, 1957; **Carolyn** Joan, born December 10, 1958; **Marie** Sandra, born September 1, 1961; **Jeffrey** Arthur, born October 22, 1963; and **Sherrilyn** Wilma, born October 6, 1966.

In 1968 the Reitsma family moved to Barrhead. Art trucked for Canadian Propane from 1968 to 1984 and now works as a school bus driver.

Art and Helen Reitsma

Back: Helen holding Sherrilyn, Art. Front: Marie, Jeff, Arlene, Brenda, Carolyn. 1967

TED AND CAROL (HOWIE) REITSMA

Ted (Theodore) Reitsma was born in Neerlandia on May 1, 1935. He lived there with his parents until 1956, when he left to work on railroad and pipeline construction jobs near Dawson Creek, British Columbia. On January 19, 1957, he married Carol Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Howie of Westlock. Carol had been born in Westlock on June 14, 1937, and lived there until her marriage.

In 1958 Ted and Carol moved to Neerlandia and purchased the trucking firm then owned by Art Fisher. They moved into the house on the NW 10-61-3-5, from where Art had operated his business.

Ted and Carol had three children. On July 2, 1959, **Deborah** Hazel was born. She was followed by **Gerald** Edward on October 17, 1961, and **Kenneth** Allen on June 17, 1965.

Kenneth, Gerald, Debbie, Carol, Ted, 1970.

Ted, Carol, and family lived in Neerlandia for several years. Carol was the manager-treasurer of Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union which she operated from her house. Ted continued to truck until Dawson Creek beckoned him to return. In 1970 he sold his trucks to Joe Fisher and bought a motel in Dawson Creek. After Ted and Carol had managed the motel for four years, they sold it and Ted has since tried his hand at a variety of jobs. For the past few years he has been working for a canola plant at Sexsmith, Alberta.

Ted Reitsma

HENRY AND ERNA (HUNKER) ROTH

Henry Roth, the eldest of three children, is a son of John and Emma Roth. He attended Shoal Creek School during grades one through six. When he was 13 years old, he was the janitor for the school with his brother. On the cold mornings, they would have to go before school and light the fire in the wood stove, so the school would be warm when everyone arrived. After school, they would have to stay and sweep the floors. Each month they received $3.00, which at that time was a lot of money. When Shoal Creek School was closed down, Henry attended Neerlandia School. During that time he played on the Neerlandia Hockey Team.

After Henry left school, he helped his father on the farm. For six winters, he worked in lumber camps in the Swan Hills area. He also drove truck part-time for Ted Reitsma for four or five years.

On June 13, 1964, Henry married Erna Hunker of Thorsby, Alberta. Soon after, he took over the family farm. Henry and Erna have four daughters: **Debra Erna Lynn**, born on July 17, 1965, who is presently employed at the Barrhead General Hospital, 1984; **Donna Emma Joy**, born on August 12, 1966; **Cheryl Roxanne**, born on September 4, 1968; and **Shelley Glorianne**, born on December 30, 1972. The Roth family attends Bethel Pentecostal Church in Barrhead.

Debbie's graduation, 1983. Henry, Donna, Erna, Shelley, Debbie, Cheryl

Erna Roth

ALBERT AND CLARA (VISSER) SCHOONEKAMP

Albert Schoonekamp was born and raised in Neerlandia. Clara Visser was born April 13, 1921, to George and Grace Visser of Edmonton and grew up there. Albert and Clara were married June 25, 1947, and in the first years of their life together they had two daughters, Grace Carolyn, born August 26, 1948, and Patricia Dawn, born October 31, 1949. The home, the church, and the school were the main sources of the girls' early education, but participation in the picnics, parades, sports, and other forms of social life also served to enrich their lives and provide a happy childhood.

After their marriage the Schoonekamps lived in Neerlandia for twenty years, enjoying the life of the community and working for its welfare. When the second church burned down, Albert worked with the many other men who gave of their time and efforts to rebuild it. The Sports Committee also took up much of his time. It took a lot of water from well and creek to make a rink. Hockey was one of his favourite sports and he played on the Mellowdale team for a year, and then as defenceman on the Neerlandia team. Both he and Clara were members of the Choral Society, and Clara taught in Neerlandia School.

The Schoonekamps lives on the Schoonekamp family farm on the NW 34-61-3-5. Before the girls went to school, the farm was the main source of income and the girls enjoyed the kittens, dogs, chicks, and other farm animals. But farming was not to play a large role in their lives for long.

When the two daughters were old enough to go to school, Albert and Clara learned that they were not able to have more children. Clara continued teaching, but Albert decided to give up farming except for cropping the land. He [illegible] he found employment with Fred Toebes and Gerrit Gelderman at the Neerlandia garage. When Fred set up Fred's Garage in Vega, Albert continued to work for him. While working in Vega he also attended and obtained his automotive license from NAIT. Finding it too demanding to look after the farm, Albert rented it out to John Visser Sr.

Carol, Albert, Clara, Patricia, 1967

In 1967 the family seemed ready for a change. Since Fred was closing his business in Vega, Albert began looking for new employment. Clara was ready for a new challenge and longed to return to her native soil. Carol was attending Dordt College, so it did not matter much to her where home was (although she did miss Neerlandia when she returned for holidays). Patricia, just out of high school, wanted to join the work force rather than attend college, since she already had fond thoughts for Dennis Nanninga. That summer the family moved to Edmonton.

Albert first worked for two different automotive businesses, but now is co-owner of Woodacorn Automotives. Since 1967 Clara has been employed by The Edmonton Society for Christian Education and is presently teaching grade two. Carol earned her education degree from Dordt. There she met Norman Bomer and they were married a few days after graduation. Patricia worked at The Bank of Commerce for two years and then she and Dennis were married.

Clara Schoonekamp

WILBERT AND WILHELMINA (VANDER ZOUWEN) SCHURING

Wilbert was born August 6, 1934, and attended Grandale School until his formal education was ended. Wilbert recalls the following incidents from his childhood:

I seemed to spend a lot of time in detentions after school for some reason or another. This particular day I came home late again! Dad was hammering grain in his old mill that had to be watched constantly. Dad was not pleased with my late appearance and expressed it. "Dumbbell, are you late again?" Well I looked up innocently and said, "Me a dumbbell? I am smart, you're dumb! You work like a fool all day while I sit in school and do nothing." This reply caused Dad's blood pressure to rise [illegible] and with an angry shout he jumped over the hammermill in hot pursuit of me. My small bottom was spared only because the mill ran out of grain. Dad noticed this and quickly ran back to fill it before any damage occurred. I didn't stop running though, because I knew Dad was mad. I shot into the house, zoomed past my startled mother, and dived under the bed. Mom looked at her shaking son and back to her furious husband. She attempted with little success to coax me out from under the bed, asking all the while to tell her what happened. By this time I was crying and burst out with, "You tell me that if I tell a lie I'll get a licking. Now I tell the truth and I still get a licking." After hearing this Mom suggested maybe I should go straight to bed [illegible]

Late that night when Dad came in from chores they both had a good laugh over a cup of [illegible]

The socializing part of Wilbert's teenage [illegible] Corner. He played hockey and baseball and enjoyed Young People's Society.

Wilbert met Willy (Wilhelmina) Vander Zouwen at his brother's wedding. He courted her for two years, and they were married February 26, 1960. Willy had been born in Soest, Utrecht, the Netherlands, on July 20, 1941, and immigrated with her parents to Calgary. Wilbert and Willy continued to farm on the home place and Wilbert drove truck for Dick Fisher from Vega. They were blessed with five children: **John** Winson (April 9, 1961), **Hermina** Theresa (June 10, 1962), **Cynthia** Rose (August 13, 1963), **Hendrik** Leonard Cornelius (January 7, 1965), and **Laurianne** May (March 19, 1969).

In 1971 Wilbert and Willy decided to leave the farm. They moved to Medicine Hat and later to Redcliffe where they purchased a greenhouse. Wilbert also drove truck. They now live in Warburg and own a dairy farm.

ROMKE AND MARIA (WACHTENDONK) STEL

Romke Stel was born on January 21, 1918, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. On November 21, 1942, he married Maria Petronella (Rie) Wachtendonk. Rie was born on September 26, 1915, in Nijmegen, Gelderland.

Rom was a mechanic by trade and worked as foreman for a Ford dealer in Leeuwarden. The economy was poor in the Netherlands and [illegible] cided to immigrate to Canada. Rom and Rie contacted the Christian Immigration Society and their names were put on a waiting list. In the meantime, Melle Elzinga had written his uncle, Peter Hania of Buitenpost, Friesland, to ask him to look out for a mechanic who would be interested in coming to Canada. Peter Hania, who was a member of the Immigration Society, checked the waiting list and found the name of Romke Stel, who was well-known to him. With the help of Peter, everything was made ready. In three months the Stels, with their three little boys, were sailing from Rotterdam on the *Tabinta*. It was May 23, 1949, the first birthday of their son, **Marten**. **Sidney** (Sybee) was four years old at the time. He was born on April 6, 1945, just before the war ended. **Peter** (Petrus), the middle son, had been born on August 14, 1947.

After ten days, the family landed in Quebec City, where Rie was immediately hospitalized with a bad throat infection. The little boys were taken to the hospital with their mother, but not Rom. Rom was taken to a harbour house where sailors who jump ship, and other suspicious or undesirable aliens were kept. Here Rom sat for eight days, with a guard outside the door. His only exercise was to go up on the flat roof or wander about the house. Twice in the eight days, he was taken by the guard to see his family. On the way, he could stop to buy a [illegible] When Rie was recovered, the family was reunited and allowed to continue their journey.

Eighty-eight hours later, they landed in Edmonton where Peter Elzinga, a brother of Melle, was waiting for them. With him was fieldman Herman Wierenga, who took the Stels to the bus station. From there, they set out on the last part of their trip to Barrhead. Melle had found a job for Rom with Walter Bell, the Ford dealer in Barrhead, at $160 per month. The welcome mat was put out for the Stels, all the Dutchies were by the bus station waiting for the new arrivals. How nice to be able to speak [illegible]

There was only a small group of Christian [illegible] were held in the Anglican church on the main street (a cute little white building). Sometimes there was a minister (Rie remembers Rev. Hanenburg or Rev. de Koekkoek), but mostly there were reading services. There was no consistory, but the readers were appointed by the Neerlandia Christian Reformed consistory; if there were problems the Neerlandia consistory handled them too. Many people from the [illegible] rhead and brought all kinds of "goodies".

"One man was especially good to me," Rie says. "As an immigrant you have to be careful with the money, but Rom needed a haircut. I said 'I will do it' and started to cut. I never finished it. I cut it way too high on one side — a disaster! But there came friends, Albert and

Mabel Elgersma. How they laughed — but Albert finished the job. Thanks again, Albert."

While Rom was working for Walter Bell, a lot of people from Neerlandia came to have their cars repaired. One day, Bill Olthuis and Albert Elgersma came by — but not to have their cars repaired. The garage in Neerlandia was coming up for sale, they said, and would Rom be interested? Rom was indeed interested, but he did not have enough money to buy a garage. One evening soon after that, Bill and Albert came again, but this time with two other men — Louis Nanninga and George Anema. That evening they spoke Fries, Dutch, and English, but the deal was made. When the garage came up for tender, Rom would put his [illegible] would "put up" the money. When the time came, it was discovered that this group of men had tendered the same amount as Ed Visser. The Co-op asked for bids a second time. After that tender Rom was the owner of the Neerlandia garage which was renamed "Neerlandia Motors, prop. R. Stel."

On January 1, 1950, the Stels moved to Neerlandia. The house beside the garage had been empty for just one day, but when the family came, in the -52° F weather, the walls were iced up. Soon, though, the old wood stove warmed up the house.

On the first morning in the garage, Rom looked at the phone and got scared. What if it would ring? He would have to answer it and speak English. But he made it, there were sometimes mix-ups, but he made it! Rom remembers that one of the first things he had to do was to overhaul the light plant. There was no rural electrification yet, so electricity was supplied by this plant to the garage, store, church, parsonage, and a few houses. This did not work very well, so Rom had to buy a second light plant, which Bert Norden hooked up in such a way that both plants could run at one time. Normally, the plant stopped at 11 p.m. and everybody had to be in bed by then or be left sitting in the dark. Only when the consistory had a meeting was the plant kept going, [illegible] believed in overtime.

From the start, the garage got a lot of business. Henry Dieterman came from Barrhead as a mechanic; he was followed by Gerrit van Dijken, Bill Vander Leest, Tjibbe Vander Leest, and John Stryker.

On November 11, 1950, the Stel family was blessed with their fourth son, **Hedley Ralph**. Rom was now a sub-dealer for the Ford company and when C. K. Mast died, Rom became the John Deere dealer as well. He even did some [illegible]

The Lord was good to the Stels. Rom served one term in the consistory. They had many friends with whom they had nice evenings together and whom they will never forget.

People also played jokes on them. One winter evening, Rom and Rie came home from Barrhead with the children. Rom spotted a beautiful white owl sitting on the gas pump. He stopped the car and told the family to stay put. Then he took his .22 rifle and shot the owl. The owl fell down, but was as stiff as a board when [illegible] a coyote standing by the garage door — frozen [illegible] Wierenga, that you played that trick on us. [illegible] on the rink all winter and also went trapping in Hessels' bush and Bert Nanninga's bush. Bill Olthuis taught them how to skin weasels and muskrats. The boys, especially Sid, were good hockey players. Sid was an all-round sports boy.

Marilyn Patricia was born on August 30 [illegible] - a girl! What happiness there was in the Stel family.

Standing: Marian, Hedley, Sidney, Pete. Seated: Rom, Marilyn, Rie, 1958

So the years went by, until 1960. In that year the Steis decided to sell the garage and move to Ontario. The garage was sold to Fred Toebes and Gerrit Gelderman. Simon Tuininga moved the Steis to Richmond Hill, Ontario, for the price of an old Massey combine, which Rom had received as a trade-in. In Ontario, Rom worked for Beaver Lumber Company.

In 1978, after 18 years, they came back to Neerlandia. They could not forget the place where they had spent so many good years and made so many friends. The old garage was [illegible] A new garage had been built by Neerlandia Co-op. There Rom was hired as service manager.

Upon Rom's retirement on September 30, 1982, a farewell party was given the Steis by the store board and employees. A week later, with regret, they left their apartment above the store, to move to Airdrie, Alberta, to be with their family.

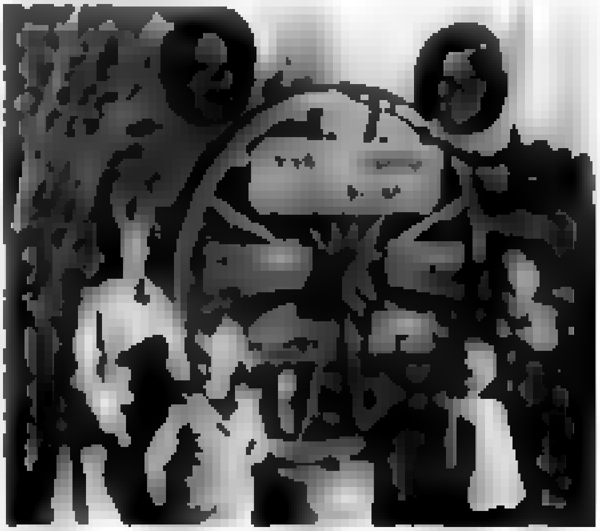
Rie Stei

ANDY AND DONNA (MAST) STRYDHORST

Andrew was the twelfth child born into the Strydhorst family. His childhood was similar to most. He broke his wrist twice and as a toddler was rescued from the rain barrel by sister Alice. No one knows who pulled him out of the manure pit, but his father was heard to remark, "It's easier to make another one than to clean that one!" Andrew survived the brush piling, root picking, and farm chores, and entered the U of A in 1965. Following graduation in 1969, he worked for Transport Canada as a professional engineer until 1980.

Donna Mast was raised in Neerlandia and attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead, studying music along with the regular courses. [illegible] on the telephone switchboard at Central from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. She usually slept on the job (there was a cot next to the switchboard) since the night shift was quiet except for the occasional emergency call. Thursday mornings were different since this was the day to ship hogs. Donna would be partially awakened by the ringing of the phone [illegible] and fully awakened a few seconds later when someone would holler into her ear, "Would you get me the operator, please?" You see, Dick Fisher was a little hard of hearing and assumed everyone else was too. Had she had her wits about her Donna might have suggested that the Edmonton operator had already heard him.

Andy and Donna were married in Neerlandia on November 27, 1970, by Rev. P. Van Drunen. After living in Edmonton for about a year they moved to Ottawa. **Melanie** Grace (October 30, 1974), **Shane** Andrew (July 27, 1976), and **Amanda** Dawn (September 29, 1979) were born there. **Erin** Lynn (May 25, 1981) was born in Barrhead, following Andy and Donna's return to the farm. Andy has often been asked why they came back to the farm. As long as the government was spending money on airports [illegible] During his last year with Transport, however, most jobs of any significance were assigned to consultants (privatization) but all personnel [illegible] had little to do except invent new words (buzz words) to describe what they were doing.


Top: Andy, Donna, Melanie, Amanda, Erin, Shane, 1984.

Upon returning to the farm, work once again took on meaning for Andy, although the days are long and 5:00 a.m. sometimes comes too soon. Andy and Donna feel that the Lord has been good to them and are thankful for a place in the Neerlandia community.

Andy Strydhorst

HENRY AND SANDRA (ELGERSMA) STRYDHORST

This chapter of history begins with the birth of Henry Strydhorst in Neerlandia, in 1936. His growing-up years and school years were in Neerlandia. After completing grade nine he quit school and did a lot of carpentry work. His first major project was a chicken coop which he and his brother James put up together when they were thirteen and twelve years of age respectively. Before this their projects were more in the line of fun and games: twenty-foot high swings, stilts and a merry-go-round, which although near to being downright dangerous, provided hours of entertainment for them and all the neighbour children.

The first few years of post-school life were [illegible] evident that something would have to be done to supplement the family's meagre income. The winter months would surely be the best time to work out so, in the winter of 1954-55, Henry and James found work in a lumber camp. The sawmill, owned by Pete Albreght, was located some thirty miles northwest of Fort Assiniboine; wages were eighty-five cents per hour [illegible] deducted. They worked five-and-a-half nine-hour days so on Saturday afternoon they would go home, returning to the camp on Sunday evening. There were also others from Neerlandia employed in this camp. Riding with Evert Wever who was the proud owner of a 1929 Chev car, Henry, James, and two Peters boys would spend about three-and-a-half hours on a Sunday evening travelling back to the lumber camp. This was at times an endurance test for the hardest of men, for when it was 40 degrees below zero outside, the temperature in Wever's car (at least in the back seat) was also near the minus 40 mark — without considering the wind chill felt through the ill-fitting doors. Needless to say they always wore their parkas and felt boots on these excursions.

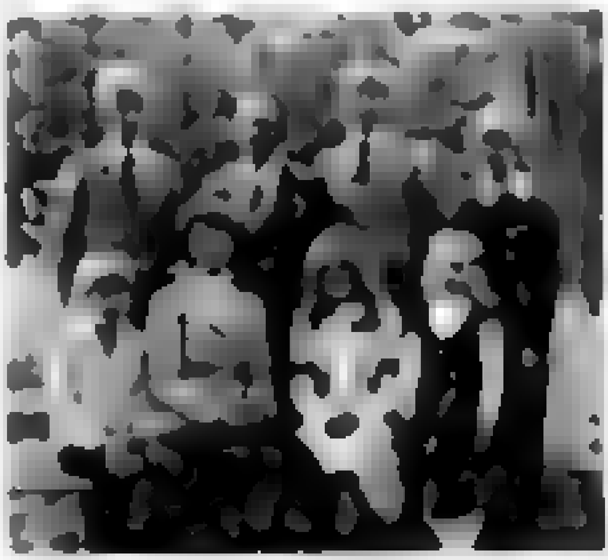
During the summer of 1955 Henry began [illegible] teen years constructed a number of houses, barns, and other buildings in the Neerlandia area. For himself and his bride-to-be, he built a house in the winter of 1961-62.

On June 15, 1962, Henry married Sandra [illegible] after grade nine. She then worked for a lot of people in their homes, usually taking care of the household while the mother was hospitalized with a new baby. She spent the school year of 1961-62 working for Tine Abday, a school teacher in the area.

Upon their marriage Henry and Sandra moved into their new house. They had bought the NW 21-62-3-5 from Melle Elzinga, Sandra's uncle. Melle, who was living with his parents, had their large house moved a few yards so that Henry and Sandra could build their new house on the location of the old.

Henry and Sandra purchased two quarters, the SE 32-62-3-5 and SW 33-62-3-5 from Frank Robinson in 1966. They now operate a mixed farm, raising grain, hogs, and cattle.

Farming was often as challenging for Sandra as it was for Henry, especially in the fall when she had to become adept at tractor driving — after which she would have eleven months to either try to remember until the next time, how to do things right, or to try to erase the entire experience from her memory. One of the hardest lessons for her to learn was one in which she had to pull one vehicle with another. On one occasion she had to pull the truck which stubbornly refused to start. However, because of its positioning, this was not going to be a simple [illegible] the truck backwards while Henry steered it. Thinking that the most effective pull had to be accompanied by a fair amount of speed, Sandra tried her best to achieve this. At times Henry and the truck did not seem to be cooperating [illegible] well and the pulling got quite har



Back: Albert, Henry, Harvey, Simon. Front: Barry, Sandra, Gloria, Marianne. 1980

However, Sandra knew how to combat that problem: simply step harder on the gas! After some time had passed and some distance had [illegible] this long enough, a quick check in the rearview mirror revealed that they certainly had! The truck was veering wildly from ditch to ditch, finally coming to rest on its side in the right [illegible] Sandra jumped from her vehicle to meet Henr [illegible] window, and greeted her with the following: "What are you trying to prove! I tried to signal to you that the truck had started, by lightly applying the brakes." At that stage Sandra had not yet learned all the signs and signals.

The years brought many changes, among [illegible] was born May 8, 1963, and is in law school pursuing a career which has been a long-time dream. On May 16, 1964, **Albert Andrew** made his appearance filling the household with fun and mischief. He is in his second year of study at RBC, having previously studied a year at the U of A. **Gloria Jean** came on the scene on March 26, 1966. Her dad's first comment upon seeing the new baby was, "It's a girl! I can tell by the mouth." Having always enjoyed school, Gloria is studying at the U of A, hoping someday to be a teacher. The trio became four with the addition of **Simon Wayne** on January 5, 1968. He is now in grade twelve and plans to continue his education, apparently not too badly affected by a rather disenchanting first day of school. On that day he didn't know when it was lunchtime so he didn't eat; he broke his thermos therefore went without a drink; and he topped off the day by missing the bus! **Barry Allan** was born July 7, 1970, a cute little fellow with a mop of black hair. At his baptism, one young fellow in the pews whispered to his mom, "That baby has more hair than his dad!" It was not natural baldness that had afflicted Dad, rather, it was a barber who wanted to make sure Dad got his money's worth! The caboose, **Marianne Adana**, showed up on September 13, 1974 — a tiny little girl with a mighty voice. After [illegible] pressed her displeasure with the world, the family faced many accusations of having shown horror shows to the poor girl the night before.

Life has been good for the Strydhorsts. They thank the Lord for the many blessings over the years.

Strydhorst family

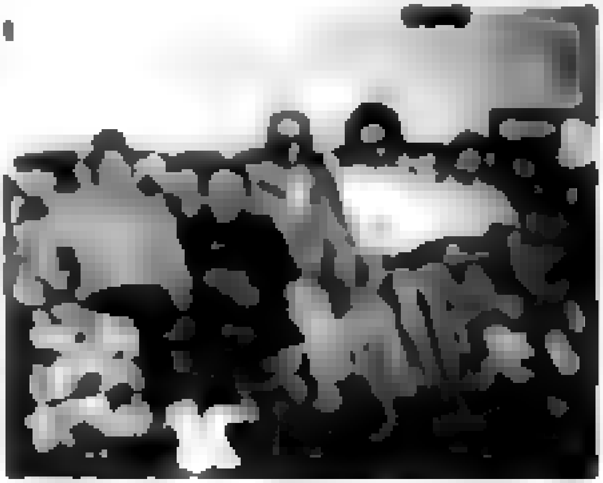
JAMES AND RETA (STURWOLD)
[illegible]

Although James and Reta both grew up in [illegible] ment residence until 1972.

James graduated from high school in Barrhead and then attended the U of A. He became a teacher, and taught for one year in each the Neerlandia school and in West Edmonton Christian School, and then in Lacombe Christian School for five years.

After finishing high school, Reta attended Dordt college for four years. After graduating, she taught at West Edmonton Christian School and also Lacombe Christian School. After the family moved to Neerlandia, she taught at the Neerlandia school for one year and has since served as a substitute teacher.

James and Reta were married August 2, 1968, in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church with Reta's uncle Rev. Jack Stulp officiating. James and Reta spent the first four years of their married life in Lacombe, where they both taught. In the summers, James sold World Book Encyclopedias.



Russell, Leslie, James, Reta, Shanna, 1984

Leslie and **Russell** were born in Lacombe. Leslie James was born November 18, 1969. He was born with spina bifida and as a result must use a wheelchair. He first went to school in Neerlandia and later transferred to Barrhead

In 1983, a hydraulic lift was put on the schoolbus to accommodate his wheelchair. Russell Kent was born January 15, 1972.

In July 1972 the family moved to Neerlandia after they had bought farm owned by Reta's parents, Lucas and Annie Sturwold. James grows grain on the land and also manages a farrow-to-finish hog operation. In 1982 and 1983, he was in the Top 20 (according to grade) hog producers in Alberta.

Shawna Marie was born in Barrhead on April 9, 1975.

After moving to Neerlandia both James and Reta have been happy to use their talents in church activities and community affairs. James has served in the consistory.

Reta Strydhorst

JOHN AND GRACE (MEYERINK) STRYKER

John (Aaldert Jan) Stryker was born June 2, 1930, in Hoogeveen, Drenthe, the Netherlands. He was married December 7, 1955, to Grace (Geesje) Harmina Meyerink (born January 27, 1935) who was also from Hoogeveen. Two children were born to them there: **Jackie** (Jacqueline) Francisca (June 21, 1956) and **John** (Jan) (December 3, 1957).

John was employed as a mechanic, but he quit his job and since the house was part of the employment package they no longer had a place to live. Thus the decision was made to immigrate to Canada. Strykers sailed on the *Grote Beer* on May 1, 1958. The ship had no stabilizers to cushion the wave action and the voyage was rough. The train trip from Halifax was even worse. Immigrants going to Winnipeg so provoked the train conductor that he retaliated by locking the doors to the bathrooms on the immigrant car for two days.

John immediately found a job in Evansburg, but within three months a friend told him about a house and a job as mechanic available in Neerlandia, so the Strykers moved again. They rented the Canadian Reformed parsonage for twenty dollars per month plus janitorial help in the church.

When they were here for two weeks, John lit the furnace in the basement of their house and went to work. It was raining outside, but the inside was soon filled with smoke. Grace went downstairs and discovered a pipe from the furnace had rusted through and fallen off. She also discovered what a dusty road was like when it rained — she had put on low boots and was going to the garage to call John, but became stuck in the mud.

Jackie, Grace, John, John Jr. 1958

One day John had gone to Edmonton and Grace decided to empty the ashes from the furnace. There must have been a few hot coals in the ashes because in no time there was a fire fanned by a wind. The fire went into Fisher's field and, although the grain was off, the granary was full. Fortunately someone sounded the alarm and within a short time men with tractors were plowing a fire guard.

That first winter John and Grace bought a butchered pig. Since they had no fridge or freezer, it was kept frozen in a barrel outside. But the weather suddenly turned warm. They tried to can the meat but didn't know how, so for a few days they ate meat like never before.

In the three-and-a-half years they lived in Neerlandia they had two more sons. **Richard** Dale was born September 16, 1959, and **Aubrey** Douglas on July 8, 1961. Strykers learned the language and customs and also learned to appreciate the people and the country. In 1962 a promising job offer came from Red Deer and the family moved there. One more son was born there.

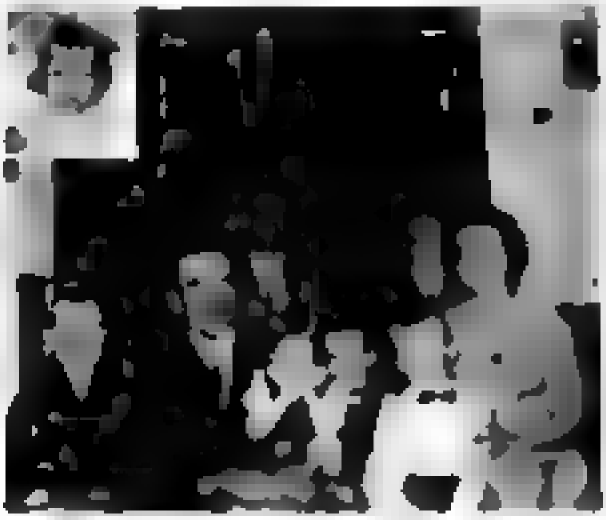
Grace Stryker

JACOB AND TENA (SEINEN-KONING) STURWOLD

Jacob Sturwold was born in 1919 on the Sturwold homestead (SW 10-62-3-5). He lived on the same farm the first fifty-four years of his life. Jake went to school in the hamlet of Neerlandia for eight years. He missed a lot of school to help his father with custom grain crushing. He worked on the farm until he was about twenty-one years old. Then he drove truck for Fisher Bros. for a few years and also did some Cat driving for Bill Olthuis before settling down to farm with his dad.

In 1950 Jacob married Tena Seinen from Houston, B.C. Tena was a widow with a two-year old son, **Raymond** Calvin (born September 6, 1943). At this time Jacob took over his father's farm.

On October 26, 1951 **Lester** Jacob was born. Since the family was growing, the Sturwolds made many improvements on the farm including a good-sized hog barn. In 1952 and 1953 they experienced severe hail damage to their crops. **Stanley** Douglas arrived on March 8, 1955, followed on September 18, 1958, by **Keith** Alan. Another son, **Wade** Ivan, was born April 24, 1961. Their family not being complete, the Sturwolds in 1965 adopted **Denise** Marie (born March 7, 1964). The next year they started building a new house. In August 1966 they adopted **Colleen** Mae (born February 9, 1966). A month later the new house was ready for occupancy. What a busy time — a new baby, moving, and all the farm duties.



Back: Ray, Lester. Front: Stan, Jake, Denise, Keith, Wade, Tena. 1966. Inset: Colleen, 1966.

Tragedy came to the Sturwold family on September 17, 1967. Their fifteen-year-old son Lester was hit and killed by a car as he was walking to Young People's Society at the church that evening. God graciously comforted them in their sorrow and helped them through the hard days that followed.

In 1967, after Ray finished his schooling, he got a job in Edmonton. On May 10, 1968, Ray married Lydia Mast. They made their home in Edmonton. Stanley also got a job in Edmonton after his graduation in 1973.

One of Jake's dreams was fulfilled when he [illegible] flying was a great joy to him.

Though the years in Neerlandia had been good ones for the Sturwolds, Jake thought it was time to leave after spending fifty-four years on one farm. So in 1973, they sold the farm to Charlie Baker.

After a lovely farewell party given by the community, the Sturwolds moved to Abbotsford, B.C. — they were looking forward to living in a milder climate in the Fraser Valley.

Jake worked on maintenance for almost eleven years at Cargill Hogs. He is now enjoying retirement.

Albertina Sturwold

ALBERT AND BETTY (MERKUS) TIEMSTRA

Albert Tiemstra, the oldest son of Charlie and Sadie, spoke only *Fries* until he started school. Once school began he soon learned the English language. He enjoyed school until grade nine when he was the only student in his grade. Then the lure of farming became too great, so he left school to help his dad on the farm.

When Albert was nineteen years old he went to work for his uncle Pete Tuininga, who owned a hatchery. During this time his interest also turned to girls, and he met Betty Merkus. She had come from the Netherlands with her parents in 1948. Two days after her arrival in Neerlandia she went to work for Elizabeth Bender of Mellowdale. This was a big change: she had to learn a new language and cook for a threshing crew. When the weather was good Betty and her Uncle John rode bicycle to Neerlandia to attend Sunday church services. She appreciated the way the young people accepted her. Betty did housework in Neerlandia and Barrhead until her marriage to Albert on January 17, 1952.

Engagement day

Albert and Betty's first home was an old twenty-four foot square chicken coop attached to the Barrhead Electric Hatchery. One morning after living in the chicken coop for five years, Albert got out of bed and stepped right through the floor of the bedroom. The tamarack supports and part of the floor had rotted away. The Tiemstra family soon found a new home across from the Barrhead school.

Albert and Betty's marriage was blessed with nine children: **Liz** (Elizabeth) Helen, December 12, 1952; **Charles** August 6, 1954; **Sharon**, July 31, 1955; **Eugene**, September 26, 1957; **Marjorie**, December 24, 1958; **Pearl**, May 19, 1962; **Barbara**, April 19, 1964; **Phyllis** Marie November 11, 1967, and **Arlan** David June 26, 1973.

Albert holding Phyllis, Charles, Liz, Eugene, Sharon, Marjorie. Seated: Barbara, Pearl, Betty. Inset: Arlan, 1982

In 1955 the Tiemstras took over the hatchery business from Pete Tuininga and operated it until 1964. Then they bought five acres in Meadowdale (SE 14-60-3-5). They continued with the hatchery business and also raised turkeys and broilers. Their first home on the acreage was a double garage to which Jerry Reitsma helped them build an addition. Later they bought the rest of the quarter and grew grain and grass. Since the family was growing up and helping more, Albert was able to spend time as director of the Alberta Broiler Growers Marketing Board and to serve as member of the church council.

Betty with duck eggs.

In 1970 the Tiemstras transferred their church membership from the Barrhead to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church because there was a larger group of young people [redacted] children except Phyllis and Arian attended school in Barrhead. After high school, Liz graduated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing. She married Arnold Nanninga. Charles graduated from NAIT in 1982 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Sharon also graduated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing. On November 10, 1979 she married Chris Rottier. They farm in Pibroch and have three boys. Eugene graduated from the U of A with an engineering degree. He married Ruby Nanninga on May 27, 1979. They live in [redacted]monton where he is employed by the Nova Corporation. They have one child. Marge was [redacted] home on her high school graduation night. [redacted] supportive during that difficult time. Pearl graduated from the U of A in 1984 with a Bachelor of Education degree. Barb took one year of business administration at NAIT before marrying Glenn van Dijken.

Although the Tiemstras were content on the farm and had planned to spend the rest of their lives there, this was not to be. When it became [redacted] the Tiemstras sold all except ten acres where they now live. Mission work had always been important to them and the sale of the farm gave them the opportunity to become more involved. In preparation for their work Albert and Betty attended the Summer Institute of Linguistics of Wycliffe Bible Translators at Norman, Oklahoma. Since 1979 they have represented Wycliffe in northern Alberta and [redacted] Looking back over their lives, the Tiemstras find that the words of Proverbs 16:9 speak to them: "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

Betty Tiemstra

CLARENCE AND ANN (STRYDHORST) TIEMSTRA

Clarence Tiemstra married Anna Strydhorst on October 7, 1955. Both had been born and raised in Neerlandia.

Prior to their marriage, Clarence and Ann worked in Edmonton. During the winter of 1954-55, Clarence worked in a feed mill and delivered feed. His wages were ninety-five cents per hour, but he was able to put in a fair amount of overtime, which paid time-and-a-half. During that summer he worked for a construction company and also bought his first car. In September he went out blood testing chickens. Ann had gone to Edmonton in December [redacted] one month, got a job at Trudeau's Dry Cleaners. She worked there for three years. The starting wage was sixty cents an hour. Later she received seventy and finally eighty an hour. Ann lived in an upstairs suite in a private home with Grace Bos and Bertha Vanden Born. They used the same bathroom as the family downstairs. They paid sixty-five dollars a month rent and their groceries came to about sixteen dollars a month per person.

After Clarence and Ann's marriage, they lived in Edmonton for two-and-a-half months. Clarence was out in the country blood testing chickens for pullorum so he was home only on weekends. At the end of December they moved to Barrhead where they rented three rooms in a house for forty-five dollars a month. They lived in this house and then in another one until June when they bought a small house south of the railway tracks for two thousand dollars. Natural gas was in all three of these homes but no water or sewer. The water was carried from a neighbour's well and outside toilets were used. Clarence and Ann both worked for brother Albert in the Barrhead Hatchery. Together they received three hundred dollars a month.

During the summer of 1956 Clarence worked on an oil rig, drilling holes in the Lac La Nonne area. In the fall, he went out testing chickens again. In those days there were many small flocks (200-500 birds) of chickens for hatching eggs and it was government regulation that they be tested.

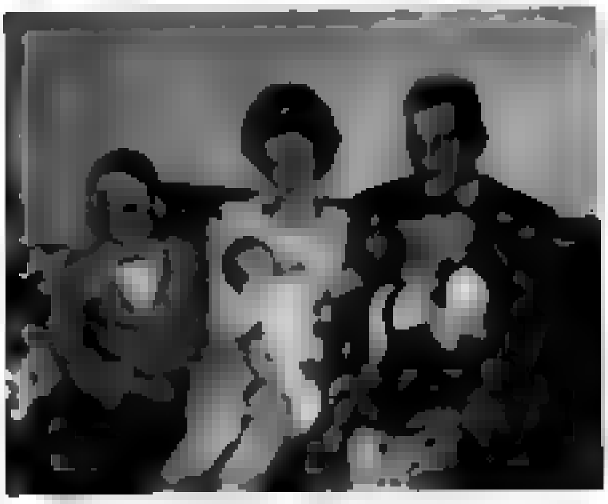
Clarence and Ann's first son, **Philip Lawrence**, was born January 23, 1957. That winter and spring Clarence worked in the hatchery again. During July and August Clarence and a very short man named Henry painted several stores together. That worked out very well since Clarence, who is tall, could paint the top boards and Henry the bottom boards.

After testing chickens in the fall and working in the hatchery again during the winter, Clarence and Ann moved to Neerlandia in May

1958, onto the farm where Clarence had grown up (SE 27-61-3-5). Clarence had no interest in grain farming and did not want to borrow a lot of money to buy the whole quarter plus machinery, so together he and Albert bought thirty acres from their dad. Later Albert sold his share to Clarence and Ann.

When Clarence and Ann moved onto the farm, they had no electricity, as the plant which the folks had used had given up. But they got Calgary Power within a month or two. They had no running water either, so when they got need [illegible] Clarence put a big [illegible] barrel upstairs and a pipe with a tap on the end down to the kitchen. He did not bother to put an overflow on the barrel so many times when it was filled it ran over. Finally, after being soaked many times, part of the kitchen ceiling came down. It was repaired and from then on more care was taken to prevent another accident.

Clarence and Ann were blessed with more children: **Roberta** Glen, December 18, 1959; **Bernard** Dean, March 10, 1963; **Kevin** Lee, November 7, 1966; and **Stephen** Drew, May 18, 1971.



Back: Phil, Ann, Clarence. Front: Bernie, Roberta, 1963

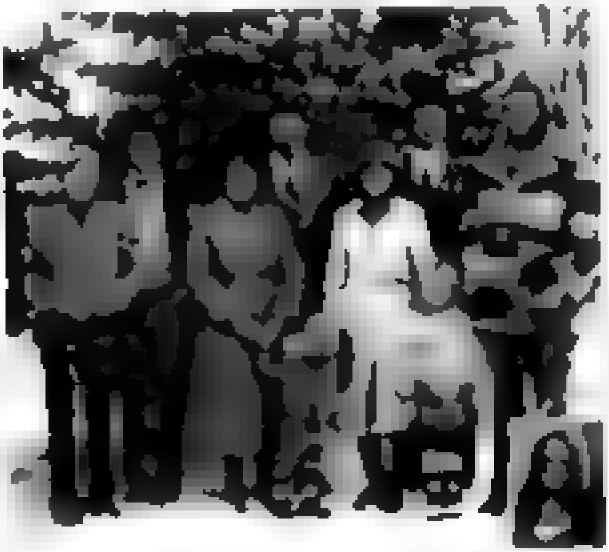
The first years on the farm Clarence milked four or five cows and had a two-storey barn with about fifteen hundred chickens. After a number of years of struggling along, trying to make ends meet, Clarence went back to testing chickens in the fall. Ann and Phil looked after the chickens, and Phil milked the cow while Clarence was gone.

Clarence's chicken testing ended with a car accident on November 12, 1968. He spent only two weeks in the hospital but could not work for the rest of the winter. He received workman's compensation and with the help of the neighbours and relatives managed to keep the farm going. The Tiemstras even did without a car for about four months. Their neighbours Peter and Grace Piers, picked Ann and the children up for church on Sundays and Wilma Wierenga took Ann to the store for groceries every Friday. Clarence had therapy in Edmonton for the month of March.

For several years Tiemstras had a flock of turkeys for hatching eggs and later raised six or seven thousand a year for meat.

Clarence served on the church council and on the store and school boards. He was on the Lilydale board for four years and presently is vice-chairman of the Egg Hatching Marketing Board. Ann is capable with a hammer and nails and her sons have inherited this capability.

After graduating and working at several jobs in Edmonton, Phil attended Dordt College for two semesters. He married **Carolyn Ruiter** from Edmonton on August 14, 1977. They and their two children, JR [illegible] February [illegible] and Levi Mark (June 12, 1981), live on the south end of the home place. Phil works with his dad and enjoys Neerlandia's number one sport — hockey. Carolyn enjoys participating in fitness activities.



Steve, Kevin, Ann, Clarence, Carolyn, Bernie, Phil. Front: Levi, JR, 1984. Inset: Roberta, 1977

After graduating from high school, Roberta attended Dordt College, where she met Ron Biel of Lacombe who was earning a degree in agriculture. On May 30, 1980, Ron and Roberta were married. They lived in Lacombe for one year before they went to Swaziland, Africa, for a three-year volunteer term sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. There Ron worked on water projects while Roberta set up a library for a teacher training college and later did secretarial work for a doctor. Clarence, Ann, Kevin, and Stephen visited them in Swaziland in March 1983.

Bernie, an apprentice at Paddle Plumbing, is engaged to marry Colleen Piers August 10, 1984. The other boys are still at home. Clarence and Ann are thankful to God for the good life He has given them in Neerlandia.

Clarence and Ann Tiemstra

SIMON AND DOROTHY (BAKER) TIEMSTRA

Simon Tiemstra married Dorothy Baker on March 21, 1957. Simon and Dorothy farmed with Simon's parents until 1963, then bought the family farm, which consisted of four Tiemstra homesteads. From their marriage five children were born: **Albert** Simon, November 6, 1957; **Denise** Trudy, July 23, 1959; **Teresa** Charlene, May 3, 1964; **Craig** Simon, February 24, 1970; and **Melanie** Joy, March 15, 1975.

Standing: Denise, Simon, Teresa, Craig. Seated: Melanie, Dorothy, Albert.

On March 14, 1981, Albert married **Lori Mae Kistemaker** of Clinton, Mississippi, U.S.A. She had been born February 19, 1959, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She received her BA degree in education from Dordt College in 1980, then taught kindergarten in Jarvie for two years. Albert and Lori have one daughter, **Natasha** May, born July 22, 1983. They bought two quarters of land from Albert's parents and are now fourth-generation farmers on the Tiemstra land.

Lori holding Natasha, Albert, 1983.

Denise attended Dordt College for two years, then later received her BA degree in education from the U of A in 1982. On July 25, 1981 Denise married Harry Ludwig of Edmonton. He is studying law and Denise is teaching at West Edmonton Christian School. Teresa is living in Westlock, working for the *Westlock News*.

Dorothy Tiemstra

FRED AND SENA (KONYNENBELT) [redacted]

When Fred Toebes was one year old, his family came to live in Neerlandia. During his early childhood years there were no neighbour boys his age, but that changed in 1938 when Lambartus Janssen bought the farm north of the Toebes homestead. Janssens moved in during the summer holidays. Their youngest son Jack was ten years old — exactly Fred's age — and he and Fred soon became very close friends. Jack, having lived in the city and having gone to a much larger school, had an entirely different range of interests and storybooks than Fred had ever dreamed of. The boys spent many happy hours together. In the summertime they would often go swimming in the creek on Uncle Bill Bouwman's land or fishing in the Shoal Creek near the Wilsons'. In wintertime, after spending a lot of time clearing the snow off the ice, they would skate on Kuppers' pond or on Baird Lake. Even today, forty-five years later, Fred and his wife, Sena, and Jack and his wife, Ruth, are the best of friends.

Fred's formal schooling ended in 1943 when he graduated from grade nine. His first job was in the Neerlandia Co-op store. The days seemed awfully long! He worked from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and, as well, had to walk the two miles to and from the store morning and night. In 1945 he started taking a correspondence course in auto and diesel mechanics from the Chicago Vocational School. This course lasted two years, with shop training in Edmonton for three months during the winter. Fred graduated from Chicago Vocational in March 1947 and one month later began working in Neerlandia's first Co-op garage, where he worked for two years. Then he took a job clearing land with a D8 Caterpillar tractor, working for [illegible] Wilsons and [illegible] Nanninga.

Fred attended a youth camp at Gull Lake in the summer of 1949 and while there met a girl from Nobleford. They had a very good time at the camp, but after going back to work Fred forgot about her. But there she was again at the next youth camp — looking better than ever. After that camp, they started dating but had one real problem: Nobleford and Neerlandia are four hundred miles apart. In 1949 that was a long trip, so their courtship had to continue by mail. After three years of writing letters every week and visiting for two weeks each year, Fred finally married Sena (Gesina) Konynenbelt on June 26, 1952. Sena had been born in Lethbridge on January 11, 1931, and grew up in Nobleford.

Fred was very happy and things had never looked better for him. He and Sena bought the family farm from his dad, to be paid for in monthly payments. Sena, being a farm girl, loved doing chores and gardening, and Fred had a job in the Neerlandia garage working for Stel and Dieterman. On the farm they had six milk cows, three hundred laying hens, and a few hogs. Besides that, the fall of 1952 brought an excellent crop, so they really had it made.

Fred and Sena on their honeymoon

But, sad to say, this beautiful situation was not to last very long. On November 12, 1952, Fred contracted polio and was taken to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. There he spent two-and-a-half weeks in isolation and was then transferred to the University Hospital for rehabilitation. He was hospitalized for one hundred days. After much therapy he finally came home at the end of March 1953 wearing a steel brace to support his back and upper body and walking very carefully with two canes. During his hospitalization, Fred's dad came back to the farm and did the chores. Sena lived in Edmonton with friends (for whom she did housework) and visited Fred every day.

After coming home in the spring, Fred and Sena experienced firsthand what community living is all about. They got help from friends and neighbours, and their crop was put in free of charge. The crop that year (1953) looked really good until August 26 when they were hailed out one hundred percent. On December 19, 1953, they received a new ray of hope when their first daughter, Janice Lorraine, was born. She gave them much pleasure, but also added responsibility. The following spring the neighbours again put in their crop, but again on July 26 they were hailed out one hundred percent. These two years left them totally ruined financially. They were unable to make any farm payments, but lived thankfully each day, receiving the love and support of community, neighbours, and friends.

In September 1954 Fred accepted a job offer from a service station in Lethbridge, pumping gas and doing lube jobs for $1.25 an hour. Fred and Sena rented out the farm to a neighbour, Jake Sturwold, and stayed in Lethbridge for almost two years. They returned to Neerlandia in July 1956. One month later they sold the farm to Ryer Krikke and bought a garage business and house from Harry Beanden in Vega. On April 24, 1962, a second daughter, Carolyn Mae, was born, again giving them much joy and satisfaction.

Eldon, Janice and Hank Wierenga, Sena, Fred, Kent Wierenga, Carolyn, 1982. Inset Marlys Wierenga, 1984

With Fred's health and strength gradually improving, they were enabled to work in Fred's Garage until February 1976. Although they experienced some lean years (along with the farmers) when snows came early and crops could not be harvested, they also had many good years. They look back, in fact, on the years in Vega as the most satisfying years of their lives. On March 1, 1976, Fred began working at the new Co-op Service Centre in Neerlandia, after selling the garage and house in Vega. Later that year, the Toebes moved into a new home in the Centre and now enjoy working in Neerlandia. Janice married Hank J. Wierenga in 1973 and Carolyn is working and living in Edmonton.

Fred Toebes

CLIFFORD AND ANGELA (VANDER SLUYS) TUININGA

Some of Clifford Tuininga's earliest memories are of his dad and mom at odds on a few issues such as the place of sports in a person's life, the things a Christian should and should not do, and who are better, Friesen or Groningers. Much of this was heard at night through the opening in the ceiling of the living room which allowed the heat to go upstairs to the bedrooms.

Cliff still remembers with pleasure the days his dad came home with a prairie chicken or other game. That was mighty good eating. Dad also had a knack for getting spruce gum. How the kids loved it!

During the harvest season Cliff was allowed to stay home and drive tractor. These days were exciting because of the tales told and the pranks pulled. One day while they were threshing, a cow ventured onto the field for the umpteenth time. The crew decided to round up the cow and tie a bucket with a rope to the tail of the cow. This worked great with dogs, but would it work with a cow? Yes it did! The last that was seen of the cow was an occasional reflection of the bucket as it bounced.

Cliff started grade eleven in Barrhead but after four days traded his books for a shovel, beginning work for his Uncle Simon. At this time much farm work was manual and, since he worked long hours, Cliff was very tired by the end of the day.

There are many good hunters in Neerlandia but Clifford is not one of them. At one time he and some others went hunting in the Blueberry Mountain area. Clifford set off by himself, following a moose trail. He soon suspected that he was lost. When he checked his compass, he found it to be inaccurate. In panic he fired a shot with his rifle and his hunting partners soon came running. Clifford found, though, that he was only one hundred and fifty yards from his truck.

In 1964 Cliff went to Dordt College as an adult student to study for the ministry. Latin proved to be too much for him to handle, however, so he ended his college life two years after he started.

Now started another phase of Cliff's life. In partnership with Case Van Beek, he bought Neerlandia Transport from Simon Tuininga. He still had time for other things besides trucking. Cliff attended a student high school conference as a discussion leader. The conference, held in Red Deer, dealt with the relation of the Bible to learning. It was here that Cliff met his future wife, Angela vander Sluys.

Angela, born January 13, 1949, in Alkmaar, North Holland, the Netherlands, came to Canada with her parents and three older sisters in 1951. Her father was a painter. The weekend was the beginning of a budding romance, somewhat stormy at times. At one point, to determine how good their relationship was, Angela went to Trinity College. This was indeed the separation they needed. Upon her return they decided to be married. They exchanged vows in Maranatha C.R.C. in Edmonton on December 21, 1968.

There was a cold spell of 40-50 below zero Fahrenheit for the first six weeks after Cliff and Angela settled into a new trailer. Trucking, farming, and marriage were too much for Cliff so he sold his share of the trucking business to Case. He entered into a farming partnership with his dad and brother Andrew. Later they were joined by Alfred and Sidney and finally Cecil. After several years, the partnership was dissolved. Now on his own, Cliff has a farrow-to-finish hog operation with a few cows as a sideline.

Cliff and Angela were blessed with five children: **Jillain** born on October 11, 1969; **Cindy Mae** on April 10, 1971; **Melisa** on May 29, 1974; **Joel Clifford** on May 13, 1978; and **Laura Joy** born on May 10, 1980.

The Tuininga family was quite healthy as it grew, although it did have a few mishaps. In 1974 Jillain needed to be rushed to the hospital to sew up a gash in her forehead after she ran into an axe. In 1979 Cindy fell from a pole at school and broke her arm badly. At the University Hospital in Edmonton she had pins put in to help set it properly. Melisa spent ten days in the Barrhead hospital in 1978 after twenty-seven percent of her body was burned by hot water.

Cindy, Jillain, Clifford, Laura, Joel, Angela, Lisa, 1980

Cliff and Angela still reside in Neerlandia. They are happily busy with their family, farming, and community.

Cliff and Angela Tuininga

DAVID AND ALIDA (VANDERGRIFT) TUININGA

The David Tuininga family history began on November 4, 1972, when Alida and David were married in Smithers, British Columbia. This event was the culmination of many trips and long distance phone calls to and from Smithers. Alida and David had first met as a result of the efforts of Rev. Jelle Tuininga, who extended his pastoral concern to his brother Gordon and his friends, David and Andrew Tuininga. These young men seemed well on their way to becoming confirmed bachelors, so Jelle issued an invitation to them to come and see the many beautiful girls in Smithers. Although somewhat skeptical of Jelle's judgement in this regard, the trio accepted the invitation. David's doubts vanished when he met Alida and the rest is history.

Alida had been born in Smithers on June 11, 1953, and after her schooling worked as a receptionist in Smithers General Hospital.

David, Alida, Jeremy, Julie, Marlene, c. 1980

David and Alida's first home on the SW 20-61-3-5, was the farmhouse which Pete and Tena Tuininga had built in 1937. **Julie Elizabeth**, David and Alida's first child, was born on May 4, 1975. **Marlene** Grace was born on October 4, 1978, and **Jeremy** David on June 8, 1981.

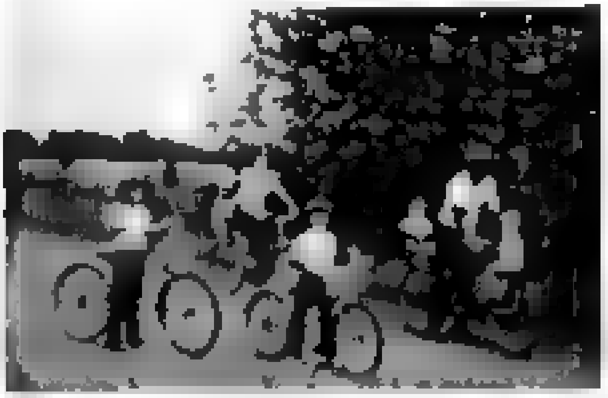
David and his father and brother own Kapeda Farms Ltd. They maintain a mixed farming operation producing eggs, grain, and hogs.

David Tuininga

GORDON AND MARJORIE (HORLINGS) TUININGA

Gordon Tuininga and Marjorie Horlings met in Smithers, British Columbia, when Gordon went to visit his brother Jelle who was minister there at that time. Marjorie had been born in Smithers on July 3, 1953. During their courtship, Gordon worked as a trucker in Smithers, in order to be near Marjorie. After three months, he was eager to get back to farming. He preferred the flat open land in Neerlandia and being his own boss. In October 1972 Marjorie moved from her home in Smithers to a basement suite in Barrhead. There she worked at Barrhead Clinic till her marriage. Gordon and Marjorie were married in Smithers on July 20, 1973, and then moved into their mobile home on the Tuininga farm (SE 19-61-3-5).

The practice of describing location by means by means of north, south, east, or west was foreign to Marjorie. Having come from an area where no road was straight and most were named, she had learned to use directions only in terms of right or left. To this day, unless the road is very familiar, Marjorie would soon be lost if she were told, "Go two miles east and one mile north."



A family outing: Juanita, Shannon, Marjorie, Kevin, Christy, Gordon, Corinna, 1983

On January 14, 1975, Gordon and Marjorie's first baby, **Juanita Lynn**, was born. **Kevin Shane** was born October 24, 1976. In October 1978 they moved into their new house, which had been built that summer. Their second son, **Shannon** Dean, was born on December 27, 1979. They had a real surprise on December 15, 1981, when twin girls, each weighing about two and one-half pounds, were born to them. After two months in an Edmonton hospital, the two tiny girls, **Christy Lenore** and **Corinna Leanne**, were welcomed home. Gordon became more domesticated than he had ever been, as he did his share of caring for them. Gordon and Marjorie feel that God has richly blessed them and their family.

Marjorie Tuininga

KLAAS AND ESTHER (NANNINGA) TUININGA

Klaas Tuininga was born at home on September [illegible] he wanted to be a farmer. At that time in [illegible] sons to quit school as soon as they reached the legal age to do so. They would then work full [illegible] his dad expected him to follow this procedure, and he quit school after grade nine.

Esther Nanninga was born on December 8, 1944, to Corny and Sena Nanninga. She went to school and helped her parents on the farm. Then, on June 14, 1963, Klaas took her for his bride.

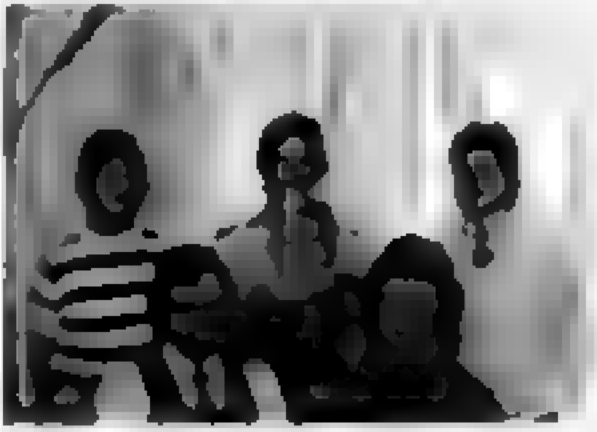
They made their home in Neerlandia on the SW 20-61-3-5, in the house in which Klaas' parents had lived for many years. Their married life started out hilariously. They came home to discover that chickens and chicken roosts were occupying their home. When a kitchen cabinet door was opened, a chicken flew out squawking. Some pranksters had used the time during [illegible] newlyweds a lively welcome. Things settled down quickly thereafter, with Klaas and Esther continuing to develop their farming and homemaking skills.

God blessed their marriage with four sons: **Russell** Kent, born on November 23, 1965; **Jeffrey** Dean, born on July 23, 1967; **Colin** Ward, born on January 30, 1969; and **Murray** Jay, born on June 11, 1976. The birth and rearing of their sons brought them much happiness, laughter, and tears. All too soon, it was time for Russell to begin school. How long that first day of school was — for his parents! It seemed just a short time later that the other boys followed in Russell's footsteps.

In 1972 a new house was built on the SE 20-61-3-5, and the family moved in. It was quite a challenge to start farming there, since there was not a tree or a building on the place when they began. With a lot of hard work, trees were planted, the yard landscaped, and hog barns erected. A small greenhouse was also built to provide flowers for the flowerbeds and to give [illegible] On this farmstead Klaas maintains his share of the Kapeda Farms' farrow-to-finish hog operation, which he owns in partnership with his father and brother.

Klaas and Esther's eldest sons have left home a second time to go to school; this time they went to the Christian high school and The King's College, both in Edmonton. The wrench that Klaas and Esther felt was no less painful the second time around. Klaas and Esther are actively involved in church and community affairs.

Esther Tuininga



Back: Colin, Russell, Jeffrey. Front: Klaas, Murray, Esther. [illegible]

LAMBERT AND BETTY (JANSSEN) TUININGA

On August 20, 1964, Lorne Tuininga and Betty Janssen were married in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. They had built a house on NW 17-61-3-5. There was no previous farmstead on this land, so everything had to be started from scratch. Power had to be brought [illegible] and Betty built a garage the same year they [illegible] no trees on the place, so for the first few years it could be very windy around the house. They planted approximately two hundred trees by hand, some taken and transplanted from neighbouring land, but most came from the government tree nursery near Edmonton.

A daughter, **Dawn Marie**, was born to Lorne and Betty on September 21, 1965. Two years later, on June 25, 1967, another daughter, **Kimberly Ann**, was born.

Lorne farmed with his brother Gordon and father Clarence for the first years of his married life. (Later Lorne and Gordon took over the farm in a partnership.) With the three men on the farm, there was little for Betty to do. A number of times she did attempt to help by driving tractor during haying season. Lorne had a John Deere 60 at the time, which Betty drove while he stood on the stoneboat to stook the bales before unloading them. Things went fine when the swath was even and the ground level, but Lorne found himself jerked off the bale stooker many times when going up a hill or when a heavy swath was too much for the baler.

Feeling very incapable on the farm, Betty longed to go back to work. When a part-time job as typist in the Neerlandia School became available, Betty took on the job. She worked for twelve years in Neerlandia before she transferred to Barrhead, where she still works today.

Kim, Dawn, Betty, Lorne, 1982

Lorne has been actively involved in the Christian Farmers Federation, serving as provincial president for the past five years. He is also serving on the board of governors of The King's College and has been president of the Neerlandia local of the Christian Labour Association since it began sixteen years ago. Lorne is an enthusiastic backpacker, and has done some hiking in Jasper and Yoho National Parks.

Dawn now attends The King's College and Kim attends Edmonton Christian High School. Lorne and Betty thank the Lord for the many blessings of the past.

Betty Tuininga

SIDNEY AND SHIRLEY (JAECK) TUININGA

Sidney Tuininga lived in Neerlandia until he was in his teens. When he was in grade eleven he left school to go to work on his brother-in-law's potato farm in Winterburn. He soon decided that life on the potato farm was not for him, so he went to Edmonton where he worked for various construction companies.

While in Edmonton he met his future wife, Shirley Mildred Jaeck. Shirley had been born September 7, 1951, in Sudbury, Ontario, but had come to live with her grandmother in Westlock in 1961. After Sid and Shirley were married, they continued to live in Edmonton where Shirley was working for the Public Trustee and Sid was apprenticing to become a heavy-duty mechanic.

Then in May 1973, Sid was given the opportunity to farm with his family in Neerlandia. Sid and Shirley moved to the NW 30-61-2-5. Here they are raising a family of four daughters: Tracy Ann (March 6, 1971); Tania Elizabeth (February 14, 1974); Tiffany Lynn (November 26, 1976); and Sarah Jane (November 26, 1980).

Tiffany, Shirley, Tracy, Sid holding Sarah, Tania, 1983

The Tuininga partnership was dissolved in 1982. Sid and Shirley and girls then began farming independently. They operate a commercial egg barn and pullet barn and raise feeder cattle.

Sid has been actively involved in sports in the community. He received the County Volunteer Appreciation Award for community work in 1982. Shirley enjoys doing various crafts, sewing, and painting.

Sid Tuininga

CASE AND SHIRLEY (WIERENGA) VAN BEEK

Case Van Beek was born January 8, 1944, in Lunteren, Gelderland, the Netherlands. In the spring of 1948 his family immigrated to Canada, settling first in southern Alberta. Being immigrants, they were continually looking for ways to better themselves and thus moved and lived in various places in Alberta and B.C.

In 1961 the Van Beek family was living in Peers, Alberta, when Rev. Kruis, who had just been in Neerlandia on a classical appointment, informed Case's father that there was a job available there at Co Rowaan's. In the fall of 1961, Case packed his belongings into his 1952 Austin and left for Neerlandia. After he arrived at Rowaan's he was soon busy doing most of the farm work, because Co was suffering from arthritis.

This was the first time Case had ever lived in a Christian community and with people of the same cultural background. Since he was a single fellow and had no family here, several families opened their homes to him. He was surprised at the great number of young people and soon became acquainted with them. He enjoyed many activities with them and found good friends.

One thing that stands out in Case's mind is the Young People's meetings on Sunday evenings in the church basement. The boys and girls met separately for Bible discussion. After the meetings were over, they would all go to one person's place for coffee. However, before going, the girls would line up on either side of the stairs in the church basement — each one hoping that some young man would offer her a ride to where the coffee was being served. Case, not related to any of them, thought this was fantastic as he could have his pick of thirty girls.

Case quit working for Co Rowaan in the summer of 1962 and began working for Simon Tuininga. The job involved driving truck and taking care of the livestock, which included many hogs and cattle. In the summer of 1966, Clifford Tuininga and he bought the trucking business from Simon Tuininga and started a business of their own. In 1969 Clifford sold his share to Case, leaving Case sole owner of Neerlandia Transport.

In September 1966, Case married Shirley Wierenga, daughter of Joe and Grace Wierenga. Shirley had been born and raised in Neerlandia. After quitting school at the end of grade nine, she worked as a clerk at Neerlandia Co-op for three years. As part of her duties she pumped gas and helped unload the truck.

For the first seven years of their marriage Case and Shirley lived on the Case Ingwersen homestead, which was owned by Shirley's father. In June 1972 they bought the Michael farm (NE 4-62-3-5) from Jake Sturwold. After purchasing a house in Edmonton, they moved it onto a basement on their farm. Then, in the fall of 1973, they took up residence on their own property.

They were blessed with five children: **Irene May** (April 30, 1967), **Timothy Case** (October 18, 1968), **Michael Scott** (July 16, 1970), **Darcy Brett** (February 12, 1973), and **Teralee** (Grace) (March 28, 1977).

Back: Tim, Irene, Shirley, Case, Michael. Front: Teralee, Darcy, 1982

Raising their family was not without mishaps. In July 1972 Michael was run over by a riding lawn mower. He was rushed to Barrhead General Hospital by his mother and was in the operating room for four hours. He got over 200 [illegible] leg was broken, and he was in a body cast for two months. Case and Shirley were thankful to their Lord for Michael's complete recovery.

Eventually Case decided that he wanted to spend more time at home with his family, and so in July 1977, after many years of trucking, he sold his business to Claus Langeveld. Case and Shirley now have a mixed farming operation.

Through the years Case has returned the [illegible] Neerlandia. Case and Shirley's door is always open to the unexpected visitor. Many young single newcomers to Neerlandia have found a second home there.

Shirley Van Beek

MIKE AND HILDA (SCHOEMAKER) VANDERKEEMEL

Mike (Machiel) Vanderkeemel was born August 18, 1909, in Rotterdam, South Holland, the [illegible] the Holland Amerika Line (HAL). He secretly dreamed of going to America, and thought about it every time he brought an administrative list aboard a ship but, being an only son in a working family, he knew it would displease his mother. Mike married Hilda (Hillegonda) Schoemaker (February 25, 1908) of Vroomshoop, Overijssel, on August 24, 1939. By 1948 they had three children: Michael (Machiel, June 28, 1940), John (Hillegondus, September 16, 1941), and Barb (Teunia Barbera, July 11, 1947).

After the war Mike worked for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, but the ministry was cutting back and things did not look very good. It was at this time that Vanderkeemel decided to take the step of immigration. Because he was a city man with a business education rather than a farmer, he had trouble getting a visa. Nonetheless in April 1953 he obtained permission to immigrate and sailed on the *Ryndam*.

It was not unusual for the post-war immigrants to change jobs frequently as they tried to find a good position for themselves. Mike was no exception. He started out as an assistant caretaker of a Vocation School in Chatham, Ontario. He then worked in accounting in two different places in Ontario — Tilbury and London. Then he took one year of study at RBC in Grand Rapids.

It was while he was in Grand Rapids that Mike discovered from the *Calvinist Contact* that the Neerlandia Co-op was looking for a manager-bookkeeper. He applied for the position and in mid-summer 1960 was awakened by a long-distance call. Charles Baker, who was secretary of the Co-op at the time, told Mike that he had been chosen out of ten applicants and could begin working September 1, 1960.

By this time Barb was the only child still living at home. Mike writes, "We packed our belongings and headed for the West. I realized that by doing so my wife, my daughter, and myself became two hours younger."

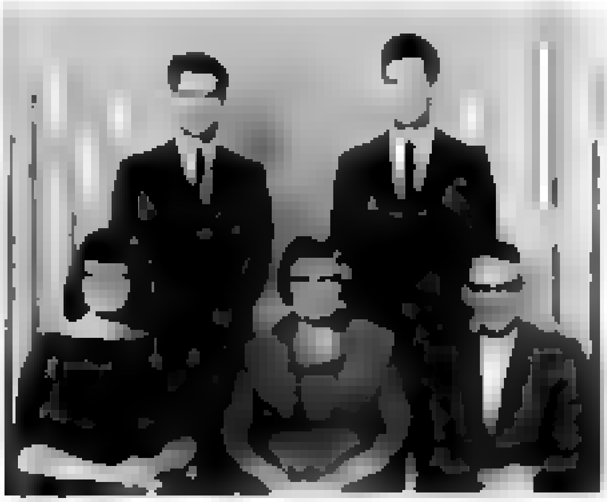
Life in Neerlandia proved to be vastly different than city life in the East. One of the first nights they were here, the Vanderkeemels were awakened by the howling of a coyote. They were also impressed many times by the Northern Lights. "It was just like it came down on the roof of our apartment above the store," says Mike. Another difference was to hear the farmers talk about their land in terms of sections rather than acres as they did in the east. Mike and Hilda enjoyed their apartment with its broad view overlooking the Neerlandia farms. Hilda enjoyed hosting tea parties for the elderly women in Neerlandia.

Not used to the Neerlandia roads in wintertime, many times Mike found himself and his car in the ditch when trying to visit his customers at nights. His customers, however, were [illegible] but at that time the palms of my hands were [illegible]

When Mike began working in the store, he [illegible] modities. Fortunately the staff was very co-operative and together they formed a team, serving the farming community of Neerlandia.

It was during Mike's stay that the Neerlandia Co-operative Association celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 1962. The store was closed for one day and festivities were held in the school gymnasium. Several men who had [illegible] vious forty years were present to share in the joy of the day. Mike remembers that the gathering was addressed by the first store manager, Case Ingwersen.

One day a salesman from the lumber company MacMillan Bloedel in Edmonton told Mike they were planning to clear the warehouse and were having a special clearance sale. At that time one of the farmers had plans to build a two-storey chicken coop and could use lots of plywood. Making use of the extraordinary low prices, the Co-op sold four carloads of plywood in the community during 1962-63. This had never happened before. For this reason gross sales, having been $180,000.00 a year previously, jumped to just about a quarter of a million in 1962.



The Five Carnations: John, Mike. Seated: Barbara, Hilda, Mike Sr. 1962

In 1963 the Vanderkeemels left Neerlandia. After working in Edson, Mike worked in London, Ontario, as taxation auditor for the Federal Government for almost ten years. He retired in 1974. He and Hada now live in Zurich, Ontario, and spend their winters in Florida.

Mike Vanderkeemel

WILLIAM AND KOBIE (MAST) VANDER LEEST

On a cold December night a 3½ pound baby girl was born into the Mast family. She was named Kobie (Coba) and put in a small box on the oven door of the wood stove to keep her warm. Kobie grew up in a large and lively family. She and her siblings got into plenty of mischief.

In the springtime the nearby creek would overflow and the only way to cross it would be over a few fallen logs. The children had been warned many times to be careful while crossing, but the Mast children considered it a challenge [illegible] on a log. Bill, Albert, and Kobie took the dive one crisp May morning after losing their balance while watching a dead pig floating in the creek. After dragging themselves out, they decided not to go home to change for fear of punishment from their parents, so they headed off to school. It was a good thing that it was a long walk to school so they had time to dry off while walking. For enjoyment, Kobie would go fishing with her dad and the boys. For lack of a fishing rod, they used a pitchfork.

Once, while gathering eggs, Kobie's mother noticed that the chickens were not producing as many eggs as they had been in the past. This caused her a bit of concern and she wondered what the reason could be. A few days later brother Carl found the little culprits and caught them red-handed. Bill, Albert, and Kobie were seen sucking the eggs right out of the shells. This might have ended [illegible] mother's worrying about the chickens, but not the kids' mischievous doings.

Living on a farm meant there was enough work for everyone. Kobie and her brothers often herded the cows down the road to bring them home for milking. On many occasions they got very thirsty and stopped and drank some milk fresh from the cow. If the cows were far away and the journey home and long, the children would hop on the cows and ride them home.

In 1948, Kobie went to Edmonton with a girlfriend, Gladys Krikke, to look for a job. Her first job was housecleaning. After a year she returned home and worked for a time in the Barrhead hospital, then returned to Edmonton. But in less than a week Kobie was asked to come home because her mother had fallen and broken a hip. After several months Kobie returned to Edmonton and went to work at the Aberhart Hospital as a ward aid. In 1953 she was asked to leave her employment, but this new job would be permanent. The wages she was offered were not very high, but it was a lifetime job. She was asked to become the wife of William (Bill) Vander Leest.

Bill had been born in Aduard, Groningen, the Netherlands, on September 3, 1921. His father owned a bicycle sales and repair shop. He left the Netherlands in the summer of 1950 aboard the boat Samaria. His sponsor was a Dutch irrigation farmer in southern Alberta. Bill worked there for three months.

He had known Henry Dieterman in the Netherlands and had trained to be a mechanic there. Stel and Dieterman, owners of Neerlandia Motors, asked Bill to come and work for them as mechanic. Bill was glad to have a job, but he stayed only one year, boarding with Della Baker. Then Bill moved to Edmonton where he worked as a mechanic.

On May 8, 1953, Kobie became Mrs. Vander Leest. What a day! It rained all day and night and during the reception the sewer backed up in the church basement where the party was being held. Everyone had to go home early.

Bill and Kobie set up their first home in Edmonton where their first son, **Paul**, was born February 18, 1954. In 1955 the Vander Leest family moved to Neerlandia and lived in the [illegible] Stel and Dieterman. Their second child, **Donna Elaine**, was born December 13, 1955. After one year they decided to move to Edmonton, where they raised their family of six. A truck accident claimed the life of their son Paul in 1981.

[illegible] on an acreage near Tofield. Bill is still employed as a mechanic in Edmonton.

Kobie Vander Leest

LEWIS AND FRANCES (KAMSTEEG) VANDERMEULEN

Lewis (Lieuwe, November 6, 1909) and Frances (Froukje, September 30, 1906) emigrated from Ryswyk, South Holland, the Netherlands, in 1948. With them came their family of four: **John** (Johannes, October 2, 1933), **Hennie** (Hendrika, May 28, 1936), **Agatha** (Gaatske, October 8, 1940), and **Daniel** (August 8, 1944). Lewis had a teaching position in the Neerlandia School.

The Vandermeulen children received some of their education in Neerlandia. Dan started grade one here and Agatha was put in the same grade. By 1952 Hennie had had her share of schooling and started working as house help or as outside help. At one time she worked for Pete Fisher, who taught her to drive tractor. Hennie wrote: "What a disaster that was. It was during harvest time that this took place. A quickie course five minutes: 1. Here is the starter. 2. Here is the clutch. 3. Here is the [illegible] the clutch real easy-like. I'm sure Pete can still feel his behind when he landed after sailing off the binder the first time we went out into the field. I even backed right onto the platform of the binder. Some people make very poor teachers and some people make even worse students."

Hennie later married John Mast of Neerlandia. In 1952 the Vandermeulens moved to Barrhead, where Lewis taught for one year. Frances worked in the laundry department at the St. Joseph's Hospital. After that, Lewis taught in various places, including Peace River. In 1972 the Vandermeulens retired to Barrhead. As one of his many hobbies, Lewis started growing orchids.

Hennie Mast

SY AND WIEA (VAN DER WOUDE) VANDER-MOLEN

Sy (Siebolt) Vander-Molen was born on March 2, 1937, in Zandeweer, Groningen, the Netherlands. He came to Canada in 1949 with his parents, two sisters and two brothers. They lived first in Fort Saskatchewan and later in Edmonton. After his schooling, Sy worked in a bank for four years and then in an automobile business for 17 years. During that time he took a business administration program which proved to be a valuable asset later for farming.

Wiea (Wietske) Van Der Woude was born on November 24, 1942, in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, and emigrated in 1954 with her parents, two sisters and one brother. They settled in Edmonton, where Sy and Wiea later met. They were married there on February 26, 1965. Four of their six children were born there: **Tracey** was born on May 8, 1966, **Sidney** on April 11, 1967, **Wendy** on April 21, 1968, and **Rodney** on October 3, 1971.

Sy and Wiea were intested in farming — not for its monetary rewards, but for the lifestyle and opportunity to do something on their own. Sy had been acquainted with the Neerlandia community since 1952, mainly through the Ike and Jenny Nanninga family. So in 1972 he purchased a farm (SE 30-62-3-5) in the Vega area which became the Vander-Molens' permanent home. Farming proved to be somewhat trying

Back: Sidney, Wendy, Tracey. Middle: Rodney, Sy, Wies. Front: Patty, Danna, 1983

for the first four years, but after the initiation period it gave them a comfortable living.

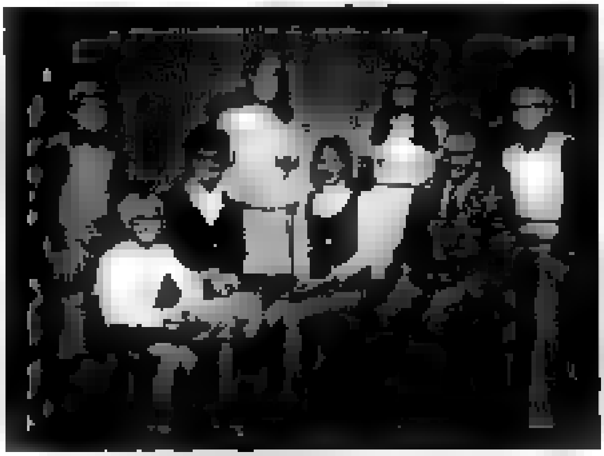
While in Neerlandia two more children were born to the Vander-Molens. **Patty Myra** was born on July 12, 1976, and **Danna Hope** on September 4, 1980. Sy serves actively in many areas of the poultry industry, which is the main enterprise of the Vander-Molen farm.

Sy Vander-Molen

GERRIT AND JOYCE (REITSMA) VAN DIJKEN

Gerrit van Dijken was born September 16, 1928, and spent his childhood years in Roodeschool, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was the fourth of eight children. In 1949-1950, Gerrit served with the Dutch Army in Indonesia. Upon his return to the Netherlands Gerrit saw very little opportunity for himself so when he saw an advertisement written by Herman Wierenga, Immigration Officer, in a local newspaper, he decided to write for information about Canada. In August 1951 Gerrit again boarded the *Volendam*, the same ship on which he had travelled to Indonesia. After ten days by boat and three days by train, Gerrit arrived in Edmonton, Alberta. He began work as a farmhand for the Andries Wierenga sons in Neerlandia. Later that same year, he went to work for Neerlandia Motors and was employed there until 1959. He lived with the Della Baker family from 1951-1954.

On May 6, 1955, Gerrit married Joyce Reitsma. They lived first in the hamlet and then at Anema's Corner in George Anema's vacant house. In 1958 they purchased the Jim Johnman farm (SW 14-61-3-5) and moved there.



Glenn, Rose Anne, Joyce, Grace, Linda, Shirley, Gerrit, Jack, 1974

Gerrit and Joyce have six children. Their oldest daughter, **Shirley Anne**, was born on March 17, 1956, and in 1975 married Tony Wierenga. On July 8, 1957, **Grace Karen** was born and in 1975 married Don Hiemstra.

Linda Joyce was born August 29, 1958, and in 1979 married Dennis West. They live in Barrhead and have one daughter. Linda is employed as a receptionist at the County of Barrhead office and Dennis is a truck driver for Kanhaul.

Their oldest son, **Jack Ronald**, was born December 7, 1960. From 1979 to 1981, Jack attended Lakeland College, Vermilion, and is a vocational agriculture graduate. In 1981 he received the Lakeland College Recreation Leadership award and also the Student of the Year award. Jack lives at home and is farming with his father.

On September 6, 1962, **Glenn Jerry** was born and on June 11, 1983 married Barbara Tiemstra. They have one daughter, **Jessica Louise** (December 27, 1983). Glenn and Barbara live on the SE 24-61-4-5. Glenn is employed as a driver with Graydon Trucking Ltd. and also farms with his father.

Glenn, Barb, Jessica, 1984

Their youngest daughter, **Rose Anne**, was born April 27, 1965, and is working in Grande Cache. Jack and Glenn have been actively involved with the hockey teams from Neerlandia. They have both played with the Neerlandia Flyers and the Neerlandia Knights.

Gerrit van Dijken

PETER AND KATHRYN (BRINK) VAN DRUNEN

Peter Van Drunen was born in Sleeuwijk, North Brabant, the Netherlands, on June 27, 1935, the son of a vegetable farmer. In 1951 he immigrated with his parents and four sisters to Holland, Michigan. Pete's first jobs were factory work, farm work, and trucking. One of these jobs proved to be rather significant. Providentially, while picking up hay in the fields for a farmer named Brink, Peter had opportunity to get to know Brink's daughter Kathryn. This developed into a lasting friendship, marriage and a life together. Kathryn was born in East Saugatuck, Michigan, on October 29, 1933. Pete and Kathryn were married June 27, 1957.

The next year on July 29, 1958, **Mary** was born, their first pride and joy. At this time they were living in Holland, Michigan, where they remained until their second child, **Leonard**, was born November 24, 1959. Then they moved to Grand Rapids where Pete, having realized his call into the gospel ministry, had begun his education at Calvin College and Seminary. By the time the seven years of schooling were over, two more children had been added to the family, **Lois**, born October 8, 1961, and **David**, born June 13, 1964.

With diploma earned and a call letter answered, the Van Drunens headed westward to Ocheyedan, Iowa, which was their home for the next four years. During this time **Ruth** was born (June 20, 1967).

Pete felt the Lord was soon going to call him to a new field, and when the phone call came from Neerlandia, he, realizing that they had been vacant for three-and-a-half years, felt he could not say "No". So the decision was not difficult, and they began packing.

Everyone talked about how cold it would be in Neerlandia and how far north it was, but on the initial move the Van Drunens did not experience it that way. The morning they left Iowa was one of the coldest mornings during the time they had lived there. They could hardly keep warm in their Checker three-seated car, even with blankets over them. But God was kind; the further north they went, the warmer it got, and they arrived in Neerlandia on a beautiful, sunny "warm" January day in 1970.

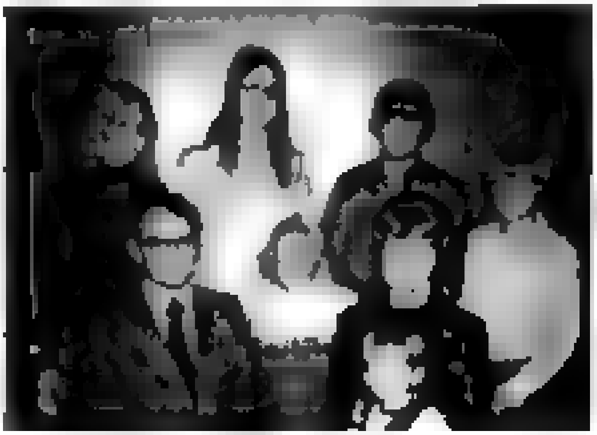
Upon arrival in the new pastorate there was the excitement, especially for kids, of quickly looking through the house which was to be their home. It proved to be the most wind-resistant house the Van Drunens have ever lived in. The yard was a joy to look at, and many hours of fun were had in it by the children and their village friends. The Van Drunens also remember looking at the bright Northern Lights — a treat not experienced everywhere. The children used to also look for UFO's and the bats that lived on the third storey of the parsonage and were always ready to entertain at night.

The Van Drunens remember

— the long summer days and the short winter days

- the skating rink which all the kids missed when they left — David more than anyone else
- the muddy road to Barrhead which was later paved
- the natural gas that could be lit with a match as it came out of the water faucet
- the propane gas lines that would freeze up on the worst day of the year and have to be thawed with a lit bale of straw

Yes, that is Neerlandia to them. They especially remember the things that were unusual to them, things that they never experienced before or afterwards any other place.



Back: Lois, Mary, Leonard, David. Front: Pete, Ruth, Kathryn, Mark, 1973

The Van Drunens recall Neerlandia made a bit of a fuss when Mark was born February 23, 1972. Pete and Kathryn were informed it had been many a year since a baby was born in the parsonage and everyone thought it was a special occasion. Mark, of course, was oblivious to all this ado.

Peter and Kathryn left Neerlandia for Peoria, Iowa, in 1973. While there, they adopted a little boy. In 1982 Pete and Kathryn accepted a call to a church in Delavan, Wisconsin. Kathryn has been involved in teaching special education part time in the Christian schools the last few years after obtaining a MA from Drake University.

Kathryn Van Drunen

ARIE AND JENNIE (STRYDHORST) VEENSTRA

Arie (Arend) Veenstra was born January 2, 1932, in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. He immigrated from there in 1951, arriving in Halifax on June 22. Arie did not see any of his family again until April 1972. He was sponsored by his maternal aunt Lucy Kippers and her husband, John Sr. He came to Canada with another aunt, Trien Post, who later returned to the Netherlands.

When they arrived in Edmonton there was no one at the train station to pick them up — a nice start in a strange country with a strange language! *Tante* Trien was concerned that no ride would be coming, so Arie found a cab to take her to Neerlandia. The cab driver had never heard of Neerlandia, and they had to go into the station to look it up on a map. Once *Tante* Trien was safely on the way their ride, John Kippers, showed up — he had gone to the wrong station.

Though Arie was born in a town, he was not a city boy at heart. In the Netherlands he had worked for farmers on days off or before and after work. After coming to Neerlandia he worked for several farmers by the month and also spent a few winters in lumber camps.

Arie married Jennie Strydhorst on December 22, 1953. They have five children: **Dorothy** (October 22, 1954), **Lambert** (September 24, 1955), **Angeline** (October 11, 1957), **Carolyn** (March 27, 1961), and **Henry** (August 12, 1966).

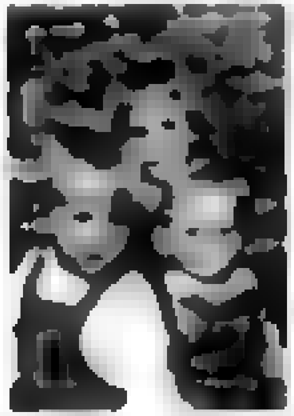
Angeline, Jennie holding Henry, Arie, Lambert, Carolyn, Dorothy, 1967

The first winter Arie and Jennie were married, Arie worked in Thachuk's lumber camp. After that they lived on the NW 16-62-3-5 where they kept chickens, hogs, and cows. The heating system in the uninsulated house consisted of a wood drum heater and a wood-and-coal range. On cold nights the water froze in the water pail; Arie and Jennie even moved their bed into the kitchen for a while during the winter. The Veenstras could not even afford a wheelbarrow, so Arie carried the manure out of the barn with a couple of old pails — a messy job!

After a few years Veenstras moved to Edmonton. Arie had worked making concrete manure pits in the Netherlands, and in Edmonton he again found work in the concrete business. In 1958 the family moved to Didsbury where they rented a dairy farm.

[illegible] came to Neerlandia and rented the SW 8-62-3-5 for two years. They kept a few cows and pigs there, and Arie worked out a lot of the time until they bought the SW 6-63-3-5 in Vega where they presently live. To help purchase the farm they borrowed money from the *Boerenleenbank* in the Netherlands. The Farm Credit Corporation would not lend Arie money for the purchase of one quarter, insisting that only one quarter was not a viable unit.

[illegible]



Robert, Daniel, Johnathan, [illegible]

All the girls are on their own and have moved away from Neerlandia. Lambert married **Anne-Marie Troost** (December 16, 1959) of Edmonton on November 10, 1978. They have three sons: **Daniel Bruce** (November 22, 1979), **Robert Alexander** (May 6, 1981), and **Johnathan James** (February 2, 1983). The family lives on the SW 34-62-3-5. Lambert owns Lambert's Concrete Finishing. Henry works with Arie on the farm.

Jennie Veenstra

ANDY AND FETTJE (VEENSTRA) VIERSEN

Both Andy (Andries) and Fettje hail from Friesland, the Netherlands: Andy was born on August 20, 1930, in Anjum — later his family moved to Wieringerwerf, on one of the first polders to have been constructed. Fettje was born on February 10, 1935, in Haulerwijk. Andy remembers when in 1945 the Germans bombed the dike that protected the Wieringer-Meer Polder, as they fled the oncoming Allied forces. This last, spiteful act by the Nazis resulted in almost instant flooding of many acres of farmland (the Viersen farm included), with the water up to 20 feet deep in some places.

[illegible] her parents and eight brothers and sisters. They spent ten days on the *Volendam* before they reached Canada. As the boat docked in Quebec harbour, immigration officials and oth- [illegible] who all spontaneously began singing their be- [illegible] Veenstras sang as well. They knew this was going to be a new beginning for them, yet they would not easily forget their history and confessions. From Quebec, the family travelled across Canada by train, arriving in Telkwa, British Columbia, two weeks after they had left the Netherlands. Fettje's father soon found work at a local lumber mill.

In August 1951, Andy Viersen arrived in Canada by plane and made a similar trek by train to Telkwa. Four years later, in 1955, Andy and Fettje were married; they made their home in the Bulkley Valley, where Andy operated a sawmill. Their first child, **Margaret**, arrived on July 11, 1956. Later, the Viersens moved to the town of Smithers. Six other children were born: **Joanne** on August 31, 1958; **Stanley** on September 1, 1959; **Monica** on October 15, 1960; and **Teresa** on June 30, 1962; **Sharon** on February 3, 1964; and **Yvonne** on August 8, 1966. Then in 1966 a tragic drowning accident claimed the life of Andy and Fettje's oldest daughter.

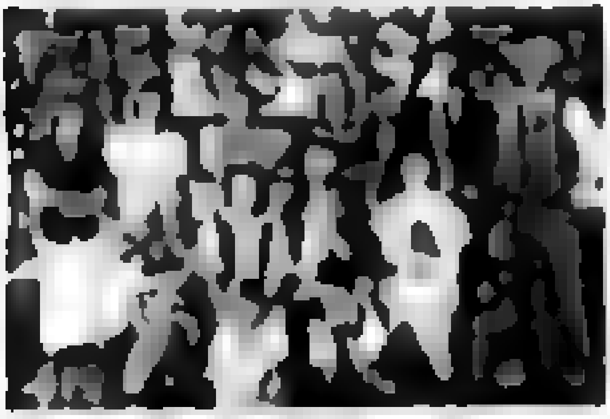
After Andy had worked many years for

lumber companies and in the construction business, the Viersens moved to a farm near Smithers. Andy and Fettje had come from farm families in the Netherlands, and wanted their children to enjoy the benefits of farm life. Three more children swelled the Viersen ranks: **Christina**, October 10, 1969; **Andrew**, March 21, 1971; and **Felicia**, May 5, 1974.

Farming in the Bulkley Valley was not easy, however; rocky soil, distance from markets, and long winters combined to make it a difficult task. Knowing of the Dutch farming community in Alberta called Neerlandia, Andy began thinking of moving there. In 1976 Andy paid a visit to Neerlandia. Things looked promising: the farmland looked good, there was a church close by, and the community was in the process of building a Reformed school. Although there were no mountains in Neerlandia and Andy thought the trees looked like shrubs, the Viersens decided to move to this small, but growing community.

With the help of Simon Tuininga, Andy purchased a farm from Frank Brunner (SE 36-61-3-5, NE 25-61-3-5). In the midst of all the preparations for their move, their eleventh child, **Lydia**, was born May 30, 1977. Six weeks later, they left for their new home.

At first Andy and the children missed the mountains, and sunny Alberta seemed to be just as wet as British Columbia had been. But before long they began to enjoy the landscape here: the herds of cattle in green pastures, the fields of growing or ripening grain, and the beautiful sunsets. Despite leaving behind family and friends in Smithers, Andy and Fettje have never regretted the move to Neerlandia. Here as well as in Smithers, they can hear the gospel preached every Sunday.



Back: Monica, Teresa, Christina, Yvonne, Dick Berendregt, Stanley, Nicole, Sharon, Fettje, Andy holding Lydia, Joanne holding Peter. Front: Felicia, Andrew, 1980

[illegible] families of their own. Joanne married **Dick Berendregt**; they now (1984) farm in Neerlandia (SE 30-61-3-5) with their children **Peter, Hester**, and **Calvin**. Monica married **Carl Osterhoff** and after briefly living in Neerlandia while working for Simon Tuininga, they moved to [illegible]'s oldest son, married **Irene Vander Burgt** [illegible] a mechanic at Stephani Motors in Barrhead.

Fettje Viersen

ALLAN AND ELAINE (DIONNE) VISSER

Allan Visser spent many hours at the hockey rink in his boyhood days. When he left school, he began apprenticing as a welder in his father's shop.

On October 2, 1971, Allan married Elaine Dionne. Elaine had been born in Lac La Biche on February 23, 1952, but she grew up in Barrhead where her father worked on road construction crews. After high school, she worked first as a waitress and later as a secretary in a real estate office. **Candace** Lynnette was born to the Vissers on March 21, 1972, and on November 14, 1974, a sister, **Nicole** Dawn, came to make their family complete.

The Vissers first lived in a trailer on Allan's father's yard, but then rented Joe Fisher's house on the NW 10-61-3-5. Allan is a self-employed welder and has his own welding truck and business, Neerlandia Welding. He also enjoys playing ball and hockey. Elaine has driven bus for the County of Barrhead since 1975. She enjoys oil painting and making gate signs. As a [illegible] spectators at hockey and ball games.

Elaine Visser

ED AND TENA (PETERS) VISSER

Ed Visser left the Netherlands with his parents and siblings in 1913 and arrive[illegible] Edmonton, where the family set up farming. Ed went to school for a number of years but being one of the oldest in a family of nine children, he had to help out on the family farm. He finally had to leave school to devote his time to the farm and family.

In the summer of 1926 Ed came to Neerlandia with his father and helped with the breaking on the homestead. That fall he left to seek employment and further his education in Lynden, Washington, where other members of the Visser family had settled. In 1927 Ed again returned to Neerlandia for a short time to recuperate from an injury to his spine caused by a fall off a barn roof on which he had been working. After working for a time on various farms in southern Alberta, he returned to the U.S.A. and took up residence there for several years.

While in the U.S.A., Ed took his high school education through night school, and then completed courses at Washington State College in gas engines and tractors and at Cleveland, Ohio, in arc welding. Ed became an American citizen and in April 1942 was inducted into the U.S. Army at Tacoma, Washington. His military job was that of construction foreman with Company A, 344 Engineers, and he attained the grade of Staff Sergeant.

Staff Sergeant Visser attended battles and campaigns in Algeria, French Morocco, Tunisia, Italy, southern France, Rhineland, and central Europe. He received several decorations and citations, among them the Arrowhead and the Purple Heart. He attended Fort Navy Diving School and after the war did deep sea salvage work for the Navy. On May 16, 1945, in Germany, he was wounded in action, and on September 24, 1945, he received honourable discharge from the service. In October 1946 Ed moved back to Neerlandia.

On December 27, 1946, Ed Visser and Tena Peters were united in marriage by a Justice of the Peace in Edmonton.

The Peters family had come to Neerlandia in 1928, and Tena's mother had passed away shortly after. When Tena was thirteen, it became necessary for her to quit school and work at home helping to care for the family and doing [illegible] home to work in Edmonton, Pibroch, and Westlock. She and her sister Della spent a winter and a summer cooking at the Garneau Mill northwest of Neerlandia.

Tena returned to help out at home for about three years before she met and married Ed. Ed and Tena took up permanent residence in Neerlandia and Ed started managing a garage for the Neerlandia Co-op. Their first son, **Allan Edward**, was born June 5, 1948.

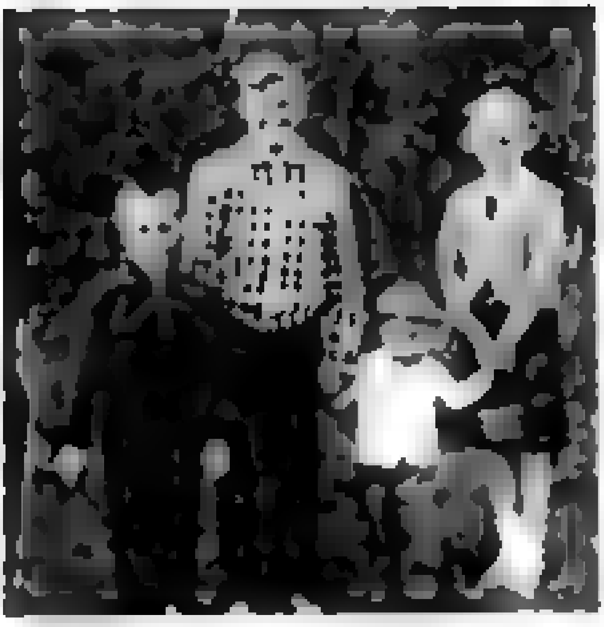
Ed decided to branch out on his own and in the fall of 1949 he and Tena moved from the corner into a small house on the Anne Elgersma yard. There Ed set up his own weld[illegible] home and then, in the spring of 1950, in his own shop. His 'welding shop' was a granary that he had borrowed from John Ingwersen and set up on Elgersmas' land near the main road.

In October 31, 1950, **Beverly Ann** was born, and in November that same year the family moved into their new home (a house purchased from Harvey Bentz of Mellowdale) on the SW 34-61-3-5. Soon Ed built a shop there and the business became known as Neerlandia Welding and Repair. In order to supplement his [illegible] for oil rigs in the area and helped in the construction of the Fort Assiniboine bridge.

In the garden, Allan, Tena, Beverly, 1953

Calvin John was born June 5, 1954, and on December 29, 1958, **Terry Edward** was born. The children attended school in Neerlandia and were involved in community activities. Ed served for some time as President of the local Parent Teachers Association.

The fifties and sixties were busy years for Ed and Tena. In the early 1950s Ed took several courses in mechanics and welding. He provided a number of services for the area: welding, blacksmithing, servicing, and mechanics. Ed was a dealer for various machinery companies and sold some of the first snowmobiles that came on the market. He was official grain tester for the community farmers for many years.



After church: Calvin, Allan, Terry, Beverly, [illegible]

Tena did her share by running to the shop with phone calls and making coffee, tea, and lunches, as well as raising her family. Neerlandia was a growing, thriving community and throughout the years the farmers supplied plenty of work.

Later Ed expanded his business into a limited company (Neerlandia Welding and Repairs Ltd.) [illegible] in business until he became ill with cancer in 1970. He passed away March 19, 1971.

Tena decided to remain in Neerlandia after Ed's passing, even as the children grew up and left home. She enjoys visiting with friends and [illegible] tea parties and gatherings with other women in the community.

On July 9, 1971, Beverly married Daryl Morrow of Barrhead. They and their three children have a farm east of Barrhead. Allan married Elaine Dionne in 1971. Calvin and Brenda Schmidt were married August 3, 1974. They live in Mellowdale, where they own and operate Visser's Welding Limited.

Terry and his wife, Karen Brummet, live on an acreage in Mellowdale, where they moved shortly after their marriage on July 24, 1982. Karen is a veterinary technician at the Long-Muir Clinic in Barrhead. Terry works for Visser's Welding Ltd. in Mellowdale, where he also has his own company, Terr Northern Steele.

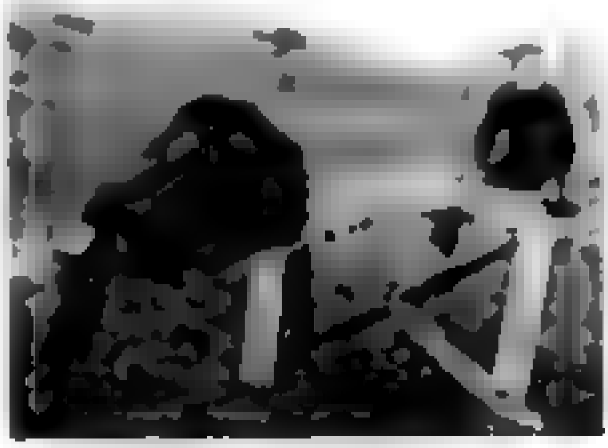
Tena is involved with the family, helping out and filling in wherever needed. Neerlandia is definitely a home to come back to for the children and grandchildren.

Bev Morrow

GEORGE AND FLORENCE (BAKER) VISSER

George and Florence were both born in 1935, during the tough years of the Depression. Though times were hard, neither experienced deprivation or felt they were disadvantaged. Later when the Second World War was being fought, they saw the headlines in the Winnipeg [illegible] the armies [illegible] fought for position. Finally the explosion of the [illegible] and they knew they would live in a world that had changed forever.

Many of George's childhood hours were spent with his dog Sport, digging out groundhogs and roaming together in the bush. His formal education was obtained in Neerlandia. In school, the good times included the "more important" things such as recess and noon hours and the games of baseball, [illegible] and hockey. Though formal education ended following grade nine, George continued self education by much reading and with several courses through correspondence school and seminars in Banff and Barrhead. George was interested in sports and played hockey in the old Barrhead rural hockey league. He also curled for several years.



George and his faithful companion, Sport

George farmed with his dad after he left school. He married Florence Baker on July 25, 1956, and they settled on the SE 3-62-3-5.

As the oldest child in a fatherless home, Florence had always felt a keen sense of responsibility for the family. She quit school after completing grade eleven. Her early work experience included a summer spent as housekeeper and nanny and an office job at a bank in Edmonton. She then worked at the Neerlandia Co-op, after promising Mr. Ashley that she would not leave to get married for at least two years.

Florence loves music and at an early age began to play the organ in church. She has also been a faithful supporter of the Neerlandia choir.

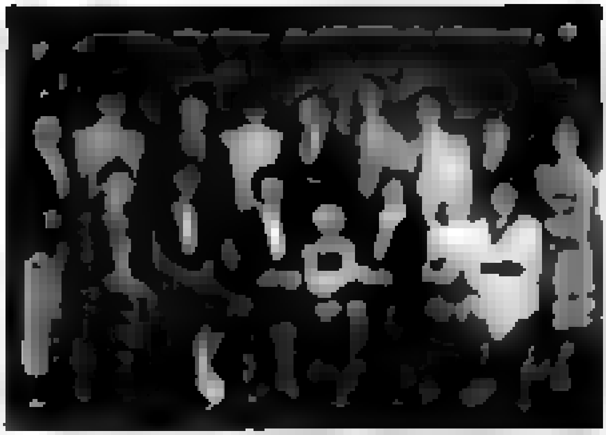
George and Florence have been blessed with eight children: **John** Bradley (May 14, [illegible]), **Debbie** (Deborah Mae, [illegible]), **Wayne** Vernon (January 4, 1960), **Rick** (Richard) Glen (August 16, 1961), **Kathy-Jo** (February 14, 1964), **David** George (July 17, 1965), **Scott** Raymond (July 3, 1969), and **Mark** Nelson (September [illegible]).

John and Wayne bought two quarters of land in Dapp in 1980. In March 1983, John began selling hog and barn equipment under the name [illegible] Sales and Services. He married **Joanne Vanden Brink** of Surrey, B.C., on July 19, 1984. Joanne was born July 10, 1958, in Rocky Mountain House. After she attended Dordt College and the U of A, she came to teach grade one at Neerlandia from 1981-1983.

After spending one semester at Dordt College, Debbie married Andrew Wierenga in 1978. Wayne graduated from Calvin College with a BA in philosophy. He married **Dagmar Seidl** on July 15, 1983, and is farming while Dagmar teaches special education in Barrhead. Dagmar was born October 23, 1960, in Lethbridge.

Rick is farming full-time. He married Beatrice Elgersma on April 7, 1984. Kathy went to NAIT after high school and is a laboratory and x-ray technician. David is attending The King's College.

All the boys are engaged in the farming operation, which includes hogs, laying hens, and grain. George first began farming with his dad, but now farms with his sons. In 1978 Vissers were selected the Farm Family of the Year for the Barrhead County. They won awards in 1982 and 1983 for being in the top twenty for hog gradings in Alberta.



Back: Mark, Wayne, John, Scott, George, Andy Wierenga, David, Rick, Kathy-Jo. Front: Dagmar, Joanne, Florence, An[illegible] Wierenga [illegible] Jennifer and [illegible] Wierenga, Beatrice. 1984.

George has been active in church and local community organizations and views his work on the elder board with particular satisfaction. He has not limited his time to the Neerlandia community, but has served as a member of the Alberta Egg and Fowl Marketing board and of the Alberta Agriculture Products Marketing Council. As an active member of the Progressive Conservative party, he spent two years as regional director for the provincial P.C. Party of Alberta.

The family is grateful for the opportunity to serve. They have experienced the blessing of God in their lives.

George Visser

NEIL AND WINNY (VAN ANDEL) VRIEND

One of nine children in the Vriend family, Neil (Cornelius) was born in Andijk, North Holland, the Netherlands, on June 5, 1932. His father grew flower bulbs and sold them for export, but he found the Dutch government too restrictive and wanted more freedom to achieve his ambitions. Thus, when Neil was seven years old, the Vriends emigrated, settling in Houston, British Columbia. After attending the local public school for nine years, Neil helped on his father's farm, and did some road building and logging for five years. Deciding then on a ministerial calling, he went to high school and then on to Calvin College.

Winny (Willemina) Van Andel was born in

Krommenie, North Holland, on July 7, 1937. Her father, being a minister, served various congregations in the *Gereformeerde Kerk* until 1954, when the Van Andels decided to emigrate. They settled first in New Westminster, B.C. Winny, then sixteen, enrolled in Calvin College's pre-med program, majoring in chemistry and biology. Her goal, already in the Netherlands, had been to be a doctor. Her mother had also had plans to become a doctor before she met Winny's father. Winny's plans also changed after she met Neil Vriend at Calvin. After graduating, she worked as a lab technician. Neil and Winny were married August 22, 1959. Neil graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1962 at the age of thirty, then served Christian Reformed congregations in Emo and Hamilton, Ontario, and in Lacombe, Alberta.

During this time, Neil and Winny were blessed with six children: **Anita** Willemine (born December 6, 1960), **Janice** Ruth (born February 22, 1962), **Christine** Teresa (born February 13, 1964), **Mark** David (born December 21, 1965), **Steven** James (born June 1, 1968), and **Derek** Norman (born November 4, 1971).

In 1974 the Vriends accepted a call from Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and their stay was to become the longest in their married life: for Winny the longest in her whole life.

It was 2:00 in the morning, on August 14, 1974, that the Vriends had their first impression of Neerlandia. It had been a long day. During the previous night Neil's brother-in-law had suddenly passed away in Lacombe, and the day's priorities had changed unexpectedly. The move to Neerlandia, however, had to be made. All possessions had been packed and were gone. What was their first impression? The silence. After living on or near a highway for nine years they could almost hear the silence. But the silence did not last long. The excitement of a new home — "Which will be my room?" — and finding groceries in the cupboards and casseroles in the freezer made everyone forget how tired and sleepy they were.

Judging by their sincere — though not always successful — efforts with animals of all kinds, the family did their best to fit into the farming community. They had a cow once who insisted on going back where she had come from — repeatedly. The turkeys thrived, but made a regular scraping of the church sidewalk necessary. The chickens raised for the freezer often died before they got there. The Vriends were best known, however, for their persistence in raising bantams. The bantams added a decorative touch to the centre and acted as a speed control as well. However, their ranks were decimated year after year by skunks, traffic, neighbourhood dogs, and even a hawk. Vriends' own dog, Blackie, was known by all. He barked a lot and kept everyone alert to anything that moved. Unfortunately, he cried wolf too often, and when vandals broke into the church one dark night, he only got scolded for being such a noisy dog. It was no surprise that, after services, the Sunday school children could be found in the Vriends' yard admiring the bunnies and chicks and seeing how close they dared get to Blackie on his leash.

Back: Anita, Chris, Janice. Front: Steve, Neil, Derek, Winnie, Mark. 1979

A minister's family is not supposed to grow roots, but roots grow whether one plans it or not. Anita, after spending two years at Dordt College and The King's College, married **Gary Veldhuisen**, a carpenter from Emo who settled in Neerlandia. A daughter, **Miriam** Joy, was born to Gary and Anita on August 7, 1982, and on May 15, 1984, a son, **Jordan** Neil, was born.

Vriends made the permanent agricultural connection when Janice, after taking two years of education courses at The King's College, married Garry Wierenga and so became part of the many-branched Wierengas of Neerlandia.

Anita, Gary, Miriam, 1982 Front, Jordan, 1984

The Vriend-Neerlandia link was further solidified when Neil fulfilled his lifelong dream of building a house. After 20 years of talking about loghouses, underground houses, envelope houses, and solar heated houses, he settled on a stackwall house heated by a Russian fireplace. It was built on a four-acre wooded lot, the site of the Messelink homestead and also of the first Neerlandia Co-op.

Neil is now (1984) in his tenth year of preaching, visiting, teaching, and building, and Winny is busy with Northern Light Singers (a young people's singing group she had organized [illegible]) as well as many other activities. Chris, Mark, Steven, and Derek are all at various stages of their schooling. Three chickens, one rabbit, two gerbils, and three goldfish all are doing well under Derek's care.

Winny Vriend

EVERT AND LINDA (VEENSTRA) VROON

Evert Vroon was born on March 11, 1943, in Middleburg, Zeeland, the Netherlands. In 1951 he immigrated to Taber, Alberta, with his parents. While attending Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., he met Linda Veenstra, whom he married in 1966. Linda was born in Hauwierwyk, Friesland, the Netherlands, on May 6, 1940. She immigrated to Telkwa, British Columbia, in 195[illegible]

Evert and Linda both taught in Abbotsford, British Columbia, and Edmonton, Alberta, before moving to Neerlandia in 1976, where Evert taught in Neerlandia Public School.

After renting a house for three years, the Vroons bought the SE 30-61-3-5 in 1979 and built a house there. To gain access to the property a new section of road had been constructed and because the summer was very wet, the truck moving their belongings got stuck several times enroute to the new house. When Evert received a position as principal in Kitchener, Ontario, the family moved there in 1981. The Vroons have five children: **David** (1969), **Danny** (1970), **Everett-John** (1973), **Justin** (1976), **Trisha** (1979).

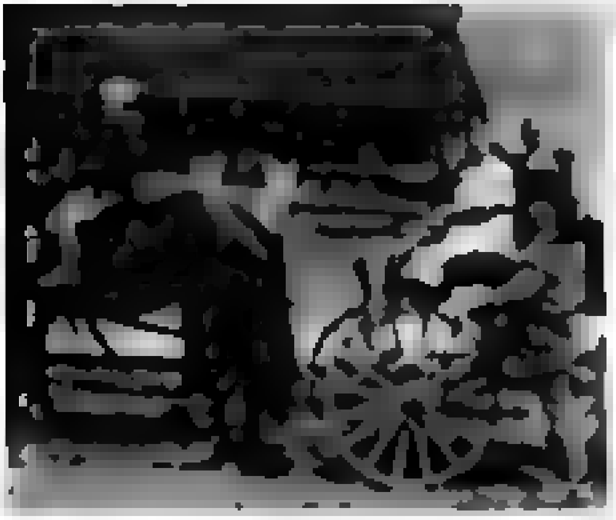
Linda Vroon

JAN AND ANJE (NORDEN) WERKMAN

Jan Werkman (May 14, 1902) and Anje Norden (July 28, 1904), of Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, were married June 5, 1930. In 1950 they immigrated to Canada with their ten children, six sons and four daughters ranging in age from one to nineteen. The trip across the ocean on the [illegible] was a very unpleasant fourteen days. The Werkmans arrived in Halifax and from there travelled by train to Alberta. Their destination was Neerlandia, where Anje's sister Egberdina Wierenga lived. When they arrived, however, they found that they would soon have to move on again due to lack of work in Neerlandia. They went south to the Lethbridge area, where they found work with sugar beet farmers. After two years they moved to Edmonton.

In 1954 Jan moved his family back to the Neerlandia area, where they bought the W½ 23-61-4-5. The only building on the farm was an old log barn, so a house was bought in Neerlandia and moved by a D8 Caterpillar tractor. It was a small old house, but it was liveable, and by this time only four of the children were still at home: **Jake** (May 7, 1942), **Reka** (June 9, 1943), **Peter** (November 28, 1945), and **Harry** (October 4, 1948).

Since money was scarce for the Werkmans, a vehicle was not a priority and their only means of transportation was horse and buggy. They only travelled when they had to go to the Co-op for groceries or to the Canadian Reformed Church on Sundays. They appreciated the Co-op because they could speak the familiar Dutch there. Once in a while, however, the



Jan and Anje on the wagon seat, 1934

horse-and buggy trip proved to be terribly [illegible] church when they became so cold that they decided to turn back. By the time they had travelled the five miles back they were so stiff with cold that it took a long time to warm up again.

[illegible] illness forced Jan to retire from farming. Peter and Harry continued farming until 1969 when Harry moved to Edmonton and Peter bought the farm. In 1971 Jan and Anje moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton where Anje still lives. Jan passed away December 3, 1981.

Peter married Carol Tuininga of Neerlandia in 1970. Jake had moved to Edmonton in 1958 but in 1977 he moved to the Bloomsbury area where he and his wife Irene Vanderland, are farming with their four children. Reka moved to Edmonton in 1959. Harry married Freeda Vander Zyl. They and their five children live in Edmonton, where Harry works as a plumber.

Peter Werkman

PETE AND CAROL (TUININGA) WERKMAN

On June 19, 1970, Peter Werkman and Carol Tuininga took the big step into wedded bliss. They lived on the SW 36-61-4-5, which Pete had bought from his dad in 1968. They did some fixing to the old house, and the end result was a cute and cosy home.

Life was a lot of fun then. Carol even had to learn to drive the combine. Everything went fine until they had to combine a newly-broken field that still had some roots on it. That combine sure picked up those roots, it even picked up one the size of a fence post. This was a bit too much for Pete who hollered some not-too-positive words — as if she had done it on purpose! Carol, being a newlywed, felt like going straight home to Mom and Dad. But somehow things cooled down and Carol has been the one to run the combine ever since.

Five years and four youngsters later, their [illegible] and no plumbing facilities was rather crowded. So in 1975 — hog prices being good — Pete and [illegible] a new house [illegible] mostly by themselves. They enjoy their new home with all the space and the bathroom facilities.

Pete and Carol have a successful hog operation. In addition to the home quarter, they own the NW 23-61-4-5. Pete and Carol's family has increased to a grand total of seven children. They are **Jason** Dean (April 7, 1971); **Shawn** Patrick (February 26, 1972), **Melanie Rae** (March 23, 1974), **Wesley** Dale (November 13, 1975); **Krista** Leigh (October 13, 1978); **Russell** Grant (December 7, 1981); and **Darcy** Wade (May 3, 1983). Everyone is in good health, and Pete and Carol see that they are blessed in many ways.

Carol Werkman

EVERT AND HENRIETTA (KUIPER) WEVER

On March 19, 1952, **Evert** and **Henrietta** Wever moved to Neerlandia onto their own farm on the SE 15-62-3-5, fulfilling a dream that Evert had had since he was a child. The realization of the dream was a long time in coming. Born in Borger, Drenthe, the Netherlands, on December 9, 1913, Evert had been orphaned at an early age and raised by relatives. On November 20, 1939, he married Henrietta (Henderkien) Kuiper who had been born in the same village on October 19, 1912. Since he did not have the financial support he needed to begin farming in the Netherlands, Evert started a milk delivery business. The business grew and so did the Wever family: **Tina** (Harmtien) was born on May 4, 1940, **Henny** (Henderkien) on September 27, 1942, **Amy** (Harmien) on May 3, 1945, and **Egbert** on February 15, 1947.

After World War II, Canada opened its

doors to the Dutch. "Perhaps it would be possible to become a farmer in Canada", Evert thought. After much deliberation, the Wevers gave up their milk delivery business to join the flood of immigrants headed for Canada. On June 19, 1949, they left the Netherlands aboard the *Volendam* and arrived ten days later — June 29, 1949 — in Quebec City. A farmer near Winnipeg, Manitoba, had sponsored them and so the Wevers boarded a train for that city. In Winnipeg, however, they got off the train only to find that their sponsor had changed his mind and no longer wanted them. The immigration officials put them back on the train and sent them on to Edmonton, Alberta. There, to their great relief, Herman Wierenga met them with a list of farmers who would employ Dutch immigrants. The first place they lived and worked was in Vimy, Alberta. After eight months there, they moved to Linaria, Alberta, where they spent two years working for John Skarel.

Because the nearest Christian Reformed [illegible] membership papers were sent there. To enable [illegible] of the congregation took turns picking them up.

During these years, a friendship developed between Evert Wever and Ike Nanninga and Evert told Ike his dream of becoming a farmer. When the SE 15-3-62-5, then owned by John Paas, came up for sale, Ike helped Evert obtain the money to make the deal. Finally the Wevers were landowners; the dream was becoming reality. But moving onto the farm did not go as smoothly as in a dream. March 19, 1952, the day chosen for the move to the farm, was bitterly cold; the thermometer registered -42°F. Furthermore, there was so much snow that the east road to the farm was blocked at the John Kippers farm. This made it necessary to travel an additional six miles to get to the farm from the west. To top it all off, some of the children were sick with the measles. Once again the Nanningas helped out, with Jennie Nanninga looking after the children while Evert and Henrietta settled into their new house. That summer, on [illegible]

Henrietta had a hard time adjusting to life in Neerlandia. She missed electricity, running water, and, most of all, her family and friends. The snow and cold weather added to her difficulties. Because the house was not insulated, it

Back: Henrietta holding Bill, Evert, Fred. Front: Amy, Egbert, Henry, 1952

stayed warm only if the heater and the two stoves were constantly filled.

The quarter-section of land which Evert had purchased consisted of 40 cultivated acres, and 120 acres of bush which Evert cleared as he improved the land. Evert spent the first four winters working in James Thachuk's lumber camp, while Henrietta looked after the house, the children, and the livestock. The children all helped with the chores, which included feeding the pigs and milking seven cows. During [illegible] continued to offer their help and friendship.

Gradually Neerlandia became home to the Wevers. Henrietta, too, grew to like the community and to accept even the snow and the cold. All of the family worked hard to improve the farm and to make it profitable. As the children grew and finished school, they continued to contribute to the farm with their work and with income from other jobs. Then in May 1965 Evert and Henrietta sold the farm and bought a larger one near Barrhead. They had resided in the Neerlandia community for 13 years.

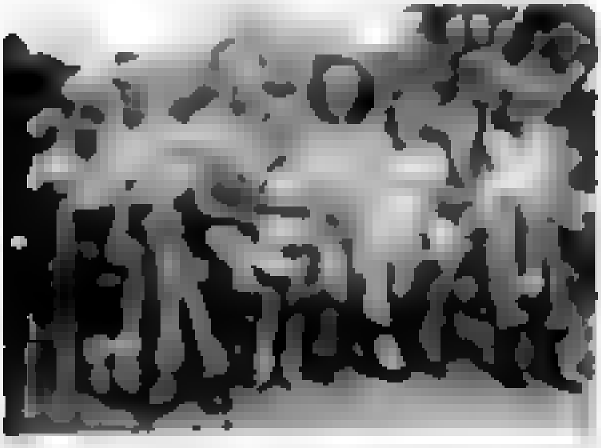
During the years in Canada, many changes [illegible] der Zouwen of Calgary. Hennie married Ken [illegible] now have four daughters. Amy is married [illegible] sons in Fort St. John, British Columbia. Bert obtained his mechanics license at NAIT in Edmonton. He owned and operated the Neerlandia garage during 1969 and 1970. He married Gail Brinton of Bloomsbury. They have three children and now reside in Red Deer, Alberta, where Bert is employed as an airline pilot and mechanic. Bil also attended NAIT, and became a journeyman baker. He is now manager of Barrhead Co-op Bakery. He married Kathy Stanhope and they have one son.

Evert Wever died of a heart attack in September 1983. His wife, Henrietta, resides in Barrhead, in a house they had purchased in [illegible]

The Wever family

GEORGE AND HILLIE (BONTKES) WIEGERS

On June 30, 1902, George (Geert) Wiegers was born in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands. He married Hillie (Hillechina) Bontkes, aged 24, on March 1, 1928. She had been born on December 11, 1904, also in Groningen. Together they owned and operated a furniture, drapery, and flooring store. They became anxious to find a new beginning when extremely high post-war taxes were forced upon them and they felt their children would have a better future in another country. They were encouraged to leave by Lammert Wierenga of Neerlandia, father-in-law to Hillie's sister, who visited them in 1947. Lammert eventually sponsored the family and promised George work on a farm in Neerlandia.



[illegible]

In August 1948 they left Holland aboard the *Kota Inten* with their six children, **Rulie** (Roelfina), aged 19; **Bob** (Wubbo), aged 13; **Liz** (Lieske), aged 10; **John** (Jan) Henry, aged 8; **Jenny** (Jantje) Johanna, aged 4; and **Ann** (Anneke), aged 2. After a tiring journey of two weeks, they finally arrived in Neerlandia. They were welcomed, and found beds and home-canned goods in their new home on Catherine Holwerda's farm. George worked for Catherine Holwerda, a widow. He worked on a threshing crew in the fall of 1948 and cut firewood in the winter. He found the work difficult, especially since he had suffered a badly broken leg in a motor cycle accident in February 1948; it still bothered him. Rulie did housework for John and Henny Kippers and for Cor and Sena Nan[illegible], when she nearly froze her legs while [illegible]

Because of a disagreement with Mrs. Holwerda, one Saturday night in October 1949 the Wiegers family packed their belongings and moved to the Herman Wierenga farm, the NE 22-61-3-5. While Hillie stayed there with the children, George went to Edmonton to find a job more to his liking. In early December 1949 the Wiegers family moved to Edmonton, where George was employed at Wm. Troock Furniture. Rulie, however, stayed in Neerlandia since it was only a couple of weeks until she was to be wed to Henry Wierenga.

Eventually, George and Hillie Wiegers retired in New Westminster, British Columbia. There George died of cancer on August 30, [illegible] October 29, 1980. Rulie and Henry Wierenga continue to live in Neerlandia. Jenny and Herman Stel live in Edmonton. Bob and Coby (Solomons) Wiegers, Liz and John Winkel, John and Ru (Van Eerden) Wiegers, and Ann and Henry Super all live in Surrey, British Columbia. Bob and John Wiegers own Champion Distributors flooring business there, and so follow in their father's footsteps.

Rulie Wierenga

HENRY AND RULIE (WIEGERS) WIERENGA

Henry Wierenga, born in Zuidhorn, Groningen, the Netherlands, immigrated to Canada with his parents, Andries and Hendrika, when he was six. Roelfina (Rulie) Wiegers was born in Groningen, the Netherlands on February 14, 1929. She moved to Neerlandia with her parents in 1948. Here Rulie met Henry, and they were married December 20, 1949. The wedding ceremony took place in the store hall since the church had burned down.

Henry and Rulie on their engagement day, 1948

In fifteen years of marriage, Henry and Rulie were blessed with nine children. **Andrew** Bernhard (September 28, 1950), **Hilda Ann** (August 27, 1951), **Hendreene** Gladys (March 1, 1953), **Jean** Georgina Louise (April 29, 1954), **Trixie** (Teresa) Joan (February 7, 1956), **Garry** (Gerhard) John (November 3, 1957), **Marion** Rose (July 23, 1960), **Wesley** Glen (July 11, 1962), and **Irene** Carolyn (June 28, 1964).

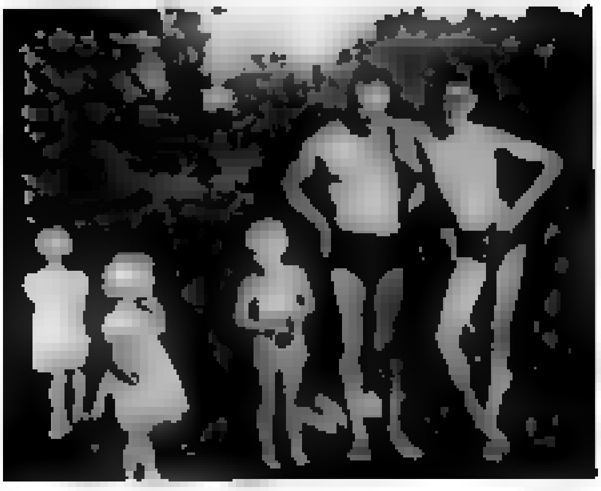
After their marriage, Henry and Rulie moved onto the farm that Henry's dad had bought from Tom Wilson. Henry owned two quarters of land, the N½ 22-61-3-5, and farmed with his brothers Martin and Joe. Each man owned his own land, but they had machinery together. At that time they worked all their land with a Minneapolis U. Henry added to his land base in the early 1970s when he bought half a quarter from Gilbert Baker (SW 22-61-3-5). Henry liked livestock and always kept cows and pigs on his yard. In 1952 he bought an old schoolhouse that stood south of the main Neerlandia School and used it for a chicken coop.

Rulie did not consider herself a farm wife in the sense of helping outside, but she kept busy inside. Rulie had taken three years of cooking and sewing courses in the Netherlands and was well prepared to take on the cooking responsibilities. Besides running a household, Rulie did quite a bit of custom sewing for ladies of the community. She sewed most of the clothes for her children, and her reputation as a seamstress grew through the years.

Besides all their chores, Henry and Rulie were both kept busy raising their family of nine children. All the children had very blonde hair, and whenever people saw Henry or Rulie, they expected to see a few "whiteheads" tagging along.

The Wierenga farm was situated on a hill overlooking a creek. The deep water concerned Henry and Rulie at first — especially the time they found two-year-old Andrew wandering by the creek — but the children all took to the water, and learned to swim at a very young age. Other children of the community also visited the old swimming holes in "Wierenga's creek." Birthday party wiener roasts were generally held down by the creek, and every Saturday morning the Wierenga kids, including those of Martin and Wilma Wierenga, would congregate by the creek and cook up a special recipe of pancakes.

With so many of the Wierenga activities associated with the creek, it did not take long for people to identify Henry Wierenga as "Henry by the Creek." To his family, however, "Henry in the Creek" was more appropriate. For quite often he would come up with a reason for going in the creek. He had either rescued a calf or cow on the other side, or he had slipped off a fallen tree, or had just gone for a dip on a hot day. Many times he would be seen coming home



"Henry by the Creek" by the creek, 1957. Hendrene, Jean, Hilda, Henry, John Wiegers

soaking wet and even, upon occasion, clad only in his underwear.

Henry and Rulie's "kids by the creek" turned out to be quite a bunch of rascals. When it came to playing tricks, they were always coming up with new ones. For awhile some of the younger ones would hide in the ditch holding onto a rope which extended across the road to the other ditch where it was attached to a sack filled with straw (simulating an animal). When a vehicle approached they would pull it across the road. This was usually done on Sunday nights after Young People's, in the hope of attracting the young people. This tactic often worked, but on one occasion it was a bit too successful: Ken Nanninga jumped out of his car, but in his haste to chase the culprits he had forgotten to put his car in park, and very nearly had to fish it out of the creek.

On January 21, 1959, in the evening, Rulie was cleaning some paint brushes in the house while Henry was at a Mens' Society Meeting. The fumes from the gas were ignited by the flame of a propane hot-water tank, and the fire quickly spread. Rulie grabbed the phone and hollered that there was a fire at Henry Wierenga's. Ed Visser was contacted at the Centre, and he quickly informed the men's meeting in church. Meanwhile Rulie dragged six sleeping children out of bed and hustled them out to the garage. When the men arrived, they pulled the flaming back porch off the house with the tractor, and quickly shovelled snow on the house in an attempt to put the fire out. In the end the porch was destroyed and the house badly damaged by smoke. Henry and Rulie were very grateful for all the support the community gave them at this time. Everyone helped to build a new house that spring — even Rev. Van Dijken, who did the wiring. In September of that year the Wierengas moved into their new house.

Standing: Garry, Hendrene, Hilda, Trixie, Andrew, Jean. Seated: Marion, Irene, Wesley, 1966

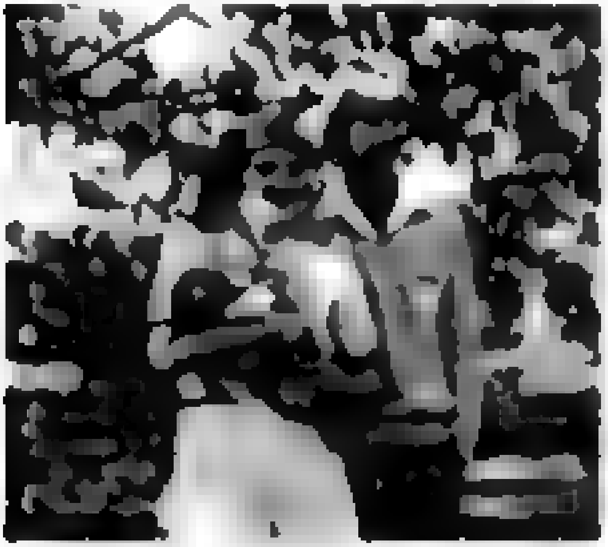
In 1970 Henry and Rulie's eldest daughter, Hilda, married Joe Fisher, and in 1971 Andrew left to go to Dordt College. The next year Hendrene married Joe's brother, Wayne. Jean married John Nanninga. Trixie married John's brother Larry. In 1976 Garry moved to B.C. to work for his uncles in the carpet business.

On February 10, 1978, Andrew married Debbie Visser. They rented a house on the same yard as her parents. They have three children: **Jennifer** Jodel, born November 20, 1978; **Andria** Durene, born January 13, 1980; and **Christopher** Henry, born October 19, 1982. In 1980 they bought one quarter from Lambert A. Wierenga (NE 26-61-3-5). Andrew's father also signed over one quarter to them, where they set up a new farmyard (NW 22-61-3-5). A house and barns for a farrow-to-finish hog operation were built.

Garry returned in 1979 and in 1980 Andrew, Garry, and Wesley formed a farm partnership, calling themselves Grand-West Farms. Later that year they purchased land in the Dapp area.

In 1980 Marion married Frank Rayment. On July 9, 1982, Garry married Janice Vreend

Adam Lee was born to them on August 29 1983. In 1983, Henry and Rulie built a new home south of the creek and sold the home place to Garry and Janice



Janice holding Adam, Garry, 1983.

Henry still keeps a few cattle. and in the wintertime keeps in shape by cutting wood for his stove in the new house. Rulie is kept busy with her sewing, and with teaching sewing courses in the winter. Wesley lives at home and, when not busy on the farm, works for Lambert Veenstra who owns a cement-finishing business. Irene lives in Edmonton and is employed at All-Alta. Credit Union, but likes to come home on weekends

Henry and Rulie can no longer be expected to be seen with their little "whiteheads" tagging along, but they enjoy watching all their grandchildren grow up around them. They are very thankful to the Lord for being so good to them over the years

Wierenga Family

HENRY AND LENA (RIBAR) WIERENGA

Henry William Wierenga, born and raised in Neerlandia, quit school when he reached grade eight He stayed home to help on the farm since his dad was often away well drilling In 1965 Henry moved the Wierenga's D7 cat to High Prairie and did clearing and breaking for farmers there. He also spent some of his winters working in the bush In the winter of 1966 he again moved to High Prairie [illegible] that time working as a mechanic and later as shop foreman.

This is when Lena Ribar first met him — in the coin laundry. At that time Lena was working in the office at the local Macleod store. She was born July 31, 1947, and has five brothers She had grown up in a two-room log house on a farm at [illegible]. They had no electrical power, phones, or running water. When she graduated from grade twelve she went to work in High Prairie

On August 30, 1968. Lena married Henry That fall Henry's dad persuaded them to move to Neerlandia and help out on the farm. Neither Henry nor Lena enjoyed living in town, so in November of 1968 they moved to Neerlandia. Lena wrote, "I'll never forget that day, as I felt very sad moving to a strange community and leaving my family and numerous friends."

Henry and Lena rented a house one-half mile north of Neerlandia and lived there for about four years. There was no indoor plumbing but at least she had running water The first winter the mice did not realize that they no longer owned the house In the evenings Henry and Lena would sit and read, and the mice would run around the room playing tag.

The first year was very lonely for Lena. Henry left early in the morning to go to the farm and did not return until late at night. Lena found it difficult to make friends in the community The only break in her long days was the time when Henry's dad would drop in to say hello One day she received two kittens. one of which she kept in the house Since she had no other company. she and the cat became quite attached to each other

Lena's life became less lonely when she began to work at the Neerlandia Co-op in 1970 She worked there for three years and quit shortly before her first child, **Doreen** Hilda, was born October 24, 1973 In 1973 they moved into a small house on the yard by Henry's parents. In 1974 they bought a house from [illegible] Krikke and moved it to the farm. They were in the process of moving into the house when Lena left for the hospital to have their second baby, **Clarence** Henry, born October 6, 1974

In 1977 Henry and Lena decided to replace the sand floor in the basement with a cement floor They built some temporary shelves, suspended from the ceiling, to hold such things as canning jars and eggs while the floor was being poured. Lena did not trust the arrangement but she was assured that it was safe enough. At about 4:00 a.m. the next morning the Wierengas were awakened by a big crash followed by a tinkle, tinkle. Henry said, "Don't even bother to look. I know what that was." To this day there are about one hundred dozen eggs under the Wierenga's basement floor. Fortunately, Lena's fruit jars did not break.

Back: Bryan, Henry, Lena. Front: Clarence, Doreen, 1980.

In August 1975 Henry's dad passed away. This made a big difference to both Henry and Lena, but especially to Lena because he was both a father and a friend to her. Henry and Lena's third child, **Bryan** Ewald, was born August 26, 1978.

In addition to farming Henry does some custom breaking. He is also active in the North Central Association for the Mentally Handicapped and has served as both a board member and volunteer worker.

Lena Wierenga

JOE AND HILDA (PETERS) WIERENGA

Joe A. Wierenga, son of Andries, had lived in Neerlandia for fifteen years when he was drafted into the army in 1943. After serving for three years he was discharged, and returned to Neerlandia to farm with his parents. On November 9, 1948, Joe married Hilda Peters. They went to live on the NE 9-61-3-5, which Joe had bought from Andrew Heberling.

Joe and Hilda have four children. Their first son, **Tony** (Anthony), was born June 13, 1950. He married Shirley van Dijken on March 22, 1975. At first they lived in Barrhead but in 1977 they moved to the Shoal Creek area, where they farm. They have three children: **Shane** Anthony (March 23, 1976), **Charlene** Joy (August 20, 1978), and **Cynthia** Leanne (June 12, 1980). Shirley writes the "Neerlandia Notes" for the *Barrhead Leader*.

Shane, Tony, Charlene, Shirley, Cynthia, 1983.

John, Joe and Hilda's second son, was born May 17, 1953. He and his wife, Carol, live in Edmonton where John is employed by Spiess Construction of Calgary.

Joe and Hilda's only daughter, **Elaine**, was born December 3, 1958. On February 12, 1977 she married Fred Rau. They live with their two daughters in Bloomsbury. Fred is a carpenter and Elaine works at Four Seasons Nursery.

Robert, the youngest son, was born May 30, 1962. He farms with his father.

Hilda Wierenga

JOE AND GRACE (TUININGA) WIERENGA

Joe Wierenga married Grace Tuininga on March 19, 1947, and they came to live on the SW 9-62-3-5. They did not own a car, so were driven home on their wedding night in a Model A Ford by Joe's brother Lambert.

The first three years Joe and Grace travelled with horse and buggy or sleigh. They had received two wedding gifts of twenty dollars each and with the money Joe bought a buggy at a farm auction in Mellowdale. At the sale Joe overheard someone say, "That fellow must have school children who will take the buggy to school."

"Little did they know," said Grace, "that that was our only means of transportation."

The Wierenga home had been built by Jerry Reitsma. The Reitsma family lived in it only a short time and then sold it to John Molodowich. John had lived in it with his family for a short while and sold it to Joe for $3200.00. The price included the coal furnace. Although Joe and Grace had to borrow money to pay for it, they felt rich. One big problem facing them however, was to move the house to their quarter. It had a full cement basement which had to be taken apart. Joe spent many hours with a sledge hammer, cracking the cement. Then the house was jacked up and put on spruce skids and it was ready to move. Sam Howey owned a D 8 Caterpillar tractor and without any difficulty moved it for twenty-five dollars.

Then the house stood on spruce props over the hole which would be the basement. Joe had boarded it up, but the cement had not been poured. Joe and Grace set up the furnace be- [illegible] middle of April, however, the spring thaw [illegible] Early one morning, they heard a bang against the furnace. When they investigated they found a muskrat swimming in the basement. Now and then it would bang into the furnace.

The first summer the Wierengas had only a shallow well which had been hand-dug by Joe Holwerda. It had not been used for several years. Mice and frogs would fall in, so they used this water only for washing. First they melted clean snow for drinking and later used clean rainwater. Their neighbour Bert Michael walked over one day and told them to get water from his well. They appreciated his offer, and from then on Joe would go over with the horse and buggy to fill a cream can with water for household use. The old well was still used for washing and some other things. That fall they had a well drilled. Grace was delighted with the new well. Not only was the water from the old well unfit to drink, but the well was also a long way from the house. One day Grace was hauling water for her wash. She had just reached the house with two pailfuls when her two dogs bounded up to greet her and knocked over both [illegible]

Springtime, when the birds were singing [illegible] since Joe and Grace's home was surrounded by bush. They could not believe the great chorus [illegible] heard above the others. Grace wrote: "That spring Joe was clearing some bush away and I would bring lunch. There again we were delighted to see the nests of blackbirds and ground sparrows on the ground. They had [illegible] one bit worried about us intruding on their privacy. We thought there couldn't be any place more beautiful than living near Baird Lake." Joe and Grace both love nature and were living on an ideal location to enjoy the birds. Baird Lake, which was quite close by, helped to attract birds of all kinds, especially the many different kinds of waterfowl.

The Wierengas tamed crows several times [illegible] One year Joe and Grace kept a crow in the [illegible] house over winter and were amazed to find that it could cackle by spring. It fooled them several times since its imitation was so well-done. The Wierengas were sorry to find the crow dead after it hit the power line during a storm.

[illegible]

The Wierengas also had a horned owl. It would sit on the porch railings and hoot. It was beautiful, but that summer several crows picked on it and killed it.

After obtaining a license from the wildlife officer, Joe and Grace started raising Canada geese. They had a suitable location for geese and at first the geese did very well. Joe and Grace thought there was nothing more majestic than the pairs of geese with their new goslings swimming in the pond. The wild geese heading north in the spring and south in the fall were attracted by the tame flock. Often fifty or more wild geese would land amongst the tame flock and the noise as they landed about 4:00 a.m. on a spring morning would wake the whole family. For some years all went well. But one year the skunks destroyed several nests and the magpies got at the eggs. The foxes and coyotes also took their share. Then one day a hunter from Ontario, not knowing the geese were tame, shot nine of them, leaving a grand total of one. Joe and Grace were upset, and so was the hunter when he found out what he had done. Joe told him that he might as well take the birds with him but that he had to pay for them. When the man pulled out his wallet Joe saw that if he paid for the geese he would have no money left for the rest of his holiday. Joe said that he had better keep the money and send a cheque after he got home. For a long time Joe and Grace thought they would never get the money, but eventually a cheque arrived in the mail. Nevertheless, after this loss of the geese Joe and Grace did not feel like starting again.

Since about 1975 the Wierengas have had whistling swans land on their place and stay for about a week at a time. The swans are beautiful to see and nice to listen to. A sandhill crane which the Wierengas had for several months was later taken to the Story Land Valley Zoo because they did not have a license to keep that kind of bird. Joe and Grace have also raised peacocks, guinea hens, and silkies (an exotic breed of chicken) but found that to have real success one must have proper room and fences for them. The peacocks would fly over the fence early in the morning and get into Grace's prized vegetable garden so they did not last very long on the Wierenga farm.

Joe and Grace also took a great interest in animals, but animals were not that easy to get. They had two baby coyotes for a few weeks, but the farm dog killed them. They also had two baby foxes but they did not do very well and were brought away. They have had a great variety of dogs, both purebred and mongrels. One was a St. Bernard, Barry, who served as a sleigh or cart dog. Joe made a harness for the dog and built a cart and a sleigh. The family enjoyed this dog and the boys, on occasion, went to the store with the dog and sleigh to get groceries. One time they stayed away for hours and Joe and Grace feared that perhaps other dogs had started a fight with theirs. But no, eventually the crew came home. The delay had been caused by many little boys in the hamlet who wanted rides on the sleigh. That dog died on the operating table at the veterinary clinic. Many tears were shed by the boys for faithful Barry.

God blessed Joe and Grace with six healthy children, and they are doubly blessed that they all married Christian partners. Their first child, **Shirley Darlene**, was born January 7, 1948. She married Case Van Beek.

[illegible]

The second child, **Henry Joseph**, was born April 28, 1950. After he quit school he stayed home to work on the farm. On June 30, 1973, he married Janice Toebes, who was a certified nurse's aide working in The University Hospital in Edmonton. They have two boys and one girl: **Eldon** Troy, born October 31, 1974; **Kent** Douglas, born January 10, 1977, and **Marlys** Joy, born October 14, 1980. They farm on the NE 33-61-3-5.

Clayton Bert, Joe and Grace's third child, was born May 14, 1953. Having a desire to further his education after high school he took two semesters at Dordt College. While at Dordt he met **Joy** (Johanna) Engelina **Siebring** (October 30, 1951) whom he married July 27, 1979. Joy, formerly of Mill Bay, B.C., taught school in St. Catharines, Ontario, moved to Edmonton to teach in a Christian school there, and then came to Neerlandia where she taught for two years. Joy and Clayton have three children: **Amanda** Gail, born May 6, 1980; **Julian** Clifford, born December 5, 1981, and **Caleb** Jay born January 20, 1984. They live in Vega on the SE 7-63-3-5.

Julian, Joy, Clayton holding Caleb, Amanda, 1984

The fourth Wierenga child, **Heather** Irene, was born November 23, 1955. She married Joe Baker. The family was completed with the birth of a pair of healthy twin boys, **Bruce** Norman and **Bradley** Douglas, born December 18, 1959. The birth of twins was a complete surprise and meant the Wierengas had to buy one more of everything.

Bruce married **Diane** Elizabeth **Dubbeldam** (February 19, 1957), formerly of Edmonton, on June 20, 1980. As a teenager Diane learned to weld, and worked in her dad's welding shop after school and during the summer holidays until she became a nurse. Bruce and Diane met at Rehoboth camp where they helped care for the mentally handicapped. Diane, a registered nurse, worked in The University and Royal Alexandra hospitals before she came to Neerlandia. She now works in Barrhead General Hospital. Bruce and Diane's son, **Benjamin** Lee, was born October 8, 1982. Bruce and Diane live in the Shoal Creek area on the SE 20-61-2-5.

Brad farms and has also spent several winters in the bush working for Jack Bozak (B & W Sawmill). He and his family presently live on the NW 3-62-3-5. Brad married Fern Nanninga on October 27, 1979. They have one son, **Daniel** Allen, born March 23, 1984. Fern worked in Neerlandia Co-op for several years before her marriage. Fern is as interested in hunting and trapping as Brad is. She helps with all aspects including setting traps and skinning the animals. Such is her dedication to the sport that she had allowed Brad to rest the gun on her shoulder to steady it for a good shot.

Bruce holding Benjamin, 1983. Inset: Diane, 1984.

Fern, Brad, 1983.

Daniel, 1984.

The Wierenga children have many happy memories of their life on the SW of 9. Their father often worked from dawn to dusk, but on Saturday evenings he quit working early and spent time with his family. The children remember this as a cosy time. There was something especially nice about having Dad in the house. Joe enjoyed the land and the crops. Many evenings were spent walking through

the fields with the boys. He often returned from the field with his flat, tweed cap full of duck or Hungarian partridge eggs to be placed under a bantam or some other broody hen.

Joe, a quiet, even-tempered man, is known and respected for his level-headed, thoughtful approach to problems. He is a man of few words — but they are well-chosen.

Grace worked just as hard as Joe, though her domain was the house and garden. A down-to-earth homemaker, she enjoyed her large garden and did a lot of canning and preserving. She loves baking bread, rendering lard, and making soap. She also took an active part in the farmwork, doing chores in the busy season. More outgoing than Joe, she sees the humour in almost every situation. She has a hearty laugh and relates humourous incidents with great gusto.

Through the years, dozens, maybe hundreds of people, have dropped in to have a cup of coffee, some of Grace's good homebaking, and an hour or two of conversation — serious as well as humourous. Both Joe and Grace are concerned members of the church and community in which they live.

Standing: Clayton, Shirley, Heather, Henry. Seated: Joe, Brad, Grace, Bruce

Joe and Grace have many wonderful memories of raising their family. There was never a dull moment. Their home was a beehive of activity. A set of twins, with a million ideas, made for many clotheslines full of clothes, much careful watching, and many a good laugh. Travelling was never an important thing in the Wierengas' lives. They enjoyed what they were doing and were thankful to be healthy. They have found Neerlandia a great place to live and raise a family and hope to spend their remaining years here.

Grace Wierenga

LAMBERT AND SOPHIE (ANEMA) WIERENGA

Lambert H. Wierenga married Sophie Anema on June 24, 1949, in a double wedding with Sophie's sister Frances and Jake Bol. The wedding took place upstairs in the Neerlandia Co-op, which was being used to hold services since the Christian Reformed Church burned down. Lambert and Sophie started farming with three milk cows, two horses, and a few pigs, one of which some pranksters tried unsuccessfully to catch and put in their bed on their wedding night.

Lambert, Sophie, 1949

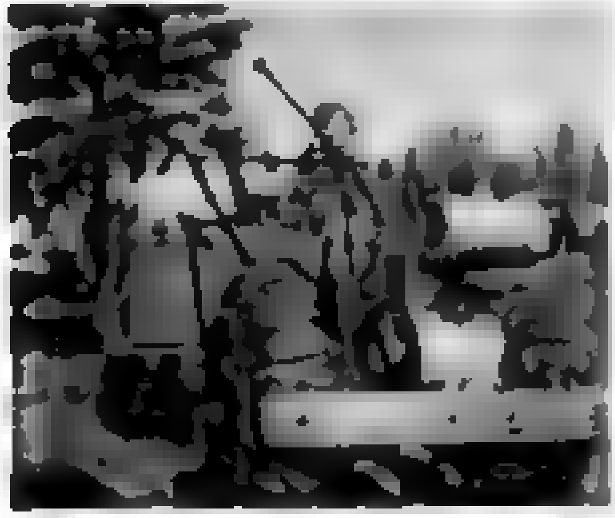
Lambert and Sophie began their married life on the SW 32-61-3-5, which Lambert had bought in 1949 from his dad. The farm had been cleared except for about twenty acres which Lambert cleared with his self-made brush piler in front of the tractor. At the same time he purchased the NW 29-61-3-5, which was comprised mostly of heavy bush, and about two years later Sophie applied for a homestead (NE

30-61-3-5). Hardships arose in the early years of their marriage with hail, frost, and wetness causing three crop failures within four years.

Snowfall in those days was so heavy that it was not unusual to be drifted in several times during the winter. This led Lambert and two of his neighbours to build a wooden snowplow. One winter in the early 50s, Lambert got caught in such a terrible snowstorm that he was forced to leave the car stranded on the road, buried to the roof in snow. Then, being unable to clear the road with his wooden snowplow, he crossed the fields to the Corner, where he met Albert Tiemstra with his steel V snowplow. Together with the two tractors and Albert's plow they opened up the highways, byways, and driveways of [illegible].

Lambert has always been inventive. At the age of sixteen he designed and built a windcharger which used a 12-volt generator. It supplied power for lights in the house and was used for charging batteries as well. He also made electric fencers from coils taken from old Model T Ford cars and Fordson tractors.

After he was married, Lambert spent many winter evenings in his garage, fixing and making things from scratch. Sometime after the snowstorm episode, he constructed his own steel V snowplow. Other projects he made through the years include a scooter, a front-end loader, a garden tractor and trailer, and a tractor cab. When it was too cold to work in the garage, whatever needed fixing was hauled into the house. Fortunately, the kitchen was large enough to contain the motors, motorbikes, snowmobile caboose, or whatever else managed to find its way in.


Harvey, Darlene on homemade tractor and trailer, [illegible]

Lambert and Sophie's first child, **Darlene** Faye, arrived April 23, 1950. After graduating from high school in 1968, she moved to Edmonton. She is presently head teller at The Bank of Commerce. On February 23, 1979, she married Derk Op den Dries. He works as a machinist, and they live in Sherwood Park.

The Wierenga's first son, **Harvey** George, was born January 9, 1953. Already at a very early age he enjoyed hunting ground squirrels and exploring nature. He still loves the outdoors to the extent that all of his hobbies revolve around nature, including outdoor photography, bush exploration, hunting, and trapping. Harvey chose to remain on the farm with his father, and together they raise hogs, beef cattle, and grain. On June 29, 1979, he married **Marge Neumann**. Marge, born December 14, 1960, grew up in Vega. They have been blessed with two children, **Trenton** Nathan (July 4, 1980) and **Teneale** Lynn (February 10, 1982).

Marge, Trenton, Teneale, Harvey, [illegible]

Lambert and Sophie's third child, **Rhonda** Mae, born November 28, 1955, loved being outdoors as well. When her brothers went on their little hunting expeditions, she was right there. After graduating from high school, she completed a hairdressing course at NAIT in 1982. She enjoys all sports, especially softball and basketball, and has been selected as Most Valuable Player and All-Star at a national level.

Next in the family came **Philip** John, born April 22, 1960. He was an adventurous little

fellow, always on the go. On September 4, 1982 he married Karen Los of Edmonton. Phil is a mechanic in Spruce Grove, and Karen is a hairdresser in Edmonton.

Last, but not least, Pearl Anne was born August 20, 1964. Also fascinated with nature, she spent many hours exploring the bush for plants, the pond for water life, and the manure pile for maggots to feed the pet crow (the latter interest soon faded). She was exceedingly fond of all the farm animals, especially the cats, bantams, and peacocks that she raised. Pearl received the Rutherford Scholarship and is presently using it to further her education in the nursing program at the U of A.

Pearl, Phil, Rhonda, 1966

All the Wierenga children were fond of animals. In the spring of 1969 they made plans to raise a pair of two-week-old sparrow hawks. The hawks became so tame that they would ride on the children's heads or shoulders, and fly to meet them as they came off the school bus. The little falcons were named Bonnie and Clyde and would come to a human perch when called. They had a great appetite for diced raw meat (which became a [illegible] and prepare). As the weather grew colder that fall, they started to roost in the barn loft at night. Since it was quite damp there, they died from a respiratory condition.

Then in 1971 the Wierengas decided to try raising a pet crow. It thrived well on bread [illegible] in milk [illegible] and an occasional side order of worms or maggots. The crow was named Inky and became a real pet. He would meet the family at the door every morning and come when called by name. Phil even taught it to ride on the handlebars of his bike, though it tottered back and forth to keep its balance. It would raid the strawberry patch while the family weeded the garden and often scared them by suddenly and silently landing on their backs. One morning Inky did not come when called and, after much searching, they found him dead under the power pole. He had met his untimely death by electrocution when he perched on the transformer.

Sophie always loved working outdoors, so she got to help with all the fun things like hauling grain, baling, doing chores, and milking the family cow. Her pride and joy was always her garden, its surplus frequently shared with friends and neighbours. A good supply of baked goods had to be kept on hand at all times to keep Lambert happy, even though she had less interest in housework than outdoor work. Modern conveniences, however, made the housework slightly more enjoyable. Hot and cold water at the turn of a tap was much appreciated after having had to carry water by pail from the well. Also, the electric clothes dryer sure was an improvement over hanging the clothes outside in the winter, hauling them in stiff as boards, and finally drying them on lines and racks in the house anyway.

Lambert has always had a great interest in the outdoors. His experience ranges from hunting squirrels during class time to trekking many a mile into the bush to get big game (and almost as many a mile back out without getting his game). Most of his children have followed in his footsteps by becoming fishermen and "Great White Hunters." Lambert served on the Neerlandia Sports committee and on the Christian Reformed Church building committee for a number of years. He was forced to overcome his shyness when he was often required to make grand appearances at the front of the church [illegible]. Lambert suffered three major heart attacks from 1981 to 1983, but being a strong man and with God's grace, he continues to carry out his daily activities.

Sophie Wierenga

You know you're a Neerlandian when

*you stay *by* a friend's house

*you pass peppermints in church

*you can tell the relationship between any of the Nanningas, Tuiningas, or Wierengas

*you can answer all the questions of the Bible category in quiz games — but none of the entertainment ones

*you're not surprised when Rev. Vriend forgets to have the offering taken during a church service

*you say *pantses* instead pants

*you *booch* animals instead of butchering them

*you are the same big as, the same old as, the same heavy as someone else — instead of the same size, the same age, and the same height

*you come at 8:15 p.m. to a meeting that starts at 8:00 p.m.

*you go acrosst the road to the neighbours

*you say, "Will youse guys come in for coffee?"

*you hit the ditch on the way to the store and the news gets there before you do

*you dial the wrong number, but talk for fifteen minutes anyway

*you say, "That sow, he had ten little pigs."

*in spite of all its faults, you still think Neerlandia is the best place in the world

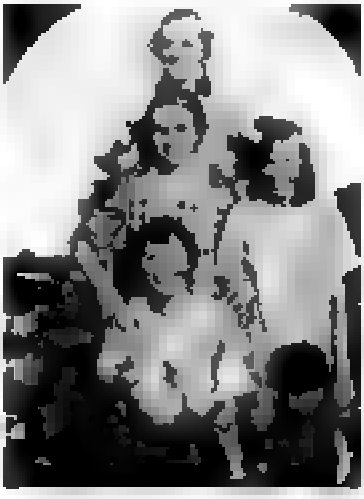
Neerlandians booched in pioneer days. They still booch today. Left: Jack Campbell, Peter Kampner Sr. with his grandson Jack Campbell. Right: Lambert A. Wierenga, Gerben Tamstra (squatting).

Friends and Neighbours

Rienk de Jager pumping water.

Johanna Oldegbers (centre) poses with her daughter Peterije Schoonekamp, her granddaughter Jennie Hennings, and her great-grandson Manny Hennings, 1936. (Jenny sewed the outfit she is wearing.)

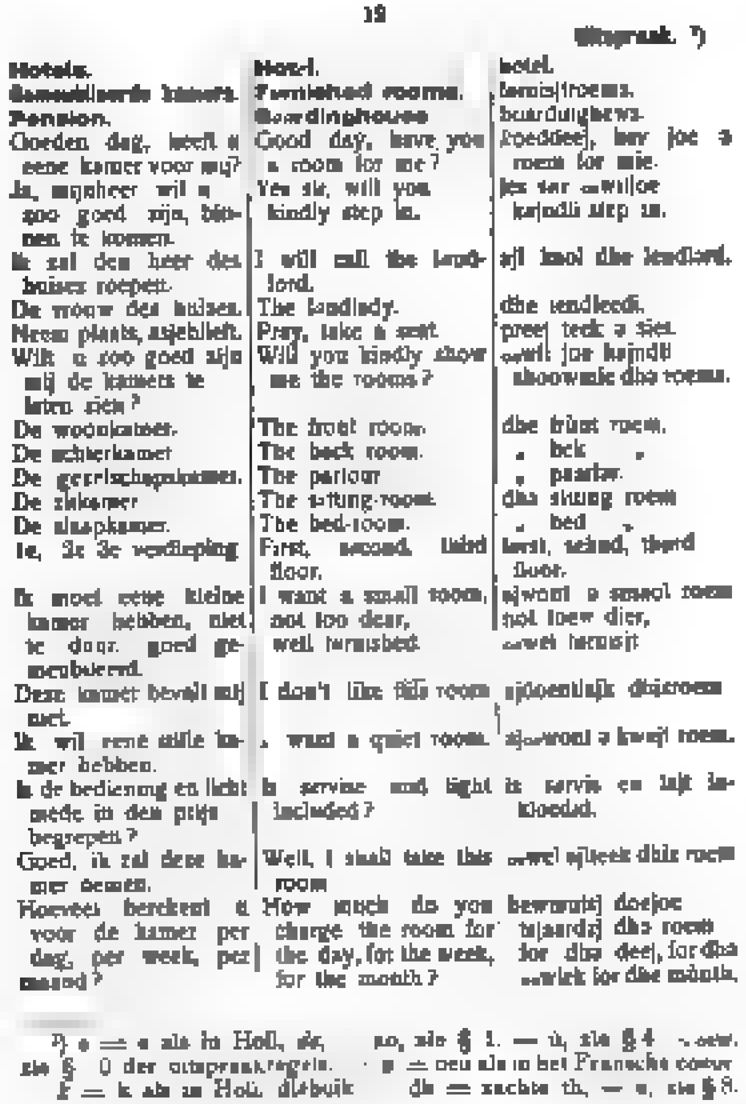
The Hendricks. They lived on the SE 21-52-3-5



Back: Sadie Tuininga. Centre: Annie, Bertha, Carrie Tuininga. Seated: Tena Terpsma. Front: Grace Tuininga, Harry Schelly, c. 1924

Albert Mast, son of Albert and Everdina, with one of the family dogs Sport, 1940s.

Coming to a New Land



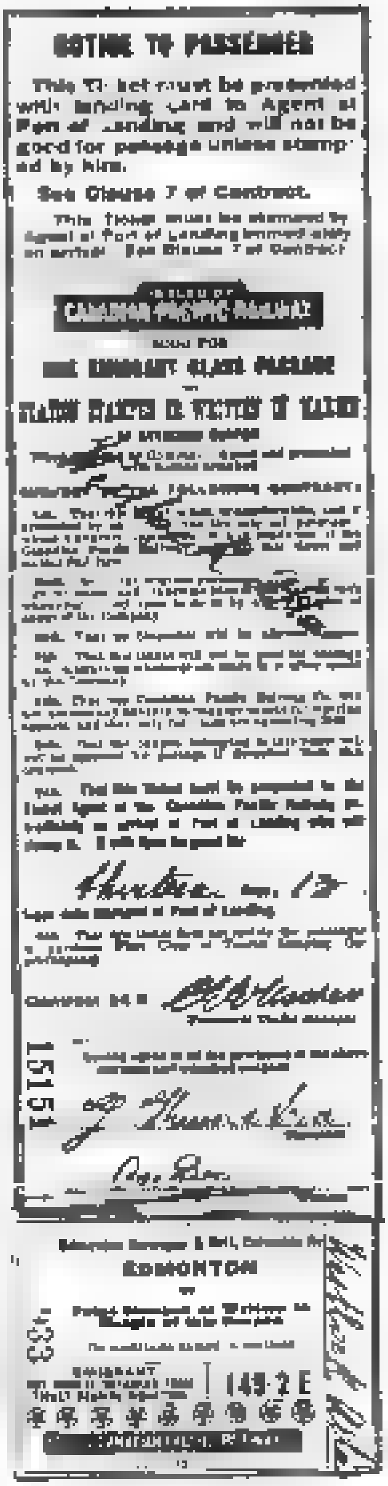
19

Uitspraak. *)

Hotels.	**Hotel.**	**hotel.**
Gemeubileerde kamers.	**Furnished rooms.**	fernisjtroems.
Pension.	**Boardinghouse**	boardingheus.
Goeden dag, heeft u eene kamer voor mij?	Good day, have you a room for me?	Goeddeej, hev joe a roem for mie.
Ja, mijnheer wil u zoo goed zijn, binnen te komen.	Yes sir, will you kindly step in.	Jes ser, willoe kajndli step in.
Ik zal den heer des huizes roepen.	I will call the landlord.	ajl kaol dhe landlord.
De vrouw des huizes.	The landlady.	dhe lendleedi.
Neem plaats, asjeblieft.	Pray, take a seat	preej teek a siet.
Wilt u zoo goed zijn mij de kamers te laten zien?	Will you kindly show me the rooms?	wil joe kajndli shoowmie dhe roems.
De voorkamer.	The front room.	dhe frunt roem.
De achterkamer	The back room.	„ bek „
De gezelschapskamer.	The parlour	„ paarler.
De zitkamer	The sitting-room.	dha siting roem
De slaapkamer.	The bed-room.	„ bed „
1e, 2e 3e verdieping	First, second, third floor.	ferst, sekend, therd floor.
Ik moet eene kleine kamer hebben, niet te duur, goed gemeubileerd.	I want a small room, not too dear, well furnished.	ajwont a smaol roem not toew dier, wel fernisjt
Deze kamer bevalt mij niet.	I don't like this room	ajdoentlajk dhisroem
Ik wil eene stille kamer hebben.	I want a quiet room.	ajwont a kwajt roem.
Is de bediening en licht mede in den prijs begrepen?	Is service and light included?	iz servis en lajt inkloeded.
Goed, ik zal deze kamer nemen.	Well, I shall take this room	wel ajteek dhis roem
Hoeveel berekent u voor de kamer per dag, per week, per maand?	How much do you charge the room for the day, for the week, for the month?	hewmutsj doejoe tsjaardzj dhe roem for dhe deej, for dhe wiek for dhe month.

*) e = e als in Holl. [illegible] zie § 1. — ŭ, zie § 4 [illegible] zie § 0 der uitspraakregels. [illegible] = eu als in het Fransche coeur k = k als in Holl. [illegible] dh = zachte th, — [illegible], zie § 8.

Many documents were needed for immigration. On far right a picture of Della Anema taken in South Dakota about 1909



NOTICE TO PASSENGER

This Ticket must be presented with landing card to Agent at Port of Landing and will not be good for passage unless stamped by him.

See Clause 7 of Contract.

This Ticket must be stamped by Agent at Port of Landing immediately on arrival. See Clause 7 of Contract.

ISSUED BY

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

GOOD FOR

ONE EMIGRANT CLASS PASSAGE

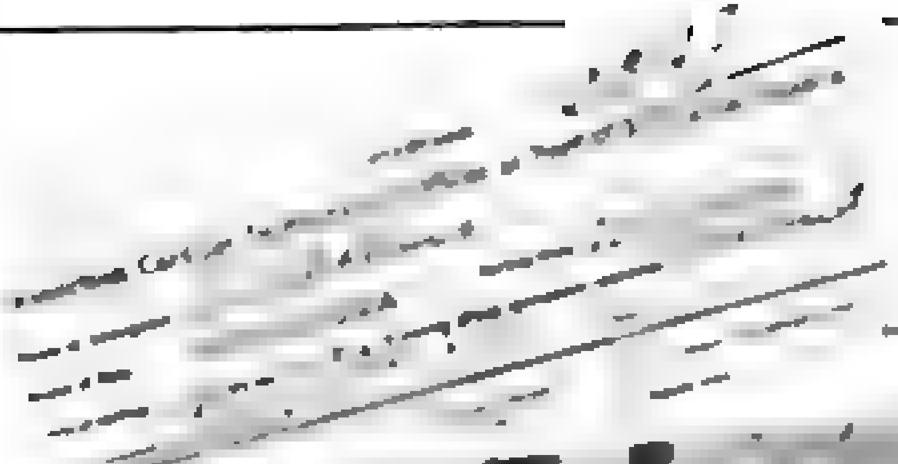
Passenger Traffic Manager

15151

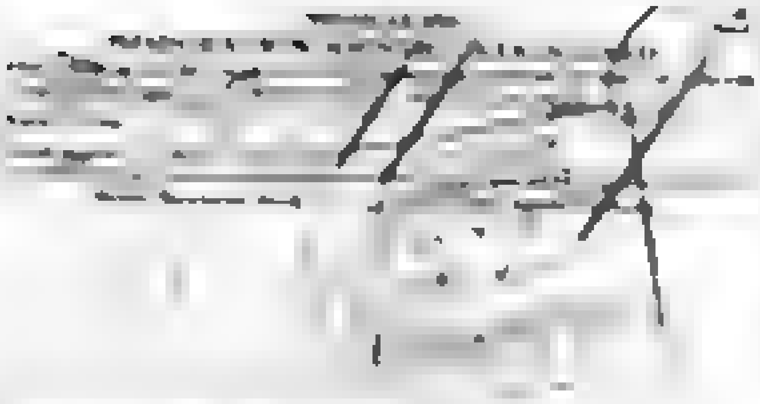
EDMONTON

EMIGRANT

149·2 E



FARM LABOUR SERVICE



Photos were taken outside because cameras had no flash. Back: Lucas, Lula, Pauline. Front: Jacob, Ralph, Margaret Sturwold. c. 1922

Anna Michael proudly holds her only child, Bert. 1917

Nelly van Dalen babysitting Annie Emmerzael at the picnic. c. 1917. How styles have changed!

All dressed up to have their picture taken. The Groothuis family: Wouter, Johanna holding Sena, Dick. 1921

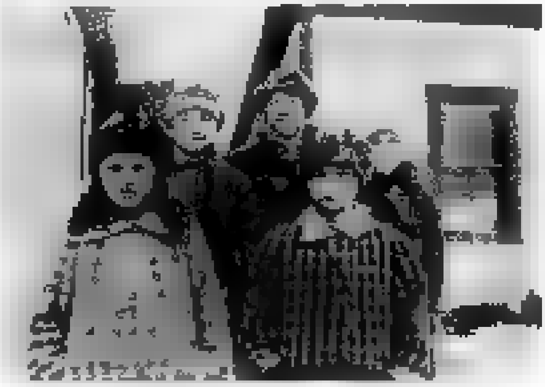
Family Snapshots

Both boys and girls wore dresses when they were babies. Here Rutie Sturwold holds one of her children, early 1920s

Three stalwart Kuipers sons: John, Henry, Gerrit

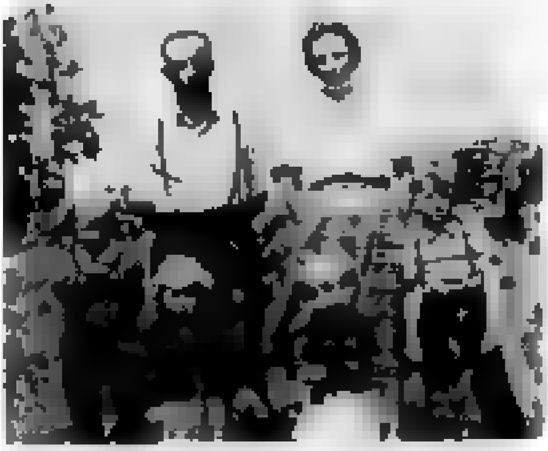
In 1926 Annie, Rutie, and Jenny Schoonekamp posed with their only brother, Albert

Soon after they arrived in Neerlandia, Bill Bouwman took this picture of his wife, Anne, and their three children Henry, Grace, and Ben. What a big smile, Ben!

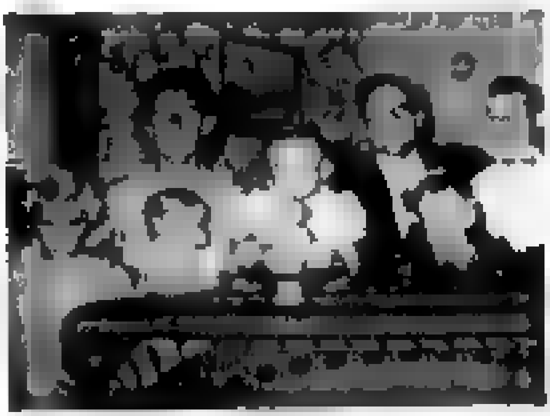


On the way to catechism: Jenny and Andrew Wierenga, Bertha Wierenga, Dena Huisink, in Edmonton, c. 1930.

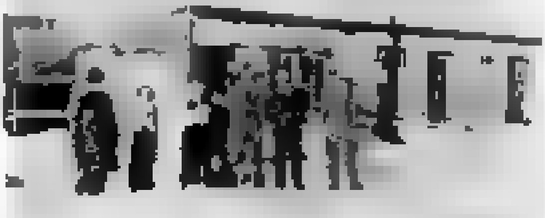
After the War was Over



Dick and Corrie Froma with their children: Martha, Emma, Rinie, and Jerry at a church picnic in 1954

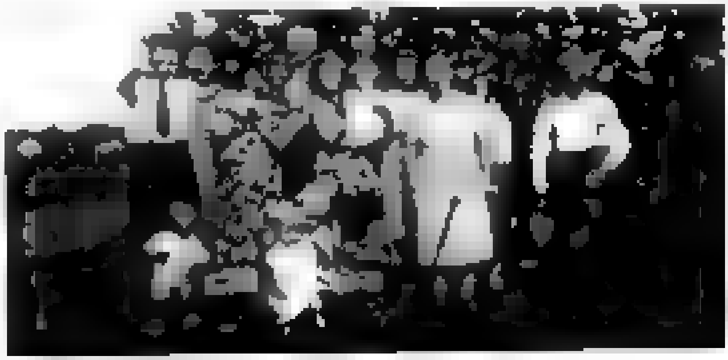


Bart and Jean Vander Wal came to Neerlandia in 1955. Bart worked in the Co-op until they moved to California in 1960



Some immigrant families lived in this house, which belonged to Catherine Holwerda

The immigrants had to rely on horsepower to get to church. Henk Nieve and his parents ready to set out



On Sundays the immigrants were invited over for a visit. The Vander Vaart and Boschma families of Barrhead are visiting the Albert Mast family. Back: Jikke and Tamme Boschma, John Kroeze, Dirk and Albertje Vander Vaart, Alice Mast, Annie Piers, Everdina, Bill, Joe, and Albert Mast Sr. Front: Little immigrants with wagon

THIS IS NEERLANDIA

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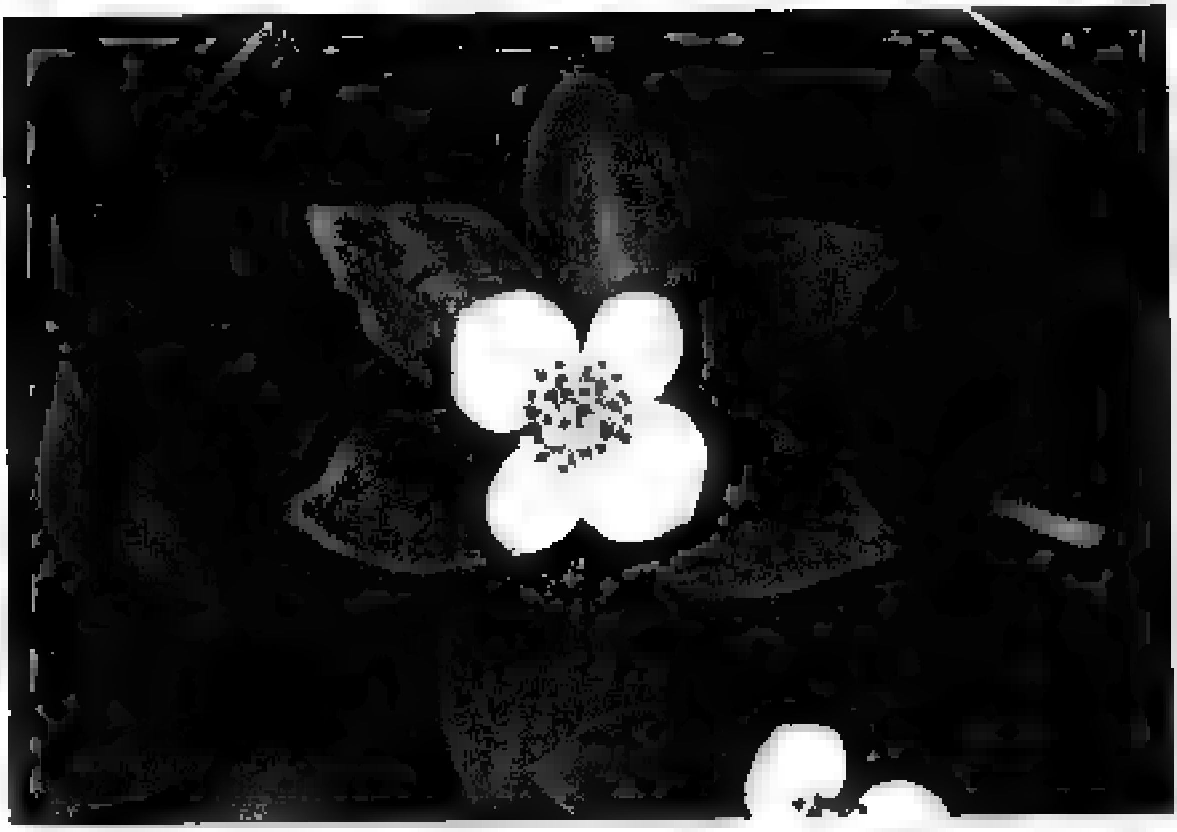

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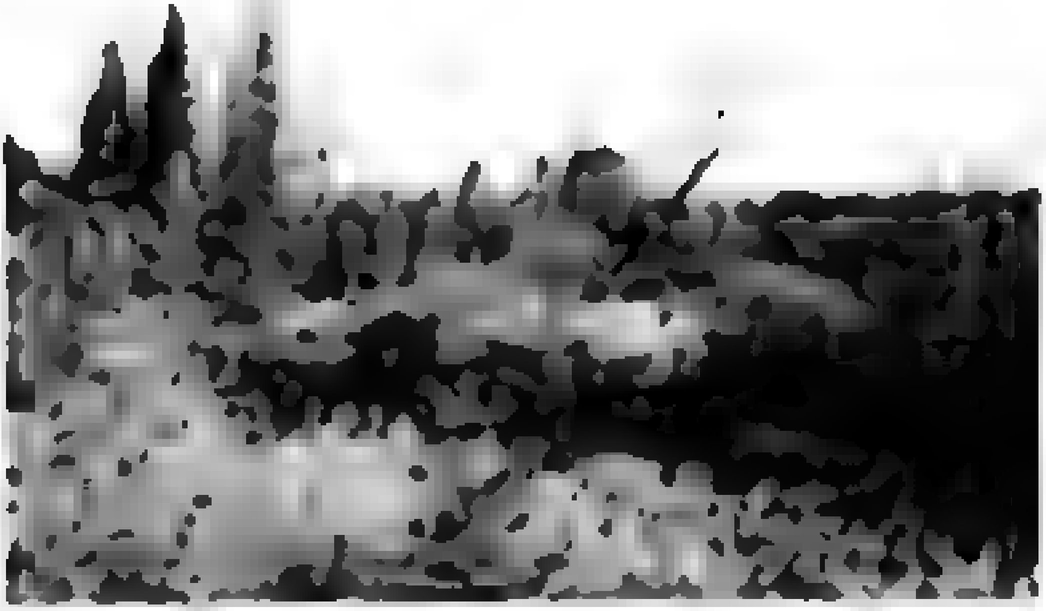

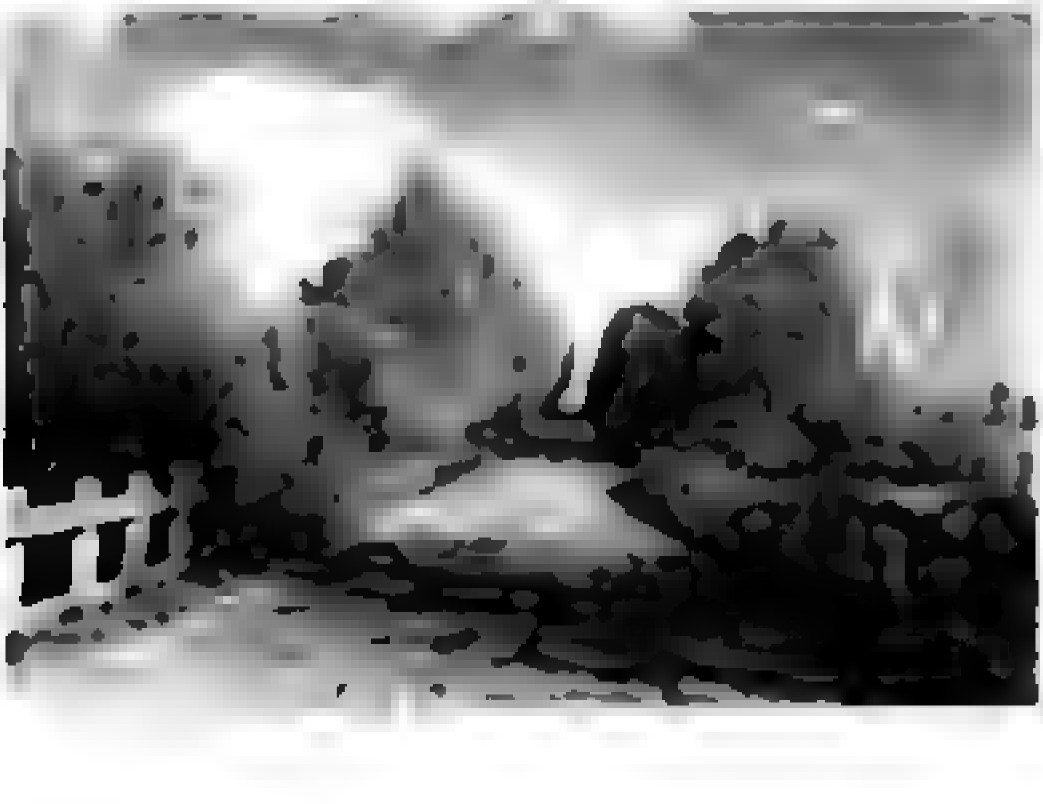

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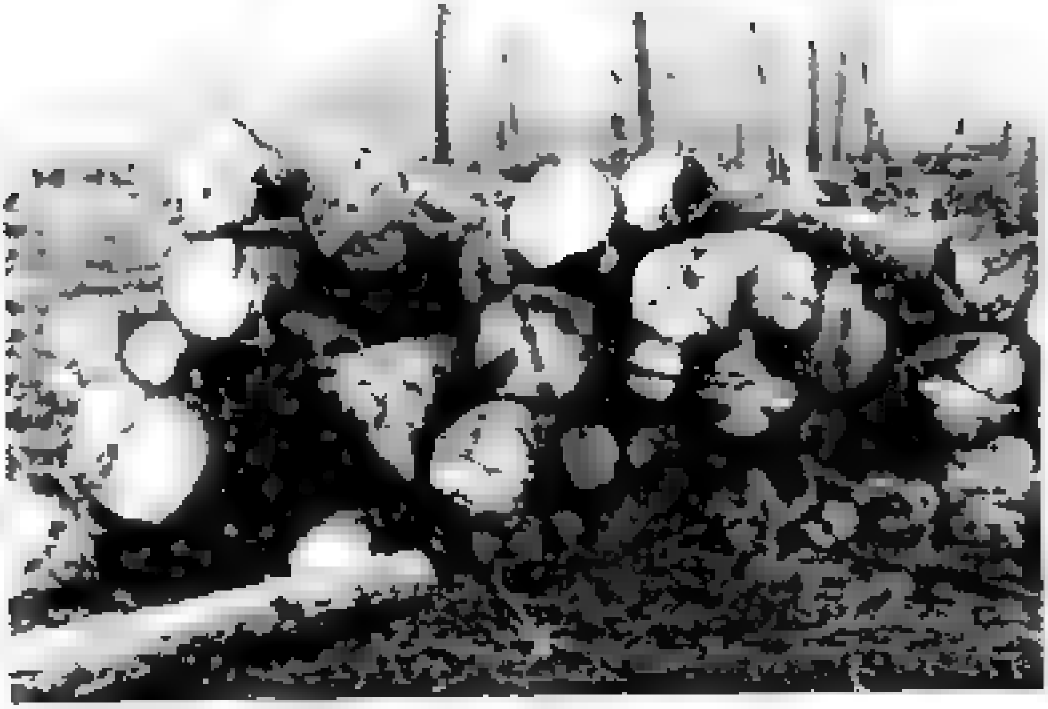

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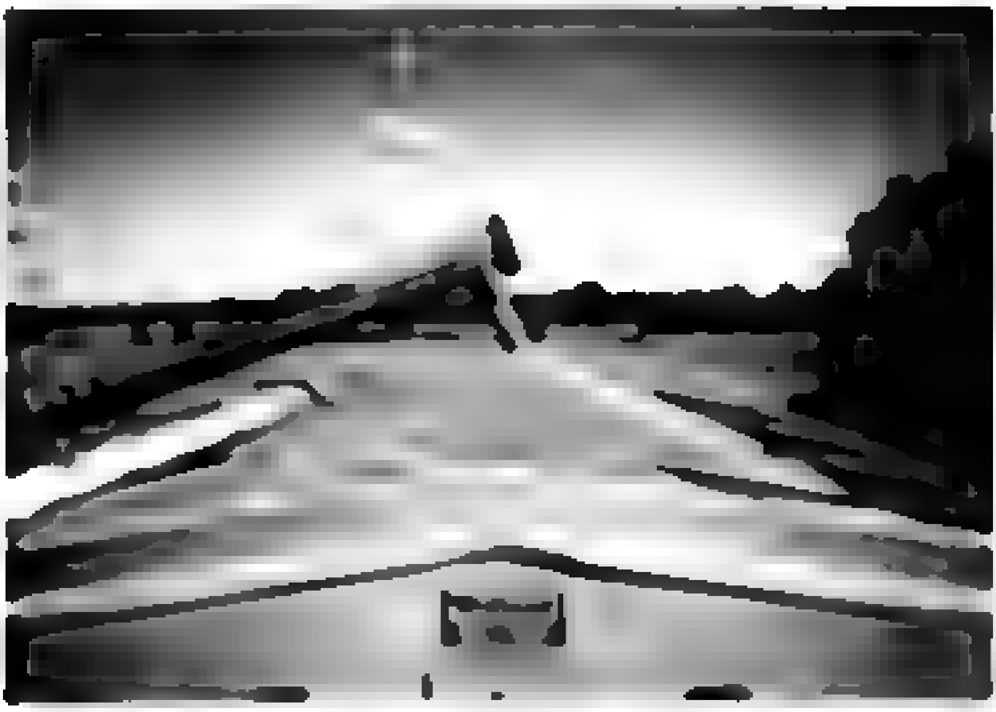


32

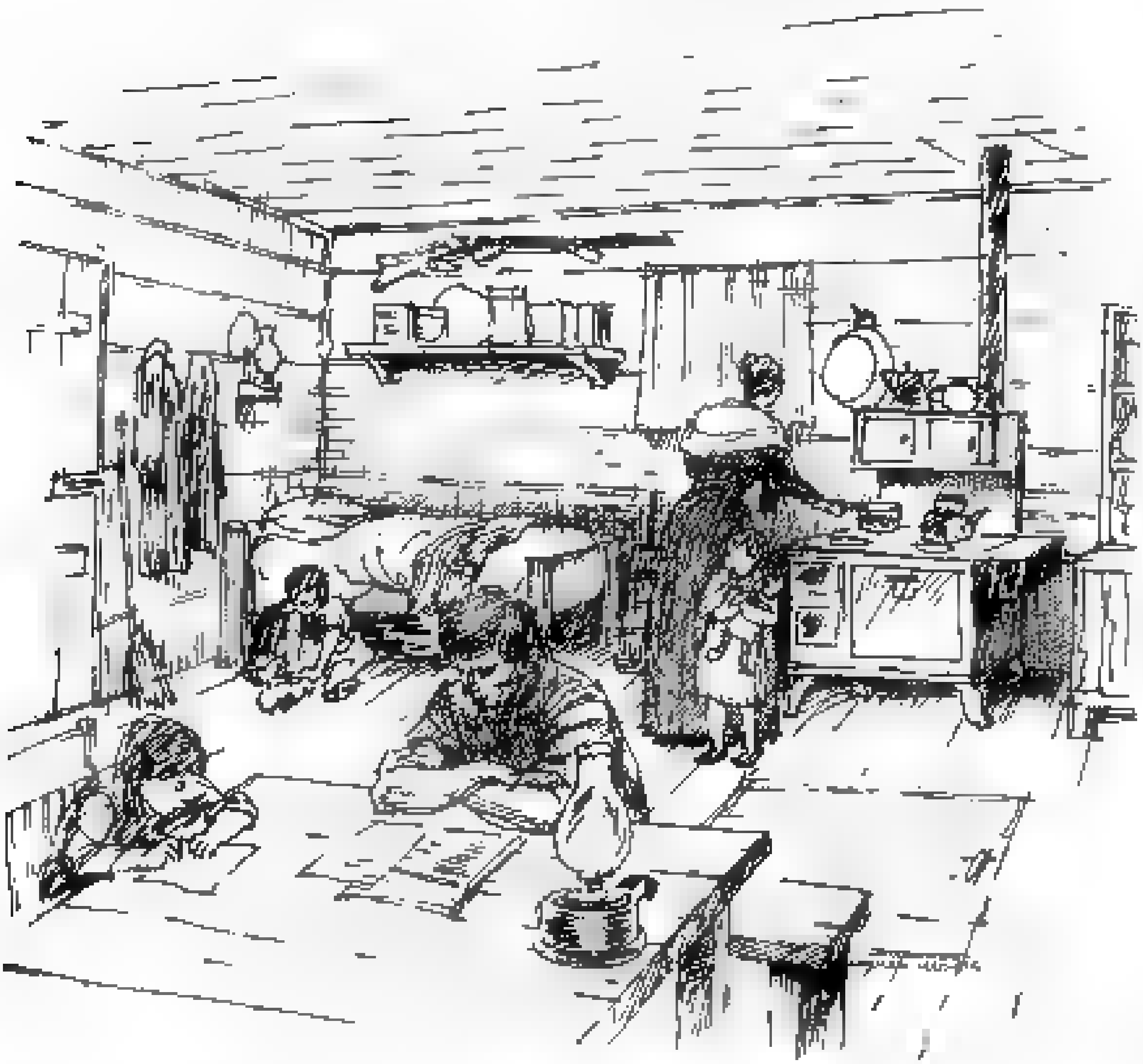
This is Neerlandia

1. *A view of the hamlet   Clarence Olthuis*
2. *Hare in the woods   Harvey Wierenga*
3. *Swallowtail butterfly.*
4. *Bluebells (tall lungwort)   Harvey Wierenga.*
5. *Garden spider web with morning dew — Elsie Navis*
6. *Highbush cranberry in fall*
7. *Black poplar loaded with seed.*
8. *Bunchberry   David Baker.*
9. *Robin's nest — Jim Bosma*
10. *Prickly rose — Bernice Fisher*
11. *Buttercups (marsh marigolds,   Harvey Wierenga*
12. *Red squirrel*
13. *The settlers helper*
14. *Barley ready to harvest   Diane Wierenga*
15. *Combining — Shirley Wierenga.*
16. *Ducks among the bulrushes   Bernice Fisher*
17. *Poplar trees in winter — Harvey Wierenga*
18. *Fall splendour   Harvey Wierenga*
19. *Baled hay   Alvina Dost*
20. *The bow of promise — Shelley Bos*
21. *Muskeg — Harvey Wierenga.*
22. *A narrow country road   Elsie Navis*
23. *A wooded pasture   Alvina Dost.*
24. *Golden glory — canola   Elsie Navis.*
25. *A harvested field   Alvina Dost*
26. *Early winter along the creek   Harvey Wierenga.*
27. *Lumber in the making — Henry Nanninga.*
28. *Fall sky*
29. *Round bales stacked for winter   Elsie Navis.*
30. *Bumper crop — Elna Siebring.*
31. *Spraying pesticides by airplane   Henry Nanninga.*
32. *Oil painting by Janna Oldegbers prior to 1917*
    Clarence Olthuis

Part Three

Community Growth

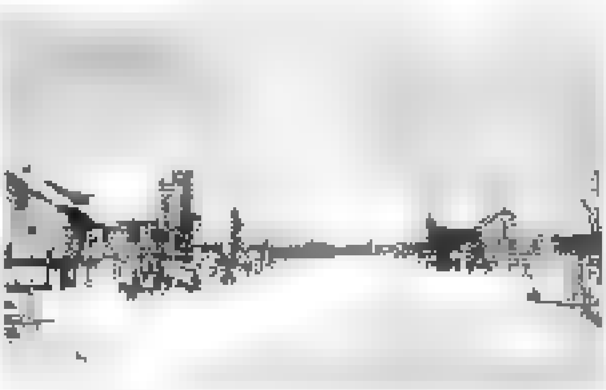
Daily Life



THE HAMLET

Neerlandia is a farming community but the hub of activity is the hamlet. Here, where church, school, garage, and store have long stood, each on one corner of a crossroads, much activity takes place. Most religious, educational, social, and business activities take place in the hamlet. It is in the hamlet that the people of Neerlandia meet and interact. To know the people of the district one must recognize the place of the hamlet in their lives. Its importance is illustrated by its nickname "The Centre".

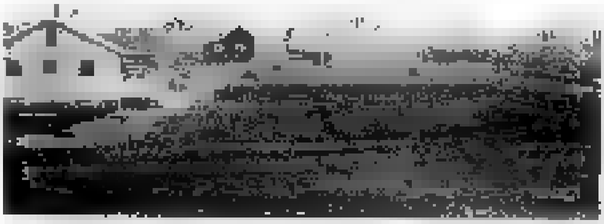
Looking northeast, c. 1925.



Looking west, early 1928.

The term "hamlet" is used throughout the prairie provinces to describe a small unincorporated rural community. Bill Olthuis, former county councillor, believes Neerlandia became a hamlet in the 1940s. Allan Charles, present county manager, states that Neerlandia probably became a hamlet by an order of the Minister.

As the settlement developed, the need for public and social services arose. They were located at the central area which is now called the hamlet of Neerlandia. Next the need for a residential area grew. These areas were provided by subdividing farm land adjacent to roadways. The subdivisions were described by metes and bounds and the residents were given a Certificate of Title. However, some plots of land not served by a public access road were also entered in by private treaty and were described, for example, as one-half acre north of a specific point. This did not constitute a legal description so no title of ownership was possible. This was resolved with the assistance of the County of Barrhead and the co-operation of the title holders of the hamlet area. A replotting of the area and a legal survey were carried out in the early sixties. In the replotting, roadways and access were included. A more responsible procedure is now followed for subdividing land within the hamlet area since all plans must be approved by County and Provincial authorities.

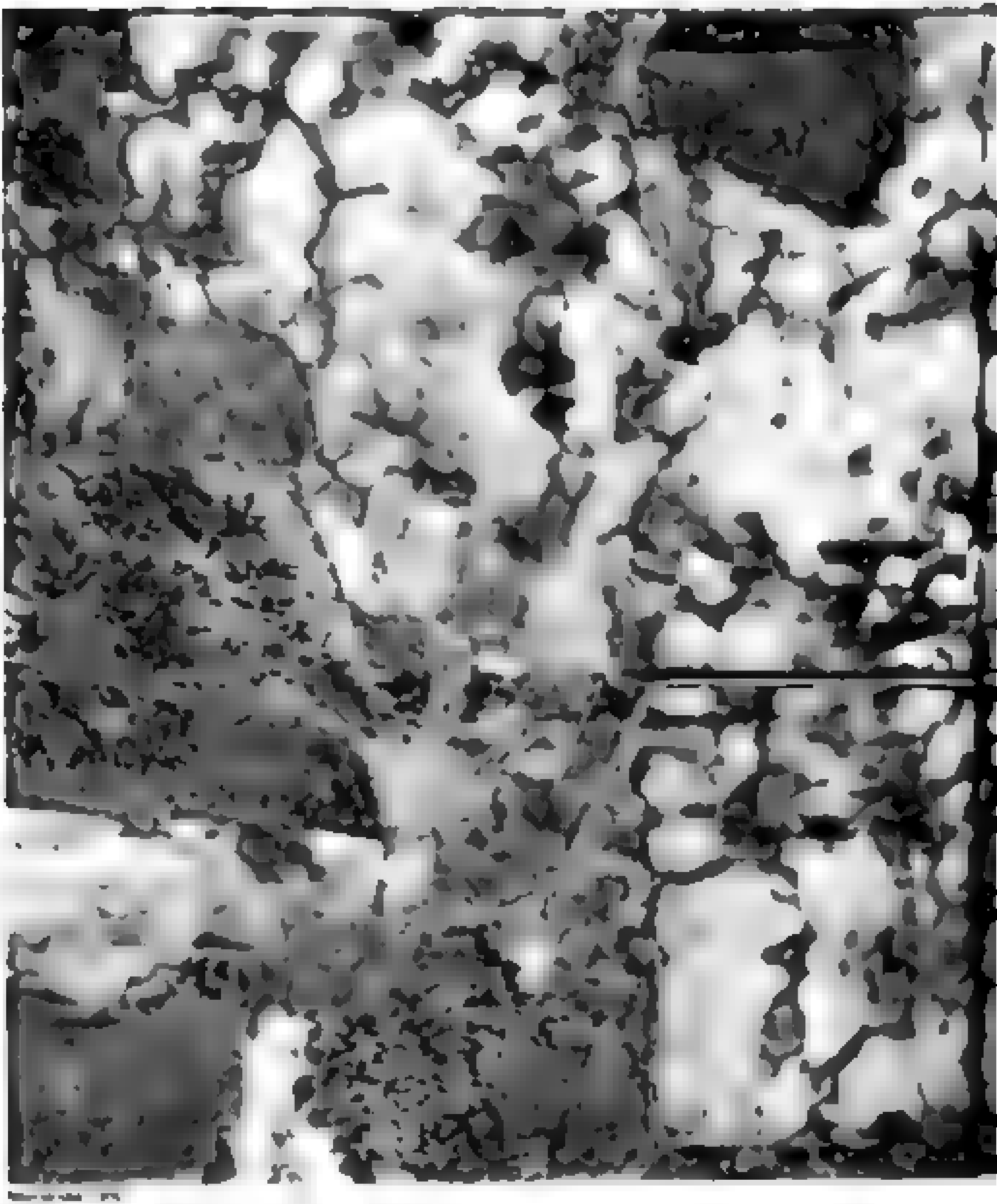


Looking south, 1940s.

Wm. Olthuis

[illegible]

Looking northeast, 1965



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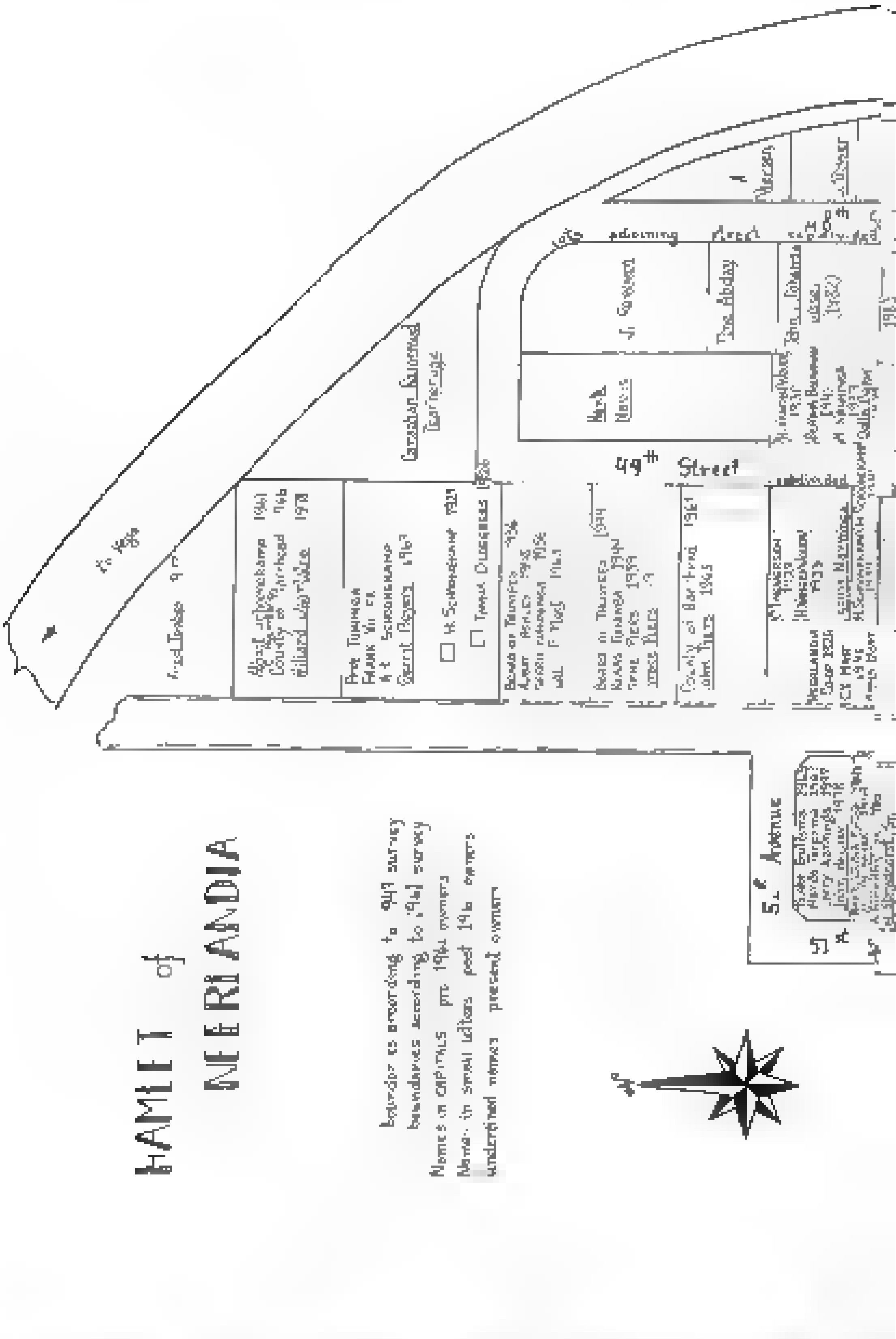
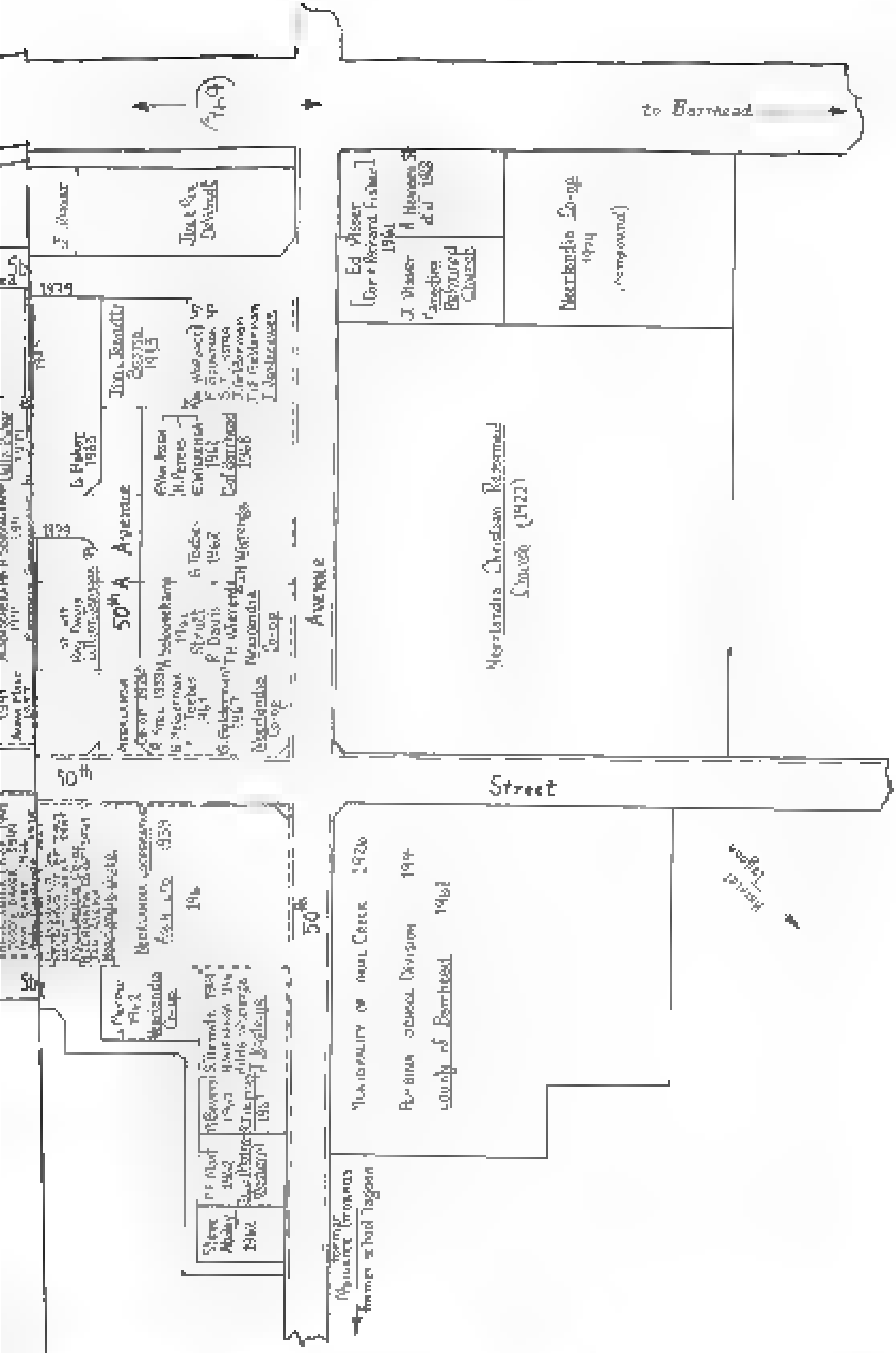

HAMLET of NEERLANDIA
boundary as according to 1919 survey
boundaries according to 1961 survey
Names in CAPITALS pre 1961 owners
Names in small letters post 1961 owners
underlined names present owners
49th Street
51st Avenue
51st
Canadian National Railway
adjoining
48th
H. Schoneboom 1921
Thomas Olsberg 1926
County of Barrhead 1961
J. Greidanus
Mark Nevis
Tine Abday
Fred Tolsma

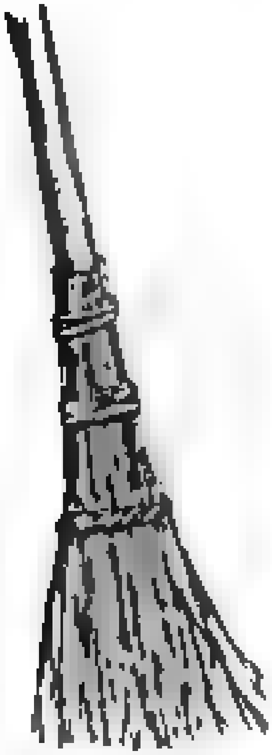

to Barrhead
(44)
50th A Avenue
50th Avenue
50th Street
Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church (1922)
Neerlandia Co-op 1974 (compound)
Ed Visser [Cor & Richard Fisher] 1961
J. Visser
Canadian Reformed Church
J. Visser
Tina Garstad Dahlberg
Tim & Jeanette Bosma 1983
G. Huberts 1983
Neerlandia Co-op
G. Tober 1962
E. Wierenga 1962
County of Barrhead 1968
Neerlandia Co-operative Assn. Ltd. 1939
Municipality of Paddle Creek 1926
Pembina School Division 1944
County of Barrhead 1962
former Athletic Grounds
former school lagoon
Hamlet lagoon
Steve Mabey 1962
Neerlandia Co-op

FAMILY LIFE

Most of the Neerlandia pioneers were Christian people. They believed that their lives were in God's hand and that their purpose in life was to serve Him. They believed that God planned for people to live together in families and that as parents they were instructed to love and nurture the children God gave to them. Indeed, one of the motivations for seeking a new land was to provide a better life for their children. They wanted to establish a Christian community to provide a better environment in which to raise their children. The children for their part were expected to love, honour and obey their parents. All of this was to be done out of obedience to God.

Out of love for God and a desire to know and do His will the pioneers turned to God's Word. Mealtimes began with a prayer asking God's blessing on the food they were to eat and thanking Him for His care of them. At the end of each meal a portion of Scripture was read; this was followed with another prayer. The common practice was to read through the Bible beginning with the first chapter of Genesis and to continue reading one chapter each mealtime until the last chapter of Revelations was read. Then the reading would begin at the beginning of the Bible again. Children were taught to seek God's guidance in all of their lives and to go to Him in prayer. Before going to bed at night, the parents and children would kneel beside their beds to pray to God.

Parents tried to show by their lives that they loved the Lord. In the midst of the hardships of pioneering they tried to find time to spend with their children. There were close family ties. That is not to say that all was peace and harmony. The Neerlandians were sinful people in a sinful world. There were breakdowns in the communication between parent and child. Some parents got so caught up in the struggle to make a living that they lost sight of the more important goal, to serve God. And some of the children as they reached adulthood strayed from the faith causing their parents anguish. For most part though, family life was stable and satisfying because there was purpose and direction to the lives of the people.


Homemade willow broom

[illegible]

Neerlandia, Alberta
June [illegible]

Dear Mother,

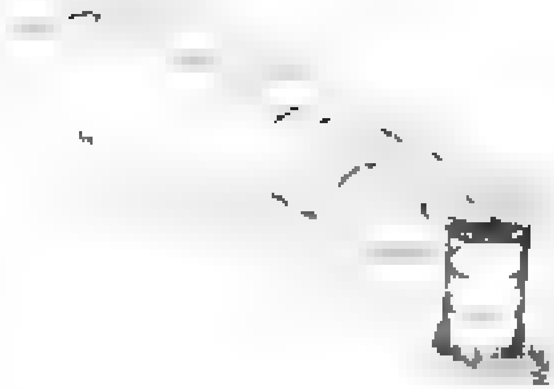
[illegible] finally arrived at our destination. [illegible] supplies and so Henk could get a look at the land [illegible] were to go and build a log cabin. You can't believe how big Canada is. We thought we'd never [illegible] and then [illegible] a place [illegible] back there.

We are right in the bush and [illegible] neighbours, although some do live a quarter mile away. We are glad to be by ourselves but how hard it is to find out how to do everything. We have to dig a well [illegible] getting water from a slough. Horrible yellow water. We have a sod roof and [illegible] that is far from leak proof.

What a chore to wash for the baby and all the others [illegible] getting better. It is so hard to know how to fix the stove. Either the bread is black on top or it stays pretty pale. At least we have food.

It is such a problem to know how to keep the food good. The flies have so many ways to get in. We do have a garden of sorts and I am thankful for that. We build a smudge (a fire that keeps burning but is mostly smoke) so we can keep the dreadful mosquitos away. There are so many.

It is a lovely country though and we are happy to own so much land. The men are busy every day chopping down the



[illegible] we will be able to grow oats for the horses and feed for the cows too.

Everyone is pretty well in the same position — no cash, but cheerful and we do like to visit with them and get some advice about life here.

There are no doctors close by but we do have a couple of women who are handy and will help in childbirth or minor problems. It makes me rather nervous to think of having a baby out here but the Lord has helped us thus far and am confident He will in the future.

Can you imagine Henk milking cows and me churning butter, baking bread and weeding the garden? The men here all had to make their own log homes and then not any of them had ever done that either. It is amazing how people have adjusted but it is not easy.

The children love the freedom, they are running wild here. No one to contend with and they find their own fun. They are barefoot so far but we will have to get some warmer footwear before winter, as we are told that it gets very cold and there is lots of snow which stays all winter [illegible] from November to April. Can you imagine that? We [illegible] for the animals in the slough so we will have some food for the cattle.

Those of us who can, walk to church down a trail through the bush. It is quite a long way to go. We cannot take the small ones so one or two of the older children, or Henk or I stay home. We have church only in the afternoon since it is so far for most people to go.

We will try our best out here but do miss you all so very much and our [illegible] country. [illegible] can hardly believe we are here.

So far we have a couple of horses and a few cows and a wagon, a sleigh and plow. It's a start. Our furniture is minimal and it's not so [illegible] in the house but we are looking to the future.

Remember us in your prayers to Him who is ever faithful and in whom we trust.

Your loving daughter
Reta

Neerlandia, Alberta
January [illegible]

Dear Mother,

It has been a long time waiting on your letter but it finally came. It takes a while to get out here [illegible] even if the letter is in Canada it takes a long time to get to Neerlandia. How glad we were to hear from you all again.

We are all well although Ben has such a swollen throat with quinsy we thought he would choke but, thank God it broke and he is on the mend again.

It seems all my time is spent washing and drying clothes in this cold country. When we hang the clothes out they freeze solid but don't dry, we have clothes hanging all through the house all week.

We got a small grinder and some wheat so the children grind it, and I make brown bread from it.

It is a long ride to the store and when it's so cold one hardly dares venture out. Even in the house the frost is on the blankets in the morning.

Oh, I should mention that before I can heat water to wash I have to melt a lot of snow for wash water. The well was not very deep and is quite low and the cattle need that [illegible] for all our needs. We have a [illegible] near the door and keep filling it with snow and it slowly melts. That doesn't make the house warmer either (the snow coming in).

Henk is cutting and sawing wood for the stove every day. My, you can't imagine how cold it gets here.

When the weather is a bit warmer the children play in the snow. They don't have school out here during the winter because it is too cold to walk so far and gets dark early too.

On Sundays we put hay in the sleigh and warm up some big stones and put them in the sleigh to keep our feet warm. During the service many people put the stones on the big heater so they will be warm on the way home. You will very likely laugh at our way of life, and sometimes we do too, but the reality is there and we strive to make the best of it.

We are all looking to the future and will try to work hard to make a living here. People are friendly and families often visit each other a whole day. The children think that is such fun and it is also good for us to exchange ideas and share our troubles.

We hope you write soon.

Your loving daughter
Reta

Neerlandia, Alberta
July 31, 1929

Dear Mother

How time flies! Now we are well into the summer. We have built a better house and barn and also cleared some land for oats and wheat.

We have a garden and so have fresh vegetables which helps so much to make the meals. Also the cow freshened so we have milk and butter again.

Ben [illegible] cutting hay with the scythe. We hope to get a few more cows [illegible] on the land.

[illegible] are having another child [illegible] though as the mid-wife is a very capable person. People here speak highly of her. It will be a few months yet and hope it is before the [illegible].

[illegible] so most people have a long way to go to call the doctor. [illegible] many ailments that go around normally. With the bad [illegible]

[illegible] and the geese at a distance and not to forget the frogs singing in the ponds or sloughs. We still have lots of mosquitoes but [illegible] off.

Money is so scarce here. It is hard to find enough to buy [illegible]

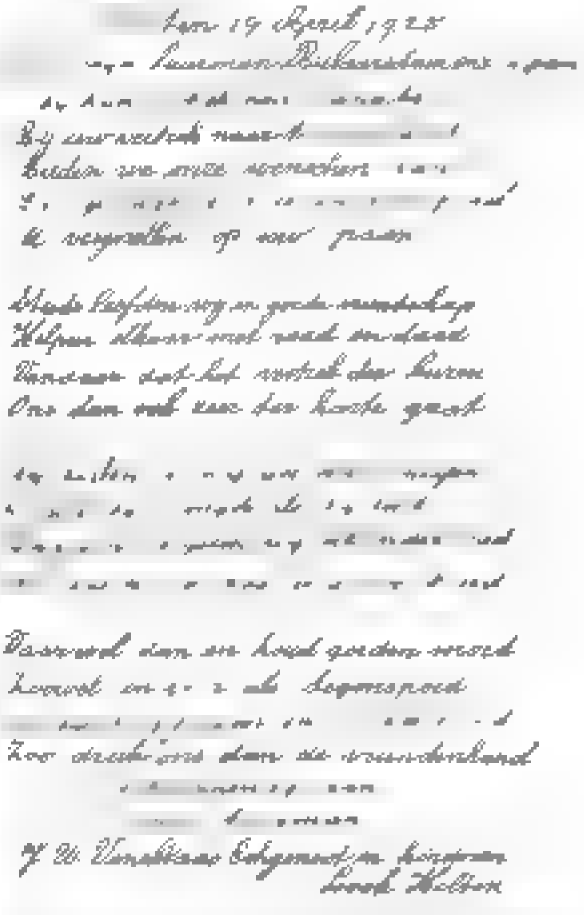
[illegible] highlight is the visit of the Rawleigh man. Of course [illegible] from the [illegible].

We are fortunate to have sold a few muskrat and weasel [illegible] a large box of salve which seems to be good for all ailments and a few small items. Usually the kind man [illegible] how happy they are.

[illegible] will be hard for you to realize that our cattle are not in pastures fenced in. They can roam for several miles to find fodder. Last week Ben came home at 10:00 a.m. with the cows to milk. He left at 6.00 a.m. already. Out here each settler has bells on their cows. Each farmer knows the sound of their bell so can find them. But when it's raining like [illegible] hard to find them.

As you can see it is not the regular life we had in Holland. We do miss you terribly and the coziness of the neighbors and friends. But we are thankful we are all well and hope someday to see you again. Please write soon we long for your letter and also the periodicals you send [illegible].

With love
Reta



Friends were left behind when people emigrated from the Netherlands. A friend of the [illegible] wrote in [illegible] autograph album before they left.

ARIE'S CABIN

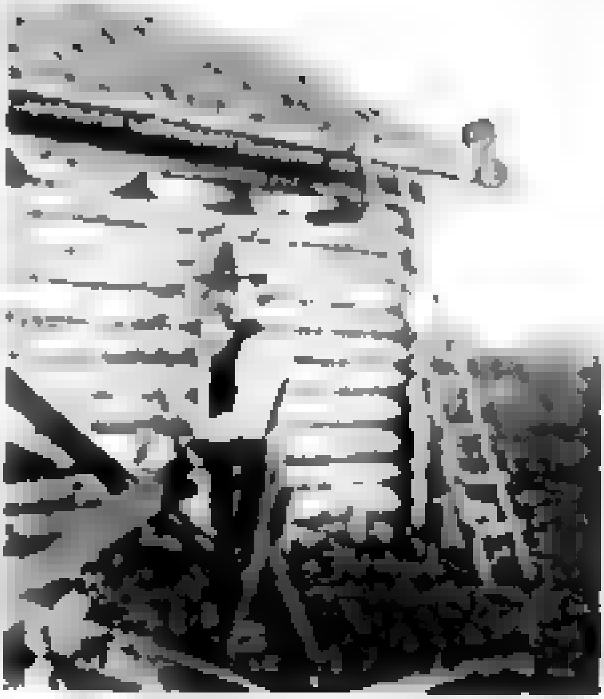
Arie's log cabin was 14 by 20 by 8-feet high made of logs. The roof was made of rails covered with a layer of wild hay. Over that was a layer of tar paper and over that dirt or sods. This was not always waterproof but it was warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Arie had a stove and an airtight heater in the middle of the room, the stovepipe had an oil tin around it where it went through the roof. The cabin had only one room. The beds were at one end – bunks made of four boards and the spring was made of boards too. We had straw for a mattress and a couple of horse blankets for covers, but after a day's work in the bush at 50-below zero you did not need a featherbed in which to sleep.

Ben Lievers

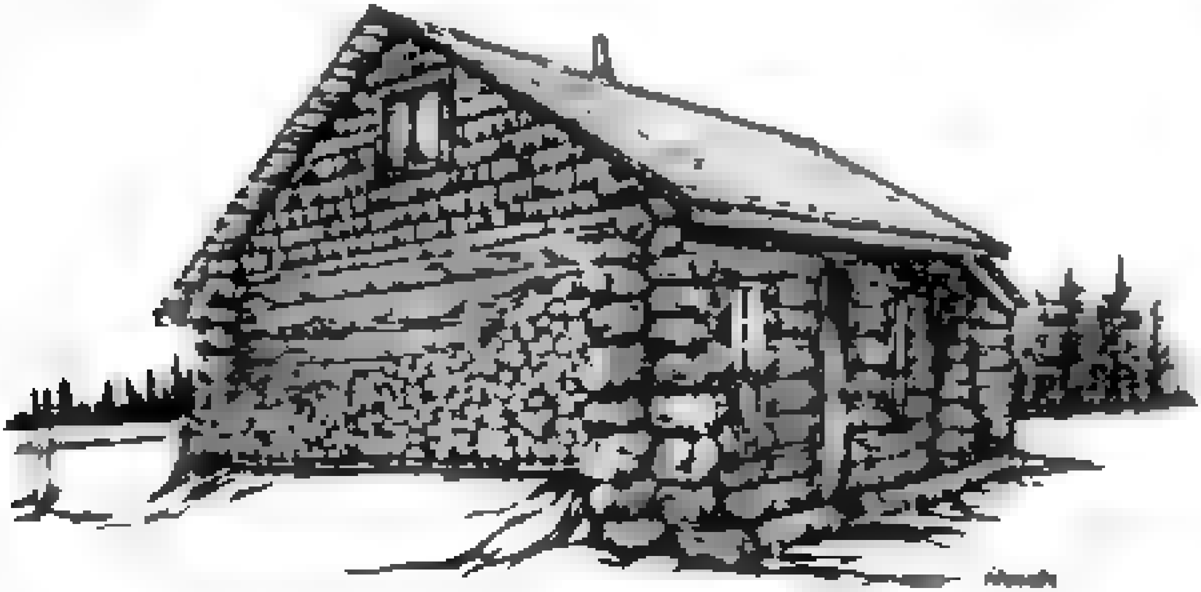
FLOORS

"We had just a lumber floor, with dirt right under the bed. But the Anemas had a painted floor and Messelinks also had a nice floor — it had been scrubbed white."

Gladys (Kippers) Strydhorst



Neighbours helped each other build houses. Klaas Krikke helping Henry Michael



FURNISHINGS

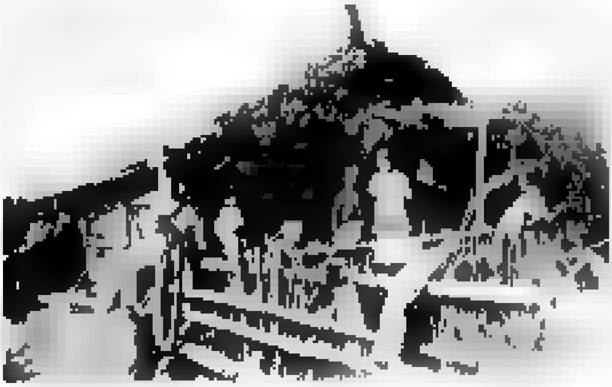
Ben Lievers made much of the early furniture used by the settlers. Our beds were iron with wire springs, the mattresses made of heavy ticking stuffed with straw.

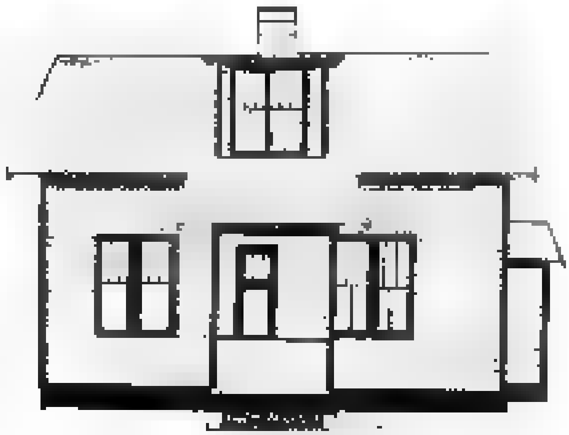
Our first sofa was a Winnipeg couch. This couch had a spring bottom with a double mattress on top, with a flounce hanging over the side. When it was pulled out it provided sleeping space for two, the double mattress becoming a single mattress.

Everything we purchased, with the exception of groceries, was obtained from the Eaton's or Simpson's catalogue.

My children have asked where we got enough money to buy food and clothing until such time as we were able to sell grain, eggs, and cream. I don't really know, but we always had enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a roof over our heads.

Susie Vanee





Anne Elgersma house.

BLESSING IN DISGUISE

The dugout cabin my dad made was really a blessing in disguise we had no bedbugs. In his ignorance he had built the cabin of poplar logs so heavy we could lift them only four high. But bedbugs don't live in poplars only in spruce. They're still around, you know. If you go to the bush and make a fire of spruce, you can smell them.

Gerri Bozak

Kippers' first house

HAULING FIREWOOD

With empty sleighs the men would leave in the morning. A couple of axes and a crosscut saw were hooked to the back bunk. The driver would stand and balance himself on the front bunk and with the jingle of bells and the snort of horses they would be off on a trot. By the time the men arrived in the bush they were cold but when they began working they soon warmed up. All afternoon the men worked, getting the sleighs loaded with logs. By late afternoon they were ready to go.

The return trip took much longer. The horses would strain to get the load out of the bush and onto better trails. Once this was attained the progress was steady with the occasional stop for a rest. Those at home would be waiting with anticipation for their return. On cold winter evenings they could be heard long before they were seen. The creak and groan of the sleigh and the snorting of the horses, would mingle with the complaining squeal of cold metal dragging over snow-packed roads.

SILVERWARE

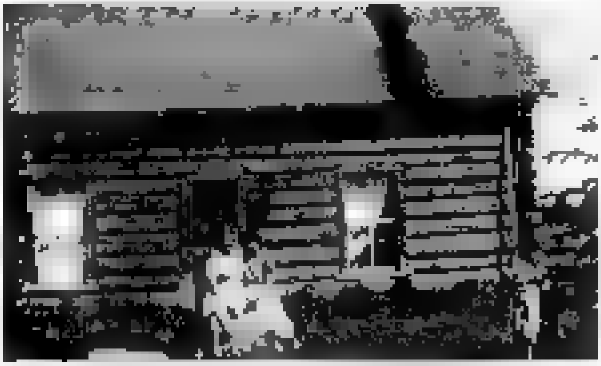
Mother wrapped the silverware in flannel and stuck it in between the logs so it wouldn't tarnish.

Gerri Bozak

ECRU CURTAINS

Nearly everyone had these ecru lace curtains, and they would fade white unevenly in the sunlight. To make them one colour we would soak them in coffee until the whole curtain was the same colour again.

Minnie Plantinga



'Doovile" the Klaas Tuininga house. Bertha Wieringa and Jennie Tuininga in front

Clarence Tuininga house.

LITTLE ENEMIES

Here are some of the drawbacks of homesteading in the bush country of Alberta. First, no roads; second, too much bush and too many trees that had to be grubbed out by hand with an axe. Too much water in the summer and too much snow in the winter and too cold — down to 50-below sometimes — and sometimes too hot in the summer and not to forget the mosquitoes and the pest they were to men and animals. There were mosquitoes in the morning and in the evening but as soon as the sun came out they retired till night and the bull flies took over. They liked sunshine and the blood of animals. If you were working with oxen you would have to go home and put them in the barn because otherwise they would put their tails in the air and would go with the implement, plow, or wagon anyway. These bull flies would bite and hold on till they were satisfied. I guess that is the reason they were named bull flies; they looked like a bulldog. If they once have taken a bite they held on to it but they seldom attacked men. They were about the size of a bee. Then we had what the Indians called no-see-ums you could hardly see them because they were so small. They bit too and really were a pest. They would settle under you [illegible] and the itch was awful. So was the swelling afterwards.

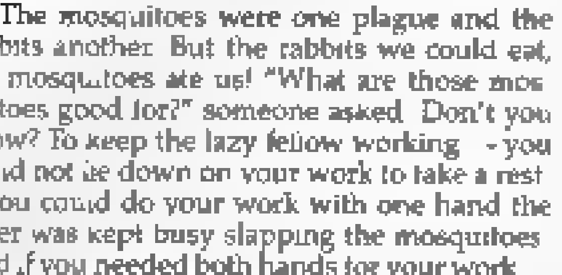
But I am glad to say I did not see a bull fly or a no-see-um for the last few years. The mosquitoes are still with us, but not as bad as in the first years. So are the rabbits but only a few, not in the millions.

Ben Lievers

MOSQUITOES

The mosquitoes were one plague and the rabbits another. But the rabbits we could eat, the mosquitoes ate us! "What are those mosquitoes good for?" someone asked. Don't you know? To keep the lazy fellow working — you could not lie down on your work to take a rest. If you could do your work with one hand the other was kept busy slapping the mosquitoes. And if you needed both hands for your work for example cutting grass you had to put an [illegible] and leather gloves on your hands. But the worst of it was when you came home tired and went to bed. Then you would hear a "friend" [illegible] and slap with your hand and miss, then you would hear "friend" on your other ear and maybe this time you did kill one. Somebody said ten would be out for the funeral. We did find out they did not like smoke so we made a smoke fire in front of the house and, before we went to bed, a smoke fire in the stove in the house but I sometimes thought the cure was worse than the sickness — sore eyes, tearful eyes.

Ben Lievers



HUNTING AND TRAPPING

From the time I could get around by myself I was always interested in trapping. I started out snaring rabbits some we fed to pigs, some we ate, and we even dried some skins and wrapped them around our feet for footwear. That was in 1919 I guess.

Then, later on when I was a little older, eighteen or nineteen, was my first time out hunting. John Terpsma was going to come with me but he never showed up. So on my own, I went across the lake and headed into the bush west of Baird Lake. It was all wild timber — there wasn't a trail anywhere. I wasn't in the bush too far when I saw a lot of tracks and I was puzzled which ones to follow. I stood there and here I heard a crashing through the bush and here came a moose. I lifted up my rifle but I shook so badly that I thought I'd never be able to shoot him. I leaned backwards and steadied myself against a tree. I fired two shots and then the moose was gone. But I had drawn blood. I could see by its crossing the windfalls that I had shot him somewhere up high. At another place in the snow, up high on the trees, I saw blood so I knew I'd shot it on the back somewhere. But it was getting dark and it was a little snowy, so I went home. On the way I had the mishap of falling with my horse and hurt my leg. I told my dad where I left the trail and he went back the next day. He followed the moose tracks for about a mile. Then he found the moose pretty well stiffened up and shot it. The next day we brought it home. You had to dress moose right away otherwise it would have the red-willow taste.

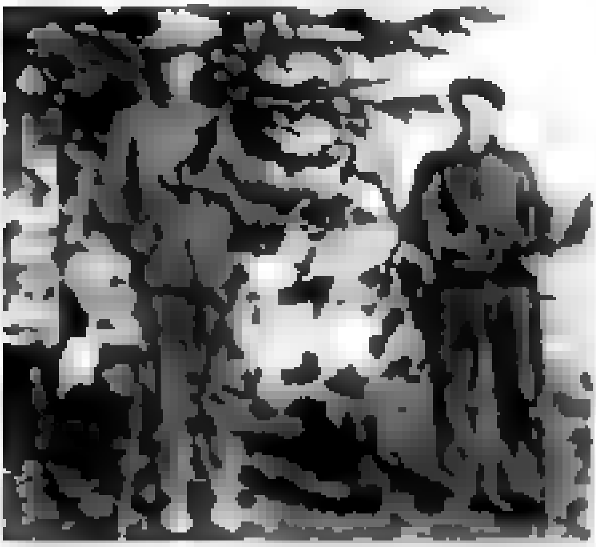
From there on I went hunting quite a lot — Bill Lievers and I went together. We had a trap line together too so we knew pretty well from day to day where the animals were. If anyone wanted an animal we could tell them about where they were. They were mostly moose and a few deer. Deer became more plentiful as time went on.

We also trapped together muskrats. The [illegible]

Albert Tiemstra with the cutter to drive us around the lake. All we had to do was jump out, open the muskrat's semi-frozen grass and weed mound with an axe, and set our traps inside. Baird Lake was really a good place for rats. The first morning we had thirty-five muskrats. And we trapped weasels and the odd coyote.

Baird Lake and Lily Lake were our two main areas. We went to Shoal Lake once too. That's quite a stretch around the lake. There wasn't much snow then. There were lots of other people there too — on bicycles and everything — just to get their traps in. One year I got 200 rats which I sold at $2.05 a pelt.

We did a lot of shooting squirrels. We'd just go out in the spruce bush, shoot twenty-five to thirty squirrels (using a .22 rifle and .22 short bullets), and skin them. Prices were not that great — twenty-five to thirty cents a pelt. But that was [illegible] and [illegible] than sitting at home at least and besides, I liked it.



Neerlandia's crack shots: Bill Olthuis and Bill Lievers

One time I shot two deer with one bullet. There were a number of deer around. I took a shot at one and when I got there I saw a track with blood and then I saw another track with blood too. I followed them a little ways and they both lay there. The bullet had gone right through the one deer into the other.

Different Bullets

We always used the soft-nosed bullet. When they hit they mushroomed immediately. It could be an indication of who really shot the animal [illegible] you could sometimes tell by the shape of the bullet whose gun it had come from. I had a 30-30 Marlin rifle and Bill Lievers had a 30-30 Winchester carbine. The soft-nosed bullet was better than the steel-nosed bullet because they were not so easily deflected by a twig.

Bill Olthuis

CATCHING FISH

In the early days there were lots of fish in the creeks during the spring run. The fish would swim upstream to Baird and Shoal Lakes. The settlers used a variety of methods of catching them. There were so many fish that the farmers would go to Shoal Creek with their pitchforks and fork the fish out of the water. Wilsons put a dam in the creek. It was constructed so that there was a small amount of water running over a slanted piece of the dam. It was possible to grab the fish as they swam up the incline. A popular method of catching fish was with a conical net. The nets were placed in the water with the mouth facing upstream and the narrow end downstream, so that it would be easy for the fish to swim in but difficult for them to find their way out.

RABBITS	Prime, 8c. SQUIRREL, 10c and 15c. JACKS, [illegible]
MINK	No. 1 large, dark $25.00; medium, $20.00; small, $15.00. No. 1 large, pale, $18.00 small, $10.00. Average lots, $14.00 to $18.00.
MUSKRATS	No. [illegible] Spring, $1.[illegible] Winter, $1.[illegible]; Falls, [illegible]. Average [illegible] to $1.00. [illegible]
OTTER	No. 1 large, $30.00; medium, $25.00; small $18.00. No. large, pale, $22.00. Average lots, $25.00. Average, $[illegible].
SKUNK	Good lots, $2.15.
WOLF	No. large, $22.00; medium, $18.00; small, $12.00 No. 2 large, $15.00; medium, $10.00. Average lots, $10.00.
WOLVERINE	No. large $20.00 medium $14.00; small $8.00. Average lots, $12.00 to $14.00.

We strongly advise shipping all furs as soon as possible. Market can easily go [illegible]

Ed Wagner, who owned a quarter just east of Bill Olthuis' land, had constructed a net of willow saplings (1927). It was composed of an outer cone of about three feet in length and about two feet in diameter at the wide end. Inside was a smaller cone of short willow sticks and ending in a narrow opening. Ed invited Bill [illegible] they wanted. One day Bill and Ike Nanninga went to the spot where Ed Wagner had his net [illegible] solidly packed with fish. "There wasn't room for one more fish," said Bill. Between the two of them, Bill and Ike had a hard time getting the net out of the water; it must have weighed about two or three hundred pounds. The fish were packed so tightly in the net that those in the centre were dead. Most of the fish were jacks and suckers and were up to twenty inches in length. The Nanninga and Olthuis families had a good fish fry that night.

A PLAGUE UPON MAN AND BEAST

Mosquitoes and bull flies were a curse for man and beast in the early days. There was not much land cleared of trees and bushes and these, together with tall grass, kept the water [illegible] weather these damp watery places made excellent breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

After sundown they would come out in droves, searching for some warm-blooded animal or human to feed on. They would attack [illegible] cattle in such numbers that the poor animals didn't know where to go to get away from them. They would run around brushing their sides and backs against trees and low-hanging branches, but they just could not get rid of the pests.

My dad would build a fire of dry wood and when this was going good and hot he would [illegible] thick smoke would spread out over a good part [illegible] quitoes.

The cattle soon learned that they could get [illegible] However if they stayed near the smudge all night they didn't do any grazing, so the next morning after milking they hurried off to the pasture to fill their stomachs.

About ten in the morning, when the sun [illegible] attack. These were big flies about three-quarters of an inch long. They had black heads and wings and a dark brown abdomen. They seemed to chew through a cowhide in one bite. They always seemed to get me when I had both hands occupied — for example, when I was carrying a heavy object. They would land, bite and suck blood all in the same instant. After they had their fill of blood from a horse, cow, or person and withdrew their mouth from the skin, a trickle of blood would run from the hole in the skin left by the bite.

These bull flies usually appeared around the middle of June. In July they came out in full force, and in August, if we got a good rain and a few cloudy days, they eventually disappeared again. The trouble was that the bull flies attacked in the heat of the day in bright sunshine and the mosquitoes at night, so every summer for about a month the animals got very little time for peaceful grazing by day or night.

One day when the bull flies were really [illegible] the cows came home from the pasture about mid morning, running as hard as they could with their tails high in the air. They went into the corral, trying to find a shady spot — some place where they just might be able to get away from the vicious pests. One cow found a place in the fence between the corral and the house yard where she could squeeze through and ran around the yard looking for a place to hide from the tormenting flies. Maybe the [illegible] few trips around the building, no door opened up to her. The house door was closed too, but she kept running — maybe some door would open up.

The cow, still being worried by the flies, made a pass along the outhouse door to scra- [illegible] unlatched and swung open. On the next trip around she saw the open door and it looked like just the right-sized place to hide from the flies. She squeezed in as far as she could, flipped up her rear, and just managed to get in through the door.

The one-inch-thick floor boards were not strong enough to hold the cow, so they gave [illegible] neath the outhouse. So the outhouse was occupied that day by the cow, until my dad came home from the field with the horses.

After looking over the situation dad decided the only solution was to take out the side wall of the outhouse, put a chain around the cow's neck, and pull her out with a team of horses. Lucky it was a dry cow so she didn't have to be milked that day. However, the wall of the outhouse did have to be nailed back on and the floor had to be replaced.

George Anema

MEAT

The meat that was eaten was mainly what was available in the bush. Moose and deer, rabbits and more rabbits, partridge, duck, and other game were available, but it was not till the second generation grew up that the ability to hunt for game was developed. The homesteaders owe a lot to trappers, who would sometimes leave word that on such and such a location a moose or deer had been shot. If the settlers wanted meat they would go to the location and find a carcass waiting for them.

DIARY OF A HOUSEWIFE IN [illegible] EARLY [illegible]

January 1 — Beginning of a new year, and what a cold day! Got up this morning to a frozen house. The heater was almost out, and the water in the kettle had ice on it. Took a while to get enough heat in the stove to boil water for tea and breakfast. Children dress by the heater, don't seem bothered by the cold. Charlie stayed home today, it being a holiday. No church this morning either, just too cold to go out. Father and boys made firewood in the afternoon — there's no end to that chore. Had to make enough for a week, so we won't run out when I'm home alone with the children.

January 2 — Charlie left for the bush this morning. [illegible] and are a big help too already. Tried to milk the 2 cows again, but [illegible] when she switched her tail right in my face. That was enough for me. [illegible] boys took over and they are learning fast. At least they are getting milk out of them.

Very uneventful day.

January 6 — Saturday: cleaned the house as best I could, a customary thing to do before the Sabbath. Charlie came home tonight, and that is the best part of Saturday. The children start looking for him already in the afternoon. Windows are so frosted, they scratch frost off the glass, but they freeze up almost as fast.

Charlie came home with a bag of the most necessary groceries. There was also a letter from Holland, couldn't [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] house for the fires. Both heater and stove are kept red hot [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

ings of the underwear. House steams up and more frost on the [illegible]

February 1 Today was Charlie's birthday, celebrated it yesterday when he was home. Didn't have anything fancy to eat, but had a nice da

There was a change in the weather today, the [illegible] but milder, children went out to play in the snow. I had another one of those tedious wash days, but its over again for a week.

February 10 What a day. After a week of rather mild weather, it suddenly turned stormy and cold. The wind blew in from the north making the snow pile up in big drifts around the house. Couldn't hardly make it to the barn to feed the animals. Boys especially had a hard time getting through the snow. Animals were very restless, don't seem too healthy either. Hay supply is getting kind of low, and they don't get enough to eat. Hope they make it through the winter, two cows are expected to bring a calf in the spring.

February 13 The storm is over, but it has left huge drifts around the buildings. Charlie made it home safe and sound. It has been a very happy day. Along with the groceries there was a big parcel from the family in Holland. There was all kinds of warm clothing — sweaters, socks, underwear, dresses, and the best part of all — toys for the children. They were wild with excitement. Eyes were [illegible] package after package was opened and admired. [illegible] tions the dresses can be made to fit myself and the little girls. But what will people say when they see us with such fancy clothes? I don't hardly dare to wear them.

February 17 There's a full moon tonight, the [illegible] crisp and cold. Snow is sparkling with thousands of little stars. Looking through a peep hole in the frosty window the rabbits can be seen frolicking around the haystack. They don't realize there's snares set out for them. Boys are getting pretty smart at setting them, especially the youngest one, [illegible] He's becoming a real little hunter. Feel sorry for those [illegible] eyes, but they sure have supplied us with meat this [illegible]

February 18 There was a good supply of meat again [illegible] Almost every snare had a rabbit in it. Boys do the [illegible]ning, some were kind of poor but the majority were good and meaty. They taste much like chicken, and everyone enjoys a meal of fried rabbit. Bert also goes hunting for prairie chicken. Charlie has taught him how to use a .22. [illegible] like it, but he says he's careful. Today he came home with 2 prairie chickens. Was he proud!

February 23 Bill, our neighbour, came over again today. He's such a likeable fellow. He's fixing up his little house, so he can bring his bride home in the near future. Children are afraid of him, especially little Tenie. He tried his best to make friends with her, but she stayed far enough [illegible] shy. Did a lot of sewing by lamplight tonight, fixing up [illegible] Want to keep it a surprise for them, but the poor light is hard on my eyes. They need some new clothes when they go to school in the spring.

February 26 February is almost over, days are getting longer, but we're still in the grip of winter. Some say it [illegible] where the tulips and crocuses will be coming up already. [illegible] calving in March, and they will need extra care. That will be really nice. Children are remarkably healthy here in this Siberian country. Germs are all froze I think. My teeth give me a lot of trouble. I'm afraid they are badly deteriorated. If [illegible] could have gone to a dentist, but alas, that's not possible.

March 10 Charlie has been home the past week. What a relief! Now I don't have to look after those [illegible] any more. I was really worried about them staying alive. Maybe with some extra care they will come through this long winter. One of them is very close to calving. Charlie says it can be any day. Hay is getting very low, but some people can spare some they say. But how can we afford to pay them? Probably Charlie will work for it.

March 12 Today the first cow gave birth to a calf. [illegible] had such a difficult time, and the calf is so weak, don't think it will stay alive very long. Charlie decided it should be brought in the house to warm up, then maybe it will have a [illegible]. He put some straw in a corner and put the calf [illegible] it cries so pitifully, children are fascinated with the little fellow. How will we sleep tonight with a bawling calf? [illegible] what will it do to the house. It is so smelly already.

March 14 Calf is still alive. Charlie has been carrying it back and forth to the mother to try and make it drink, but it's too weak to stand. Tried to feed it by hand *which didn't work either. Its crying is becoming less; don't think it will live through the night.*

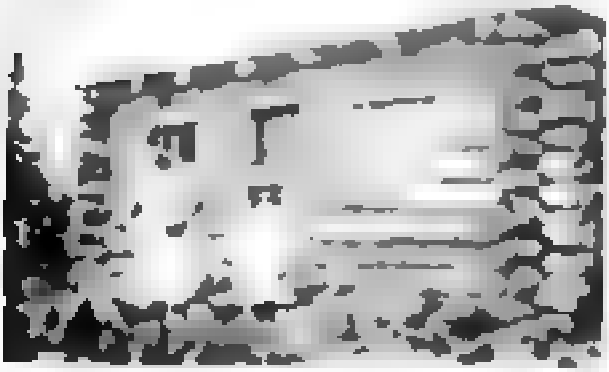
March 19 — Calf died during the night. Ch[illegible] [illegible] of course enquired what had happened [illegible] anymore. How disappointed they were to find out it was gone [illegible] served around.

March 20 — Went to visit one of my friends today. She lives about half a mile away. Had such a lot of things to talk about. Weather was sort of mild, it was a pleasure to get out for a change. When I came home Charlie was busy with the other cow, which was in the process of bringing forth a c[illegible]. Everything went quite well, so now we have 2 cows and one calf. Lots of milk to drink and make pudding with.

April 1 — I think winter is almost over. It [illegible] today, with bright sunshine; snow was melting somewhat near the house. Neighbours say it is too early yet for spring and we will get more [illegible].

Children are excited about going to school Monday. They are so tired of being cooped up in a small house for so long.

We're so thankful to have been spared from s[illegible] illness or accident. Winter has been long and harsh, but the [illegible] is in sight. Am looking forward to seeding vegetables and [illegible].



Feeding the chickens was a daily chore

THIS IS THE LIFE

Everyone seemed to be happy, busy clearing land, breaking, building houses and barns. [illegible] There was much to do and little time to worry about anything. I can still hear one man's words, "This is the life," as he was wading around in the muskeg, cutting bush, and breaking the sod amongst millions of mosquitoes. He had been working by the hour between four walls, in a factory in the U.S.A. Here he was his own boss, out in the fresh air and had his own business. He was poor in material things but rich in spirit. It was a close community with togetherness. They needed each other to help build log houses and barns and also borrowed tools from each other. They could not make it alone.

Martin van der Heide

PA'S GLASSES

Albert Jan read his Bible after every meal and liked to ask questions to find out if you knew the Bible. He had an old Staten *Bijbel*, and after the meal would say to one of his children, "Give me my glasses and the Bible." Sometimes he would use the glasses and other times he would forget about them. One time his youngest girl broke a lens in it and she was afraid. "Now I will get it," she thought. After the meal the old man said, "Jenny, give me the Bible and the glasses." Jenny took the Bible and the glasses and waited for the storm. She had decided not to lie about it but to tell Pa she had broken them. The old man started to read and said, "This is funny. I can see better with one eye than the other." "Which one?" Jenny asked. "This one," and he poked his finger into his eye. Everyone laughed except the old man. One of the children suggested, "Pa, break the other glass too. Maybe you could see better still." Jenny never heard of the broken glasses again from Pa.

Ben Leevers

SMUGGLER

One of the mail carriers, Pete, was a smuggler — that's why he was lame. He was shot in the leg and also in the head. His brother was killed. This was on the German border during the first world war.

* * *

TERRIBLE FRIGHT

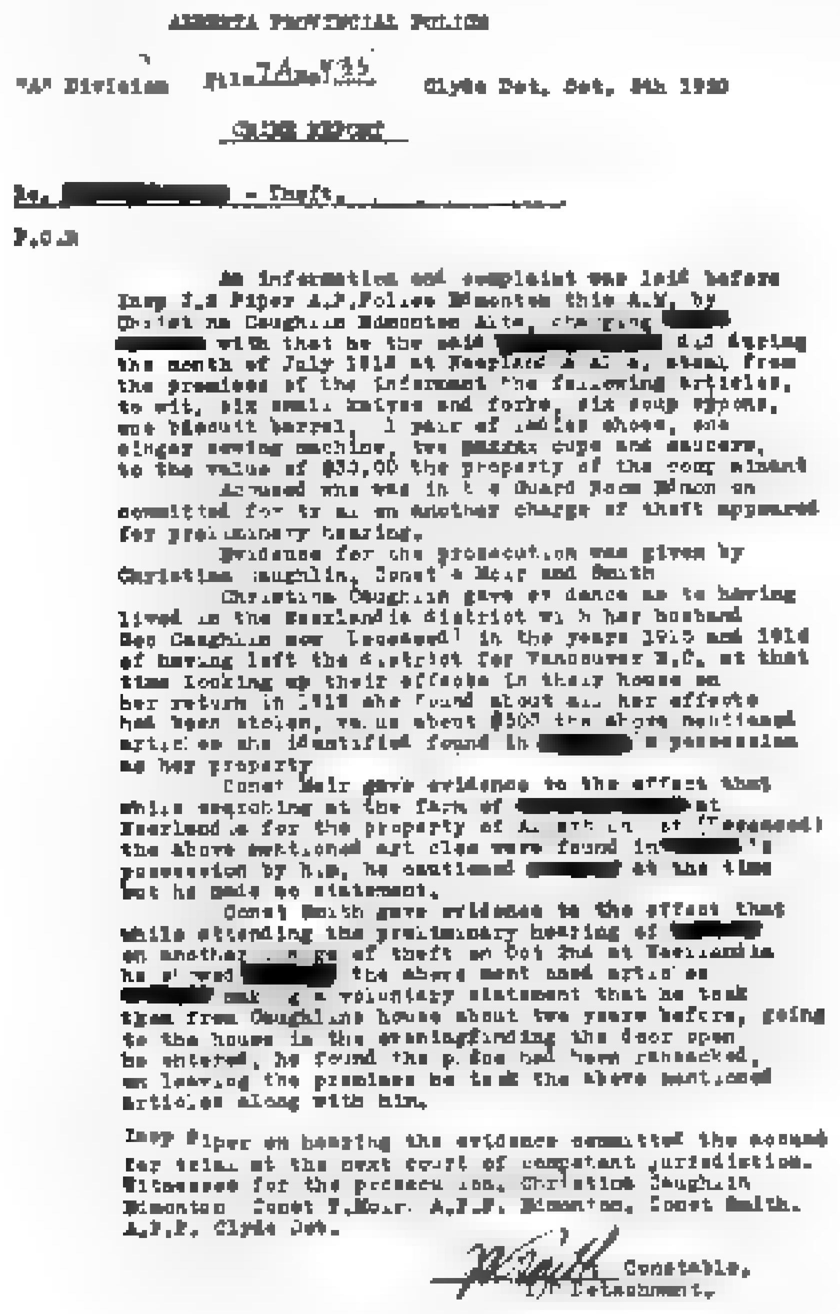
The chamber pot is reponsible for a terrible fright one lady had. The story goes like this —

In the pioneer days there were many bachelors, but not many girls to marry. In the early twenties, northwest of Edmonton, there lived a man by the name of Mound. Mr. Mound was a bachelor who had his eye on the sixteen-year-old daughter of his neighbours. The parents were not in favour of him marrying the girl because they thought their daughter was too young to marry. This really enraged the suitor. One day while the parents were gone he went over there and persuaded the girl and her fourteen-year-old brother to go with him. Then he killed them both.

Everyone was rather uneasy because he was rumoured to be in the area. At night some people had now and then seen lights in some of the empty houses of those who had gone to work in Edmonton for the winter.

Night came and, in one of the pioneer homes, the chamber pot had not yet been emptied that day. The busy mother told one after another of her children to empty the pot but no one dared to go out in the dark for fear of Mr. Mound.

Their mother scolded them. "Aw, what's the



ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE

"A" Division   File 74 No. 35   Clyde Det, Oct, 8th 1920

CRIME REPORT

Re. [redacted] - Theft.

P.C.R

An information and complaint was laid before Insp J.S Piper A.P.Police Edmonton this A.M. by Christina Caughlin Edmonton Alta, charging [redacted] [redacted] with that he the said [redacted] did during the month of July 1918 at Neerlandia Alta, steal from the premises of the informant the following articles, to wit, six small knives and forks, six soup spoons, one biscuit barrel, 1 pair of ladies shoes, one singer sewing machine, two cups and saucers, to the value of $33.00 the property of the complainant.

Accused who was in the Guard Room Edmon on committed for trial on another charge of theft appeared for preliminary hearing.

Evidence for the prosecution was given by Christina Caughlin, Const's Moir and Smith.

Christina Caughlin gave evidence as to having lived in the Neerlandia district with her husband Geo Caughlin now (deceased) in the years 1915 and 1916 of having left the district for Vancouver B.C. at that time locking up their effects in their house on her return in 1918 she found about all her effects had been stolen, value about $500 the above mentioned articles she identified found in [redacted]'s possession as her property.

Const Moir gave evidence to the effect that while searching at the farm of [redacted] at Neerlandia for the property of A. [illegible] (deceased) the above mentioned articles were found in [redacted]'s possession by him, he cautioned [redacted] at the time but he made no statement.

Const Smith gave evidence to the effect that while attending the preliminary hearing of [redacted] on another charge of theft on Oct 2nd at Neerlandia he showed [redacted] the above mentioned articles [redacted] making a voluntary statement that he took them from Caughlins house about two years before, going to the house in the evening finding the door open he entered, he found the place had been ransacked, on leaving the premises he took the above mentioned articles along with him.

Insp Piper on hearing the evidence committed the accused for trial at the next court of competent jurisdiction. Witnesses for the prosecution, Christina Caughlin Edmonton Const F.Moir. A.P.P. Edmonton, Const Smith. A.P.P. Clyde Det.

W.Smith Constable,
I/C Detachment.

matter with you? I'll do it!" and seizing the pot she bravely marched out In moments she was back, shaking like a leaf As she had stepped out the door a dark shape loomed in front of her Thinking it was the killer she dashed back into the house To her great relief, it was a friend who had arrived unnoticed.

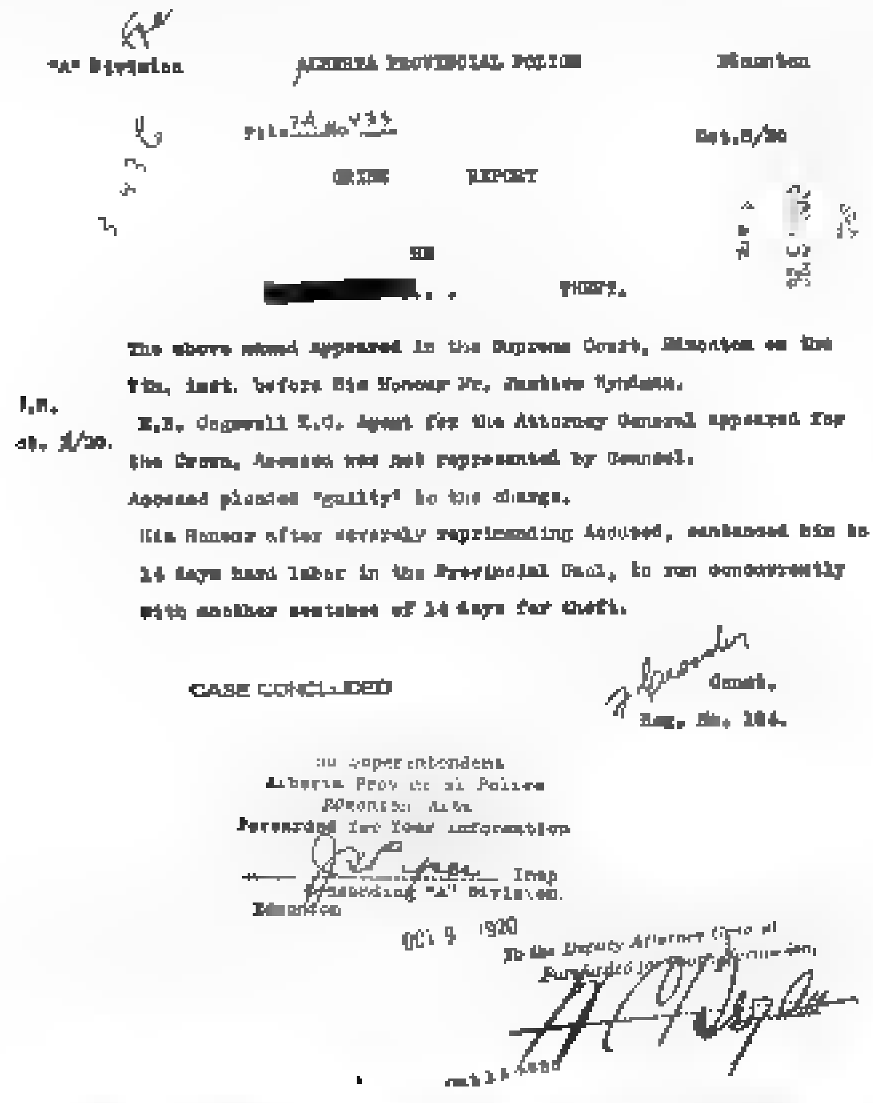
What about the lights? Later it was discovered that it was not the killer in the empty houses but a thief who was helping himself to their possessions while they were away

LIGHTS IN THE NIGHT

My folks came here about seventy years ago There wasn't much of anything here then just a lot of trees, swamp, and so on. The people really had to depend on each other because it was pretty hard to travel to any place to get supplies or help. Most people were poor too; we were all in the same boat, but everybody would help you when there was need Sometimes things got just too tough though and a family would pack it in and go to Edmonton for the winter to make some money They would leave everything but the essentials behind. Sometimes newcomers would live in one of these houses till they had time to build a shack or a house of their own

The doors of these houses were never locked. There were no such things as locks and anyhow, who would take anything? Or so we thought

At night sometimes we would see a light in



"A" Division ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE Edmonton

File 24 No 433 Oct.8/30

CRIME REPORT

RE

[redacted] THEFT.

The above named appeared in the Supreme Court, Edmonton on the 7th. inst. before His Honour Mr. Justice Hyndman.

I.R.
ct. 8/30.

H.H. Cogswell K.C. Agent for the Attorney General appeared for the Crown, Accused was not represented by Counsel.

Accused pleaded "guilty" to the charge.

His Honour after severely reprimanding Accused, sentenced him to 14 days hard labor in the Provincial Gaol, to run concurrently with another sentence of 14 days for theft.

CASE CONCLUDED

Const.
Reg. No. 184.

The Superintendent
Alberta Provincial Police
Edmonton Alta.
Forwarded for Your information
Insp
Commanding "A" Division.
Edmonton

OCT 9 1930

To the Deputy Attorney General
Forwarded for your information

one house or another but we thought it was a murderer who was supposed to be somewhere north of Edmonton — and boy were we scared! Little did we know that one of our own community was looking through those houses and taking what he wanted. Human nature being what it is, the temptation to enter the empty houses was too much for one man.

When spring came and the families re- [illegible] belongings but no one knew what had happened to them.

Of course this kind of activity couldn't be hidden for long and soon people began to realize who the guilty party was. If I remember correctly somebody alerted the authorities but before they could arrest him the thief escaped across the border into the U.S.A. To his wife was left the task of selling the land and holding a farm sale. At the sale people recognized some of the items they had "lost" earlier. *Schandalig*. When I was a kid I was excited over the idea that I had known a real live thief but now I just feel sorry for him and his poor wife, who had to face the music, so to speak.

MAKING A DEAL

You know my dad had thirteen head of cattle and Brunner in Dusseldorf . . . Dad worked for him — he'd come home Saturday nights on a horse, a beautiful horse, and that got Dad all up in the air. He wanted a team of horses in the worst way. So Brunner went along with him one time and they made a deal for Dad's cattle. There were about eight or nine head there. "Well," he says to Dad, "Haven't you got any more?"

"Ja, there's a couple out in the field yet."

"Well, you had better get them too." So he got them — the whole works — thirteen head, for a team of horses and a wagon! So Dad went to pick up the team of horses. The wagon was [illegible] The one horse was so balky he got about one mile out and he wouldn't go anymore. So he tied the balky one behind and with the other one — he was so old he couldn't hardly go — he got home. But before he got home he had to go [illegible] look. He says to Dad,

"Case, *wat heb je daar? Komt het uit de Ark?* (What do you have there? Did it come out of the Ark?)" He says, "I told you I'd come along and help you make a deal." But Dad wouldn't have nothing of that.

"I make my own deals," he said. So that one horse — that balky one — he (Brunner) bought [illegible] days already.

Gerrit Ingwersen

FIRES

1923-24 was a very dry year in northern Alberta. Everyone was warned to put out any fires which they had burning on their land. The farmers all had brushpiles burning on their land, of course, and to put these out was not only a big job but it also hampered their land-clearing progress. So many of the farmers did not heed the warnings. Then a government fire ranger came to the area. Since Joe Holwerda was commissioner of oaths he was asked to accompany the ranger to the farmers who had fires burning on their property. A fine would be levied and, if it wasn't paid before a certain date, the authorities would come and pick up the farmers and they would have to serve a jail sentence for a few months.

So Joe Holwerda and the ranger made their rounds, levying many fines. The only farmer receiving no fine, but who also had fire burning on his place, was Joe Holwerda. Some farmers were allowed more time to pay than others, but none of the farmers planned to pay their fines. When due dates came along and no payments were made the authorities came and picked up three farmers. They stayed overnight in Westlock in a cold room which wasn't very good for the health of one old farmer. The next day, with no explanation, the authorities told the farmers they could go back home.

Later Joe Holwerda set up a type of court with a translator for some farmers and eventually many of the fines were paid.

Shortly after this was settled, a high gusty wind roared through the treetops during Sunday afternoon service, carrying sparks from Joe Holwerda's brushpile to his shack, burning it to smoldering cinders.

Norman Terpsma

VAN DER WOUDE

There is no question that Rev. Van Der Woude was a good spiritual leader but for community life he was not the man that Neerlandia needed He had no eye for expansion of the settlement To people that wanted to come to Neerlandia to live he advised "Neerlandia is completely filled, the land that is still there should stay for the following generation." Later, though, it was found that to the north and west there was still a lot of good land. In general, the thought had always been that the land was not so good since it ran along the Athabasca River The outcome however was that more rain fell there than in Neerlandia and therefore the crops were better.

In the area of the school Rev. Van Der Woude also took a position that later led to many difficulties. Since he had attended a public school in the Netherlands, he considered the public school good enough for Neerlandia. Towards the end of his years of service he had changed his standpoint somewhat but by then however, it was too late

Case Ingwersen (memoirs

HEIL HITLER

"Kannegieters we used to go there quite often on Sundays for coffee They used to entertain us a lot They were nice for young folks, really nice."

"I took Kannegieter along one time when we were logging up north, when we had our mill there He was going to the [Vega store and I was going to the mill. That's the time when the war broke out and he was pro-Nazi. So we went on the wagon and he was standing there too All of a sudden we passed Zitlau [of Vega He says 'Heil Hitler' to Zitlau I said

'That's enough. Get out of the wagon. and I says I'm not slowing down, you get out And if you are not out in five minutes, I'm going to throw you out Boy, I tell you, that stirred some people."

Gerrit Ingwersen

THE GOOD OLD FLOUR SACK

Mothers made aprons, dresses, underwear, towels sheets and what-have-you from the good old flour sack. I don't know how many of us would have been clothed without it The sacks were bleached and dyed before being cut and sewn One day a young child came to school with a grayish-blue suit his mother had made from flour sacks for him The color was by accident — one of the other children said, "Mother boiled the white clothes and a black felt cap was in the tub too, so the entire white wash turned grayish-blue."

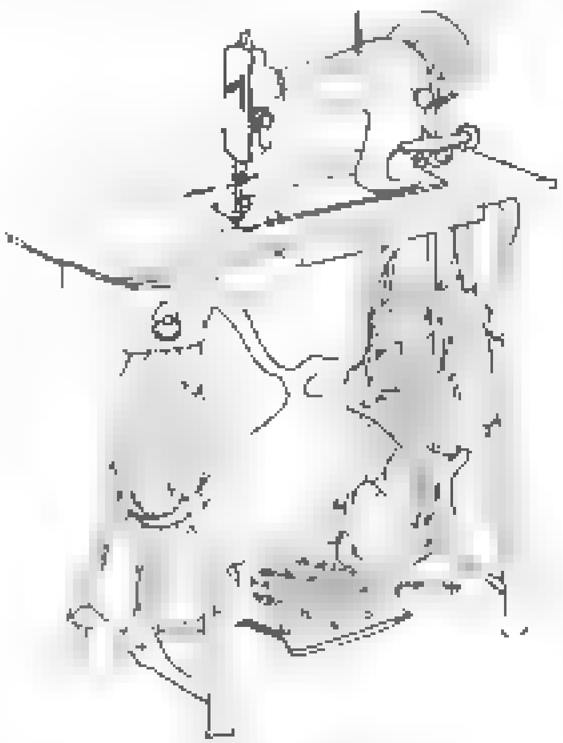
Carrie Olthuis

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT DRESS?

We all wore hand-me-downs and made-overs Our mothers remodeled old clothes These garments were sometimes taken apart and turned inside out since the inside was, by then better than the outside Many hours of work were done mending, patching, and making over by the dim light of a coal oil lamp and later, the Aladdin lamp. With the large families of those days some women had to stay up until midnight on Saturdays so the socks and stockings would be clean and mended by Monday for school

The hand-me-downs we wore were handed down the line in the family until everyone from youngest to oldest had worn the garment or until it fell apart

Carrie Olthuis



MAIL ORDER

Things were hard to come by because for most of us money was scarce. When an order was sent to the catalogue only the most necessary items were ordered. After everything that was needed was on the list and the cost totaled it was often found to be more than the family could afford. Painfully the list was gone over again to see which item could possibly be done without. One time shoes were ordered for me. I looked so forward to the arrival of the parcel. Finally it came and in it were my new shoes. Happily I tried them on. Alas, they were too small. What was I to do? If I admitted that they were too small they would either go to my younger sister or, more likely, be sent back and who knew when I would get another pair. Foolishly I pretended that they fit me well and wore them — and suffered from bunions ever since as a result of those too-tight shoes.

Carrie Olthuis

NEW SHOES

In the winter people wore grit bags for footwear, which were quite warm and comfortable. One time the Kippers' boys had new ones on, which they wore to church. There was a big drum heater in the center of the church for heat. Well, the boys were cold, so they went close to the heater to warm up. Then the old man said, "Look out, boys. Don't burn your new shoes."

Joe Tuininga

BELLY BANDS

"The baby was bathed faithfully every morning no matter how cold it was. The oven door would be opened for heat and a towel laid in front. Everyone use cloth diapers, of course, and belly bands. The bands were made of double flannel and they were for keeping the navel in and strengthening the baby's back. The narrow band was put over the navel and kept very tight and firm. The diaper was put over the band. The bands were kept on for about a month.

Jennie Fisher
Lulla Fisher

FASHIONS

"The girls who worked in the city were the ones who usually had the latest fashions. I think the Terpsma girls were among the first to wear bob haircuts — that was around the early twenties. Soon all the girls wanted their hair cut. But most parents were against it: the Bible teaches that women should have long hair. I cut mine when I was fourteen and my mother cried. I had the style called the shingle bob. The hair was layered from the top, the sides were curled, and in front were bangs or you could use barrettes. Eventually, in the thirties, even many of the older women got short haircuts. Some, though, never did cut their hair.

Another fashion that caused a lot of parents to get upset was stockings. At first everyone wore heavy, well-knitted, black stockings. Later grey stockings came out and then, worst of all, stockings that looked just like bare legs — flesh-coloured stockings made of lisle. These stockings had a sheen to them and you could buy them in beige or grey. They cost about fifteen cents a pair. More than one girl was ordered to take the flesh-coloured stockings off after her father discovered her wearing them."

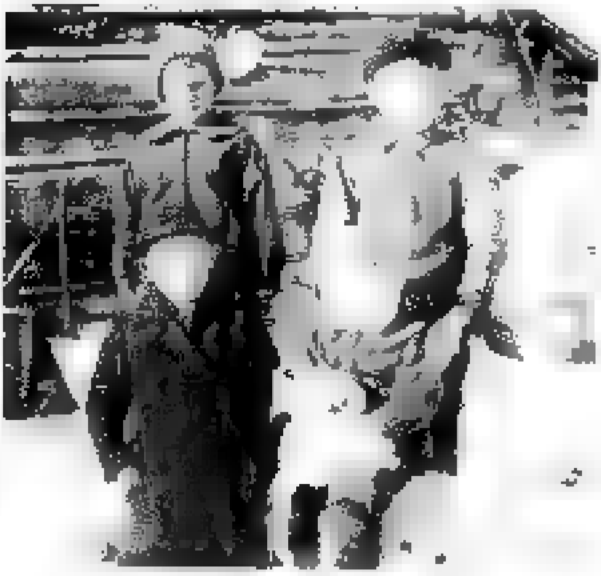
HATS TO SCHOOL

"How we envied the Ritsema girls — they wore hats not only to church but also to school. Some people even thought they were very extravagant doing that. The Ritsema children also wore shoes during the summer while many of the rest of us went barefoot."

SHOE PACS

Shoe pacs were similar to a low moccasin only made of heavy cowhide, usually dark brown and smooth. Moccasins usually could be worn without low rubbers. They were more water-resistant but slippery.

Henry and Anna Michael with baby Bert



Bill, Bennie. Front: Henry, James

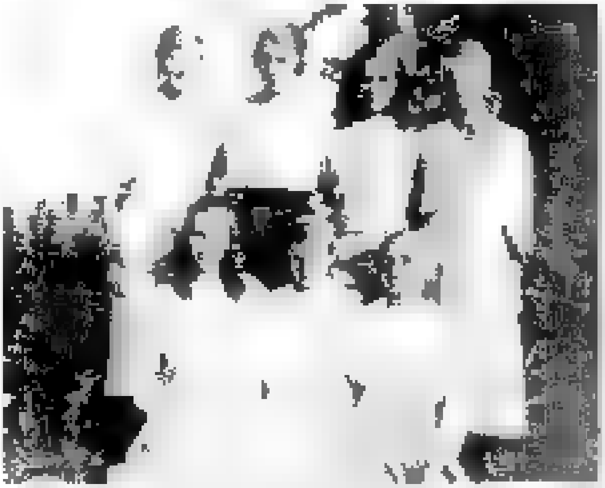
Bert and Anna Michael.

How do you like my winter coat? Lizzie Baron

Dressed for winter, Tena Terpsma.

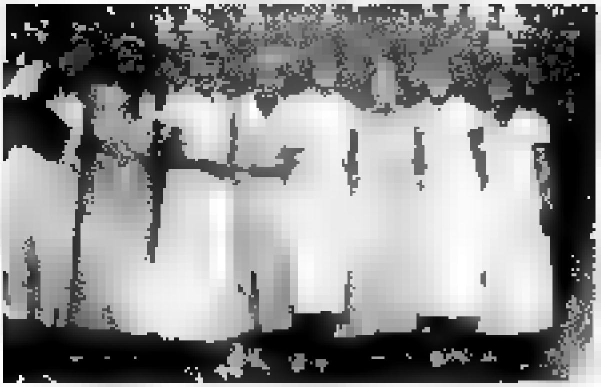
Johanna and Margaret Masselink, early 1920s.

Sadie Ritsema

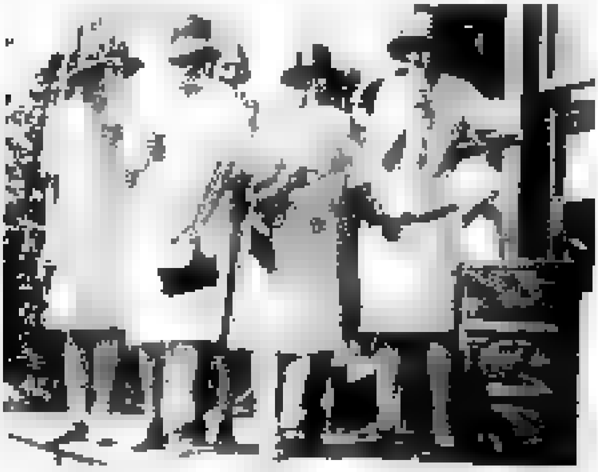


A Bevy of Beauties. Harda Lievers, Jennie Tuininga, Della Anema, Pauline Sturwold. Front: Tena Terpsma, Clara Ritsema, Gertie Tuininga. c. 1924

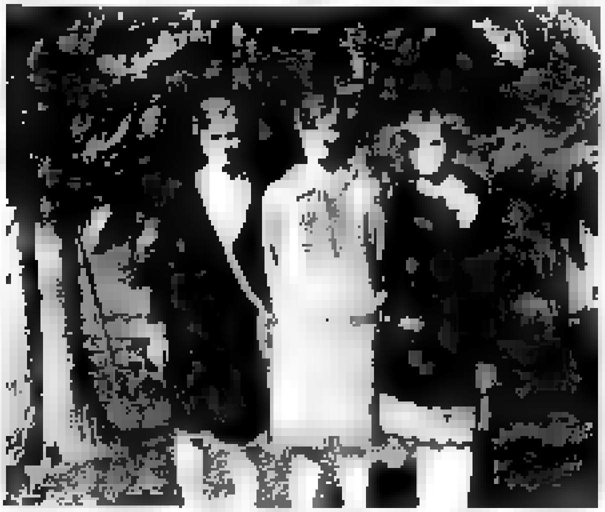
The Redfern girls of June 1925. How disgraceful, showing your bare knees! Jennie Fisher second from right.



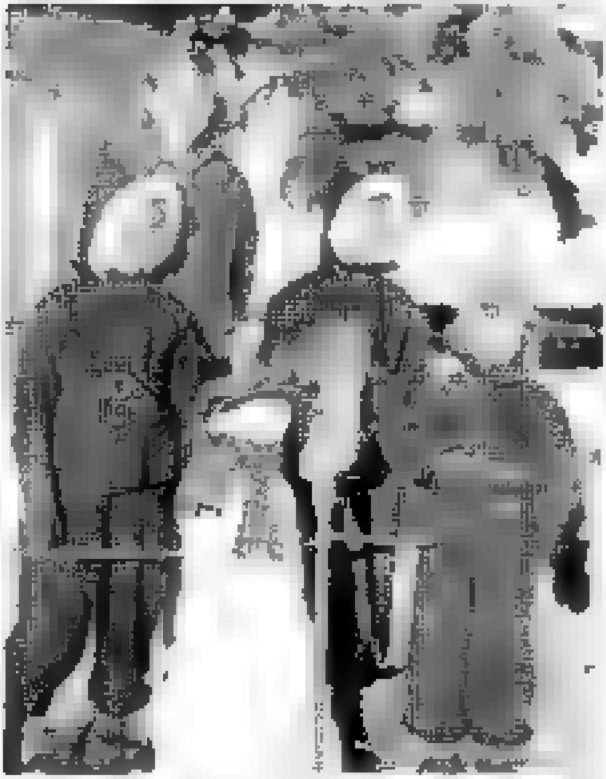
Neerlandia Girls. Kay Baker, Jennie Wierenga, Lula Sturwold, Annie Schoonekamp, Bertha Wierenga (?), Annie Fisher (?), Rulie Schoonekamp (?), Alice Kippers. 1935



A refreshing drink. Johanna Messelink. Carrie Tuininga. Tena Anema. Gladys Kippers. Front. Annie Ingwersen. Susie Anema. Margaret Messelink.



Sunday Best. Della, Tena, and Susie Anema, 1929

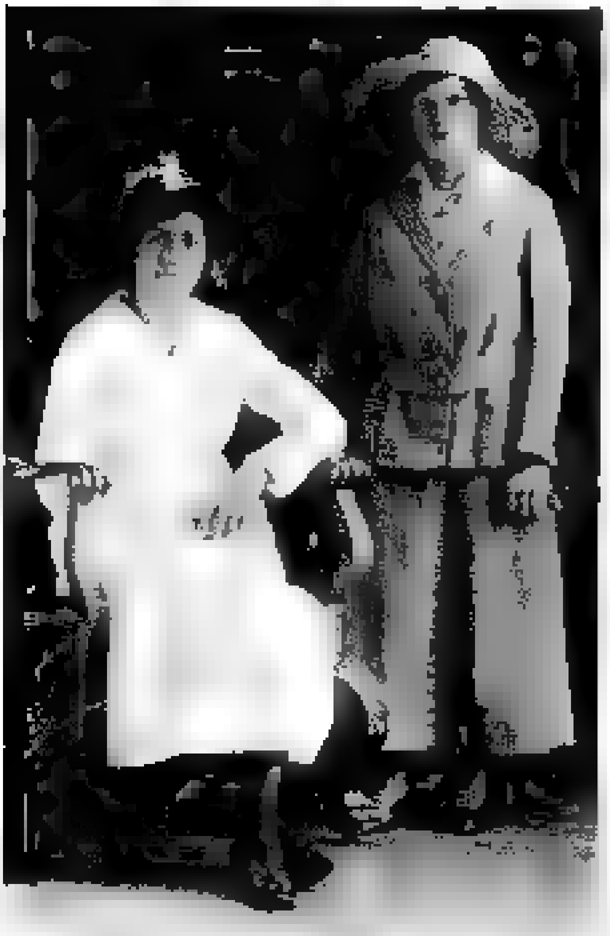


Snowsuits. Shirley Olthuis, Clara Oldegbers. Elsie and Joan Olthuis

Dressed in style. Jennie Tuininga.

Sunday clothes. Gladys Strydhorst, Rieka Lievers, Jennie Schoonekamp, Alice Brown, c. 1932

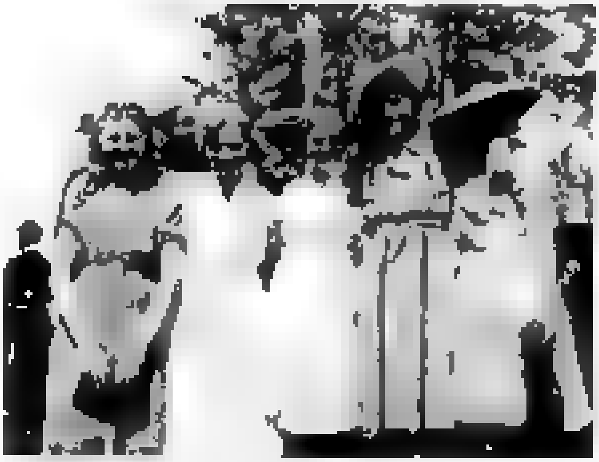
Modelling dresses made by Gladys. Gladys, Jennie, Alice Kuipers.



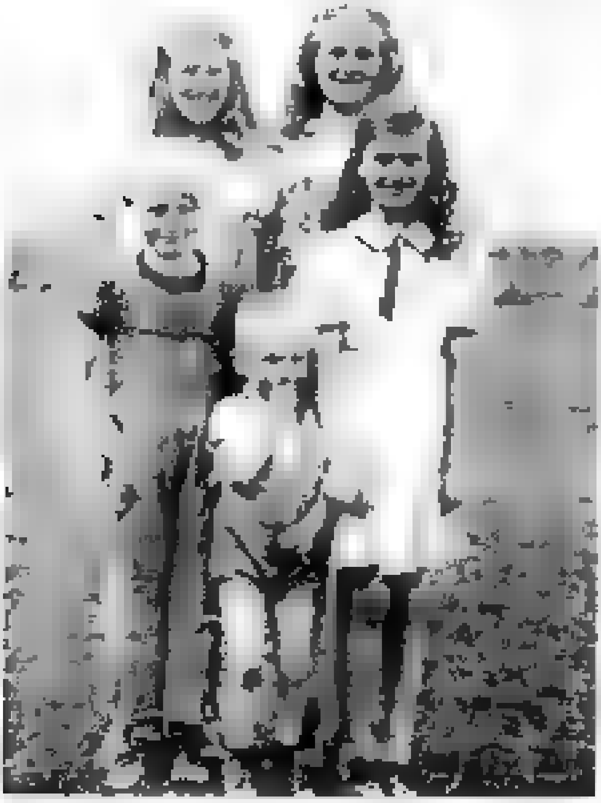
The latest fashion. ? Hemper, Flora Terpsma.

The Masts often wore breeches. Corny Ingwersen, Carl Mas strolling down Jasper Avenue, mid 1930s

All ready for winter: Annie Emmerzaal, Alice Kippers, Rulle Schoonekamp, Nettie Ingwersen, Helen Emmerzaal, Annie Schoonekamp, Tenie Hiemstra, Grace Tuininga, Annie Anema.



The latest style: thirty-five-cent straw hats: Rena Janssen, Helen Emmerzaal, Cecil Tuininga, Annie Anema, Bertha Wieringa, Grace Tuininga.



What children wore at home: Shirley, Elsie. Front: Jack, Clarence, Joan, c. 1948.

POTATOES AS BIG AS MARBLES

"The weather in those days was colder than it is now. It could be sixty-five degrees below zero sometimes for two weeks at a time. I remember temperatures of sixty-eight below zero. It got so cold at times that the thermometers broke. We couldn't raise potatoes for the first years because it would freeze every month. The potatoes that would grow were no bigger than marbles. As soon as the land was cleared and the wind could get through the temperatures started changing."

Digging potatoes, Douwe Terpsma.

BEER

"An old settler, who lived close to school in the 1920s, used to make beer out of hops. It wasn't that strong — yellow water, really. After he'd give us some of it he would ask, '*Kan ik daar ook een stuiver voor hebben* (Could I have a *stuiver* for that)?'"

A QUICK SNACK

On bread-baking day Mother would pinch off pieces of dough and twist them into doughnuts. She would fry them in the frying pan, browning them on both sides. As soon as they were removed from the pan, she would sprinkle them with sugar and we would gobble them up.

WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?

We ate everything we were given because it was all there was. There was no asking, "Do you like this?" or "What would you like me to make?" We usually had potatoes and other vegetables such as carrots or turnips, but often no meat. So did we put butter on the potatoes? No way! We made homesteader's gravy. Here's how.

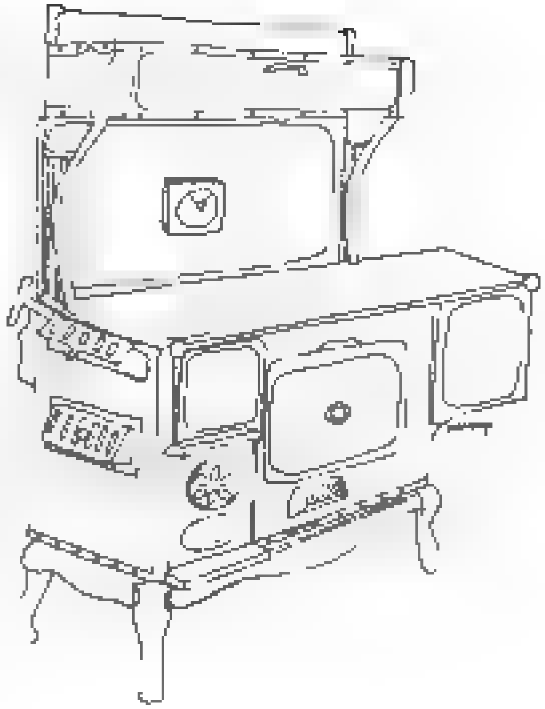
Put a heaping tablespoon of flour in the frying pan. Add a large piece of tallow and salt and pepper to taste. Stir until brown, then pour in (while stirring) boiling water to make the right consistency. It was good.

For dessert we ate *brij* or *pap*. This is made by adding a cup of pearl barley or rice to a large pan of boiling milk. Mother always made the same amount of *brij* regardless of the amount of milk. She would just add water to make up the required volume.

Rice was a Sunday treat served with cinnamon, butter, and sugar or with sweetened thickened cranberry juice.

Another Dutch food was a sticky flour, water, and salt dish called *postro*. To prepare this, place water in a pan and bring to a boil. Add salt and stir in flour until stiff. Serve with melted tallow and syrup.

To make *klont*, prepare a mixture of flour, baking powder, water or milk, and salt. Place in a bag and boil for three or four hours. Serve with butter and syrup. This dough may also be placed in a greased dish and baked in the oven and served in the same way.



BUTTER AND CHEESE

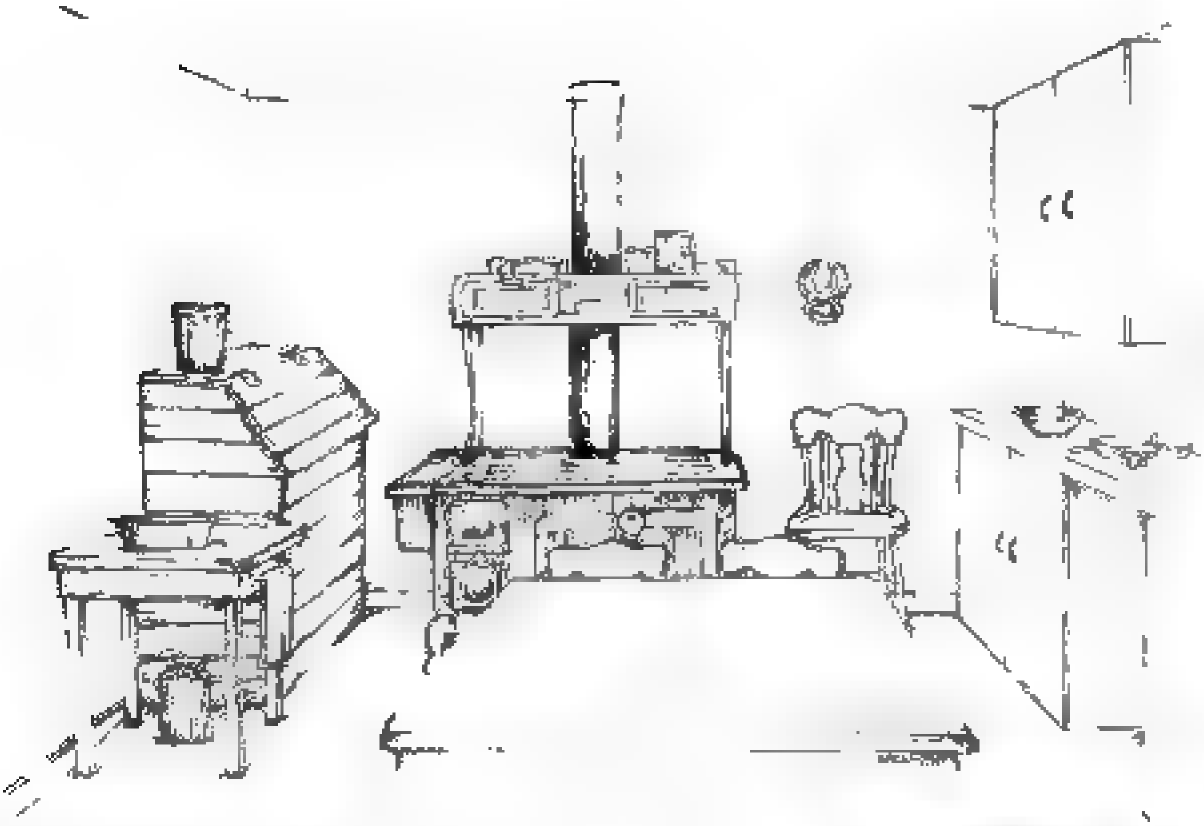
We always churned our own butter, but used it very sparingly because our income every week was a cream cheque and not very big. We also made our own cheese. We used Rennet tablets. We put them in warm milk and then the milk would separate from the whey. Then we would put it in a bag and put salt and colour in it and press to get all the whey out. We'd leave it stand till it was ready to eat, usually about a week.

Sadie Tiemstra

MAKING BUTTER

To make butter all we do is put some cream in a five-gallon can which has a lid on with a hole in it for a plunger, which you jerk up and down. This churning action separates the butter from the buttermilk if done long enough and with sufficient vigour (the slower you go, the longer it takes).

The buttermilk, though it has very little food value in it, is also salvaged. Some of it we make into a pudding commonly known as *Karnemelsepap*, which is eaten with a good



deal of syrup making it quite delicious. The rest of the buttermilk is fed to the pigs and they just love it.

BUTCHERING HOGS

There were always some pigs butchered (booched) on the farm for the farmer's own use. The day usually started with the heating of a large drum of water over a wood fire. After the hog was killed and bled, the boiling water was used to scald loose the hair which was then scraped off. After butchering, the bacon slabs were placed in brine to be smoked later. Much of the meat was cut up and bottled, since the only freezer was the great outdoors. The head was sawn in half, cleaned, and boiled for making headcheese. The excess fat was rendered into various grades of lard, depending from which part of the carcass the fat trimmings were taken.

Andy Strydhorst

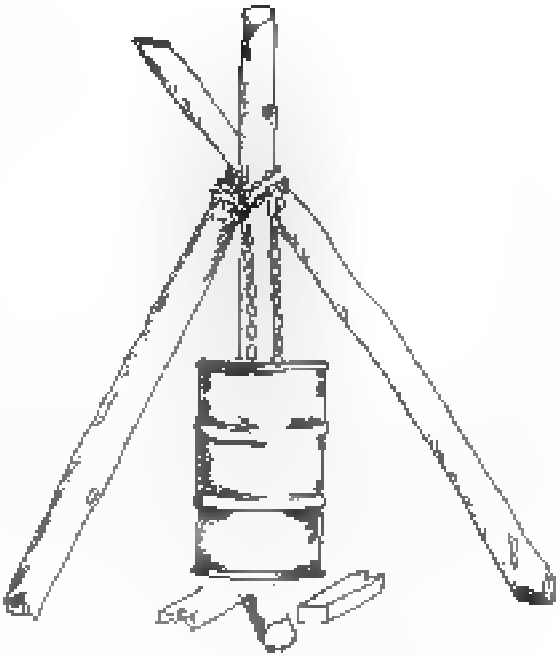
BACON

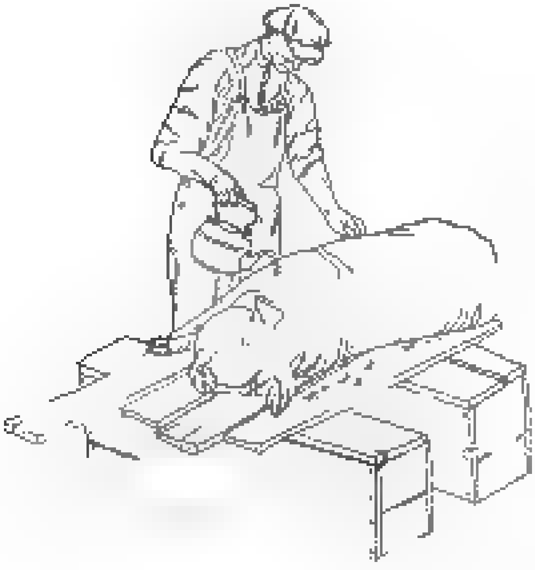
The bacon of fifty years ago was cured for preservation without refrigeration. The brine

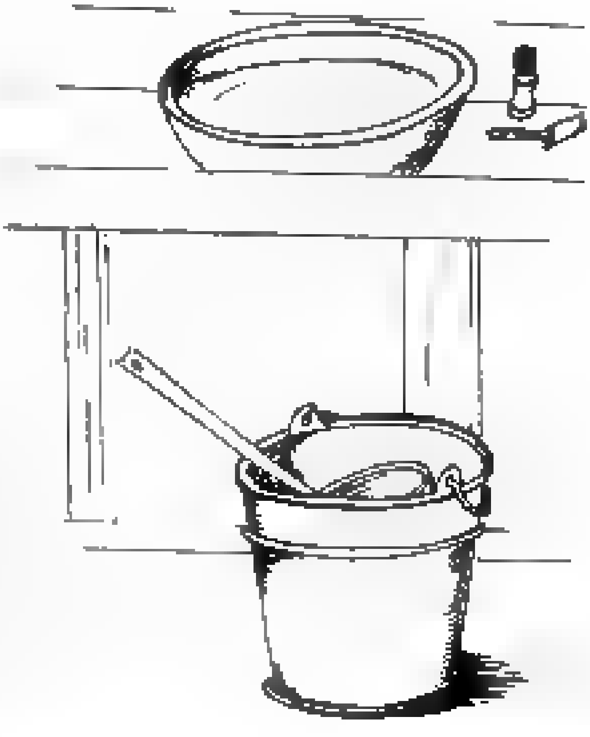
There was work to do. Butchering a hog

was prepared by dissolving salt in water until the density was such that a raw potato would float in the brine. Bacon slabs were taken, placed in the brine, and kept there for about three weeks, producing a bacon which would be much too salty by today's standards. After curing, the bacon was hung in the smokehouse and smoked for about seven days. Smoke was produced by placing sawdust on a slow burning fire. Although sawdust from hardwoods would have been desirable, the sawdust from the woodpile (white or black poplar) was normally used.

Andy Strydhorst







LARD

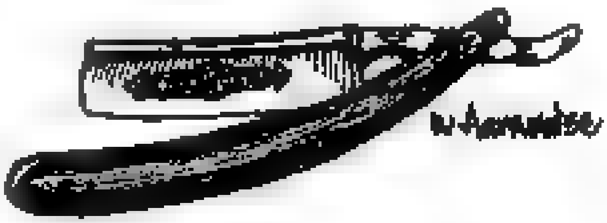
Rendering fat was done by grinding the fat, using a table-mounted hand-operated meat grinder and then heating it to a boil. The lard was then strained and allowed to cool. In the old days lard had many uses, from baking and soap making to sandwich spread. (It seems everyone had syrup and lard on their sandwiches to school.) The increased use of vegetable oils has greatly reduced the need for lard.

Andy Strydhorst

WATER SOFTENER

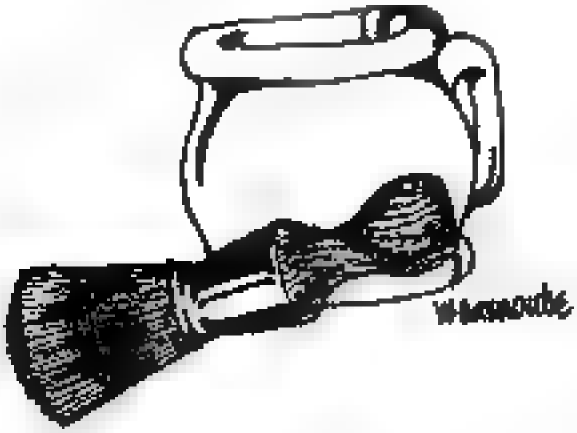
We had very shallow wells in those days. They were all hand dug and the water was mostly very hard My mom used to make us carry the barrel full of water on Saturday nights. Then she would empty all the wood ashes in from the heater and cook stove This made our water softer for doing the wash in

Sadie Tiemstra



WATER SUPPLY

We melted snow
with raisins in it
— Boy did we haul a lot of snow in the house
For the wash



One year we did it for four cows, two horses, and for our family We melted it all

— We had such a tank on the stove — a reservoir and that would melt snow

And as soon as the snow was down a little ways again you would put more snow on top. It would take pails and pails of snow to get it full.

We also had a boiler on all the time

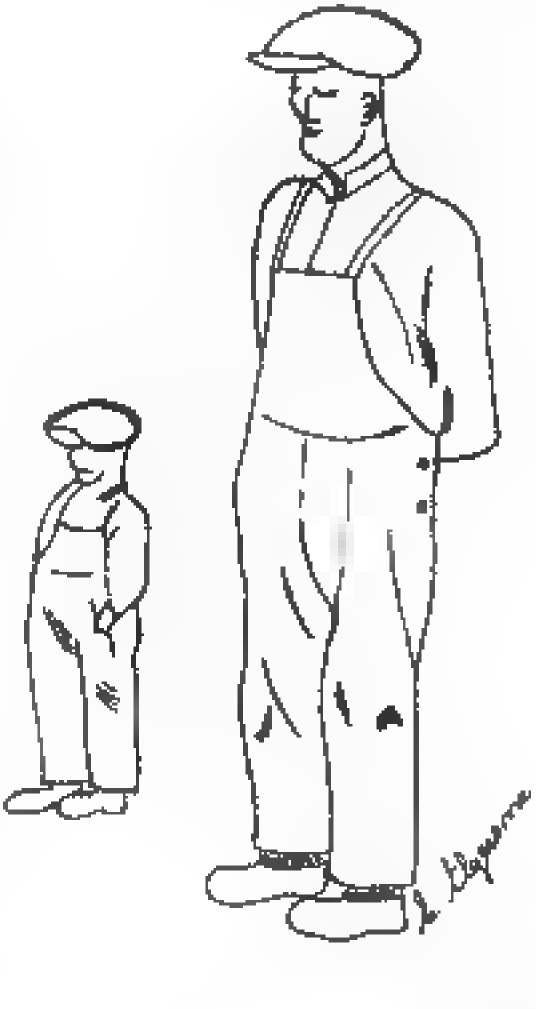
— Later John built a little thing of bricks and made a bricklike furnace outside We set the tub on there that really helped. Later when we had three children we finally drilled a well. And we were rich.

SATURDAY NIGHT BATH

all in the same water
if there was water
in the bathtub standing by the stove
in front of the oven door

RAISING SUGAR BEETS

The Elzingas always had a large garden, and it always yielded abundantly Having grown sugar beets in the "old country", they knew their value and therefore they had a good portion of their garden in sugar beets During the winter evenings these sugar beets would be thoroughly cleaned and grated This time-consuming work was done by Mabel and her father A wash boiler-full was done at a time. Next



morning the grated sugar beets, with water added, were thoroughly boiled and then strained. This juice was again brought to a boil and simmered for a few hours until it had the consistency of syrup. It was good syrup and was used as a sweetener whenever possible.

Mabel Elgersma

COWS IN THE HOUSE

One Sunday when we came home from church, as we were crossing a neighbour's farmyard, we noticed that the front door of his house was open. After investigating, we found his cows standing in the front room — they had been through the whole house.

When someone left the [illegible] door open, a young calf came inside and climbed up the stairs to the loft. It fell through and ended up in the kitchen!

Martin van der Heide

CATTLE DROWNED

Since there were very few fences in the early days, many cattle grazed wild in the district. Toward fall these cattle would gravitate to the lakes. One fall in the mid-twenties was extremely dry and frosty, and the cattle were desperate for water. A large number of these cattle wandered on Shoal Lake ice until their weight was too much and the ice sank, drowning them. The wild coyotes, wolves, and smaller animals such as the weasel and mink had a feast. The loss of the cattle was a serious blow to their owners, but many of these thieving animals were shot and trapped, giving some much needed [illegible] to other homesteaders and trappers.

Cor Fisher

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

One of the first settlers went looking for his milk cows one morning. Because there were no fences, he got lost. Walking around most of the day he came to a dwelling. He was so agitated and scared he did not recognize his own home so he knocked on the door. His wife answered. Surprised, he asked, "Are you visiting here, vrouw?" The cows had come home by themselves with swollen udders before he did.

Cor Fisher

FAITHFUL BESS

A farmer hitched up his horses to the sleigh, got his wife and children all settled in the blankets and hay he had put there for them to sit in, and then they set off merrily to another farmer's place (a close friend of theirs). The purpose of the trip was to help the friend butcher a cow, and give the ladies a chance to visit for the day.

As the time approached to kill the animal, the first farmer, who owned the cow said, "I cannot shoot the cow, I feel like such a traitor to kill such a faithful cow."

"I can't either," said the other farmer. "I have never killed anything in my whole life and that innocent look the cow has makes me unable to hurt her." Both men lit their pipes and sat down [illegible] and then shoot. A gunny sack was found and tied neatly around poor Bess' eyes and then bang the first farmer had shot and Bess was dead. The second farmer cut its throat and both were proud of having thought of such an excellent idea.

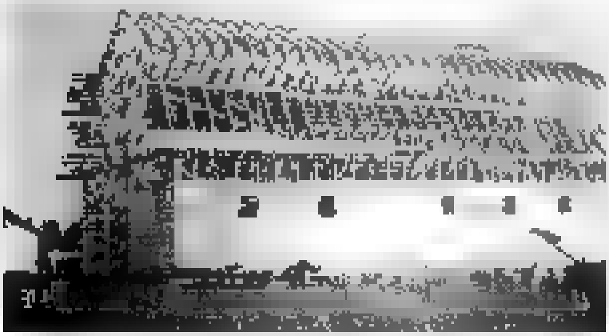
The women had a great day, and were proud of their able husbands. The children [illegible] and were proud of their heroic fathers.

The farmer again hitched up his team, loaded his wife and children and headed home into the setting sun.

A WARM FIRE

"When we built the second church (1929) everybody had to help. Everything was done by hand. Anyhow, one farmer had a team of horses and he was hauling stones to the church, but the one horse was not too sure — every once in a while that horse wouldn't go anymore. And this happened again when the farmer was just about by the church with a wagonful of stones. He had another hundred feet to go and the horse would go no farther. He stopped right there. The farmer had a couple of bundles of straw with him which he fed to the horses. So he took some of that straw and lit it under the horse. As soon as it was hot enough the horse moved on. But just far enough so the centre of the wagon was over the fire. The fire burnt the centre out of that wagon, leaving all the stones on the ground there."

BARNS

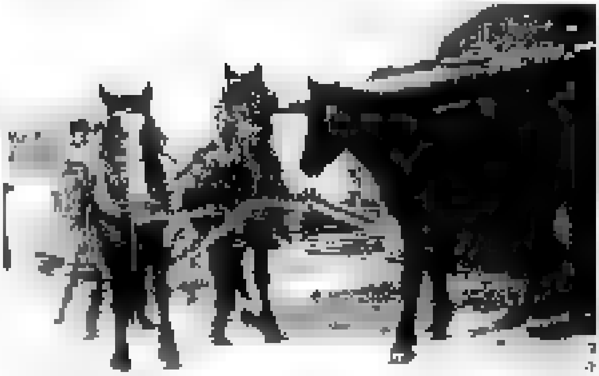


This barn built by Henry Kippers in late 1920s had stalls for ten horses and twenty-four cows

Neighbours helped Henry Schoonekamp build a log barn, c 1934

"Dit is onze stal' geheel links (*'This is our stable on the left)*" Jan Paas wrote.

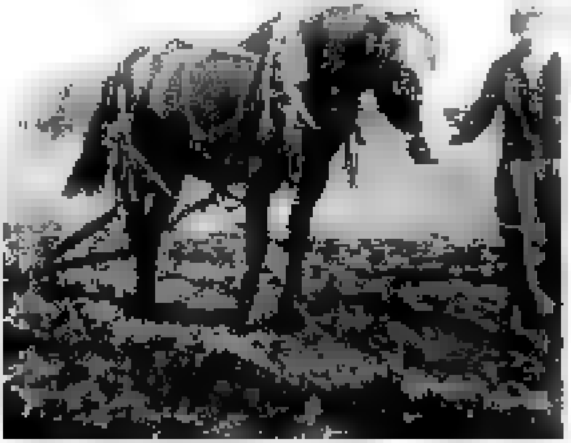
HORSES



Everyone had horses the Barons.

The Masts, 1927

Lola Krikke poses with a horse.



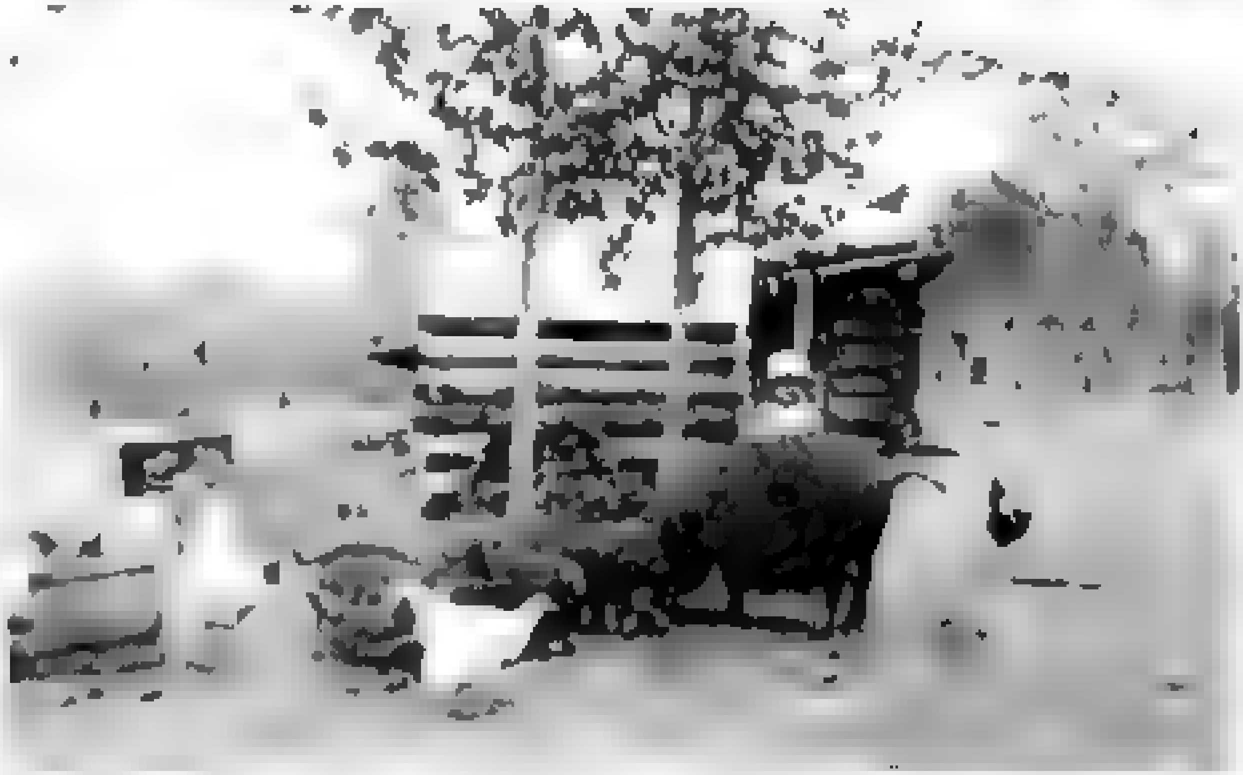
And Grace Bos with a hardworking horse

ON THE FARM

A good stand of hay. Ada Terpsma in the timothy. Note gate at right.

Baron homestead. Maggie and her children

Gable Baker's yard

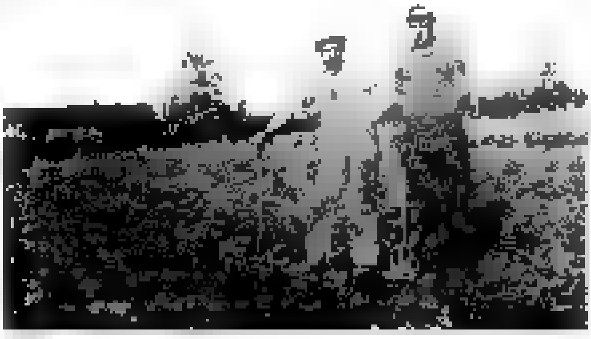


Supper time for the sow and her piglets, 1924. Cor Hiemstra on the homestead

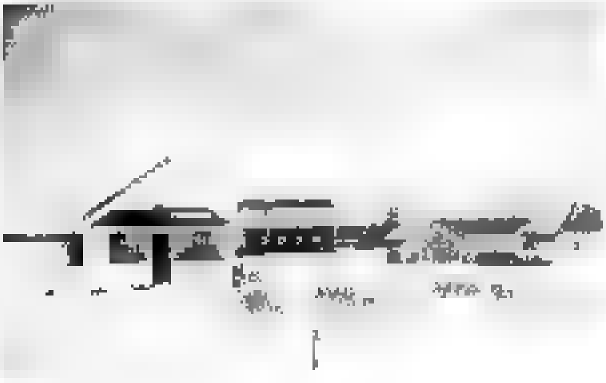
The chickens are fed by Ina Mast. 1928

Admiring the Lievers flower garden

Lula, Ralph, Betsy Bos admiring the chickens.

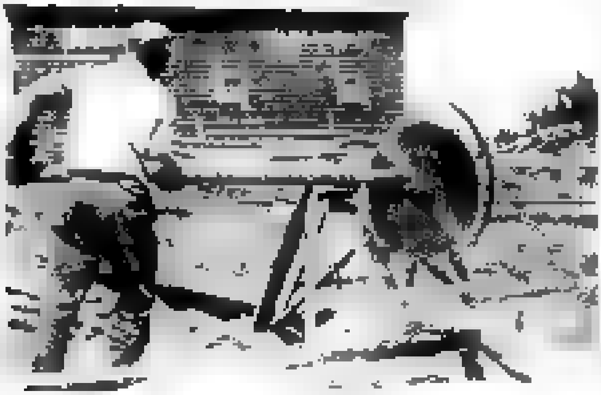


Digging potatoes. Gene and Peter Piers.

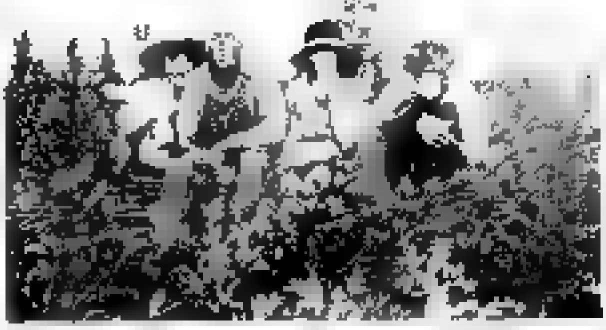


The Bill Bouwman farmyard. c. 1930

Dug well in background. Henry and Joanne Gelderman in front of a cold frame for growing vegetables. c. 1945.

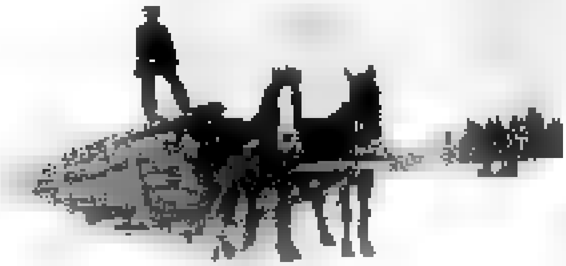


Harry Janssen sharpening fenceposts. 1948

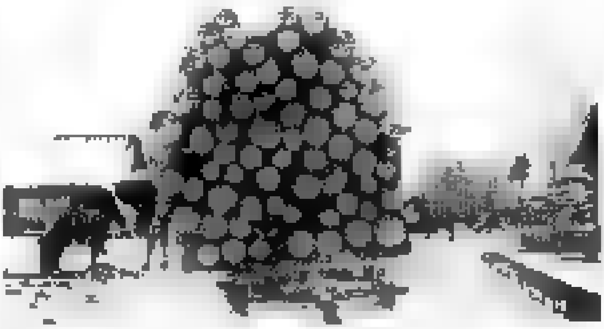


Time for lunch, on a brush pile. Lucy and John Visser. Tena Prins. Raymond Visser.

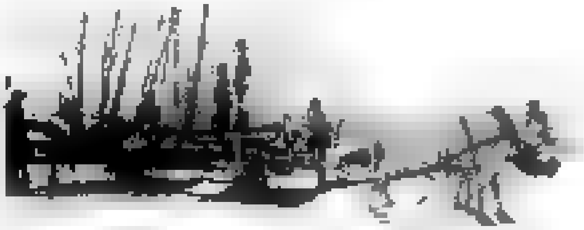
FIREWOOD



Hauling firewood was an important task. Hendrik Lievers, 1938.



Load after load was hauled. This load contains about eight cords of wood

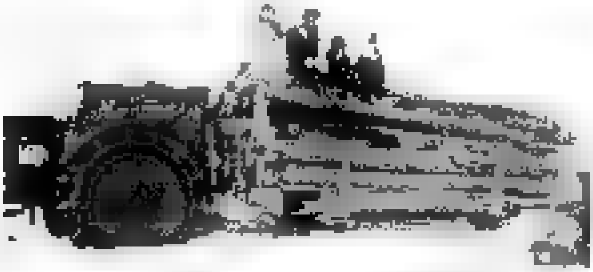


It had to be unloaded at home

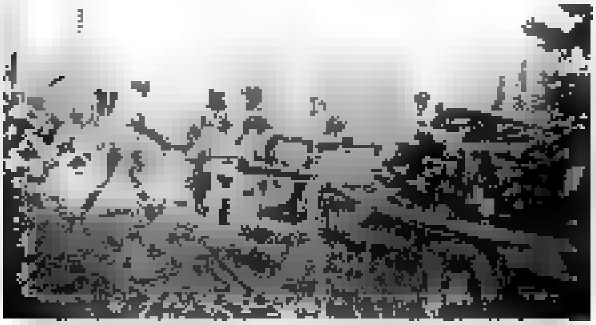
Sawed into lengths

Chopped   Bill Kiikka taking a break.

And stacked neatly for winter. The Hendricks by their cabin

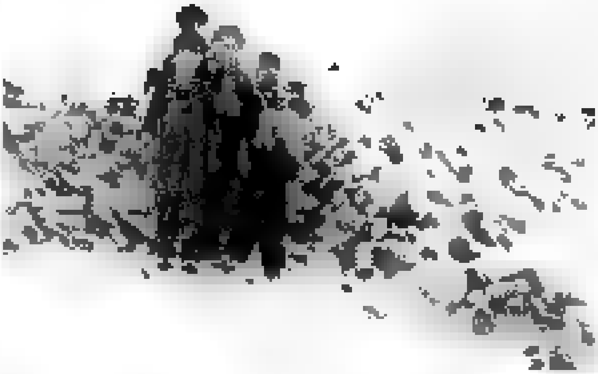


As time went on, tractors were used for hauling. Lambert Wierenga with John and Hilda Molodowich in 1945.



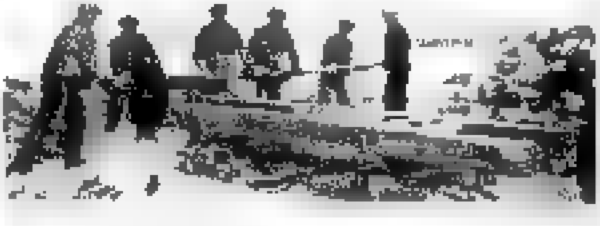
And sawing. John De Vries, Clarence Mast, Jake Schuurhart, Pete Mast, Ed Jevers, 1947

And splitting. Bill Nevis, 1956



Not everyone stacked the wood neatly. Sandra, Andrew, Winson, and Ann Elgersma.

Sawing. Jack Janssen, Willy Toebes, Jan Pass.



And sawing wood. Dave, Cecil, and Joe Tuininga. Charles Tiemstra, Bob Howey, Pete Tuininga, 1945.

HEALTH CARE 1910-1927

When the railroad line came to Barrhead the town started up with a doctor and nurse and other businesses started. Before this event the sick had to travel by horse and wagon to Westlock, which would be thirty to forty miles one-way and take one day to travel. So that meant the survival of the fittest. This was especially hard on newborn babies and their mothers, the chronically ill, and accident victims. Local midwives took care of births (which was convenient if no complications set in), plus the different diseases such as whooping cough, diphtheria, and influenza.

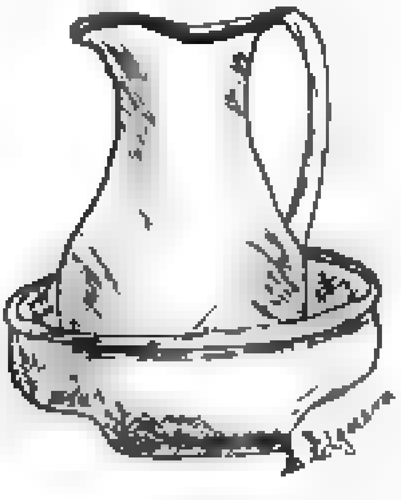
Cor Fisher

REMEDY FOR SORE THROAT

Make a salt solution. Dip a cloth in it. Wring it out. Wrap it around the throat. (Was not done in wintertime because it was too cold.)

MUSTARD PLASTERS FOR CHEST COLDS

Take equal parts dry mustard and flour and make a paste with water. Spread it on a couple layers of newspaper and cover with another layer. Leave on chest or back or both 15-20 minutes (or longer) but not too long because it will burn.



SICKNESS

There were several families who lost one or two babies on account of rickets because of a deficiency in the diet. One winter just about every family was sick in bed with the bad flu. This was in 1919. There was only one of my brothers and one of my sisters who didn't get the flu. Otherwise we all were sick for a whole week.

Sadie Tiemstra

BURNED

When Joey Krikke was a teenager she had to help Mother with the wash. Once she was taking this boiling water from the stove to dump in the tub and got it all over her foot, she was burned very badly. She did not go to a doctor. (This was hard in those days as the only way of travelling was horses.) Mother put dressings on it every day with Mecca ointment. It was months before it was healed. I think it was a good year for the Neerlandia Co-op as it took boxes and boxes of ointment.

Gladys Mast

VERREAU CUTS UP

About the year 1927 a young doctor by the name of Verreau came around with a petition for starting a practice in Barrhead. I am sure most people signed because we really needed a doctor closer in than Westlock. He started his practise in the building that Charlie Wood later used for a blacksmith shop. One of his early patients was Joe Tuininga, who had a ruptured appendix. For a while it looked like Joe wouldn't make it, but eventually he did. Verreau was so proud of him he called him his "Wonder Boy." Shortly after that he started taking everybody's appendix out. I guess there was good money in that and whenever anyone had anything wrong in the hospital you had your appendix taken out.

John Ingwersen

BIRTH AND DEATH

Fortunately, Neerlandia was a healthy community because the nearest doctor was in Westlock. Midwifery services were provided by Aaltje Baker and Petertje Schoonekamp. Neither of these ladies had any formal training. It is possible Petertje's mother, Johanna Oldegbers, had received midwifery training in the Netherlands.

In the case of death, a local carpenter made the coffin. The body was laid out in the living room for several days, then put on a wagon and taken to the church for the funeral service.

Susie Vanee

HAPPY NEW YEAR

When we were small children in the 1930s a nickel was a highly-prized possession. We had a bachelor neighbour, Rienk de Jager, who lived one-half mile from our home. This neighbour had a nephew staying with him for a time. This nephew came from the Netherlands and missed his little sister and brother whom he had left behind. As a result my brother and I often got a lot of attention from him.

One Old Year's Eve, he was down to visit and promised us that if we could wish him "Happy New Year" before he wished us this greeting, we would get a nickel.

Next morning was a mild January first and we left in the dawn, carefully walking along until we came to the barn where he was doing chores. We ran in, calling (in *Fries*): "Happy New Year!" To this day I am sure he had spotted us long before we got there, but he jumped looking startled, and said, "You beat me." We each got a nickel. We felt like two little rich children marching home, and the great fun of having planned the surprise added to make this something never to be forgotten.

Grace Wierenga

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays at our house were always treated as special occasions, whether they were for the parents or children, the day did not go by unnoticed. The type of celebration differed though. For the children there was usually a homemade gift – perhaps clothing or toys, some treat in the form of cookies and candy and a day you were treated as "special." Father made mention in his prayers of how thankful they were you had been spared for another year and that made us feel good, made us feel important.

When it came to Mother or Father's birthday the celebrations were a bit more elaborate. Father was a great one for festivities and he usually organized a special event when Mother's birthday rolled around. Days before already he would be planning how and what to do for her "special day." When the children were small he no doubt handled things by himself, but as we got older we were included in the preparations. The main thing was to decide what gift she needed the most. It would be something that was necessary for the household. Sometimes it was a piece of furniture, or dishes, or some other kitchen utensils. Father would order it from the Co-op store and keep it hidden until the morning of her birthday. Early in the day it would be brought into the front room and covered with a cloth so she would not see it right off. Mother had orders the night before to [illegible] in bed until she was called. We children had to arise a bit earlier than usual, so we would be all washed and dressed and lined up in the front room. Then Mother would be called and seated in an easy chair. Upon a cue from Father we would all sing from the heart:

Dat 's Heren zegen op U daal
Zijn gunst uit Zion U bestraal
Hij schiep 't heelal. Zijn naam ter eer,
Looft, looft nu aller Heren Heer
(Jehovah bless thee from above,
From Zion in His boundless love,
Our God, who heaven and earth did frame,
Blest be His great and holy Name.)

When I was a little child, the chills would go up my spine when we sang that. It seemed so awesome. After the singing Mother would be [illegible] displayed. Mother was always very surprised and pleased, but somehow I used to have the feeling she knew a little more about it than she let on. When all the excitement was over it was time to get back to reality, and Mother would put on her apron and make breakfast, which for that special day was cornflakes, eggs, and bread. After that we left for school, Father went to work in the store, and Mother spent the day baking and cooking.

For an extra treat she usually baked cream puffs since there was always plenty of cream and eggs around. For supper there was chick[illegible]tatoes, vegetables, and maybe, if she had the ingredients, a pie for dessert. After supper we played some games and sang songs, which [illegible] any event.

These occasions were usually the same for Father's birthday, although it was hard for him to be the passive participant, he liked to do the organizing himself, so the event was never quite the same.

These birthday celebrations lasted many years until the children left home, and then the tradition came to an end. But birthdays were not forgotten, we got together at the home of whomever had the honour of having a year extended to their life.

Johanna Visser

EASTER

As soon as Dad had a barn built we got a few chickens. Well, they didn't lay eggs in the winter, but would start before Easter. Every family would gather up as many eggs as they could [redacted] eggs as we wanted. We were anxious to meet [redacted] eaten the most eggs. Old Mrs. Nanninga had a [redacted] the eggs in the boiler. Those boys would eat a dozen apiece. What a treat!

Sadie Tiemstra

SMELLY THINGS

My brother Pete made $60.00 one spring [redacted] bought himself a nice suit of clothes and was very proud of it. On Sundays after church, he always went to see his girlfriend. They lived about six miles from us. Coming home one night Pete met up with a skunk, and the skunk sprayed him. You can well imagine the smell. Well, the only thing my mom could do was bury his suit in the ground for awhile to get rid of the smell.

In our times we all wore painted straw hats to church and you could smell the paint. They were very heavy. One summer my sister Gerbe and I each got a new hat — one of these heavy things. It was a hot Sunday when we wore them for the first time. Walking home from church, I got sick to my stomach just of the paint smell and the weight of the hat.

Sadie Tiemstra

MEMORIES OF A PIONEER GIRL

We left the Netherlands in 1912, the same year the *Titanic* sank. We sailed on an immigrant ship and from Halifax we travelled on an immigrant train with hard seats, which must have been very difficult for Mother with a wee baby and nine children. We landed in Edmonton. My father had been an engineer in a dairy and got a job as engineer in a box factory in Edmonton where he would have to work six days a week including Sundays. Being a God fearing man, he felt he could not work on Sunday and teach his children to "keep the Sabbath day holy", so he decided to move to Neerlandia.

We moved to Neerlandia in 1917. I, being only eight years old at that time, thought it was all very exciting, but when we landed in the bush in an old log house, I felt very lonely. I had loved Edmonton; they were just making wooden sidewalks and my friends and I would build little houses. I also loved school — learned the English language and to read and write in English, and I enjoyed drawing too. On the homestead I was very much afraid of wild animals, bugs, bears, etc. One day a bear walked over my path about ten feet ahead. I was all alone. In the fall, packs of coyotes or wolves would howl on our way to school; it would be very foggy, no houses around, and I was so afraid.

The first year on the homestead my brothers Jack (ten) and Pete (eleven) cleared an acre of land where Dad built a log cabin. (Dad was no builder, only an engineer.) It had a sod roof which was not so great. It was one big room. Three-quarters of the floor was boarded, the rest was dirt on which were three beds where our parents and us girls slept. There was a partial ceiling like an attic where the boys slept. The house had two small windows which would freeze over in winter. It would be very [redacted] house, also of logs, with three rooms downstairs, but it was still cold. If we had a very cold winter the frost would crack the stuffing between the logs, it would fall out, and we could see the moon shine on the snow like diamonds. We had only a heater downstairs. By 11 p.m. all the logs were burned up. It would get so terribly cold that even the cylinder records of our old Edison record player would break; we could hear them crack. One year all our potatoes froze in the cellar.

Our school was one big building. We had one teacher who taught all eight grades. It was very strict and no talking was allowed. We had school only for the summer months. We mostly went on bare feet as there were only paths through the muskeg, but we finally knew exactly where to walk. One summer when we had school in the log church we had an old retired minister who was supposed to teach us. He was very deaf and sat way back in the pulpit. We had lots of fun and would go from seat to seat and, of course, learned nothing. I did pass my grade eight government exams.

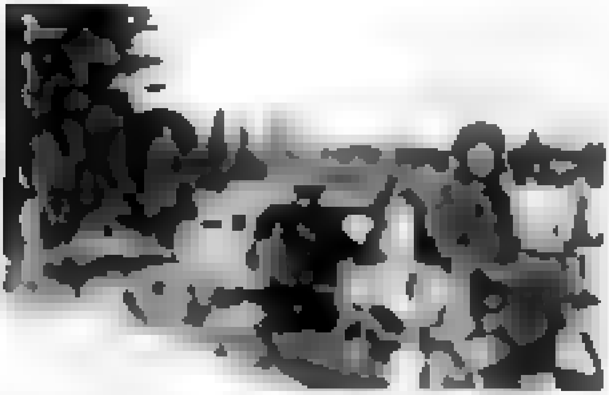
My brothers would trap muskrats in the winter. I would often go along on the traplines [illegible] how cold it would be. My brothers got quite a few, however, took them home, skinned them, dried the pelts, and then sold them. Of this money we could buy shoes and other neces[illegible].

Then one winter the cold and frost started in September and lasted till May. No one had any hay or fodder left. We used to travel for miles for a load of straw, which had no food value. So nearly all our livestock died of starvation [illegible] another year of struggling. One very poor year Mother made us sort of moccasins out of old heavy coats. Sometimes she had no thread, so she took it out of other garments which took hours. Father was always a cheerful Christian, in spite of hard struggles, and taught us many hymns and Steven Foster songs such as "Old Black Joe" and "Put on your old Grey Bonnet".

One year Grace, my baby sister, got pneumonia. Mother and Dad had to take her by wagon through rough trails to Westlock. The hospital was just a house. Mother stayed with Grace as she was so sick and scared, so I had to stay home and keep the home fires burning. I did it cheerfully because I knew it had to be done, even though I loved school.

By that time I was about fourteen and was used to my surroundings and had school friends. I also loved going to church, which lasted two hours. We walked five miles to church so were quite ready to sit for a long time. I would go to my friends' for lunch.

Our Aunt lived about a mile down the road



[illegible]

from us. I worked there from age twelve [illegible] seventeen and hated it at first. I would be tired from the daily long walk to school. However, she taught me much. My pay would be twent[illegible] five cents from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I saved my money and bought a pair of shoes from Eaton's catalogue for $1.45. I also bought a couple of [illegible] dresses. I would also save for a straw hat since everyone wore them to church.

The July first picnics were a highlight in [illegible] lives. Then we got ice cream — once a [illegible]. Another great day was our Christmas concert [illegible] a whole-day affair. We all went by bob sleigh [illegible] were covered with blankets, with heated stones at our feet, and a milk can of chocolate milk tied to the back. Over every bump in the road some would spill out, we loved the chocolate icicles. I used to sing duets such as "The Holy City" and "Whispering Hope" with my girlfriend. Everyone seemed to like it and would ask us to do it again. Everyone would bring goodies [illegible] what a treat! There would be songs, dialogues, recitations, and so on [illegible] a joy amid all the hardships. As we grew up we would go walking to Bible Class on Saturday afternoons and to choir practice Thursday nights. I loved all that.

Gertie Muller

KLAAS AND JELLE

When the Klaas and Jelle Tuininga families couldn't get to church because the small bridge over the creek washed away, they would have a service at Jelle's, where a sermon would be read either by Jelle or Klaas. They always dressed up on Sunday whether they went to church or not and in the afternoon Sjoerdje read Bible stories to the children.

They and the neighbours all walked to church and Carrie can remember Joe Baker carrying baby Charlie all the way to be baptized.

MANNERS

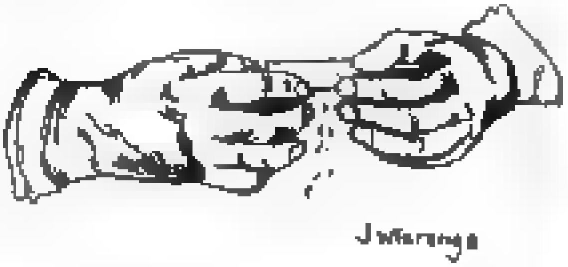
One time our school went on a track meet to Mellowdale. Sadie wanted to meet her friends at Anema's Corner, so she and I left home at 6:00 a.m. to enable us to walk the five miles in time to get a ride. There were a couple of wagons going and we rode with Joe Holwerda. We had twenty-five cents to spend for the day. Upon arriving, my sister promptly spent all the money for chocolate bars. I could hardly eat the last bit (very likely had five bars for the money) but the bad part of it was that when the ice cream was sold in the afternoon we didn't have any money.

On the return trip Katie Metzger rode along. Joe Houwerda left her off at the gate and she said, "Thanks for the ride," and Joe said, "You're welcome." I had never heard the expression before and never forgot it. No wonder Mr. van Ark was trying to teach us homesteaders some manners. We had to say, "No sir," "Yes sir," and "Mr. or Mrs. So and So" — no first names.

Carrie Olthuis

OOPS! WAS THAT YOUR THUMB?

We had a very thrifty man in our district. In those days most men chewed plug tobacco and would treat one another. When it was his turn he would hold his thumb on the plug to mark the size of bite they could take.



KEEPING TIME

The Bakers had a mantel clock, but it would sometimes be stopped because it had not been wound or was dusty. If it was dusty, Aaltje would find a chicken feather that was not too coarse and, after dipping it in coal oil, would go along all the gears in the back to clean the clockwork. But once the clock was running again there was no way of knowing what time it was. So Aaltje would often say to Minnie or George, "Run to the line a minute and see what time it is." The "line" was a three-wire fence that was near the house and ran north and south. They would estimate what time it was by checking the shadows made on the ground by the wires. When all three wires formed one shadow, it was exactly 12:30 p.m.

Minnie Plantinga

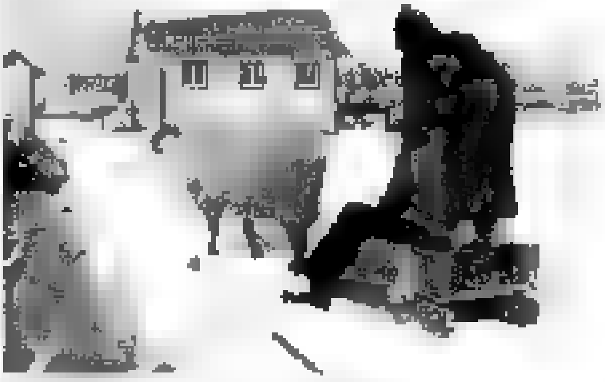
LEISURE

Joey and I had different likes and dislikes. Joey was a home-lover. I was an outdoors type. I liked roaming the bush looking for flowers, birds' nests, and berries. The only nests I destroyed were crows' nests. I could never get Joey to come along, but Lily came quite often.

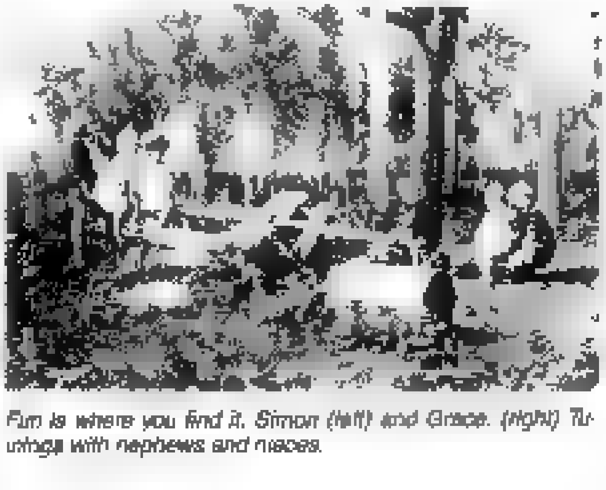
We also liked trips to the sandhills to pick blueberries. We would start out at 4:00 a.m. with horses and wagon and get home around 6:00 p.m. with lots of berries. Everyone went except Mother. The Lievers family usually went with us.

We girls always had braids (or pigtails, some called them). One day Joey and myself took Lily behind the chicken house and Joey did a great job of bobbing her hair. We thought she looked real pretty. Apparently Mother didn't!

Gladys Mast



The Lievers children going for a sheep ride



Fun is where you find it. Simon (left) and Grace, (right) Tuininga with nephews and nieces.

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Good clean fun and recreation was also [illegible] lot. We did not have to spend large sums of money to entertain ourselves. On the first of July the whole congregation gathered around the church for a land-clearing bee, ending with a picnic and games for young and old.

[illegible] saries were always an occasion for rejoicing. The whole community would arrive at the home of the host, bringing food and music, enjoying each other's company and catching up [illegible]

Hardship and trials never dampened our [illegible] of humour. Quite the contrary, they tightened the bonds of solidarity and loyalty we felt for one another. This attitude was encouraged by our church. Services were faithfully attended. Snow, rain, mud or 40 to 50-degree below weather would never be a deterrent. When a familiar face was missing, everybody sought the reason and offered any help needed. In the early period of the settlement this was the only social contact the settlers had. We were all happy to greet our neighbours and [illegible] ings, as not only did we get to hear what God had to say to us, but we were able to listen to all the happenings in the settlement for the past week, be it either good or ill.

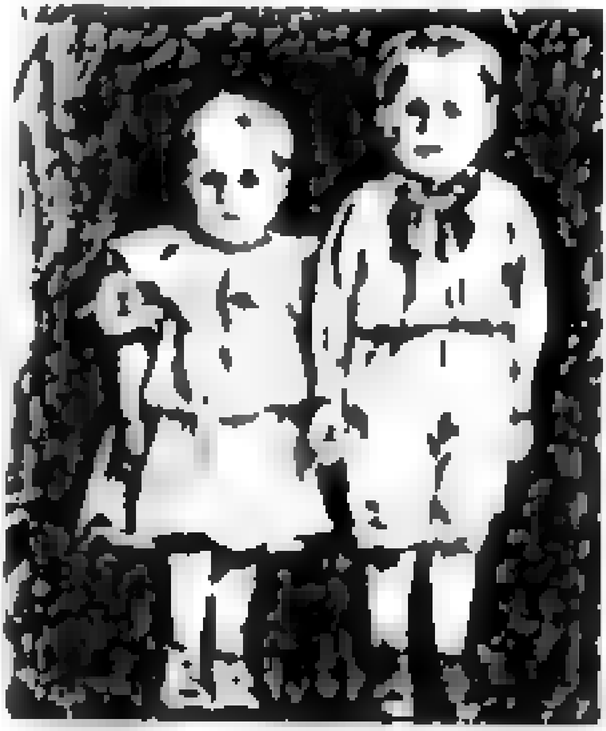
All in all it was a good life. Poor, yes, if one considers material things only, but rich in many other ways. Our daily experiences and trials molded us into stronger men and women physically as well as morally.

T ibbe Reitsma

No one had much money, but a lot could be bought with a 1923 one dollar bill, known as a Horse Blanket

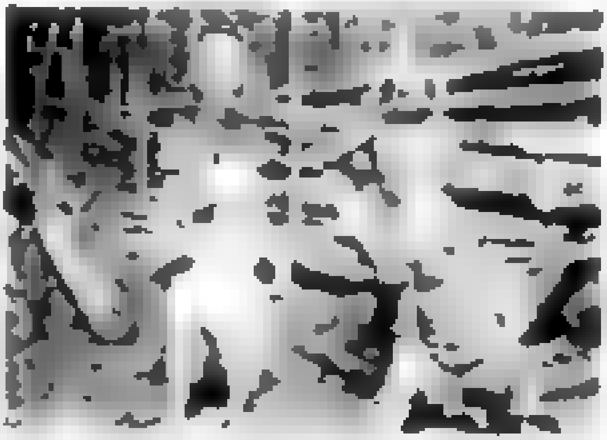
THE LITTLE BONES

"In the early days we ate a lot of rabbit meat, prairie chickens, and pancakes. We'd eat the breasts of the prairie chickens, and our toys were the little bones of the long back. They were trains. I can remember that. We used to string them and later on put them on the Christmas tree."



TOYS IN THE THIRTIES

"For toys we often used wooden spools. We also used to ride a stick for a horse or cut pictures out of the catalogue. Bow and arrows were made out of willow. Later we got some of those blocks with the alphabet on them.



Some of the Strydhorst children

FIRE!

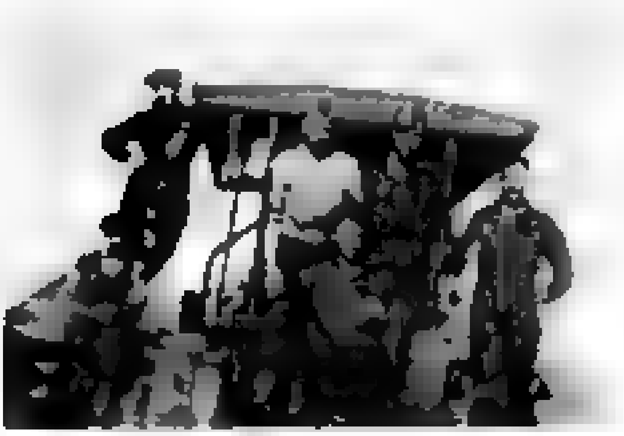
Fire was a real danger in those early days. Everyone had stovepipes going right up and out of the roof. These would sometimes get red hot when the weather was real cold. I well remember the Schoonekamps, who lived north of us, having their house on fire from the stovepipes. This would happen quite often, and all the children would have to come to our place to sleep. I used to think that was exciting as we would all be awake and talk most of the night. Dad and my older brothers went to fight the fire, even Rev. Van Der Woude would sometimes help. In the morning we would hear all the details of how they finally got the fire out. It all had to be done by bucket and hauled out of a well. One family had a fire start under the roof and, no water being immediately available, someone took the slop pail, which was in every home in those days, and threw it at the fire to put it out. It seems in those days the Lord took special care and I do not know of any real bad fires until later when we had cars.

John Ingwersen

ADDED INCOME

A number of our younger married men and some single men went to help harvest in the southern prairies. They started stooking at the end of July or the beginning of August and worked till the threshing was completed. Most of these men would come home with $200.00 to $400.00 — a great help in paying for the winter's added expenses.

Cor Fisher



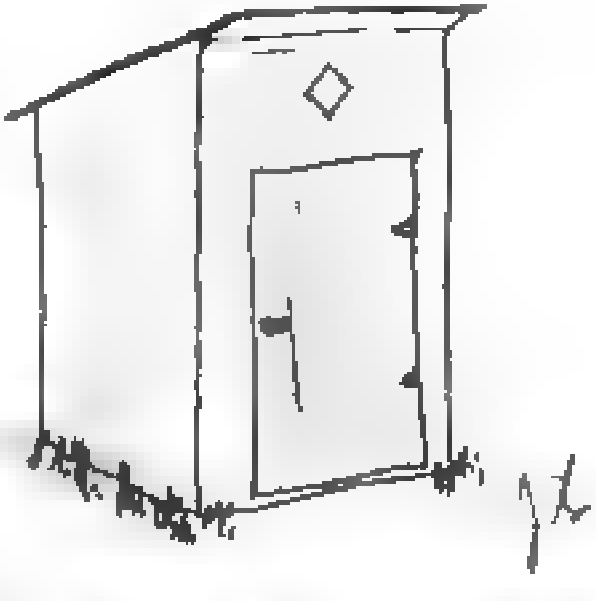
Harvesting in the Prairie, 1928. Two engineers, the Hemminga, Bill and John Olthuis, Henry Kippers in front

TRAVELLING SALESMEN

One never knew when a travelling salesman would appear at the door. This could result in some embarrassing moments. One day I was doing my work cheerfully, singing as I did. Those were the days when we had no indoor plumbing, so the chamber pot was an essential item. Each day a trip had to be made to the outhouse to empty the pottie. On this day I was carrying it to the door — all the while singing lustily, "Good-night Irene, good-night Irene." As I stepped out the door I came face to face with the handsome Watkins dealer. I hastily set the pot down and invited him in. We both had a hearty laugh over it, but I bet he had a story to tell his friends that night.

A PIONEER OUTHOUSE

"Near our log house was an outhouse that had been put up by the previous homesteader, who was English. It was neatly built with peeled six-inch poplar poles — the only one like it in the settlement. The one thing it lacked was a door, and we children had to look in all directions before using it, as it faced the house and was in full view of any visitors approaching the house. Fortunately we didn't live along a main road. The outhouse never had a door for many years. Later we put a makeshift door of boards in front of it."

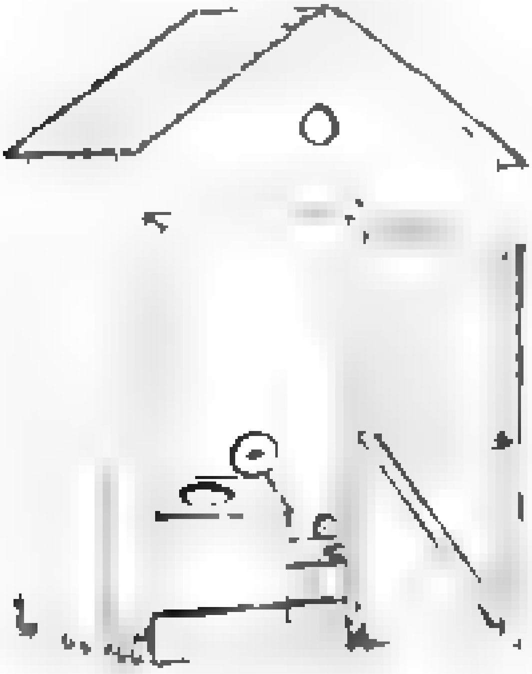


OUT TO THE OUTHOUSE

My dad had built a beautiful new outhouse. My three older sisters were quite grown-up, and my three younger sisters were growing up too, and you know how girls are: when one has to go, they all have to go, and one would get there first and that would leave at least two to fight about who was going to be next.

My parents had discussed this situation a few times, and the only reasonable solution seemed to be a two-seater outhouse. It was really quite a respectable structure, made of slabs.

Slabs are the outside cuts of a log when it is sawn into lumber. Every log sawn in a mill produces slabs. These were piled beside the mill and could be bought for two cents apiece. It was cheap material and was used for building fences, sheds, roofs on log barns, and outhouses. The first layer was put on with the bark to the inside, which gave it a rustic appearance, and the second layer was put on with the bark to the outside which gave the appearance of a log building with the logs standing upright. The roof was made of the same material. The door was made of one-inch boards, as were the floor and the seats.



It seemed to me that for some people outhouses became a sort of status symbol, something like bathrooms are today. I remember that one family had a beautiful three-seater, like in the story of the three bears — a great big seat for father, a middle-sized seat for mother, and a wee, wee seat for baby. When I reflect on the size of mothers in those days, I think most of them used the great big seat too.

Our outhouse even had a knothole in the back wall that I could peak through but, as it didn't have a window and it was quite dark inside when the door was closed, I was always disappointed that I couldn't see much anyway.

For toilet paper there was always last year's Eaton's and Simpson's catalogues and last week's *Free Press Prairie Farmer* or the *Western Producer*.

A favourite trick on Halloween night was to move the outhouse back off the pit in the hope that someone would have to use it before morning light and walk into the pit in the dark. That was a real "dirty" trick and I never heard of anyone that did walk into it.

Outhouses also gave problems in the winter when the temperature dropped thirty to fifty below zero for extended periods of time, and this happened quite frequently. At these times the stools would freeze where they dropped and a frozen pole would grow up from the pit, and soon you would be sitting on a frozen dung pole. The only solution to that was to take an axe to the pole and chop it down. This procedure would have to continue until the spring thaw came, then it would all settle down to the bottom again.

George Anema

BAD BOER BOYS

Jack and George Boer (nephews of Dad) spent several summers at the farm. They were city boys very much unaware of the ways on the farm. Being young boys, they did not always go downstairs and outside to go to the outdoor toilet. They would just open the upstairs window and do their thing. This normally would not be a problem, but below the window were hung the milk-straining cloths. Dad had been puzzled for some time as to why those cloths were still wet in the morning. When Jack and George heard them talking about it, they realized what was happening but they did not tell

They were concerned what the next cream grade would be. It turned out to be Grade "A" much to their relief.

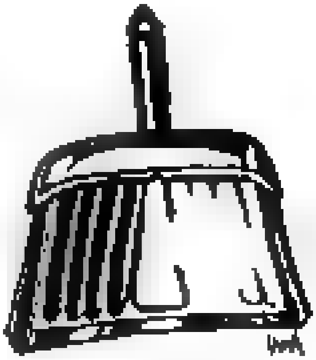
Henry Gelderman

Saturday night bath, Jim and Roy in tub. Art cleaning, 1962

FARM WIFE'S DAY, MAY 1947

Monday, 5:00 a.m. the alarm clock lets out a loud ring to awaken us to another busy day. We must be up at 5:00 a.m. because there is so much work to do. We have cows to milk and the separator to turn the milk through, then the milk is brought back to the calves who are so eagerly awaiting their warm fresh milk. Now the barrel must be filled with water for the cows from our hand-pumped well. The sun is shining brightly and the birds are singing and making nests in the many trees surrounding our new home. It is a beautiful spring day.

It is now 7:00 a.m. and time for breakfast. How fortunate our firewood was dry, now the stove is hot, the kettle is full with boiling water and we quickly have our breakfast ready. Our toast was slightly burnt this morning since the stove is hot. (Better next time, we hope.) Now it is 7:30 a.m. and Joe goes out to feed the four horses and pump water for them. He also feeds and brings water to the hogs and cleans the barn. It is wash day and I start hauling water to heat on the stove. How fortunate that the reservoir on the stove has hot water, so I can wash the dishes. Next I clean the separator which is very dirty because it was not washed on Sunday. I clean the milk pails and then run for more wood for the ever-hungry stove. The wash water is warm, everything is going smoothly, already so much done and it's now 9:30 a.m. I haul the hot water to the washer, and run for more pails of cold water to rinse the clothes, and extra water to boil the towels in. But alas! Try as I will I cannot start my gas washer. I run to Joe for help. I hesitate to ask him because he is busy sharpening his axe to chop trees down on a strip of land he hopes to farm the next year. He comes and tries his best. After a loud roar and a few sputters it is humming along nicely. It is ten minutes to ten so I quickly make a cup of coffee. The stove is still hot and the coffee is perking in no time.



I continue with my wash. It is a beautiful morning and soon the wash is blowing gently on the line, with the extra overalls hanging over a fence to dry.

It is already 11:30 a.m., how the morning has flown by. I must see what is left from Sunday to make a fast meal. There is not much left as we had company for supper on Sunday, but we will manage. I let out a shout to Joe, only to find that someone is out there helping him and will also come for dinner. We share our meal; I haven't much bread on hand as Tuesday is my bread-baking day. I am thoroughly frustrated that I did not have a good meal for my guest.

It is now 12:45, our dinner is finished, and I first go out to get more firewood and a pail of fresh water. I then drain the washer into pails and haul it outside, clean the washer, and put it away. Now I must bring the slop to the hogs as my pails are full. I will check the sitting hens and the one turkey who is also sitting. It is pleasant out there — the birds continue their busy chatter and the cows and calves are sleeping in the warm sunshine but there is work to do so I better get back to the house

I now wash up my dinner dishes and sweep and dust mop the floors. Everything is dusty and the old dust mop needs plenty of shaking. Soon everything is looking nice. It is 3 p.m. My husband comes in to announce he can borrow a plow to get a small piece of land ready for our garden. I help him. He will seed the potatoes. We work at this together and soon it is done. It is 4:15 p.m. and we have a cup of tea. How great things are going today. Joe says he will go back to clear more land until six o'clock, so I get more water to fill my reservoir and a few pails of fresh water to use for drinking and washing. I then get more wood for the wood box to keep the stove [illegible] until next morning.

Now it is time for supper. The stove gets a few pieces of wood and it cooperates very well. I open a jar of meat to get it frying so it will be browned just right. I open a jar of vegetables — after all, it is May and there are no fresh vegetables left. Then I run to the well to get the milk which has been hanging in there to keep from getting sour. I will make a pudding for supper. In a short time it is ready, and I again let out a shout — it's a good thing Joe is clearing so close to the house.

We have our supper, then Joe goes out to milk the cows and do the same chores as he did in the morning. Joe brings in the fresh milk and I turn the separator for him and bring out the fresh milk to the calves. I also shut the doors to the sitting hens and turkey.

I gather my wash from the fence and clothesline as the sky looks dark and I wouldn't want my wash wet again. I wash my supper dishes, sweep the floor and then bring the cream to hang down the well.

It is 9:00 p.m. We are both tired. I fill the lamp with coal oil and then make a cup of tea. It has been a busy day, it has been a beautiful day. Very tired, we head for bed. The alarm clock is no respecter of persons and will awaken us at 5:00 a.m. again.

EMBARRASSING MOMENT

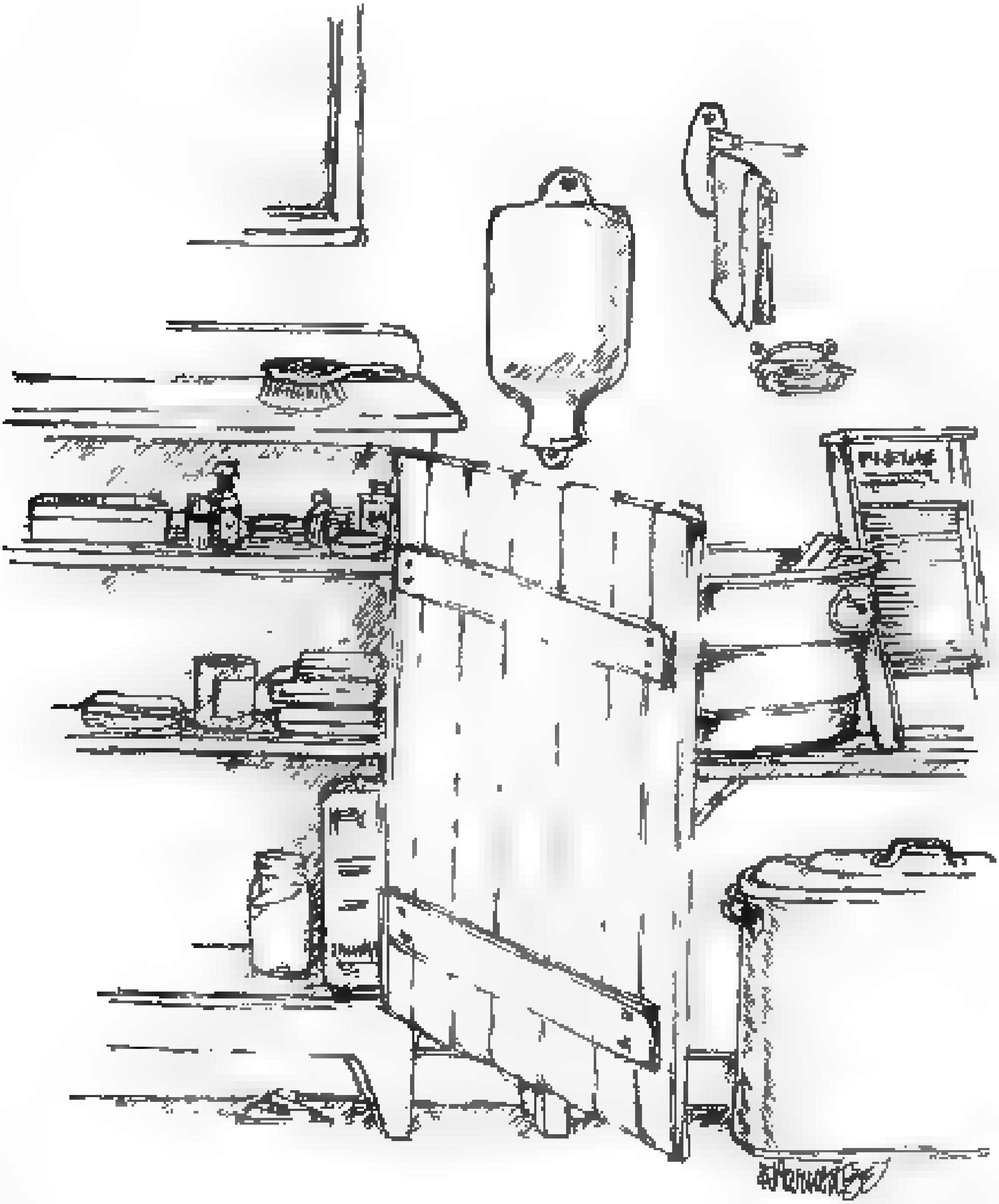
On winter washdays, clothes lines were strung across the rooms, and clothing was hung upon them to dry. Sheets and towels and shirts and pants festooned the lines. Socks and stockings hung there too. Making one's way across a room was an awkward procedure and sometimes embarrassing as well. One man, late for Men's Society, flung his jacket on as he passed through the kitchen on his way to the door. He hated to be late and, to his great relief reached the church just in time for the meeting. Quickly he removed his jacket and sat down only to be greeted by gales of laughter. Over his shoulder hung one of his wife's stockings — the result of his hasty passage through the kitchen.

WINTER FOR FARM WOMEN

"Winter for farm women was a cosy but busy time. Many hours were spent carding wool [illegible] enough to make quilts. Making wool-filled quilts was a big job as the houses were small and a form took up a great deal of room but the results were worth it — having very warm quilts for the cold winter nights in our cold houses.

" Washing clothes was a big job. There was not much room to hang everything inside, so often the wash was hung outside to freeze and later taken in to dry inside. Families were often ducking under clothes in the kitchen and front-room. We had to melt snow for washing as many had hand-dug wells that did not have enough water; in the summer we used rainwater.

" We also canned meat in the winter, as that is when the butchering was done. This usually included three days of cutting and boiling and grinding fat in preparation for rendering lard



* We used potatoes to make our own starch. The potatoes would be peeled and grated then put on cookie sheets. Then the next day the starch would be settled under the potatoes. We lifted the potatoes off and the starch was put on paper to dry. We used this starch for clothes and for thickening pudding. It was a brownish colour, but worked well.

* Women made mats out of leftover stockings, socks, or dresses. They often spent many

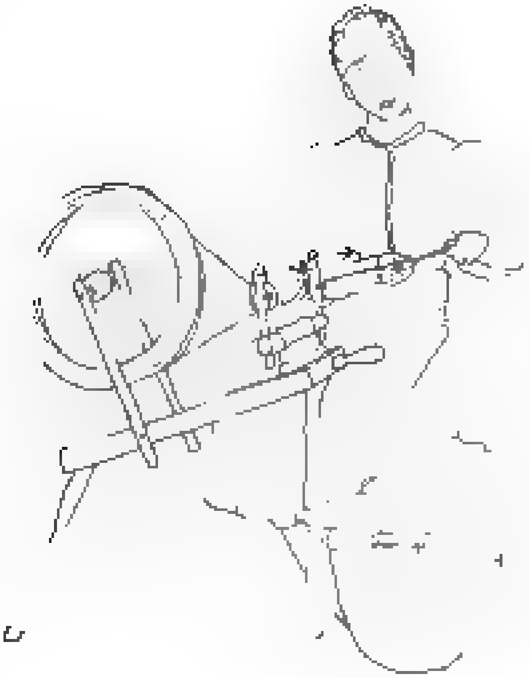
hours knitting or doing embroidery. Many homes had embroidered flour sacks, pillowcases, and aprons. These embroidered aprons were special, used only for Sundays.

* Very few people had fresh eggs in the winter because the henhouses were cold and the chickens could barely survive, let alone produce eggs. There was a solution available called water glass. In the summer when eggs were plentiful we would have several crocks in which we would dilute water glass with water. Then each day we put fresh eggs in, until the solution got too thick to cover the eggs adequately. The crocks were put in the cellar, and in the winter these eggs were great for baking or making scrambled eggs. They were not good for boiling as the shells were softened from the storage.

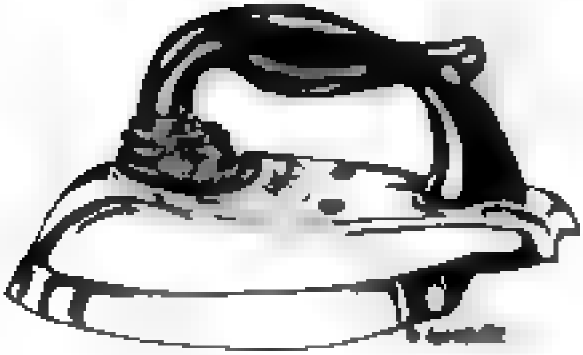
* The evenings were cosy since no one went out because of the difficulty in getting to other places. Only the young people went to choir and Young People's societies, so the family was busy together reading, knitting, or playing checkers. Musical members of the family played the organ, mandolin, or mouth organ.

WASH DAY

I remember the days when I was a young girl, how wash day was one I never looked forward to. Monday morning started out with the task of going to the garage to get water for the wash. I never did master the art of starting the old pump engine with ease. On cold frosty mornings it was especially difficult. If you've ever started a gasoline pump engine you will know how hard this was for a young girl. To get the engine going I had to bend over and crank the engine with one hand while with the other hand I had to control the choke. The bit of holding my finger over the air intake or carburetor always gave me a scary feeling as a result I always pulled my finger away too soon and thus made the engine balk all the more. Once I did get the engine going there was the trick of pulling my hand back quickly. I often had sore knuckles from being hit by the handle on the flywheel.



Once I got the pump engine going there was the task of carrying pails of water to the house for the huge pile of washing which had to be washed. Carrying two buckets of water at a time without sloshing it over myself took some



skill. I often had my skirt and shoes well-soaked with water by the time I was finished. If you've ever had a wet skirt slap around your legs with every step you take you'll understand how unpleasant it is

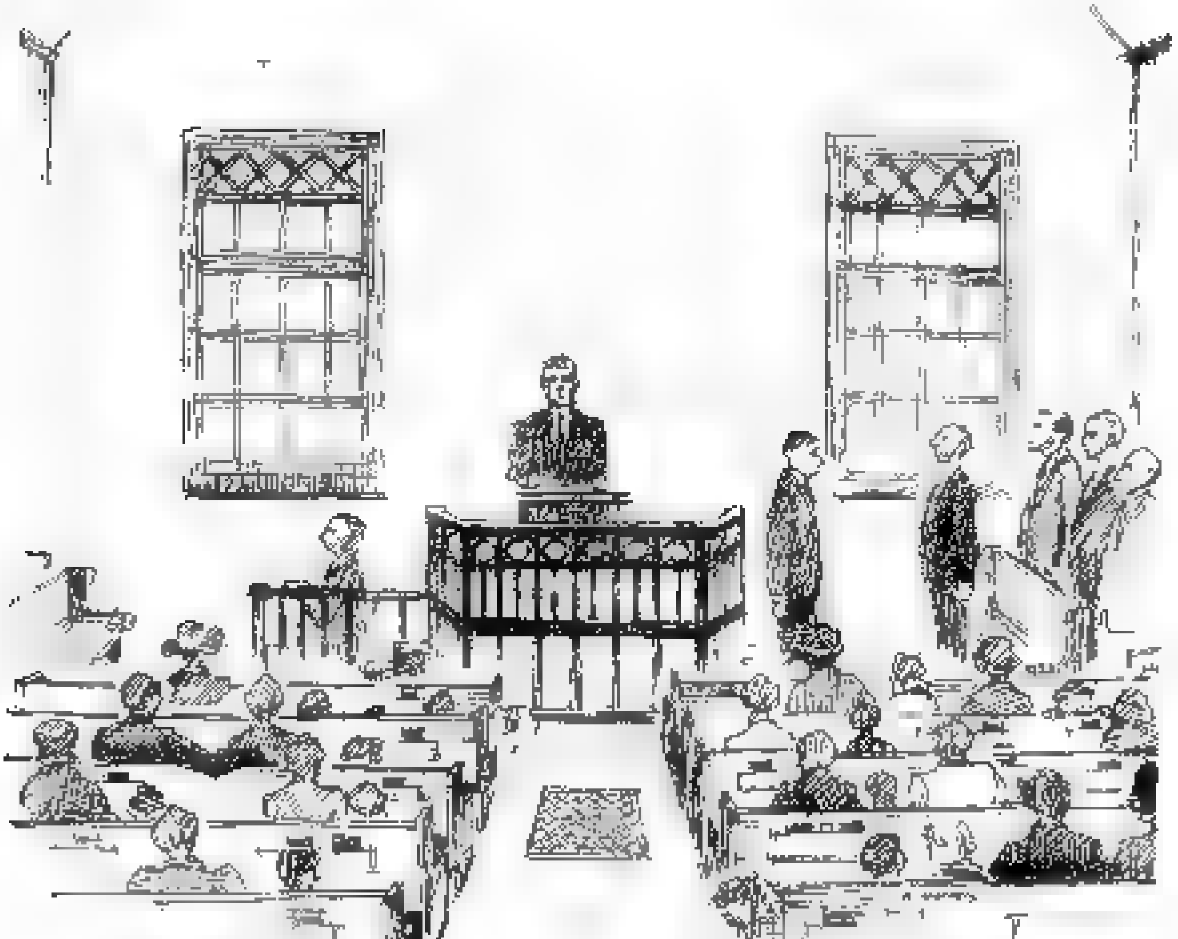
By the time the water was heated on the old wood stove it was time to challenge the old gas-motored washing machine That motor, too, liked to put up a good fight before it would go To get it going I needed to step down on a foot pedal: it took a strong leg and a lot of patience to coax it to start By the time I finally got it going the room was filled with blue exhaust

The old cook stove could only put out so much heat so we always washed with warm water and rinsed with cold I still feel chills when I think of putting my hands in that ice cold water and Mom always insisted on rinsing twice. The last rinse had to have blueing in it the stuff that looks like ink to make the white articles whiter. Putting articles through the wringer was another challenge If perchance the article wasn't straight, a pocket or pillow case corner were good places to trap some water as they went through the wringer it was no surprise to get showered with cold water when the pressure of going through the wringer squirted it out

During cold winter months, if I wasn't cold enough after handling all the cold water and clothing, I still had to hang the wash on the line outside as it was thought that the frost would help whiten it some more and it would dry a bit By nightfall it was time to haul in all those stiff boards. The unyielding sheets were just like handling sheets of plywood. Men's combination underwear became statues and were a chore to handle If anyone happened to be in the way they just might get a good whack with [illegible] legs. [illegible] from the cold after prying off all those clothespins and getting the stiff clothes off the line I would dash back to the warm house Once the solid articles had softened up they were draped over doors, chairs, and clotheslines which were strung in parallel rows across the kitchen and living room, and the house became cool and damp. Although I would be chilled to the bone and weary from the day's work the little kids found it great fun to run up and down amongst the [illegible] the lines would come down with all the cool, damp wash The rewarding part of wash day was those clean clothes and the fresh smell of the outdoors. Many a wash day today I am thankful to live in an age of automatic washers and dryers and always plenty of hot water

Joan Bos

Pulpit and Pew



CHURCH

When the Dutch emigrants who were living in Edmonton in the early [illegible] decided to begin a farming community, it was a foregone conclusion that the community would be centred around a Reformed Church. The intent of these early pioneers was clear: they wanted to start a community which would be exclusively Dutch and Reformed where they could live out their faith isolated from other Canadians and worldly influences. The institution which they established, the Christian Reformed Church of Neerlandia, primarily served the people's need to worship God and to express their faith in the new circumstances in which they found themselves.

The group of people who set out to accomplish this task were remarkably united. They came from many different walks of life, though most were poor. They came from areas of the old country with varying views of what it means to be Reformed, with a large group coming from the conservative [illegible] provinces in the north; a few of them were strong Kuyperians. Each was fervent in his own Christian ideas and, in spite of the different views, each was committed to establishing a strong church community.

Throughout the community's history, immigrants from the Netherlands joined the community. Each group had new ideas and experiences that were peculiar to them and also characteristic of changes which had occurred in the Dutch churches since the Neerlandia pioneers had left. The introduction of fresh ideas began in the twenties after Dutch immigrants again came to Canada after World War I was over. In [illegible] a group of large families from the Province of Groningen, people strongly committed to a traditional Reformed theology, came to Neerlandia and became a strong influence in the church. After World War II more immigrants arrived with their religious viewpoints. Through it all, the community struggled to maintain its original vision.

There was a tendency among the pioneers toward a narrow view of Christianity, a view that considered ideas and practices which did not conform to the Reformed view of Christianity and which were not Dutch as unacceptable and therefore to be avoided. In order to be in the world but not of the world, some thought it best to avoid the rest of "Canadian" society by keeping geographically and culturally separate from it. People of other nationalities and religious backgrounds were at times made to feel that they were not welcome to settle in Neerlandia. The notion that there was only one correct view made it difficult for people to accept differences in others and at the same time to accept differences among themselves.

Regardless of the prevailing view of the church in Neerlandia there were those who challenged it. Thus, in the twenties the [illegible] group left the church to form their own fellowship of believers, a group of people left the church in the fifties to start a Canadian Reformed congregation, and the AACS movement caused tension in the community in the sixties.

Besides the doctrinal differences which appeared among the members of the Neerlandia community there were other serious problems, especially severe economic hardship in the early years and the always painful problem of "wayward youth". Yet God, who placed a candlestick in the wilds of northern Alberta in 1912, has blessed the church through the years.

* * *

Building the Church

Most of the people here belonged to the Christian Reformed Church and one or two had been elders in the Edmonton Church. At first they read sermons when they came together in their homes on Sundays. I, not being a member, did and do not agree with all their teachings but attended the services up to the 20s because there was nothing else. We did not always agree but worked together quite harmoniously — building the log church at first and, after, helping build the better buildings. So when the log church was built, I did my part as a carpenter putting in the windows and doors, etc.

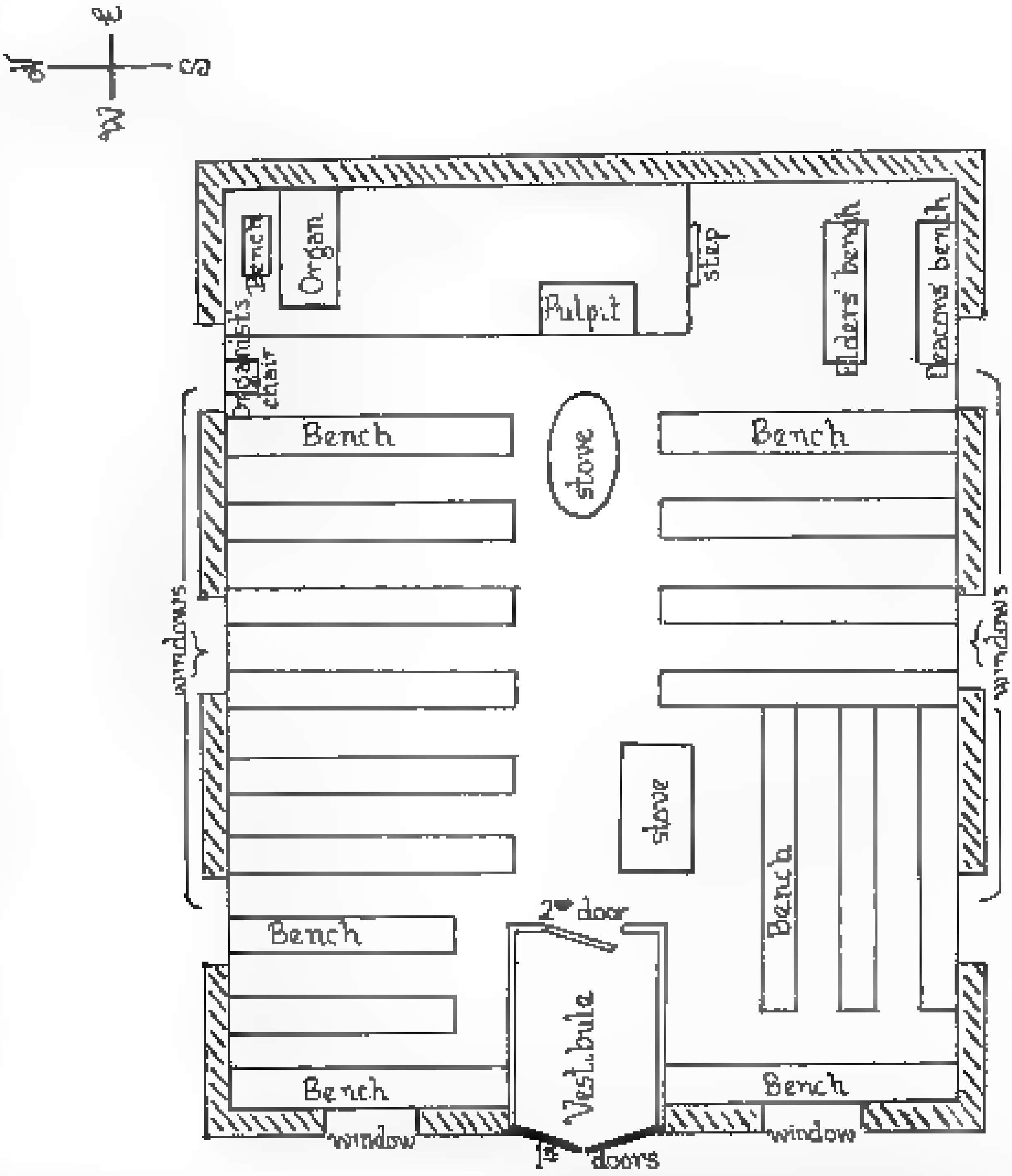
Ben Lievers Sr.

* * *

Beginnings: A Log Church is Built and a Congregation is Organized

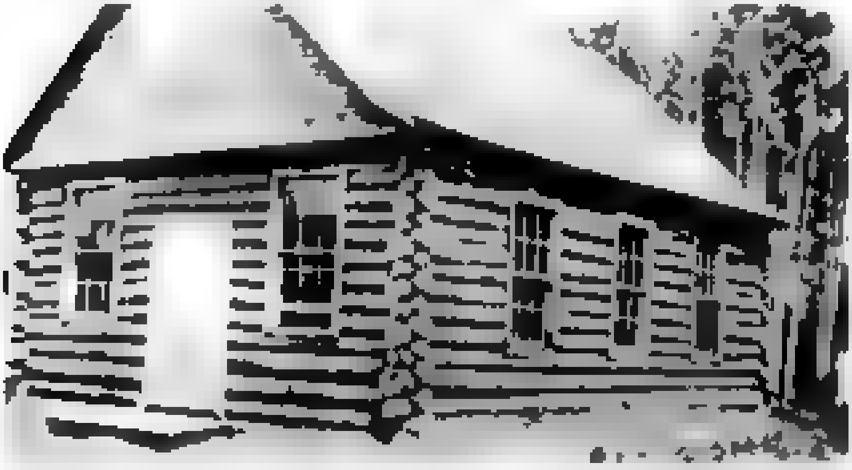
The pioneers who had started the community in the winter of 1911-1912 turned their attention to the matter of building a church in the winter of 1914-15. In the three-year interval most of them, who had their church memberships in the First Edmonton Christian Reformed Church, gathered together to worship in each other's homes. John Anema's cabin, near the centre of the settlement, seems to have been the place for worship most of the time. In the winter of 1914-15, plans were drawn for the construction of a log church, and logs were cut from the Big Timber. They were loaded on sleighs and hauled by oxen north to Anema's Corner and then one mile west to the location which had been chosen. A square piece of ground, ten acres, on the northwest corner of Rienk de Jager's quarter (SW 34-61-3-5) had been donated for church property. A patent fee of ten dollars was paid to the provincial government.

Nearly all the men of the community helped with the building. Several good carpenters — Ben Lievers, Menne Nanninga, Popko Schuring, Jacob Visser — were among them and they made sure the job was done right. The logs were lifted into position and dovetailed together at the corners to keep them securely in place. A block and tackle was used to raise the logs to the higher levels. When all the logs were in place, diagonal braces were fastened across the top to keep the corners square. The roof was made of pole rafters covered by one-inch lumber with cedar shingles over that (some of the old-timers say it was the only roof in Neerlandia at that time which did not leak!). There were three large windows on the longer north and south sides and two on the west side. The doors which were on the west side sometimes did not shut very well and were, therefore, propped with a stick of wood. Another homesteader, William Swaffield, neither Dutch nor Christian Reformed, also helped with



Floor plan of the log church. The building was about thirty by twenty-four feet and seated approximately 108 people. At first the only stove was the one at the back of the church, but later another stove was placed near the front. For baptisms, a bowl of water was brought in. For the celebration of the Lord's Supper, two long tables were placed at the front of the church. Each July First the church benches were used outside for the picnic.

the church building. He made a diamond shaped decoration of cedar shingles on the west gable above the door. The cracks between the logs were chinked with moss to keep the wind out.



Log church built in 1915

At first the inside of the church was just bare logs, but several years later they were covered with heavy blue building paper held in place with shingle nails and large tin washers. The ceiling was open to the roof. The building was about twenty four by thirty feet and had a seating capacity of 150 people. There was a small podium at the front for the minister or, as was more often the case, a reading elder. The building was heated with a large wood-burning stove near the back. Later another heater was added near the front of the building. The total cost was about two hundred dollars, one hundred of this was received from the CRC Church Help Fund.

With a church building nearly completed, the settlers made a request to Classis Pacific of the Christian Reformed Church that they be allowed to organize as a congregation of that denomination in Neerlandia. The request was granted, and Rev. Guikema of Everett, Washington, and Rev. Vriesman of Zillah, Washington, were appointed to assist the consistory of Edmonton Christian Reformed Church in the task of promoting and establishing a Christian Reformed Church in Neerlandia.

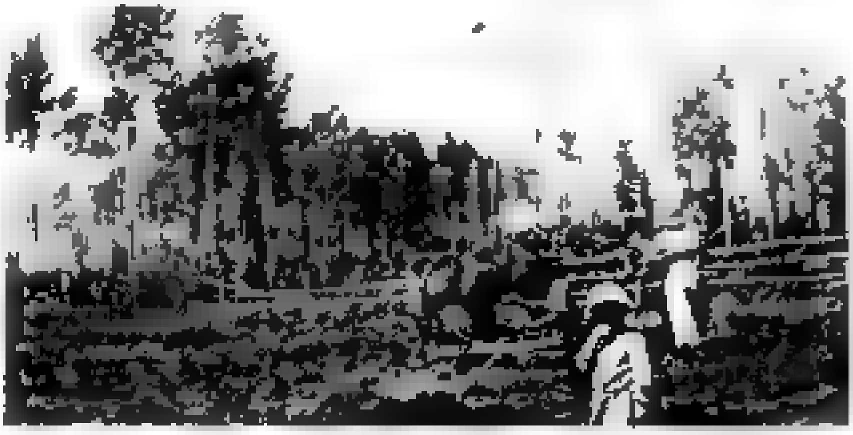
On May 1, 1915, the following memberships were transferred from Edmonton to Neerlandia:

Jan and Froukje Anema with three children
Gaele and Catherina Baker with three children
Derkus and Johanna Hummink with two children
Cornelius and Hermina Ingwersen with four children
Hendrik and Mina Kannegieter
Rudolf and Geesje Kieneker with seven children
Henry and Jennigje Kippers with four children
Klaas Krikke
Albert and Everdina Mast with one child
Mutke Mast with one child
Johan and Everdina Messelink with three children
[illegible] and Anna Michael
Albertus Jan and Johanna Oldeebers with one child
Hermanus and [illegible] Schoonekamp with two children
Popko and Jantje Schuring with two children

Douwe and Betje Terpsma with six children
Siebren and Willemke Siemstra with three children
Hendrik van den Burg

Even though there were more settlers in Neerlandia, not all of them immediately requested membership transfers from Edmonton.

Clearing around church building, July 1



Discing the church grounds.

On Wednesday, June 2, 1915, the organizational meeting for the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church was held in the new log church which had recently been completed. It was pouring rain, but since there was no way of letting people know if the meeting was cancelled, it was held anyhow. In spite of the weather, nearly all of the congregation was present for the event. Rev. Teerd Jongbloed and deacon C. Quist had come from Edmonton the previous week to represent the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church for the occasion. Rev. Jongbloed chaired the meeting and Case Ingwersen was asked to take minutes. Rev. Jongbloed explained that the two ministers from Washington were unable to be present so he had been asked to take charge of the organizing ceremony. At the time it was organized the congregation was composed of seventeen families. There were thirty-five confessing members and forty-six baptized members, including Gerrit and Wilhelmina Nyland and their three children, Hermiena, William, and Fredrik, of Eastburg.

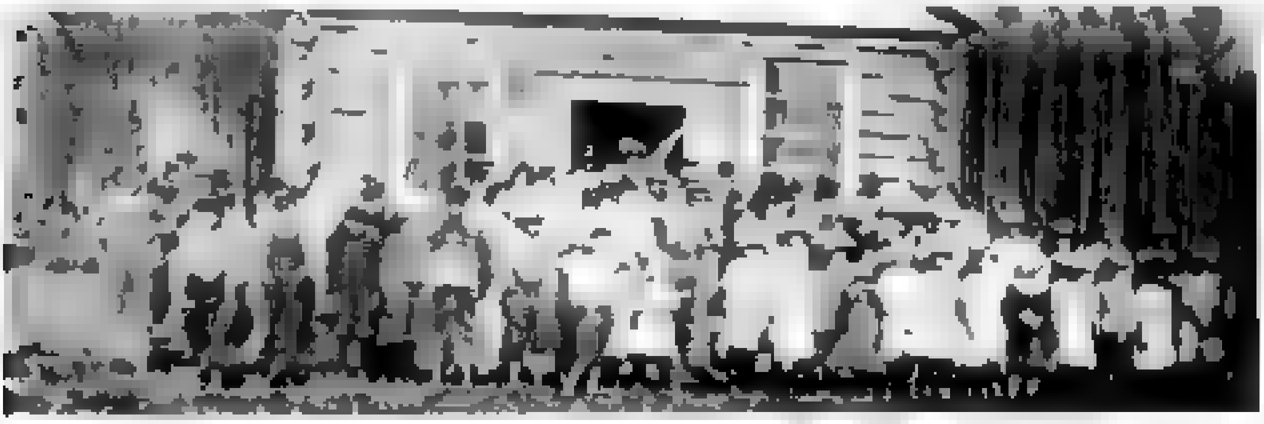
After Rev. Jongbloed declared the congregation organized, nomination of candidates for consistory took place. It was decided

to have three elders and two deacons. After nominations, there was a recess of one hour to give the candidates time to decide whether to allow their names to stand. The first consistory consisted of Gatie Baker, Case Ingwersen, and Tjipko Schuring as elders and Johan Messelink and Siebren Tiemstra as deacons.

The first consistory meeting was held immediately after the organizing ceremonies were over. Matters discussed at this meeting included the need for a communion set, a baptismal font, and an organ. It was decided not to get any of these immediately because there was no money. At this meeting Arie Emmerzael, who was from the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk* of Hillegom, the Netherlands, was accepted as a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The treasurer reported an income until that time of $278, which included $60 from the Church Help Fund. Expenses were $[illegible].04, leaving a balance of $[illegible].96.

The Formative Years 1915-1927

The new consistory immediately attended to the more administrative aspects of running a church. These included ordering a book of sermons, *Menigerlei Genade* from the Netherlands for use in the reading services and a set of catechism books for the young people in the congregation. After about eight months, Hendrik Schoonekamp was hired as church custodian at $2.[illegible]5 per month,


First congregation c. 1915.

replacing Rienk de Jager who had to that time done the job free of charge. The church yard and cemetery were fenced off by Jacob Visser and Willem de Groot for twenty-five dollars. The consistory put an advertisement in *De Wachter* for a used communion set and several months later a set was received from the Englewood Christian Reformed Church in New Jersey.

There was much to be done, and the consistory had to set priorities for what to do with the available funds. When a complaint was heard about the poor singing during the services, the diagnosis was simple: there was no organ to lead the singing. Yet the consistory decided against purchasing an organ since there was not enough money. Efforts to obtain a student pastor through Classis (October 22, 1915) and to have a room built on to the church to be used as a classroom (December 8, 1916) also came to naught.

* * *

A Dirty Story

Once Mr. Tiemstra went to Dusseldorf to get a minister to preach on Sunday. In the fashion of the day, he used his team of oxen pulling a two-wheel cart. (These carts, often homemade, were the only vehicles that could travel the rough trails we had instead of roads.) Before leaving, these two oxen had their fill of June tender green grass and as a result their bowel movement was one without [illegible] On the way back, jogging at about two-and-a-half miles an hour, one of the oxen hit a pothole deeper than the others. Trying to get out of there, pulling and grunting, he lifted his tail and sprayed the dear minister who was sitting directly behind him. The poor man was covered from head to toe with digested green grass.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *

In 1915, Albert Mast requested a plot in the cemetery for his infant child who had been buried on the Mast homestead. The consistory had to admit the cemetery was not ready yet. Shortly thereafter Popko Schuring drew up a cemetery plan giving alignment specifications, and by 1919 plots could be reserved for one dollar each.

In 1918, improvements were made to the church property. Henry Michael was awarded a contract to haul four thousand board feet of lumber from a nearby mill for $1[illegible], and an eight-stall horse barn was built. The consistory decided to charge three dollars rent per year for each stall to cover the cost of construction.

The church showed gradual growth in its early history. Soon after it was organized more community members joined. In June 1915 the baptism papers of Jelle Houwerda and in November of the same year the membership papers of Hendrika Boer de Groot, Johannes [illegible], Hendrik Hiemstra, and Willem [illegible] and the families of Fred Baron and Jacob Visser were transferred from the Edmonton church. Roelof [illegible] and his family transferred from the Monarch Christian Reformed Church in April 1916 and Willem and Marina van Ark were accepted as members from the Lutheran church in February [illegible]. In June [illegible] C. K. Mast became the first young person in the congregation to make public profession of faith and in December 1917 Rients de Jager, [illegible] Houwerda, and Tjibbe Reitsma did the same. Soon these occurrences were commonplace. By 1920 the church role had swelled to include twenty-seven families with [illegible] baptized and confessing members. By 1922 five more families had joined the fellowship and by the late twenties over forty families were associated with the Neerlandia church.

Worship services were held once a Sunday until 1919 when it was decided to have two services during the summers. The services were usually well-attended in spite of the worst condition of the trails. The consistory did receive occasional complaints: the poor singing, the tobacco chewing during the services (at least one member was known to have staked out his territory on the church floor), and the late start of the worship services — they were supposed to begin at 11:00 a.m.

* * *

A Saloon

"The women sat in the front of the church with the children and the men sat in the back where there was a heater. If a father came alone, the children would sit with him. The men would stand during the long prayer.

Douwe and Betje Terpsma were the only couple that sat together until Bill Kokke and his wife came; they also sat together.

Old de Groot always sat alone in the same spot and he would spit the juice from his pruimpje on the floor or through the cracks between the logs.

The men used to smoke like troopers in the old church before the service. A sign was put up 'Verzoeken niet te roken' (Requested not to smoke) with little effect. Once when Kannegieter and Strodhorst came into the church at the same time, Kannegieter remarked, 'Het ruikt hier wel een saloon' (It smells like a saloon in here)."

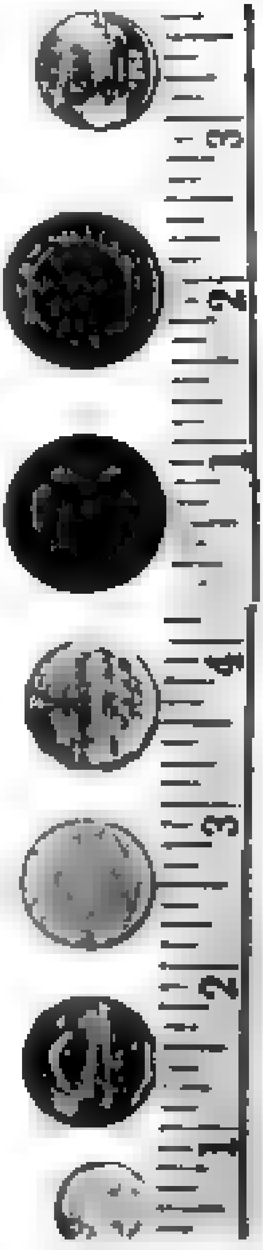
* * *

Dutch was the language of the church services, which were conducted by visiting ministers from Classis Pella or, more often, by an elder reading the Dutch sermons received from the Netherlands. Communion was celebrated; a minister had to be present. The people sat at a table and passed around the cup of wine and the bread. While the church had no organ, *Psalmen* were sung with Albert Mast serving as *voorzanger*; there was a variety of *Psalmboeken* however. Collections for benevolence were held every Sunday and the people gave what they could. Usually the total was one to two dollars each Sunday during the first few years.

In June 1916 the consistory decided that the oldest deacon and elder would retire. After that, consistory members were asked to serve three year terms. However, when deacon Johan Messelink died, the older deacon was asked to remain in office. The original consistory of three elders and two deacons was increased in number (November 1918) to include an extra elder, an arrangement which lasted for at least ten years. Consistory meetings were held on Sundays and, for many years, there was always a consistory meeting on Christmas day. In November 1921 the council decided to discontinue this practice.

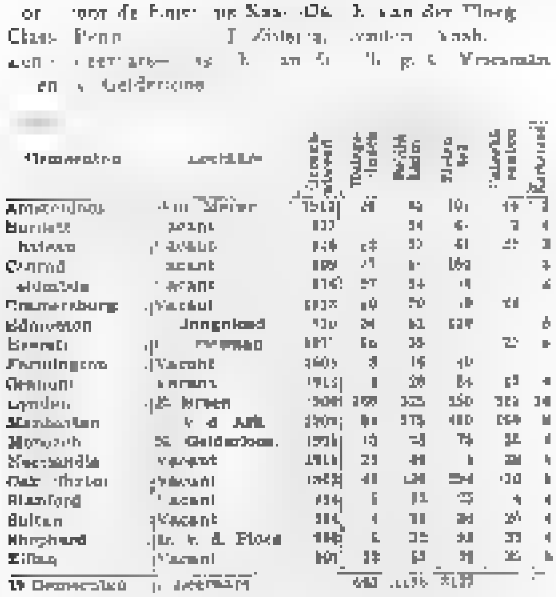
Consistory members took turns attending the Young People's Society meetings (though they did not lead the lessons) and also taught catechism classes to the youth. For those under fourteen, catechism was held on Wednesday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. and for those over fourteen it was held from 2 to 3:30 p.m. This was begun in November 1915 and in June of the next year it was decided to teach the young children catechism at school from three to four o'clock on Friday afternoons. The regular duties of *huisbezoek* and reading sermons on Sunday mornings also took up much of the elders' time.

A highlight of the year was the annual congregational meeting, usually held in February. The first time it was held was January [illegible], 1917. Presumably only men were present, because at the next congregational meeting held February 9, 1918, women were invited to

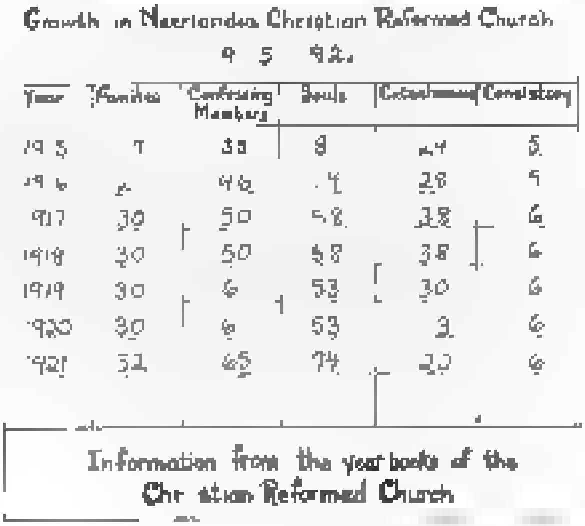


Money for the collection plate

"increase the *gezelligheid* through their presence." For a congregational meeting, members of the church assembled for a whole day. First the finances and goals of the church were discussed, then one or usually two essays were presented by various members and discussed at length. The essays had such inspirational titles as "Above the Stars" (Henry Kippers), "Our Love Response to God" (Douwe Terpstra), "Love Serves" (Tuininga), or "The Wellspring of Life" (Tuininga). The church seldom sent a delegate to the regular Classis meetings as was required, for lack of funds. They were usually held in Washington, but in 1917 Popko Schuring attended one such meeting held in Montana. In 1922 elder elle Tuininga also attended such a meeting.



Neerlandia church became a member of Classis Pacific. Page from Christian Reformed Church Yearbook, 1917



Growth in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church
1915 1921

Year	Families	Confessing Members	Souls	Catechumens	Consistory
1915	7	35	8	24	5
1916	2	46	4	28	5
1917	30	50	58	38	6
1918	30	50	58	38	6
1919	30	6	53	30	6
1920	30	6	53	3	6
1921	32	65	74	20	6

Information from the year books of the Christian Reformed Church

* * *

A Gold Watch

"I remember going to Sunday school. Henry Kippers was our teacher. He had a gold watch, and he would pull it out and say, 'If one of you can learn Psalm 119 by heart, you can have this watch.'"

Treasures

On December 26 we always had our Christmas party. Then the children got bags of candy and some little gift like a book or a pair of mitts. When we went to Sunday school, if we knew our text and Psalm verse we would get a card with a Bible picture on it. We saved them until we had enough (about ten) to get a Dutch psalmbook or a Bible. We treasured that. We had Sunday school before the afternoon service.

Gladys Strydhorst

* * *

Sunday School was held for a time during the early years. Some of the teachers were Siebren Feenstra, [illegible] Kappers, Henry Michael and Dina Messelink. Rev. Jongbloed often came to Neerlandia as a visiting preacher, celebrating the Lord's Supper with the people and catching up on baptisms. In the July 14, 1915 issue of *De Wachter* he describes a journey to Neerlandia for the organizational meeting as follows:

> The train of the Canadian Northern R.R. takes us to [illegible]. To our great surprise, after arriving there we hear the call "All going west." That can [illegible]. So we will walk to there, although we did not really trust that the roads, which are sometimes very poor, would be suitable for this [illegible]. But we made use of it anyhow. The first twenty [illegible] miles was made in fairly good time ... but the driver would not go any further that evening. ... [illegible] the morning ... we made the last ... fifteen miles in five-and-a-half hours. We reached our destination with great difficulty, because the roads were poor. The rains had just started. ... The next morning on our way to church (it was Sunday, and we had three miles to go on very wet and muddy roads), well-supplied with [illegible], someone remarked that to preach here required physical perseverance. The worst was that we were so wet.

* * *

One day after classes some children espied
The church doors wide open, cows walking inside!
The janitor came and the mess he was shown,
Schoonekamp stared speechless; the cows were his own.

Ellen Matheis

* * *

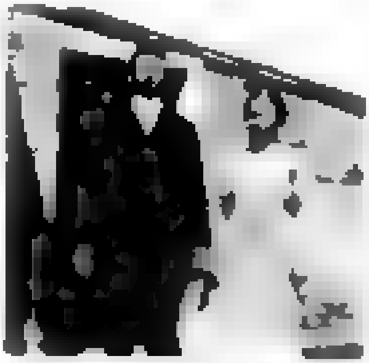
Other ministers from Classis Pacific filled classical appointments in Neerlandia. These included Rev. Vos and Rev. S. Gelderloos, the home missionary in the Nobleford area. These men, in addition to conducting worship services each Sunday for about a month, were responsible to aid the consistory with family visiting. Considering that over half of the Classis churches were vacant and that the ministers had to travel distances in excess of one thousand miles, the service of these men was indeed admirable. At one meeting of Classis Pacific Rev. J. de Jong, upon hearing he had to preach three Sundays in Neerlandia, asked, "Whereabouts is Neerlandia?" The reply was, "Do you see the Northern Lights? Beyond that lies Neerlandia."

When Jongbloed left Edmonton in 1919, the Neerlandia congregation lost its most frequent guest minister and the congregation considered the feasibility of calling their own pastor. The consistory did a cost analysis as follows:

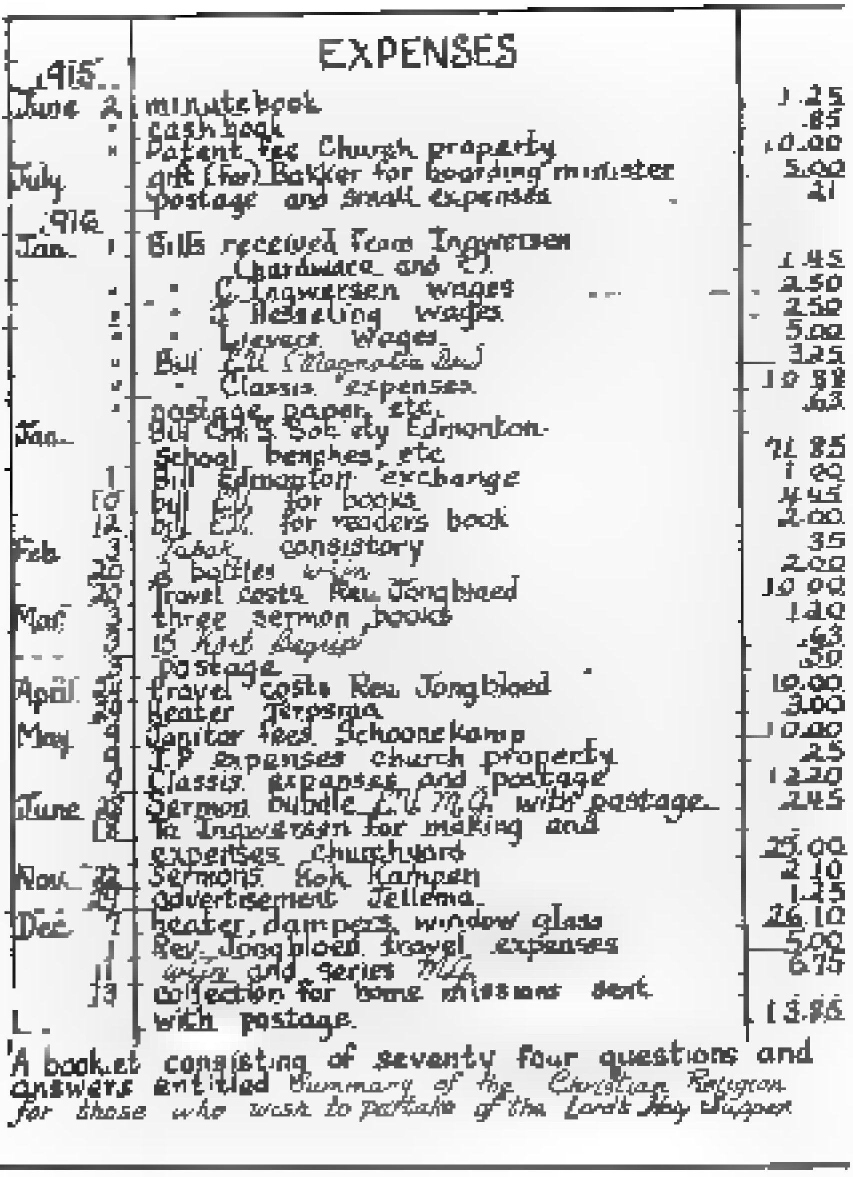
Parsonage (to be built)	$1200
Travel	$ [illegible]
Salary	$[illegible]
Miscellaneous Expenses	$ [illegible]
Total	$[illegible]

The conclusion was the same as before: "We can't afford it." When Rev. H. Bos came to Edmonton in 1920 his preaching duties were shared not only with the Neerlandia congregation but also with a church in Edam, Saskatchewan. He served the congregation until 1922 when he resigned from the ministry. He was followed by

Rev. T. Jongbloed


Rev. Gelderloos and unidentified woman

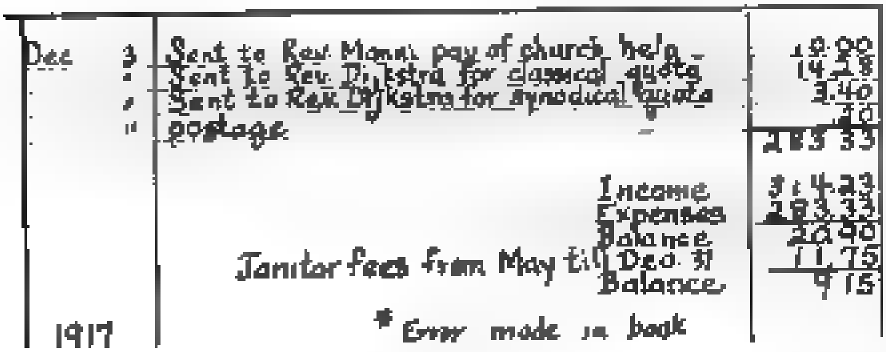
Rev. H. Bos



EXPENSES

1915			
June	2	minutebook	1.25
	"	cash book	.85
	"	Patent fee Church property	10.00
July		gift (for) Bakker for boarding minister	5.00
		postage and small expenses	.21
1916			
Jan	1	Bills received from Ingwersen (hardware and C.)	1.45
	"	" C. Ingwersen wages	2.50
	"	" J. Hesseling wages	2.50
	"	" Lievers wages	5.00
	"	Bill E.U. (Magnolia Ave)	3.25
	"	" Classis expenses	10.88
	"	postage, paper, etc.	.63
Jan		Bill Chr. Society Edmonton School benches, etc	71.85
	1	Bill Edmonton exchange	1.00
	10	bill E.U. for books	4.45
	12	bill E.U. for readers book	2.00
Feb	3	Tabak consistory	.35
	20	2 bottles wijn	2.00
	20	travel costs Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
Mar	3	three sermon books	1.40
	3	15 Kort Begrip	.63
	3	postage	.30
April	24	travel costs Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
	29	heater Terpsma	3.00
May	9	Janitor fees Schoonekamp	10.00
	9	I.P. expenses church property	.25
	9	Classis expenses and postage	12.20
June	28	Sermon bundle E.U. M.G. with postage	2.45
	18	To Ingwersen for making and expenses churchyard	25.00
Nov	22	Sermons Kok Kampen	2.10
	29	advertisement Jellema	1.25
Dec	7	heater, dampers, window glass	26.10
	1	Rev. Jongbloed travel expenses	5.00
	11	wijn and series M.G.	6.75
	13	collection for home missions sent with postage	13.86

'A booklet consisting of seventy four questions and answers entitled Summary of the Christian Religion for those who wish to partake of the Lord's Holy Supper



Dec	3	Sent to Rev. Manni pay of church help	10.00
	"	Sent to Rev. Dijkstra for classical quota	14.28
	"	Sent to Rev. Dijkstra for synodical quota	3.40
	"	postage	.10
			283.33
		Income	314.23
		Expenses	283.33
		Balance	20.90
		Janitor fees from May til Dec. 31	11.75
		Balance	9.15
1917		* Error made in book	

April	9	for Kok Kampen	.25
June	25	Mr. Sturwold "screen for the windows"	4.00
July	16	For Bengerter Genade	7.50
	16	For postage, etc.	1.00
	16	Business to Eastburg	3.00
	22	Rev. Jongbloed Home Missionary	10.00
Aug.	20	tablecloths	3.00
Sept.	17	Nails Davis through Anema	2.05
	17	Classis expenses spring meeting 1917	39.78
Nov.	15	Old bills at M Mast	9.10
	2	Stovepipes Davis through Anema	6.40
Dec.	1	Sturwold	2.00
	4	Collection Camp Lewis sent away	5.60
	〃	Collections home mission Thanksgiving Day sent away	7.10
	〃	Assessment travel expenses Classis fall meeting	2.10
	〃	Stamps etc.	.20
	〃	To Kooi advancement for catechism books	4.70
	〃	Wages neglected Ingwersen	3.00
	〃	To Anema for horse feed	1.50
	〃	Schoonekamp janitor fee and coffee.	16.00
	〃	Ingwersen churchyard	.75
	〃	Tiemstra in advance travel expenses Rev. J.	4.00
	〃	Brookhuis Krikke work on Church	4.00
	〃	Manninga for work done in June 1917	6.00
	〃	previous travel expenses Rev. J.	30.00
	〃	classis expenses - secretary	.60
	〃	To Terpsma for wood June 1917	3.00
		Total	162.98
1918			
Jan.	28	Travel expenses for Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
Feb.	5	Wood sawn by Sturwold	2.50
	5	2 "helpers" to saw wood	1.50
	9	1 "broom" for the church	.80
	10	Payment to Mast for Caps(?)	.25
Mar.	22	For delivering firewood Althuis	15.00
	22	For 500 feet lumber for churchyard	7.00
April	1	Paid to Michael for hauling and for lumber and "strip" sawing	60.60
	9	Paid to Kooi for classis expenses	20.70
	14	Tiemstra in January Rev Jongbloed pickup and bring away	8.00
May	6	To Manninga for tables	8.00
	14	Travel costs Rev Jongbloed	10.00
	〃	For 2 bottles wijn	1.50
	〃	Anema lodging expenses and bringing Jongbloed away	8.05
	〃	To Kooi for tablecloths	3.15
	15	To Davis for nails	6.90
Oct.	2	Classical expenses	17.70
Feb.	13	Barn door hangers and wire for church stable	7.15
Nov.	10	10 lbs nails and 2½ tabak	1.80
	27	To Michael for building stall	24.00
Dec.	7	Mannkel for a bottle wijn	1.00
	16	Rev de Jong travel costs	30.00
	28	Ingwersen fences building stable, etc	52.00
	29	Sent up from Collections and Postage	59.30
	29	Lodging expenses Rev. de Jong	10.80
Feb	1	Stamps for Sermons sent away	.15
	12	Janitor work H Schoonekamp	20.00
		Total	387.45

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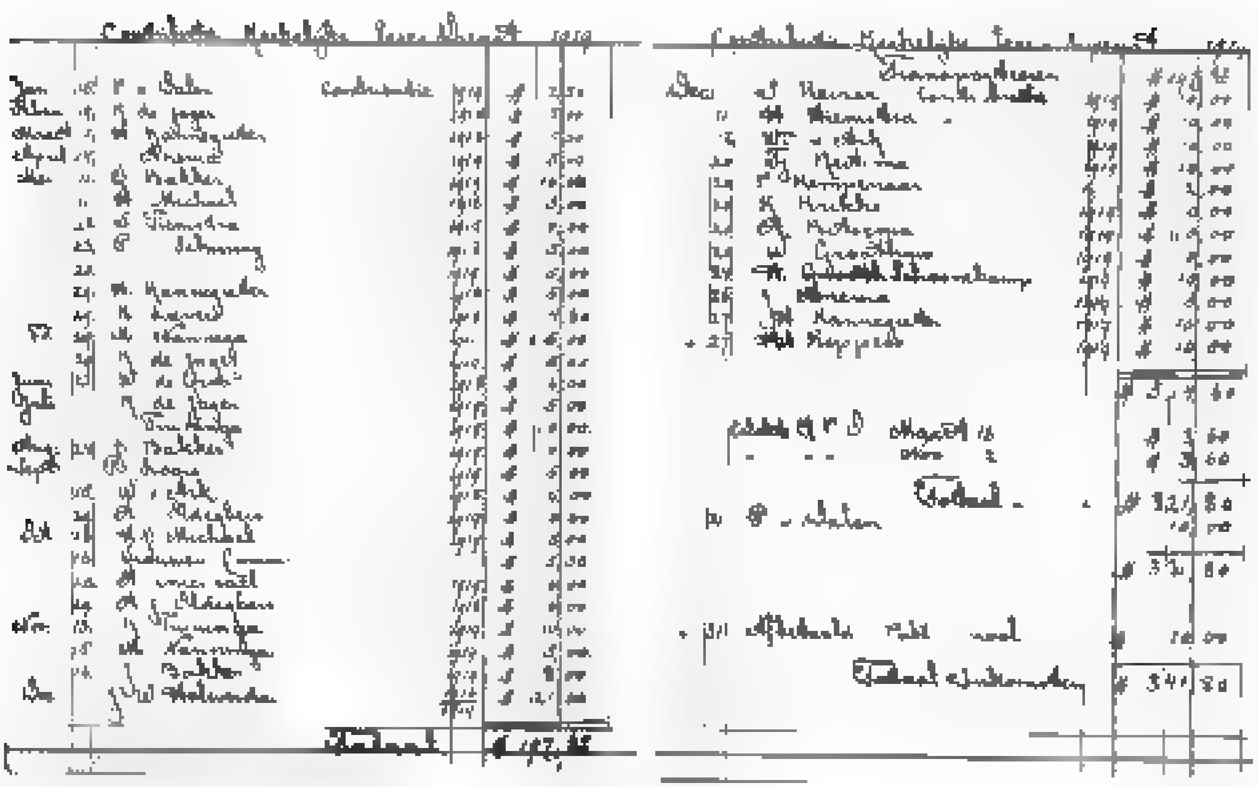
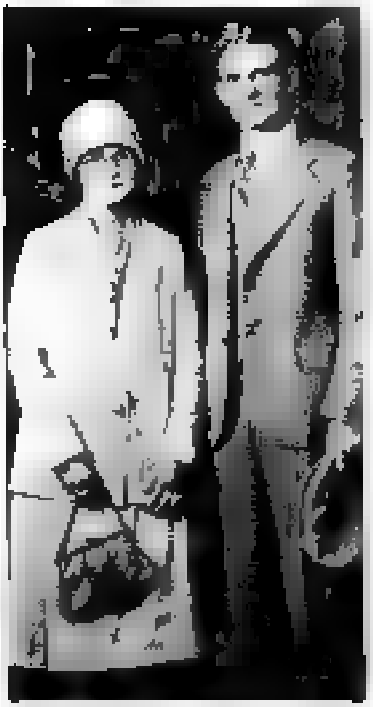


Page from the cash book of the church.



Rev. and Mrs. Selles.

Rev. H. Van Der Woude and Rev. A. Selles, whose duties were split ⅔-⅓ between Edmonton and Neerlandia.

The Neerlandia church could not afford to support a minister. Income for the church was meagre, but a budget was always drawn up. Every family on the church's list was expected to give ten dollars per year to the church. This amount was often not collected. In 1920 there was some talk of increasing this amount to fifteen dollars but nothing came of it. The three-dollar rent for the horse stalls was seldom collected, and by 1925 no one had yet paid a one-dollar fee to reserve a graveyard plot. School furniture, which had been

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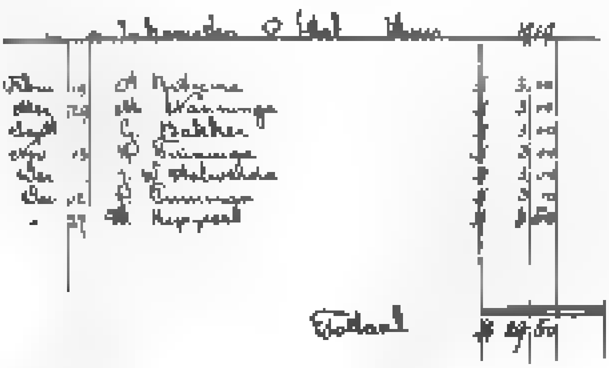


bought for the Christian School Society, was sold to the Public School Board, who were lax in paying their debt. An additional loan of one hundred dollars from the Church Help Fund came in 1915 but, four years later, only forty dollars had been repaid. The church's Benevolence Fund received donations, two from the Monarch Christian Reformed Church (fifteen dollars both times) and one from the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church (fifty dollars). Considering the financial circumstances of the settlers, though, this "poor fund" was probably taxed to the limit.

The situation was indeed bleak as the congregation met in 1918 for a special day of prayer because of the hard economic situation. Yet the people were committed to their ideals; through those early days of poverty, the settlers remained undaunted in their goal to establish a strong church community.

* * *

WRONG DAY 1

One time, we were working with about six men, cutting a road through the bush. It was a Saturday. Then along came a bachelor homesteader, all dressed up in his Sunday best. We asked him where he was going. He replied, "To church — it's Sunday isn't it?" He was only one day out.

Martin van der Heide

* * *

WRONG DAY 2

In the pioneer days, when no one had radios or any other means of communication, it was often difficult to keep the days apart, everyday having the same activities. Families with children going to school did not have nearly as much trouble keeping days straight as those living alone did.

One day my father was on his way to church when he decided to call in on Rienk de Jager, who lived alone a half mile from church. Much to father's surprise, Rienk was busy cooking erwtensoep (His Saturday meal) and mending overalls. He always marked off the days on his calendar, but had forgotten to do so one day and now was one day out.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

The budget contributions were collected by stewards who visited each home to solicit the member's donation. In 1923, an envelope system was tried whereby people could put their contribution toward the budget in the collection bag once a month. This system was soon abandoned, however. The steward system was reintroduced and continued well into the thirties. Although some people paid their budget dues by pledging labour, the many payments listed for such tasks as fencing, building pews, cutting firewood, and the like lead one to conclude that volunteer labour was not prevalent. One member settled his debt with the church in a most unusual way: he told consistory that they could collect his unpaid quotas from a neighbour who owed him money.

As the budget was rarely met, the consistory attempted various means of raising money to meet expenses. Two plans in particular stand out. One was the so-called "Church Calves" plan, whereby members could designate a calf for the church, feed it to market weight, and give the money to the church. In the first year (1920), twenty-five calves were donated, but by year's end five had died and market conditions were so poor that the Church Calves Committee asked the members to keep them for another year. In the fall of 1922, the people were instructed to dehorn the calves to increase their market value. The first group of calves raised $234.32 for the church coffers.

In 1925, W. van Ark came up with an idea whereby people could pledge a part of their crop. People were asked to pledge one acre of grain per year to the church. The records show only one member who actually donated crop to the church — twelve dollars worth of wheat — and that seems to have been the end of the matter.

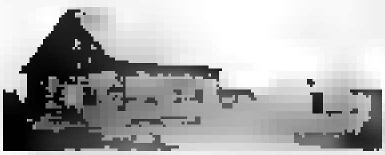
Despite these efforts, the church was not able to pay the Classical and Synodical quotas until the thirties. From time to time Neerlandia complained to Classis and Synod about the excessive amounts that were requested. In turn, complaints from Classis were received despairing of the small amounts received from Neerlandia. This was to be a point of contention later as these unpaid bills became the congregation's debt. In spite of these shortages, the congregation did send contributions to causes such as the sanatorium in Denver, Colorado, and a church building project in Sultan, Washington.

* * *

Another Sunday, a visiting minister from the United States was addressing the congregation. This man had the habit of walking to and fro on the pulpit platform as he was talking. The particular platform on which he stood was not very large, probably much smaller than what he had been used to. In any case, he was reading his text entitled "When I have prepared a place for you, I will come." As he became deeper and deeper involved in his sermon, he was walking faster and faster. Repeating his text "I will come", he forgot the size of the platform, missed the edge, and landed into the laps of the congregation members sitting below him.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *



Note consistory room addition and stable behind the church

Expenditures for the church in the first ten years were minimal. *Wijn* for communion and *tabak* for consistory meetings were regular items listed in the cashbook in the early years. In 1919 Willem de Groot made six new church pews ($2.85 each) and Henry Kippers Sr. purchased a clock and a safe. In 1919, one hundred dollars was spent improving the church interior with double flooring and heavy paper on the walls to keep the heat. In 1923, a twelve-foot extension costing two hundred dollars was built on the southeast of the church to accomodate the society life that was by now flourishing. A regular expense was to reimburse elders who paid visits to the church's members in Eastburg. In addition to all this, the church's major expense was paying for classical appointments the travel, wage, and room and board expense that went with the arrival of a guest minister.

Although finances were a heavy burden for the new congregation, there were other problems. There were men with strong personalities and when they differed as to what was acceptable as part of the Christian life and beliefs, disagreements could be sharp.

A contentious issue arose as a result of a sad situation. When Deacon J. Messelink had died in late 1919, he left behind a widow and four children. Economic conditions being what they were, Dina Messelink had a difficult time making ends meet. Nor was the consistory able to provide adequate relief. In March 1920 Dina Messelink, with the help of [illegible] government assistance, despite the fact that three months earlier consistory had ruled that the poor should not seek such help. When an inspector visited the Messelink home in April to determine her financial situation, the consistory decided to do all in their power to prevent her from receiving charity from the government. Feeling he was unable to do his task as deacon since the government was taking over his responsibilities, a deacon threatened to resign. It was decided to put the sister and brothers involved under church discipline if they continued their ways. Eventually the dispute was resolved and Mrs. Messelink continued to receive government aid.

At least two Eastburg families, the [illegible] and the ter Horsts, had joined the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The elders made huisbezoek in Eastburg and also visited other Dutch families

* * *

Icicles on his Mustache

***In the winter,** the potbelly stove cheerfully spread warmth throughout the church welcoming the congregation for worship services. It was a long, cold ride for many by horse and sleigh and when the men came in frost dusted their eyebrows and eyelashes. This brings to mind the memory of how as kids we would eagerly await the arrival of Mr. H. [illegible] because he would come into church with long icicles hanging on his mustache. He went straight to the stove and would lean over it and with two fingers pinch the icicles out of his mustache. They would fall to the stove and with a delightful sizzling noise, instantly melt away.*

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Sticky Benches

***The** janitor of the church thought it time to varnish the chairs in the front of church. These were used if the benches were full. The school teacher's boyfriend came to see her one weekend. The church was pretty full so he had to sit in one of the chairs in the front of church. When the service was over he stood up and the chair came along with him — the varnish was still sticky. Comical for the onlookers — embarrassing for him.*

Norman Terpsma

such as the Hoogers. They also informed the members there when Lord's Supper would be celebrated so they could attend. In 19[illegible] a complaint was received that the church was not doing enough for the Eastburg Reformed people, with the elders countering that the Eastburg families were becoming "too English." Some years later, the Nylands and [illegible] moved to the States and the Eastburg connection was eventually severed.

Another issue which occupied the consistory through the years was a different view of baptism held by some community members, mainly the Lievers family. Ben Lievers had been in a Brethren fellowship in the Netherlands and was strongly influenced by the evangelistic zeal of a man named Johannes de Heer. Although Ben was never a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed church, his wife Alice was. Her views on infant baptism were not Reformed. The issue was an important one for the Neerlandia community. The church could live with these differences for some time — indeed, in the early years Ben attended and supported the church — but Alice Lievers eventually left the church. In the late twenties, after Loe Reyse, a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed church, joined the Lievers group, they began holding fellowship services in their homes, organized a Sunday school, and invited evangelists to come to the community and speak.

* * *

Switching Shoes and Socks

One of the early settler families had to walk four or five miles to reach the church. The husband went to the morning service while the wife stayed home with the children. At noon the wife would meet him halfway where they would change stockings or socks and shoes. Then she would go on to the afternoon service and he would go home to take care of the children.

Cor Fisher

* * *

From 191[illegible]-1927 the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church struggled against economic odds, against the inevitable internal problems and, though not documented, against the sin that is present in everyone's life. Yet all of the struggles must be seen not only in the light of the whole pioneer experience, but also in the light of the settlers' conviction that God was working all things for their good. It was that belief which moved the settlers into the second stage of their ecclesiastical history: The Van Der Woude Years.

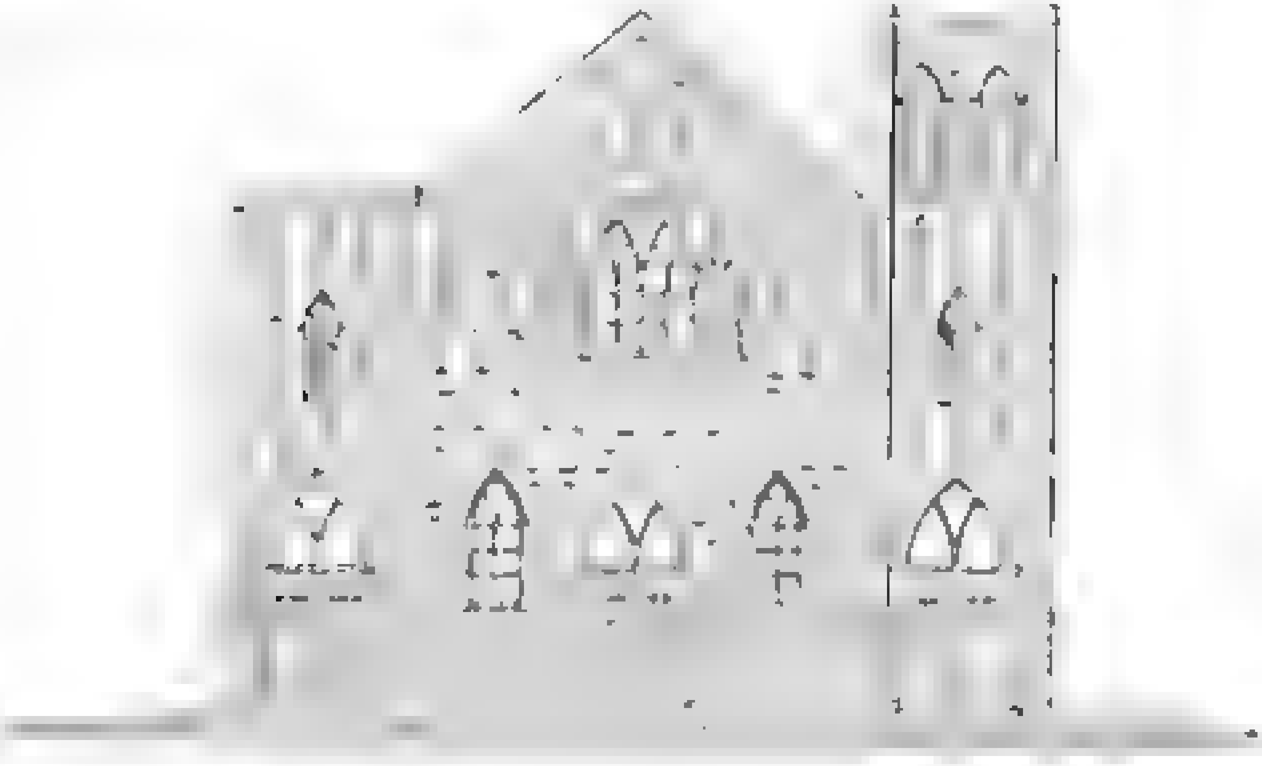
The Van Der Woude Years 1928-1941

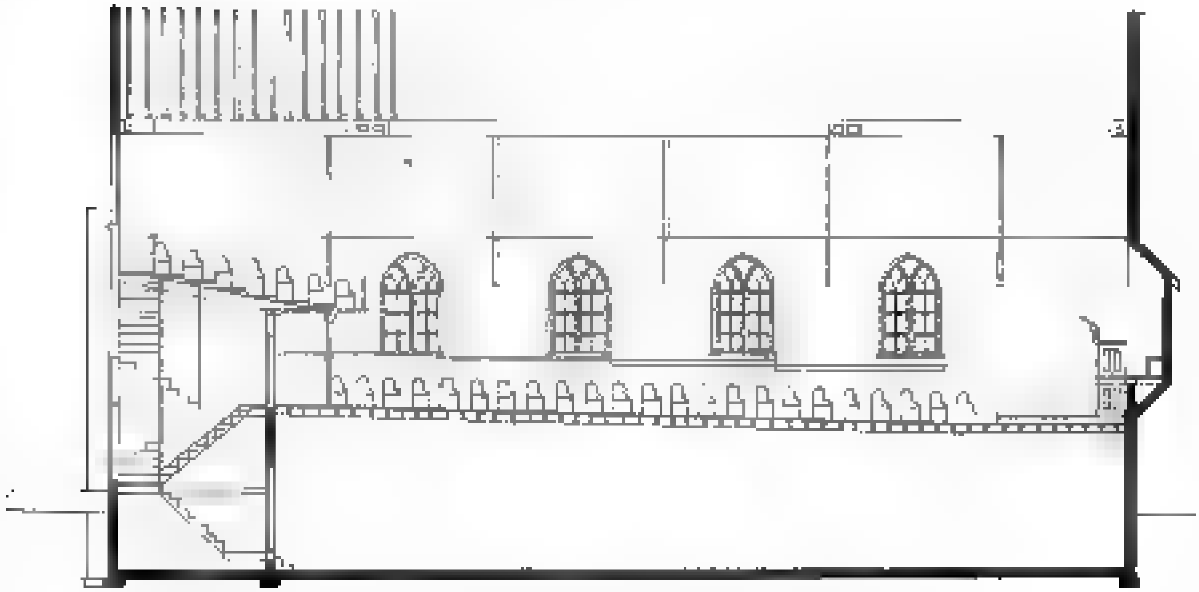
Not many years after its formation, the Neerlandia congregation realized the need of a new church building, but there were no funds available for this. In the mid twenties, though, the Neerlandia church's financial position improved to some extent. Although the budget still stood at ten dollars per male member, the membership had almost doubled in the ten years since the church had been organized. Many members were contributing twice or even three times that amount yearly. By 1928 Neerlandia decided to build a new church and a parsonage, with the goal of calling their own minister. Prior to this time they had been supporting a minister with the Edmonton congregation. Neerlandia was better able to meet its Synodical and Classical quotas, although there were still old debts. The consistory requested in 1926 that assessments of the unpaid quotas. Neerlandia did not believe they could meet the obligations to Classis, the building program and a minister's salary since they had been without a minister all these years since their organization eleven years ago; they thought the latter items were more important. Classis did not agree but suggested that Neerlandia build the church and parsonage first and then renew their request for permission to call a minister.

Sawing wood for church and parsonage, c. 1926

Menne Nanninga drew up plans for the church. At the congregational meeting held in February 1926 it was decided to purchase lumber for the building project, and a committee was appointed to immediately begin gathering sand and gravel. The Young Men's Society took it upon themselves to supply the church with firewood for the coming year since the older men would be busy with the building project.

The ambitious building program was actually beyond Neerlandia's reach had it not been for a loan from the church building fund. Over $600 in loans would eventually be received from Classis for the church and parsonage. In addition, the consistory raised the year's quota for members, ranging from ten dollars to fifty dollars. From 1927 to 1929 the congregation was hard pressed to meet this. In 1928 the consistory apparently reduced the quota to thirty dol-


Preliminary sketch of first lumber church, drawn by Menne Nanninga



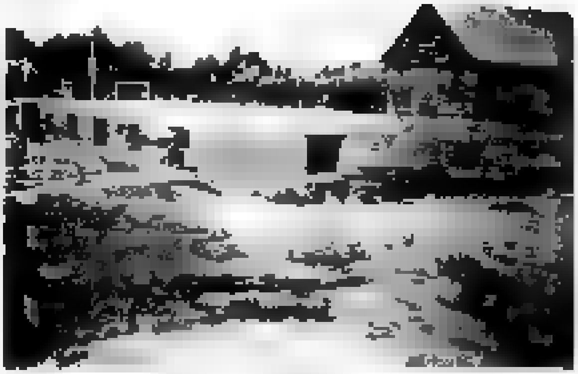
Preliminary sketch of interior of first lumber church drawn by Menne Nanninga.

lars, and this was expected to generate the money for the church's budget of $3400 ($1600 of which was to be set aside for a future minister's salary).

The church was convinced it needed its own minister and was willing to sacrifice for it. Rev. A. Selles, writing in *The Banner* of February 1929 said, "A congregation which has been shepherdless for nearly fourteen years is in dire need of a pastor. There is no doubt in our mind that for that very reason, the servant of the Lord who will answer the call saying 'I am coming over to help you' will be very much appreciated." The parsonage and new church must be seen in this light, namely, as attractions for a pastor the church could call its own.

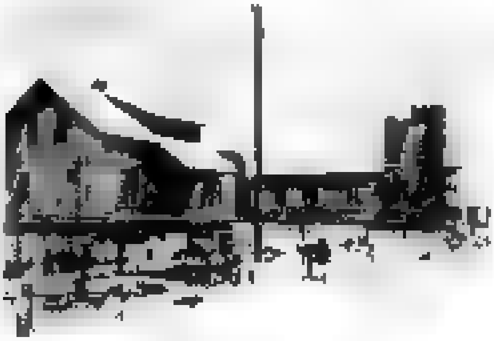
The parsonage was built first. Menne Nanninga and Jacob Olthuis directed the construction, much of which was done by volunteer labour. The parsonage was built east of the log church. It was about thirty-four by twenty-four feet in size, with a full basement, three bedrooms on the second storey, and a large living area on the main floor. By September of 1928 it was completed and two rooms were rented out to a teacher, Mr. Levy, for ten dollars per month.

The lumber church, completed in 1929, was a big undertaking. Aside from a few men who were paid for the work they did on the project (Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, Jerry Reitsma) nearly all the work was done on a volunteer basis by the congregation. The logs were hauled from the bush to lumber mills (bills were paid to Chikeen, Fluet's, and Garneau) to be sawn into the appropriate dimensions, then brought to the site. Gravel, hard to come by in those days, was hauled in the winter of 1927-28 from the "island" in Shoal Lake, and supplemented with field stone from Neerlandia farms. At the site the larger stones were crushed with sledge

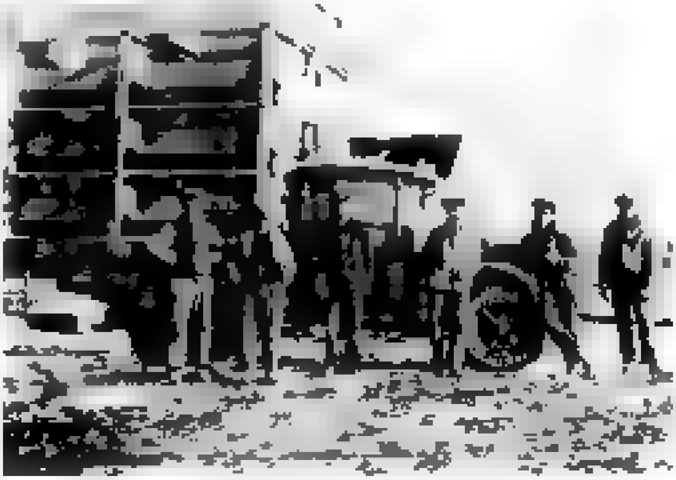


Building a new church. The foundation is laid.

The rafters are up.

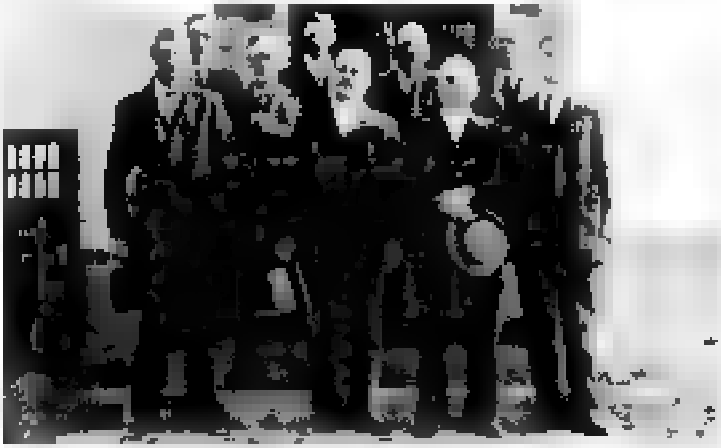


The roof is on.



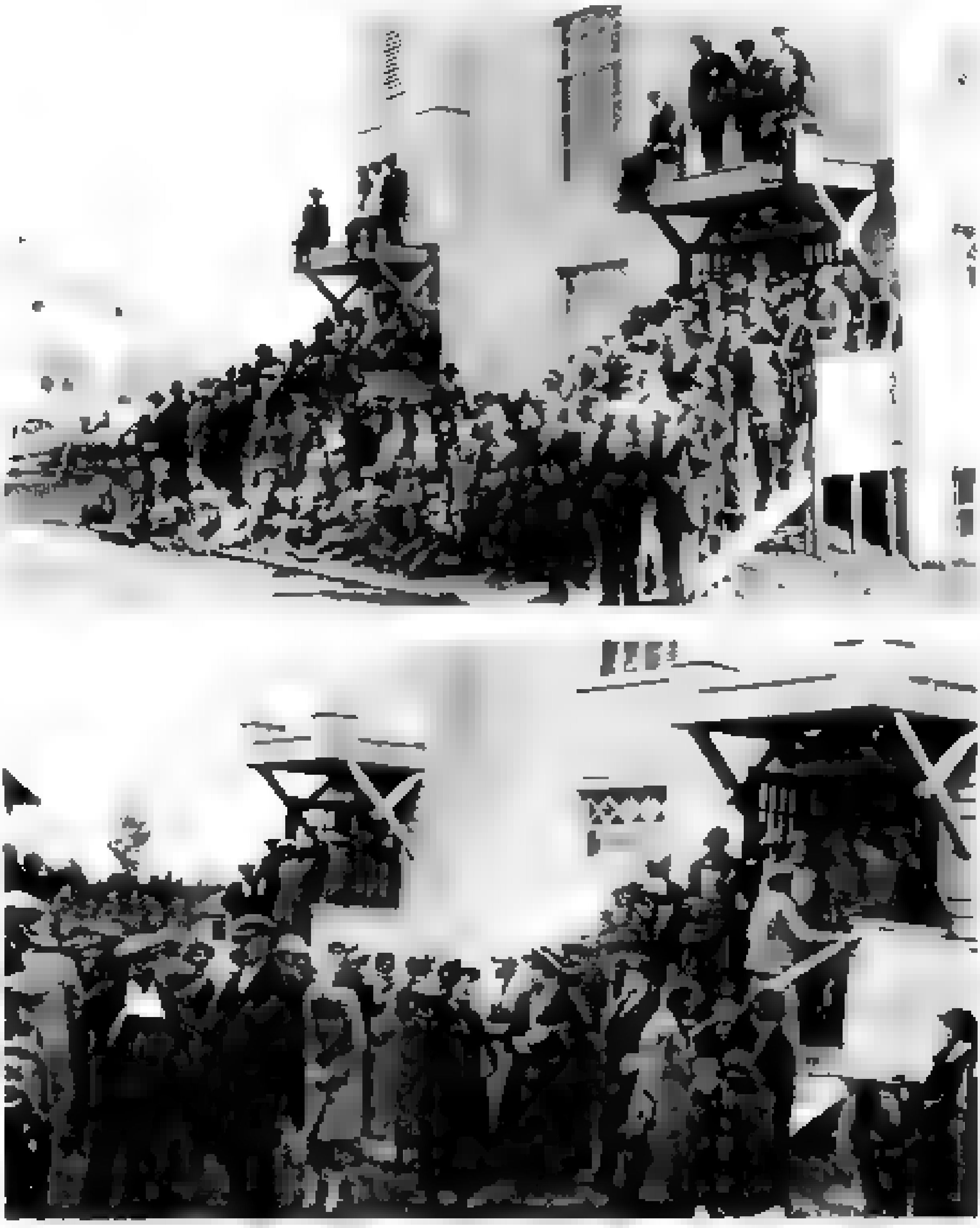
The benches arrive. George Toebes, Johannes Peters, Conny Ingwersen, Ike Nanninga, Billy Quick, Gerrit Ingwersen.

Dedication day.



The consistory at the dedication of the church: Klaas Turninga, Hendrik Schoonekamp, Jelle Turninga, John Anema. Front: Bill Kikke, Toney Sturwold, Rev. Bratt, Rev. Mulder, Rev. Selles.

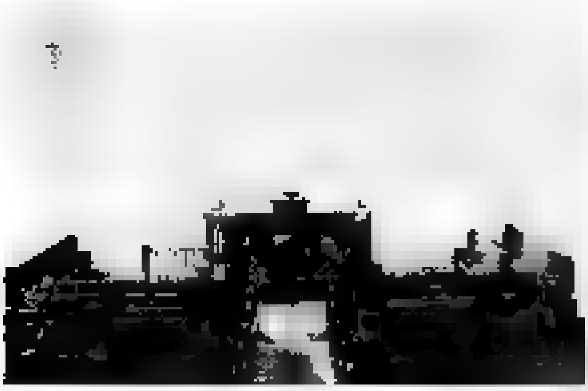
DEDICATION DAY



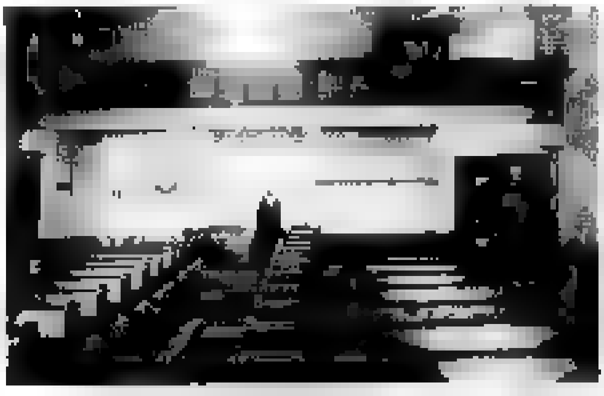
hammers and a crew of twenty-four worked all day mixing the cement with shovels and carrying it to the foundation forms. By the winter of 1928-29, the basement was complete and was used for regular worship services. Construction was continued on the upper floor. One generous Dutch plasterer, not a local, supplied plastering work for free, asking to be compensated only for his travelling costs. In May 1929, $1,205.40 was owing on labour for carpentry work, but the consistory, always short of money, decided to pay at that time only those who needed it most.

The second church

Contrasted with the old log church, the new church looked impressive. Rev. A. Selles wrote in the March 15, 1929 issue of *The Banner* of the new church, "It exhibits the splendid taste of an architect. And the brethren of Neerlandia may be proud of having a brother in their midst who is chiefly responsible for the planning and construction of these buildings. We admire his painstaking patience in using all the help available. It is nothing less than a



All is ready.

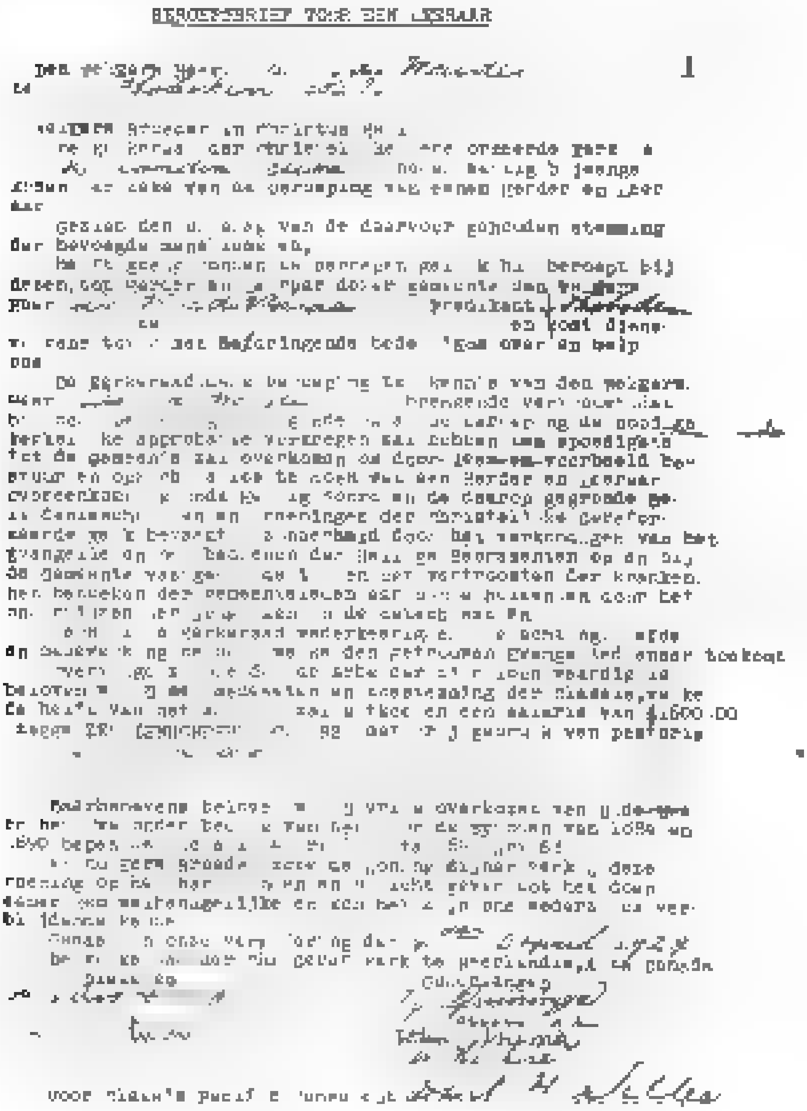


Rear view of church showing balcony. Joe and Gertie Olthuis being shown the church by Hendrik Schoonekamp giant's task to use the class of mechanics he used and still produce such splendid results."

The new church was dedicated on Monday, April 22, 1929. The old log church was torn down in the spring of 1929, even though some felt it should be preserved. The lumber from the roof was reused — Jerry Reitsma used some of it for building a coffin.

The consistory wasted no time calling a minister once permission had been granted by Classis early in 1929. Three former guest ministers were placed on a trio for the congregation to decide on by ballot: Revs. Meykens, de Jong, and Van Der Woude. In March of that year, Rev. Van Der Woude was given the call while he was serving a congregation in Hoboken, New Jersey. He accepted, and was installed as Neerlandia's first full-time pastor on June 23, 1929.

Rev. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Soon after he arrived (July 17, 1929) it was mentioned that his prayers were too long and



BEROEPSBRIEF VOOR EEN LEERAAR

Call letter sent to Rev. Van Der Woude which includes an urgent request to 'Come over and help us!' Besides his salary, the Rev. is also promised to be supplied with firewood.

Rev. Harm Van Der Woude.

he was requested to see if it might be possible to shorten them. To emphasize the point of his sermons, the Rev. would say "Ik herhaal het, ik herhaal het, en ik zeg het nog eens weer (I repeat it, I repeat it, and I say it once again.)" Another quote he often warned the congregation with was "eensen worden geensen" (oncers become 'none-cers')

* * *

Rev. H. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Once in 1925 when he was visiting Neerlandia, some men were working at the log church. Mr. Reitsma said to him, "Did you know Mrs. Mast died?"

"No, I'd better prepare a sermon then," was the reply. He walked around the log church three times, came back and said "I've got the sermon ready!"

Jennie Reitsma

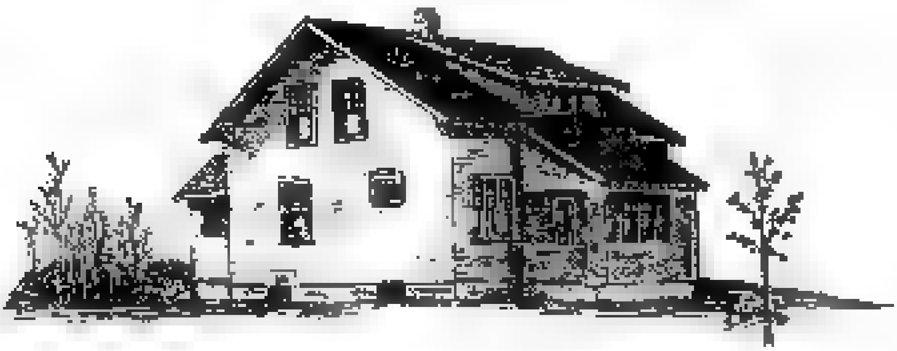
* * *

Rev. Van Der Woude showed a tendency to promote social and cultural isolation from the surrounding communities, as part of being "in the world but not of it." He is quoted as having said "In isolation is our strength," from the Dutch theologian Groen Van Prinsterer.

The congregation after church.

Church life flourished in those years. The Men's and Ladies Societies, Young People's Society, Singing Society, and catechism classes served the peoples' social as well as spiritual needs. After a request by some members to start a Sunday School again (1930), the consistory ruled that if proper use was made of catechism classes, a Sunday School would be superfluous. The worship services changed very little, with occasional variations introduced such as having the consistory and other men stand during the prayers (it was considered more reverent), standing during certain songs, and organ playing before the worship service. The consistory had added two more members by 1938, and the tabak and sigaren expenses continued until at least 1936.

During those years there were a few minor disciplinary prob-



lems. In March 1929 complaints were received that the young people were fooling around during choir practice making singing impossible and on one occasion some of the young men returning from a day of hunting and trapping went directly to the church where a meeting was going to be held. While waiting there they amused themselves by shooting at a block of wood in the church basement. Brother Henry Kippers brought the matter to the consistory to ask if this could be discouraged or stopped.

* * *

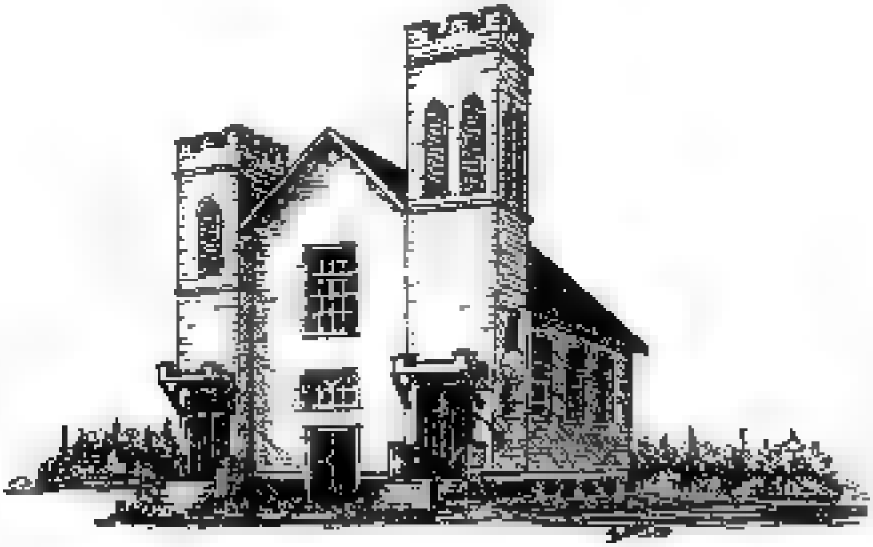
Shiny Tie Clip

Young men were wearing tie and pins or tie clips at that time. Rev. H. Van Der Woude preached and tried to keep the attention of his audience, but one teenager thought to polish his clip up some. This caught the eye of the preacher. Pausing for a few seconds he said, "Als U klaar is dan kunnen wij verder." (When you are ready then we will proceed.) After that we teenagers did not want the preacher's eye on us during the service.

L. Nanninga

* * *

Economically the times were hard for the church during those Depression years. The essay topic for the 1931 congregational meeting was by Henry Kippers Sr. entitled "The Current World Crisis and the Believer!" When Classis asked that the consistory fulfill its financial obligations re the Church Help Fund loan, the clerk wrote back saying that this was impossible in light of the circumstances. Rev. Van Der Woude was willing to take a $400 cut in pay in 1931. He said that since everyone else was receiving less it was only fair that



he should too. This seems to have been a loan from him, and his salary was increased again in 1938 to its previous level. The budget which stood at almost $5200 ($40 per family) in 1930, was reduced to $2333 ($22 per family) in 1933. (The budgets included subsidies from Classis and collections.)

By 1935 the congregation had grown to more than fifty families, an indication not of immigrants coming in but of families growing up. The essay topics at congregational meetings often dealt with child-related subjects: Klaas Tuininga (1931) "The Worship of Children," Lammert Wierenga (1930) "Childrearing" or "Catching the Little Foxes." Though a few members left the church it was showing growth spiritually and numerically.

With some sadness Rev. Van Der Woude announced his retirement in 1941, being 65 years of age. As he left the Neerlandia congregation for his retirement elsewhere, receiving an honourable emeritus, he could look fondly at his work, the Lord's work, in that northern Alberta community. He had been a good preacher and had provided firm leadership, two things the Neerlandia church had appreciated and benefited from.

* * *

Faith

One day two of the younger girls from the Lammert Wierenga family were walking home from school through the forest and they suddenly heard crackling of twigs and then a short way ahead of them they could see something quite big and black. They were petrified. A bear! The girls were so scared they sat down on the nearest stump and thought best to pray. They prayed "Here zegen deze spiese" (Lord, bless this food). They were young and only knew their mealtime prayer. Later someone asked, "Who were you girls praying for? The bear or for yourselves?" Anyway it turned out that it was not a bear but their own big black dog hunting around in the bush.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Besides teaching, the consistory soon required my services as organist in church twice a Sunday. As a token of appreciation I received an Encyclopedic Concordance Bible, beautifully inscribed by Mr. Ingwersen, which is still one of my prized possessions.

Grace Boer

* * *

1941 — to the present

In the forties the church grew numerically through natural increase as the first generation married and had children. Because of the isolationistic stance there were no members received from surrounding communities. In fact some of the children reached their teens without realizing there were Christians in other areas. One member did suggest engaging in mission outreach to the unchurched in the surrounding areas but this fell on deaf ears. Nevertheless the church building was soon too small for the congregation and expansion of the church or the construction of a new building was discussed (1944-1945). In the meantime the janitor was instructed to set out chairs to accommodate the congregation.

After Rev. Van Der Woude left, first Rev. Maynard Keuning (1942-46) and then Rev. John Rubingh served the Neerlandia congregation. Their pastorates were difficult ones for both the ministers and the congregation. Rev. Van Der Woude had been Neerlandia's first minister and had been like a father to the people. It was difficult for the congregation to adjust to anyone else. Everything the Revs. Keuning and Rubingh did was compared to the way Rev. Van Der Woude had done it. Their preaching was Reformed but they stood in the shadow of Van Der Woude.

Adding to the difficulty was the problem of transition from Dutch to English as the language of the church services. The suggestion to introduce an occasional English service had first been made in 1938. The request was renewed at the 1939 annual congregational meeting. Rev. Van Der Woude said at that time that though he was not against it himself, he thought it inadvisable because the congregation was not ready for it. The congregation agreed.

Rev. M. Keuning

Finally, in the forties the transition began. The change to English was painful for some of the older people who had never learned English. They were concerned that if the services were conducted in English they would not receive the guidance, comfort and admonition of the sermons. On the other hand most of the younger people understood little or any of the Dutch. The conversion was made gradually. Then the church burned down and services were conducted in the store hall and in the school. Four services were held each week because neither location could accommodate the whole congregation — two in Dutch and two in English. That forestalled the problem for a while.

Rev. and Mrs. Rubingh [illegible]

* * *

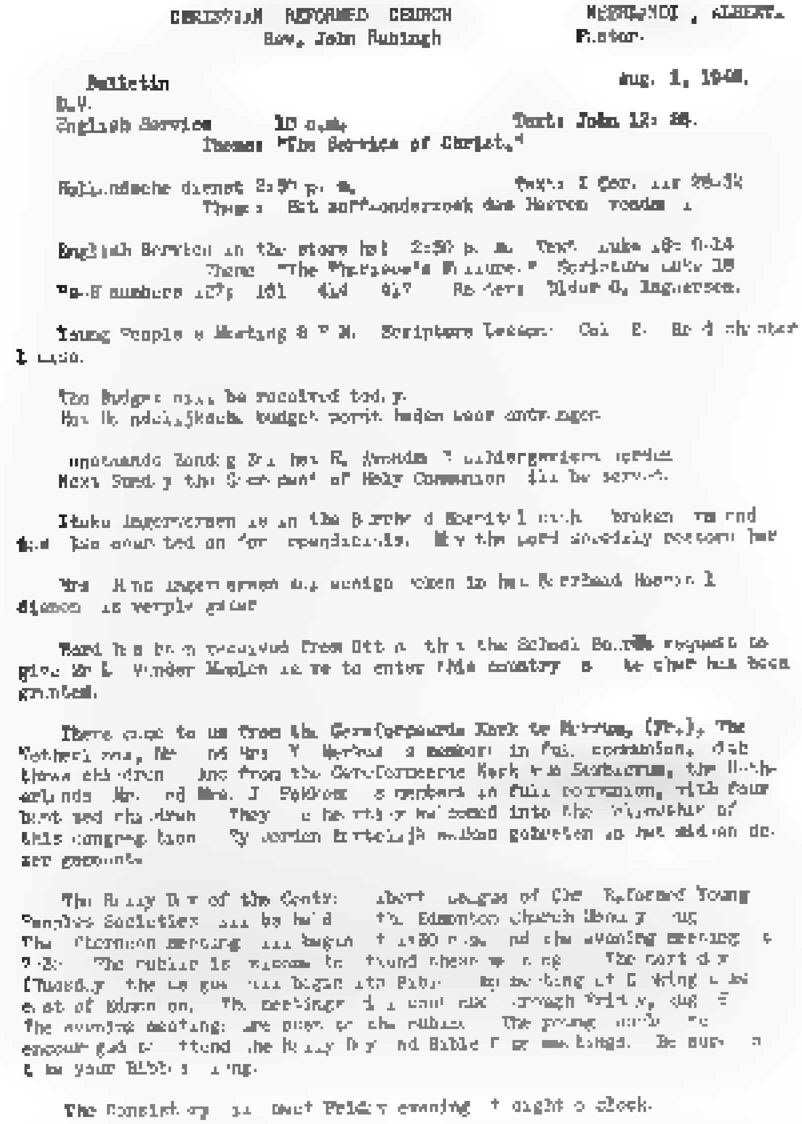
The First English Sermon

"I will never forget the first sermon that was to be read in English. One of the elders had to read it. It was Dutch upstairs and English in the basement. Anyhow, the elder was going to go down the stairs to the basement and his uncle bumped him so that he fell down the stairs. The uncle was so upset that there was going to be reading in English — that was the devil. So he knocked him down the stairs and the elder was so upset he couldn't read. I had to read for him."

* * *

The Church Burns

When the church burnt down, it was around the middle of November. Rev. Rubingh had left only a few days earlier. Albert Mast, the janitor, had stoked up the furnace because there was to be Choir Society that evening. Around 7:30 p.m. Dick [illegible] came pedalling by on his bicycle on his way home from working at Henry Mast's. He noticed a strange light in the church basement and, on



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH NEERLANDIA, ALBERTA.
Rev. John Rubingh Pastor.

Bulletin Aug. 1, 1948.
D.V.
English Service 10 a.m. Text: John 12: 26.
Theme: "The Service of Christ."

Hollandsche dienst 2:30 p. m. Text: I Cor. 11: 28-32
Thema: Het zelfonderzoek des Harten [illegible]

English Service in the store hall 2:30 p. m. Text: Luke 18: 9-14
Theme "The Pharisee's Failure." Scripture Luke 18
Psalm numbers 127, 101 [illegible] Reader: Elder G. Ingwersen.

Young People's Meeting 8 P. M. Scripture Lesson: Col. 2. Read chapter 1 also.

The Budget will be received today.
Het Hollandsche budget wordt heden weer ontvangen.

Aanstaande Zondag [illegible]
Next Sunday the Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served.

[illegible] Ingwersen is in the [illegible] Hospital [illegible] broken [illegible] and [illegible] on for [illegible]. May the Lord speedily restore her.

[illegible]

Word has been received from Ottawa that the School Board's request to give Mr. [illegible] Vander Meulen leave to enter this country [illegible] has been granted.

There came to us from the Gereformeerde Kerk te [illegible], The Netherlands, Mr. and Mrs. [illegible] members in full communion, with three children, and from the Gereformeerde Kerk [illegible], the Netherlands, Mr. and Mrs. J. [illegible] members in full communion, with four baptized children. They are heartily welcomed into the fellowship of this congregation. [illegible]

The Rally Day of the Central Alberta League of the Reformed Young Peoples Societies will be held at the Edmonton church [illegible]. The afternoon meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. and the evening meeting at 7:30. The public is welcome to attend these meetings. The [illegible] the League will begin its Bible [illegible] east of Edmonton. The meetings [illegible] through Friday, Aug. [illegible] The evening meetings are open to the public. The young people are encouraged to attend the Rally Day and Bible [illegible] meetings. Be sure to take your Bible along.

The Consistory will meet Friday evening at eight o'clock.

closer inspection, saw flames. He immediately went to the store to let store manager Frank Visser know, then rushed to C. K. Mast's. When the men got to the church, the whole basement was full of flames. Frank threw one or more fire extinguishers through a basement window, but that made no difference and the men soon realized that not much could be done to stop the fire, although they and others continued for a long time to haul water with buckets to douse the fire.

By then many people had come, including janitor Albert Mast. He had left his watch in the church — a keepsake from his father — and he wanted to get it. The bystanders tried to restrain him, but Albert insisted. He went inside and soon came out with the watch, suffering no more than singed hair and a scorched face.

Many of the people watching the burning church were crying.

but one old pioneer jokingly said that he was glad it was burning because the church had been too small anyhow (with the recent influx of immigrants the church building had been crowded)

Meanwhile, water was hauled from the store to keep the parsonage soaked down so it would not catch fire The pump at the store could not keep up with the water that was needed though so some men came with a stoneboat loaded with containers of water. Later the garage and the store got hot as well. The Visser children were moved to Anema's place for safety Water was also thrown on the garage and the store to keep them cool

A firetruck had come from Barrhead, but by the time it came it was too late to do anything to the church building Before midnight, the whole building had burnt down. All that was left standing above the smouldering ruins was the chimney, which still had smoke rising from the top like it often did It reminded some young people of a popular song at the time, "The Smoke Goes Up the Chimney Just the Same "

The old organ and a few benches were the only things that had been rescued from the church it was believed that overheating pipes in the furnace had been the cause of the fire

* * *

The third church was built during a dry spring with no rain till after the first of July. When rain finally came, everyone was so thankful that the boss gave the workers the day off

* * *

The church had been destroyed by fire in November 1948. Only a few things were saved. Plans were soon prepared, again by Menne Nanninga, for another larger building and before long work began on it The church members pledged either time, money, or loans to help finance the construction Some of the Dutch immigrants who came to Neerlandia were hired to help as well. On June 28 1950, the new building was dedicated It was valued at ninety-six thousand dollars.

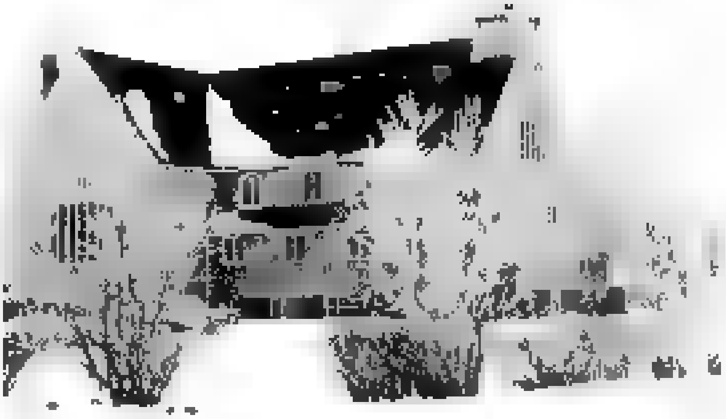
There were a few problems to solve regarding the church building and fixtures The minutes of January 22 1951 indicate a problem with the ventilation system. " the automatic ventilation on the church will not work as it has been installed, __ Sheet Metal Co. blames Electric, and Electric blames them but they now both blame the architect and consequent (sic) is that the church is the loser."

The young people, however, had quietened down from the days when the second building was constructed Still there was a complaint " some of the young people rubbed the dirt off their shoes on the walls in the basement "

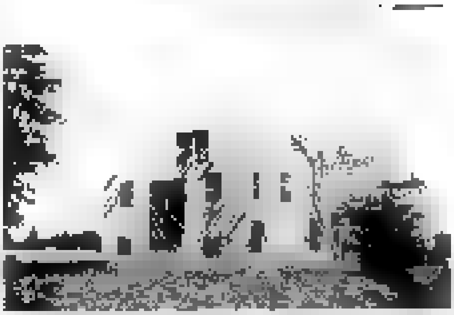
From 1948 to 1950 many Dutch immigrants came to Neerlandia and the Barrhead-Westlock area As the nearest Christian Reformed Church, Neerlandia was responsible for the spiritual care of these immigrants. At first all the immigrants were brought to Neerlandia for Sunday church services. They were expected to pay two dollars per trip to the driver of the car that transported them If

A NEW CHURCH

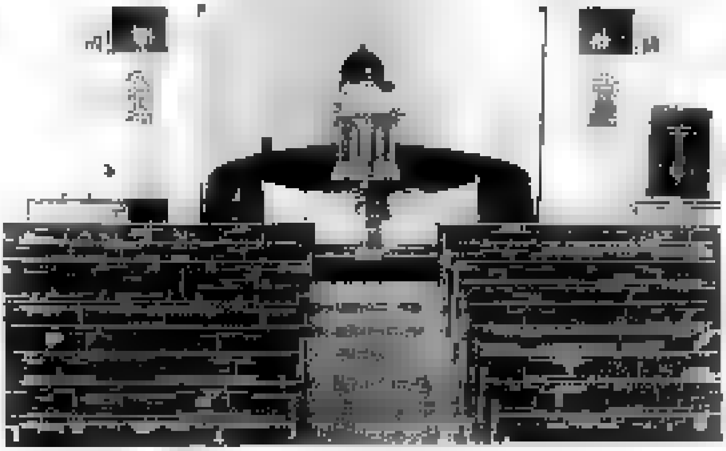
Construction progresses, 1949.



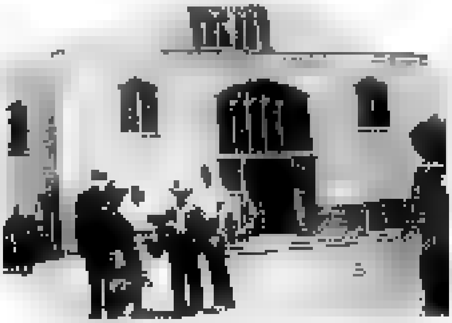
An imposing structure outside



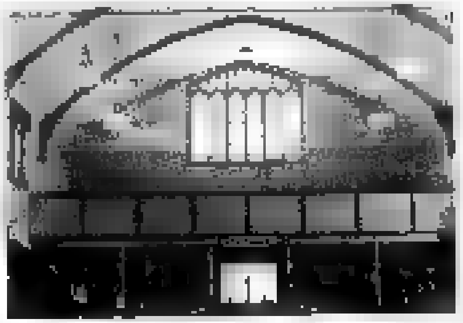
The third church under construction, 1949.



And in [illegible] the pulpit



The church is dedicated, 1950.



The balcony, 1962

they were unable to pay, the money was taken from the church funds. Soon the Anglican church in Barrhead was rented and services were held there under the auspices of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The elders from Neerlandia conducted the services but soon some of the immigrants were chosen to read the sermons. On October [illegible], the Christian Reformed Church in Barrhead was organized. At that time there were fifteen families, two single men, and forty-eight children. The Neerlandia congregation, which had changed to individual communion cups in [illegible], donated the old communion set to the new congregation.

The Anglican church

Neerlandia faced other problems. In [illegible] a second church, the Canadian Reformed Church, was formed. This was a painful time for the community; strong emotions were generated, relationships severed, and families divided.

* * *

Sermon Shuffle

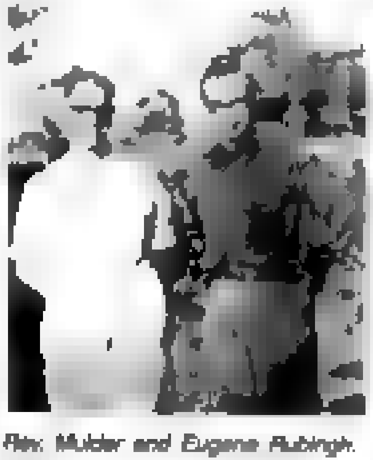
When the CRC lost its pastor and the church burned down, some of the congregation worshipped in the store hall, others in the school. Reading services were also conducted in Barrhead where the elders had to read. I remember having to read there one Sunday. I had forgotten my sermon but it did not dawn on me until I was halfway there. I had no choice but to go back to pick it up. In the meantime my brother-in-law had gone to my place and Grace had asked him to bring me the sermon. We passed each other on the road, he going one way and I the other. When I finally reached Barrhead the sermon was already there. I was very upset and remember getting stuck in my prayer which had to be done in Dutch. Those were the days. A new church was built and finally after three years the call was accepted by Rev. Mulder. That was a happy turn of events. I had been clerk those three years and had had my fill of writing ministers.

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

At the same time the church was without a minister. Though many of the leaders were well read, some had always subscribed to the Dutch church papers and read the works of John Calvin, Herman Bavinck, Abraham Kuyper, and others, and knew and understood the basic confessions of the Christian faith as well as the established church order, the burden of leadership was heavy on their shoulders at this time.

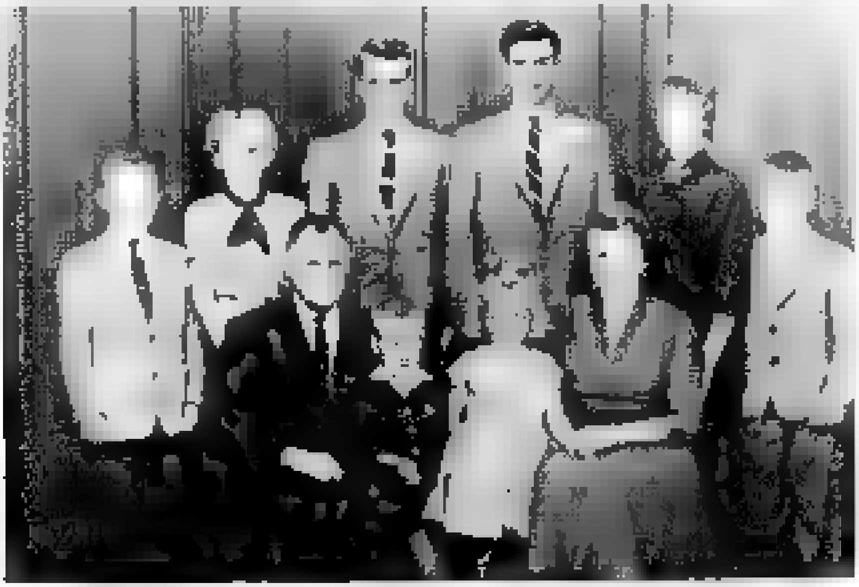
After Rev. Rubingh left Neerlandia in 1948, call after call had been sent out but no minister accepted. The elders read the sermons, conducted family visitation, visited the sick, taught catechism and exercised church discipline year after weary year. Then in 1952 Rev. Lambertus Mulder accepted the call extended to him. Rev. and Mrs. Mulder were joyfully welcomed by the congregation and were soon busy. Rev. Mulder, an energetic man, would bound up the steps of the pulpit to deliver his sermons. He had a unique and interesting preaching style. No one fell asleep while he was preaching. The sermons were not only delivered with enthusiasm and seasoned with singular expressions, they also instructed, admonished and edified the listeners. Rev. Mulder was well able to


Rev. Mulder and Eugene Rubingh, 1954

After a good sermon, February 1958.

deal with the factions within the congregation and the church thrived under his tireless leadership. However in 1957 he accepted a call to Fort William, Ontario, and the congregation sadly bade him farewell.

After the Mulders left Rev. Harry Van Dyken accepted the call extended to him. He served the Neerlandia congregation from 1957-62. Rev. Van Dyken was well-versed in the doctrines of the Christian faith and taught them from the pulpit and in catechism and doctrine classes. As part of his teachings on the Christian life he emphasized the sinfulness of man. He stressed the covenant relationship between God and His people. Under his tutelage the members learned what it means to be Reformed. Rev. Van Dyken was followed by Rev. Harold Hollander, who stayed in Neerlandia from 1962-66.



The Van Dykens. Back: Clifford, Marjorie, Arnold, Donald, Joanne, Curtis. Front: Harry, Gordon, Mary, Wilhelmina.

After Rev. Hollander left Neerlandia was vacant until 1970 when Rev. Van Drunen accepted the call to serve the congregation. Rev. Van Drunen was a compassionate man. When Martin and Wilma Wierenga's little daughter Bernice was terminally ill with a brain tumor, he frequently came to visit. On one occasion he took the fur cap he was wearing and cupping it in his hand held it out to her and said, "You are one of His (the Lord's) chicks."

During this period the ideas brought to Canada by the postwar immigrants became a source of friction in the congregation. Though the Kuyperians in the congregation had always promoted the idea that Christianity involved all areas of life, this was never widely accepted in Neerlandia. Immigrants and others formed the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (later called the AACS) based in Toronto. This association aggressively proclaimed the view that all of life is religion and that Christians must therefore show God's Lordship over every area of life.

When these ideas reached Neerlandia they were embraced by the descendants of the Kuyperians but resisted by others. Tensions rose within the congregation. It was an unhappy time.

Then in 1974 Rev. Cornelius Vriend came to Neerlandia to take the place of Rev. Van Drunen, who had left in 1973. Through his ministry broken relationships were healed and there was a gradual reduction of the tension which marred congregational life.

As time went by, more people accepted the idea that they should be Christians engaged in all areas of life. Many Neerlandians had always promoted Christian education. Now some became concerned about social issues, politics, and labour unions. With this came the realization that there should be co-operation with other Christians, and some supported such organizations as CLAC and CPJ.

The local CRC congregation had for many years supported missions endeavours in China, Africa, and other foreign fields. In the 1950s the congregation joined the Edmonton CRC in a mission project in Jasper Place. This work was discontinued in 1962. Since then there have been efforts at evangelism at Kawacatoose and the penitentiary at Fort Saskatchewan, but the location of Neerlandia, which was considered a boon when Neerlandia was founded, was a drawback in these mission efforts. The distance to both of these places made it difficult to establish and maintain contact with the people. Both projects were discontinued.

In 1979, acting on a proposal of the deacons, the congregation agreed to sponsor several Vietnamese refugee families, the so-called boat people. The intention was to help as many people as possible leave the refugee camps and start life anew in Canada. By 1984 six families had been sponsored.

In 1984, as in 1915, the church is considered the centre of the community. From the church the members receive direction for their daily lives. Through the years there have been gains and losses. The church has grown numerically from 17 to [illegible] families. There has also been growth in insight as to what it means to live Christianity. On the other hand, some good practices have been discontinued. The once-thriving society life has diminished. The annual congregational meeting has become strictly a business meeting. Nevertheless the purpose of the church remains the same: to promote the worship of Jesus Christ as Lord, and to instruct, admonish, and uphold its members through the sacraments and proclamation of God's Word.

The Societies in Neerlandia

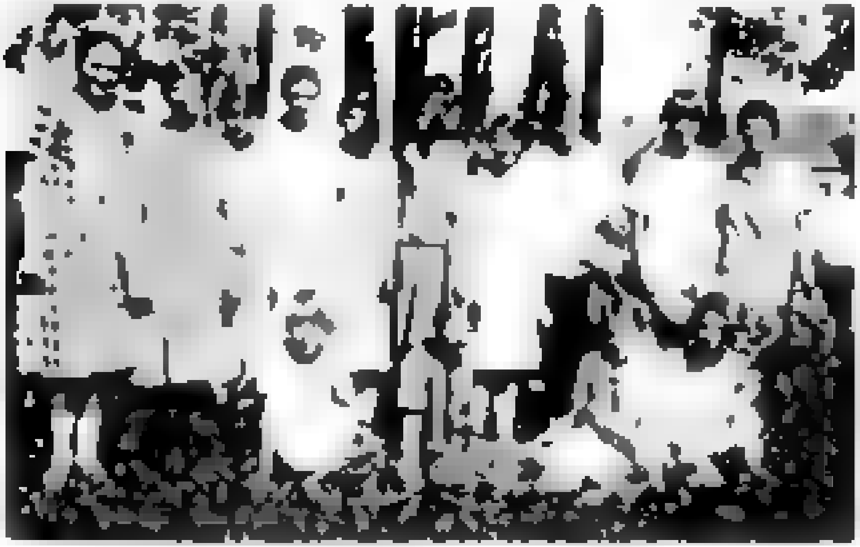
As soon as there were enough young folks in Neerlandia, society life began. A Young People's Society was organized in [illegible] At first there were many more boys than girls since there were quite a few bachelors. This society met at the homes of some of the young married couples.

As the membership grew, meetings were held once a week (usually Thursday evenings) in the church during the winter months. The meeting was divided into two parts. The first hour was a Bible study lesson. The discussion was led by the president. The members were given assignments in turns. This meant they had to make an introduction (an essay) to introduce the topic on the part of Scripture they were to discuss the following week. This took a lot of study as they had to be prepared to answer the questions put to them. A short recess followed. After recess, for the second part of the evening, someone would present an essay or recitation. There was also a question box into which members could put a question. At the end of the meeting the questions were given out to be answered the following week.

A Men's Society was formed in the early twenties for the married men. These societies were similar to and patterned after the societies in the Netherlands. Church history was a common topic for after recess since much had happened in the Netherlands in the recent past. Christians had been given the freedom to have their own schools, a Christian party led by Abraham Kuyper had been elected to form the government, and there had been a division in the church as well.

One member of each society had to prepare an essay to be read and discussed at the yearly church meeting. These annual meetings lasted a whole day so there was lots of time to do this. The Men's Society disbanded in 1973 because of poor attendance.

A Girls' Society was formed in [illegible] by Bertha Tuininga at the request of Jennigje Kippers who felt the young girls should learn some handicrafts such as crocheting, knitting, embroidery and



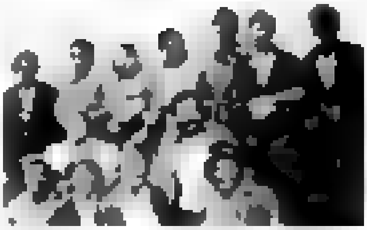
Sewing Club. Bertha Tuininga, Gladys Kippers, M[illegible] [illegible], Johanna Meeuwsen, Rena [illegible], Eva Tillema, Susie Anema, [illegible] Offinga, Lula Sturwold, Tena Anema. Seated: Margaret Sturwold, Anne Schoonekamp, Johanna Ingwersen, Alice Kippers. 1926

sewing. It started with ten or twelve girls and, at first, was only for crafts but later Bible study was started. When Rev. H. Van Der Woude was pastor he led the Bible Discussion for several years. The young men met separately during those years.

The Girls Society meetings were held every Wednesday afternoon year round. The handicrafts the members made belonged to the society and goods for making them were bought with the dues paid at each meeting. Once a year a bazaar was held and the beautiful and useful items were sold by an auctioneer, usually Sietze Tiemstra, to the highest bidder. The money raised at this event was sent away for missionary work or other worthy causes. Sometimes the knitted or sewn garments were given to the poor. This society continued until some of the girls went elsewhere to work. The small group remaining then joined the young men in a Young People's Society formed of boys and girls fifteen years and older. They met Sunday evenings. After the opening of the meeting the girls and boys would usually meet in separate rooms where one of the older members would direct the Bible study. Mrs. Rubingh, Mrs. Mulder and Kay Baker were among those who helped the girls during these years. [illegible] the 1950s the girls continued meeting during the week as well.

Rev. Rubingh, Rev. L. Mulder, and Rev. Van Dyken also led Young Peoples during their term of office here. Rev. and Mrs. Mulder were actively involved with the young people of the church on both societal and social levels. Mr. [illegible] Elzinga and John Visser Jr. who led them for three years when the church was vacant, guided the young people. There were others who also helped at various times — not for as long a time — but all helped to keep the society going.

There was a social as well as a study aspect to the Young Peoples Society. At these meetings outings were planned. The young people had good times there and it was a good dating time. Many courtships in Neerlandia started out by dates after "club" as they called it.

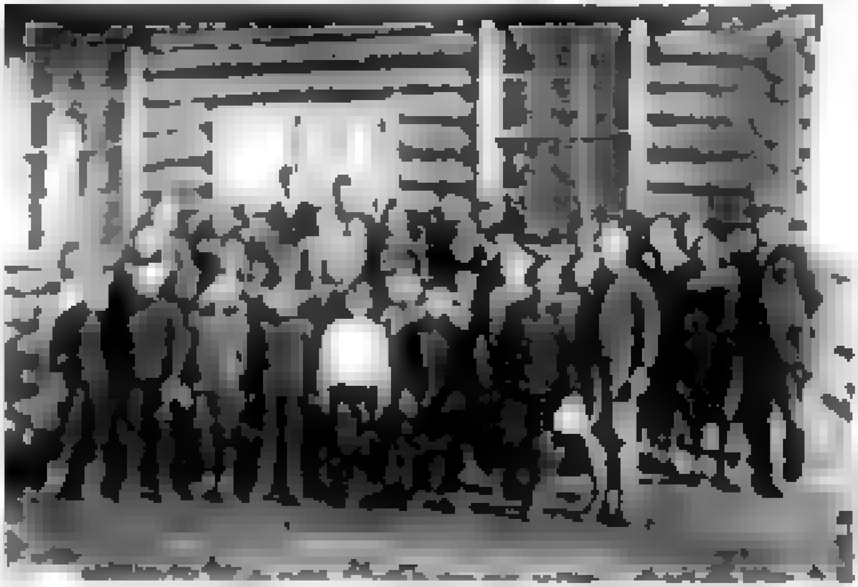


Girls Society
Back: Alice Kippers, Catherine Baker, [illegible], Anna [illegible], [illegible] Annie Schoonekamp, Jennie Kippers. Middle: Mabel Elzinga, Sophie H. Wierenga. Front: Della Peters, Gladys Wierenga, Rutie Schoonekamp, Grace Nanninga, Sophie A. Wierenga, c. [illegible]

The Girls Society went to Edmonton to have this picture taken. Back: Lena Baker, Lutie Bos, Jennie Wierenga, Jennie [illegible], Grace [illegible], Catherine Tiemstra, Hedia Peters, Elsie Wierenga.
Front: Annie Anema, Bertha Wierenga, Bertha Gelderman, Rev. Van Der Woude, Frances Anema, Nene Nanninga, Helen Emmerzaal. 1942

Though there have been many changes, Young People's Society is still in existence. At first young people remained members until they married but later, as many people left Neerlandia for higher education or jobs, the society became composed of fifteen to nineteen year-olds. The society is under the direction of youth elders. Young married couples give leadership to the fifteen to eighteen year-olds who make up the society.

In the early twenties a Boys and Girls Society was started and led by Clarence Tuininga. The members ranged in age from twelve to fifteen years. This society was held during the winter months on Saturday afternoons. Clarence would explain a passage of Scripture and ask questions about it. The after recess topic was church history. This society lasted about six years.



Knappen en Meisjes Vereeniging *(Boys and Girls' Society). Back: ? ?, Andy Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, Lucas Sturwold, Albert Tiemstra, Bill Lievers.*

Third Row: Gertie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Johanna Messelink, Annie Ingwersen, Susie Anema, Tena Terpsma, [illegible] Ritsema, Gertie Tuininga, [illegible] Anema, Pauline Sturwold, Sadie Tuininga, Norman Terpsma, Grada (Margaret) Messelink, Klaas Tuininga, leader.

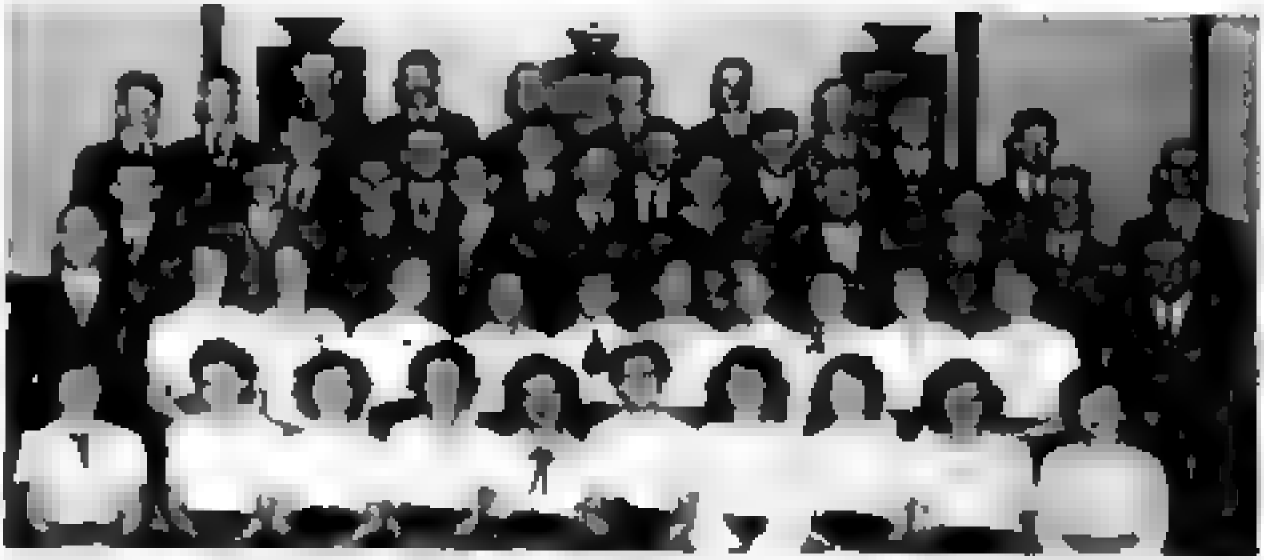
Second row: Gladys Kippers, Hanna Lievers, Johanna Ingwersen, Minnie Lievers, Rieka Lievers, Lily Messelink, Jennie and Annie Schoonekamp, [illegible] Sturwold, Gertie Ritsema.

Front: Andrew Nanninga, Joe Tuininga, Case Tuininga, George Terpsma, Henry Ritsema, Henry Lievers, Peter Ritsema, John Kippers.

According to the CRC denominational yearbook, a singing society began in 19[illegible] with Popke Schuring directing. The original purpose seems to have been to improve congregational singing during the services. As time went on the choral society moved toward the presentation of musical programs at Christmas and Easter both in Neerlandia and in hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions. Henry Michael directed a choral society in 192[illegible]. Several leaders have taken the turn at being director. Since about 1975 there have been two choral societies; the second one is composed of single young people.

Mrs. Rubingh at home in the parsonage, 1947

Mrs. J. Rubingh formed a Ladies' Aid "Dorcas" in 1946 and led this society until Rev. J. Rubingh was called to serve elsewhere. The Dorcas society followed the same procedures as the Girls' Society — Bible Study before and handicrafts after recess — but later the after recess program changed to include a reading, discussion of business concerning the society, and having tea served by two different women at each meeting. This society, though small in number (thirteen to twenty), continues to be active in the community. The women hold a bazaar each year, donating the goods and refresh-



Back: Ralph Bos, Arthur Rietema, Pete Kriens, Archie Howe, Bill Toebes, Clarence Tiemstra, Arie Kriens, Albert Kriens. Fourth Row: Norman Toebes, Henry Wierenga, Fred Toebes, Lambert A. Wierenga, Ralph Kriens, Cor Hiemstra, Martin Wierenga.

Third Row: Herman Gelderman, Ben Bouwman, Don Brunsell, Eugene Rubingh, Arnold Hiemstra, Dewey Terpstra, George Anema, Jim Johnson, Pete Mast, Albert Tiemstra.

Second Row: Rev. Rubingh, Robie Mast, Jennie Terpstra, Alice Mast, Margaret Bouwman, Jean Gelderman, Grace Bouwman, Thelma Sturwold, Sophie Anema, Rika Gelderman, Janet Sturwold, John Visser.

Front: Grace Turinga, [illegible] Bos, Jane Baker, Gladys Kriens, Anna Anema, Mrs. Rubingh, Jennie Elgersma, Lois Kriens, Cecelia Tiemstra, Wilma Visser, c. 1948

Young People's Society

Back: James Strydhorst, Henry, Peter, Ed, and Bert Flem, Clarence Tiemstra, John Flem, Bert Jansen, Wilbert Schuring, Bill Rietema

Fourth Row: Joe Mast, Raymond Marcus, Lambert Turinga, Julius Boersma, Jake Turinga, Henry Gelderman, Ken Turinga, Jim Nannenga, George Visser, Ralph Bos

Third Row: Marvin Nannenga, Mrs. Mulder, Rose Turinga, Shirley Ashley, Johanna Wierenga, Thyra Dieterman, Evelyn Riemstra, Hattie Elgersma, Hessie and Jean Fisher, Betty Bus, Anna DeBoer, Faye Ithuis, Stewart Plantinga, Simon De Groot.

Second Row: Bob Jansen, Ruth Turinga, Shirley Olthuis, Henry Turinga, Joyce Rietema, Edith Turinga, Ann Strydhorst, Jean Olthuis, Florence Baker, John Baker, Rev. Mulder.

Front Row: Annette Plantinga, Catherine Baker, Henry Nannenga, Klaas Turinga, Jim Turinga, Dave Tiemstra, Henry Strydhorst, Marvin Nannenga, George R. Visser, Sylvia Turinga, Joe Plantinga.

ments and, of course, serving and cleaning up later. Quite a few donations are sent in by non-members too. With the proceeds of the sale the Society helps causes such as Rehoboth and The King's College, and helps to obtain items such as kitchen equipment for use in the church. In addition the women are active in visiting the Hillcrest Senior Citizens Home and the Barrhead Nursing Home every other week. They also visit the elderly and shut-ins of the community. Although they have had leadership from some of the ministers and their wives, the women have usually kept this society going by themselves. Through the years the members have changed, but the society remains faithful to the original purpose of Bible study and charitable work.

Young People's Society, 1957

Back Row: Henry Nanninga, Andrew Elgersma, Clifford Tuininga, Lambert Tuininga, George Strydhorst, Wilbert Schuring, Ken Piers, Jelle Tuininga, Peter Piers, Tony Fisher, Marvin Nanninga, Alvin Nanninga.

Third Row: Bert Piers, Ella Plantinga, Rose Mast, Betty Fisher, Lucille Tuininga, Hilda Piers, Rosetta Nanninga, Marilyn Mast, Anne Tuininga, Joanne Gelderman, Edith Tuininga, Sandra Elgersma, Gilles Plantinga, Jack Olthuis.

Second Row: Arnold van Dyken, Raymond Markus, Judy Fisher, Joanne van Dyken, Elsie Olthuis, Mrs. van Dyken, Henry Piers, Don van Dyken, Johanna Wieringa, Henry Gelderman.

Front: Jim Tuininga, Winnifred Ingwersen, Klaas Tuininga, Frank Visser, John Strydhorst, Henry Strydhorst, Cornelis Kappers.

Young People's Society.
Back: Henry J. Wieringa, Sidney Tuininga, Ray Stuiwold, Henry Schuurman, Bill Koopers.
Third Row: Cor Strydhorst, Tom Stuiwold, Fred Olthuis, Jake Van Beek, Gilbert Baker, Ken Strydhorst.
Second Row: Jack Mast, Rev. Hollander, Mrs. Hollander, Judy Nanninga, Audrey Gelderman, Sharon Nanninga, Clarisa Hollander, Edna Schuurman, Jennie Schuurman, Beverly Visser, Jake Strydhorst.
Front Row: Andrew Strydhorst, Sharon Hollander, Carol Schoonekamp, Shirley Wieringa, Alida Mast, Betty Visser, Darlene Wieringa, Gordon Tuininga, 1965-68.

Memories From A Preacher's Kid

In September of 1946 Rev. and Mrs. John Rubingh came to Neerlandia with their teen-age son, Eugene. The pioneer days were long ended, but for this young transplanted Yankee it would all be an unforgettable adventure. My diary for September 5 says simply "Came to Neerlandia," but the reality was far more astonishing for this sheltered son of the pastorale. The road was incredibly bad (I have since traveled the mountains of Sierra Leone and I still say the road to Neerlandia that year was terrible). Every two miles we stopped to scrape the mud from the windshield to see if there was any hope of making it. Mother trembled to think to which outpost of the earth she was being slithered by her foolhardy husband, though in the end she had as much pluck as he.

The days of that autumn are stark in my memory, for the timid city kid was being hammered into shape. The young people painted the basement of the church that fall and some muscled young buck named Egersma painted me with raucous glee. Mother took one look at me and said, "You're not going back there!" But I knew I had to go back, no matter what. *Dominee* descended from the study and agreed with me, and I went back and painted with all the rest. It had been like baptism, in a way. On December 22 I joined Young People's. Neerlandia, at last, was truly home.

That winter was punctuated by savage bouts of a sport new to the city kid, a sport played with pucks and sticks. Rolled-up newspapers covered shin bones, but they turned blue with bruises nonetheless. I became as mean as the best guy, and I was faster than [illegible] and [illegible] was the goalie. I remember he had always been the goalie as far back as [illegible]. There was an ageless quality about him, but he could move like lightning when the puck approached.

There is only one other entry in my diary that year. It reads: "Took out a girl for the first time. Her name is [illegible]." Our young romance blossomed, and we both went to school in Grand Rapids eventually. Our shared dreams of missionary service took us both to Africa, but with different mates. Even today we speak together in the language of the Tiv of Nigeria, to whom we recommended and proclaimed Jesus Christ.

Mr. Van [illegible] was our teacher, and many of us made life miserable for him, but I was his special nemesis. I do not write this with any pride, but surely Mr. Van [illegible] forms a chapter in the lives of many of us, and we cannot let him pass unnoticed. Forever there rings in our ears the summons to punishment: "[illegible] the science room." I wonder if Mr. Van [illegible] realized all along that we were just young jack rabbits growing up. Perhaps he went home at night and [illegible] about our outrageous antics. I doubt it. But I hope so. Henry Piers and [illegible] and I were his triple trouble. Once every ten years or so we see each other and our greeting is: "Go into the science room, you rascal!"

In the summers I worked for [illegible] Nanninga as carpenter's apprentice. I learned to lay shingles in a hurry, but I was a disaster with the cows and I think they chuckled when they saw me coming. Their coordination of kicking the [illegible] pail and [illegible] a tail in my face simultaneously was magnificent.

On slow days we "picked roots", and the evening skies were nearly always dotted with fires as new land was cleared and the brush piles burned away. The [illegible] often hired a bulldozer to come and clear brush for $[illegible] an hour. Occasionally a bulldozer would sink into the muskeg.

In [illegible] a momentous decision was made concerning the schooling of the youth. The high schoolers took most of their courses by correspondence, but it was decided that busing to Barrhead High School would be arranged. Would the preacher's kid go? Yes. In September [illegible] the yellow bus arrived and many of the covenant youth indeed went to Barrhead High, including the preacher's kid. I can still see concerned parents watching us go that morning. One father stood at the door of the bus and urged us not to step on board. But we went anyway.

So Neerlandia seeped into my bones. Preachers' kids in later life seldom know where they are from, for their parents put down stakes in so many places. But I am from Neerlandia, and I know it. Its images go with me everywhere: the columns of smoke rising straight into the sky from farmhouse chimneys on a still and bitterly cold winter morning, the sweep and crackle of the Northern lights across the canopy of sky, the lonely howl of a crazy coyote. I remember how we laughed at the story of the Ukrainian neighbor who said to John Gelderman, "You horse me. I post-fence you," and they had a deal.

But those images have not yet caught the heart of it. In Neerlandia, in the 40's, the vision that drove the pioneers was still alive and vibrant. The depth of their faith they translated into action, and built a community known all around as founded in the name of Christ the King. The steel of their commitment was still flowing into their sons and daughters. Their hope in the future was still invincible then. There still was sod unturned, land as uncleared as when their fathers first crossed the Pembina. With those strong links to the past, and with that optimism about the future, there was a strong sense of self-identity. People in Neerlandia knew who they were. I could not have described it then, but I see it now: they knew who they were. At their hearts' core they were the people of God. They had staked everything on that commitment. It had given them a past and a hope.

The decades have rolled on, and I am told that while the externals have changed, in its essences Neerlandia is still as it was then. The steel is tempered now and the landscape a little softer, but in Neerlandia the sense of self-identity is yet clear: the coming of the Kingdom of God drives them on. And that, at last, is the heart of it.

Eugene Rubingh

Our Plight in Vacancy
Some three years ago, to the shock of us all,
There came from the east for our pastor, a call
To do home-mission work, an extension of church,
Which call he accepted, and left us in the lurch.

Then just two weeks later our old church burned down,
And only its ruins were left in our town.
Yes, it was insured, but not near high enough,
With the present-day prices we pay for new stuff.

But plans for a new church were very soon made,
Pledges accepted, which of course, would be paid.
Our services now were held in the Hall,
But space there was lacking to seat them all.

So our group was divided, some went to the school,
Half English, half Dutch was kept as the rule.
Thus now we all worshipped and each did his part,
Though divided in body we were still one at heart.

This meant that the elders four sermons must read,
Plus two more in Barrhead, where one had to lead.
Besides this there were several classes to teach,
While none of the elders had learned how to preach.

Add all this together, there was work here to do,
And none was excused, for not even the flu.
Time marched on apace, and good sermons grew few
To read to the audience who sat in the pew.

The calls we extended to men of sound mind
Were politely acknowledged but firmly declined.

We called, yes we called, from the east to the west,
Some young and some old who had been through the test

And so two years passed and no minister came,
And the answers we got were always the same
They took their full time, their reply mostly late
We acknowledge your call, yes, your need there is great

"We hope very soon one will heed to your call,
But I must decline, just can't come, that is all."
The past it was gloomy, the future not bright
But give up? — not we, we'll keep on with the fight!

So time went apace, our new church was complete,
With room in abundance, for each one a seat
Although this new building was fair to behold,
It could not entice the right man to our fold.

Those men in "Jerusalem" all sit there so tight,
Although we prayed, wrote, and beseeched with our might
We called old and young, we called big and small,
Had a few more years gone by, we would have called them all

But now at last we can rejoice, for one our call has heard
To lead us in God's pastures green, and preach to us His Word.

God grant him grace to labour here, and give him strength and
life,
And happiness while here with us, both to him and his wife
And may we all with one accord remember them in prayer,
Rejoice with them when all is well, and in their burdens share

Now let us praise and bless our God for His great goodness
wrought,
Who after all these years of wait, this man to us has brought
O magnify His holy name, His mercy faileth never
Pastors may come and they may go, but God's church goes on
forever

Gerrit Ingwersen

Excerpts from poem read by Gerrit at the welcome party for Rev. L. Mulder, 1952

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF NEERLANDIA

"The year 1948 saw the beginning of a new stream of immigrants to Neerlandia. Amongst these people were members of the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk* in the Netherlands, in Neerlandia they joined the Christian Reformed Church but that was not to last too long

The Christian Reformed Church had correspondence with the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands and did not want to get involved in the trouble in the Netherlands, but they would not accept ministers from the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk* on their pulpits. Many in Neerlandia were well aware of recent developments in the Netherlands and, after talking to the new immigrants, some became very dissatisfied with the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church.

A number of times Lammert Wierenga wrote in *De Wachter* pointing to the struggle in the Netherlands against synodical hierarchy. Then protests went to the consistory and to classis, but to no avail. Eventually, in March, Lammert Wierenga, Ite Wierenga, and

Joshua Rowaan sent a letter to the General Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of 1950 requesting them to ask both church groups in the Netherlands to present their views as to the reason for separate church existence, and to ask one group why it had suspended and deposed, and the other why they liberated themselves. In the meantime, a number became members of the Canadian Reformed church in Edmonton, others wanted to wait for the answer of Synod. A few days later the answer came. Synod had decided not to accede to their request.

"Grounds

A. It is not in our province to sit in judgement over these churches.

B. It is not our Christian duty to invite delegations from these churches for the purpose of settling these items.

C. The "*Gereformeerde Kerken onderhoudende Art. 31 K.O.*" is in no way prevented from directing an invitation for correspondence to us."

On August 1, 1950, they sent a letter and an Act of Liberation to all the members of the Christian Reformed Church, stating their reasons for liberating themselves. In summary form, these reasons were (following the order of the grounds Synod gave):

A. The Christian Reformed Church, while saying that it does not want to judge events in Holland, by their decisions in fact implicitly condemn the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk*.

B. The Christian Reformed Church, while claiming to be neutral, has already judged (as seen by its accepting Synodical ministers but denying *Vrijgemaakt* ones the right to speak), and has done so without hearing the arguements of the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk*.

C. The one-sided attitude of the Christian Reformed Church has prevented correspondence with the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk*.

A Canadian Reformed Church was instituted in Neerlandia on August 6, 1950, under the leadership of elder A. W. De Leeuw of Edmonton. Andy Mulder, Hendrik Peters, and Ekke Wierenga were installed as elders and Gerrit Dam and Adrian Hamoen Sr. as deacons. At that time there were about forty members. A year later the membership had risen to sixty-eight.

After two ministers had declined, the congregation of Neerlandia joyfully received word that Rev. H. Stel had accepted the call, and he was installed on November 25, 1951. At this time worship services were held in the school. In the hamlet of Neerlandia a piece of property had been bought on which the first parsonage was situated. An old school building was bought in December 1954 and moved to the church property in 1955. The following year Rev. Stel accepted a call to Houston, and Neerlandia was once again without a minister.

In 1961, the church in Barrhead was instituted and an agreement was made to call a minister together. In March 1966 the Rev. and Mrs. Pieffers came to Neerlandia; as emeritus minister he was able to serve Neerlandia for two years until he died in 1968.

Early in 1968, the congregation decided to build a new church building, and on December 5, 1969, the official opening was celebrated, although there was no minister. In 1971 Neerlandia called candidate C. Van Dam, who accepted. In 1973 Rev. Van Dam accepted a call to Brampton and moved there the following year.[41]

After Rev. Van Dam left, the congregation had its ups and downs in church membership numbers. Many ministers and candidates were called, but they all declined the calls. Classical preaching

Rev. and Mrs. Van Dam, 1978.

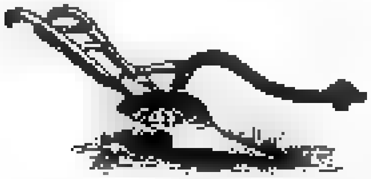
engagements were shared with Barrhead until Rev. Tiggelaar was installed as minister of Barrhead in December 1981, then he came to Neerlandia for a service two Sundays every month and also taught catechism at school.

On Christmas Day, 1982, the joyful news was received that the Rev. A. de Jager of Anna Paulowna-Enkhuizen, the Netherlands, had accepted a call to Neerlandia.

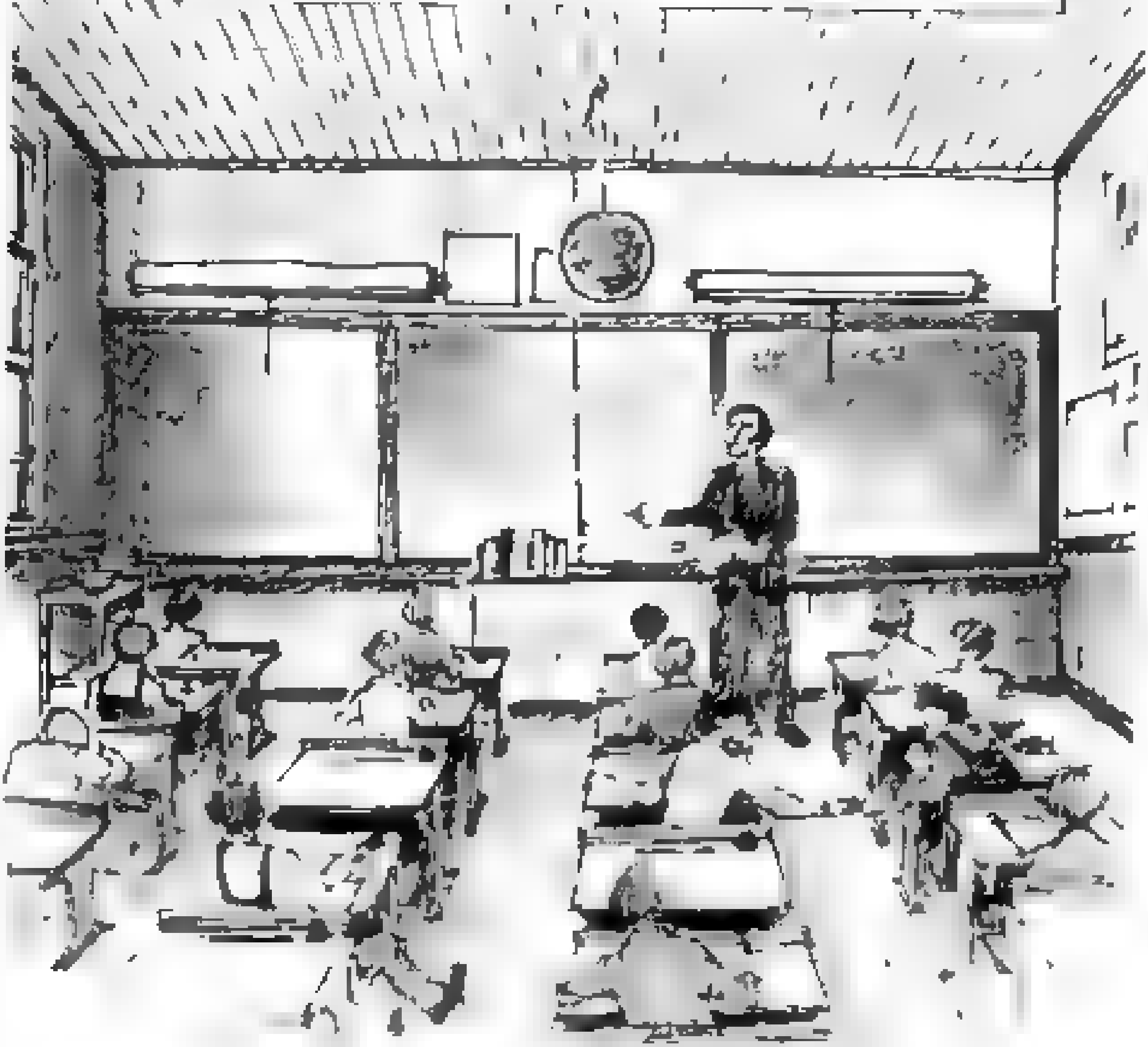
At the present time (1984) membership of the church of Neerlandia stands at 227 members. Plans are underway for a new building since the church building is too small.

Lies Hamoen

J. Van Dam, "Neerlandia 25 Years" *Clarion*, Vol. 24, No. 17 August 23, 1975



Slates and Syrup Pails



EDUCATION

From the beginning of Dutch settlement in Neerlandia, the people were [illegible] that their children receive a good Christian education. In the Netherlands, independent Christian schools governed by a school society formed by parents were in existence since the mid-19th century. The people's motive in establishing such schools was grounded in their belief that parents are charged by God to bring up their children in a way that acknowledges God as Lord of all of life. The men and women who came to Neerlandia in the early 20th century brought this idea with them. How clearly they understood just what Christian education entailed is not known. What is known is that in response to God their desire was to establish an independent Christian school.

By [illegible] the few settlers in the [illegible] had formed a Christian school society and were operating a school. Henry van den Burg, a settler from the U.S.A., agreed to teach the children, although he had no teaching certificate. There was no school building so classes were held in the log church. On Sundays worship services were held there, but during the week the benches were pushed to one side and replaced with homemade desks. Henry van den Burg exchanged his teaching skills for the [illegible] of [illegible] products by students and parents. The settlers were too poor to pay him, but this method of payment did not work either. The reason was that when the students came to school, Mr. van den Burg [illegible] in and he [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] he was getting his land cleared, he was getting [illegible] he had [illegible]. In any event, he eventually returned to the U.S.A.

Meanwhile, the pioneers met to discuss ways and means of continuing Christian education. Some of the settlers were of the opinion that they were too poor to support a Christian school, while others thought it necessary [illegible]. In response to [illegible] and [illegible] the financial difficulties, [illegible] others were not convinced. They thought the education provided by the public school system would be good enough. Back and forth the discussion went with [illegible] meetings and [illegible]. Eventually the settlers made up their minds: a large group of the opinion that a Christian school was impossible to maintain at that time and another [illegible] the idea of going ahead while seeking financial assistance from the Christian Reformed churches in the U.S.A. The latter proposal was brought before a subsequent meeting where the proponents urged the others to trust the Lord for success in this matter. A vote was taken; the motion [illegible]. The [illegible] there would be no independent Christian school in Neerlandia. Instead, a committee was formed with the intent of forming a public school district.

* * *

They never went ahead with a Christian school because the settlers felt there was not enough [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] *were asked if they would object to our own school and they said "Go ahead, we won't bother you."*

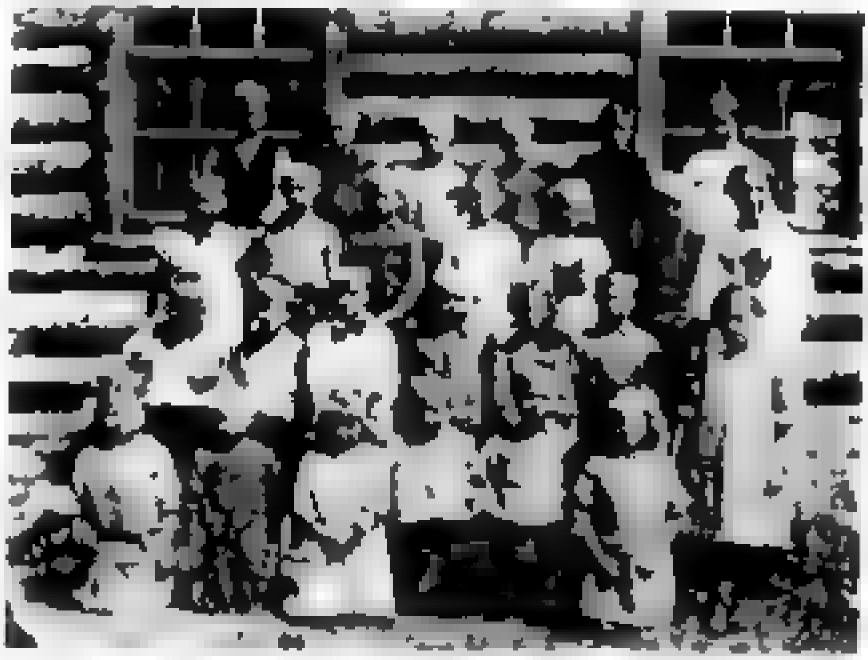
They had a meeting and Ingwersen, Kippers, A. Mast, Oldenburg, and Terpsma were in favour of their own school but were voted down. Those men thought they should write to sister congregations in the U.S.A. for financial aid.

Roelof Kooy said at this meeting, "Luiden wij hiermee de doodsklok over een Christelijke school in Neerlandia. We hereby sound the death knell for a Christian school in Neerlandia."

Norman Terpsma

• • •

Before van den Burg left, he and the parents approached Helen Kooy, a settler's daughter, to take his place. She was hesitant to do this, being young and having had no training to teach. However, since most of the people had come directly from the Netherlands and spoke little or no English and she had received her education in Alberta, she felt obligated to take the job. Although she had no prescribed textbooks available to her, she taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and some geography. The children had slates and slate pencils to work with. For her efforts she received twenty-five dollars a month.



Miss Kooy and her class, 1916.
Note Gerrit Kippers in front row. He was below school age but came that day to have his picture taken.

Back Row: Henry Kippers, John Olthuis, Andy Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, Jim Melsome, Ida Kooy.

Third Row: Della Anema, John Kippers, Lucas Sturwold, Pauline Sturwold, Tena Terpsma, Ike Nanninga, Helen Kooy (teacher).

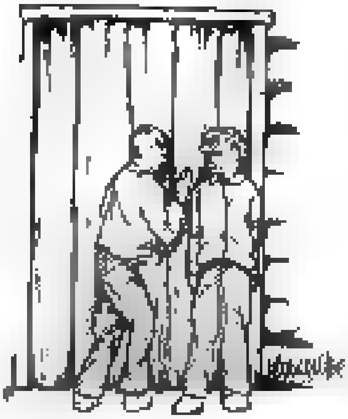
Second Row: Corny Ingwersen, Gerrit Ingwersen, Norman Terpsma, Louie Nanninga, Gladys Kippers, Albert Tiemstra, Margaret Messelink.

Front Row: Hanna Lievers, Gerrit Kippers, Minnie Lievers, Fred Olthuis, Gerben Tiemstra, Susie Anema.

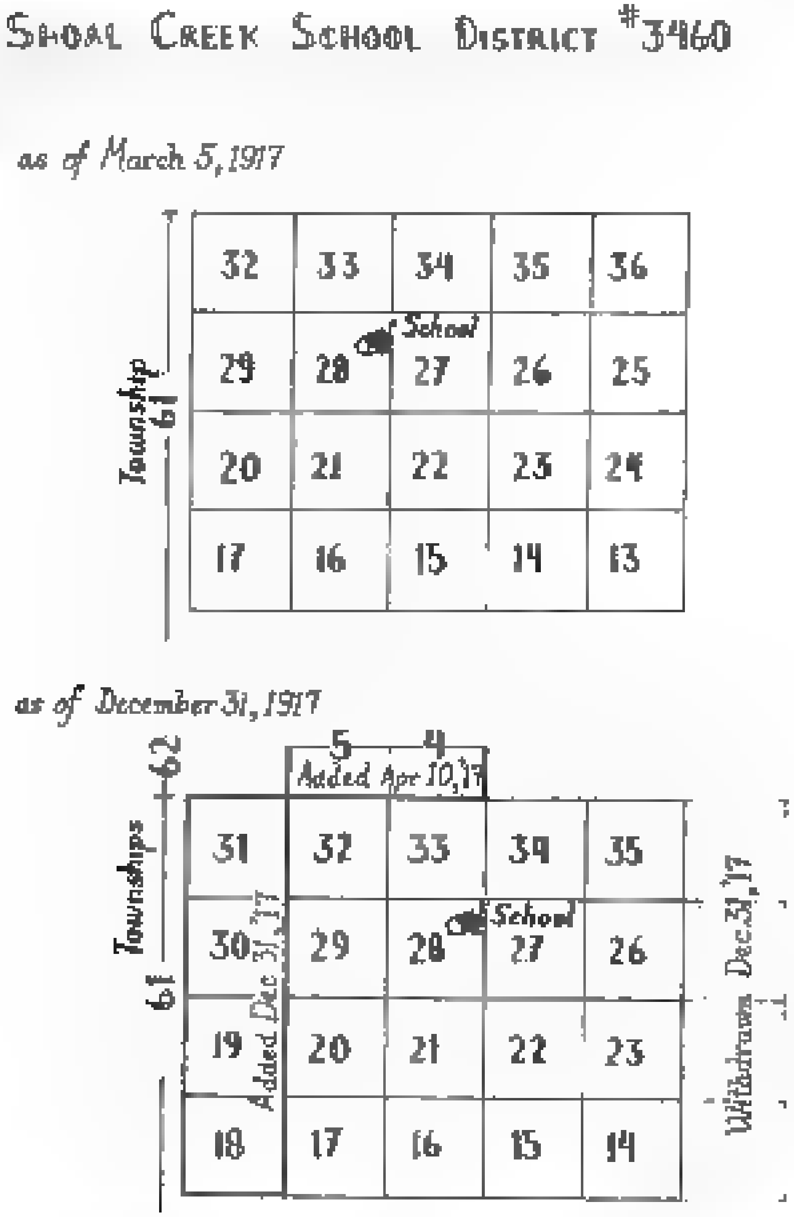
• • •

In her classroom Helen Kooy taught grades one through four. These included two rascally boys who, one afternoon when Miss Kooy stayed to put some work on the board for the next day, held the door shut to prevent her leaving. Fortunately Miss Kooy was wearing a hat with a long hat pin. Through a crack in the door she poked one of the culprits, Andy Nanninga, with her hat pin. The other boy must have been Bill Olthuis, for shortly after that the Nanninga and Olthuis families received a visit because "the boys *were getting too big for their britches." In spite of mischievous boys, Helen Kooy enjoyed her work and taught for about two years. The parents were glad their children were receiving some education in the English language*

* * *

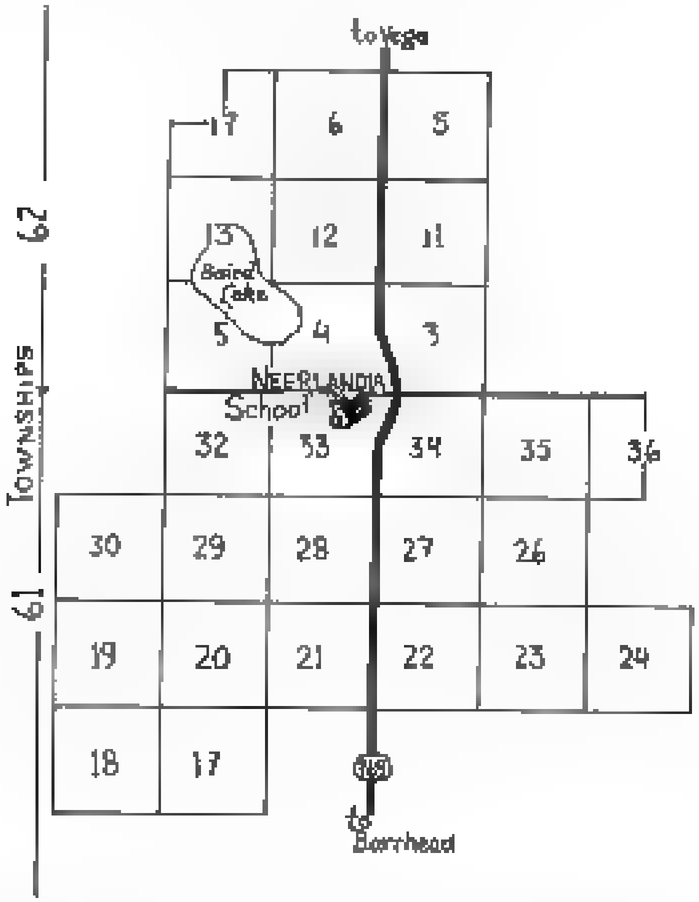


Though the attempt to establish a Christian school had been defeated, the efforts to provide Christian education had not stopped. The settlers hoped to start a public school with Christian teachers. The committee formed earlier had contacted the Government requesting permission to form a school district. To be eligible for the formation of a school district, at least four adults and at least eight children between the ages of five and sixteen had to be



residing in the proposed area. A petition could then be sent to the provincial government, which would respond by sending a copy of the School Ordinance specifying the steps to follow. The first requirement was the selection of a school committee composed of three members. They in turn had to set up a public meeting at which residents would vote on setting up a school district in their area. The required procedure was duly followed in Neerlandia with the result that the Shoal Creek School District #3460 was formed March 5, 1917. The number indicates that this was the 3460th school district formed in Alberta. No records remain to indicate why the name Shoal Creek was chosen but presumably it was taken from the nearby creek of the same name.

Though the Shoal Creek School District was a public organization, its members were Christians. This was demonstrated in the practice of opening each meeting by seeking God's help in prayer


NEERLANDIA SCHOOL DISTRICT # 3460
as of November 23, 1949

[illegible] chairman without prayer

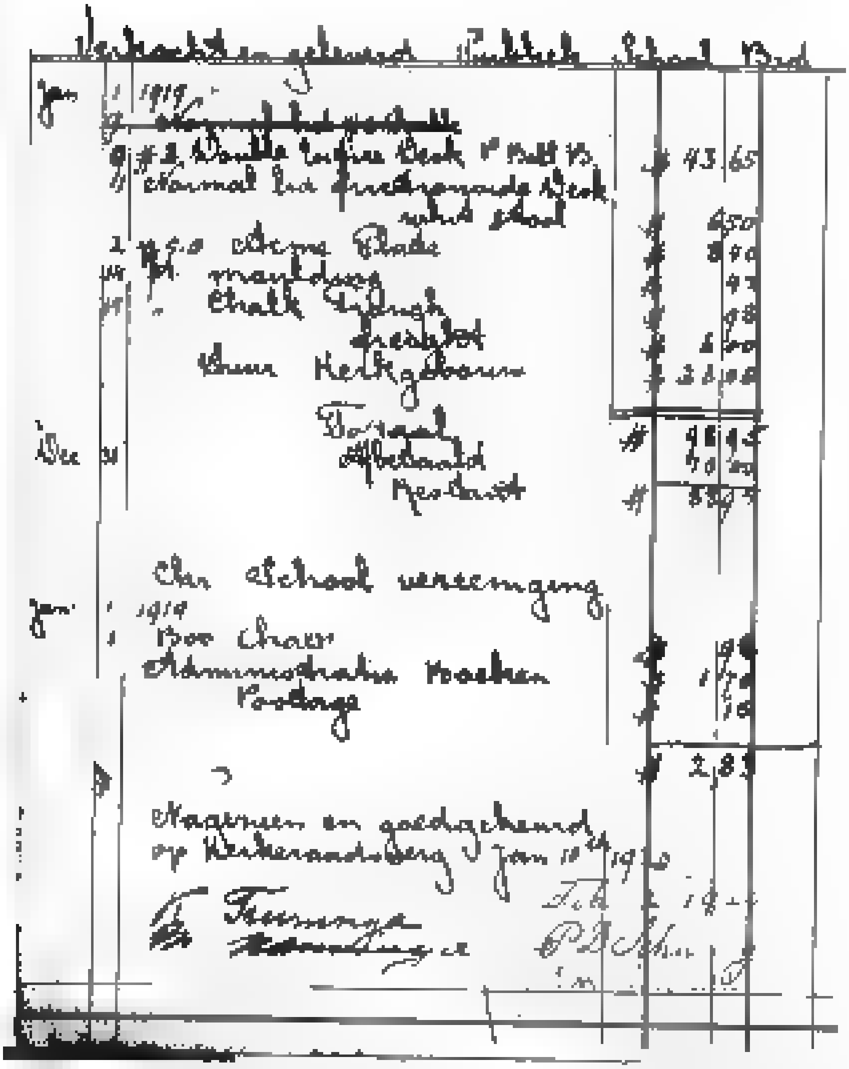
[illegible] cupied lands at the same time.

[illegible] received on June 27, 1917

[illegible] for example, did this until November 1947

[illegible] greater funds

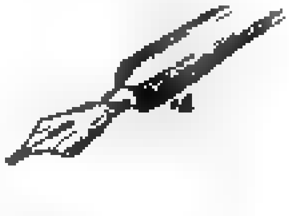
[illegible]



beaverboard or other material around the lower interior walls, but the cost of from $34 to $92 for various materials was considered prohibitive so they settled for colouring the walls dark with kalsomine and staining the floors. By June 1919 the school building, with the exception of a heater, was ready.

During the building process the trustees had been anticipating a visit from the school inspector who, they hoped, would advise them on heating, obtaining a special grant and other related matters. In September 1919 the long awaited visit took place with the inspector approving all that had been done. He did, however, recommend the following equipment

a standing numeral frame
an 18" hanging globe
a map from N. America and Canada
2 visitor's chairs
a basin and towels
a thermometer
window shades

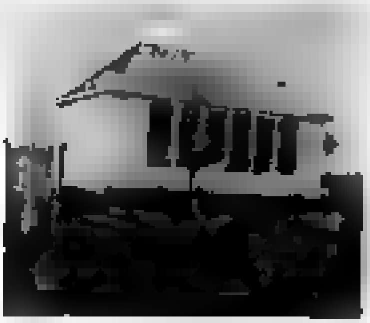


7 small-sized seats
penholders and busy work
a combined filter and fountain
a teacher's desk and chair

The board agreed to purchase all except the last two items which, they said, would be ordered when finances permitted.

At the same time, the trustees attempted to comply with the departmental regulations which stated that the grounds should be cleared of brush, levelled, and fenced. The fence was to be made of two strands of smooth wire topped with one strand of barbed wire. Arie Emmerzael and Popko Schuring submitted the only tender which was broken down as follows:

$48.20 for digging a well
$40.00 for clearing
$15.00 for fencing


First Neerlandia school

The janitorial contract was awarded to Willem de Groot at a rate of $4.75 per month. For this salary he was expected to do the following:

1. Sweep the floors every afternoon with the doors and windows open.
2. In the morning, dust the benches and light the fire. (The room was expected to be ready one-half hour before schooltime.)
3. Wash the blackboards every Saturday.
4. Wash the floors every fortnight.
5. Clean the windows.

And so schooling under the conditions set out by the Department could begin.

* * *

Walking to school four miles every day,
Seldom would we get a ride — there just was no way
On the way to school with our neighbours we'd meet,
And all walk together which we thought a treat
We named our junction Spruce Avenue you see,
Because there we assembled under a spruce tree
It must've been hard for my parents, I'm sure
But the memories that linger shall always endure
As we walked to school and saw bird's nests with young,
The frogs in the ponds, the spider webs as they hung,
The berries we found and the falling drops of rain,
Those memories I'm sure will always remain

excerpt from a poem by Annie Visser

In 1923 the name of the Shoal Creek School District was officially changed to the Neerlandia School District #3460. The name change, initiated by Clarence Tuininga, was made because mail intended for the school district was being misdirected to the community of Shoal Creek.

Financing the District

Finances, the catalyst by which a school system operates. No matter how highly education is regarded, without money it is next to impossible to obtain. For the pioneers in the Shoal Creek School

District, money was hard to come by. But money was needed for a schoolhouse, a well, school furnishings, salaries for teachers and janitors, firewood, and a host of other miscellaneous expenses. It was because of the lack of money that an independent Christian school had been foregone.

To a duly constituted school district though, money was available from three sources: debentures, grants, and taxes. Through the Public Utilities Commission, ten year debentures were available to schools for their initial building programs. The Shoal Creek School District first applied for and received a one-thousand-dollar debenture. When this was found to be insufficient, they applied for a second debenture, which was authorized in January, 1919 at seven percent interest.

The provisions of the School Grant Act of 1913 made additional money available. For each day school was open the district received $1.10. For the first four years a school was in operation it received thirty cents a day. Fifteen cents a day was available to schools that maintained a certain minimum standard in regard to grounds, buildings, equipment, government, and progress. In this last instance the government retained the right to provide a library of books instead of the money. Finally, forty dollars per term was available to schools having at least six students above grade eight.

Special grants were available in cases of need. The school inspector on his first visit to Neerlandia on September 10, 1919, agreed to attempt to obtain a special grant of three hundred dollars for the district. The poor financial status of the community may be appreciated when one notes that special grants were requested also in 1920, 1921, and 1922.

The third source of revenue was land taxes which, under governmental regulations, the School District could levy. Because most of the people were poor, the taxes were initially set as low as possible, at a flat rate of five cents per acre with the proviso that this could be increased to six cents per acre if a teacher was hired. (Minutes of May 26, 1918.)

A fourth minor source of revenue was fees paid by non-resident students. In 1928 the Bos and Heberling families paid four dollars per student, while the Elzingas paid a daily rate of two cents per day. On January 16, 1929, the rate was set at $4.50 per school year or part thereof.

Almost at once the monies raised were found to be inadequate and the tax rate quickly rose. By December 1, 1919, it was at the maximum allowed by the government, twelve cents per acre with a ten-percent discount for prompt payment. In 1921 and 1922 taxes were again raised but still expenses could not be met. As well, some residents were unable to pay their taxes. The school minutes record the frustrations of the trustees and ratepayers in dealing with the situation.

> "Some ratepayers who still are in arrears of taxes have to make payments, otherwise get it by force." (May 25, 1925)

Regarding a letter from a resident who had left Neerlandia for southern Alberta, the minutes state: "A letter was received from stating that he is unable and unwilling to pay his taxes. In this case the trustees found a solution:

> "Decided if he don't (sic) pay to take hay from his land and sell it for taxes."

The financial status of the people had not improved by 1924, so at the annual meeting on January 5, at which thirty-one ratepayers were present, Henry Kippers Sr. moved that to avoid the increase in taxes, the school should be open for eight months only with the teachers engaged for such a term and not for a whole year. The ensuing discussion over the relative importance of education in a time of financial difficulty led to such a vigorous exchange of views that the chairman was obliged to close the meeting. Ten days later another meeting was called at which Henry Kippers Sr., Ben Lievers, and Jacob Olthuis, representing twenty-two ratepayers, presented a modified proposal to the board. They proposed that the principal be engaged for ten months at a salary of one thousand dollars, and another teacher for six months at a lower rate of pay. The trustees did not deal directly with the proposal but suggested that this group of ratepayers ask for financial aid if the ratepayers could not pay the higher taxes. The board decided to support this course of action. The delegation agreed to approach the Department, but asked for a written statement that the board would make no unnecessary expenditures before the Department replied. This the board refused to do, stating that their word of honour should be good enough. No agreement was reached.

Nevertheless, the trustees were not heartless men. They, too, were pioneers, they, too, were short of money and they realized that there was a limit to what could be asked of the people. The minutes of February 12, 1924, state "The board decided that were (sic) those arrears were the result not of unwillingness but of financial distress not to take any drastic steps." Efforts were made to keep the taxes and expenditures as low as possible. When calling for tenders for

* * *

Sometimes during schooltime we would run out of water. Then Jim Ritsema and I would be sent to Emmerzael to get more. We would take the funny papers with us and sit down along the way to read them.

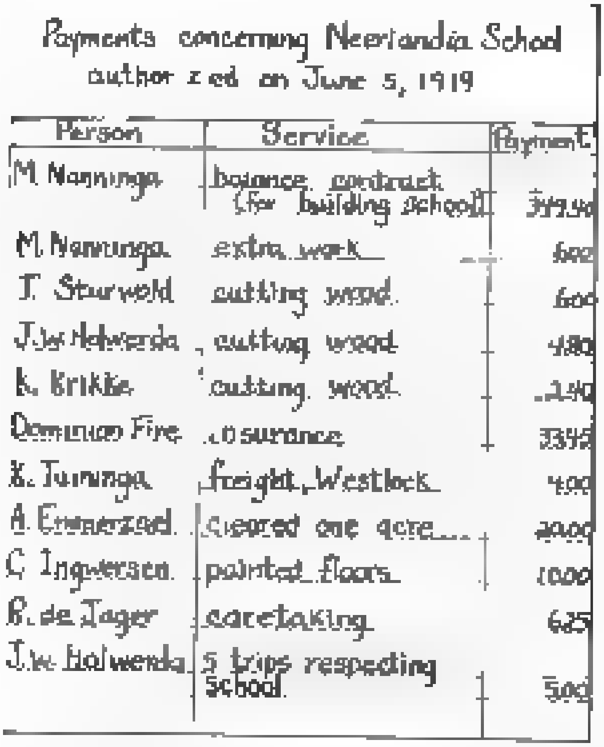
Wm. Olthuis

* * *

We had very little sports equipment at school. Van Ark tried to teach us business and to collect money for the needed equipment at the same time. I was the treasurer and we all had to collect money. Jim Ritsema and I went collecting together. We had one horse between the two of us and took turns riding it. We started out together — Jim riding and I walking. When Jim got a half mile down the road he dismounted, tied the horse, and continued on foot. When I reached the horse I untied it and rode for half a mile passing him in the process. We continued this way till we were finished — and pleased with our ingenuity I might add. Finally everyone had given to me the money they had collected, and I reported to Mr. van Ark. With the money he bought sports equipment — a basketball for the girls and some baseball gloves for the boys.

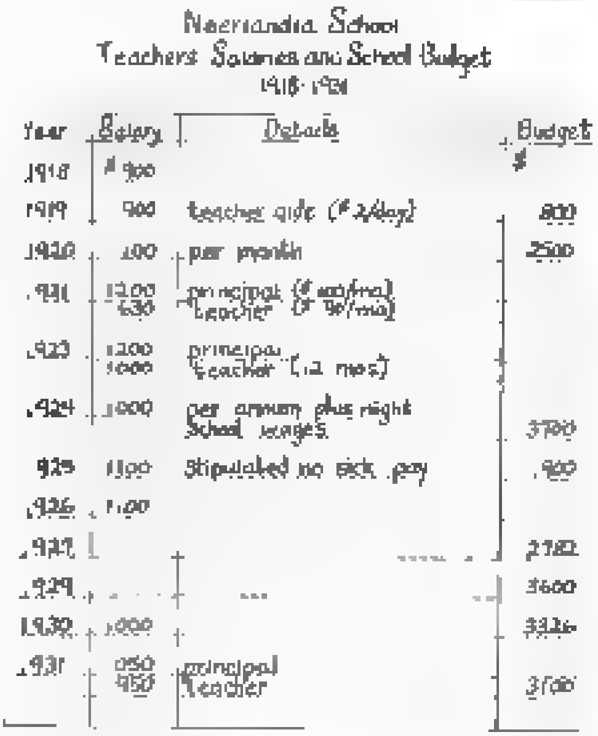
Wm. Olthuis

* * *



Payments concerning Neerlandia School authorized on June 5, 1919

Person	Service	Payment
M. Nanninga	balance contract (for building school)	349.50
M. Nanninga	extra work	600
T. Sturwold	cutting wood	600
J.W. Holwerda	cutting wood	480
K. Krikke	cutting wood	240
Dominion Fire	insurance	3345
K. Tuininga	freight, Westlock	400
A. Emmerzael	cleared one acre	2000
C. Ingwersen	painted floors	1000
R. de Jager	caretaking	625
J.W. Holwerda	5 trips respecting School	500



Neerlandia School
Teachers Salaries and School Budget
1918-1931

Year	Salary	Details	Budget $
1918	$900		
1919	900	teacher aide ($2/day)	800
1920	100	per month	2500
1921	1200 630	principal ($100/mo) teacher ($90/mo)	
1923	1200 1000	principal teacher (12 mos)	
1924	1000	per annum plus night School wages	3700
1925	1100	Stipulated no sick pay	1900
1926	1100		
1927			2782
1929			3600
1930	1000		3326
1931	1050 950	principal teacher	3100

fencing, maintenance, or other projects. If no tender was considered low enough the board attempted to have the work done more economically by day labour. On occasion they asked for volunteer labour.

A look at some budgets is quite instructive. During the 1919-1931 period the budgets ranged from $1800 to $3400. The largest single expenditure was for teachers' salaries. Another expenditure was the janitor's salary which went from $4.75 a month in 1919 to $10 per month in 1930. Some expenditures such as one of twenty-five cents to Andrew Nanninga for delivering books from Westlock were minimal. Fencing the school yard was paid at a rate of thirty cents per hour. In 1924 Pete Tuininga got a contract of $21 for supplying the school with fourteen cords of dry tamarack firewood. Not large amounts, but difficult to pay when tax revenue was inadequate.

* * *

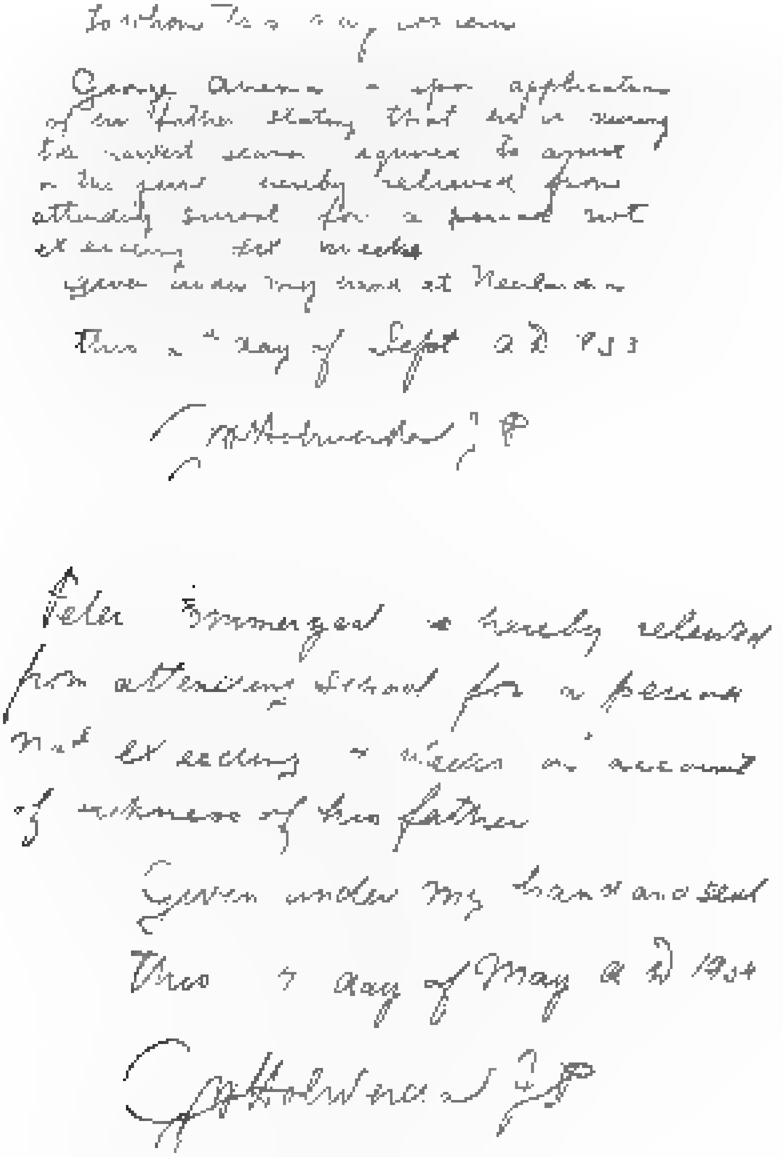
A Little Bird

Mr. McKitrick thought it was a good day to take the class on a nature walk. At the outset he instructed the students that as soon as they heard his whistle it was time to return to school. Taking advantage of a situation, brother George said, "Oh, there goes a rabbit," so all the boys ran into the bush, supposedly after the rabbit, and weren't seen for the rest of the day.

The next day Mr. McKitrick asked, "Didn't you hear my whistle?" George said, "Ja, but we thought it was a little bird."

Alice Visser

* * *



To whom it may concern

George Annema [illegible] upon application of his father stating that he is [illegible] the harvest season [illegible] to assist on the farm is hereby relieved from attending school for a period not exceeding six weeks

Given under my hand at Neerlandia

This 2nd day of Sept A D [illegible]33

Holwerda J P

Peter Emmerzael is hereby released from attending school for a period not exceeding 4 weeks on account of sickness of his father

Given under my hand and seal

This 7 day of May A D 1934

Holwerda J P

Children were often needed to help at home. Joe Holwerda, in his capacity as Justice of the Peace, gave the necessary permission.

The concern over tax rates and collection of them continued to occupy the minds of both trustees and ratepayers. In 1922, by means of section 7 of the School Assessment Act, the government of Alberta changed from a flat rate per acre to an assessed value as basis for taxation. The Neerlandia School District # 3460 considered various methods of valuation before settling on a sliding scale with the highest assessment on lands nearest the school. This was never put into effect. Less than one month later, May 19, 1923, it was changed to a valuation, also on a sliding scale, according to the number of acres under cultivation with the highest being $600 for

361 acres. This may have redistributed the tax load but made taxes no easier to collect.

* * *

One time, at recess, van Ark's oldest son William and I were having a shoving match and somehow we knocked over Mary Howe's desk. The ink spilled out of the inkwell all over her books and she began crying. Mr. van Ark took his son over his knee and gave him a good spanking. Then William said to me, "My Dad is going to give you some of the same treatment," but he never did. He sure had me scared for a while, though.

When McKitrick taught us we made trips into the bush; it was only boys, but there were a few who would not go with us. One of them had always been considered one of the gang, but when he would not go along we became rather cool towards him. I suppose he noticed this too because one afternoon he got in behind Mac as he was walking towards the playground with a whole bunch of us boys, and gave him a swift kick in the rear. Immediately he blended in with the gang. Mac turned and said, "Who did that?" No one owned up and he could not find out. Well, that did it; our classmate was back in the good graces of the gang again.

After about four months of Mac, the school board must have known about the problem of discipline in our school because they got us another teacher, a young man by the name of Dickson. He was a big man and he was usually smiling. He told us of the problem we had, which the board must have told him, so he laid down a few rules: "No one may leave his desk without permission. If you are asked a question you are to rise; no one is to talk to his neighbour during classes. If these rules are broken your name will go on the blackboard with a stripe behind it. If you have three stripes you will see me after school, and the reason for seeing me will be this gentle persuader." He proceeded to haul out the strap, which looked very impressive. After being used to no discipline, how can you change so quickly? Well, the result was lots of strapping, but eventually we fell in line, except for Sam. He was not going to buckle under after all the freedom he had had. Sometimes he would get the strap every day, but it had no effect on him. We used to wait outside to see how he would be after his ordeal and he would just laugh. Every time you got the strap it would double. I think Sam got up to ninety straps on each hand. His hands were swollen so badly that we all felt sorry for him, but his spirit would not break. Eventually he quit school. Anyhow, the system worked. We almost all became good lads again and even graduated to the next class in June.

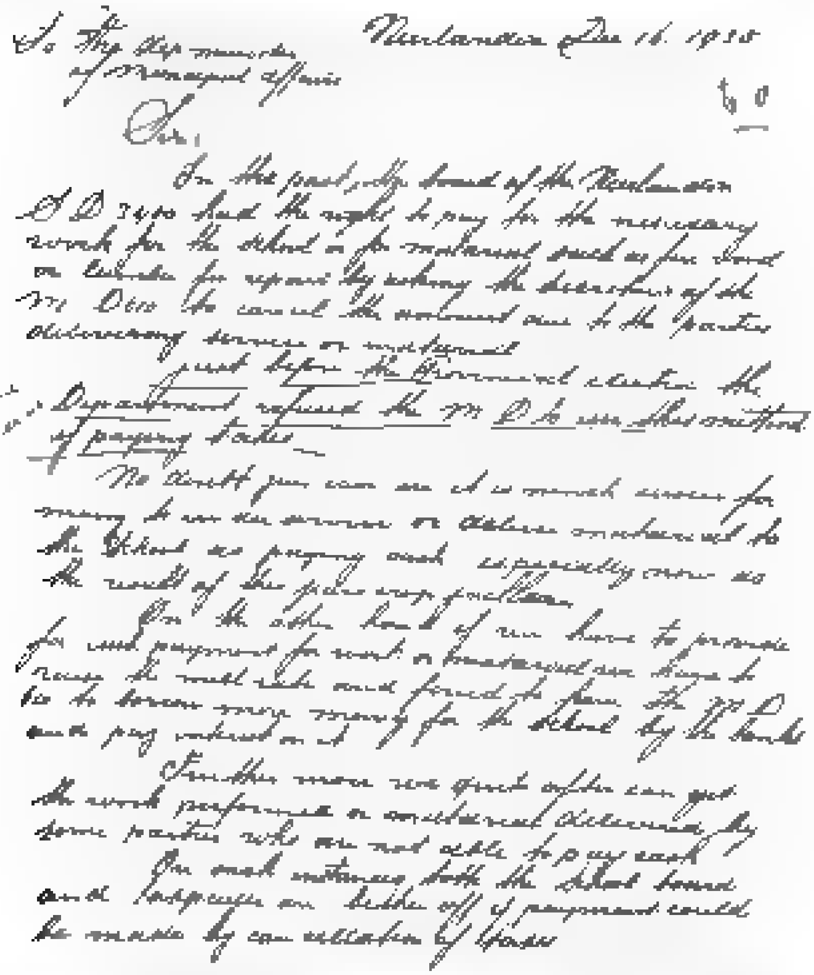
John Ingwersen

* * *

When it was found impossible to collect some taxes, the school board approached Municipal Affairs with a view to having the land titles taken from these people so the land could be sold for taxes. Most often, but not always, these were cases of someone who had simply left Neerlandia and his land, leaving his taxes unpaid. An interesting sidelight involves the Justice of the Peace, who was also in arrears of taxes. He asked the school board to pay him in cash for his work as Justice of the Peace in transferring of titles of others

instead of deducting it from his tax debt. Of course the board did not agree. He subsequently paid his tax in full, albeit in installments. The collection of tax arrears was an unpleasant task for the trustees of the school district. Unknown to them, the end of this task was at hand.

In 1928 the Shoal Creek Municipality was formed with Neerlandia School District #3460 falling within its boundaries. The school district now requisitioned the municipality for the money it needed. Using that figure the municipality determined the mill rate for the Neerlandia district, collected the taxes, and turned the money over to the school board. On occasion, when the taxes were not collected on time, the school district was compelled to take out a loan to meet expenses until the money came in. With the onset of the Depression, it became increasingly difficult to collect taxes, not only in the Shoal Creek Municipality, but all over Alberta. To facilitate tax collection, the UFA government passed the Tax and Rate Collection Act in 1931. With that act, all responsibility and authority for taxes passed from the school districts to the municipalities, no doubt producing a sigh of relief on the part of many trustees. That, however, signalled the beginning of the end for the autonomy of the school districts.



To The Hon. the Minister
of Municipal Affairs

Neerlandia Dec 16. 1930

Sir,

In the past, the board of the Neerlandia S.D. 3460 had the right to pay for the necessary work for the school or for material used as fire wood or lumber for repairs by asking the secretary of the M.D. to cancel the amount due to the parties delivering service or material.

Just before the Provincial election the Department refused the M.D. to use this method of paying taxes.

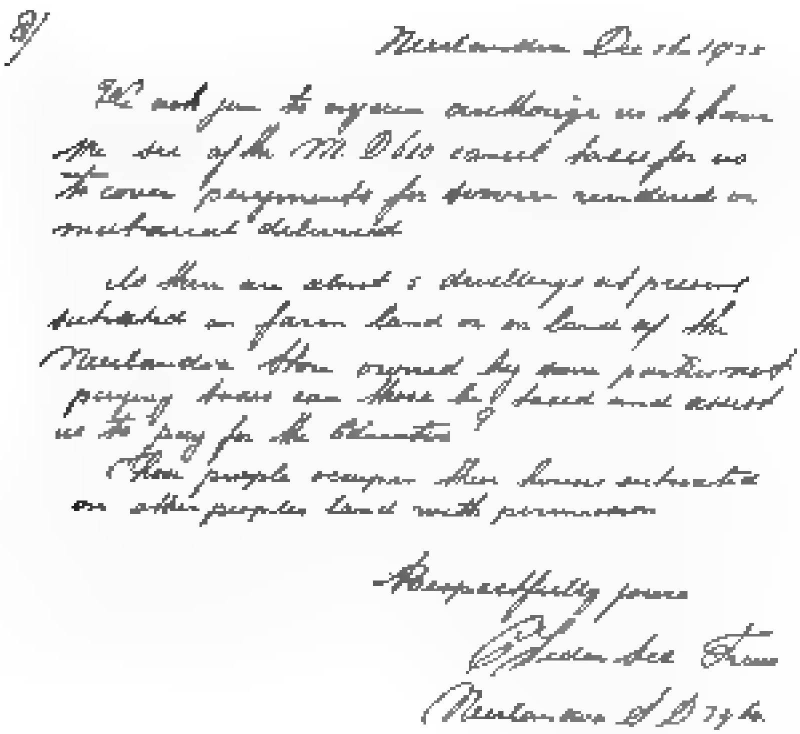
[illegible]

No doubt you can see it is much easier for many to use their service or deliver material to the School as paying cash, especially now as the result of this years crop failure.

On the other hand if we have to provide for cash payment for work or material we have to raise the mill rate and forced to have the M.D. to borrow more money for the school by the bank and pay interest on it.

Furthermore we quite often can get the work performed or material delivered by some parties who are not able to pay cash.

In such instances both the school board and taxpayers are better off if payment could be made by cancellation of taxes



8/

Neerlandia Dec 1st 1938

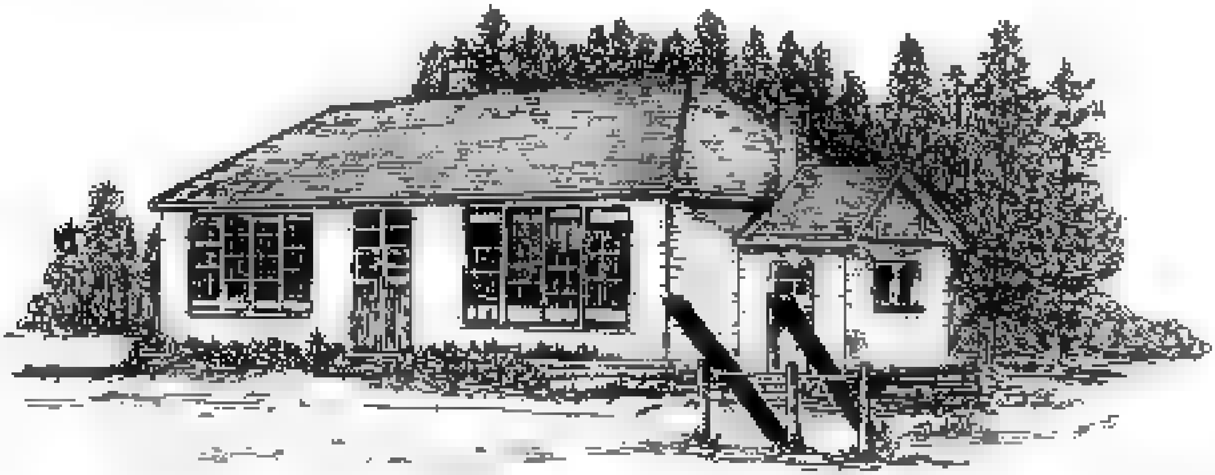
We ask you to wire authorize us to have the use of the M.D 610 council funds for us to cover payments for services rendered or materials delivered

As there are about 5 dwellings at present situated on farm land or on land of the Neerlandia Store owned by non resident paying taxes can these be taxed and assist us to pay for the Education?

These people occupy their houses situated on other peoples land with permission

Respectfully yours
[illegible] Sec Treas
Neerlandia S D 3460

In 1936 the Social Credit government enacted legislation making provision for large administrative units for schools. In 1938 the province of Alberta was divided into several large divisions. On January 3, 1939, the Neerlandia School District #3460 was included in the Pembina School Division #37 and Subdivision #5. Trustees were elected from each area included in the new Division. Carl K. Mast was elected as representative from Neerlandia, a position



which he held until his death in 1957. In 1947 the Pembina School Division was divided into two: the Westlock School Division #37 and the Barrhead School Division #49. On January 1, 1948, the Neerlandia School District was included in the Barrhead School Division. From the time of the large divisions, the local board began to function largely as an advisory board. Through the years, changes occurred not only in the administrative set up but in other areas as well.

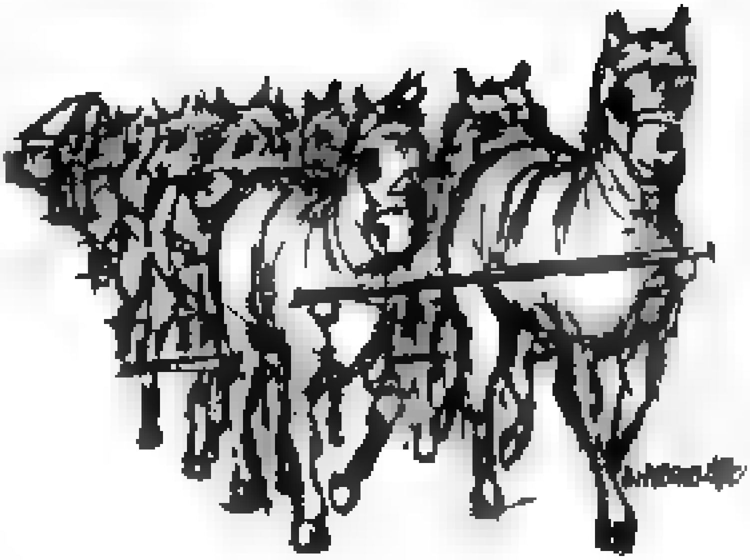
The School Building and Grounds

The school building completed in 1919 served the community for several years with only minor renovations and repairs. From time to time the floor was re-oiled, painting was done, and improvements were made in an effort to make the building warmer. Students of those days remember being unable to hold a pencil in their numbed fingers. They also suffered from icy toes because the floor was cold. In an effort to improve heat circulation, a sheet of galvanized iron was placed around the stove. As well, a bank of dirt contained by logs was erected around the exterior base of the school. At that time the school was in operation from March or April to November or December with vacation during the coldest part of the year.

The biggest change to the interior of the school in the first years of its existence resulted from the influx of new settlers and from the productivity of the settlers in their response to God's command to "be fruitful and multiply". In 1923 the little school was bursting at the seams, and an addition was in order. To have good quality education the trustees felt that it would be best to have two teachers. On January 9, 1923, after considering the alternatives, the trustees Jan Holwerda, Klaas Tuininga (father of thirteen children) and William van Ark concluded that finances would not permit the building of an addition as well as the hiring of a second teacher. In an interesting bit of logic they decided instead to partition the existing room by means of four double swinging doors.

Complying with the School Act's requirements regarding the condition in which the grounds be maintained also presented some difficulties. The job was let by tender, as were most matters the school district dealt with, but the man who received the contract was so lax in fulfilling his duties that when the job was not yet finished by March 1921, the board threatened to do the work themselves and charge it to the procrastinating gentleman. As it turned out, the job never was completed because on May 2, 1921, a group of ratepayers petitioned the board to move the school near the church and closer to the centre of the community.

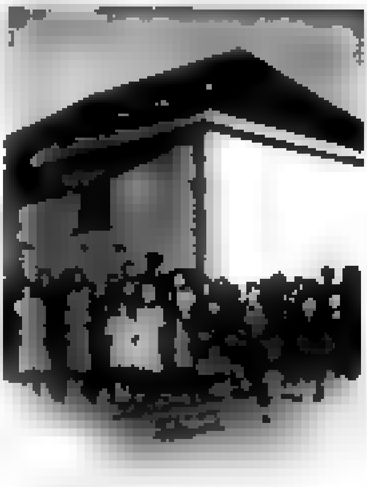
William van Ark, then secretary-treasurer, offered a two-acre corner of his quarter (SE 35-60-3-5) directly west of the church. On December 11, 1922, at a ratepayers meeting, a decision was made by a vote of thirteen to one in favour of moving the school. Twelve of those men then agreed to volunteer their services, while the board promised to try to get the ratepayers who were not present to do the same because, the board stated, they did not have the nerve to raise the taxes to cover the cost of moving. Preparations were made and then one day in early spring, 1923, fifteen teams of horses were



hitched to the school in a long line and, under the direction of the teamsters, began the three-quarter-mile trip north. Unfortunately, it was difficult to coordinate the teams to all pull at once, and after the school was moved a short way the teamsters gave up. They did manage to pull it partway off the road so traffic could pass by. And there, on the side of the road, school was conducted for about two months. It was a miserable, muddy "school ground" the children had and it was difficult for them to clamber up to get in the doorway. How happy they were when Oscar Bonstrom was hired on April 19, 1924, to move the school with a stationary engine called a donkey. Horses moved the donkey into place, the donkey winched the school ahead, then the horses moved the donkey again. This procedure was repeated until the school building arrived at the new site. Once again the work of clearing and fencing the school yard commenced. A new well was dug and a new flagpole erected. But some of the same problems resurfaced — the major one being lack of space.

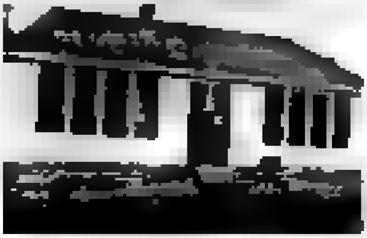
By September 1926 the board of trustees, then composed of Henry Kippers, Tjibbe Reitsma, and Henry Hiemstra decided the time was ripe to build an addition. Mr. Gorman, head inspector of schools in Alberta and present at a ratepayers meeting, explained the benefits in grants and education which would accrue from better facilities. The ratepayers agreed by a vote of twenty-one out of twenty-four.

As before, Menne Nanninga drew up the plans for the construction. Because this was not their initial building program, debentures were not available to the district. In order to finance the construction, taxes were raised fifteen dollars per quarter section and the work was done by day labour. Menne Nanninga, as foreman, received sixty cents per hour. For some unspecified reason there was a difference in the hourly rate other workers received — some were paid forty-five cents and the rest received only thirty



School parked on side of road, 1923

Children sitting on donkey machine behind fence five cents. Ratepayers who were in arrears of taxes donated labour or hauled materials, thus reducing their tax debt and enabling the school to be built with a smaller cash outlay. In this cooperative manner the addition of one room was made to one end of the school.

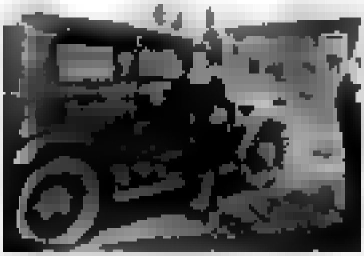

The school was banked up to conserve heat. Two-room school, c 1926.

Upon its completion, the two-room school with its separate cloakrooms for girls and boys, and the large round heater in each room, was ready to enclose girls and boys for many more years of education. Each room had four multipaned windows, which on occasion fell victim to various student-aimed projectiles. Generally grades one through four were in the "little" room while grades five through eight were in the "big" room. The division of grades between the rooms varied from year to year according to enrollment. Even with the two-room school, enrollments of 35-45 students per room were common.

Back: Annie Tuininga, Margaret Sturwold, Rutie Schoonekamp, Carrie Meat, Carrie Olthuis, Rika van Ark, Annie Lievers, Alice Kippers, Johanna Ingwersen, Alice Olthuis

Middle: Nettie Ingwersen, Reka Lievers, Johanna Messelink, Jennie Schoonekamp, Eva Olthuis, Lily Messelink.

Front: Harry Lievers, Bert Michael, George Terpsma, Bill B. Lievers, Simon Fisher, Andrew Hanninga, Ryer Ankie, Ab Messelink, Cor Fisher, Cecil Tuininga


School nurse, Miss Meyer

* * *

One incident I recall happened in or about 1930. Brother George Olthuis was tall and skinny and each year seemed to grow another few inches. Each time he was weighed by the school nurse, he brought home a note saying he was quite underweight. After a few years of this and probably getting teased a bit about it, he decided he'd had enough. Next time the school nurse came back, George filled both his pockets with rocks — that should take care of *[illegible] "Slim."*

Alice Visser

* * *

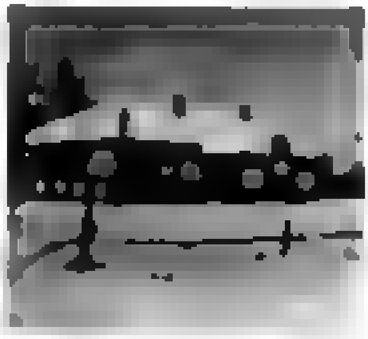
The population of Neerlandia kept growing at such a rate that [illegible] for which they were not sure they could pay.

It was not until [illegible] during World War [illegible] ratepayers contributed one hundred dollars each.

[illegible] sibility was for outhouses.

[illegible] of the district.

[illegible] Neerlandia, the Van [illegible] and



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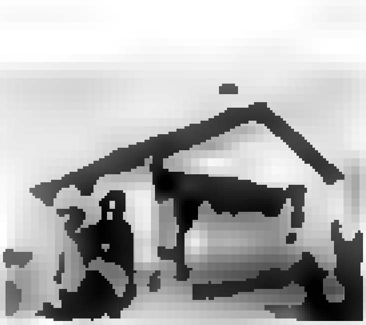


One of the [illegible]

others came, speaking not a word of English, and filled desks in the already-crowded rooms.

Furthermore, in keeping with the Division's policy of centralization, Shoal Creek and later [illegible] school [illegible] had been closed, with some students going to Barrhead and others to Neerlandia. The students kept coming until there was simply no more room. [illegible] spoke of [illegible] students in her classroom at that time. Finally, two small schools no longer in use in Vega and Shoal Creek were moved into Neerlandia. Magdalena [illegible] wrote about one of them:

> My classroom was a small school that had been brought in. It stood on some large logs. Once again there stood an enormous black stove. That stove never [illegible] it stood quite close to the one-and-only exit it could become quite a hazard. Perhaps the students of that time remember the emergency measures we employed should the stove explode!

Moving one of the small schools early 1950s

Further renovations and additions were in order again. During construction in [illegible], some classes were conducted in the church basement. After what seemed like a long time, the last board had been sawed, the last nail hammered, and the last lick of paint dry. What a joy! Not only were there new classrooms, but also a staff room and, best of all, indoor washrooms with flush toilets and hot and cold running water. Not only were these facilities more comfortable and more sanitary, but they also had a beneficial effect on the students' I.Q. rating. (One question on an I.Q. test they wrote showed a faucet upside down. The child was expected to indicate whether or not that was correct. Prior to the new addition many Neerlandia children had never seen such a faucet.)

Since that time further additions and renovations have been made. The construction of a gym in [illegible] enabled a better physical education program to be undertaken and gave the children a place to play during inclement weather.

On January 1, [illegible], the Barrhead School Division #[illegible] and the Municipal District of Barrhead #[illegible] merged to form the County of Barrhead #11. Under its auspices [illegible] more rooms and later a portable classroom were added. As of [illegible] plans are underway once again to improve and enlarge the educational facilities of Neerlandia.

Janitors — Faithful Servants

In dealing with education in Neerlandia, we must not forget one very important group of people — the janitors. These hard-working people have provided a comfortable atmosphere for education. To them falls the often thankless responsibility of keeping the building clean and warm. In the early years this meant rising early in the morning to get a fire going in the big round heaters. After the school day was over, cleaning began. If it had been a rainy day, there was sometimes so much mud that the janitors would have to shovel the dirt outside before sweeping and/or scrubbing the floors.

The school building was used for other purposes besides education. The school board meetings were held there. On occasion someone would come to the community and request the use of the building. [illegible] of the Latter Day Saints was one such visitor in [illegible]. He was given permission, with the understanding that he per-

for the extra janitorial work that had to be done. Various societies also held their meetings in the school. One teacher complained to the board that the building was left in disorder following these meetings. The leaders of the societies were admonished to leave the building in good condition, but the teacher and janitor were to be held responsible for any damage that resulted from leaving the doors unlocked.

Many people held the unenviable position of janitor over the years. Willem de Groot was the first janitor. During his tenure it was decided to have the students dust the desks, rather than giving him a raise. That practice does not seem to have lasted very long. In 1925 Dina Messelink became janitor, with her wages to be deducted from her tax arrears. She refused to light the stove in the winter months so, in 1926, the job was given jointly to her and Henry Schoonekamp at ten dollars per month. In 1929 the Anemas became janitors. Susie wrote, "Della and I were the school janitors for some years. We would arrive early in the winter [morning] to start the heater, using kindling cut the night before, and shavings which we brought from home each morning."

It took a lot of firewood to keep the school warm. Tine Abbay with her class, 1950.

The Henry Bouwman family also served as janitors. They too found it to be a lot of work. Jenny wrote about some of the tasks that had to be done:

"Wood was piled to the ceiling in the cloakroom every evening. Sometimes the blackboards had to be wiped and each day the floor had to be swept. On rainy days there was so much mud that the janitors had to shovel it out of the door. Three times a year — at Christmas, Easter and in the summer — the whole school was scrubbed down. The floors had to be mopped and then oiled with linseed oil to keep down the dust. Each day, two pailfuls of water had to be carried from the store and poured into a big crock. (It had a tap on the bottom, but there was also a dipper because the tap was too slow to allow everyone time to get a drink when they came off the playground. Every child had his own white enamel cup which was hung on the coat nail in the cloakroom.) If the water ran out during the day the principal would send one of the boys to the store to fetch another pail of water."

When the three-room school was built in the 1940s, the work load was increased. The cleaning took so long that on short winter days Meindert Boorsma had to go around with a lantern in order to complete his daily work. In recognition of the difficulties this created, the local school board asked that electricity be installed in the school. The task of stoking the wood and coal-burning furnaces of the three-room school also fell to Meindert Boorsma. It is too bad that he was not permitted to experience the pleasure of the easier task of caring for the school when the oil furnace was installed. Instead Carl P. Mast and Jim Merkus were hired at that time.

As of 1969 Joan and Ralph Bos have been the janitors of Neerlandia school. Though their equipment includes some electrical tools such as a vacuum cleaner, the bulk of the work must still be done by manual labour.

The Struggle For Christian Education

> "Even though Neerlandia is called a public school it is a Christian school for many reasons. First of all the students have believing parents who want their kids to have a Christ-centered education. Second, the teachers are all Christians, and third, everything is taught from a Christian perspective. We believe and are taught that God created and upholds the universe and not that man is the king of creation. Man's task is to take care of the world and that task has been given to him by God. These are some of the ways Christian schools differ from public ones. Also we are taught Bible Study which is absent in public schools. Neerlandia can be called a Christian Public School."
>
> Gloria Strydhorst
> Grade Nine 1980

The heartfelt desire on the part of the pioneers to obey the Lord in the matter of providing Christian training in the area of education is a theme woven through the history of education in Neerlandia. Not everyone agreed with this need and not everyone was agreed on how this could best be achieved, but the struggle continued.

In setting up the Shoal Creek School District rather than an independent Christian school one of the deciding factors, no doubt, was the trustees' awareness of the powers vested in them. By virtue of the School Ordinance Act they were enabled to engage teachers of their choice, provided the teachers were qualified, and to dismiss them if they proved unsatisfactory. To the trustees, the source of money for operating the district and the particular type of classroom building used were not crucial matters. But who was to teach their children? That was the heart of the matter. Education is only as good as the teacher who stands in front of the class. With the power to control that aspect of education, most of the pioneers were satisfied for the time being. A Christian School Association had been formed but remained in existence only until 1919, when it turned its affairs over to Shoal Creek School District #3460.

From the outset, the trustees attempted to obtain Christian teachers. Although exactly what was expected of the teacher in regard to Christian education was not spelled out in the minutes of the meetings, the desire is recorded repeatedly:

> "The board decided to place an ad in de Wachter and the Calvinist for the purpose of getting a teacher of Reformed religion." July 16, 1918
>
> "(The chairman, J. W. Holwerda) advised to see Mr. Mullet, if he can supply us with a teacher of Christian faith." February 1, 1919
>
> "Decided to advertise as soon as possible in the Christian journal." March 13, 1920
>
> "Trustee Klaas Tuininga deemed it advisable to write the Department of Education to give the department a clear idea of what kind of a teacher is wanted in this settlement and why. The Chairman (J. W. Holwerda) claimed the officials at the Department knew all this."
>
> "The board agreed that a teacher who professes to be a Christian must be secured." March 17, 192
>
> " to advise the Department to send a Christian teacher (Protestant) as no other need apply." April 18, 1921

The concern for Christian teaching was sometimes expressed in a negative way. On January 1, 1926,

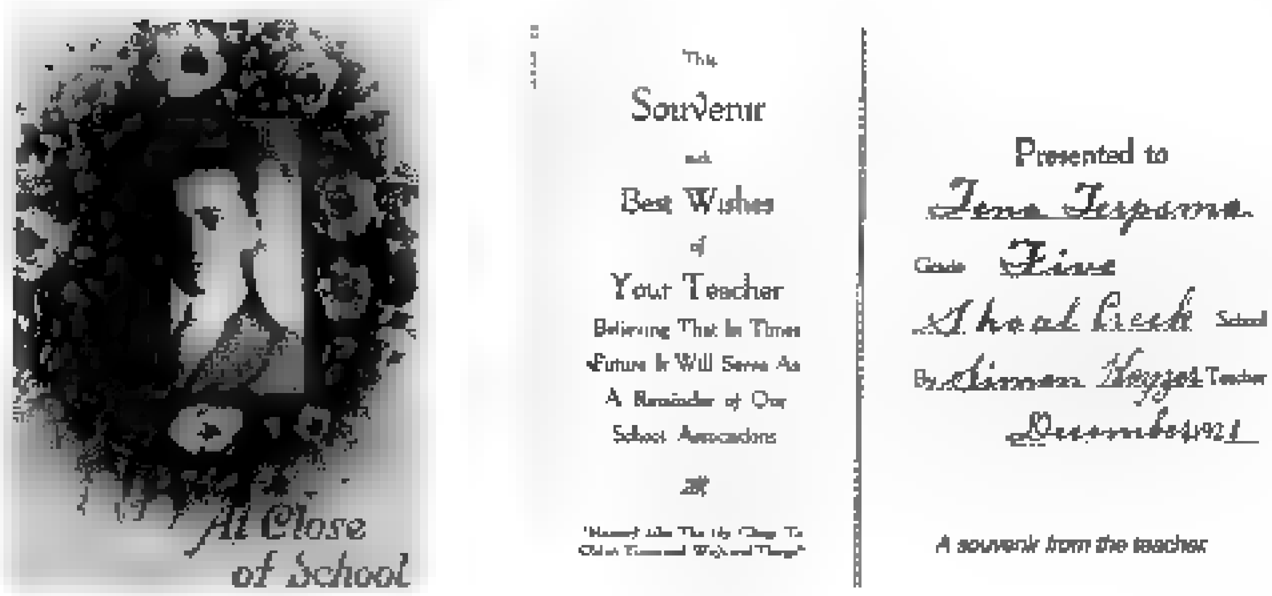
> "Mr. Kippers pointed out to the board that he would like to see a better education along Christian lines than what was given by The board as a whole was of the same opinion."

At times the board involved itself more closely with what was being done. For example the minutes of November 27, 1931, read in part as follows:

> "Chairman was instructed to visit the school and see if the (Christmas) program would be carried out as much as possible according to our Christian point of view."

The efforts to acquire Christian teachers did not always meet with success. To obtain even minimally-qualified teachers was difficult. In the years from 1905, when Alberta became a province, to the 1920s, there was a shortage of teachers. During that time three types of certificates were available to teachers, the majority of those issued being second-class certificates which required the candidate to have passed grade 11 and to have had four months of professional training. Because of the influx of settlers into the new province, the number of teachers could not keep up with the growing number of students. The government, therefore, instituted a policy of issuing provisional certificates (permits) to allow a person without any professional training to manage a classroom for a limited period of time. So great was the need from 1914-1918, when many men were serving in the armed forces, that 3434 permits were issued, an average of 687 per year. To this problem was added the fact that Neerlandia was ninety-five miles from Edmonton over rutted roads and trails, through swamps and across rivers, and one can appreciate the difficulty of getting teachers to come.

There were severe problems in staffing the school. After Helen Kooy left trustees attempted to get a teacher from the neighbourhood. J. A. Heath, a retired Baptist minister who had filed in the area, agreed to teach. He began teaching on October 16, 1918, but by November 13 of the same year there was such widespread dissatisfaction with his teaching that a special meeting was called to discuss the matter. In view of the fact that he was ineligible for a permit, the



At Close of School

This

Souvenir

and

Best Wishes

of

Your Teacher

Believing That In Times
Future It Will Serve As
A Reminder of Our
School Associations

"Memory Like The Ivy Clings To
Olden Times and Ways and Things"

Presented to Tena Terpsma

Grade Five

Shoal Creek School

By Simon Keyzer Teacher

December 1921

A souvenir from the teacher

chairman and secretary were "invited" to tell him to stop teaching immediately.

In the meantime the board had been corresponding with Simon Keyzer who was studying for the ministry in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Though he had indicated that he intended to complete this training, he came to Neerlandia in June 1919 and stayed until the end of August 1921. For thirteen months he taught as a permit teacher, but then he obtained his certificate. His strong point, according to former students, was music.

> One writes: "We sang at the start of the day, before recess, after lunch, after recess and before going home. Our reading, writing, and arithmetic suffered badly but we sang well."
>
> Another said, "He taught us our hymns ... there's something to be said for that."

As was often the case in those days, finances and overcrowding were a problem. In September 1919, with ten more pupils enrolling, it was impossible for one teacher to handle the teaching load. But the weak financial position of the community made it impossible to hire another teacher. Once again, compromise was required. Jenny Tuininga, a local girl, was hired as an assistant at the rate of two dollars per day.

Financial disputes also had a way of intruding into school affairs, although it is often difficult to determine whether the disputes were the cause or result of dissatisfaction. By way of example, Simon Keyzer first expressed himself as so satisfied with his position that in May 1920 he asked the board to build him a house, suggesting that he intended to take up permanent residence. Yet by September 1921 he had left Neerlandia following a dispute over wages and a complaint about not receiving the support of the parents.

* * *

You Can't Get Blood From a Stone

When Mr. van Ark was teaching here the school was right across the road from Willem de Groot's place. The teacher told us older boys we had to dig trees out of the bush and plant them around the school during noon hour. We didn't fancy this idea too much, since noon time was our only time to play. But we dug some trees out anyhow and put them in a wheelbarrow. Then we decided to pretend that the wheelbarrow was too heavy for us to move.

Van Ark said that Bill Olthuis and I had to go to Mr. de Groot's and get a piece of rope to tie to the front of the wheelbarrow, then some boys could pull and some could push. At least this stalled things for a little time. So off went Bill and I to de Groot's place.

I said to Bill, "You do the talking because he doesn't understand English and you speak the same dialect of Dutch as he does." So when we got there Bill did the talking. De Groot looked none too pleased when we asked him for a piece of rope. He said, "Ik heb even mir touw als een kikvors veren heft" (I have no more rope than a frog has feathers). So we left with no rope, but we did end up planting the trees.

Norman Terpsma

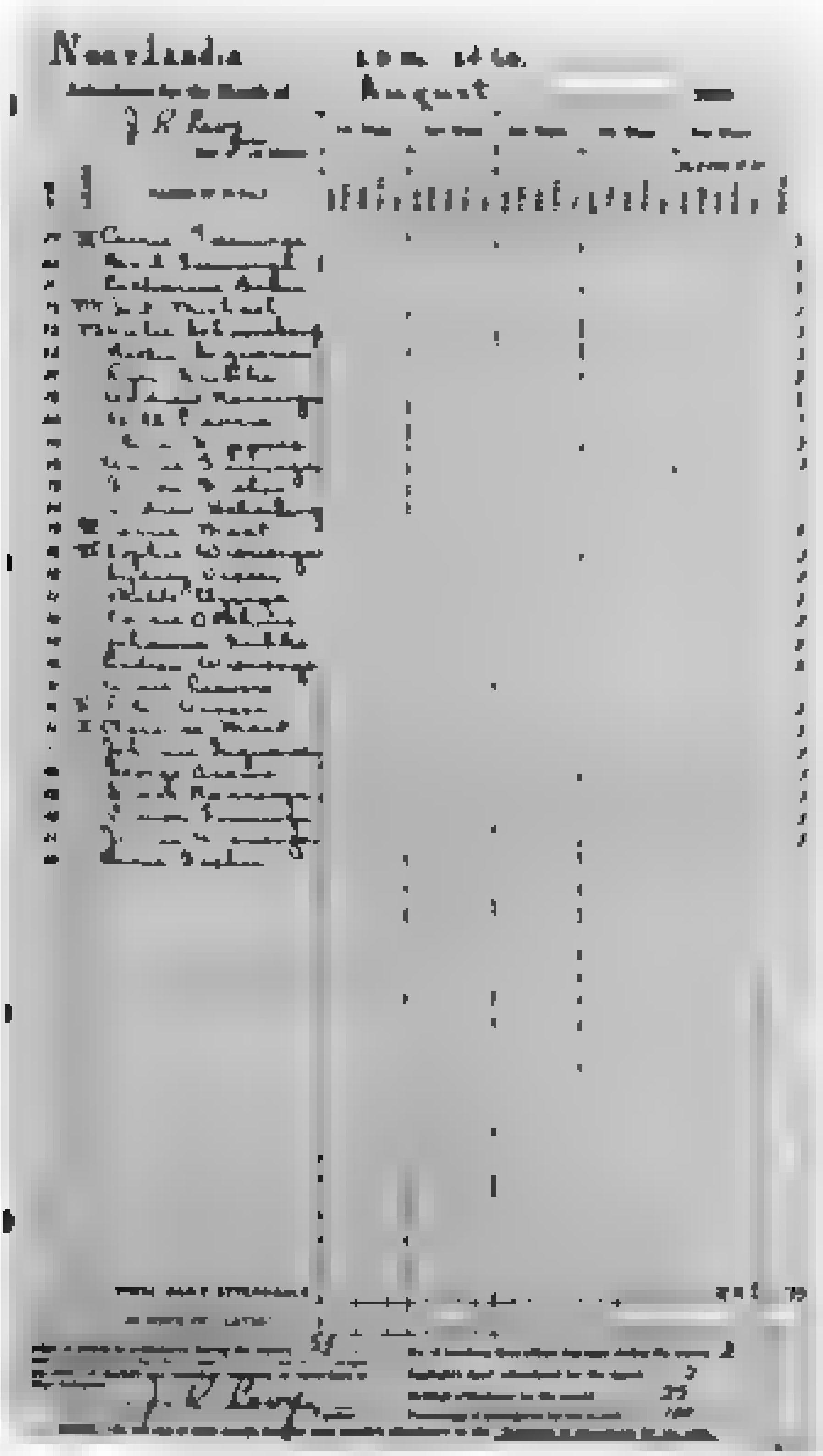
* * *

The struggle to get Christian teachers continued. William van Ark, a settler and member of the board of trustees, had been instructing some of the boys in night classes under one provision of the School Act. He enjoyed this task so, with the encouragement of some of the parents, he decided to become a teacher. On April 11, 1921, the board passed a resolution to request the Department of Education to give him a permit. This was done. Mr. van Ark began to teach and to prepare for certification. By March 30, 1923, the board made the following resolution:

> "And whereas Mr. Van Ark according to the inspector[i]al report will be a very capable teacher fully qualified be it therefore resolved to engage Mr. Van Ark as principal teacher for said School District from first of May to the 31st of December for a salary of $1200."

Once again the Neerlandia students had a qualified Christian teacher, until he left in 1925.

During this time the school operated sometimes with one teacher and sometimes with two. Another Neerlandian, Carl K. Mast, decided to pursue teaching as a career and in December 1921 asked the school board's cooperation in getting a permit. Because he had not completed grade eleven, the board, in keeping with its policy of providing quality education, denied his request. Undaunted, he enrolled in Alberta College. Meanwhile, with World War I over, men were returning to the teaching force and, with the shortage of other jobs, more males were attracted to teaching as a career. As a result, the number of permits given dropped from 455 in 1920 to 65 in 1925, and only 5 in 1929. It was with sadness, therefore, that Carl K. Mast reported to the board on April 16, 1923, that because of the great number of qualified teachers, he was unable to obtain a permit. This did not end his involvement with



Page from earliest academic register

education though, as he became a school trustee with the Pembina School Division in 1939.

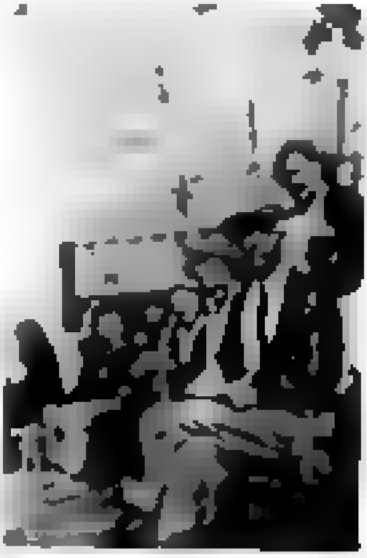
During Carl Mast's efforts, William van Ark continued teaching. In 1933 he was joined by Thelma Hare, who is fondly remembered by her students. She was followed in rapid succession by James Levy, Miss Spaulding, Mr. Palumbo, Jack Tracy, and Jean Carlyle.

Teaching in an immigrant community of predominantly Dutch people was difficult for many of the teachers. When the teacher was someone like Thelma Hare or James Levy, who were fellow Christians, the differences were easier. Even so, Jean Kerr Winkelaar wrote, "Born in Scotland and of Presbyterian parents, I readily identified with the Dutch Calvinists of the Christian Reformed Church." For others the strong religious orientation of the community increased their sense of isolation. Jack Tracy and Jean Carlyle walked the fifteen miles to Barrhead at least once, one and a half miles of it over the bare corduroy stumps, to see a movie.

As the Depression deepened it became easier to obtain teachers, even in Neerlandia. On one occasion 23 applications were received in response to an advertisement. The time of a rapid turnover of teachers was drawing to a close. In 1931 the school board was fortunate in securing the services of Aubrey Ashley, who came from Collington, Alberta, with his wife and young son. This debonair young Englishman came into a farming community of Dutch Calvinists, many of whom spoke very broken English. He remained — a highly respected teacher of the senior grades — until the end of the 1944-45 school term. After resigning, he stayed on in the community as bookkeeper for the Neerlandia Co-op store.

Other teachers came and went during Aubrey Ashley's tenure, but in 1942 one came who would remain for many years: Cora Visser. Like Aubrey Ashley, she was a Christian, but unlike him she was affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church.

* * *



Sports day, Mr. Ashley in foreground c. 1946.

What I Did During My Summer Holidays (1945)

Every night I would get the cows. I had to drive tractor everyday. John Mast

I picked berries. Last week Jennie and Anne and James and I stooked 12 acres of barley. It took us a day and a half to do it. Henry Strydhorst

On my holiday I was at Peter's place. I played guitar. Betty Terpsma

My cousin Bunny came from Edmonton. We sure did have a lot of fun. We went to the lake to pick low bush cranberries. Kenneth Tuininga

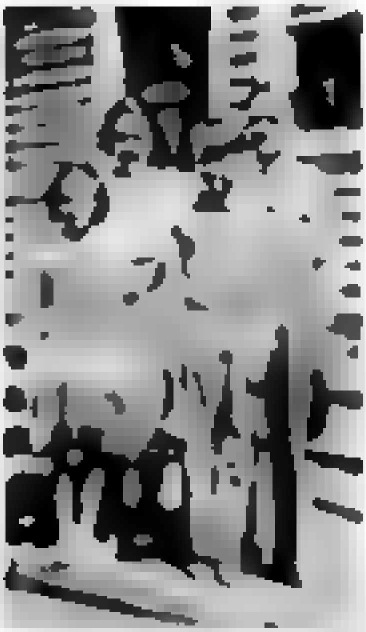
I had to help my dad work the field for a week. I had to get the cows every night on horseback. Henry Hiemstra

I went away for two weeks. I helped my dad dig holes for the barn. I drove tractor in front of the binder. Henry Gelderman

I was to the camp for a week. Tenie Jorritsma

I had a lot of fun riding horseback to the store. I had to help my dad milk cows. Lambert Tuininga

I went to Edmonton on my holidays and I had a good time with



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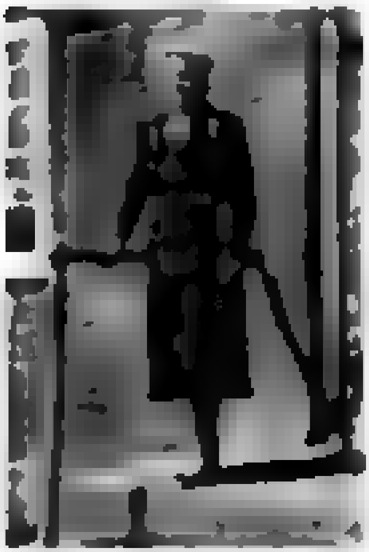


[illegible]

[illegible] Ted Reitsma

[illegible] Kuipers

[illegible] rest of the holidays. Else Olthuis

[illegible]

[illegible] school

[illegible] grade one from 1947 until her retirement in 1979

[illegible]

> "Whereas the importance of religious instruction in school is being [illegible] is more acute than ever, particularly those teachers who are willing and able to [illegible] Neerlandia school district nominates Mr. L. Vander Meulen of Rijswijk, the Netherlands, to become a teacher in the Neerlandia School and petitions you as board of the School Division to engage Mr. Van Der Meulen as a teacher for said [illegible]

[illegible]

Sander Meulen emigrated from the Netherlands and taught in Neerlandia for four years.

The divisional board cooperated with the Neerlandia School District in the hiring of teachers. Nevertheless, according to the School Act, the district had power only to nominate a teacher. They could not hire. With the prosperity which came following World War II, there would seem to have been minimal financial difficulties in the community. Given the above, one must ask why an independent school was not established at this time.

The question is one which has occupied Neerlanders over the years. In the years immediately following the formation of the Pembina School Division #1 and the sharp curtailment of the district board's powers, the people were well aware of the fact that they no longer had any way of controlling the type of teachers hired. Therefore on April 5, 1946, the Christian School Association, which sometime during the years had been re-established, held a reorganizational meeting with Rev. M. [illegible] elected chairman and Henry [illegible] secretary. As the divisional board was at that time considering building a three room school in Neerlandia with volunteer help of the ratepayers, it seemed an opportune time to start a Christian school instead. Enthusiasm was high and a decision to build a school was made. At a meeting in May 1946, $[illegible] was collected toward the estimated construction cost of $[illegible] and a subscription list begun. By June plans were made to try to have the foundation finished before harvest. It seemed that there would be no stopping the project this time. But it was not to be.

Although finances apparently were no problem, there seems to have been a shortage of teachers. At a general meeting of the Christian School Association, Klaas Tuininga Sr. cautioned the members that just having a school building which belonged to them would not ensure Christian instruction and, further, that there was a concern as to the status of students from a Christian school in regard to departmental exams. What would happen, he wondered, if the students did not answer questions on evolution in accordance with the theory of evolution. Mr. Tuininga advised a delay in building plans until these matters could be further investigated. He then made a motion, seconded by [illegible], instructing the board to "find out everything possible so that we can have a school for Christian education." The motion was carried by a margin of twenty-nine to three. In the meantime meetings were held with Rev. [illegible], Mr. McNally, deputy minister of education, and others. Mr. McNally stated that there was no way to opt out of the divisional system, and that they could build their own school in addition to the public school if they were willing to pay for both. However, he promised to help them if they remained in the public system by making it possible for non-resident Christian Reformed children to attend the public school in Neerlandia.

Over the next few months, as in [illegible], these ideas were surely the subject of many discussions in homes and public meetings. Some quotes from the minutes follow:

June 15, 1946 — "Talked about an apparent change of heart of some members."

Ruth Schiemann, Jack Jansen 1969

February [illegible], 1941 — The inviting by some of our members to make the [illegible] [illegible]

No one seems to know exactly what happened after this. A sum of $[illegible] had been collected for the Christian school and it appears that this may have been turned over to the Neerlandia School District for building the three-room public school. It is known that taxpayers contributed to this building. The decision seems to have been once again to settle for a public school.

This was not by any means the end of the effort to obtain Christian education, but was it the end of efforts to establish a Christian day school. When one reads the minutes of the local Neerlandia School District board and of the Christian School Association, one is impressed with the tremendous amount of time and effort devoted to these issues.

One must realize that although upwards of ninety percent of the residents were members of the Christian Reformed Church, not everyone was equally committed to the ideal of Christian education and, as indicated above, there were varying ways of interpreting God's will in this aspect of their lives. In this community, where the majority of people held strong convictions, it is inevitable that controversies arose. Although — and this must be stressed — relations were mostly harmonious, disputes, when they did erupt, could be acrimonious. There are reports of table-pounding demonstrations and tears at taxpayers meetings. In the 1950s one school board member resigned because of the lack of faith of the [illegible] trustee and the vacillating actions of his fellow board members in regard to the trustee.

Many school related disagreements centered around teachers. Sometimes petty reasons, such as a teacher's [illegible] or status of person[illegible] [illegible] than reason which led to the teacher's resignation, but more important were reasons focused on one's ability to teach competently and/or Christianly.

When the School District lost its autonomy and no longer able to control its own affairs, the taxpayers were not always pleased with the teachers placed in the school. It was usually not their ability to teach that was doubted, but their commitment to the Reformed faith that was questioned. That this was so can be seen by the fact that children were expected to respect the teachers no matter what the parents thought of their religious persuasion. The children, though, often reflected their parents' attitude and conducted themselves accordingly. This can be seen in one incident that occurred in the 1930s. A parent complained to the board about the type of education the teacher was giving. Apparently his children were aware of his dissatisfaction because he received advice from the board to admonish his children to obey and respect the teacher. Interestingly though, the complaint must have been justified because at the next meeting the teacher was asked to resign, and he did so.

Twenty years later a similar problem arose and the minister of the Christian Reformed Church spoke to the students about their lack of respect for the teachers. In that case too, the issue was not the teachers as persons but as capable of giving the desired kind of education.

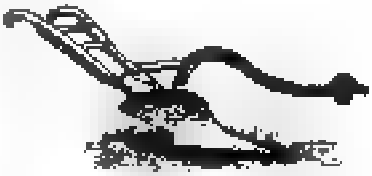
Being a member of the Christian Reformed Church was an asset in seeking a position as a teacher in Neerlandia. Votes recorded on two occasions in the minutes of the local board regarding which teachers would be recommended to the Barrhead School Division indicate most votes going to the two teachers who were members of the Christian Reformed Church, with the third teacher also a Christian but of a different denomination, being rated third.

Even when the teachers were all of the same faith, the board supervised their teaching by means of board member visits to the classroom. Records of such visits usually speak favourably of what was observed, with special mention of discipline and the teaching or singing of songs or hymns and closing the day with prayer.

Unavoidably, hard feelings resulted from misunderstandings between teachers who were not of the Christian faith and the community leaders. Such teachers could not understand why they were not acceptable to the community, and on occasion were deeply hurt by the efforts to replace them with those who would teach Christianity. If only they could have been made to understand.

In the matter of hiring teachers, the County of Barrhead No. 11 always co-operated with the local Christian school board. Though the local board could act only in an advisory capacity it was granted the right to advertise for, interview, and recommend candidates for vacancies in the Neerlandia school. Though the final decision remained with the Superintendent of Schools, the recommendations of the local board have invariably been implemented.

The Alberta School Curriculum is taught in the Neerlandia school, but the perspective of the courses is Christian. Through the years, parents and teachers gained insight into the meaning of Christian education. Every subject is permeated with the knowledge that God is Lord of life, and each is studied in view of its relationship to the God-given norms and laws which hold for creation. In short, the desire of Neerlandia's pioneers has been fulfilled beyond their imaginings. Neerlandia school provides Christian education under the auspices of the public school system.



FOOTNOTES

John C. Charyk. *The Little White School House* p. 3.

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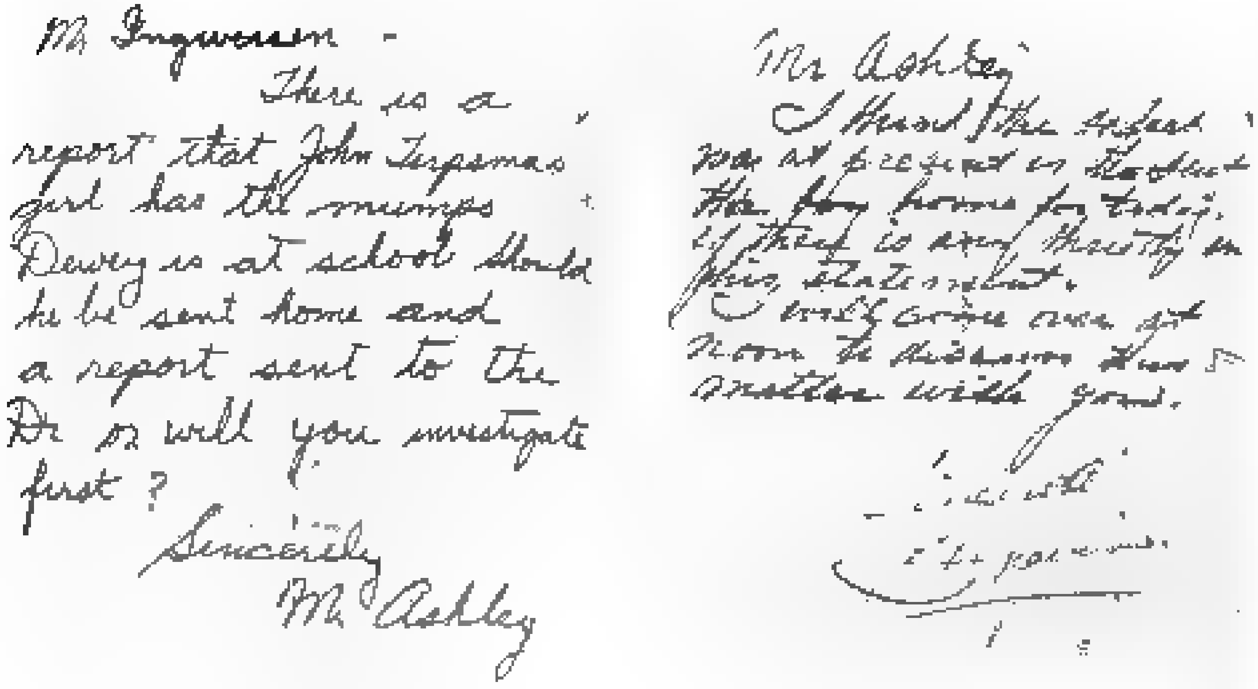


Mr Ingwersen -

There is a report that John Terpsma's girl has the mumps. Dewey is at school should he be sent home and a report sent to the Dr or will you investigate first?

Sincerely

Mr Ashley

Mr Ashley

I heard the school was at present [illegible] the boy home for today, if there is any truth in this statement.

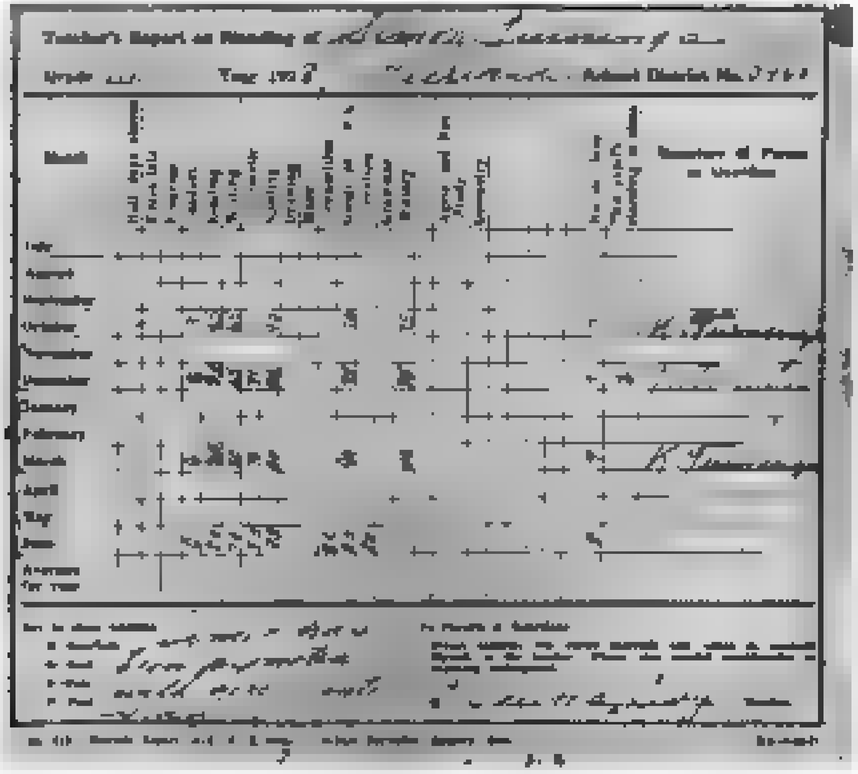
I will come over at noon to discuss this matter with you.

[illegible]

The local school board was expected to solve all sorts of problems.

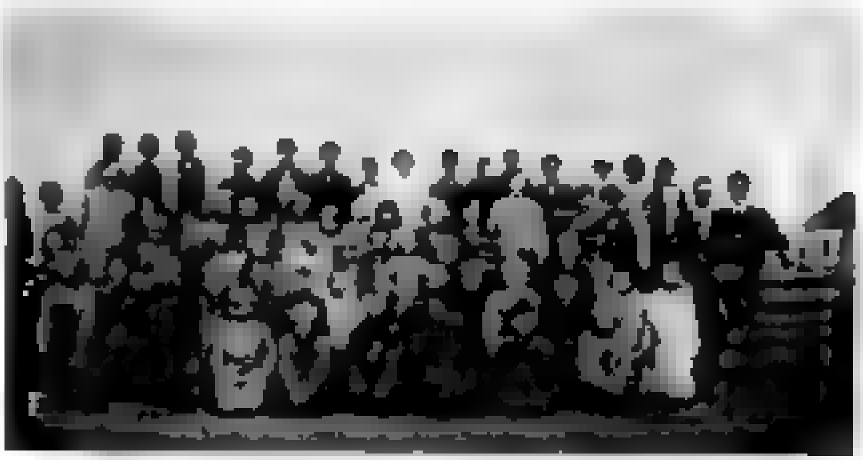
Reminiscences of Neerlandia 1923

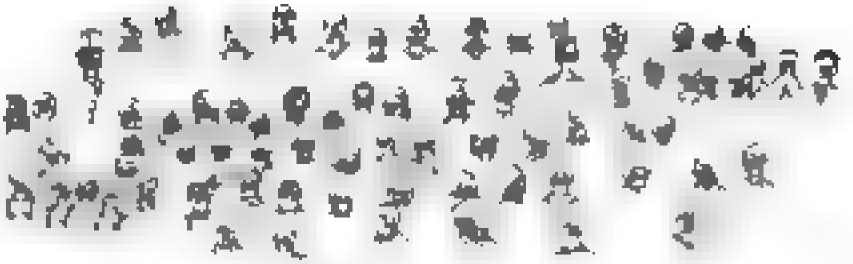
When I graduated from the Edmonton Normal School (Highlands) in the spring of 1923, Dr. Donalda Dickie, one of the professors, asked me if I would accept the position as a primary teacher in the Neerlandia School (grades one to four). Bill van Ark was the principal (grades five to eight). It was with delight that I accepted this position. I traveled from Edmonton to Neerlandia by truck over very bad roads. The truck driver stopped at various places to deliver freight. My boarding place was with Bill and Manna van Ark and their two lovely children, Wim and Zus.



When school opened on May 1, 1923, the two rooms were filled with children. My room was filled to capacity with about thirty-five students and a large stove. The settlement was young then (I think about ten years old). The new little beginners couldn't speak English, having always spoken in Dutch at home. However, all the children were as eager to learn as I was to teach them. We got busy and worked. There was no fooling around and I don't recall any disciplinary problems. They were well-behaved children and had been told by their parents "to do as teacher said." One little beginner stands out vividly in my mind. He was George Olthuis, a small slender child, bewildered by where he was. To top everything off, there was no desk for him. Well, we improvised a desk which we hoped was comfortable and all summer long we took care of George.

There was no teacher's desk so the school board had one made for me. Ben Lievers did the work. I remember it being piled high





The school children, 1929. 1. Robert Hoeve 2. Margaret Sturwold 3. Annie Schoonekamp 4. Bert Minnee 5. Johanna Ingwersen 6. Cor Fisher 7. Katherine Baker 8. Lucy Visser 9. Andrew Hebering 10. Sid Visser 11. Peter Visser 12. Lace Tuininga 13. Nellie Ingwersen 14. Annie Tuininga 15. Russ Schoonekamp

16. Jennie A. Wierenga 17. Kay Wierenga 18. Jo Mossedink 19. Gladys A. Wierenga 20. Tena Peters 21. Grace Nanninga 22. Sophie H. Wierenga 23. Emma Tiemstra 24. Carrie Maat 25. Annie Lievers 26. Mabel Tuininga 27. Sophie A. Wierenga 28. Carrie Tiemstra 29. Johanna Krikke 30. Evert Olthuis 31. Harry H. Lievers 32. Jim B. Lievers 33. Simon Fisher 34. Andrew Nanninga 35. Ryer Krikke 36. Thelma Levy 37. James Levy 38. Mr. Manuel of Three Hills Bible Institute

39. Alice Kippers 40. Jennie Kippers 41. Clara Visser 42. Helen Emmerzael 43. Clara Peters 44. Minnie Maat 45. Annie Anema 46. Sena Gelderman 47. Sadie Reitsma 48. Alice Lievers 49. Henry A. Wierenga 50. Jim Lievers 51. Joe H. Wierenga 52. John Peters 53. John H. Lievers

54. Henry B. Lievers 55. Cor Nanninga 56. Annie Emmerzael 57. John H. Wierenga 58. George Anema 59. Jake Sturwold 60. Clarence Maat 61. Simon Tuininga 62. Cor H. Hiemstra 63. John Fuyemer 64. Charles Baker 65. Joe A. Wierenga 66. Bert Nanninga 67. Lammie A. Wierenga 68. Bertha Hoevey 69. Doris Wilson

70. Gerrit Gelderman 71. Grace Tuininga 72. Pete Maat 73. Gladys Krikke 74. Archie Hoevey 75. Clara Krikke

with wild strawberries, which the children had picked for me during the noon hour. Always there were wild flowers, from marsh marigolds in the spring to asters and goldenrod in the fall.

I must tell you that this was a summer school. That is, the children attended school from May to the end of October or until the weather got too cold. This was because they didn't have proper winter clothing and the roads weren't passable during the winter.

Times were hard but it was a beautiful summer. Neerlandia was a quiet, pleasant place. The summer passed all too quickly. In the fall many of the children contracted whooping cough. Dr. Miller from Westlock closed the school until the sickness had passed over. When we tried to open the school again, cold weather had set in. I never did get the children all together again to say good-bye. I was sorry about this. The Board paid me every cent of my wages, most of it in cream cheques.

So ended the days at my first school. One's first school, like one's first love, lives on in one's memory as a very happy time.

Thelma (Hare) Levy

Teaching Fifty Years Ago

I find it hard to realize that it is over fifty years ago that I lived and taught school in Neerlandia. During my stay, the road from Barrhead to Neerlandia was a dirt road — dusty when dry and very muddy when wet. In many spots the road was reinforced in the low spots with logs; these corduroy spots made a car trip a bone-shaking experience. In fact, such was my introduction to Neerlandia in 1931 as I travelled by truck from Edmonton for many an hour to be interviewed by the school trustees, Tjibbe Reitsma, Joe Baker, and Simon Tiemstra.

I replaced Mrs. Levy, who was resigning to have her second child. There being no teacherage I was obliged to seek a boarding place. I asked Mrs. Schoonenkamp if I could board at their home. After a little hesitation she agreed. This was indeed fortunate for me as she proved to be a second mother to me. Before long I was accepted as one of the family.

Being city bred and having just graduated from teachers' college, the responsibility for forty to fifty children was indeed a challenge. I was, however, young and full of energy. I tried my best and can still boast that my first Inspector's report was most favourable.

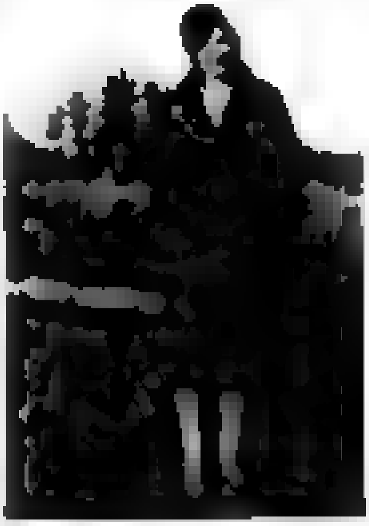
The two-room school was crowded. A big potbellied stove in each room kept out the cold, the water bucket and community dipper provided water, toilets were outside. The setting may sound primitive, but the children seemed to be happy, healthy, and full of good spirit. They were eager to learn. I especially remember one of my many bright grade one pupils, now Dr. Henry Bouwman, Orthopedic Surgeon of the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. About twenty of my students were beginners and some were obliged to walk more than two miles to school. Nevertheless, attendance was excellent.

The Depression was upon us so we were obliged to use slates for the lower grades. My salary was one thousand dollars per year, figured at five dollars a day for two hundred teaching days. The board gave me a raise of fifty cents a day for my second year. Everything depended on the crops as to whether there was enough money to pay the teacher. But I usually received my full pay on time.

Our means of transportation and communication with the outside world were the post office and the telephone, which were located in the store, and Billy Quick's truck. The twice-weekly arrival of the truck was quite an event. Many articles not available at the local store were ordered to be brought out by truck. One day one of my grade one pupils, upon hearing the truck arrive, jumped up from her desk, looked out of the window, and joyfully announced in a loud, clear voice, "Oh, there's Billy Quick's truck with my new shoes!" and headed for the door. None of the other pupils seemed to think this strange. In the interest of discipline, I restrained my amusement and followed in hot pursuit to return her to her desk.

After two years I left the teaching profession to marry William Winkelaar, the second son of a Dutch-Canadian family in Edmonton. In retrospect, even after more than fifty years of married life, I still have nostalgic thoughts and memories of my Dutch-Canadian pupils and their parents, and of the warm and friendly Schoonenkamp family in their log home and the way they made me feel at home.

Jean (Rae) Winkelaar



Jean Rae, 1931

My Neerlandia Years

My teaching career began in 1941 when my application to teach at the Cleardale school was accepted by the [illegible] School Division. I had just completed one year of training at the Edmonton Normal School. Cleardale school was located on the NW [illegible], just one mile east of [illegible] and Anna Nanninga's home where I boarded for the year.

Cleardale was a typical one-room country school. But this one was quite new and provided ample space for the nineteen children who were enrolled. Although it stood by itself and was somewhat isolated, it holds many fond memories for me. With only nineteen children, thirteen of whom were in the primary grades, the class was like a large family. The six older children proved to be a great help as I struggled with the "Enterprise" system of the day. This was an integrated approach where the learning skills are taught through working on a project. In particular, I remember the "Three Bears' House" which we made of poles we hauled from the woods and its furniture which we made mostly from apple boxes. I must confess that my only grade eight student, [illegible], rarely got her share of my time. Fortunately she was a capable student.

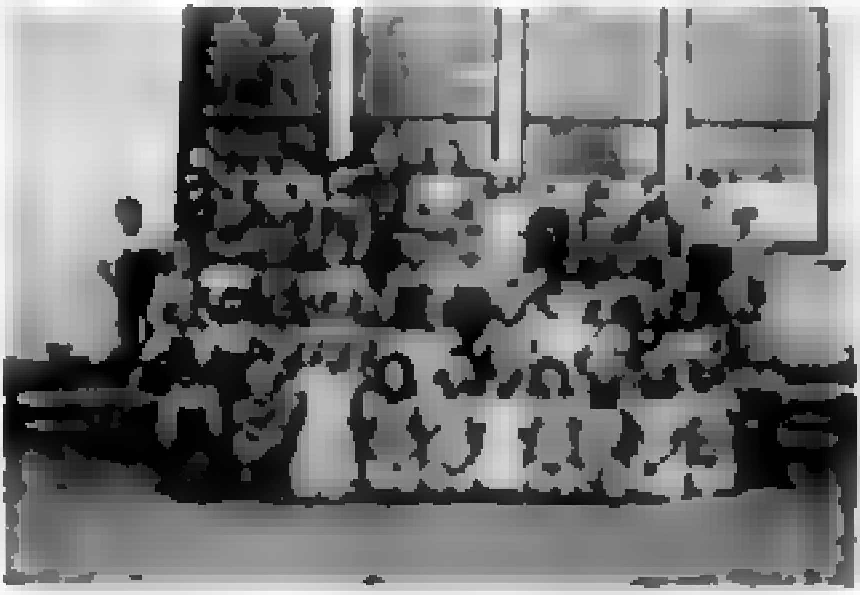
Clara's first class. Grades 1-4

Back Row: [illegible] Tuininga, [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] Eigersma, Jennie Terpsma, Clara Visser (teacher), Cecelia Tiemstra, Bill Reitsma, Ed Jorritsma, John Mast, Wilfred Hofwerda, Henry Struyk[illegible]

Third Row: ? Ken Ashley, Henry Hiemstra, Genevieve Keuning, Ted Reitsma, Henry Piers, Rita Koning, Gilbert Hiemstra, Stewart Plantinga, George Visser.

Second Row: Joe Plantinga (?), Jelle Tuininga, Henry Tuininga, Elsie [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] Baker (?), Dolly Wieringa (?), Anna Reitsma, Betty Terpsma, Johanna Wieringa, Katie Boersma, Jennie [illegible]

Front Row: Henry Gelderman, Tena Terpsma, Alice Krikke, Hilda [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] Olthuis, Mathilda Eigersma, Anna Stydhorst, Gladys Krikke, Tenie Jorritsma, Ben Krikke



1942. The following year I applied for the Neerlandia School because their present teacher was planning to go back to university. So it was that in August I made my home with the [illegible] family.

A greater challenge awaited me that September. Instead of nineteen children there were forty-one. Four were transferred back to Cleardale in November but the room was still overcrowded. Children seated at double desks lined the room from wall to wall. The centre rows were a bit shorter to make room for the jacketed stove and the drinking fountain with its attached enamel basin and tin cup. In winter additional space was needed to store a day's supply of firewood. The [illegible] cloakrooms were already overcrowded with syrup pail lunch buckets, coats, [illegible] scarves, and rubbers. Needless to say, aisle space was limited and the children didn't move out of their desks except for recess and noontime breaks.

Space was limited and educational aids were few — the trusty blackboard, the hectograph, a few maps, and the abacus — but the children did learn, thanks to the curiosity and energy of youth. The day started with devotions, a Bible story, and singing, and then the children worked at arithmetic. The after-recess period was the time I set aside for them to acquire their reading and language skills. To attend to all four grades in the allotted time was difficult. The afternoons were used for science and Enterprise and its activities. Mr. Ashley, who taught the upper grades, exchanged rooms with me two periods of each week. He would teach Science to the children of the primary room while I tried to help the older children appreciate art and music.

Thanks to the dedication of the parents, the children attended school regularly. To some of them it meant walking four to five miles, often in the mud or cold. But I do remember one day in the winter of 1942 when a blizzard blocked the tree-lined roads and only six neighbourhood children weathered the storm instead of the usual forty-five. It was a day we enjoyed, playing games, drawing pictures, and telling stories around the heater. I might add, however, that no one ventured to the outer edges of the room where the frigid air preserved the cold white snow which stuck to our boots.

1943 The second year was much like the first, although the enrollment was down to forty. Mr. Ashley now taught grade four and thirteen children occupied the grade one section of the room.

Since I was a product of that period of time, teaching in the old school did not bother me — in fact, I was enjoying it — but when the scrapers, hammers, and saws disturbed the quiet of the classroom that year, it was welcome news: a new school was on the way.

1944 The next September the new three-room school was complete. The student population was now distributed over three rooms. What a treat! I taught only thirty-two children and two grades, which was still a fair amount by today's standards, but quite a change from the two previous years. The three intermediate grades, three, four, and five, were taught by Miss Betty, and Mr. Ashley taught the upper grades and held the principalship.

The classroom took on a new appearance. The double desks were replaced by small tables and chairs which were accessible from all sides. Extra space at the back provided room for activities and quiet games. This proved especially helpful when winter cold forced the children to remain indoors during noontime break. No longer did the classroom serve as a storage area. Lunch boxes, extra winter clothing, and the drinking fountain were moved to the basement. The potbellied stove with its wood supply was replaced by the central heating system which provided more uniform heat. No longer did the children sitting near the outer edges of the room exchange places with those near the heater. Adequate blackboard and bulletin board space used all but the window side of the room. It was quite a change!

From 1945 to 1948 the local school board provided either hot chocolate or soup to supplement the children's lunches. An old stove was purchased and housed in the basement, and the board provided the funds to purchase the ingredients. Various families contributed soup bones to make the soup more nourishing. The lunches were prepared by the women teachers and the janitor, Mr. Aasen, did his best to keep the stove piping hot.

The three-room school continued to be my place of employment the next four years. The enrollment in my class varied from thirty-three to forty-six students. The very high teacher-pupil ratio made it impossible to provide the special help so sorely needed by the children who had difficulty learning.

Finding a place to stay was not easy for a country teacher. I too experienced that problem. As mentioned earlier, Herman and [illegible] [illegible] offered me a home when I first came to Newbrook, but in April they left for Edmonton and I had to search for a new place to live. The Schoenenkamps kindly took me in, and I lived with them two years, after which I stayed in the teacherage with another teacher, Alberta [illegible]. The next year I lived with John and Rose Ingwersen, but soon I had to move because my room was needed for the family. My stay with the Schoenenkamps eventually led to marriage with their son Albert, which incidentally solved my housing problem. I taught one year after our wedding, then stayed home with my family for four years.

In [illegible], when I returned, things were quite different. The schoolhouses had been moved in from the surrounding areas. With centralization the one-room schools had become a thing of the past. Even though the number of teachers on staff also increased, two grades still had to share one classroom and the enrollment per room was still in the thirties. My experience up to this time had been in the primary grades, but upon my return I taught various combinations of grades six through eight. It was a time of adjusting to different levels and sometimes having both upper elementary and junior high.

There were times of stress through the years: children whom I was unable to help, differences of opinion with other teachers, being frustrated with my own abilities. But I also have many pleasurable memories of the years I taught in Newbrook. The rapport with the children and fellow staff members, the class outings, the field trips, the programs shared with the community, the staff socials, and the conventions all contributed to making life interesting and worthwhile.

* * *

One day as I prepared to have the children read "The Three Bears," I asked, "What do you think might be in the book?" I chuckled when one little boy quickly threw up his hand and called out, "Bey!"

* * *

When the school first began serving soup to the children at noon, tables were built in the basement with the intention to have the children eat there. Unfortunately for the school board, this idea proved impractical and the students ate in their classrooms. Determined not to let the tables go to waste, an undaunted Mr. Aasen commandeered them for table tennis matches. It is understood that his classes became quite adept at the sport and even a few other teachers developed clever backhands and nasty serves.

* * *

Clara (Visser) Schoonekamp

A Job in Neerlandia

When the letter came from Neerlandia offering me a position teaching grades three, four and five, I thought about it for a long time. Then Clara Visser and her father came to see me and tell me something about the community. If Clara was teaching grades one and two there, I would have someone with whom to share common problems and pleasures. I had found a one-room school lonesome in that respect. So in the fall of 1944 I came to Neerlandia by a Fisher truck and boarded there with Anne and Cas Mast and their little daughter Marilyn. Next year Clara and I shared the teacherage and had many hilarious housekeeping experiences such as the chimney catching fire. Without Clara I would never have felt so at home there.

I cannot find words to say how much I enjoyed the community. The school board, the parents, and the principal Mr. Ashley were all supportive. The Young People's Society always had some activity going, and Clara and I were invited to the homes of all our pupils. Most of all I remember how hard the children worked and how much I loved them.

One event sticks in my mind particularly. We went on a field trip and three boys caught a ride in a truck and came back to school half an hour after the others were dismissed. I was shocked to see them, [illegible] hurt that they had done such a thing. They stood in a row in front of my desk and, before I could speak, saw they were sorry. I said, "What do you think you deserve as punishment?" Henry Hoekstra said solemnly, "We deserve the strap." The two others agreed. My heart sank at the idea of them getting the strap so I said, "Go tell Mr. Ashley what you've told me." This was the only time I had sent pupils to Mr. Ashley, and I waited, hoping they wouldn't get the strap. They did get a strap, however, and I flinched as I heard it, although it was only one on each hand and not too hard. I still admire those little boys for coming into the school and taking their punishment.

Katie, Alice, Tinie, Bert, Wilfred, Mathilda, Jenny, Anna, Kenneth, Susan, Shirley, [illegible], Henrietta, Lambert, John, Henry, Jellie, Betty, Stewart, and the others whose faces I remember but whose names escape me, wherever you are now, thank you for being my pupils and giving me such a happy two years.

Alberta (Robb) Cole

Clara Visser, Wiepje [illegible], Alberta Robb, c. 1945.

A Backward Look

April 25, 1949 — I remember the day vividly. I was greeted by thirty-four excited pupils as I walked into a little one-room school to begin my first day of teaching. Only two days before I had written my final exam at the U. of A. and now ready to start my teaching career. I faced a grade three and four class. I looked at the kids and wondered how I would ever remember those strange names: Nanninga, Wiersma, Tiemstra .... Now so many years later, I look back and think of all the changes that have taken place in the field of education.

A severe teacher shortage prevailed at the time, so it was a matter of superintendents selecting you rather than prospective teachers answering numerous applications, hoping that one would be accepted. Many of us began teaching with one year of university training, but even then there were schools short of staff, so sometimes high school students acted as supervisors while the kids worked at correspondence courses.

My first school, the old Shoal Creek School that had been moved to Neerlandia centre, had a big coal-eating monster at the back, a washbasin, and the bare essentials for teaching. Many a cold winter day we huddled around the heater as we shovelled in more coal — fingers too cold to write — an excellent time for storytelling and for quizzes and games. Every school yard had several little outbuildings (no washrooms, you know), which provided great excuses for walks in the summer when students became bored, but weren't very convenient in the bitter cold weather. A short distance from the little school stood the big three-room school where Mrs. Fenner, Mr. VanderMeulen, and Mrs. Afman taught the other grades. Since there was no staffroom, we seldom got together and morning coffee was unheard of.

A regular bus ran from Vega through Neerlandia to Barrhead, while a converted truck driven by Albert Tiemstra transported kids to the south and east. The wooden seats got mighty hard and I am sure the airtight heater used in the winter months would not pass today's safety standards. Buses were often late due to muddy roads in summer and spring and snow in the winter, and some springs they were banned for weeks and education practically came to a standstill.

We had few books to help us teach; paper and art supplies were almost nonexistent, and certainly we had no tempting projectors or any of the other numerous machines we take for granted today. Teaching was very much a time of listen and copy rather than research. Because the classroom teacher taught all subjects, regardless of training or ability, music was often no more than singing and physical education was simply games — whenever weather permitted, since there was no gym.

However, I enjoyed the challenge of teaching when I first started and I still do today. It has been a rewarding experience to see a succession of students pass through my classes while instructional innovations have come and gone, but I have no desire to return to "the little white schoolhouse."

Ruth Janssen

Teaching in Neerlandia

I was born in Neerlandia in 1923 on a farm at least three and a half miles from the church and school. I began my school years in Neerlandia. At that time the school consisted of two rooms. There were no lights in the school and it always seemed dark on short winter days. The rooms were heated by two large black stoves, which required constant effort to keep going

In 195[illegible] I was able to come back and begin my teaching career Additional small schools had been brought in, this was the beginning of centralization of school districts Big yellow buses became a part of everyday life as children came to school from quite a distance

To add to the excitement of schooling, I spent a bit of time working on a rhythm band with the children It required a great deal of patience persistence and long-suffering but we did succeed in playing for concerts. Christmas concerts were important to the community

The noon hour lunchtime conversations were inspiring and profound "Mother's homemade bread is at least seven times better than the hopeless store bread " "Don t complain about your food " "Eat what your mother feeds you " "That tractor of ours has a lot more power than those hopeless little John Deere tractors "

All those little people have grown up. I see that they have done well for themselves With God at the centre of their lives they will continue to be a blessing to their church and community I am thankful to those students for being a part of my teaching career

Magdelena Baker

Teaching in 1923

A school day started at 9:00 a m First recess was from 10:30-10:45 a m Noon hour was from 12:00-1:00 p.m Last recess was from 2:15-2:30 p.m Dismissal was at 3:30 p m During lunch hour and often at recess, games were supervised by the teacher in the yard

School was always opened with the Lord's Prayer saluting the flag, and singing a song or two

We had very few teaching aids. but we did have a good curriculum to guide us and to know what we should expect from each child at the end of his grade

The three "R's" of course were stressed. Oral reading, writing, and arithmetic were carefully taught every day to every child and all work was corrected by the teacher then the child corrected his mistakes. There were no workbooks

History, geography and agriculture were important subjects Great care was given to mapmaking with surface features and printing clearly shown

English composition stressing paragraph structure and choice of words was given much attention. Formal grammar was taught Writing was stressed The teacher illustrated on the blackboard and the children carefully followed instructions There was no printing in any grade cursive style was taught from the beginning Grade one wrote in full space Penmanship was marked for legibility, line qualities, and freedom of movement

Elementary science was also taught Children gathered mounted, and named plant collections They learned to recognize birds and to write a life history of a robin, sparrow hawk, or other bird.

The teacherage, 1950.

Olive Young with Ken, Harold, and Shirley Ashley.

Health was taught, stressing the foods that were good for them. Some anatomy was taught.

Physical exercises were taught whenever possible. This was usually a short relaxing break from schoolwork during the day; the windows would be opened and everyone refreshed with some exercise.

There were good textbooks. The readers were lovely and had beautiful stories and pictures. The children loved the readers — they had such a variety of stories, often with a moral. First there were the *Alexandra* readers and later came *Highroads to Reading* and others.

The teachers [illegible] Alice [illegible] [illegible]

We used the blackboard for everything. At the end of the school day or before school began in the morning, seatwork was put on the board. While I taught grade one mathematics, grades two, three, and four did seat work. Then I went from grade to grade checking and often teaching something new. Everything was corrected and explained. At first children used slates, but soon scribblers and pencils came into use.

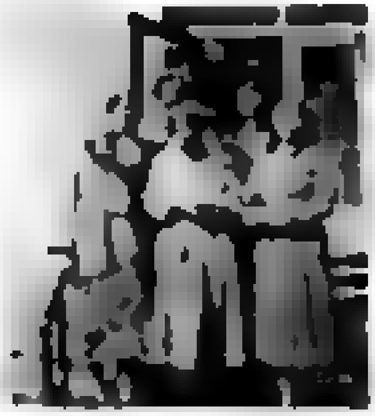
We used pictures a great deal. I had a large collection, cut from magazines, mounted, and named. We made our own flash cards. We had a hectograph for making seat work. This hectograph could only be used once every twenty-four hours because it took a while for the inked words to sink in.

Teachers worked every minute of the day, including noon hour; there were no coffee breaks. The minimum salary was $840.00 a year although I remember some teachers being paid in the range of one thousand dollars per year in [illegible]. We were dedicated to our profession and I think in many ways we produced good students.

Thelma (Hare) Levy

Hectograph

The one aid we did have was a hectograph — a primitive duplicator. Each teacher purchased her own. It was a shallow pan very like a cookie sheet with a lid. In fact some teachers purchased cookie sheets to use as hectographs. We would fill both top and bottom with a gelatin-like substance which could be purchased or made from a recipe. With a special indelible pencil we would write or draw on a sheet of paper. The surface of the hectograph would be moistened and the paper pressed print side down on it. After a few moments the original would be removed. One by one students' books or sheets of paper would be carefully smoothed over the surface to receive the impression. One could make about twenty-five fairly good copies in this way. Any additional copies were quite faint. It took about twenty-four hours for the ink to settle to the bottom of the pan. After repeated use the pad would become saturated with ink and we would have to make a new one.



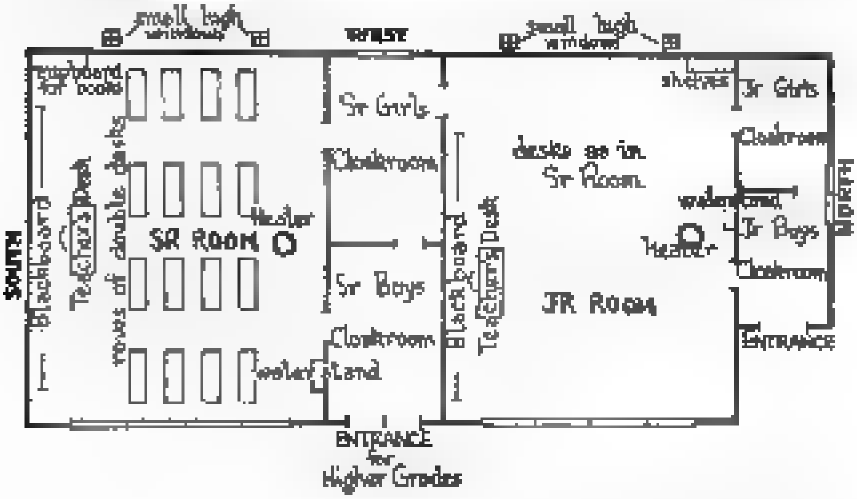
Shirley Olthuis, Tina Abday, Eleanor Bauer. Front: Irene Fowler, Clara Schoonenkamp, Lena Baker, 1963

Memories of School Days

After a breakfast of wheat porridge, milk, and bread or fried potatoes and milk, we left with our lunch in either a lard or syrup pail for our little white school. We lived less than a mile from school.

so for us it was not an ordeal as it was for some who had to walk five miles in bitter cold or pouring rain.

We found the walk fun: in the early spring after a thaw there were the beautiful snowdrifts, in the summer the soft earth was just perfect for our bare feet as were the puddles after a rain in the autumn the lovely scenery delighted even a child's heart The winter was worse since so many did not have warm clothes especially footwear. Many a tear was shed because of aching cold feet or frostbitten hands.



Our schoolhouse was divided into two parts. Grades one to five were taught by a lady teacher and grades five to eight by the principal The rooms were divided by a hall which again was divided by the girls and boys' cloakroom In the cloakroom closest to the door we usually had a wood box and a water pail with a dipper from which everyone sick or healthy, dirty or clean drank

The grade one to five room also had a cloakroom, a wood box, and a water pail and dipper. It was the janitor's job to get a clean pail of water every morning, but the boys in grade seven and eight got fresh water if the pail would be emptied during the day

The school was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Regardless of how we fed the stove it usually took until noon to get every corner of the room warm in winter We usually brought our lunch pails into the schoolroom and put them next to the stove, as the majority of lunches were frozen on the way to school. I don't think the lineup of syrup and lard pails added to the beauty of the school, but no one had anything nicer so this was just a part of our school life.

In the summer we were already very warm by noon and were allowed to go outside to eat our lunch We then sat on the north side of the school or on the north side of the huge woodpile which was all split ready for winter

Lunches were poor in those days. We always had homemade bread, homemade butter and homemade cheese That cheese was much like the cottage cheese of today. We sometimes had syrup. One girl always had a better lunch than the rest of us since her mother was quite artistic and knew how to make pretty things. Sometimes she would have cupcakes or fancy buns. Her sandwiches would be daintily cut and everything was wrapped separately. I think her lunch was often the envy of the class. Once one mother had gone to the city and came home with some peanut butter. For a few days that lunch was the envy of the room. Sometimes the lunch pails, when opened, had a sour smell. This meant that the bread had not risen properly and it was sour. All these things formed the pattern of our school days. At harvesttime we all had treats, usually half an apple until the barrel of apples was gone. Sometimes Mother would buy bologna for bread if the threshers were at our house, and then we would have it to school too.

Our early teacher, Miss Brown, taught us many songs and poems. Some such as "Good Morning to You" and "I Am a Gay Little Farmer" remain in my memory to this day. Since she had grade one students, much time was spent on music and poetry, much to my delight. But if you didn't like singing or poems it was very boring.

Miss Brown wore very high heels and when she went home for lunch we would take turns to try them on and walk around in them. I am quite sure she must have known, but never mentioned it.

The principal, Mr. Ashley, taught grades five to eight. We had great respect for him and were afraid of him as he had the traditional punishment — the Strap. Although I personally never had it, I was afraid. Then there were other ways of punishment which were to be avoided, not because they were painful but because they were humiliating. Standing in front of the class or the corner for ten minutes (I think) hurt as much as the strap since it hurt the pride of a young child. When I was in grade one my coat fell down when I was hanging it up and I said a bad word. Miss Levy marched me to the principal and made me sit next to his desk during noon hour while all the others were out playing. Since I was terrified of Mr. Ashley, this was a punishment I never forgot.

Another punishment was writing lines — sometimes one hundred lines, sometimes more, depending on how severe the misdeed was. Usually we had to write "I must behave in school" or "I must obey my teacher." This also was done at noon when everyone was having a great time outside. Punishment is always hard — even if deserved — and as a child you feel like a prisoner with all the others enjoying freedom.

One time when we were quite young but felt we should be acting like grown-ups, several of us took face powder to school. Little did our childish minds realize that the teacher could see or smell the powder on us. My parents were told, and when I arrived home I got punished. I still don't know why, as surely a little powder would brighten up the drab room and add a sweet smell to an otherwise musty room. At that time free samples of powder could be obtained by filling in coupons in farm papers. These were sent out by Ponds, Cashmere and Woodbury. I think some of these samples were taken to school.

Another punishment I still remember is when I was a little girl and got five cents to buy a scribbler. While in the store, I saw some mouth-watering candy. I had already bought the scribbler but, yielding to temptation, I returned the scribbler and bought the candy. Little did I realize that the clerk, Annie Ingebretsen, knew there was something wrong, since no one bought five-cent candy except on picnics. She told my father and when I came home — already feeling guilty — I was severely punished. The shame of what I had done hurt more than the punishment I received. I also knew, small as I was, that I had hurt my parents because I did need the scribbler and had to have another five cents which they could not afford.

Once we had an English lady for a teacher. She was from England, I think, because she spoke with an English accent. She taught us how to embroider and make very fine stitches. Whoever made the best job got a five-cent chocolate bar. We all worked hard at it; what a surprise to find out that I had won. I was twelve years old then and that chocolate bar was like receiving a terrific prize.

Our noon hours were fun. In summer we did a lot of skipping and I am often surprised how sixty years later children are still singing the same skipping songs we did. The older grades played baseball. Sometimes we played Anti-I-Over — that was always fun. I think it might have broken a window once in a while, although I can't remember. The smaller children often played Mother May I, Run Sheep Run or Pom Pom Pull Away. The latter was rough, especially if the one at the end was small.

In the winter we played football, although I think it is now called soccer. This was for boys and girls and was fun, although it was rough. Often in the month of June the boys were busy doing high jump or broad jump, practising for the picnic. When we were in grade seven or eight, we had an outing with our teacher Mr. Ashley. One of the older boys took a team of horses and a wagon. We went to Shoal Lake on the [illegible]. We all brought our own lunches. We played ball and ran some races. Picnics like that were seldom had, and I still like to think of that day.

One of the days I always thought great was when the weather was very cold and only ten or twelve pupils came. We would have games during our extended noon hours and would be free to go home at three o'clock.

The rules at school were strict. One rule was that we were not allowed to stand up. When Mr. Maskell moved his sheep to the summer pasture, he would slowly walk them from his place in Meadowdale to a pasture in Vega. Our teacher would allow us to leave our work and watch this. It was interesting since he had a large flock of sheep and led them carefully past the school.

Another fun thing of my school life was Valentine's Day. The making of the valentines was more fun than the receiving, as many hours were spent trying to find pictures out of catalogues or wallpaper samples. They were pasted on thin cardboard and given to whomever you wanted to.

Times were poor and we were all pretty well restricted to one dress for Sunday and one for school. What a thrill to get a new cotton dress in the spring and a new flannel dress in the fall! Anyone having more than one dress usually had hand-me-downs

Early Valentine made for [illegible] by Grace [illegible], c. 1934

from their older sisters. It is hard to believe that all the girls wore dresses. Many must have been torn in sports or while climbing fences.

This is the way I remember school days. We were not protected like the children are now, being picked up by bus and going into a warm school. We did not have beautiful sports equipment or lovely clothes. We did not have the modern lunches, which would have made our mouths water. But we did have fun and felt secure in our way of life. Our parents were home when we came home from school, and were there to listen to our problems. We had playtime and worktime at school and home. So it is with pleasant memories that I can look at my days in the little white schoolhouse.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

Education. Before and After School

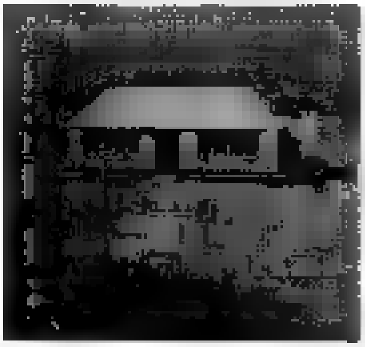
My formal schooling began in 1934 at the old two-room school in Neerlandia. I can still picture my teacher sitting at her desk with glasses perched on the end of her nose and looking at us over the top of her glasses with eyes that could see right through us.

I have many fond memories of my school years, and the education I received in those years has certainly served me well in later life. We walked to and from school every day and that extended our education beyond regular school hours by two or three hours each day. On the way to and from school we studied frogs and tadpoles, bees and wasps, hawks and owls, and whatever animals and birds were around in the various seasons of the year.

We also received many lessons in human behaviour or misbehaviour. I vividly recall one lesson I received from Ruby, our neighbour girl, who was six years older than I was. Ruby had two sisters: Thelma, who was my age, and Janet, who was one year younger. We always walked to school together carrying our lunches in lard pails or syrup pails. One day Thelma came to school with a brand-new, brightly-painted, square lunch kit of which she was very proud. On the way home, as a prank and maybe even from a bit of jealousy, I took Thelma's new lunch kit and threw it as far as I could into three feet of snow along the road. When Ruby caught me I received the worst beating I had ever had, and went the rest of the way home with several painful lumps on my head and with a very sore tailbone from a sharp boot in the rear. When I got home I didn't even get one bit of sympathy and got sent right back to the neighbours to apologize before supper. That really hurt, and I never forgot that lesson.

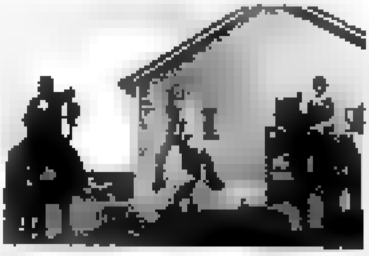
Fred Toebes

* * *



The school.

Some walked. Elsie, Shirley, Joan, and Jack Olthuis.



Horseback was a common form of transportation. Annie Schoonekamp, Joan Rae, Jennie Schoonekamp.

EDUCATION AS THE KIDS SAW IT

* * *

School lunches

Four slices of steamed cracked wheat bread
Butter or bacon fat
Fillings:
— smoked moose meat (real good)
— fried thick-sliced bacon (real good)
— fresh raspberries (soggy)

Winter lunches were better as we could have roast meat sandwiches. Keeping meat in summertime was impossible. We sometimes ground the wheat in a coffee grinder. It took a long time to grind enough flour to make two loaves of bread about 20" long. It was baked slowly in a long roasting pan with a greased board in the centre. It took about three hours to bake (real good).

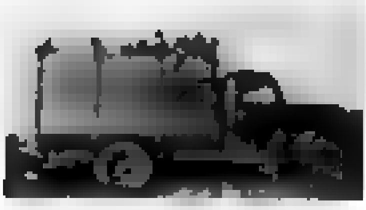
Gerri Bozak

* * *

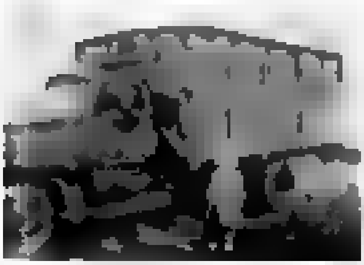
With Mr. Fisher's arrival, the real learning began. He felt our education had been sadly lacking up to that time and introduced us to history, geography, and grammer. He would knock on our heads and say, "You Dutch cheeses," indicating we were not too bright.

Susie Vanee

* * *



Some took the bus. Albert Tiemstra drove the first "school bus" 1950



Here comes the bus. Everdina Nanninga

Others went by plane. Albert and Thelma Meet, Fred Dolke, 1971

We went to school until we were either fifteen or had passed grade eight and I now graduated into the working world

Susie Vanee

* * *

My mother felt we should learn to read and write Dutch so she held classes for Margaret, Johanna and Lily Messelink, Dena, Tena and myself in our home

Susie Vanee

* * *

The hall window in the school used to have about a hundred bull flies buzzing around on it. One day I took a straw from the broom and strung about twenty bull flies on it and let them go outside, and they buzzed away like an airplane. When I turned around, I saw that Mr. Ashley, the teacher, had been watching me, and he didn't think it was a very nice way to treat bull flies. I thought the only good bull fly was a dead one

George Anema

* * *

When Simon Fisher and Andrew Heberling were schoolboys, they had some traps set on the way to school for squirrels and weasels. One morning they found a skunk in one. Being a little green about skunks, they killed it with a stick. Then they took off for school and got there a little late. "Get out of here," roared the teacher, "and don't come back till you smell better." They got a holiday out of it at least

Cor Fisher

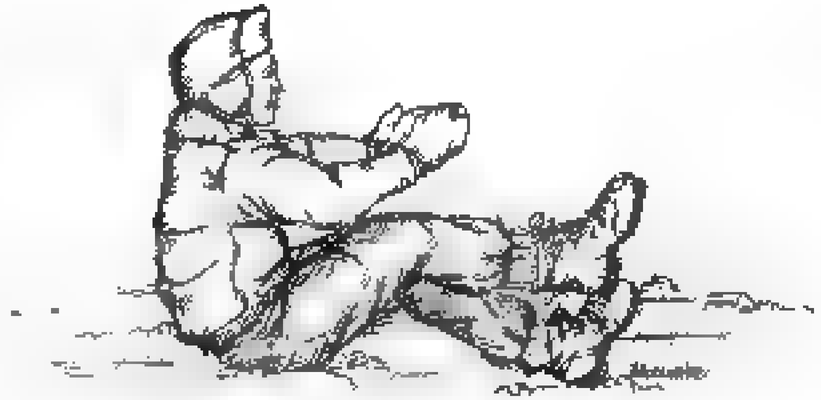
* * *

Noon hours were always the highlight of each day, but they also provided some frustrations. No one was allowed out of the school until twenty minutes after twelve. We could very easily eat our lunch in five to ten minutes and get out to play, but this was not to be. You see, our teacher had this (to us) very unreasonable rule. Each bit of food had to be chewed at least twenty times. And this is what he did, with the regularity of a Holstein cow chewing its cud. It made no difference if we were done eating in five minutes — we had to sit there for the twenty minutes anyhow. So, even if we never did learn this slow, methodical chewing, after watching it for five years we at least knew how it should be done

Fred Toebes

* * *

After school there was the two-mile walk home. This could be a long hard walk in winter, especially if a north wind was blowing, but it could also be a lot of fun. In the spring of the year, when the snow was melting, the ditches along the road would fill up with water and then freeze over during the nights. This would provide beautiful, long sheets of smooth ice slides, and we made use of every one along the way. I remember one time in particular. We had an exceptionally long slide just about a half a mile from school. It gave us entertainment for almost a whole week. One afternoon my brother Norman and his friend Ralph decided to cut a hole in the



middle of our slide and cover it over with snow. About fifteen minutes later Cor Leder came along. He slid neatly into the hole and two-and-a-half feet of water. That was the end of our slide for that year.

Fred Toebes

* * *

Walking Home From School

Kids miss a lot riding those smelly school buses. They are so shut-off from nature. Sure, it's fast and efficient, a lot warmer in winter and cooler in summer, but still they miss a lot.

We saw little piles of wild rose hip skins where some chipmunk had sat on an old stump or fallen tree to eat them. And we often watched these bright-eyed little creatures nibbling at their food or flicking their tails and scampering away.

Burning nettles were the test of every child's bravery. Dare to grab it firmly and avoid a burn, or tentatively touch it and feel as if your hand was on fire. Is that true? It passed for gospel when we were kids.

We learned about the plants. Snake berries were poisonous, as was purple pea vine. The white pea vine was okay, though, and we ate it every spring. In fall we imitated the chipmunks and gathered rose hips. The difference was that we ate the skins and only the skins.

We walked home in groups. Usually we walked companionably but sometimes we got into mischief. When Simon Groot sold his house to Frank Kowalchuk, a few of us entered the house after school was out and tore wallpaper off the walls. Little vandals at work. Sometimes we had disagreements with the Terpsma kids and then we had to watch out because they had the most formidable weapons school kids possessed — lard or syrup lunch pails. They could pack a terrific wallop. We poor Olthuis girls had only cloth schoolbags with which to retaliate.

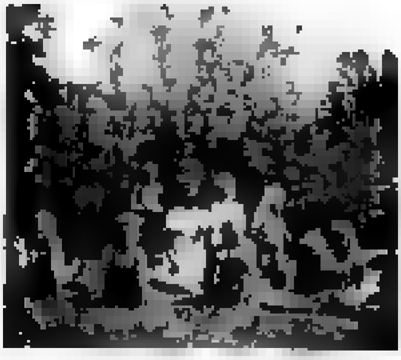
You've heard of motorcycle gangs — well, we had the Nanninga bicycle gang. The Nanninga boys and George Visser could make life miserable for us by parking their bikes across the road and

refusing to let us pass. Florence Baker loved to visit her Aunt Tenie but dreaded these confrontations so sometimes she would cut across the fields to avoid them. Not learning from our own experiences, we would pick on someone even more defenceless. How cruel one can be!

Another thing kids miss today is walking home on the snowdrifts. The roads are wider today and it seems there is less snow, but in our day it was often possible to walk most of the way home on the drifts. After a blizzard we would carefully test the drifts before committing ourselves to the heady experience of walking on top of the world. Sadly, being the heaviest of the group, I experienced this glorious feeling less often than the others. I would take a few steps on the firmest drifts, then fall through and have to flounder back to the road. On one occasion my brother Jack, about six years old, fell through to his armpits. My sisters and I tried to dig him out, but we were not making much headway when the Terpsma contingent appeared. Here was salvation, we thought! But it must have been one of our feuding periods because they refused to help. After they passed, we continued hopelessly digging amid tears, and finally freed him.

Another great pastime, when walking to and from school, was to kick a horse turd all the way to school. When we got to school we would carefully nudge it up against the school wall for safe-keeping till it could be kicked home again once the school day was over. How can riding a bus compare with this?

AT SCHOOL



Come and play house! Some of the 1949 grade 3 and 4 class.

There was the teeter-totter. Front: Jennie Terpsma, Alice Boorsma, Florence Baker, Betty Terpsma (?), Tena Jonkema, Alice Krikke. Back: Cecelia Tiemstra, Shirley Olthuis, Mathilda Elgersma, Tena Terpsma (?), Katie Boorsma, Reta Koning, Jennie Strydhorst, Elsie Olthuis, Gladys Krikke, Anne Strydhorst, 1942-43.

Of course there was work too. Clara Visser with class, 1945.

Harold Ashley, Janet Sturwold, Lula Krikke.

And sports days. Thelma Sturwold at bat.

And school pictures.

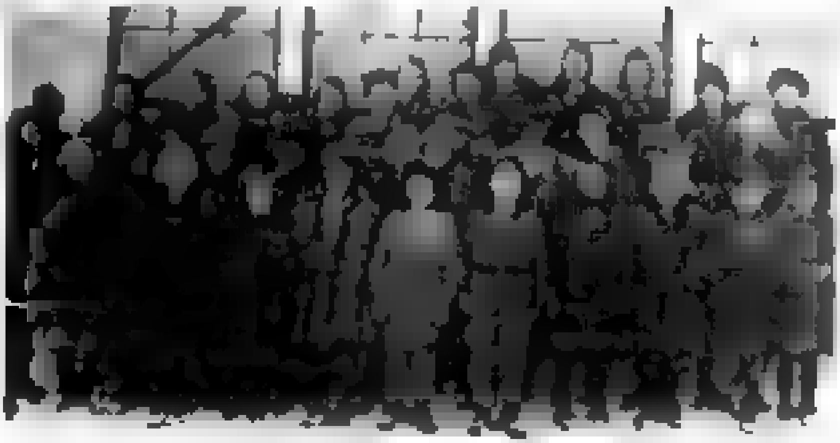
Back: Arie Krikke, Harry Reitsma, Ben Bouwman, Cor Hiemstra, Annie Leder, Hilda Peters, Kobie Mast.

Third: Fred Tansowny, Walter Tansowny, Harold Ashley, Gerrit Lievers.

Second: Clarence Tiemstra, Bart Leder, Arthur Reitsma, Arnold Hiemstra, Albert Tiemstra, Fred Toebes, Katie Dieleman, Tena Koning, Jurina Elgersma, Betty Koning.

Front: Sophie Anema, Thelma Sturwold, Lula Krikke, Gertie Hiemstra, Jane Dieleman, Janet Sturwold, Violet Tillotson, Alice Mast, Hazel Tansowny.

SCHOOL CLASSES



Back Row: Joe Tuininga, Mary Hatney, Lula Sturwold, Johanna Messelink, Reka Lievers, Annie Ingwersen, Margaret (Grada) Messelink, Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Eva Olthuis, Lily Messelink, Susie Anema

Third Row: Jennie Schoonekamp, Alice Kippers, Annie Schoonekamp, ?, George Kippers, George Olthuis, Cecil Tuininga, George Terpsma, Annie Tuininga, John Lievers, Johanna Ingwersen

Second Row: ?, Grace Nanninga, Harry Lievers, Henry Lievers (?), Bill Lievers, Albert Messelink, Ryer Kniske, Rube Schoonekamp, Minnie Lievers, Annie Tuininga

Front: Nettie Ingwersen, Annie Lievers, Jennie Kippers, George Anema, John Ingwersen, Johanna Kniske, Carrie Olthuis, Corry Nanninga, Ethel Howey, c. 1922

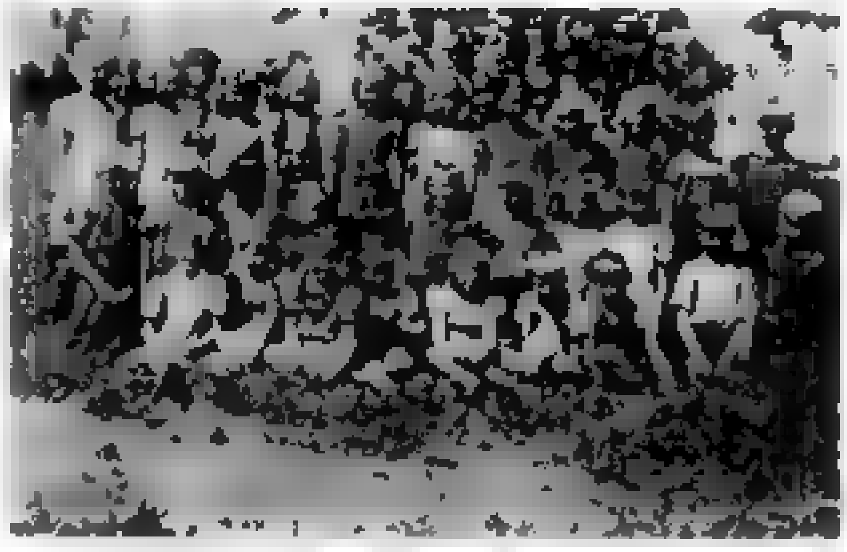
Back Row: Margaret Bouwman, Cecelia Tiemstra, Gertrude Hiemstra

Middle: Jean Gelderman, Grace Bouwman, Grace Tuininga, Thelma Sturwold, Hermia Nanninga, Janet Sturwold, Alice Mast

Standing Front: Henry Tuininga, Sylvia Tuininga, Shirley Olthuis, Anna Reitsma, Doris Wieringa, Alice Kniske, Katie Boorsma, Jennie Strydhorst

Seated Back: Peter Piers, Gilbert Hiemstra

Seated Front: Dave Tiemstra, Clarence Tiemstra, Stewart Planinga, Ed Jonkema, Bill Reitsma, Bert Piers, 1946-47

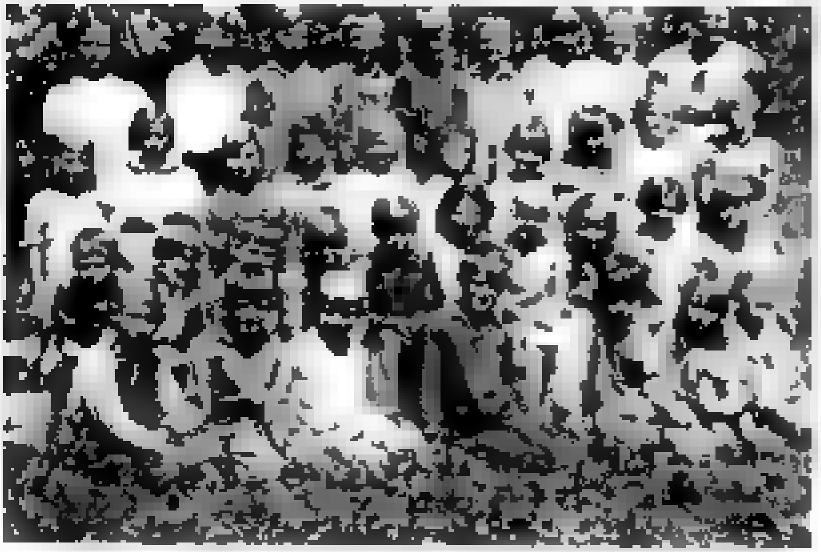


Back: Julius Boorsma, Herman Wagner, John Bouwman, Stuney Ashley, Joan Olthuis, Ed Piers, Henry Nanninga, Simon Tiemstra

Third: Betty Oldegbers, Reta Tuininga, Judy Fisher, Susan Tiemstra, Jean Kippers, Alice Strydhorst, Margaret Wagner, Marjorie and Elsie Ingwersen, John Baker, Jim Nanninga

Second: Jack Olthuis, George Visser, Elsie Courtepatte, Tena Kippers, Jean Fisher, Katie Terpsma, John Molodowich, Bertha Strydhorst, Minnie Kniske

Seated: Gladys Wieringa, Lydia Dorzlef, Edith Tuininga, Hilda Molodowich, Beatrice Tuininga, Alvin Nanninga, Gilbert Baker, Gilles Planinga, Tony Fisher

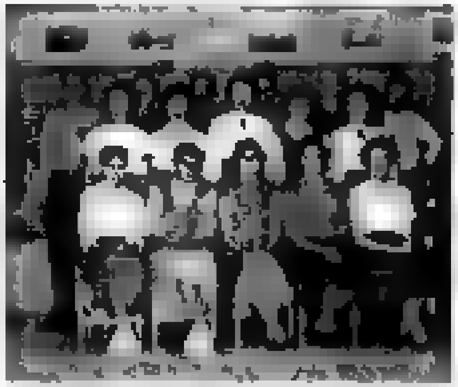


Back: Hilda Peters, John Lievers, Harry Reitsma, Cor Hiemstra, Norman Toebes, Arie Krikke, Annie Leder, Tena Koning, Grace Boer.

Third Row: Fred Tanasowny, Fred Toebes, Jurina Elgersma, Rita Gelderman, Katie Dieleman, Elizabeth Koning, Thelma Sturwold

Second Row: Dewey Terpsma, Albert Krikke, Ed Jorritsma, Jim Jorritsma, Walter Tanasowny, Violet Titchson, Janet Sturwold (?), Hazel Tanasowny, Gertrude Hiemstra, Jane Dieleman

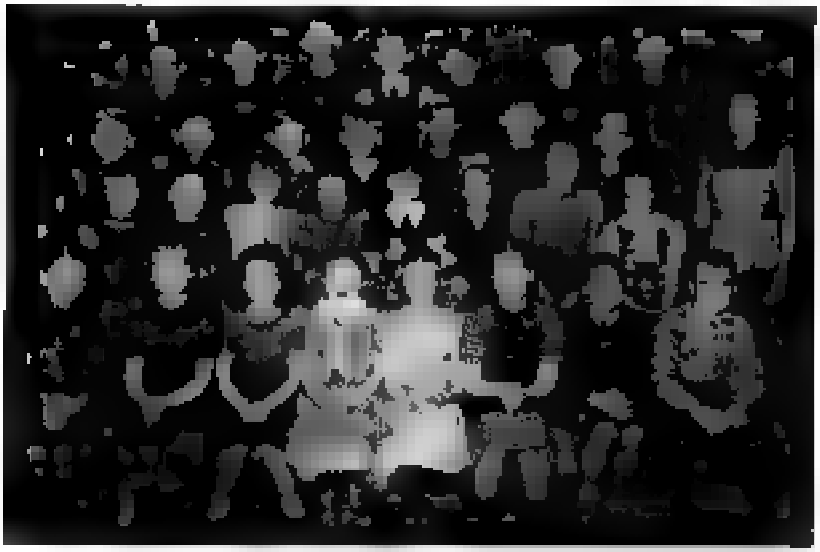
Front: Arnold Hiemstra, Art Reitsma, Bert Leder, Martin Wieringa, Gerrit Lievers, Jennie Terpsma, ?, Alice Mast.



Back: Dan Johnman, Jim Nanninga, George R. Visser, Simon Tiemstra, Jack Olthuis, Julius Boorsma

Middle: Bertha Strydhorst, Lydia Dotziet, Alice Strydhorst, Jean Fisher, Ada Dieleman

Front: Minnie Krikke, Lula Krikke, Reta Tuininga, Judy Fisher, Shirley Ashley, 1954-55



Grades Three and Four

Back: Evert Hessels, John Strydhorst, Gilbert Baker, Andrew Elgersma, George Strydhorst, Sam Dotziet, Ernest Tiemstra

Third Row: Calvin Visser, Henry Kippers, Alvin Nanninga, Tony Fisher, Gilles Plantinga, John Baker, Ken Piers, Ruth Schoenrock (teacher)

Second Row: Joanne Gelderman, Betty Fisher, Ella Plantinga, Patsy Boorsma, Marilyn Mast, Hattie Rowaan, Johanna Peters, Winnifred Ingwersen

Front: Clifford Tuininga, Dorothy Baker, Anne Tuininga, Grace Mae Fowler, Tena Kippers, Sandra Elgersma, Arnie Krikke, Adrian Harmoen, 1950-51

The Teachers' Strike of October 1, 1971

The collective agreement between the teachers and the boards of the North Central Alberta School Authorities Association (NCASAA) had expired August 31, 1970, and one year later no settlement had been reached. The various stages of the bargaining process produced no positive results, and a strike date was set for Friday, October 1, 1971. The Neerlandia school was included in this bargaining unit but five of the eight teachers believed that a strike was unwarranted, that it was detrimental to the well-being of the students in the school, and that a settlement should be sought through binding arbitration. The withholding of services should be considered only in extreme circumstances, not simply to gain a few economic benefits.

The board of the Neerlandia Christian School Society, in consultation with the school staff, discussed ways of keeping the Neerlandia school operating during the proposed strike period. In order for this to occur, the County of Barrhead school committee would have to grant permission for the school to operate.

A delegation of parents met with the county board in early October 1971 requesting that the Neerlandia school be kept open and that it would be operated with five of the eight teachers along with one substitute. At a special meeting on October 8, the County School Committee gave authorization for the Neerlandia school to open its doors on Tuesday, October 12.

The teachers who chose to teach during the strike were well aware of the possible consequences. An Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) delegation consisting of Richard Staples from Westlock and ATA district representative Dr. Miller met with the five Neerlandia teachers. Considerable pressure was put on them to not teach the following morning. The teachers were warned that charges of unprofessional conduct would be laid against them and they would be termed as "scabs," which the ATA delegation considered to be detrimental to the well-being of the students in the Neerlandia school. The teachers, however, stuck to their position.

On Friday, October 15, Joe Bertrand, Coordinator of Teacher Welfare for the ATA, met with the six teachers (including the substitute) and indicated that he was investigating the alleged strike-breaking activity of the teachers and would be reporting to the ATA Discipline Committee. In accordance with Joe Bertrand's recommendation, the Provincial Executive Council directed that a hearing of the Discipline Committee be held.

The formal charges of unprofessional conduct were received by the six teachers by double-registered mail and read as follows: "It is alleged that you have been guilty of unprofessional conduct in that you taught school . . . despite the fact that the bargaining unit of which you were then a member was conducting a legal strike." The teachers were requested to appear before the ATA Discipline Committee December 4, 1971.

In the meantime, the teachers and the local Christian School Board had engaged the services of lawyer Ben Vandenbrink.

The discipline hearing began on the morning of December 4 at the ATA headquarters in Edmonton. Several ATA witnesses testified that the teachers had indeed been teaching during the strike

The cross examination by lawyer VandenBrink proved interesting in that all the witnesses had difficulty in relating how teaching during a strike was in fact unprofessional conduct. Mr. VandenBrink eventually introduced as evidence a clause contained in the memorandum of agreement, signed by board and teacher representatives on October 22, 1971, ending the strike, which stated that "no punitive action would be taken by either party against any person for conduct or statements made during the strike." The hearing was adjourned for lunch at this point.

Immediately after the hearing reconvened in the afternoon, the ATA lawyer, Donald Bover, stated that in view of the clause contained in the memorandum of agreement the ATA was withdrawing the charges of unprofessional conduct, and the hearing was adjourned. The ATA had unwittingly contracted itself out of the right to discipline. Although the teachers were happy that the charges of unprofessional conduct were dropped, they did believe that there would have been advantages to having a decision rendered on whether the ATA's disciplinary powers did in fact extend to its trade union activities. Later a brief was prepared by the teachers and presented to the Alberta government requesting extensive revisions to the Teaching Profession Act to prevent a recurrence of the events surrounding the strike of October 1971. No action was forthcoming.

The teachers received moral and financial support from the community. All legal expenses were paid by the Neerlandia community under the auspices of the Christian School Society.

COVENANT CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL

On January 7, 1972, the Canadian Reformed Church began operating a Saturday school. Under the guidance of Rev. C. Van Dam, the minister at that time, a Saturday School Society had been set up. For three hours every Saturday morning the students were taught Bible study, church history, and catechism, but the parents thought this was not enough, the children should be taught according to God's Word in all subjects, science as well as social studies, Bible study as well as world history, and they believed this was not being done in the public school.

On March 4, 1975, the Rev. M. C. Werkman was requested by the consistory of Neerlandia to speak on the topic "Why Reformed Education?" At that time a school society was set up and given the mandate to look into ways and means of opening a day school. A board consisting of Case Hamoen, Lies Hamoen, Wilfred Holwerda, Pete Werkman, and Bert Wierenga was elected.

The Society was incorporated on April 30, 1975, and was registered as a Charitable Organization on May 1, 1975. In April 1975 a building committee was appointed to look into the acquisition of land and cost of a building. In June 1976 an education committee was appointed and met with some teachers who were on holidays in the area to find out more about educational matters.

Meanwhile, the Building Committee was looking for building sites, but due to government policy on prime agricultural land the first application was turned down, as was the appeal to that decision. The Board then approached Norman Terpsma for a piece of property on the N.W. [illegible] and an application was sent to have this property subdivided.

Building had already begun. The framework of the school was being built in the shop on the Case Hamoen farm. Even Eike Wierenga, with his wooden leg and all, came out to nail frames and rafters together — he could stay in one spot for that. At the annual meeting in January 1977, a group of young men were appointed to repair and varnish the secondhand desks which had been purchased. This was done in a barn on the Adrian Hamoen place and due to Fred Breukelman's wise contributions (either in Dutch, English, or Afrikaans), there was never a dull moment.

On June 1, 1977 word was received that the subdivision of the property was approved. Work on the property started the next day. Old buildings had to be removed and brush cleared away. After eight days of work the foundation and walls were erected and the roof was on in another four days. Every day ten to thirteen volunteers came to work from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The building consisted of three classrooms, a library, staff room, supply room, principal's office, and washrooms. A secondhand school bus was also bought.

In March 1977 the board appointed two teachers, J. J. Hoekstra to be principal and teach grades five to nine, and A. Janssen to teach grades one to four. By September 1 almost everything was ready. There was only one problem — no doors. They were on the way somewhere between Vancouver and Edmonton. After waiting a few days (the original starting date had been set for September 6) makeshift outside doors were constructed and school opened on September 12. The lack of inside doors did not dampen the enthusiasm of teachers or students.

Thirty six students registered that first day. They came from Neerlandia, Barrhead, and Linaria. Letters of authority were received for the teachers from J. Koziak, Minister of Education, early in October. Thus the school was officially recognized as a category one school. The official opening of the school was held November 18, 1977. It was an evening filled with songs and praise to God who had made this event possible. Representatives of the Barrhead County Council and of the Canadian Reformed churches in Barrhead and Edmonton were present.

In 1978 the teachers of the school did not get letters of authority because they were not Alberta certified. The school was then put in category four. In 1978 grade ten had been added to the curriculum; grade eleven was added in 1979 and grade twelve in 1980.

By 1978 the school building was not big enough. A building fund was set up and the building committee received the mandate to look into the building of a gym, one classroom, and one science and multipurpose room. As with the original building, this addition was built by volunteer labour. It was completed early in 1980 after problems with the acoustics in the gym were resolved, and it became a much-used facility.

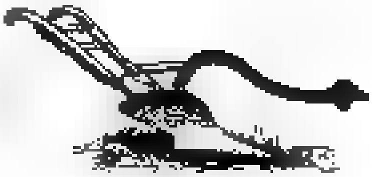
Typing classes were started in February 1979, taught by Lini Hamoen. A library committee was set up and does the work of a librarian. The school has offered a number of options, including

photo chemistry, Dutch, woodworking, and needlework. Some of these courses are taught by teachers, while others are taught by volunteers from the society. The janitorial and secretarial work is also done by volunteers. Two buses driven by volunteer drivers are on the road each school day.

The school is funded entirely by the members of the school society and donators. Every year the school board, when preparing the budget, sets up the fees which are required to run the school. These fees are in three categories: families with children attending school, families with children not attending school: pensioners and singles. Fund-raising activities by groups in the society are for items that are not budgeted for, such as audio-visual, science, and sports equipment.

Peter Van Assen and Sharon Vierser were the first grade twelve graduates of the school, graduating in June 1982.

Lies Hamoen

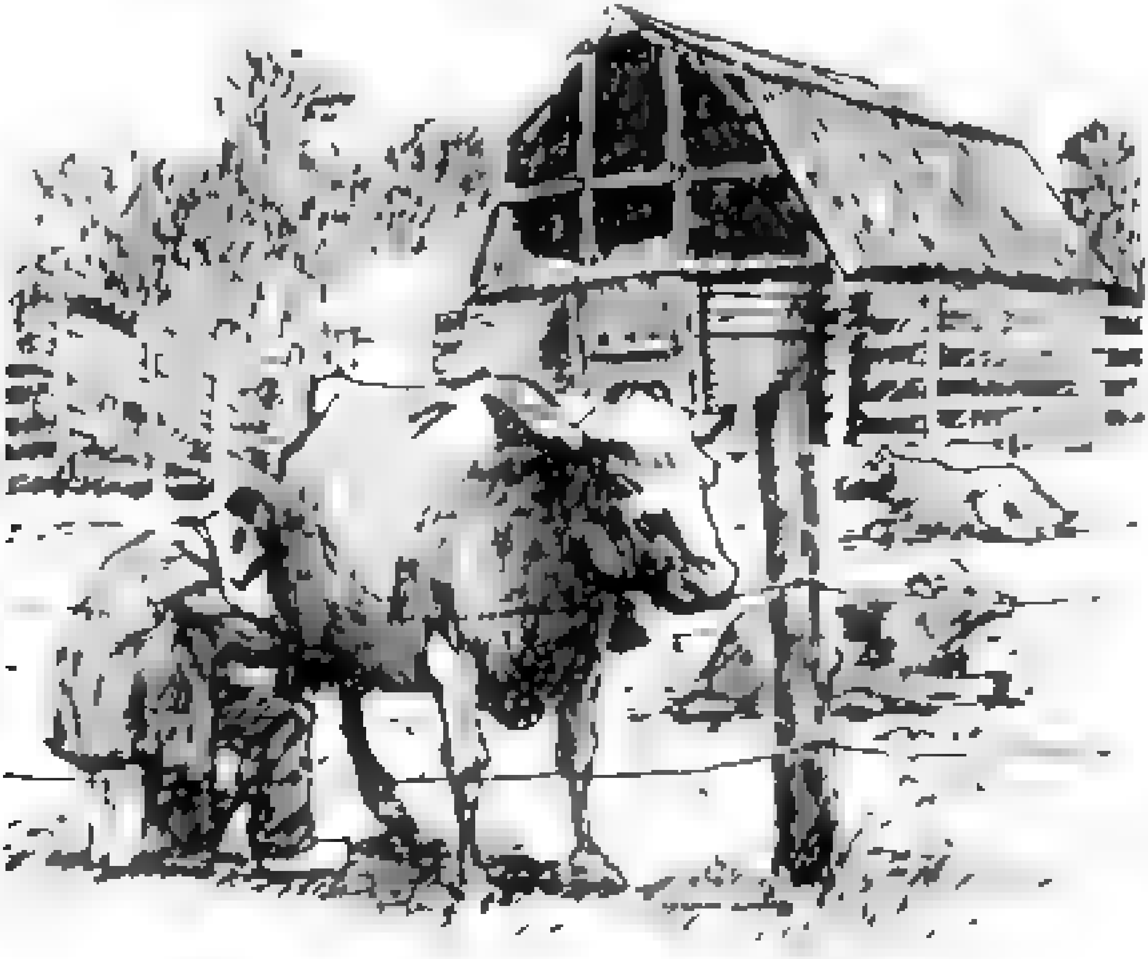


Back: Rita Speers, Elsie Ashley. Middle: Harold Ashley, Tena Koning. Front: Bert Leder, Ken Ashley, Betty Koning, c. 1936

Unknown to his mother, Ted Reitsma invited some friends to come home with him after school to celebrate his birthday: Henry Tuininga, Arthur Reitsma, Sylvia Tuininga, Grace P. Tuininga, Ted, Joyce, and Bill Reitsma, Henry Hiemstra, 1947

Marilyn Mast, Doreen Vance, Dorothy Baker. (Note C.K.'s oil shed and Rev. Van Der Woude's barn in background.)

From Forest to Furrow



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1915

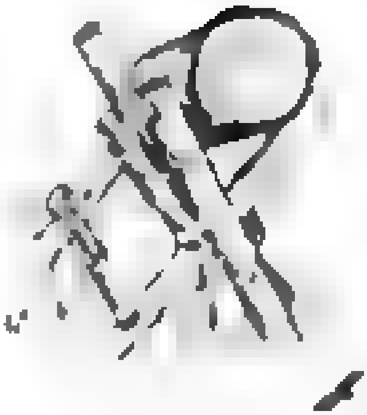
I awoke with a start this morning. The sun was coming through the small window in the bedroom and shining right in my face. I wondered what time it was. Did I sleep in? Looking at the place beside me, I noticed my wife, Jenna, was already up. Now that was a switch. I usually was the first one up and would put a fire in the stove and go out after the cows before Jenna made breakfast. Now I quickly got up and reached for my pants, which was usually by the side of my bed somewhere, but I couldn't find it. Just then Jenna came in with my pants in her hand.

"Here," she said, "I had to patch them again. Thought I'd do it before you put them on with holes in both knees." Ach ja. That pants was getting so thin, there's hardly room for another patch. Anyway, they did feel better with those holes covered. I tied them up with my favourite cord — I took that along from Holland. Farmers there all use them, they are simple to use and cheap. Here them use belts to hold their pants up, but why buy a belt when a cord will serve the purpose. By the time I got ready, my wife was busy making breakfast. I looked at the clock, already 6:30. Half an hour late, and that in the springtime. Jenna told me I'd better go out and get old Bessie tied up. By then breakfast would be ready and she'd have the children up. So I went out. The air was just like velvet. I took a deep breath and said, "Ah. A day like this is worth all the struggles of a cold winter." The crows were cawing, already fixing their nests in the big spruce trees behind the barn. Robins were singing their hearts out. All nature seems to be in harmony on such a beautiful spring day.

I went looking for old Bessie. I knew she wouldn't be too far from us because her calf was tied up in the barn and she liked to stay nearby. But where was she today? I asked, but no answer. Following the path to the bush I saw signs of the earth reawakening all around. Little sprigs of grass and flowers were poking through the ground. So that was it — Bessie was probably in the meadow looking for grass. Sure enough, as I came through the opening in the bush, there she was, with her head to the ground, pulling up the small blades of grass. Seeing me come, she made a soft mooing sound and was quite willing to be led home. I tied her up in the barn and went home for breakfast. The wife and kids were waiting for me, at least, I thought they were all there, but looking around the table I noticed one empty place. Sure enough, it was Jan again.

"He," my wife said, "I called him a dozen times, but he just sleeps on. He seems to need a lot of sleep." What nonsense, I thought, on a day like this who wants to sleep? But I had no time to waste today, it was already seven o'clock and I had a lot of work to do. So I told Jenna, "We better get started with breakfast and when he hears the rattling of dishes he'll soon be here. [illegible] he likes eating." After saying grace we had our wheat porridge. It was thick and coarse but tasted good with syrup and rich milk on it. There was also an egg for each and homemade bread. As I expected, halfway the meal who should come down but Jan. The girls started a chorus of: "Here comes the sleepyhead." He being the only boy, is constantly being teased by his sisters.

After things quieted down and breakfast was finished, I de-

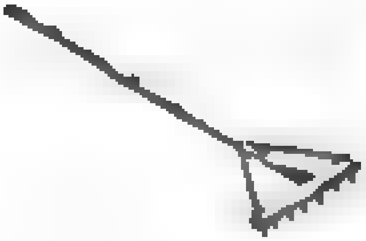


cided to get to work. There was plenty to do. First, there was the cow to milk — she just freshened a few weeks ago and gives a pailful of milk every day. I gave her some chopped grain and a good forkful of hay. While she was munching away, I got my stool and pail and soon the streams of milk hit the pail. Half of the milk I poured into a pail for the calf, which the children have named Blackie. She is a beautiful little heifer calf, black as night, just like her mother. She slurped the pail empty in no time, switching her little tail and bunting the pail at the same time. The rest of the milk I took home and, after straining it, lowered it with a rope down the well, where it could cool off.

When the cream has risen to the top, Jennie skims some of the thick cream off to be collected till there is enough for churning. That, of course, is women's work and my wife and our eldest daughter Betsy do that work. They also look after the chickens, of which we have a dozen. Since the days started lengthening, the chickens are laying but the eggs are not always easy to find. Some are laid in the manger of the barn, but some hens go further afield and make nests in the bush. Betsy is keeping a close watch on them. She picks some eggs up but leaves others for the hens to set on; she is looking forward to an increase in the chicken population.

After I let Bessie out of the barn, I went looking for Tom, the ox. He is a rather temperamental creature: some days he is a steady worker, then again, he can be so lazy that I need a good whip to get him started. I hoped he would be willing to work today, since I wanted to pull some stumps out of the small piece of clearing I had ready. Having caught up with him standing in the bush, I had a feeling this was not his day to work. He eyed me with half closed eyes as if to say, "Oh no, you're not going to make me work today." Using a little switch, I managed to get him moving.

After reaching the barn, I gave him some hay and put the harness on him. Taking a good thick rope along, I led him to the clearing. I tied the rope around a tree stump, hoping it would hold, and then tied the other end to the harness of the ox. While I was doing this, Tom was standing there with eyes half closed and I had a feeling this was going to be a bad day. Anyway, I gave him a flick with the lines but he hardly opened his eyes.



"So," I thought, "you're not going to cooperate with me. We'll see about that." Looking around, I found a good strong willow stick and gave him a good smack on the rump. He lifted his head and switched his tail.

"There," I thought, "he's at least partly awake. I'll give him a few more of those." That did it: he moved a few feet forward but, feeling the hard stump behind him, he stopped, and I could get no more out of him. Getting angrier and angrier, using the stick on his thick hide continually, I finally got him mad too, and as if awakened from a dream, he took off with a leap. The rope around the stump broke and, when he found out there was nothing to pull, he took off to the bush. I was left standing with a broken rope and a stump still stuck in the ground. Looking up at the sun, I noticed it was almost in the middle of the sky, so it had to be close to twelve o'clock. "Better go home for dinner," I thought. After finding old Tom and tying him to a tree. I left for home. Somehow I had no appreciation anymore for the beautiful spring day, and all on account of this miserable ox.

Dinner was as good as ready, so when I told Janna my troubles, she said, "We'd better have something to eat and talk about it then." We had potatoes fried in lard. They are good, but you have to eat them fast, or the fat will harden and then the potatoes are hard to swallow. There was also homemade brown bread and, for dessert, soup or pap. Janna makes this from fresh buttermilk boiled with flour and we eat it with a little syrup. It is delicious. During dinner we discussed what to do.

"First thing," I said, "We need a chain, so that when Tom decides to move he will at least have to take the stump with him." I knew one of our neighbours had a chain, so decided to go and see if I could borrow it. I had about half a mile to walk, and when I got there Gerrit was having problems of his own. One of his cows was in the process of calving and was having a very hard time. Having had some experience with these situations, I stayed and together we managed to deliver the cow of its calf. It had taken quite a while. Gerrit thanked me for my help and said he would come and help me with my stumps after he had straightened things out in the barn.

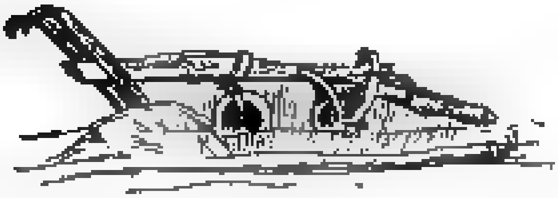
I sure hoped I could get those stumps out today. It was getting time to get the land ready to seed some oats. After arriving back at the clearing, I tied the chain around the stump, got the ox, and once again got the two tied together hoping I could get some action this time. Tom seemed a little more awake, so I gave him a few flicks with the lines, but there still was no movement.

"Well," I thought, "if he was going to continue to be stubborn, I'll fix you." Getting the stick, I really laid it on him, and finally he started to pull. But the stump was so solid in the ground it just wouldn't budge. Just then Gerrit came. His idea was to chop at the roots while the ox was pulling. He said, "You take the lines and get the ox pulling, and I'll chop at the roots." So together we went to work. Not having to watch the stump, I could concentrate on Tom. With a lot of encouragement, he put all his strength into the job. Hurrah! The first stump came out. When man and animal work together like that, it is a beautiful thing. After a few hours we had pulled out quite a few stumps. By this time we were both tired out, so decided to quit. Tom had even worked up some sweat and deserved a little petting. He closed his eyes, as if to say, "Just let me go to sleep again." Gerrit and I chatted for a little while, and we both decided oxen were really quite valuable animals. They have strength and, when they have a mind to, can sure get some heavy work done. I thanked Gerrit profusely, as without him I would probably still be working on the first stump. I asked him in for a cup of tea, but he said he had work to do at home. So he left and I took Tom home, took off his harness and let him go. Oxen can browse around for food; they like to eat the wild grass growing in the bush.

I was rather thirsty myself, so went to the house for a cup of tea. The kids were home from school; the girls were helping Janna with supper and Jan was getting wood for the stove. After tea I went looking for Bessie; she was in the meadow again but quite willing to go home. Coming into the barn she went straight for her calf.

Blackie, and nuzzled her. Having tied Bessie up, I though I'd better clean the barn. It wasn't too dirty as the only animals we have are Tom, Bessie, and her calf, but I like to keep things clean. After that I went home for supper. Janna had prepared a big dish of brown beans with some fried salt pork. With it we had the usual homemade bread and plenty of freshly churned butter. It was a hearty meal and satisfied even the most hungry eater which, of course, was Jan. We had our usual devotions, giving thanks for all the good things we had again received.

After supper Betje went out to milk the cow; she can do it as good as me. The other girls had to wash dishes. Jan went outside to play and get away from his teasing sisters. I told Janna to come outside with me and enjoy the beautiful evening. I got a few blocks to sit on, took out my favourite plug and together we talked about our life in Canada. She wasn't so sure it was all that good, but I said, "Wait a few years and you'll see fields of golden grain blowing in the breeze. I hope to have a few acres already this year."



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1920

It is early morning, the sun is shining, and we are awakened to the singing of the robins. We arise and get dressed. I still wear my winter underwear because even though it is May, the air is cool due to the snow still lying in the thick bush surrounding our home.

We awaken our family and get ready for breakfast. This morning we are eager for our breakfast as Martin brought us whole milk to put on our wheat porridge. Our milk cow died during the winter and my wife, Tena, cooked the porridge very thin, so we could do without milk.

Now that our family is up, we gather around our table and give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessings we have received. We are poverty stricken, but have all been kept alive; we have survived the harsh winter and we look forward to the beautiful season of May.

After our breakfast we read Psalm 107: "Give thanks to God for He is good, and his love endures forever."

Why are we so thankful? Because we have come through a winter that was the worst in history. When the snow fell on October 9 we were not too concerned. Harm Jan came over to our place, and he said, "Don't get so excited. Indian summer has to come yet. We have a whole month to dig potatoes and pick up our hay."

Next day it was still snowing, and we got our potatoes dug and hauled into our cellar. It was already very cold. Our oldest son shovelled mud against our house to bank it up so our potatoes would not freeze. Maybe Harm was right — Indian summer would come — but we were happy our potatoes were inside.

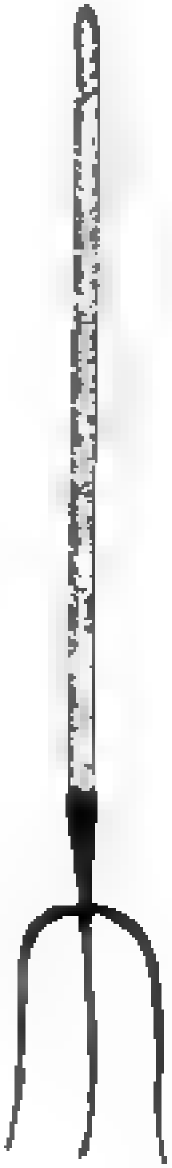
The next day a roaring blizzard came and the snow drifted into every open crack of the barn and even around the windows of our house. We were not ready for this and our house was cold. My oldest boy, Klaas, and I went to feed our animals and tried to shove manure and straw into the open cracks in the logs. We still thought this winter weather would be over in a few days, but we were wrong.

Next day the sun shone, but it was so very cold. Klaas and I drove down to see Harm. He also has a large family and now all his potatoes were frozen in the ground.

Harm, however, had raised five acres of oats that past summer, so he had feed for his horses and cattle. We only had grain from two acres and it was poor oats because it froze before it was ripe. Harm thought maybe we could trade some potatoes for some oats. We thought this a great idea and told him we would come the next day with the potatoes.

We had taken a loan from the government to buy cattle and were anxious to keep them well-fed because all the heifers were to calve in January and then we would have milk and cream to use and to ship.

Our plans for next day were stopped as a storm came again and temperatures dropped to twenty-five degrees below Fahrenheit. We waited out the storm and went to Harm's a few days later. The trails were plugged, but with great coaxing and much effort our horses got through. It was so cold. When we got there we noticed Harm did not have enough firewood left, so with his team and ours



we got a few loads for him. Poor Harm, who waited so faithfully an Indian summer which never came.

As I mentioned, we were not ready for this sudden onslaught of winter and in October, our eight children were already house-bound in our small log house. Our neighbour's dear wife, Anna, who often dropped in, could not come until a trail was made for the horses and sleigh.

We soon realized we would not have enough feed for the winter, and in January, we knew we were in trouble — our feed was as good as gone. Martin, who has been in Canada longer than we, said there was a man living about ten miles away who had straw we could get. We set off early one morning and, although the temperature was only one below zero, the deep snow made the going slow. Besides, my horses were hungry for, even though I had let them outside quite often, they were only filling up some dry grass in their stomachs. The ten mile trip took a lot of energy and took us a long time. However, when we got there we found more farmers waiting and each one of us got barely a sleigh box of straw. By the time we arrived home it was late. We were hungry, tired, and very concerned.

My wife was kept very busy keeping the house warm and cooking for the children. With all the kids pitching in, we ran short of many food items. Martin's wife, who has no children, brought a few things to eat. What an encouragement she caused for our eight house-bound children. She also told us that some people were eating rabbits but, since we had been city dwellers in the Netherlands, we had never killed rabbits and didn't know much about them. Harm came by one day and said all one had to do was snare them and they were delicious — much like chicken. We got wire to make snares and quite soon got our reward and got our rabbits in the oven. They were delicious!

How good providence for us. [illegible] said, little did we realize that the rabbits were going to keep many of us alive for that winter.

We ran out of flour and had to wait until someone went to the store. In the meantime we made do with our potatoes and rabbits.

I would walk outside and hear my poor cows bellowing and I did not know what to do. Martin came by and said some farmers were cutting twigs that were tender and feeding them to their cattle. He said he would come and together we would get some for ours and his. Two of our cattle had already died and more were too weak to stand.

Next day we set out and got a sleigh load of twigs, but the weaker cattle would not touch them. I melted snow in an old tub and carried warm water to the cows. They drank well, trying to fill their empty stomachs.

Our children got out of sorts; they wanted to play outside. But the snow was deep and it remained cold. My oldest son went with me and we cut some poplar trees and sawed them into different size blocks and, since I couldn't work outside, I made a little wagon and blocks for them to play with. It was good to see how happy they were with their new toys.

February came and the days were getting longer. We were told we could get some straw from a farmer's barn yard. We started off and found the trip very difficult because the horses were so weak.

We got some old black straw, which my starved cattle would not even look at. Three more cattle died that day.

As we were coming home we noticed a wind change. The wind turned to the west and was almost warm. Our hearts leaped in joy. The temperature was rising; would spring come as early as mid-winter day? Maybe this straw would keep our cows alive and maybe our milk cows would again produce.

Next morning the snow was melting and began dripping off the roof. What an excitement! The four oldest children ran out to play. Tena left reluctantly her busy task and even she was full of hope. The next day was still warmer. Harm dropped in. He was all smiles. He said, "What a country, winter in October and spring in February." This was only our second winter here, so I agreed that this was great. Harm helped us cut more frozen wood, and he took a sleigh load home. His cattle were starving too, but he did not have as many, so his feed lasted some longer. The fourth day was also warm, but on the fifth morning we woke up to a roaring blizzard. By night it was again very cold and by morning it was thirty below zero. A crust had formed on the melted snow and the horses' legs bled as they tried to get through the trails. We wrapped old sacks tightly around their legs to protect them.

During these mild days Martin had made a trip to the post office and store. He brought us some flour, tea, and sugar. There was also mail from our folks back in the Netherlands. These letters always make Tena cry, as they remind her that we will never see these relatives again. At times like this we are homesick for the old country and our people there. In March and April the weather varied from cold to warm and more cattle died at every farm.

My heart ached for our little eleven-year-old girl, who wanted so badly to go to school. I would see her sitting at the table hoping to get a little flour for bread. But even if she had bread for a school lunch, there was no way for her to get there because of the lack of footwear and warm clothing. I often got a feeling of despair but Tena said, "The Lord who brought us safely over the ocean will provide for us. As He has in the past, so He will continue to do." How thankful I am for my wife, who has such a deep-rooted faith.

Now finally May is here, but the ground remains cold and the grass is slow in coming. We do not have any chores to do as the few cows I have left are outside and living here. I do not have hogs or chickens. Klaas and I hope to get more land cleared and our garden ploughed.

The sadness of the harsh winter is past, our children can go back to school, and our little ones can run around outside. Tena can hang out the wash, giving more room in our little house.

After breakfast Klaas gets the axes sharpened and we start out to clear more land. We find we do not have the energy we need to work as we want to. The long winter had its effects on our strength. We are, however, busy at our work when Martin drives up. Martin needs some help; he has more land under cultivation and ploughing has to be done and grain has to be put through the fanning mill. We agree that Klaas will help and in return Martin will come with his horses after the spring planting to pull stumps and perhaps plough a small strip for me.

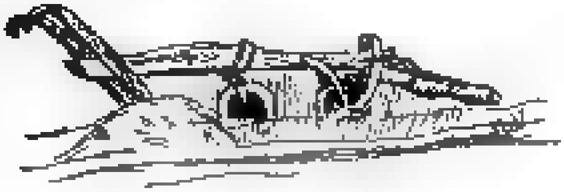
I continue to work until noon and am anxious to have my noon meal.

Our neighbour lady, Anna, came while I was in the bush, and brought a small variety of food. Her oldest son has come home from the lumber camp and had bought food before coming home. Martin also has brought more fresh milk. Truly we are feasting today.

The sun seems warmer after dinner and I head out to cut more trees. Our little ones are enjoying themselves and the older ones are helping Tena prepare a place for a garden. Martin has potatoes and peas and carrot seed for us to plant. We are excited about the coming summer. Our four older children can now go to school and are radiantly happy to be free to enjoy a normal life again.

We bought a cow which will have a calf in June, so we will have our own milk. We do not have to pay for the cow until harvest. Martin said we could buy a few hens from him, so after supper I will go with the family to get the hens as Tena and the children are eager to get out for a drive.

Surely, God has provided for us, and now we look forward with new hope to the coming year of 1920.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1930

Ah! What a glorious time of year. Even through this little bedroom window the smell of spring is reaching me. My heart fills with thankfulness and praise to our Heavenly Father for bringing us into this land.

Jumping out of bed — I must have overslept. It is already 5:30 a.m. I look out and notice a heavy mist has settled over the land. This will make it hard to find my cows.

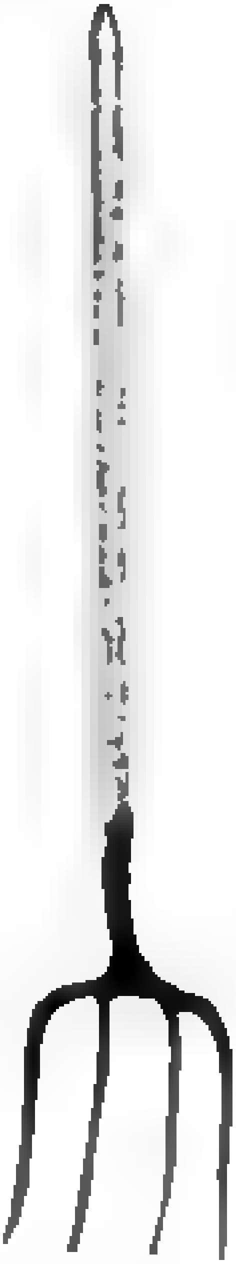
I put on my cotton shirt and bib overalls. How happy I am that this year we could afford to buy underwear. It sure beats what I had last year — made out of flour sacks. It was hard to get clean and not comfortable to wear. This way Mina has it easier and can help me outside doing chores. I put on my wool socks and get my low rubbers. Oh, how I envy Kaas — he has rubber boots up to the ankle. They are all laced tight so he does not get his rubbers full of water at the first step in the bush. Oh well, maybe next year I can get a pair too. I put on my grey checked cap. It's dirty and sweaty and looks more black than grey. I get my jacket — maybe I'll need it, maybe I won't — but it's misty and the bush will be wet.

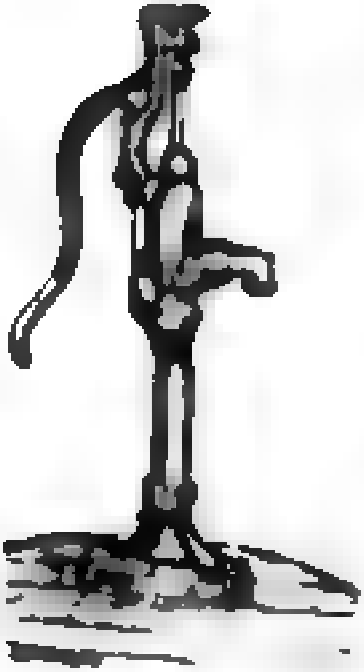
I start out to find my cows. I have them in a ten acre field of bush. I again envy Kaas, he keeps his in a corral at night and feeds them hay he has left from last year.

My, it is quiet for this early May. Not even a bird is singing. It is so misty they are quietly waiting for the sun to warm things up. I find the trail my cows use morning and night and start walking, but there is no cow in sight and no sound to be heard. I wonder where old Bessie is; she is always faithful in coming home at this time of day. I walk and walk and wonder if the fence is broken somewhere. I follow the fence to look at the places where it is most likely to be broken but everything seems fine. The mist is lifting now and the sun is shining; that means I should be busy [illegible] now and here I am without a cow in sight. Thoroughly frustrated, I walk back home. I hope Mina has the porridge ready as I am hungry and tired and wet from the wet grass and bush. I get close to home and what do I see but my three cows quietly chewing their cud in the barnyard. I feel foolish, why didn't I think of that before. I get the milk pails and tie up the cows by the fence. If I had grain to feed like Kaas does, they would come to the fence and let me tie them up easily. I tie up old Bessie's legs as she has a great habit of kicking the pail over. Kaas has a chain with clamps on, it is called an anti cow kicker.

The sun is getting hot already by the time I am done milking. I carry the milk to the house to put through the separator. We are fortunate we have a De Laval cream separator. It turns fairly easily so Mina can turn it while I eat breakfast.

The aroma of the rolled oats porridge is delicious. We often have crushed wheat porridge but this is a treat. Mina has boiled me an egg, since our chickens are starting to lay again after their long winter's rest. We only have ten chickens and they didn't do too well as I didn't have a warm place for them in the winter. Kaas said he made a small henhouse which he insulated with straw and his chickens were laying in March already. I have much to learn in this new land.





My breakfast was great — we [illegible] this year. The storekeeper said it is called "Black Strap" molasses. It is not as refined as some of them, but Mina puts it in our wheat bread and it is great. No doubt about it, we have [illegible] since last year.

Mina has the separating done and I bring [illegible] the skim milk to the calves and the little piglets, and whatever I have left I give to the cats.

My two horses, Maude and Prince, have been tied to the fence for the night. I now take them to the trough for a drink. I've noticed Maude has such sore shoulders, rubbed raw from the harness. How I wish I could get a sweat pad for her, but I can't get one this year. [illegible] can't afford it. Bruno is such a thoughtful friend; he gave me some Man and Beast Salve. It heals and soothes. This, though, is a nasty sore place and should have a good rest away from the rubbing of the harness but, since I have no choice, I rub it gently and harness up my two horses to my one-furrow plough. I [illegible] this morning. I tell Mina I will not be needing a coffee break as I would like to get at least two acres ploughed and ready for seeding.

Bruno has four horses and a two-furrow plough with a seat on it. But I still have to walk behind mine. Maybe in the future I can have that too. I feel sorry for [illegible]. He just came here and has only the two oxen that he paid five dollars apiece for. They are so slow but they are steady. [illegible] says he hopes to go working in a lumber camp this fall and maybe get some horses too. He says he is hoping to get a better house but that right now he is in a very poor [illegible].

The ploughing is going quite well and the first half acre is turned — beautiful dark soil in these [illegible]. I turn to see Mina coming. That means it is noon already. I unhitch my horses and give them another drink. I must unharness Maude because she is hurting again and this will give her a break.

Mina has a great dinner. She has found a patch of pigweeds and boiled them for dinner. She has fried a few potatoes and another egg. [illegible] are getting spoiled. We have a good [illegible] milk and then I again go to my ploughing.

We work along, everything going fine, until all of a sudden we [illegible] on a stump. [illegible] the horses to pull, but in doing so they break a doubletree. When I heard the crack I knew I was in trouble. I head for home. How fortunate that last winter I had made a few doubletrees out of [illegible] wood. It does not take long before I am back in the field. I am angry that I was so careless with that stump, so I take my axe and [illegible] chop all the roots away. That took much longer than I had thought. As I look up I see my dear wife coming with tea [illegible] around four o'clock [illegible] back already. I had so much wanted to get a few acres ploughed. We stop to have tea and also to remove the collar on Maude. She is so sore again and is wet with sweat.

After our little break we march along again and things are going great. Mina said she would get the cows for me so I can plough until six o'clock.

The furrows are a long [illegible] place nearly now and I still hope to get my two acres ploughed. But now my poor horses can go no farther; they have used up all their energy. They are wet with sweat again and I lead them to the trough, unharness them, and rub them

down with a brush. How I wish I could give them a generous helping of oats for all their hard work.

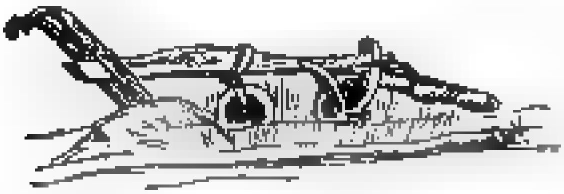
Mina has the cows home and supper all made. I quickly tie the cows to the rail fence to be sure they won't go away while we have supper. Mina says our supper will be pancakes again. I don't mind as I am hungry and now that we have a few eggs the pancakes are actually quite tasty. We also have stewed rhubarb from our own plants, so our supper is great.

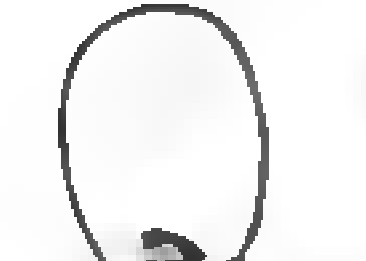
I first wash up, as I am sweaty and dusty. We had rain last week and I can wash in rainwater. We do have a well but the water is hard, so every bit of rainwater is used for our washing.

We relax after supper for about half an hour and then go out to milk the cows. Because of improper pasture and hay, the cows have not produced as they could — with summer coming this will improve. We are only getting a three-dollar weekly cream cheque and with summer coming it will be hard to get a good grade since we have to haul it five miles before it gets to the truck that will take it to town. However, it's a way to make a living and so I cheerfully head out to milk. Again I give the skim milk to the calves and piglets. Tonight I have only a pail-and-a-half so don't have enough for the sow. With skim milk and green grass the piglets should do quite well. Even though it's late I still go for water from the well to fill the trough for my animals so I can get an earlier start tomorrow morning.

Mina has her work done too, so we go for a walk along the bush, looking for small spruce — they are the best trees to make rails for a holding pen for the cattle. We enjoy our walk since there are still no mosquitoes or flies and the air is so warm.

The sun is setting now. It has been a busy day. We are tired, but as we approach our little home, our little log barn, and our contented animals, we feel rich and dream about the future, which looks hopeful to a young married couple in a new land.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1941

[illegible]

[illegible] world is as bright as it looks here today

However, such is not the case, and we hear reguarly about [illegible] better price for our products now than we have for a good many years

* * *

[illegible] happy to be able to wear any shoe at all

[illegible]

[illegible]

piglets were all squealing and the sow was in a frenzy, snorting angrily along the fence.

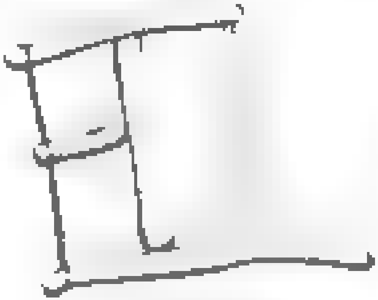
It's time to get moving or I'll be late for breakfast. "Hey! Whatever happened here? I heard about the cow that jumped over the moon, but I see you couldn't even clear a two-wire fence without tearing a teat half off. Hold it. Hold it. If you had jumped like this when you broke out of the pasture you wouldn't have a scratch."

Here we are, chores all done and I see Hendrika has breakfast on the table. Today it's rolled oats and wheat chop porridge, not the most delicious but it sure sticks to the ribs. I'm glad to have a little bit of cream to pour on this cereal — this way it tastes not too bad. I light up my pipe, but all I have left to smoke are these stalks I ground up Saturday. Good thing I'm going to the store today — these stalks crackle so and the smell is fearful.

I see it's already quarter to seven so I'd better get the horses harnessed and be going as I have quite a few stops to make on the way to Neerlandia. This cream and egg pick up is a bit unhandy in the spring, but with a growing family a little extra cash is appreciated. After all, Fisher pays me all fifteen cents for a five gallon can of cream, twenty five cents for an eight gallon can, and ten cents for each fifteen dozen crate of eggs. My run is a bit longer now than it was a few weeks ago because spring is here — grass is growing, chickens are laying again, and the cows are producing more too. All in all it's a worthwhile run now to Neerlandia. Last week I made almost seven dollars, and that's pretty good money — I have to go to the store for groceries once a week anyway.

Last week Jones Sturwold had a case of eggs and he told me his chickens were "laying like sixty." I asked him, "How many chickens do you have?" He replied, "Forty." I said, "Then they sure are doing good when forty chickens lay like sixty!"

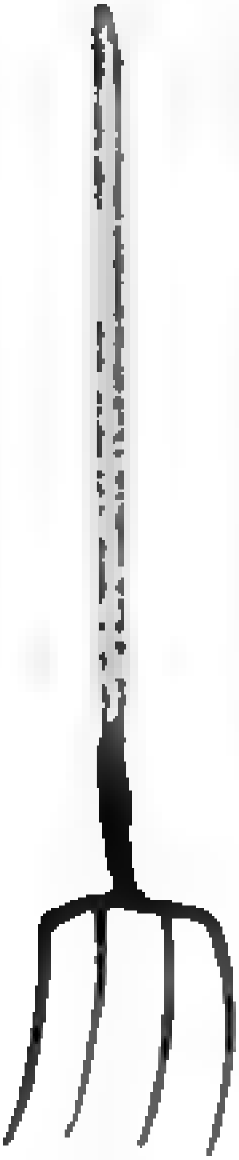
I arrive at the store at 8:15 a.m. and transfer the cream and eggs onto Dick Fisher's truck. I see John de Vries already has his wagon empty. John also has a cream haul but he is always earlier because he usually takes pigs along at the same time. He put a lid on his wagon box so he can take six to eight pigs in the box and the cream and eggs on top. John is here about seven o'clock because Art Fisher leaves for Edmonton with his load of hogs by 8 a.m. and with Art that means no later than 7:30 a.m.



Bucksaw

Before proceeding to pick up my groceries this morning, I bring two plowshares to Walter's Blacksmith Shop to have them sharpened. Sharpening costs fifty cents a share, which is cheap considering how much better a "pounded out" one plows than a new one does. Walter informs me that he can do my shares immediately, so they will be ready in about thirty minutes.

When I come into the store there are no customers ahead of me, so I hand my grocery list to the clerk behind the counter. While my order is being filled I stand around the wood stove with some other farmers who are engaged in a lively conversation about the latest happenings in the war. The discussions lately are always about the war: any more young men called up? anyone reported missing in action? We hear a lot about Hitler and his big plans and



many people are more than just a little concerned about the outcome of this one.

My groceries are ready now so before leaving I pay for them with the cream cheque. Now it's back to Walter's to pick up my plowshares which, though still quite hot, are ready to go. As usual, a beautiful job of sharpening.

I arrive home at ten o'clock this morning, have my coffee in the house before going to the field to do some plowing. Usually a few of the children bring me coffee in the field and then while I have my lunch the horses also have a short rest.

Plowing is not as hard work, especially now that I have a sulky plow — three wheels and a seat for the driver. My, how my feet used to hurt when I plowed all day with the walking plow which I still used last year. The amount I get plowed in a day remains the same for this plow is also sixteen inches wide. It takes a pretty good day to plow three acres, but it is much easier now. Most of the farmers in this area are using tractors now and, according to Albert, those little ones with the rubber tires are not very expensive either. Albert claims that he got his [illegible] tractor just in time because now they're quite scarce and, besides, the manufacturers are going back to steel wheels because the rubber is needed for the war. I often wonder what it will be like when this war is over. I'm afraid we don't have much to look forward to if Germany wins.

Seeing I didn't start plowing until 10 this morning, I'll keep going until after [illegible] o'clock before going in for dinner. Usually I start at seven a.m. and then go for dinner at twelve o'clock. That's one disadvantage with horses — if you want to work later in the afternoon you have to have your noon break a bit later as well, and I want to go until about seven o'clock tonight.

It must be nearly one o'clock for there's Hendrika waving me for dinner. I unhitch the horses from the plow, take them to the water trough and when they're done drinking give them some hay and oats which they can eat while I am eating. After dinner and a fifteen-minute nap it's back to the field.

Here we are back in the field at two o'clock and the bull flies are just about driving my horses crazy. It wasn't the mosquitoes, it's these bull flies and there is not much you can do about them either. At least with the mosquitoes you can build a smudge at the end of the field and allow the horses to stand in the smoke for a little while after every round if necessary. If these bull flies get any worse I'll have to quit for a few hours and then make up for lost time by working later tonight. That's one thing about a tractor — at least the mosquitoes and bull flies won't bother it, unless one of these days they get so bad they puncture a tire.

It must be about four o'clock now for I see the children are bringing me my tea and some sandwiches. We always have home-baked bread with butter and cheese Hendrika makes herself. After I finish my lunch I go back to plowing for a few hours and about six p.m. I unhook the horses from the plow and hitch them to the harrows. Every day before we quit for supper the plowing must be harrowed so that it doesn't dry out too badly before seeding. Harrowing goes much faster than plowing because now we cover a fifteen-foot wide strip instead of sixteen inches like with the plow.

However, I still have to walk behind my harrows, but then, that's only a few miles when you do some every day. It would sure be nice to have a harrow cart but a new one costs over twenty dollars so I'll just have to wait with buying a luxury item like that till I have more money.

I get home for supper at seven o'clock, but before eating I unharness and water my horses. After the horses are watered I turn them loose in the pasture. The first thing they do is roll on their backs in a nice dusty spot near the yard to clean the sweat and grime off their bodies. After spending some time rolling back and forth they give themselves a good shaking before they go out to graze.

We eat supper together as a family, and tonight we have potatoes with meat and gravy and also some brown beans which we grew in the garden last year. That's one thing about living on a farm, you don't have to buy many groceries if you grow a good-sized garden. For meat we always butcher an old cow in the early part of the winter and we bottle a good supply for the next summer. We put about half the meat in an old granary behind the house where it stays frozen until spring. Whatever we don't have eaten by the time the spring thaw comes is also bottled so that it doesn't spoil. I hear some of the more well-to-do farmers in Neerlandia now butcher either a steer or a heifer to eat, but I suppose for the next few years at least we'll butcher a cow. That old three-teater and the other old red one that has an occasional mastitis problem are not such good milkers so we will probably eat them in the next two years.

It's almost eight o'clock by the time we finish supper — at suppertime we do not rush, we always read the Bible and have time to discuss what we read — but with the long daylight we have now I decide to pick some roots on the breaking that I seeded last week. After the breaking is seeded it's a good idea to repick roots as there are always some sticking up and after drying out all summer they are rather hard on the binder knives.

I come back home at about 9:30 p.m., so I can relax and have a cup of coffee before going to bed at ten o'clock — it's 5:00 a.m. before you know it.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1950

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." It's 5 o'clock and time to get out of bed. This is Monday morning. There is a little chill outside but the company last night stayed late so an extra few winks of sleep feels good.

Lettie was out of bed before me ... a few minutes ago. She had to check the yeast for the bread dough. Last night she set a cake of yeast in some water to get it started. The kitchen was too warm overnight so the yeast rose too fast and ran over the counter. Lettie calmly cleaned it up and proceeds to light the wood stove again as there is no fire left in it from last night. As soon as the fire crackles in the stove she puts on a kettle of water to make some tea. She drinks her cup of tea before she begins making the bread. She'll mix the yeast with flour and other ingredients to make a batch of dough, let it rise, then add more flour and let that mixture rise again. It should be ready to bake by about teatime this afternoon. Lettie wants to have some water hauled to the house from the well so that it can warm up to wash clothes. The only running water we have is when we run with the pails of water we carry to the house and barn too. We do not have electricity as yet because it is not available here. Our old light plant does not want to run any more either so we will just make do with what we have.

It is now 6:15 a.m. I will go out to do some chores before breakfast. Lettie has her tea first but I will settle for a chew of Copenhagen. First that pump engine must be started to pump water. I am happy to have a gas motor to use on the pump. This is easier than pumping water by hand. It really does feel good to be alive this early in the morning as the sun is shining and the birds are singing all around. Even the crows sound all right this morning with their caw-caws.

The cows are not by the barn yet so they must be out in the pasture somewhere, maybe in the bush with ... First the pigs should be fed. We have some fatteners in the barn so I will give them some barley chop and water. Later they can have some skim milk. I'll feed the chickens in the barn right away too. They are laying a lot of eggs and it does pay to feed them on time every day. We had a good enterprise going for a number of years as we were in R.O.P. It was a good business for a few years but last fall we had pullorum in the flock of chickens. The government inspectors re-tested two times and we still had pullorum so we cannot ship any hatching eggs from this flock. Now we take the eggs to Ken ...'s grading station in Flatbush but he pays a lot less money for the eggs. We have a difficult time to make the payments with so much less income.

My thoughts had better go back to my work again. We still have some sows and a boar in the pig pasture so I carry some oats chop and water for them. Here they come running to meet me. They sleep in the straw stack which is just as warm as any barn. In the cold weather in wintertime we feed them later in the day and only once a day so that the feed and water will not freeze up in the trough. I see the two litters of young ones that were born in the straw stack away back in the tunnels the pigs made. We didn't see them till last week. I'm pleased that even the small ones were healthy looking pigs too.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Each of us sits on a stool made from a block of wood with a [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] before and after the meal and read a portion of Scripture after the meal.

[illegible] right.

[illegible]

on the Oliver tractor to get it ready for field work. That old tractor is not always to be trusted either. It tends to backfire when you crank it over with the hand crank to get it going. Someone will for sure break an arm doing it some day. John says the gas tank on the tractor is only half full so I will have to go to Barrhead to get a forty-five gallon barrel filled with gas — that should keep the tractor going for a week or so. I have to go to Barrhead for other business anyway and I'll pick up the egg cheque to pay for the gas. John can start discing anyway. I want to get that twenty-acre field ready because we should seed the wheat in it. It is 2-22 wheat and should grow good on that summer fallow. We need some wheat to feed the chickens next winter. That field is on the other quarter of land we own out east — seven miles from home. It sure is a long drive every time with that old tractor but if it stays dry it won't be too bad. There are two bad mud holes on that road — one close by here at Norman [illegible]. The bush is so heavy on the sides of the road that when it gets wet it seems to take forever to dry. Maybe someday the municipality will clear the bush and give us a good road too. I am sick of those mud holes.

With the tractor and disc gone I make sure the egg boxes are filled, load them on the one-ton Fargo, and set out for the trip to Barrhead. The road to Barrhead is pretty good — at least it has gravel on it. I have to be home by eleven o'clock to gather chicken eggs. If they are left in the nests too long the chickens will break them and eat some. If I hurry then the old Oliver tractor will not have to wait for gas either. That seed wheat really should be seeded yet today. Talking to some neighbours, it seems like most of the wheat has been seeded already, but then a lot are good farmers and have better equipment to work with. You know — some are even talking about combines. They say it will be so much easier as all you have to do is sit on the tractor all day. You will not have to stook or pitch bundles into the threshing machine anymore. That does not look good to me as that grain would for sure lying on the ground at least if it rains, and it always seems to rain sometime in the fall. As long as the grain is in bundles it will stay good until it is dry and can be threshed. Those straw piles too are real good to have for the pigs and cows. The pigs can sleep in the straw stack all winter and the cows sure like to eat from the pile. No, we better keep the binder and threshing machine yet. It does mean more work but then work never killed anyone.

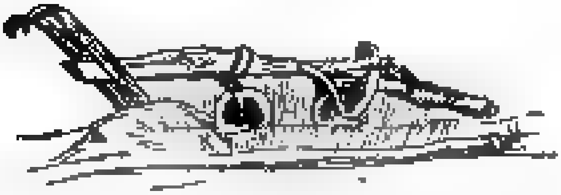
Well I made good time on that trip. Maybe I should go to the east quarter now. Uh-oh — the missus is hollering. She needs some help to get the gas motor running again on that clothes washer. She is not too happy either as she says it is nearly dinnertime and she does not have any clothes on the line yet. She says, "What will women like Sophie or Bertha or Tennie think? Those Wierenga women seem to start at 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning and have clothes on the line already at 6:30 a.m." We have to start that machine again — probably has a dirty spark plug or is out of gas. While I struggle with the motor, Gertie makes dinner. We take a few lids off the cook stove so she can put some pans on to warm up some soup and rice. We have some old bread to eat with soup for dinner. A cup of cold milk from the pail in the hole by the well sure is good and the rice [illegible] Fargo and go east to see how things are going

[illegible]

every summer we pick strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons and blueberries to can in one quart bottles. These berries all grow wild and have a special good flavour to them.

With supper completed we get the cows from the pasture. It is milking time again. The cows have to be milked twice a day and it is better to space the time between milkings equal to get the most milk from the cows. After milking we give them some sweet clover bundles because there is not much grass growing in the pasture yet. The milk is put through the cream separator and the squealing pigs get some more skim milk along with barley chop. We grow mostly barley as do most farmers in Neerlandia. The fields have too much wild oats in them so Oli barley as well as some other early varieties are grown too, in hopes that it will be ripe before the wild oats are. We have no way of controlling wild oats other than summer fallow to grow them out. The wheat and oats are grown on the cleaner fields such as new breaking or summer fallow.

With the chores done, we relax and have a cup of tea before going to bed for the night. It has been another busy day so the bed will feel good.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1984

At six o'clock Tuesday morning John wakes to the shrill ringing of his alarm clock. He quickly shuts the clock off so Anne can stay sleeping. He dresses into patched blue jeans and shirt and, looking out of the window, hopes it will be a beautiful spring day. There is lots of work planned for today. Chores first. John puts on a G.W.G. coverall and steps into a pair of size 9 acid resistant black boots and heads for the barn.

Before reaching the barn John gives one holler for the cow who soon is in the barn ready to be milked by hand while she munches on her ground barley chop. She is the only cow on the farm.

The electric mill is now started to grind the daily feed for the feeder hogs. The electric mill is a four-compartment Farmmatic. It has a five horsepower electric motor which grinds the barley that is then mixed with soya and minerals to get a 16 to 16.5 percent protein diet for the feeder hogs. The feed gets tested regularly — yesterday a sample came back testing 16.4 percent protein. The ground barley is augered into cement self feeders which John purchased at a local dealer.

Inside, the hogs are in confined pens with a slatted floor on one end where the hog manure can fall through into a holding pit below. The barn is vented by fans which drive the air from one side of the barn and force it out on the other side. Someday John hopes to have a naturally vented barn which has no need of electric fans.

John now steps into his farrowing barn where his dry sows are also kept. With the push of three levers he feeds his seventy-five dry sows, thus stopping their squealing. While waiting for the pails of chop to fill he scrapes the manure from behind his dry sows. They are also standing on slatted floors. When the pails are filled John feeds the nursing sows with a 1[illegible] percent ration which he grinds with a ninety horsepower tractor on a mixer mill. The ration is made from barley, soya, and pre-mix which has selenium added because this is a deficient area. This reminds John that he has to phone another salesman who is trying to sell a new premix, claiming it will change the herd's whole production performance.

As John enters the farrowing room he sees that three sows have farrowed during the night, so he goes to the boiler room and gets the side cutter, selenium, and disinfectant. He cuts the little pigs' teeth and gives each .25 cc of selenium. In two days the piglets will receive 2 cc of injectable iron, have their tails cut off, and be castrated. In a week they will get a second shot of iron and 2 cc of B.B.P., a vaccine for atrophic rhinitis. To give the little pigs extra heat John plugs in a heat lamp hanging from the ceiling. The piglets are easy to catch because they are in a farrowing crate which has a confined area of forty square feet. The sows are standing on plastic slats which clean easily and are quite strong. When John cleans the farrowing rooms, he washes with a Hotsy pressure washer, using eighty-degree Fahrenheit water.

Now the weaner room takes John's attention. He flips the switch which puts power to the one-quarter horsepower motor mounted on a three-and-a-half inch auger. The auger comes from a hopper bin holding bulk pig starter. This pig starter, delivered from the local feed mill, has eighteen percent protein.

John glances at his digital watch. It's 7:15 a.m. Time for breakfast. The family is up and everyone is gathered around the table. John leads in prayer asking God's grace for the coming day. Breakfast is homemade porridge, brown bread, and an orange. The talk today centers around the track meet which will be held in Fort Assiniboine. After reading the morning devotions, each reading a few verses, the youngest girl finishes the devotions with a word of prayer and everyone goes on their way.

John is planning to seed the back quarter so Anne will bring dinner there. He prepares his Versatile which is standing by the five hundred gallon fuel tank. It's ready to go because it was fueled up last night when it was sitting beside the engine [illegible]. The Versatile is a [illegible] horsepower, four wheel drive tractor with air conditioning, heater, AM/FM radio, and tape deck. John hooks onto the [illegible] foot Morris Vibrashank and notices a leaking hydraulic hose. In his garage he finds a wrench and tries to tighten it. He [illegible] sees that it has a tiny pinhole leak so he removes it and [illegible] his [illegible] Ford half ton, heading for the [illegible]. There are several people ahead of him so it will be ready at [illegible] a.m., no earlier. Henk will give Anne a call when it's ready.

At home John starts working the garden so Anne can plant some early potatoes with the kids when they return from school. John uses a [illegible] Kubota with a rototiller that is used to work the land. The unit has six grease fittings which need a multipurpose grease. The Kubota has a diesel engine with a pre-heater which must be held on for twenty to thirty seconds to heat the firing chamber so the engine will start. After the garden is worked, John [illegible] with a cup of coffee and freshly baked cinnamon [illegible]. Henk calls: the hose is ready. The rest of the coffee is gulped down and the line is soon replaced.

The tractor is started with the flip of a switch and it's off to the field. John brought along a cassette tape along so he can listen to the [illegible] and [illegible] show this morning. The weather is favourable for [illegible] so John hopes to get as much done today as possible. He is working on a [illegible] acre piece which will take five hours to complete. John's brother calls over the two-way radio to tell John that he will be coming for the Versatile at about [illegible] p.m. so John must push it. He is cultivating the land about three and a half inches deep, incorporating the Avadex on the way. Avadex, a wild oat herbicide, was put on earlier with the granular Avadex applicator rented from the Neerlandia Co-op.

Anne comes to the field with lunch and afternoon tea. She stops to eat a quick lunch with John and asks [illegible] from Edmonton on the bus so she'll go to Barrhead. Is anything needed? No. He kisses her goodbye and continues with his vibrashanking. At [illegible] p.m. [illegible] is on the radio and the topic for today is "How does smoking affect your mental and physical health?"

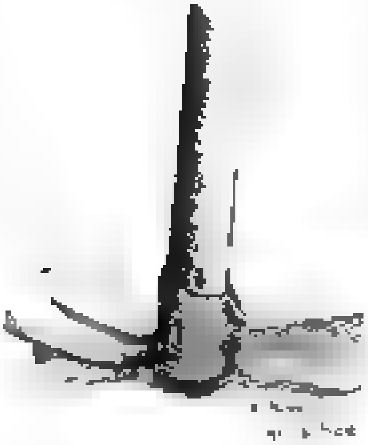
At [illegible] p.m. the [illegible] acres are done and John's brother is there to trade the seed drill and tractor for the Vibrashank and Versatile. Now John goes to the Neerlandia Co-op [illegible] to pick up some granular [illegible] fertilizer which is loaded in the [illegible] box on his truck. The fertilizer will be applied at sixty pounds per acre.

one week ago anhydrous ammonia was applied at the rate of eighty pounds of actual Nitrogen per acre. Next the seed grain is augered into the truck. In the field the fertilizer and seed grain is put into the drill with hydraulically-run drill fills. John is seeding Leduc barley at one and one-half bushels per acre with a twenty-four-foot double-disc press drill pulled at 6.5 mph with a 140 horsepower tractor. Seeding started at 5:00 p.m.

Supper is brought out to the field at 6:30 p.m. The whole family, even Oma, enjoys "eating out". After the lawn chairs are set out and grace is said, they eat a supper of lasagne, salad and buns, and yogurt for dessert. John is happy that the chores were done and that their oldest daughter (who picked the shortest straw) has milked the cow. The kids were still excited that Neerlandia won a trophy at the track meet. Before the supper dishes are packed up and everyone is back in the car, John is already busy seeding.

At 11:00 p.m. the piece is seeded and John is very tired and looking forward to bed. A quick bath is taken and the day is ended with a prayer of thanks and also a promise to Anne that tomorrow will not be as long.

Hans Ingwersen, Herman Gelderman, Gerrit Ingwersen, Albert Tiemstra, John Ingwersen, Pete Emmerzaal, Dewey Terpsma, Norman Jansen.



AGRICULTURE

1912-1919

The pioneers who arrived in Neerlandia in the second decade of the twentieth century hoped to make a better life for themselves and their children. They were willing to forego material comforts to be their own boss and to provide for their children a more satisfying life than they themselves had experienced thus far. It mattered not that it would be a struggle — they believed it would be worth it and so they set about farming.

Farming in the wilderness was a difficult task. The first concern was to find grass and water. In the summer water was easily obtained, especially on the edge of the sloughs. A hole would be dug and it would soon fill with water. The homesteaders preferred land that had a large slough or open area where grass could be cut and where the oxen could graze. One of the first things they did was build a barn for their cattle. Another important task was the clearing of a small area of land on which to grow a garden. Axes and oxen were used to remove the trees and the ground was spaded with a grub hoe. When the soil was ready, the women and children planted the garden. To protect the gardens from rabbits and cattle, fences were made of many saplings set upright, and as close together as possible.

* * *

Muskeg Holes

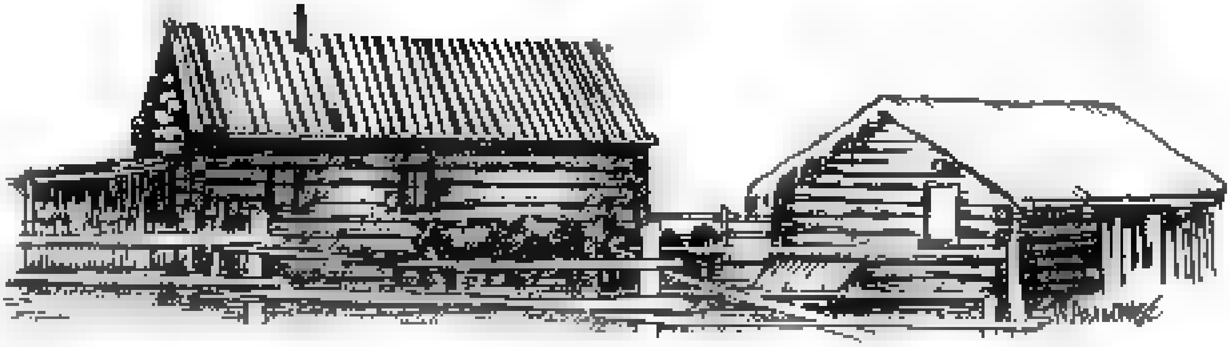
Muskeg holes were used during the winter. To make a muskeg hole the farmer would dig a hole in the peatmoss in the fall. The holes had to be fixed up before winter. First poles were put across the top of the hole, then moss was put on top so it would not freeze. Then it was fenced off so the cattle could not trample the hole. After water had been taken out of the hole, some would gradually seep in again — some holes filled a lot faster than others. Sometimes the holes caved in and sometimes they went dry. The holes were also used if it got too dry in the summer.

When I was at home it was my job to take the cattle to the muskeg holes. For a trough we used a wooden vinegar barrel that had been cut in half. I carried the half barrel over my head while holding a pail in the crutch of my arm. I would take a rope along too. Our muskeg holes were about one-half mile away from our yard. When I got there, I would put the barrel outside the fence, haul up the water using the rope and pail, and pour it into the barrel.

In the winter of 1929 all three muskeg holes we had there went dry. Gerrit Ingwersen told me to ask his dad if I could use their hole, which I did and which he allowed. Ingwersen's hole was fancier than ours. It was a square hole with a bale of straw over it. I used that muskeg hole all winter.

Norman Terpsma

* * *



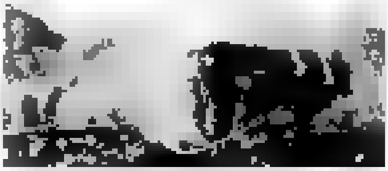
The Dutch settlers worked hard to provide feed for their animals. At the end of June they would help each other cut the grass which grew along creeks or near lakes. With a scythe they would attempt to maintain an easy rhythm so they would not tire easily. This was a skill that carpenters, army captains, and others had not acquired in the old country. No doubt they were glad to stop from time to time to sharpen the scythe with a whetstone.

Haying

In the summer, hay had to be made. There were meadows here and there along the creeks and lakes. One had to ask the government for permission and, for a small amount of money, you could harvest it. Mowing machines could not be used (neither did we own one) because there were many branches and so forth lying in the grass. I cut some hay with a scythe, like we used to do in Friesland, but here the ground was not smooth, it was rough and full of brush. On one patch we mowed the grass was up to a man's height. It took us a long time to put up a small stack of hay, but time was cheap in those days.

Martin van der Heide

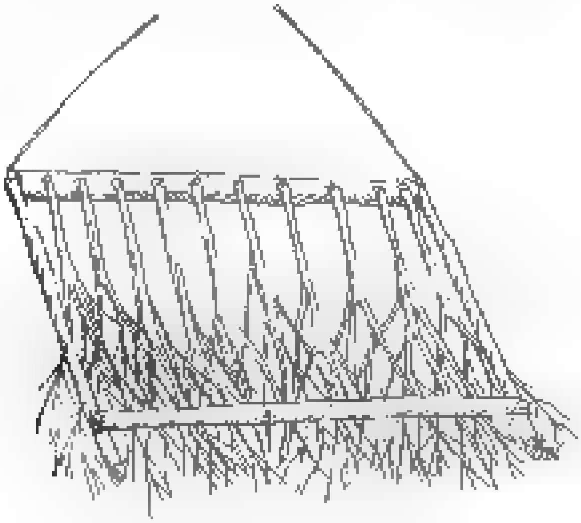
The main job, however, was to clear the land. Often the whole family would be involved in this back-breaking work and neighbours helped each other too. All the trees had to be cut down by axe. First brush and small trees were cut down at ground level and piled up to dry. Then the larger trees were chopped down — usually four or five feet above the ground. The roots at the base of the tree were cut, and then the stump was pulled out by oxen. A block and tackle was sometimes used for very large trees. If time was not important the homesteader would simply cut the roots on one side of large trees and wait for a strong wind to blow them down. These large trees were cut into smaller sections and pulled by oxen to the piles in preparation for burning.



Working with a breaking plow. Hendrik Schoonekamp.

After the piles of wood were burned, the stumps and roots that were still in the ground had to be pulled out. This was sometimes done with a root hook a C-shaped piece of iron that was hooked onto a stump and pulled by oxen. Finally the land was ready for breaking. Some of the first breaking was done with a walking plow pulled by two oxen. Once the land was plowed the remaining roots were picked, piled, and burned. Finally the land was harrowed in preparation for seeding.

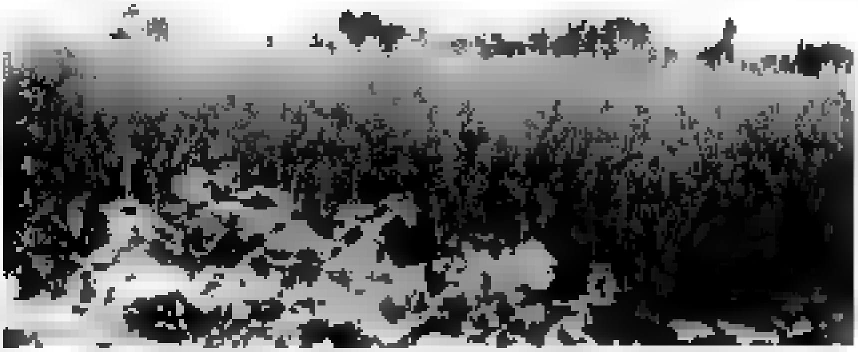
Since the homesteaders had little money or equipment they made harrows by attaching willow brush to a pole and dragging this over the land. Seed obtained from other established farmers to the south was broadcast by hand and worked into the ground using the harrow. Some very small parcels of land were ready for seeding by 1913. Oats was planted, since it provided feed for the oxen and could be used as green feed if a frost came before it was ripe. In the early years frost occurred almost every month, but once the land was opened up the frost-free period became longer.



Homemade willow-branch harrows. One man stood on the cross member to apply pressure to the springy brush. A horse or an ox pulled the contraption across the field.

Since clearing was difficult work most pioneers cleared the lightly-wooded areas first and left the heavy bush till the last. The result was a network of small cleared patches scattered throughout a quarter. The homesteader cut trails through the bush to get to his cleared patches and bring his grain home. The grain was cut with a scythe. Some scythes were fitted with a cradle that gathered the grain into bunches. Each bunch was then tied together with stalks of grain to form a bundle. When dry, the grain was threshed with a flail.

Oxen were the main source of power for the farming operation



A good crop of oats.

The ox was considered reliable but slow. Good oxen were powerful animals and, if a homesteader was patient, they would work well. During the hot weather when the flies were out, however, it was not unusual for the oxen to head for water and stay there, ignoring the rage of the owner.

* * *

Rienk's oxen

I borrowed Rienk's oxen once to haul some hay. As I was going along I met a neighbor. He said, "I thought that is Rienk's oxen team coming and it is really moving — how is that? The driver has no stick and is standing on the wagon, how is that possible? Oh now I see." I was standing with my one foot on the hay fork so that if the oxen were too slow they would come in contact with the tines of the fork and this was the reason they were travelling faster than ever before.

Ben Lievers

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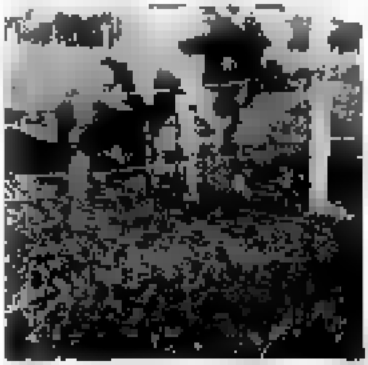


Cows were milked outdoors.

Progress was slow. Many of the pioneers were not farmers and even those who were found it difficult to provide for their families in the wilderness. Many of the men went out working — to the prairies for the harvest, to the logging camps, the coal mines, or to Edmonton during the winter months. While the men were away the women and children did the chores. They would feed and water the cattle. The animals were led or driven to a creek, slough, or lake and a hole would be chopped in the ice. Most homesteaders had a cow that needed milking and this also was part of the chores that had to be done.

When the men returned they often found that things had changed on the homestead. On at least one occasion a baby had died while the father was away. The women, especially, were homesick for their homes across the sea. But they did not go back. For some there was no choice but they trusted that God, with whose guidance they had made the decision to move, would care for them in the new land. The early settlers helped each other — though some were not very ambitious and others not very likeable — out of need and out of a sense of Christian community.

These settlers were resourceful people who produced their

Henry Kippers admires his purebred Ayrshire cow bought through the Cow Bill.

own food by growing many vegetables and keeping livestock for butter, meat, and eggs. They supplemented their diet with wild berries and game. Since many of the farmers had virtually no cash, they obtained supplies by trading farm produce for them.

Most of the cattle and horses roamed freely. At first settlers had to fence their crops to keep the animals out, but later the animals were fenced in. Barbed wire was used where long fences were needed.

The Government of Alberta enacted legislation to help the people flocking to the province and Neerlandia pioneers were helped thereby. On April 5, 1917, the Provincial Government of Alberta passed the Cow Bill or Cow Bell Bill which enabled homesteaders to borrow a maximum of five hundred dollars for the purpose of buying cattle or improving existing herds. Ten percent of the money could be used to purchase a purebred bull. The five-hundred dollar limit was set because the bill was intended to help the poor. The government hoped that if a man had livestock he would stay on the land all year round and build up his farm. The intention was to enable farmers to get money without borrowing from a banker. One government official said, "The farmer doesn't have to pawn his watch and mortgage his wife in order to get money."

To get his loan, five people had to form an association, making each person responsible for the others. Some Neerlandia farmers borrowed the money but because of their lack of experience with livestock, they made some bad purchases and found themselves owing five hundred dollars and having little to show for it. Some farmers had no idea how much feed a cow needed and did not put up enough hay. During the severe winter of 1919, the hay was soon gone and the animals began to suffer from "manger fever". Some of the pioneers helped each other to locate and haul hay for their starving herds. Others saw the opportunity to make money by selling their surplus, resulting in some bitterness. When spring finally arrived the animals were skin and bones. They went to the edges of the sloughs where the first green grass was growing. Because of their weakened condition, they were unable to pull themselves out of the mud and died. Some of the homesteaders lost most of their herds that year.

* * *

Is it a heifer or — ?

Another humorous tale circulated around the villages when a new settler took home the cattle he had purchased and called his wife to look at his "nice heifer". After looking it over, puzzled, she asked, "Well dear, if this is a heifer, how come she urinated from underneath?" Investigation confirmed he had bought a steer and not a heifer as he first believed.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *

The Cow Bill never became very popular and by March 1921 it was suspended. The outstanding loans were later forgiven and this became a source of hard feelings among farmers. Those who had worked hard, scrimped, and saved in order to pay back the loan did not appreciate the fact that other farmers were later forgiven their debt.

The government, though, continued its efforts to help the settlers and placed two purebred bulls at farms in the district. The homesteaders would bring their animals to be bred and, in this way, improve their own herds.

* * *

In connection with the government effort, the Neerlandia Agricultural Society was set up. The main function of this society was to hold a yearly fair where the homesteaders could enter displays of handicrafts, vegetables, grain, and livestock. These displays were set up in the log church. In 1918 Ben Lievers wrote Jacob Olthuis that ripe tomatoes were exhibited at the fair. Usually the Department of Agriculture showed a purebred bull and/or a team of good horses at this time to make the pioneers aware of the quality of animals available. The society was officially retired in 1937 due to lack of activity.

* * *

The provincial government also passed a bill to lend seed grain to the farmers. In addition, a district agriculturalist had an office in Westlock. During these years Neerlandia was part of an improvement district so few taxes had to be paid. The federal income tax act came into effect in 1919, but had little effect on the Neerlandia farmers because most did not have any taxable income.

Prize-winning cabbages for the fair — 21 and 22 pounds — raised by Jan and Bertha Kampman, 1918

* * *

Winter of 1919

Livestock suffered not only during that winter but also some years when the meagre supply of cattle feed was inadequate. If because of the cold and/or lack of food, cows were found laying down and unable to get up on their own, a crude tripod was placed over them with a makeshift block and tackle to hoist the animal into a standing position. Then the problem was to get the beast moving towards water or whatever food was available. Most often an animal could be encouraged to use its own strength by lifting its tail, slapping, and patting it, and generally prodding it to put forth greater effort, and thus getting it on the move again. This was vital for its very life.

Carrie Groot

* * *

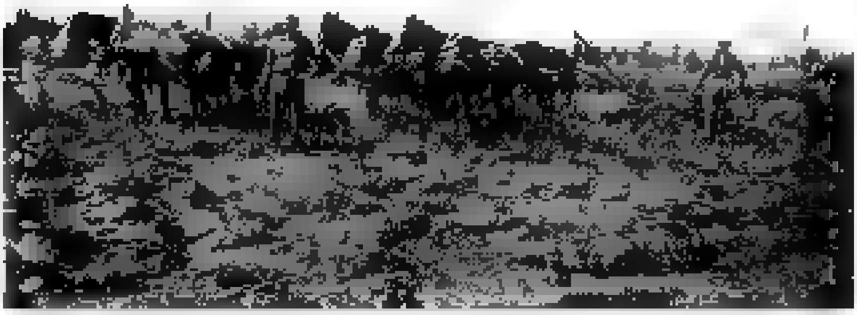
1920-1929

When the winter of 1919-1920 ended, many farmers, especially the recent arrivals, were in desperate straits. Others such as the Anemas, Nanningas, and Tiemstras had been better prepared for the winter. They had been in Neerlandia for a number of years and knew better how to manage the land and the animals. Secondly, they were farmers and knew enough to keep a few pigs to provide meat and fat. In spite of their difficulties they believed that there was a good future in Neerlandia. They entered the twenties with determination and hope and, little by little, things did improve.

Before 1920, a livestock dealer had already travelled around the area buying the pioneers' oxen. The pioneers bought horses to replace them and used them for farming and transportation. Even though some tractors made an appearance as early as 1925, most fieldwork was done by horses.

To operate a productive farm with horses meant working long hours, and careful treatment of the animals was essential. If a horse was treated well it would be able to do a lot of work. To have a well-matched, healthy team became the goal of every homesteader. These horses were not merely beasts of burden, but were considered almost part of the family.

The horse was faster than the ox. When eight horses were connected to a breaking plow, three to four acres could be broken in one day. The plows had a steel beam, but farmers soon found that a specially-built breaking plow with a large, solid oak beam was stronger and more flexible. This plow was also a single-bottom plow meaning it had only one share, but the addition of a coulter enabled it to do a much better job. It was not necessary to remove all the stumps and roots before breaking, as the coulter could cut through most of them. This meant that root picking was done after the breaking and not before, as was the case with the walking plow and oxen.



Breaking with horses. Andy and Ike Nanninga.

By the early 1920s many farmers had several acres under cultivation. This too needed preparation and other implements

Plowing on the Case Ingwersen farm.

were used. A farmer could plow about three acres a day with two horses pulling a walking plow. Later a gangplow, which had two bottoms, became popular. It was pulled by four or five horses and had a seat for the farmer. Other implements such as discs, drills, binders, and harrows were added. As cultivated acreage increased more grain was produced and the farmer began to market some. Teams of horses hauled grain into Westlock — the land was beginning to provide a good living.

The Olthuis barn in winter

The 1920s were a period of growth in different areas. Better barns were built and more milk cows were obtained. The cream was put in cans and shipped to market. Because skim milk was a valuable source of food for hogs, farmers began to keep more hogs.

Hog farming in the early 1920s was rather limited and only a sow or two was kept in the barn with the cows. Later, as straw stacks became common, the farmer kept several sows and a number of feeders confined by a fence. The straw stacks provided shelter for them.

Another small source of income was eggs. The chickens that were kept scrounged for themselves. During the winter they would sit huddled together for warmth in the barn. When spring arrived the chickens looked for nesting spots. Some were left to produce chicks, but if this could be delayed for a while, some eggs could be gathered and sold or traded for supplies.

There were, however, still many problems such as frost, wet weather, and insects. Sloughs, potholes, and low areas were commonplace and the wet conditions resulted in hordes of mosquitoes which were such terrible pests that many farmers kept smudges going most of the summer in barnyards and near the house in an effort to keep them away. Homemade remedies such as salves, oils, and protective coverings were also used in an attempt to find relief from mosquitoes. The insects were also a problem for the livestock. When a farmer was breaking land, he was forced to keep up a steady pace because if he stopped the horses would step over the traces while trying to rid themselves of the insects.

* * *

The Plague of Insects

Most years during the warm summer the insect plague was almost unbearable, especially in wet weather. In wet years mos-

quitoes, sand flies, bull flies, and blackflies were the worst. At night we had to keep smudges. Some of these mosquitoes carried encephalitis (sleeping sickness), a disease of the brain. Many horses died from this dread disease. The diseased animals lay around listlessly. For the horses we had ear covers made of cloth and nose baskets made of wire screen. For ourselves we had twenty-pound sugar bags with eyeholes, covering our head and neck. For the hands we wore gloves. So it was no picnic for the men either.

Cor Fisher

* * *

Rabbits, Rabbits, Rabbits

Rabbits, rabbits, rabbits and more. Every seven years or so the rabbit population would explode to astronomical proportions. Come fall and winter they would eat small evergreen brush, grain, left out haystacks. Seen some stacks 16' wide and 30-40-50 feet long chewed in from all sides till they tipped over and if the farmer did not get the rest out that would be destroyed also. In the spring of those years they would get a disease called tularaemia, a disease of small animals (possibly man if they were bitten by diseased mosquitoes) which would wipe them practically out. If we saw a rabbit the next summer it would be almost a miracle so deadly was this disease. The first symptoms of this was blood blisters on the ears. The last time we had an epidemic like the one described was in the early forties. Before that it was every so many years almost like clock work seven years or eight.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Fire could also be a problem. It was necessary to burn trees and muck land (peat soil) but sometimes it burned too deep and caused land loss. One particularly dry year (1924) a lot of topsoil was lost because of fire.

There was plenty of work for the farmers, too. Since livestock were kept indoors during the winter, barns needed cleaning. At times the horses were kept in cold shelters where the manure would freeze and build up behind them. In some of these shelters there was little room between the roof and the horses' backs by the time spring arrived. In the cow barns, however, the manure had to be removed at least every other day. Sometimes it was forked out of the door or window and left on a pile till summer. The best solution, if the weather was not too cold, was to spread it on the fields immediately.

To move the manure the farmers used a stoneboat. Later, a wheelbarrow was also used to move manure out of the barn, either onto a pile or onto the stoneboat. In the late twenties, manure spreaders began to lighten the job.

* * *

Not only was the stoneboat used to clean barns or move loads around, but it was also used for transportation. With two horses in front, it was kind of a poor-man's sleigh. As it did not have a tongue or pole to control it, the driver had to be careful not to stop the horses too fast lest the stoneboat slide into the back of the horses' legs. In the summer, when a stoneboat did not slide so easily, a *farmer would sometimes cool a frisky team down by hooking it to the stoneboat and going to a soft field. He would give the team free rein and encourage the horses to gallop. It did not take long before they were well-behaved.*

This same method would sometimes be used to break a horse to the harness. This important job was often done in the spring. Two or three-year-old horses were usually the ones trained. The first step was to halter-break the animals. A collar would be put on and the young horse would be teamed with a well-broken and reliable horse. Unless the horse was particularly rebellious, it soon learned what was expected of it.

* * *

The construction of fences required a lot of work and farmers, to their dismay, found that fence posts made of spruce or poplar soon rotted away. Tamarack was found to be much better and hauling tamarack fence posts and firewood from the low areas became a winter project.

When it was necessary to go to the bush, a few farmers would get together early in the morning, each with his team of horses and a bob sleigh. They would take along their lunch since they would be away the whole day.

Straight trees, about four to six inches in diameter, were cut down with a crosscut saw. They were then limbed, topped, and cut into twelve to fourteen-foot lengths. The posts were loaded with the bottom end of the tree to the front and the thin end to the back of the sleigh. If the load was large it was bound together by a chain wrapped loosely around the logs. A dip was left in the centre of the load and after the chain was in place more posts were placed on top of the chain to tighten it.

Gradually mechanization took place. Tractors were first used in Neerlandia about the mid-twenties. By about 1925 Raymond Baker bought a tractor and Simon Tiemstra bought one shortly afterward. Raymond Baker's was a one-cylinder 15-25 horsepower International Titan, powered by distillate, a fuel with an octane rating between gas and diesel. These first tractors were used only for stationary power, because they were too difficult to handle in the field.

About the same time, Simon Tiemstra and Klaas Tuininga Sr. purchased a portable threshing machine with a ten horsepower stationary gas motor and ten-inch cylinder. Before this time the grain had been put in stacks and stored until November or December, when a thresher from another community would come.

When Tiemstra and Tuininga arrived at a farm, threshing began. One man threw a bundle from the stack onto the platform where another cut the twine and fed the machine half a bundle at a time. The straw came out on a conveyor at the other end and another man stacked it using a fork. The grain came out of a spout and was bagged and carried to a shed or granary where it was stored. The men charged a fee for each sack of grain threshed.

* * *

Coffee Grinder

Siebren Tiemstra and Pete Tuininga went threshing throughout Neerlandia. They charged by the bag. There were two bag sizes — the two-and-a-half bushel Canadian and the three bushel American. They charged for threshing by the Canadian bag. One man had sewn six inches on the top of each of his bags to make them bigger and thereby get more grain threshed for less. When Tiemstra and Tuininga objected, he said that his bags were standard size. Everyone was upset but the threshing went on. In the course of the work, as one of the men, Jacob Olthuis, was carrying a full bag of grain on his back, the bottom of the bag fell out and the grain scattered on the ground. No one felt sorry for the farmer — they thought he deserved it. From then on Tiemstra and Tuininga brought their own bags.

Siebren and Pete would stay overnight at the home of the farmer for whom they were threshing. Most had no extra beds to offer, so the two men experienced a variety of sleeping accommodations. At Bill Knikke's they were given two big wool bags filled with straw. Little Siebren Tiemstra took a run and jumped on the bag intended for his mattress. While Pete looked on in amazement, Simon said, "It will be impossible for me to stay on top of it unless I make a dent in it first," and he ran and jumped again.

Sigurd Fette, a bachelor, spread bundles on the floor for them to sleep on. Siebren got a bundle with a rosebush in it. "I'll have a sore rear end all winter," he moaned.

Flies were a great pest in the pioneer days. At one home the threshing crew were presented with a molded pudding. As the flies settled on it like a blanket, the host said, "If you don't eat quick, the flies will get it."

* * *

Any grain used for feed had to be crushed. Klaas Tuininga and Menne Nanninga were among the first to own crushers. The crushers were powered by two horses walking round and round. Farmers hauled their grain to the crushers.

Starting in 1928, McCormick Deering 15-30s came into the area. They were a big improvement over the Titan and used gas as their fuel. These machines were on steel wheels, providing a rough ride. With the coming of these tractors a new era in the breaking of land arrived. Tractors were heavy and had the momentum to pull the plow through the stumps. If the breaker did get stuck in a stump it was possible to back out and take another run at it. (When using horses, if a breaker got stuck in a stump, it was necessary to unhook the horses, hitch them to the back of the breaker and pull the breaker back.) Breaking could be a bone-jarring job, and the operator had to be ready for sudden stops. Often several runs would be required before the stump was split. Not all farmers had these heavy tractors so the Nanningas and others did a lot of custom breaking.

When land was being cleared, a stump often remained that was too big or too difficult to pull out. When that happened farmers

Plowing on the Hendrik Wierenga farm. Lambert, Clarence, Johanna, Tenie, Joe, Hendrik.

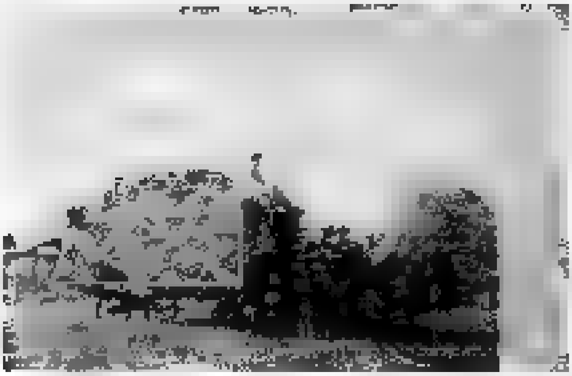
sometimes resorted to the use of dynamite or stumping powder. The powder would be tamped well under the stump and a fuse inserted. Then one would light the fuse and run. If done properly the stump would split and pieces would fly into the air. One farmer made a practice of doing this on the first of July. He thought picnics were a waste of time and with every boom he could prove he was working.

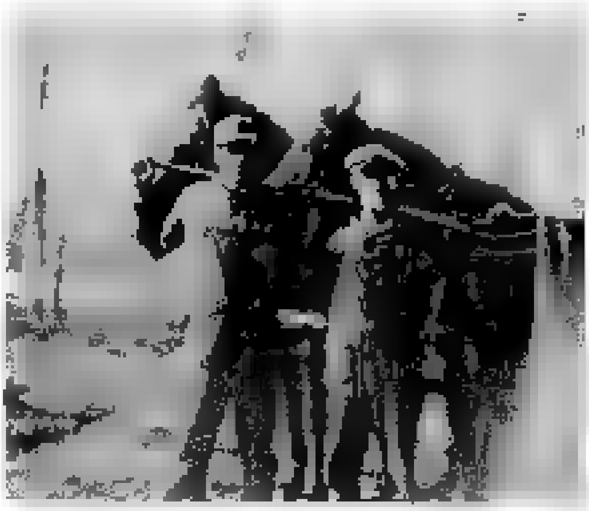
With the construction of the Pembina Valley Railway to Barrhead in 1927, the farmers no longer had to deliver grain to Westlock. Along with the railway came the elevators, and the Alberta Wheat Pool opened in Barrhead in 1928. Many farmers joined the Pool because they hoped through co-operation to gain some strength in the marketplace. Others were afraid of the power of the large co-operatives. Though Neerlandia farmers had always worked together, usually harmoniously, many of them were not certain that membership in co-operatives such as the Pool was compatible with their Christian principles. The concept of pools, co-operatives, and unions was a hotly-debated issue whenever farmers got together.

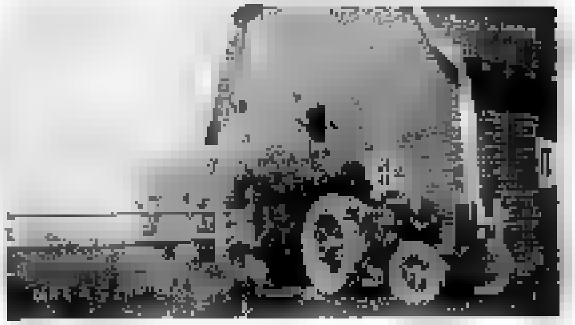
There were trucking services to Neerlandia by this time, so when a farmer had livestock to ship he would sometimes haul them by wagon or drive them to a central location where the animals would be loaded on a truck for shipment to Edmonton.

The years 1920-1930 were a time of growth. Prices for grain and livestock were such that the Neerlandia farmer was making financial progress. It seemed that the pioneers were justified in their choice of a new home. Life was becoming easier. Mechanization made it possible to crop land more quickly and thus allowed more time for family life.

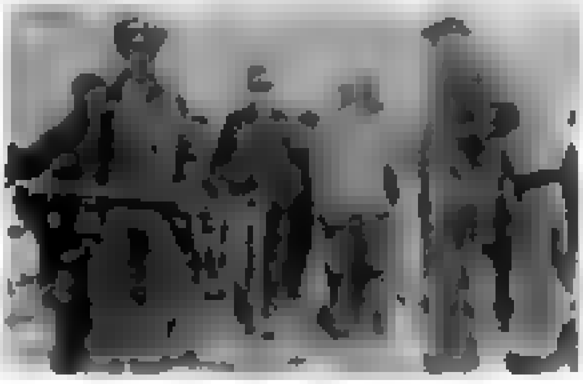
FARM SCENES

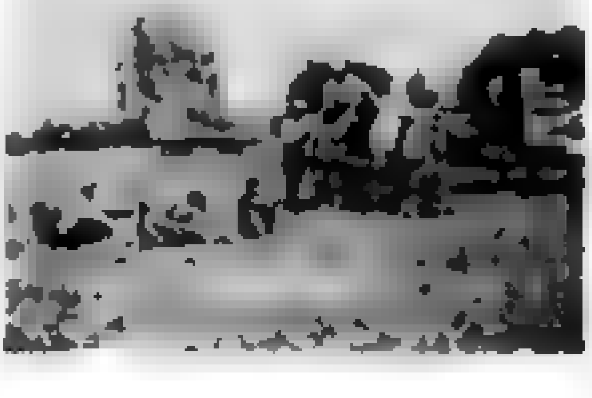






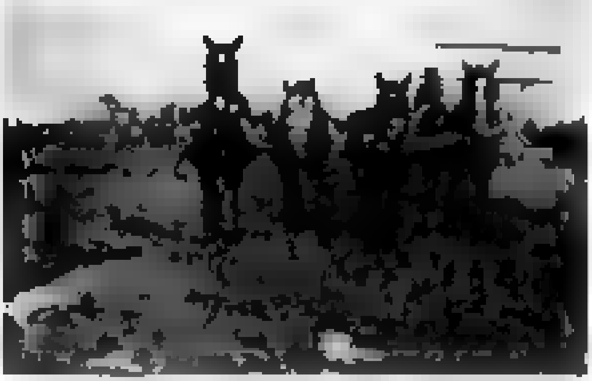
FOOD: AN IMPORTANT PART OF FARM LIFE





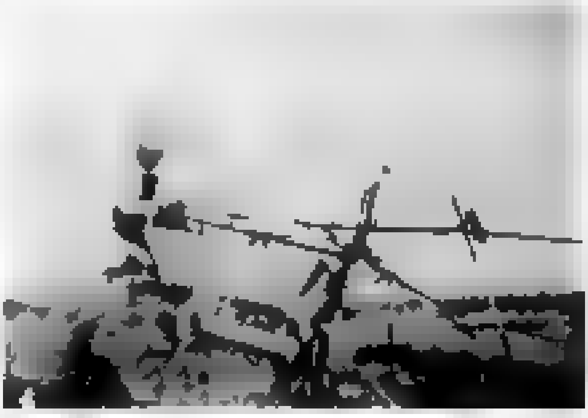
CUTTING

Grain was cut using a horse-drawn binder. George Anema, John Peters Sr., Frances and John Anema, c. 1933

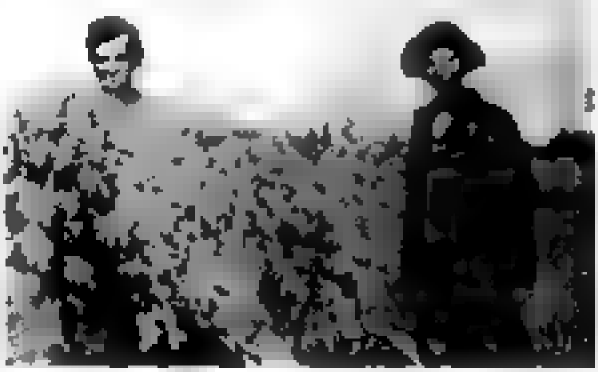


Four horses were hitched to the binder. An early snowfall has flattened the crop.

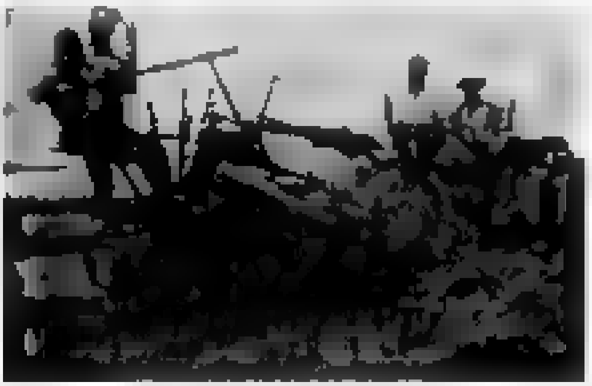
The binder put the grain into bundles. John and John Peters Sr. c. 1937



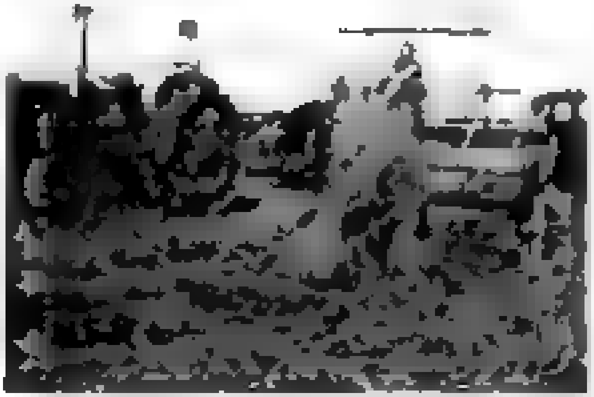
A whip on the end of a long bamboo handle stood upright within easy reach of the driver. Peter Kampner Sr. c. 1930.



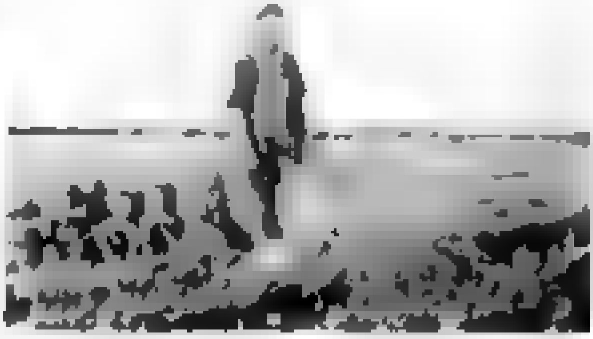
After cutting, the grain had to be stooked. Celia and Susie Anema spent many hours stooking.



Later tractors replaced the horses. The Romsen brothers: Ko on binder, Joe and Klaas on tractor



ne Mast operated the binder while Henry (not shown), drove the tractor. Rose on the tractor, 1940.



Stooking still had to be done by hand. Albert Eggerame with Andrew, Ann, Winston, and Sandra

1930-1939

The economic crash of 1930 marked the beginning of the Depression and brought to a temporary halt any economic advance that Neerlandia was experiencing. During the Depression, those farmers who owned tractors could not afford to buy fuel for them so they were parked and horses were used instead. Prices for farm produce dropped drastically. As a result of this situation, the financial position of the farmers became desperate. They were even in danger of losing their land because of unpaid land taxes.

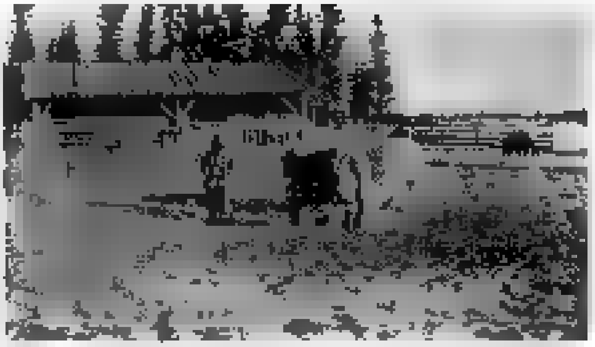
During the early 1930s, farming methods remained fairly stable but in the late thirties farming began to change for the better. Improved crop yields resulted when farmers began rotating their cereal crops with legume crops. Since manure was the only fertilizer, raising legume crops and summer fallowing were the only other ways to increase the nitrogen level in the soil. Another major breakthrough at this time was the drilling of deep water wells complete with, in some cases, a windmill to pump the water. Hand dug wells were becoming less dependable because the water table was getting lower.

Machinery too was improving. Rubber tires for tractors became available about 1938-39. Although fields were still rough, rubber tires made fieldwork a little less bone-jarring. Frame buildings began to replace log structures during this time as well. Although frame buildings had been built earlier, they now began to be the norm instead of the exception.

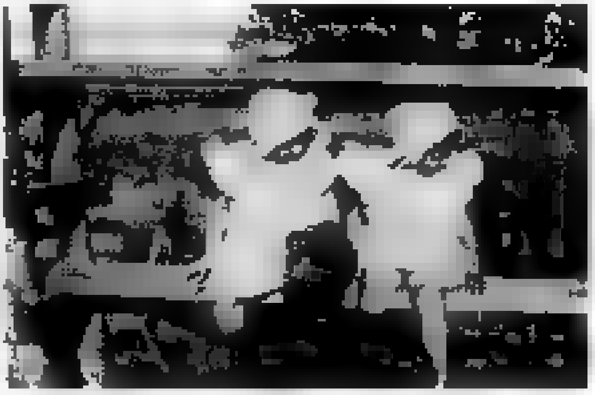
Though farming practices were slowly improving, prices remained low and other setbacks occurred as well. Hail and early frost damaged crops. In 1935 an early frost devastated the crops. Farmers did not carry crop insurance so this was a tremendous loss. In this instance the provincial government decided to lend its support by supplying seed grain for the next spring. This was appreciated, but some weeds, such as Ontario mustard, were introduced with the seed. By the time farmers knew what these weeds were they could

CONSTRUCTION

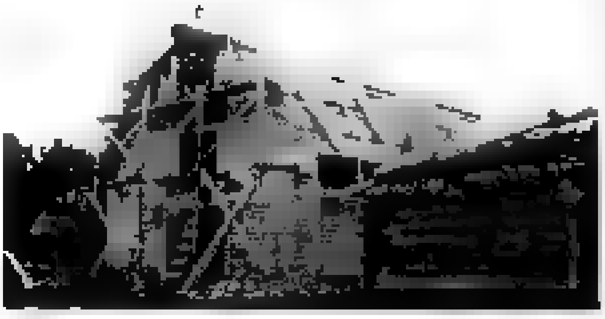
Granary.



Sheep shed with slab roof.



Note gate.



Geldeman's horse barn.

Note stationary engine — moved by horses to do threshing in early days not eradicate them from the land. For years farmers tried to control them by handpicking, but it proved to be a losing battle. Since these weed seeds can lie dormant for many years, control by cultivation was impossible. Wild oats was becoming a problem since it too had delayed germination.

Other problem weeds were sow thistle and Canada thistle. They tended to grow in patches and farmers tried to control them by summer fallowing, by handpicking and by cutting down any patches in the crops with a scythe. A common chore for children was picking weeds in the crops.

Despite all of these setbacks and difficulties, as the 1930s came to an end, farmers in Neerlandia were thankful they were able to survive. Though money was scarce they always had food on the table. Even the economic situation was improving slowly by the end of this period. Tractors were again coming out of hiding. Several makes and models were available, but the John Deere D and the Oliver 80 were most popular in Neerlandia. Heated debates over the relative merits of the various tractors and even pulling contests were held once farmers started to buy these machines.

* * *

Harvesttime Down on the Farm

Harvesttime was a very special time on the farm — the season when farmers would take in the crop which they planted in the spring and which through the blessing of the Lord produced forty, sixty, or one hundred fold. The first homesteaders used a scythe and flail for harvesting, but after some years binders and threshing machines were used.

Cutting

The first binders to arrive in Neerlandia were rather small (having a 6 to 8-foot cutting bar), were ground driven, and had to be pulled by horses. The most amazing thing about these machines, however, was that they could tie the bundles (sheaves) automatically by using twine and a complicated little gadget called a knotter. What an amazing little mechanism if it worked properly, but what a pain in the neck if it would get out of adjustment. These binders also had a bundle carrier which could carry five to eight bundles, and then these bundles could all be dumped together. This allowed the farmer to pile the bundles in rows, which made it much easier for the stookers and later for picking up for threshing.

Being ground driven means the binder was operated via a chain from the bull wheel (large wheel with cleats) and this turned only when the binder was pulled forward. As soon as the binder stopped moving forward the whole business would stop operating. If the binder was plugged or needed adjustment the farmer could operate the machine for a bit by hand via a crank — far from ideal but certainly better than nothing. If the crop was standing upright everything usually went reasonably well, but watch out if the crop was badly lodged (flat). Then you could sometimes see a "cloud of blue smoke" rising from the farmer-operator. The knife would plug up, the canvasses would stop, and the bundles looked like balls of hay! Sometimes a whole field would be cut from one direction if the

crop was all lying in one direction. This made it somewhat easier to pick up and cut, but it took a long time to finish a field.

Some years later tractors were used to pull the binder. This meant steadier power, but it also meant the need for two people — one to operate the binder and one to drive the tractor. Many times the tractor driver would be a son or daughter from eight years old up. These first tractors were not equipped with a power take-off so the binder still had to be ground driven. But about 1940 many of the tractors came equipped with a power take-off (PTO), although it was not "live". This means that the PTO did not have a clutch of its own but was driven by the main clutch that operated the tractor. This was, however, a great improvement as the binder could now be operated while stationary. If the binder would plug up while cutting, the tractor driver would disengage the clutch, take the tractor out of gear, and engage the clutch again to operate the binder. When the problem was rectified, he would disengage the clutch once more, put the tractor back in gear, engage the clutch, and get under way again. In the late forties and early fifties tractors started coming out with "live" PTO or a separate clutch so the binder could be operated while the main tractor clutch was disengaged. This eliminated a lot of clutching and shifting and made for a much smoother operation.

Stooking

Cutting the crop was only the first step in the harvest operation. The next big job was stooking. And what a job it was. This was performed either by the older sons of the family or by someone hired to do the job. Stooking involved setting the bundles or sheaves upright so the grain heads would be up and away from the ground to help the grain to dry. A stook was made up of six to nine bundles — six bundles for oats and barley and usually eight or nine for wheat. The stooker would take a bundle in each hand and set them up against each other in the form of an inverted V. He would repeat the procedure putting two bundles on one side of the original ones and then two on the other side. This way they would hold each other up. One bundle would sometimes be placed on each side of the stook and some farmers would also place one bundle flat on top of this. This was to help shed any rain that might fall and would also keep wheat from bleaching in the sun. The redder the colour of wheat, the better grade the farmer would get for it. Many of the bundles were very heavy, making for hard work. Then, to make things worse, sometimes the bundles were very messy and even tied together when the crop was badly lodged. Usually one would start stooking at seven in the morning and go to late in the day. Most mornings the bundles would be soaking wet due to heavy dew from the night before, so the stooker would be soaked until the sun dried the bundles and his pants. The first few days of stooking often meant very sore fingers, especially when stooking wheat or crops infested with Canadian thistles or hemp nettle. But by the end of the first week the fingers were well calloused and the arm muscles hard as nails.

Threshing

When all the stooking was done, the task of threshing could begin. This was indeed the highlight of the harvest operation. How every young lad of that day looked forward to the day when the thresher and wagons came rolling down the road to harvest their family's crop. How every woman and young teenaged girl must have looked against the awesome task of maintaining the household and feeding a crew of hungry men. A threshing crew was generally made up of four to eight farmers living fairly close together who owned a threshing machine together and helped each other thresh their crops.

Basically, what was needed was one threshing machine and one fairly large tractor with a pulley. A belt about one hundred feet long was placed around the pulley of the tractor and the other end around a pulley on the thresher. The tractor was then backed up to tighten the belt and then the pulley was engaged to operate the threshing machine. What a thrill to see and hear all those belts and pulleys, shafts and chains whir and roar and chatter and clang — a very impressive sight. The threshing machine would be placed in the centre of the field to be threshed where the farmers had beforehand placed one or more granaries. Threshing was also done on the farmyard to provide a straw stack for winter protection and bedding for the livestock. Also needed to run the whole operation was one man who ran the threshing machine and made sure everything kept running in tip-top shape. Then there were from four to eight teamsters — men with a wagon or hayrack and a team of horses. The teamsters hauled the bundles from the field to the machines. They had to load the bundles by hand using a pitchfork to throw bundles on the hayrack. It would take a fair bit of skill to build a decent load that would remain in place all the way to the machine. Many was the time that part of the load would slide off before it ever reached the machine. When this happened you could usually see the other men laughing with glee at the poor guy's misfortune, but this was mostly done in fun.

Then there were the times that someone's horses would take fright at something or other and you would have a runaway. What an excitement that would create. One fall, my brother [illegible] had a runaway with his team when threshing for Harry Janssen. The horses headed straight for a new fence Harry had just put up, going straight ahead at full tilt. When they got close to the fence they tried to turn but, alas, it was too late. One horse jumped the fence and down the fence line they tore, one horse on each side of the fence, snapping off the fence posts with the neck yoke and the wire catching underneath the wagon. What a mess! Harry was not impressed when he saw his new fence and who can blame him?

There were usually one or two field pitchers whose task it was to help the teamsters load their wagons. These men did not have a team of their own; they would just go from one wagon to the next helping pitch bundles.

When the wagons were full the teamsters would head for the thresher to unload the bundles into the ever-hungry jaws of the machine. Here there was usually one or two spike pitchers who would help the teamster unload his wagon. The bundles would be tossed onto the feeder — heads first — and a chain would carry them into the machine. The grain would then be separated from the straw which was blown into a pile while the grain was elevated and dumped into a granary.

When the granary started to get full someone was needed in the bin to keep the grain spout clear and to make sure the bin would be filled as full as possible. The granary man would usually be a son or daughter of the farmer at whose place they were at the time. Being granary man had to be the worst job there was, especially when the bin was getting full. Here you were trapped in, seemingly forgotten by everyone, and the grain just kept steadily coming down the spout. All you needed was a bit of claustrophobia as I had and you soon got the feeling that this was it — you were a goner. But somehow or other, at the last moment, you always managed to get someone's attention by hollering as loud as you could or else by pushing the spout out of the granary. This soon brought results. The spout would then go into another granary which meant you had a few hours of respite. Being granary man did have its compensation because you could be where the action was and, best of all, you could stay home from school. If you happened to be threshing at your place on a Saturday — well, that was worse than the plague!

Threshing started at 7:00 a.m. on the dot [illegible] at least not later. The dew never bothered as there was enough dry grain inside the bundles to compensate for that. Threshing would continue until 12:00 noon, when everything was shut down for one hour for dinner. At 1:00 p.m. sharp you were at it again until 7:00 p.m., at which time you would shut down for the day. Most farmers had a fair amount of chores to do and, if you didn't have any kids to do them, it meant doing them in the morning before you started threshing and in the evening after you quit. This would mean getting out of bed at 4:30-5:00 a.m., doing your chores and feeding the horses, eating a quick breakfast, and then heading for the field. At night you would eat supper and do your chores again. Usually it was at least 10:00 p.m. before you were done. By the time you hit the pillow you were out like a light, but the morning bell came all too quickly. I'm sure most young guys on the crew prayed for a day of rain at one time or other.

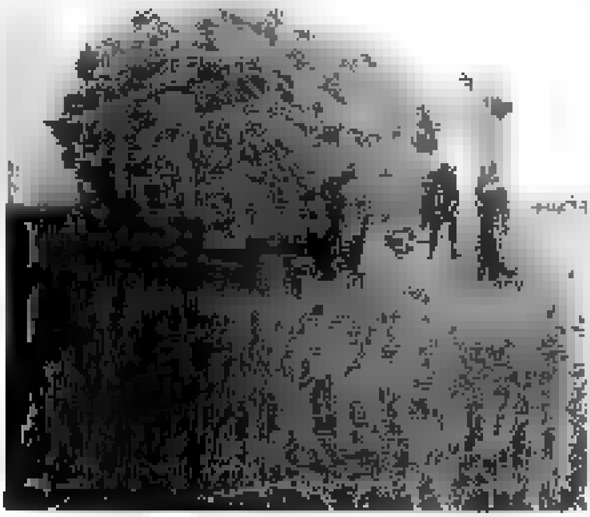
In spite of the long days and hard work, threshing always was an enjoyable time. There was always time to play a trick or two on each other, and the fellowship and working together was something to be treasured.

The Homemaker

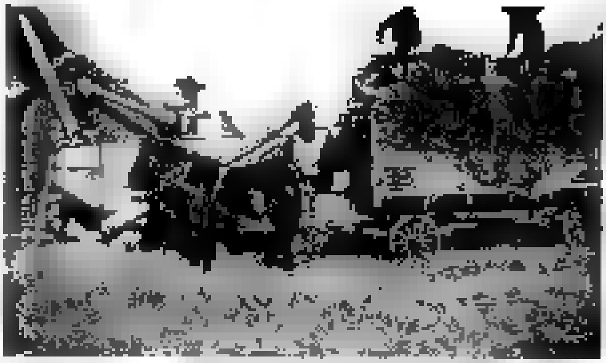
The task of the women at harvesttime was also a very busy one and probably not appreciated enough. Imagine her having to feed an army of hungry men besides taking care of her own family and doing the hundreds of other tasks she was expected to perform. The men's day was long and hard, but the women's was just as long or maybe longer. She had to have a good breakfast ready for her husband and sons by 6:15 a.m. If there were children she had to get them ready for school and attend to infants or small children. By 9:00 a.m. she had to have lunch and coffee ready and in the field by 9:30 a.m. This lunch and coffee wasn't just a snack, every man would eat three or four double sandwiches of homemade bread as well as cake and cookies. She would then rush back home to get

THRESHING

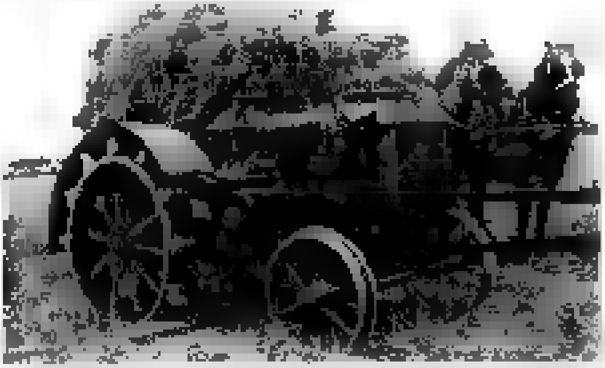
Ready to start. Ingwersen — Anema crew.



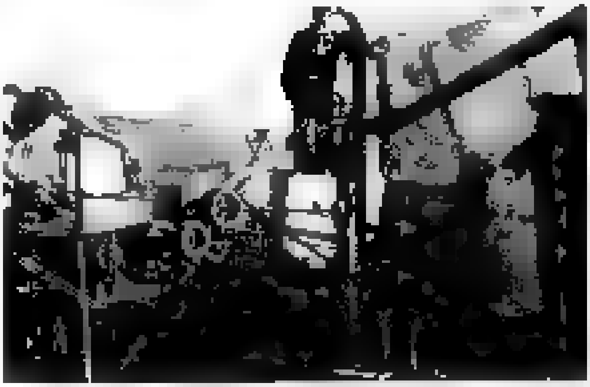
Loading in the field, c. 1954. Note field pitcher who went from man to man helping load the racks.



Straw came out of the blower to form a straw pile. Grain came out of another pipe and went into a granary.



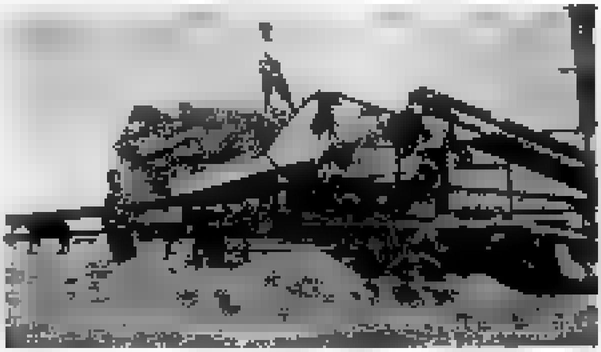
Some farmers had matched teams of horses. This team belonged to Joe Bruk who threshed with the Heberlings.



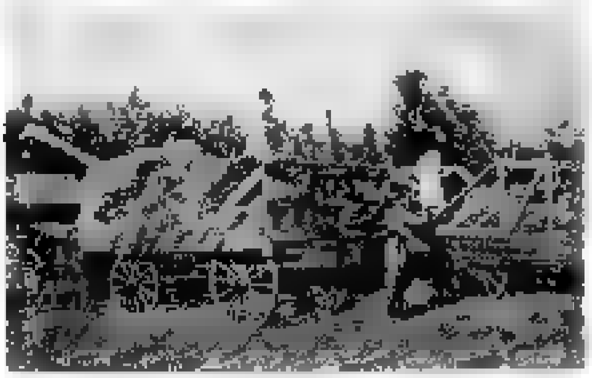
Belts and pulleys, chains and cog wheels. What a racket! Henry Peters smiles amid the noise.

The belt had to be lined up with the tractor. John Roth pitching bundles

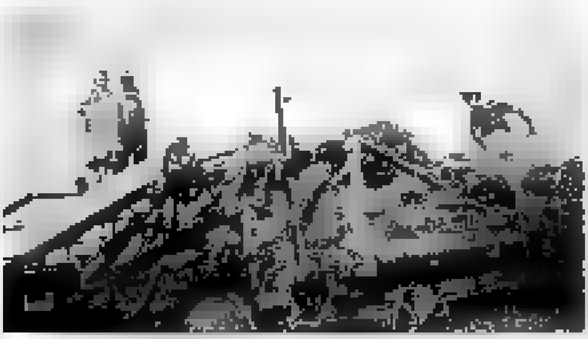
Time out for lunch. Threshing at Albert Masts farm.



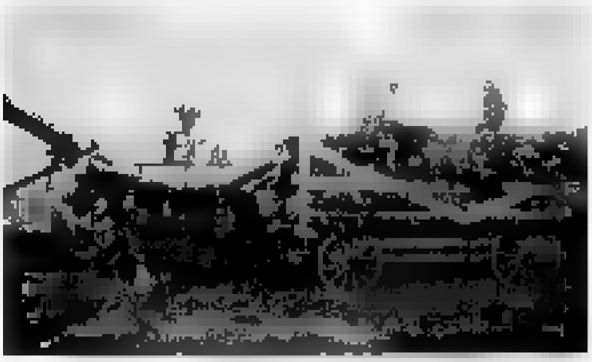
Do you want some lunch? Still at the Masts



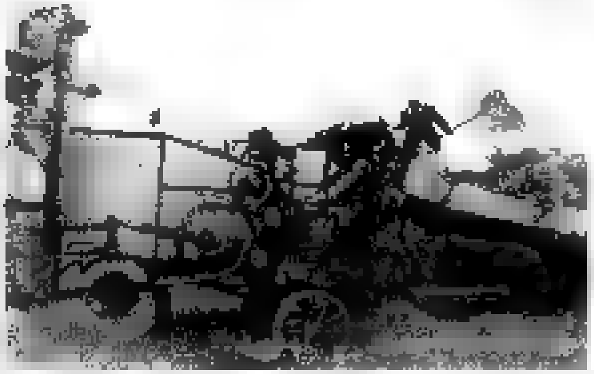
The women try their hand at pitching bundles while the men eat. Bert Eigersma on the ground.



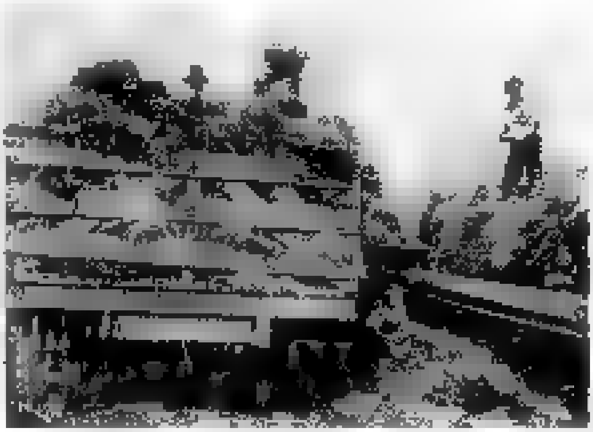
Trientje and Clarence Tuininga surveying the harvest scene. Jim on rack.



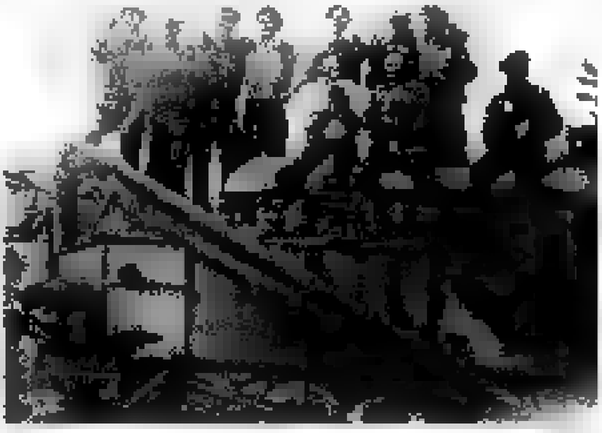
Threshing took place on every farm. This is at the Nanningas in the early 1940s.



Pete Mast is working hard to keep the threshing machine busy.



It was easier to have a rack on each side of the feeder.



Time to celebrate, the harvest is in the bin, c. 1937. Is that beer they're drinking? Bill Olthuis, Bill Bajema, Albert Elgersma, Andrew Wierenga, ? George Olthuis, Lucas Stuiwold. Seated: Cecil Tuininga, Raymond Visser, Jake Stuiwold dinner ready by 12:00 noon. By this time the men were starving again and were looking forward to a feast. And feast it usually was, with spuds, meat, and vegetables, enough to feed an army. For good measure each man would devour about half a pie for dessert. The lady of the house would have to clean up and wash all the dirty dishes, prepare another good lunch and tea by 3:30 p.m., then rush home and prepare supper for her family while baking bread, pies, and cakes for the next day. How they managed to get everything done and usually right on time is something to be marvelled at.

Lambert Tuininga

* * *

Threshing

The second year of our threshing syndicate, John Ingwersen, Albert Schoonekamp, and I decided that only work and the same old topics of discussion at the supper table made the evenings rather dull. We thought this could be improved a lot by the addition of a keg of beer. We promptly ordered an eight-gallon wooden keg with Dick Fisher, the truck driver, and this was available at Dick's place on his return trip from Edmonton. The price was eight dollars and the keg had to be returned when empty. The rest of the crew soon had the suspicion that we had something other than coffee to drink before we came in for supper, so they were informed about the keg. They offered to chip in on the price provided they could also help to consume the contents. I have to admit that when the keg was tapped before supper it opened up entirely different and very interesting topics for discussion at the supper table, and it did not diminish the appetite for food in the least.

I also have to admit that when we tapped the keg again after supper it led to expressions of wit and strength that would never have entered our minds if we had been completely sober.

Thus one day we had been threshing at Gerrit Ingwersen's place, and John had made sure the keg had come along. Gerrit had room in his barn for several teams of horses, so they were stabled and fed before we had our supper. After supper we tapped the keg and made our way to the barn to hitch our teams to the wagons and go home for the night.

In the barn some interesting and big discussions developed. As we talked about feats of strength and endurance we had accomplished in days gone by, I backed my rear between the hind legs of our horse Mae. In a hunched position I got my back under her hind quarters, put my arms around her legs, and as I raised my back I lifted her hind end up so her hind feet were off the barn floor. Mae was a 1500-pound horse, and I was quite proud of the feat of power I had displayed, so I confronted John with what I had done.

Now you have to know that John Ingwersen could not be outdone by anyone, in any way, under any circumstance, and he was ready to prove it anytime. He said, "Oh, lift the hind end of a horse, that's nothing. I can lift a whole horse." Everybody immediately said, "Well, this we'll have to see."

John got under their horse Charlie on his hands and feet. Charlie weighed in excess of 1200 pounds, and I didn't believe he *could do it. John heaved up his back, Charlie gave a grunt and his back feet left the barn floor.*

We told John, "You only lifted his back end," so he moved over a bit to the front of the horse, and heaved up again. And lo and behold, all four of Charlie's feet left the barn floor. John had done the impossible again.

George Anema

* * *

Turkey In The Straw

How many of you remember straw stacks? They were wonderful places to play. When threshing was finished we couldn't wait to climb the straw stack and slide down. Dad always strictly warned us not to play on the stacks till they were three days old. That would give them a chance to settle and be safer for us.

One time though, the temptation was too great. Shirl, Joan, Jack, and I climbed up and slid down a fresh stack. To our horror, when we reached the bottom Jack was nowhere to be seen. Frantically we dug in the area we had last seen him. Finally he emerged crying — wide open mouth full of straw. What a relief to find he was still alive. We learned the value of obeying Dad's rules that day. But naturally we breathed not a word of this event to him.

Elsie Navis

* * *

1940-1949

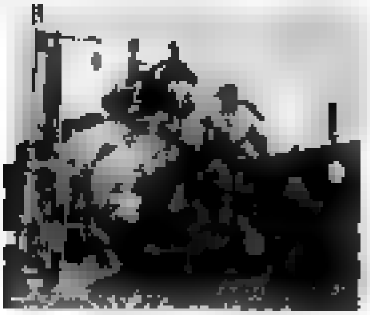
The men who farmed Neerlandia in the forties took seriously God's command to till the ground. They believed that in response to God they had to prepare the land well, keep it weed free, and produce good crops and herds. They worked hard to achieve this end. Changes on the agricultural scene in the 1940s enabled them to succeed. The financial return to farmers increased drastically as a result of the wartime demand for farm produce.

Nevertheless, the local people had many shortages to cope with. It was difficult to get new tractors and farm machinery in the early forties because the manufacture of instruments of war had a higher priority than the manufacture of farm machinery. The metal shortages were also evident in the fact that barbed wire at this time was much thinner and more difficult to work with. It was especially troublesome to reuse because it could not be rolled up easily. Gasoline was also rationed, although there was always a good supply for agricultural purposes. During this time farmers had their own fanning mills to remove weed seeds from the grain. Seed grain was treated with formaldehyde in an effort to control smut.

The major change in farming practices was the use of the Caterpillar tractor for clearing land. These large machines eliminated much of the back-breaking work and enabled larger areas of land to be opened up for farming in much less time. The sight of these monsters slicing their way through the bush with trees falling like tenpins before them was a major event for everyone. The roar of their motors would carry for miles and people would soon know who was clearing more land. Along with the Cats came bigger breaking plows and heavier disks, and the country soon opened up. Fires were everywhere and smoke was thick as farmers burned

the windrows to get more land into production and take advantage of the better prices for grain and livestock. For those who had been unable to pay their way during the Depression, this was a wonderful time.

As early as 1940 tractors with lights and starters became available. By 1946 the first tractors with hydraulics were for sale. These features made tractors easier to handle, more versatile, and useful for longer hours.



Combining on the Albert Tiemstra farm

Combines too were becoming more popular in the 1940s, making the cutting and harvesting of grain faster and easier. No longer did long hours have to be spent stooking, loading, and hauling the grain to the threshing machine. The combine brought with it a new set of problems, however. Fields were often too rough for effective combining. The many roots on recently-cleared land were often picked up with the swath and caused breakdowns. Most of the combines were pull-type and often got stuck in the soft spots. Once the grain was swathed it took a long time to dry because fields were small and often sheltered by bush. Then too, combines left the straw in the field and this posed another problem because most of the other field machinery was not capable of working the straw into the ground. To overcome this problem many farmers burned the straw. Farmers at this time either did not know that burning robbed the soil of much-needed nutrients and fibre or they simply accepted the lesser of the two evils. Nevertheless, combines were seen as an improvement over the cutting, stooking, and threshing method and more farmers purchased them.

With the end of the war and the stabilizing of prices, the 1940s was one of the better periods for agriculture. It was in these years that Neerlandia farmers became more prosperous and well-established.

* * *

Unemployed

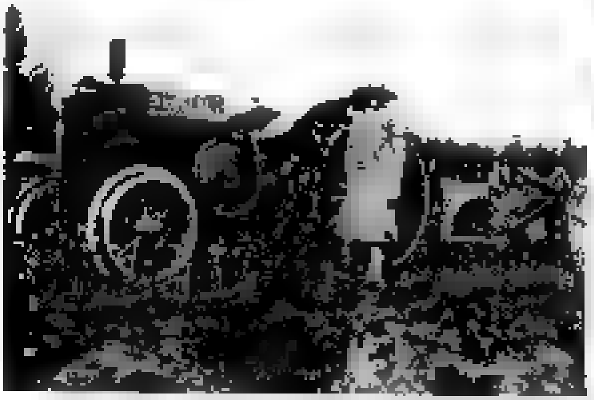
The thanks the faithful horse received. During the latter years of the war many farmers with tractors let their horses run wild and they began breaking into granaries. One horse was so smart he would back up to a full granary and let fly with his hoofs, knocking a hole into the granary. The grain would pour out in the deep snow. Then about fifteen or twenty horses would come to feed and trample the grain into the snow. Many of the horses would get to water and the grain in the stomach would start swelling bursting the stomach. With a little imagination, you can understand the terrible pain the animals suffered. Some of these animals were shot for their own good because they became pests, the unemployed without work, a life of boredom. No fault of their own, but of the times and the system, plus the refusal to start from the bottom and work up to become efficient workers.

Cor Fisher

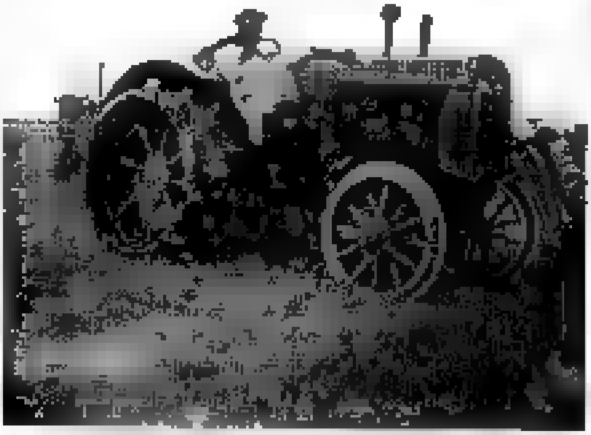
* * *

STEEL-WHEELED TRACTORS

A furrow laid bare. Gerrit Kippers.



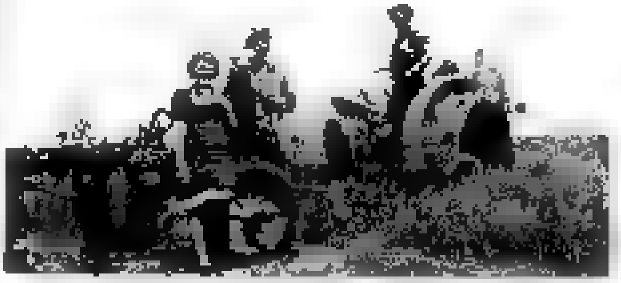
Ira Mast and the John Deere — note flywheel used to start tractor.



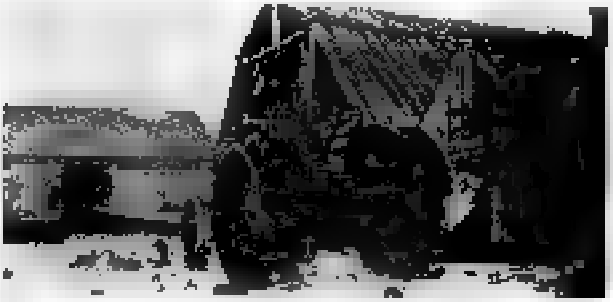
Clarence Mast posing with his Oliver 60. 1936. Note the crank for starting the tractor.

Andy Nenninga and Clarence Rowaan clearing land, 1944.

Lambert H. Wierenga breaking, 1944



Steel-wheeled tractors were still in use in the 1950s. Henry, Henry and Art Peters, Lambert H. Wierenga on tractor.



Crushing grain. Hilje, John, Joe Wierenga, 1937

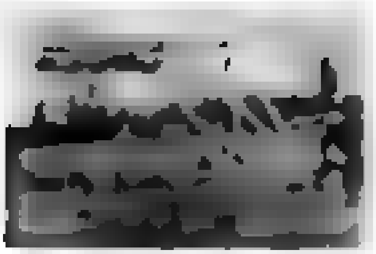
1950-1964

The beginning of this period brought many changes to the agricultural sector. The most important changes were the coming of electricity to the farms, the development and use of fertilizer and herbicides, the use of supplements in feeding livestock, and the improvements to tractors and machinery.

The first of these changes was the coming of rural electrification in [illegible]. Although some of the settlers had previously had access to electricity through gas powered generators or wind chargers, the coming of rural electrification made electrical power available to almost all the settlers. The power had tremendous use in the home and it opened up new horizons in all aspects of the people's lives. There was better lighting to work by in the house and in the barn. Electrical power could be used for ventilating barns, for the use of [illegible] and in feeding animals by the use of augers and electric motors. Pressurized water systems which provided underground water lines became possible. The labour of the farm wife was also made much easier with electric stoves, refrigerators, and other appliances.

The use of chemical fertilizers such as [illegible] and [illegible] began in the early fifties. Crop yields showed an immediate increase and this resulted in larger financial returns per acre of land seeded. Farmers also became more aware of and more concerned about weeds in their fields. Many farmers invested in [illegible] to remove the wild oats from the seed grain. Broadleaf weeds were [illegible] and more effectively through the use of weed sprays but wild oats continued to be a problem. It was also about this time that [illegible] began to be used in livestock feeds resulting in healthier and faster-growing animals.

Farm machinery was also improving at this time. In the mid fifties the handling of hay was revolutionized by the square baler. As hay had been handled loose but now it could be baled and stacked. The bales were handled by hand at first, but later stackers were invented along with front end loaders on the tractors. Because hay could be handled much easier and efficiently, more hay could be put up and more cattle could be kept.



A hay stack

Before balers were out, farmers continued to thresh some of their grain because they needed straw stacks for cattle feed and bedding. They would thresh as much as they needed to provide the necessary straw stacks and combine the rest. This prevented the [illegible] of [illegible] the straw in the field. The work load was very heavy because then each farmer was on his own. There were no longer any threshing crews so the threshing had to be done by the members of each farm family.

With a baler the farmer could gather the straw from behind the combine. As a result the use of threshing machines gradually declined. Nevertheless, some farmers continued using them because they worried about the grain not drying in the swath. However, as the work load increased, the job of threshing became less and less attractive. By [illegible] almost everyone had switched to using the combine. Harvesting was done more efficiently but the comradeship and co-operation among farmers in threshing was lost.

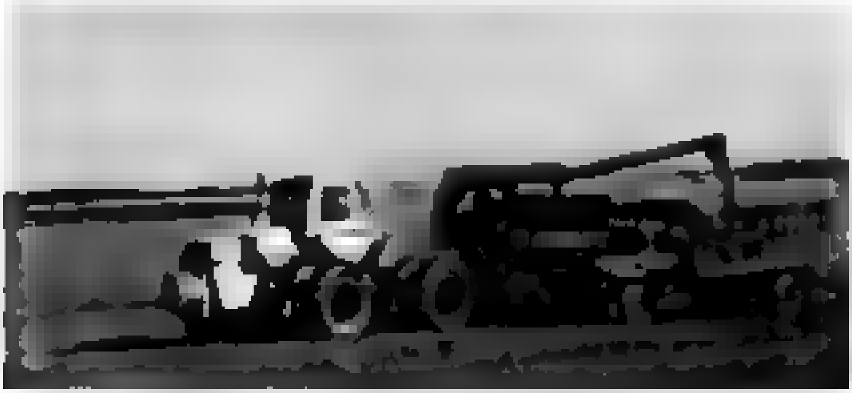
During the sixties farming continued to change in the [illegible] area. Commodity prices continued to [illegible] though they fluctuated up and down. Probably the most striking development during these years was the growth of automation. Self-propelled swathers and combines could be seen everywhere. Grain augers, trucks with hoists, automatic bale wagons, and grinder mixers greatly improved farming methods and eliminated much of the manual labour.

With all these improvements, farmers would handle more land. Farms were becoming bigger as farmers with small holdings sold out to others who increased theirs. Livestock herds were increasing in size as well, and bigger barns were being built. This led to the start of liquid-manure handling systems.

Fertilizers and chemicals were more widely used, resulting in larger crop yields than ever before. There was, however, some concern about the long term effect of these chemicals. In addition, soil testing was starting to become popular and this provided the farmers with valuable information which helped them decide how much and what kind of fertilizer or chemicals to use. There was a larger variety of crops grown. Canola (originally called rapeseed), flax, peas, and beans were occasionally grown in addition to the usual barley, wheat, and oat crops.

Steady growth continued to be the dominant trend in the seventies. Tractors with dual wheels became common and soon even air-conditioned cabs were standard equipment. Four-wheel-drive tractors began to replace the two-wheel-drive models and this enabled farmers to work more of their own land. Machinery size increased in order to keep up with the larger tractors, and farmers were able to farm more land with less manpower. Round balers began to replace square balers and electric mills began to replace the grinder mixers. Dugouts began to be used for livestock water supply, and improvements were being made in animal nutrition. Large strides were being made in animal genetics, resulting in faster-growing animals with better feed-conversion ratios.

Self-propelled swather


Combining, [illegible]

Farmers began to specialize at this time. Whereas farms had consisted of a few chickens, pigs, and cows, and a few acres of land, they now began to concentrate on raising one kind of livestock. Some fairly large dairy operations came into existence as well as farms that specialized in raising hogs, broilers, or feeder cattle. Some farms concentrated on raising cereal and cash crops. Quite a few of the farmers in the Neerlandia area went into the hog industry and hog barns began to be built all over the countryside. The Neerlandia area has become one of the most intensive hog-raising areas in the province of Alberta. Some farmers still do mixed farming — a combination of hogs, cattle and grain.

Due to the complexity of farming, farm organizations came into existence. The National Farmers Union had been in existence for many years but few Neerlandia farmers joined. More felt comfortable with Unifarm when it was formed and some joined it.

The Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta had its beginning in Neerlandia in 1971 and a provincial organization was formed in 1974. The purpose of this organization is to present a Christian position in regard to agricultural issues and to attempt to apply the biblical principles of stewardship and justice to farming. Many Neerlandia farmers joined this organization. Their intent was to farm in accord with the land — that is, in a way that conserves the environment while producing food and maintaining an economically feasible unit.

Neerlandia continued to grow in size as many farmers bought land in surrounding districts. Bumper crops, good markets, and good prices all combined to contribute to the increasing prosperity of the Neerlandia community. Inflation began to be a major concern but the way to beat that, it seemed, was to borrow money and build barns or buy land. More land was also being cleared and the low lands were being drained.

By the 1980s farmers were able to operate farms many times the size of their forefathers' farms. The pioneers faced the problems of survival in a new land and the development of the land for agricultural purposes; their descendants have to face such questions as whether bigger is necessarily better, what place the use of chemicals has in farming, and what should be made of technological developments.

Cattle

When I was just a lad

Most of the pioneer families brought a cow and sometimes a calf along to their homesteads. The cow would be a source of milk for the family and the calf would eventually become another milk cow, a bull, or an ox. In the end, all cattle would grace the table as roasts or some other form of beef unless, of course, they met an untimely death.

The kind of cattle the pioneers brought were mostly a red mongrel species. They were tall and gangly, with long thin horns. Their front quarters were usually heavy and the back quarters light. Among the pioneers it was common to hear someone comment, "That one is so skinny you can hang your hat on her hipbone." The cattle would roam free since there were no fences. They would search for grazing areas and feed on the wild native grasses along the sloughs. It was poor quality, but it was feed. A farmer's few cattle would usually stay together. One of them had a cowbell and their owner would have to recognize the sound of the cowbell in order to find them and bring them home.

Bringing the cows home was often girls' work. The girls would have to go through the bush, looking here and there while following the cow trails. One time two Tuininga sisters had a long hunt and by the time they found their herd, it was dark. When they got them home, the one sister laughed and asked the other, "How are you going to milk that one? It's only got one teat!" They had brought home a steer!

It became even more difficult to find the cows when it rained. All one could hear was the rain falling. While getting soaked to the skin, one would strain to hear a cowbell and all one could hear was the sound of the rain. (You would continue to listen till ... ah yes, you could hear something. You heard not only one bell, but many bells in all directions.) Meanwhile, the cows would be standing still under the trees, trying to stay out of the rain.

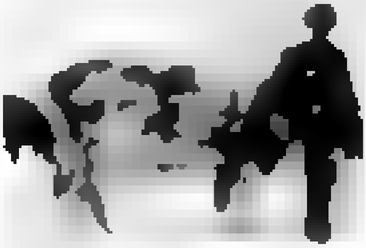
In wintertime, the animals were sheltered in small log barns. They were fed mostly native hay which the farmer had managed to stack during the summer and some grain too, if it was available. But grain was scarce, as the land first had to be cleared, broken, and seeded before the pioneers reaped any harvest.

Many oxen, too, were brought to this country. They were used for breaking new land and for pulling wagons or plows. These creatures were known for their speed — or rather, lack of it. Jan Oldeghers would say that one had to put a stake in the ground every once in a while to see if the plow and oxen had moved. Working with oxen took real patience and many a pioneer understood the saying, "If you have driven oxen seven years without ever getting mad at them, you've earned heaven." But there was still the cautious farmer who warned his son who was behind the ox and plow, "Easy, Lucas, Easy Lucas."

A few years have gone by

As a farmer could afford it he would increase his herd, sometimes it would be only another scrubby runt. But one had to know

[illegible]



[illegible]

what he was buying. One young homesteader came home with a [illegible] tail before he would buy one.

There were also times, though, that the farmer wished he [illegible] flank, closed his eyes, and milked as quickly as he could.

[illegible] bull.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Some years have gone by
[illegible]

In the 1920s the farmers' herds increased slowly. So did the [illegible] cows, at least, could be watered more easily and more often.

More people, too, came into the area. [illegible] Edmonton.

Dairy cattle such as Holsteins are tall with very little [illegible]

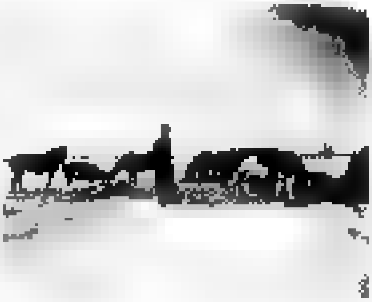
They are heavier in the hind quarters than in the front and are used for production of milk (although they would still grace the farmer's table when their usefulness as milk producers was over).

Farmers did not take their sick cows to a veterinarian — it was too far and they also could not afford it. If cows got bloated, some farmers would treat them with coal oil: a bottleful was given internally. The milk from the cow's next milking, though, could not be used since it tasted like coal oil. Serious cases of bloat were treated by puncturing the cow's stomach with a trocar.

During the thirties farmland continued to be cleared, but most of it was used for growing grain, and farmers did not have much tame pasture. Cows grazed in the bush pastures or along sloughs, but sometimes there was not much grass to be found. One farmer would sometimes remark to another that he wondered whether a neighbour's cattle were lying down because they were resting after having had their fill of grass or if they had become tired looking for it!

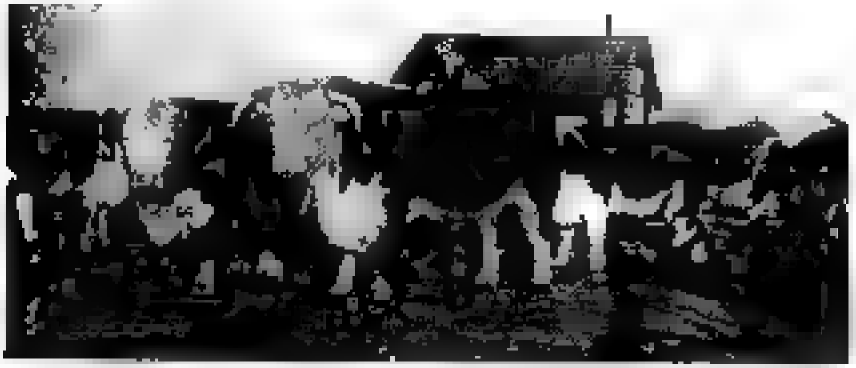
More years have gone by,
My son has his own little boy.

Although mixed farming had been the norm, towards the late forties a slow trend towards specialization developed. There had been many changes in animal, crop, and manure handling. Some farmers were no longer dependant on the cream cheque to make ends meet. Farmers realized that there were advantages to having only one or two types of farming.



Feeding time. 1940s

Henry Mast was probably the first to specialize in purebred Herefords, a type of beef cattle. Beef cattle are chunky and square-looking, with their weight spread evenly between the front and back quarters, mostly along the backbone. Henry began with a herd of about twelve cows with calves in 1945 and had increased it to about one hundred head two years later when, due to health reasons, he had to sell. The Masts exhibited their cattle and sold breeding stock. In the summer the cattle were pastured and brought home for the night; in the winter they were fed hay, grain and chop.



Herefords.

Henry Mast and his prize-winning Herefords.

Artificial Insemination (A.I.) the Bull on Wheels was introduced in 1957, resulting in a radical change in animal husbandry. The Vega Artificial Insemination Breeding Association, a cooperative of the surrounding farmers, was established at that time. Each member paid a ten-dollar membership fee. Albert Janssen was hired as A.I. technician. A farmer could now have his cows bred to select bulls to improve his herd in one or more specified areas. The first year mostly dairy cows were serviced. In 1961, Bob Janssen took over from his father and became the A.I. technician. In 1963, the cooperative was dissolved and Bob set up the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association. At that time seventy-five percent of all the A.I. service was performed on dairy cows. This changed the following year, when semen from exotic European breeds became available, although semen from the Netherlands could not be imported until about 1980 as the Dutch cattle had hoof-and-mouth disease.

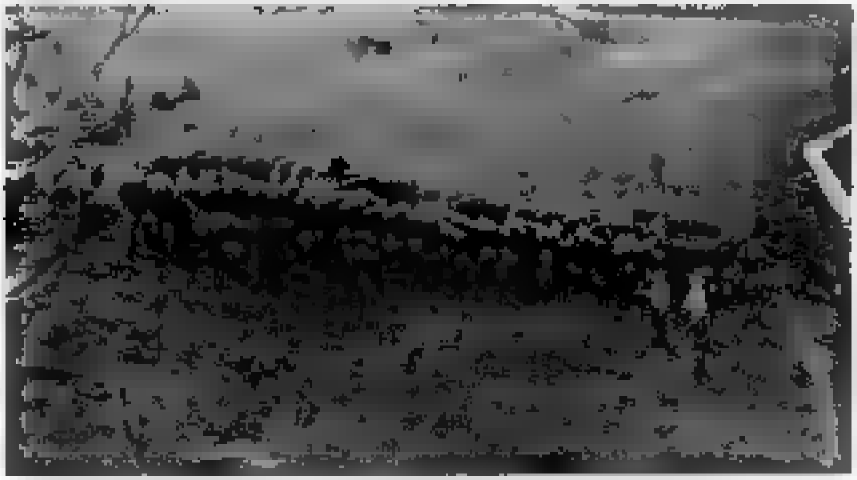
But Neerlandia farmers were a progressive group. They saw the advantages of doing their own A.I. They were always around the animals and thus could inseminate their cows at the optimal times rather than waiting for the A.I. technician who might not be available. After 1976, when the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association was dissolved, most farmers either kept a bull or did their own A.I.

A recent advancement in the cattle industry is embryo transplanting (ET). Embryos from one or two select cows are transplanted non-surgically into recipient cows. Case Van Beek began using this method in 1982 to improve his Simmental herd, averaging ten live offspring per select cow. At first he rented Barrhead Veterinary Clinic for the transplanting (done by an ET technician), but now select cows plus several recipients are taken to Nanton

For the dairy farmers a major change occurred after the creamery in Barrhead was overhauled around 1967 to include the processing of skim milk powder as well as butter. Except for those living along the mail route (their cream was picked up by the mailman and delivered to Barrhead), the cream was still being shipped in cans to Edmonton by truck. With the conversion of the Barrhead NADP plant, however, farmers could start shipping fluid milk. Many did not do so immediately, however, since it took a large initial investment to convert to a fluid milk operation. Art Peters was one of the first in the area to ship fluid milk (1968-69). After converting to fluid milk, the dairyman no longer had the skim milk by-product from separating the cream, so he could phase out his hogs and specialize in dairy farming.

Over the past years, the average dairy cow's milk production has increased considerably due to better feeding and careful breeding. In 1940, a cow's average production per lactation would be 8,000 pounds milk and 280 pounds butterfat. By 1960 it rose to 10,000 pounds milk and 360 pounds butterfat. By the 1980s, it increased to 14,000 pounds milk and 540 pounds butterfat. Among Neerlandia farmers, the Frisian Holstein is the most popular milk cow.

The beef industry initially included primarily Herefords and Black Angus; now some farmers have Charolais and Simmental (maternal breeds). The calves of the former are smaller and weaned at 400 to 450 pounds, the latter are larger and weaned at 700 to 800



Cattle feeding time on the L. H. Wierenga farm.

pounds because the cows are also good milk producers. Holstein steers are also raised for beef, mainly by the dairymen.

Neerlandia farmers who keep cattle have specialized into dairy or beef. The beef farmers generally have mixed farms, raising grain and hogs besides, whereas fluid milk is the main source of income for dairy farmers. Today, only a few farmers keep an individual cow to serve as the family's source of milk.

The Pound

Pound: an official government means to deal with stray animals; a fenced-off area on a Pound Keeper's property where stray animals were brought when they had been making a nuisance of themselves by going onto prohibited property.

During the pioneer years, livestock were free to roam the bush or follow the creeks to find grazing areas to their liking. But, unknown to the livestock owners, the Domestic Animals Act of 1920 and 1923 changed that. The Act required municipalities to have by-laws prohibiting animals from running at large. It seems, however, that the Neerlandia area had no such restrictions until 1929.

In November 1929, when Neerlandia was part of the M.D. of Shoal Creek, the Domestic Animals Act was passed by the Council as a by-law and Councillor Joseph Baker appointed Henry Kippers Sr. as Pound Keeper on the NE 10-62-3-5. As a result of the by-law, Neerlandia animals were now restricted. Most male animals were not to run at large or to enter another person's property. Where the property was surrounded by a lawful fence, no animal was to trespass and if other than the owner's animals were found within that fenced-off area, these animals could be brought to the nearest Pound.

The fence, however, had to meet certain regulations. For example, if made with rails or boards it could not be more than eighteen inches from the ground, it had to have posts not more than twelve feet apart, and the number of rails or boards could not be less than four. A wire fence had to have at least three strands on posts not more than sixteen-and-one-half feet apart. There were more regulations. the fence had to be eight feet away from grain crops and twenty feet away from haystacks. There were a few variations but the message was clear – make a good fence!

There was also a provision for the protection of animals from dogs. If a dog was off its owner's property and was "pursuing, worrying or destroying cattle, horses. sheep, pigs, or poultry," it could be killed

After an animal was impounded. the owner could redeem the animal by paying the Pound Keeper for expenses The amounts that could be charged had been stipulated in 1923 as follows (they were revised from time to time):

For capturing a male animal and bringing it to the Pound	$2 00
To the Pound Keeper for each day that he kept a:	
Stallion, bull, jack, or boar	$1 00
Ram or he goat	$ 35
Horse. mule, donkey, cattle. or swine	$ 50
Sheep or goat	$ 20
Goose	$ 10
Other expenses:	
For notifying owner	$ 50
For giving notice to the Department in Edmonton	$ 25
For each mile travelled	$ 10
For all notices	$1 00

The maximum to be charged for one animal was twenty dollars except in the case of male animals.

Failure to comply with the ordinance by unlawfully taking animals from the Pound could result in a maximum fine of one-hundred dollars If a male animal had been removed, there was the possibility of a thirty-day imprisonment instead of the fine

In August 1933. when Joseph Houwerda was councillor. Chris Leder was appointed Pound Keeper on the SE 4-62-3-5 As Chris Leder discovered, being a Pound Keeper was fraught with problems. He wrote the following letter on September 3. 1936, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs

> Sir
>
> On August 31 1936, a bull was delivered to the pound kept by me and as the owner was unknown to the party delivering the said bull I posted a notice as required by the Domestic Animals Act. The next day the owner asked me how he could redeem his bull as he had no money I advised him the only way according to the act was by getting two sureties as provided in the Sect. 31 of the Domestic Animals Act
>
> The owner of the bull went to the party who delivered the said bull to the pound and secured a written statement that he would not claim the $5.00 allowed under the Act. As I was not at home being away stooking at a neighbours place he gave this statement to my wife and took possession of his bull without permission and without paying the fees due
>
> Please advise me on a few questions.
>
> Can I or any pound keeper release any animals impounded without receiving the fees due as set forth in the Domestic Animals Act?
>
> If a pound keeper releases any animals without receiving the fees due, will he commit a breach of the Domestic Animals Act and is he liable to be prosecuted for such action?
>
> If any person takes possession of any animal or animals impounded without permission of the pound keeper and without making payment of the fees due is he committing an act against the Domestic Animals Act and is he liable to be prosecuted?

Should a pound keeper take action on a case like this or could he let the matter go?

Are there any amendements made to the Act after 1932? If so would you supply me with a copy of the amendments and oblige me

Respectfully yours,
C. Leder pound keeper
Neerlandia
Municipal District 610

It is not known what reply Chris Leder received.

In June 1946, Henry Kippers Jr. was appointed by Fred Casavant as Pound keeper on the NW 16-62-3-5 and remained such until 1955, when Neerlandia became part of the M.D. of Barrhead. In 1956, Joe Tuininga was appointed Pound Keeper by Bill Olthuis. The Pound was then located on the SE 28-61-3-5.

One of the animals brought to that Pound, a 600-pound Hereford steer, was never redeemed. After Joe posted a number of advertisements and a period of time had elapsed, the animal was sold. With the funds, expenses against the animal were paid and the balance was given to the general fund of the Barrhead municipality, since the owner remained anonymous.

Joe remained Pound Keeper until May 1976, when the Alberta government passed a new Stray Animals Act, which made provisions for an inspector to be in charge of stray animals within each County.

* * *

Loose Cattle

The neighbour's cattle would be in my crop every day — I had warned him and even milked his cows, but his boys never cared. So finally I got fed up with it. I walked the cows (about forty of them) to the Pound at Chris Leder's, but the bull refused to go so we put him in a wagon and brought him there. My neighbour was furious — he figured I would get the money he had to pay to get them back. I don't know how he finally did get the cattle back.

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Stuck in the Muck

One thing most homesteaders looked for when they settled this area was the availability of a good water source for their livestock. A creek or small lake served this purpose. Having a small lake or body of water on your land, however, could create some problems since your cattle could get stuck or even drown in them. This problem still exists to a small degree to this day. Most of the local lakes have muskeg all around the edges with virtually no bottom to it. Horses usually were smart enough to stay away from the soft ground but cows seemed to want to see how close they could get. The danger was usually the greatest in the spring since the cattle were longing for some green grass, and the first green shoots usually emerge around the lakes. The cattle would keep going closer to the water's edge as they looked for those new shoots, and then they would break through the frost and down they went. They usually managed to keep their heads above the water but if they remained in the cold water too long they would die of pneumonia

Mostly, however, there was no way they could get out themselves so they needed help. A horse was quickly harnessed and backed as close to the cow as possible. A chain was then tied around the neck of the submerged cow and to the singletree attached to the harness on the horse. The horse would drag the animal until she was once again safe on firm ground. Planks were often needed for farmers to walk on so they could get close enough to the animal to get a chain on it. The reason you attached the chain to the animal's neck was that this usually was the only part of her body that was above the water. Their necks are pretty tough though and I can't ever recall hurting the animal this way. I can recall one spring when in the 1950s six of our milk cows failed to come home for milking. As there was a lot of bush around yet at that time, we spent a considerable time looking for them. I happened to walk close to the lake located on the Gordon Tuininga farm now, and there were the six heads sticking out of the water. Boy, did Tupsy have to do some pulling that day. If my memory is correct all six cows survived this ordeal without any adverse effects. After that we generally tried to keep our cattle away from the lake until all the frost was completely out of the ground.

Lambert Tuininga

Horses

After using oxen for the first five years, many of the pioneers changed to horses. Some of the early settlers had horses called cayuses which were wild horses that came from the U.S.A. They were generally small, standing thirteen to fourteen hands high, although some were taller like Nanninga and Bt. Olthuis often broke horses for others in the area. The horses were used for transportation as well as for fieldwork in summer and to haul firewood in winter. They were thin and always looked tired. In the summer when they could graze, they would put on some weight. In the summer the farmers would cut the little bit of hay that grew and the oats they raised for green feed. The green grain would be cut and stooked, then left to dry. Later it was stacked and the whole bundle was fed to the livestock.

Some suggest that the early settlers bought light horses weighing around twelve hundred pounds because "the ground was so soft and wet. In the early days, heavier ones would get bogged down in it. After another five or six years the surroundings got more solid, and the farmers figured they should have heavier horses." In any case, in the early twenties, a man called Texas Johnson, who travelled around with a Belgian stallion, brought it to Neerlandia to breed the mares. From this cross between the light mares and the heavier stallion, they raised some fine workhorses, bigger and sturdier than the mares they were from.

Ray Wharton of Shoal Creek had a registered Percheron stallion and for some years his hired hand, Mr Jardine, "peddled his stud" — he travelled through the district with Wharton's stallion once every week for a few months, stopping at farms to see if the farmers wanted any mares bred to his horse. The fee was two dollars at the time of service, and five dollars when the mare showed signs of being in foal. The Anemas raised three colts on their farm that were sired by this stallion.

There was also a big roan Belgian standing at stud in the Hoffman's livery barn in Barrhead for a few years. This horse weighed more than a ton.

In [illegible] the farmers of Neerlandia again thought it was time to improve their horse population. They formed an association and got a subsidy under a livestock improvement plan. John Anema was elected to house and care for the stallion for three years and then the animal would belong to him. The farmers bought a jet black Percheron stallion for six hundred dollars. He was a well built three year old, but not a proven breeder. The farmers came to look at him one afternoon when he was brought to Neerlandia. One of them, a Groninger, after he had looked the horse over carefully, said, "What is his name?" "That is [illegible]," someone said. [illegible] This man knew but a few words in the English language so he did not understand it. He said, "He had better not be lazy." "[illegible]" he said. When he heard the man say "[illegible]" it had sounded to him like "[illegible]" which in Gronings means lazy. The men that heard him had a good laugh over it.

The farmers kept the horse for two seasons but were disappointed with the results. They got only a few colts from this stallion. After trying him out for two seasons, the farmers thought it best to sell the horse. It was later seen that the horse was not at fault. It was lack of exercise that made him perform so poorly. A farmer living east of Neerlandia bought him for very little money. He put a harness on the stallion and worked him along with his other horses in the field. The result was that before long he got a normal crop of colts sired by the stallion.

Since horses do not have a strong constitution, they suffered a variety of ailments. A horse that had been overworked or galloped for too long could become wind-broken. A wind-broken horse's breathing could be heard a long way off and it could work for only short periods of time.

To overfeed a horse with too much grain, especially when it was not working, could cause it to founder. A horse that was foundered walked stiffly on its front legs and was considered worthless. The stiff walk resulted from the horse trying to protect the swollen, tender underside (frog) of its hooves. Although a hardworking horse needed good feeding to be able to keep in condition, a farmer had to be careful not to feed too much grain to his horses.

* * *

If a farmer found his horse had gotten into the granary and overeaten, the suggested cure was to stand the horse in cold water. If the water was deep enough to cover its belly, the fermentation of the grain was supposedly slowed down.

* * *

Stall leg, a condition that caused the back legs to swell while standing in the stalls after work, affected some horses. This was not a serious ailment and would clear up after exercise. Colic was also a common ailment; when a horse was restless and seemed to try to kick its belly, the Dr. Bell's bottle would be taken out to treat it.

After working in cold weather, a horse would be either brought into the barn or covered with a blanket. If a horse was let out of the barn to drink in cold weather, the farmer had to be careful it did not get a chill. Furthermore, a horse had to be left to cool off after working hard before it was allowed to drink. If one was not careful a horse could develop pneumonia.

Bot flies were also a problem and many horses were lost because of botfly infestation. Since there was no veterinarian in the district, livestock diseases usually could not be treated very effectively. Some of the homesteaders, however, were handy with animals and often their home remedies were successful. Albert Van Oleghem had some experience in raising livestock and he often provided his neighbours with help in treating their sick animals. Besides the ever present Dr. Bell's, a liquid that was administered orally, farmers kept an assortment of salves and ointments which were rubbed on the sores that often developed from the chafing of harness or saddle.

The care of a horse's feet was also important. Hooves needed to be trimmed to prevent them from breaking. During the winter horses were sometimes fitted with shoes. Shoes provided stability in icy conditions and enabled horses to pull four or five times as heavy a load. Nevertheless, shoeing horses was not commonly done in Neerlandia. A horse that was used during the winter would sometimes develop a limp because a piece of ice had formed under the hoof; chipping this off would soon correct the problem.

The grooming of a horse was another part of its care. Many farmers brushed the animal periodically with a currycomb. The mane and tail were trimmed to the length preferred by the owner.

To get a horse ready to work in the field took time. First a collar was put around its neck. A poorly fitting collar would chafe the horse's shoulders, resulting in sore spots. A harness was then thrown onto the horse and buckled in place. Next a bridle was put on: first a bit was put into the horse's mouth and then straps were put over its head and ears (some horses' ears were touchy). An important part of the bridle was the blinders, which prevented a horse from seeing what was going on beside it and getting spooked.

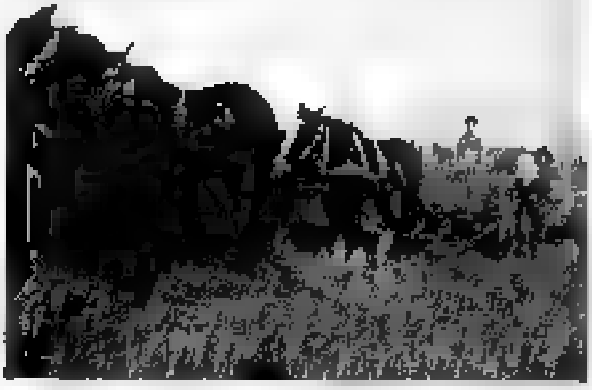
The reins, which were attached to the harness, were snapped onto the bit ring, enabling the farmer to control the horse while sitting on his vehicle or equipment. When more than one horse was used, the process of connecting them by reins became more complicated. Many farmers used up to eight horses at a time, and controlling them required skill.

When harnessing was completed it was time to hook the team up to the implement or wagon to be used. Most implements had a pole (tongue) that went between the team of horses. The horses were connected to each other with a neck yoke to which the tongue was tied. By this means a wagon or implement could be backed up. The horses were attached to the implement with traces that were hooked to a singletree, a doubletree, or an evener. When all this was accomplished the farmer would gather the reins in his hands and say "Giddy up!"

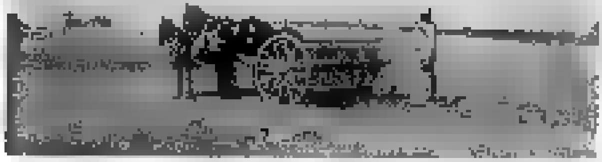
Today there are three groups of horses — draft, saddle and pony. Draft horses are heavy muscular animals, developed for doing heavy work. Saddle horses are lighter than draft horses and used for lighter work where the horse must move quickly and for pleasure riding. Ponies are the smallest and are generally ridden by children.

Work horses are no longer used in Neerlandia. The only horses kept are ponies and saddle horses, and these are used solely for recreational riding — a far cry from the pioneer days!

HORSES ON THE FARM



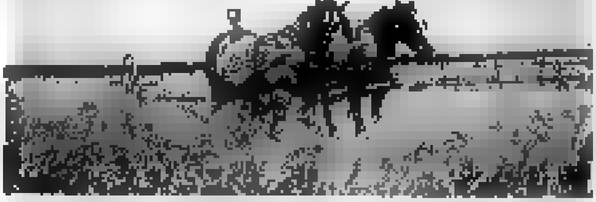
Horses were used for plowing, 1937



Seeding. Hendrik Jan ter Horst

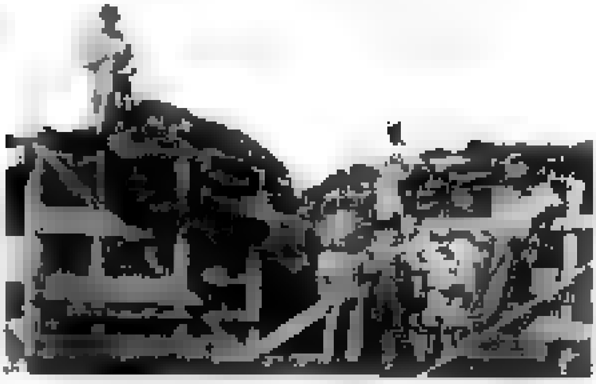
Pete Kooy cutting hay with mower. Ben Lievers with scythe, 1920s.

Harrowing. Hendrik Kannegieter, 1930s



Mowing grass. Hendrik Kannegieter.

Raking hay, Henry Michael, 1920s.



Taking hay bundles to the stack, 1950s.

Hogs

Remember the days when newborn piglets were brought to the house in a box (perhaps an old egg crate) and placed by the cook stove to dry off and warm up? And remember how the runt of the litter was taken over by the children to be nursed on a baby bottle? Or perhaps you remember that ornery sow that would not budge until the family dog sank his teeth into her rump and the time your dad had to spend sewing her up again. And remember how, after spending all that time and energy to lock her up, you would find the gate to her pen ripped apart and the old girl in the straw stack with her new litter? Those were the good old days.

This Little Piggie Stayed Home

During the first years of the settlement, no one in Neerlandia kept a hog. It seems that around 1917 a few farmers such as Willem de Groot, Rienk de Jager, and John Terpsma began raising hogs. John had a sizeable herd of six. The pigs were probably fed crushed wheat or barley, along with the contents of the household slop pail. Around 1920, when farmers began shipping cream, the pigs were fed any extra skimmilk that was available. In fact, during the twenties, nearly every farmer began raising hogs, since the arrangement worked very well for anyone who shipped cream.

These first hogs were likely mixtures of the red Duroc or mainly-black Berkshire breeds, called lard-type hogs because they have such a large amount of fat. They were usually very heavy, and since they had short legs, their bodies were close to the ground. These kind of hogs were favoured by the pioneers because the fat would be used for cooking and baking. The fat off the intestines and the stomach was used for making soap and some women also used the rind in soap-making. At least once a year, usually in the fall, one of the oldest sows was butchered for the family's use.

* * *

Bad Day for Hogs

One Neerlandia pioneer was fixing his fence so that his pigs would not get into the garden. Soon, though, a pig jumped over the fence. "Guess I'll put another rail on," thought the young farmer.

After doing that he went into the house, but when he came out again he saw another pig, a sow, trying to jump the fence. The farmer, being rather hot tempered, thought, "I'll fix him." He took a hammer and hit the pig on the head, but unfortunately killed the pig, so had to butcher it right away. Then, while he went to haul water for the rest of the butchering, another pig ate the spleen that was on the ground and choked on it. So that farmer lost two pigs that day as a result of his hot temper.

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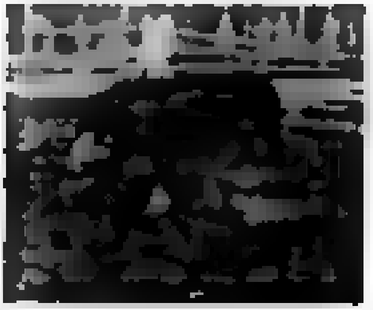


The two or three sows every farmer owned were usually penned up in a pig pasture enclosed by a rail fence. Only a few farmers could afford to keep a boar, so the sows had to be herded or brought to the nearest boar for breeding. [illegible] owned a pure-bred white boar. Sows farrowed usually only one litter a year. When the farmer saw the sow picking up gatherings of straw, he knew she was building a nest, preparing for little ones. Straw stacks also provided a good shelter for the farrowing sows. What excitement when the sows farrowed — one never knew what the piglets would look like and they were always varied in appearance. Some had a combination of three different colours on their skin. Litter size varied greatly due to the uncertain farrowing conditions, but a litter of eight or ten was considered very good.

This Little Piggie Went to Market

When trucking began out of Neerlandia during the twenties, farmers began shipping hogs to Edmonton. Hogs, though, were still only a sideline for Neerlandia farmers, who were shipping mainly cream. These hogs were raised for meat, so over the years a leaner animal was developed. Crossbred pigs of the red Tamworth and white Yorkshire breeds were raised as well. Both of these are bacon type hogs, since they have more meat than fat on them. At one time during those years, the packing plants discouraged farmers from raising mixed breeds because they wanted no hogs with black hair, claiming that black hairs were rooted too deep in the pig's skin.

To judge whether hogs were ready for market, many farmers simply eyeballed the hogs. Others used a string that was [illegible] three inches long to measure the hogs behind their front legs. If the string fit exactly around the pig's body, it was ready for market and shipped. One farmer is reported to have had a hole in the barn wall that he used to judge the hogs — if they went through the hole, they were too small to ship. One farmer had a gate just the right size for a market hog to squeeze through; any smaller hogs were not ready for market.

* * *

Bird Diet

During the 1930s the Tuininga boys caught crows and threw the carcasses into the pig pasture for the pigs to chew on. The crows' feet were brought to school where the boys were paid a few cents per pair. The pigs got used to eating the crows and soon started attacking the chickens running loose in the pen — they had developed a taste for birds.

* * *

When it was not possible to have grain crushed, it was boiled for the pigs. For many years no minerals were given to the pigs. Being outside they got the necessary minerals by rooting in the dirt, but farmers gradually began using additives. One of the first, called tankage, was a forerunner of hog concentrates. It began to be produced during the forties and it stank worse than the pigs. It was sprinkled on the hogs usually with a tobacco tin. Raw cod liver oil was given to weaners and [illegible] to farrow. Reduced iron, a powder, was given to baby pigs when the sow and young were kept indoors or if the piglets looked a bit pale.

Even though the pigs kept outside were hardier, they were still subject to some diseases. They would contract a type of pneumonia known as "the thumps" and also suffered from erysipelas and atrophic rhinitis. Many sows had litters afflicted with [illegible]. Besides that, the magpies could make a mess of some razor backed sows who were weak and skinny from having raised large litters. And on rare occasions a bear would kill a pig.

This Little Piggie is Pampered

By the 1960s there were many changes in hog production: specialization had developed. Beginning during the sixties, many Neerlandia farmers began raising hogs on a larger scale. Barns were built and the hogs were moved indoors. Today many hog barns have been built using the latest technology and with all available labour saving devices. As the hogs were moved indoors, manure handling progressed from shovel to barn cleaner to in-ground pits. In any case, the smell went from bad to worse but that's progress! Another result of being kept confined is the chance of disease spreading more rapidly among the hogs.

As a result of the latest technology, electric mills have become quite common, grinding and mixing grains and minerals to achieve the proper feed based on feed analyses and computer printouts. The result has been the production of a top grade hog. Several of the area's farmers have been in the top twenty in the provincial grading while others have entered winning carcasses in the Barrhead Fair.

A large number of local hog farmers specialize in finishing hogs, while about one-quarter operate farrow to finish operations. The farmers raise crossbred hogs of mainly the Hampshire, Lacombe, Landrace and Yorkshire breeds. An average hog farmer ships about 500 finishing hogs a year. Besides raising grain, hog farming has become a main enterprise of most farmers in Neerlandia.

Poultry

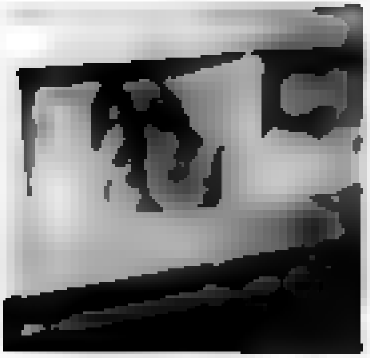
The poultry business in this area started in 1912 when the Oldegbers and the Terpsmas brought a few chickens with them to Neerlandia. There were probably hundreds of wild prairie chickens and ruffed grouse in the bush but domestic birds were few in number. In the winter the early settlers kept their few birds in log barns with the cows and horses. The birds would roost on partitions between the animals overnight. During the day they would scratch through the straw to pick up whatever grain they could find.

[illegible] inspector would have to come back for more samples

[illegible] cross-breeds as pure strains

[illegible] outside to let them out in a fenced pasture

[illegible]



[illegible]

would have their combs and wattles cut off as well. This operation, done with sharp scissors, did not bother the birds and even increased their performance during winter months since often a bird's comb or wattle would freeze in the cold laying house. The spare cockerels were sold to other hatching egg flocks. Heat was not used in those years to keep the barns warm. In the late thirties and early forties artificial light in the form of a coal oil lantern hung from the ceiling was used for a few hours in the evening and to give the birds a longer day and stimulate egg production.

The birds that were on the R.O.P. program were handled with more care and attention because they were worth more money. The nests used were trap nests that closed when a hen went into it. Nests were checked every half hour to let out the birds who had laid an egg. Eggs were numbered and recorded on charts in the egg room. Better performing birds had many of their offspring kept for the following year. The purpose of R.O.P. was to produce birds of better meat quality and birds that laid more eggs in a year.

In the forties and fifties a lot of pullorum was found in some areas of Alberta. All birds to be used for hatchery egg supply had to be blood tested and banded. The poultry inspectors who came to Neerlandia spent two weeks in the area each time since there were many hatching egg flocks there. Most flocks were small — from one hundred to four hundred birds. By 1975 this blood test was discontinued because the county was declared pullorum free. Gradually the number of poultry farms decreased, although the size of the flocks increased.

By the 1980s flock size has increased greatly. Barns are warmed by natural gas or heat units. Neerlandia has several white egg producers with all birds in cages, two producers hatching eggs for broiler type birds, two broiler producers, one rooster producer, and a started pullet operator.

Which mother would you prefer, the goose or the turkey?

White egg producers keep flocks of 5000-10,000 White Leghorns. The chickens are kept in wire or plastic cages which hold from three to six birds each.

A bin near the barn holds ten to twenty tons of feed — mostly wheat and supplements — and an auger brings it from the bin into the feeders in the barn which are regulated by clocks. When a feeder is full, an electric eye above it shuts it off. Each cage has a nipple drinker to supply water.

A bird lays approximately twenty dozen eggs in twelve months. They get about thirteen to sixteen hours of light a day, and since there are no windows in the barns the farmer can control light for better production. Eggs are collected twice a day. The eggs roll onto a belt and a motor by the header pulls the eggs to the front of the row. The header has a finger which moves the eggs to the center of the egg table where they are packed into crates.

There is a plastic belt under each row of chickens which collects droppings; the belt is rolled twice a week for cleaning. The droppings go into a pit under the floor at the end of the barn, and the pit is emptied every two and one half to three months. There is less work involved in this operation than when the farmers had only one thousand birds but had to feed them by hand and clean the droppings out with a fork.

All segments of the poultry industry are controlled by provincial marketing boards and only farmers who have a quota can keep flocks. Imported heavy-cross birds are used for the broiler trade although there are still some light-heavy crosses (dual-purpose birds) in the country. Besides these domestic birds there are some wild prairie chickens and ruffed grouse and many Hungarian partridges in the area.

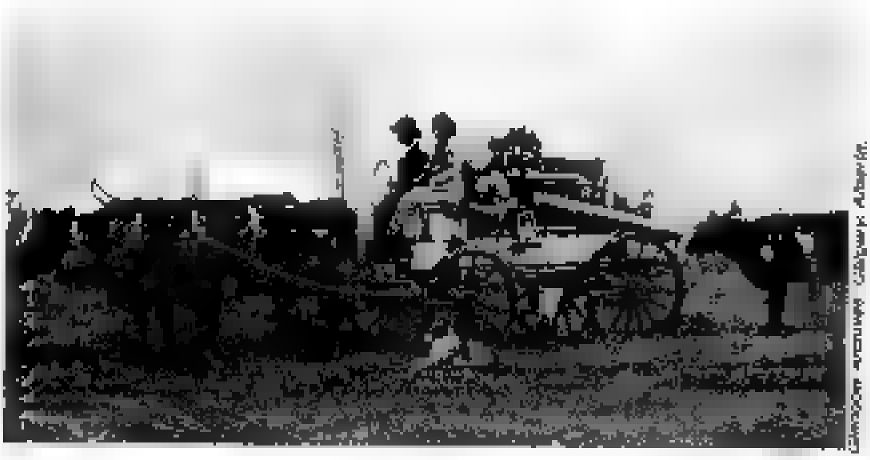
Trails and Travel

TRANSPORTATION

Dutch Settlement

"Before families from the Netherlands established the farming settlement of Neerlandia in 1912, the area was an isolated wilderness. Transportation routes were poor and water saturated the uncleared land. These harsh realities did not prevent the Dutch settlers from recognizing the potential of the area. Their devotion to Christian values and belief in the Calvinist work ethic contributed to the success of the agricultural industry in the district. Today, model farms and a strong Dutch-Canadian community are the results of their efforts."

If one is travelling west down Highway 18, about six miles past Freedom, he is likely to miss this sign marking an historic site. Another half-mile farther west is a sign indicating that the approach road to Neerlandia, Secondary Highway #769 N., is coming up on the right. Within fifteen minutes, having driven on smooth pavement through rolling countryside, the traveller will have reached the Dutch settlement, an effortless and pleasant drive making it difficult to imagine that at one time coming to Neerlandia was an arduous journey.

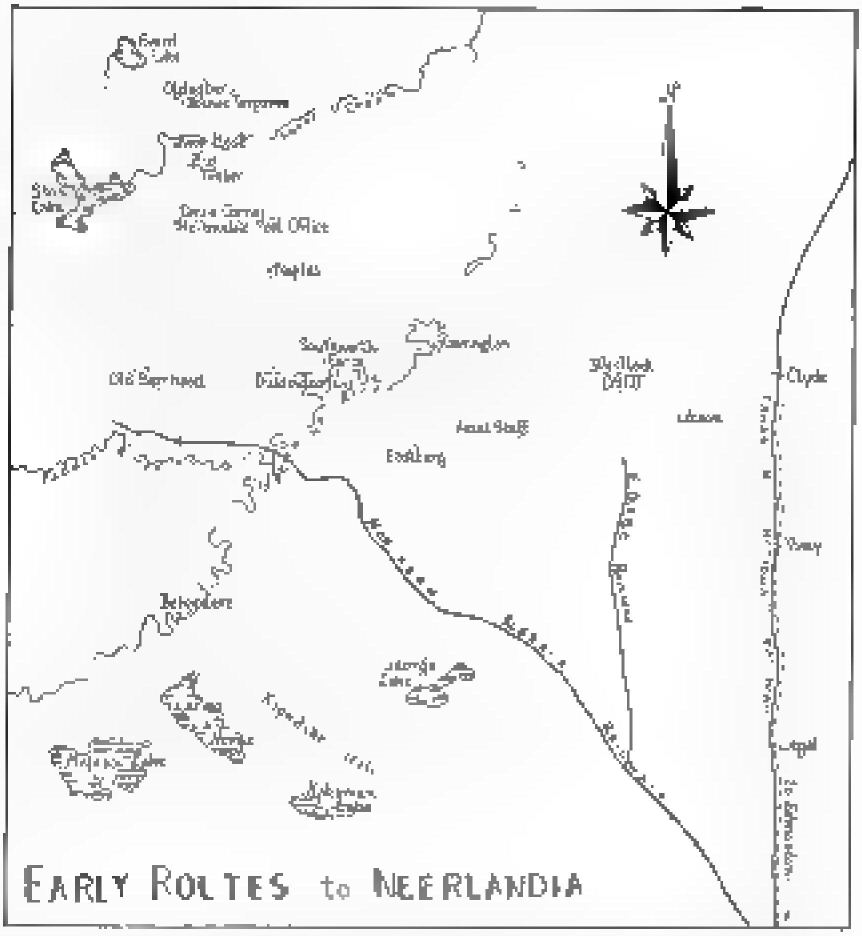

Homesteaders.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta

During the spring of 1912 three Dutch immigrant families left Edmonton for Township 62, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian. They were Jan and Johanna Oldegbers with their son John, Koop P. and Minke Mast with their son Henry, and Douwe and Beltje Terpsma with five of their children, Florence, Ada, Arthur, Tena, and Norman. It took them approximately two to three weeks to cover the distance of ninety miles. There were many reasons why this journey took so long to complete. First of all, the means of transportation necessitated a slow pace. The families travelled with ox-drawn wagons and the men were inexperienced in handling or driving these animals. The oxen were bought in anticipation of the trip as the people, while they were in the city, went about on foot.

The Jan Oldegbers family and the Koop P. Mast family travelled together to their homesteads. At first John Anema and Simon Tiemstra accompanied them with horse teams. However, it soon

proved impossible to use the horses as they sank into the mud up to their bellies. The two men left the group and returned to Edmonton with the horses. Jan then purchased an ox and a bull to pull his wagon and the group travelled on with two ox-drawn wagons. It is believed that they followed the Klondike Trail from Edmonton in a northwesterly direction through Belvedere and continued on the Trail in a northerly direction until they reached Township 60, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian. Upon leaving the Klondike Trail they would have gone in a northeasterly direction, probably entering Township 61 through Section 3. This assumption as to their route is based on the likelihood that they travelled basically the same route as the surveyor of Township 62, Allan Findlay, in 1910. He reports going north on a road from the Mellowdale Post Office, which was located at the NE 22-60-3-5. If followed, this road would run into the trail beside which these first three families had their cabins.



EARLY ROUTES to NEERLANDIA

Douwe Terpsma and his family took a different route to their homestead. They took the St. Albert Trail north from Edmonton and then continued on the main road north all the way to Clyde. They were only as far as Morinville, however, when they encountered muddy roads. After reaching Clyde they headed west over rough roads and trails through Edison, Rossington, and Dusseldorf. A short distance from Dusseldorf they headed north through the Naples district and then, going cross-country in a northwesterly direction, entered Township 61 through the Big Timber southeast of 14-61-3-5.

The trip for all three families was a nightmare. The trails were winding, going through bush country with sloughs and creeks with no bridges, and on the trail itself were mud holes and fallen trees. Travelling as they did in the spring, the way was more difficult as they had to go through or around the mud holes, sloughs, and creeks rather than pass over them with a sleigh, as was possible in the winter season. Undoubtedly rainy conditions and spring run-off made crossing the Pembina River a hazardous undertaking. All the obstacles encountered meant time spent in unloading the wagons, pulling them through the soupy mud holes or creeks, and then reloading them again. It has been recounted that the Oldeghers group used logging chains and both teams to get a single wagon at a time through the sloughs. Often furniture or trunks would be left behind at a farm or in a shack along the way and most of these possessions were never retrieved.

Stuck on the trail

[illegible] E. Brown Provincial Archives of Alberta

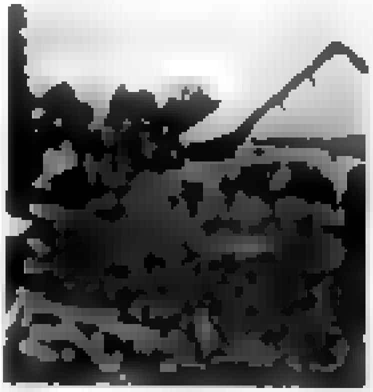
In order to lighten the load the women and children, who may usually have had the privilege of riding on the wagons, would have had to walk through the difficult places. Imagine the women holding their skirts up in a vain attempt to keep them from getting soaked and caked with mud. Shoes and stockings were doubtless soggy and wet and, because of this, perhaps the children were allowed to go barefoot at times. In addition the swarms of mosquitoes and other insects made things miserable for man and beast. No regular stopping places are mentioned in connection with those who made this first trip to Neerlandia. It can be presumed that they slept either outside, perhaps under the wagons and maybe the women and children in them, or in empty and abandoned barns or cabins. It is also likely that some help in the way of food and supplies for them and their teams was given by farmers along the way, these farmers being familiar with their Christian tradition [illegible] did not travel on Sunday, their day of rest. One can easily understand why under these circumstances it was a task to those who were together from Edmonton to bring them to their homestead quarters in [illegible] ship. It must have been the condition of these people upon their arrival at their cabins [illegible] a weary group with soiled clothing and tired, whose harder tasks were yet ahead.

The settlers who came later drove horses or ox-drawn wagons and sleighs and followed the same route as the carpenters who went to their homesteads. Due to the experiences of the first farmers they decided to avoid travelling in the spring. They went through the small towns of St. Albert, Morinville and Clyde, reportedly on fairly good clay roads. From Clyde they headed west on a graded road meandering through bush country with fewer settlements. The further west they went, the poorer the road and trails became. The first day from Edmonton it was possible to do thirty miles but each day following the mileage would decrease. The distance that could be covered depended a lot on the weather. For example, if it rained on the way, they would take shelter in any building they could find until the sun shone again. Approximately nine miles from Clyde was the town of Westlock and about ten miles farther west was a small town called Kensington. At Kensington the Pembina River had to be crossed. From [illegible] to [illegible] this was done by riding across on a current-driven ferry. In 1926 a wooden decked bridge with a steel structured overhead was built between sections 4 and 9 of Township 60, Range 1 West of the 5th Meridian. This fifteen foot wide bridge was built low and was often within inches of being under water during spring run-off. In the winter, if the snow was melted off the bridge, the deck had to be packed with snow before it was crossed. If there was more than one sleigh and team waiting to go across, the teams would be doubled up to pull each sleigh over individually.

After crossing the Pembina, the road followed [illegible] north of the corner of the river for about six miles to the settlement of [illegible] along the lake. While there were a number of stopping places here used not only on the settlers' first trip to their homesteads but also on subsequent trips to Westlock and Edmonton, the stopping place most often frequented by the Dutch settlers was the Richard Southworth farm, SE 8-61-3-W5. The road went right through their farm, the barn being on one side and the house on the other side. The trip from Edmonton to Neerlandia could be accomplished in good weather with a team of horses in three or four long days.

* * *

Ruth Southworth Brandon was a teenager at the time when the first Dutch settlers went through in 1911 and 1912. Her family provided the land-seekers with lodging and also prepared meals for them. Ruth Brandon recalls that some returned with their families a few weeks later and again stayed at their place. Mr. Southworth, who was religious himself, enjoyed the singing of the Dutch and viewed them as fine, good-living people. Ruth remembers a Mr. Mast



Richard Southworth farmyard

holding a worship service in Dutch in their home one Sunday, and also times when Dick Baker would play piano during his stays. Elsie (Munsterman) Thompson, whose parents also had a stopping place in Dusseldorf, recalls a Willem de Groot who walked to their place from Clyde with a grandfather clock tied to his back.

* * *

When the train went through to Clyde in 1912 and to Westlock in 1913, many of those who came to Neerlandia could take this faster means of transportation. The trip to Clyde from Edmonton took about three-and-a-half hours and from there those bound west could take Marshall's Stage. This stage, capable of carrying six to eight passengers and their luggage, was a democrat pulled by a team of mules or horses. Around 1915 Marshall also began using a truck with two double seats and a van compartment in the back for the luggage. In the winter a covered sled was used for transporting the passengers. Initially the stage went as far as Dusseldorf, where the driver and passengers would spend the night at one of the stopping places. The next morning the driver would return to Westlock. Those going to Neerlandia had to walk the remaining fifteen to sixteen miles, carrying whatever luggage they might have.

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A Trip To Edmonton

I stayed at home for awhile after George was born (1915) to help Mother, but I had to be back at my job in the city by the fourth of November. I had to walk to Dusseldorf to catch the stage. I left during the day but I got lost in the Naples area. I finally found the right road again, but by then it was late at night. My hands were freezing cold and icicles were hanging from my skirt. I finally got to a stopping place in Dusseldorf at 2:30 in the morning. There was a girl downstairs in the kitchen talking to a policeman. She motioned me upstairs where there was a room with a stovepipe coming through the floor from downstairs. I was so cold I stood beside the stovepipe and wrapped my skirt around it to warm up. I had nothing to eat and didn't sleep much. At four or five o'clock I heard the bells of Marshall's stage. Charlie Marshall and Johnny Finch were driving the sleigh with mules. It was too cold to sit on the sleigh so I walked behind it to keep warm. At Rossington a horse team was waiting on the other side of the river. We had to go across by boat, which had to break ice as it went. With the other sleigh we traveled to Clyde, where I caught the train to Edmonton. A minister on the train shared his lunch with me.

Florence (Terpsma) Baker

* * *

The last part of the trip, which took a day to complete, was the most difficult as the countryside was now covered with timber and the trail was rough. It went around big trees and through sloughs, mud holes, and creeks. Ben Klevers relates that they measured the depth of the mud with a long stick to see if it would be safe for the horses to get through. Some settlers may have followed a road which went west at the north to Old Barrhead, where the stage route also later ended. Most of [illegible] seem to have taken a trail northward about one and one half miles west of [illegible]. This trail went north to Naples and then in a northwesterly direction to Herman Temstra's farm at the NW [illegible]. If they had taken the road to Old Barrhead they would have gone north from there four [illegible] miles, [illegible] east for one mile, and then gone north again at either the [illegible] after [illegible] to the [illegible]. This trail was described by the author of [illegible] in a couple of places and somewhat [illegible] up [illegible].

No matter where [illegible] was entered, it was acknowledged that the entrance to Neerlandia was the location of Herman Temstra's farm. From Temstra's north for a distance of approximately three miles the trail was referred to as Jasper Avenue. This was a tongue-in-cheek parallel to one of the main roads in Edmonton. Most of the early settlers lived along this trail and it was the only way into Neerlandia for about sixteen years. It was the heart of the Dutch settlement and in the same period a [illegible]. Jasper Avenue was a straight narrow trail with brush on either side and had the inevitable mud holes. The mud holes were quite a nuisance as they could not be gone around and so everyone went through them.

[illegible] the trail could be impassable for a couple of days or one could get through on the trail. When the trail was wet after a rain or in the spring, it would often happen that the wagons would sink axle deep in the mud. Under such early road conditions a team of oxen was preferable to a team of horses. The oxen were better equipped physically to go through wet muddy spots because of their cloven hooves. A horse's hoof, when sunk into the wet ground, caused a suction action which made it very difficult for the horse to pull it back out. On the other hand, when an ox sank into the ground it was able to pull itself out. It was physically able and strong enough to, but the question would often be: did it want to? Herman Temstra had to deal with this temperament of the oxen one day. He was on Jasper Avenue about one and one half miles north of his place when his team of oxen which were hitched to a wagon got stuck in a mud hole. He used his whip with little effect as the oxen lay down in the mud hole and would not get up. In his frustration he said, "The [illegible] is in the oxen and before he gets out of the oxen [illegible]." He then walked home and had lunch. After the meal was over his wife suggested that he should go back and get the oxen off the trail. When he returned to the mud hole the oxen had of their own volition gotten out of their predicament and were grazing beside the road. Another homesteader commented, "One thing I learned is that an ox would not back up." However, this was probably due to the fact that an oxen team was not fitted with a breeching harness as was a horse team.

Approximately one mile north of Temstra's, [illegible] Creek flowed through, cutting across Jasper Avenue. At first there were two flattened logs laid across the banks at the edge of the creek for those crossing on foot. During spring run-off the water level would rise and stream over these logs. Another problem when fording the creek were its steep banks. Often the oxen had to be coaxed and entering the water. Once through the teamster would have to goad them into scrambling up the opposite bank. Some people would get off their wagons, ford across on foot, and then the oxen and wagon would struggle across without the additional load. A few settlers would choose to remain on board the wagon while it crossed. Ben Lievers recalled his family's first crossing of Shoal Creek. Alice Lievers was sitting on the wagon with her baby and asked, "Where is the bridge?"

"There!" replied Lievers and pointed to a log laying across. "We have to go through the creek."

"Oh, let me off!" she replied.

"Can you walk over that log with your baby on your arm?"

"No! No!"

"Then sit tight and hold on!"

Fortunately they went through without any mishap. Later the creek banks were sloped and a timber bridge was put in. This bridge consisted of two logs about ten feet apart laid across from bank to bank with additional logs fastened on top of them. Often the creek would flood in the spring and be completely impassable.

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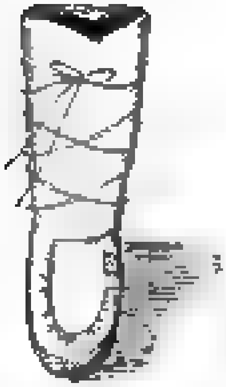

Folded-over moccasin

Shoes, Boots, and Rubbers

In the pioneer days of Neerlandia, the winters were usually cold with lots of snow. Homes having only one-board floors were cold so most housewives wore felt shoes. In the fall the children got warm footwear, usually moccasins with low rubbers to cover them. If the snow was dry only moccasins were worn — generally with two pairs of socks or stockings and felt insoles in them. But if it was mild weather rubbers were worn over them. Many also wore felt shoes with low rubbers over them. Sometimes shoe pacs were worn. They were of a harder leather and since they had a double sole sewn on the bottom could be worn without rubbers. Rubber boots were usually worn in the spring (and all winter by some people), but were not warm.

Later felt socks with low rubbers came into use and also buckled and lined cloth overshoes to wear over dress shoes. Some people wore several pairs of socks and only low rubbers with felt soles in them.

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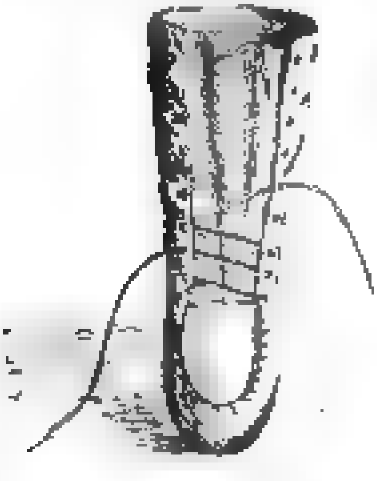


moccasin

Shoe pac

Shoe pac

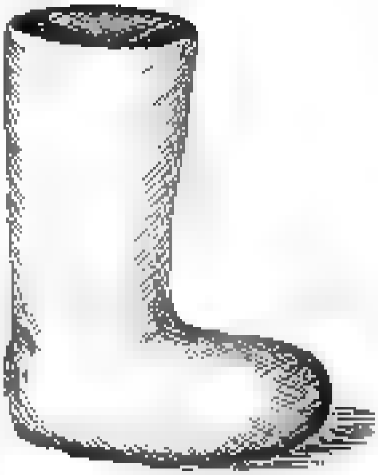
* * *

Footwear

In the early years of the settlement many families could not afford footwear for all family members year-round. Out of necessity the children went barefoot from summer until the first frost. The children who had to travel daily to school on foot would often get blisters on their feet. The footwear available was made of leather, canvas, felt, or rubber. Sunday shoes were a real luxury and these black patent leather shoes worn by the girls were generally received through boxes of goods from the Red Cross or The Salvation Army. Wooden shoes, which were worn in the homeland of the Netherlands, were uncommon as the proper type of wood for their construction was not available in the area.

* * *

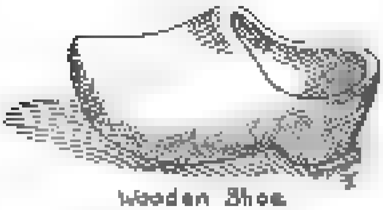
gum boot



felt boot

over boot

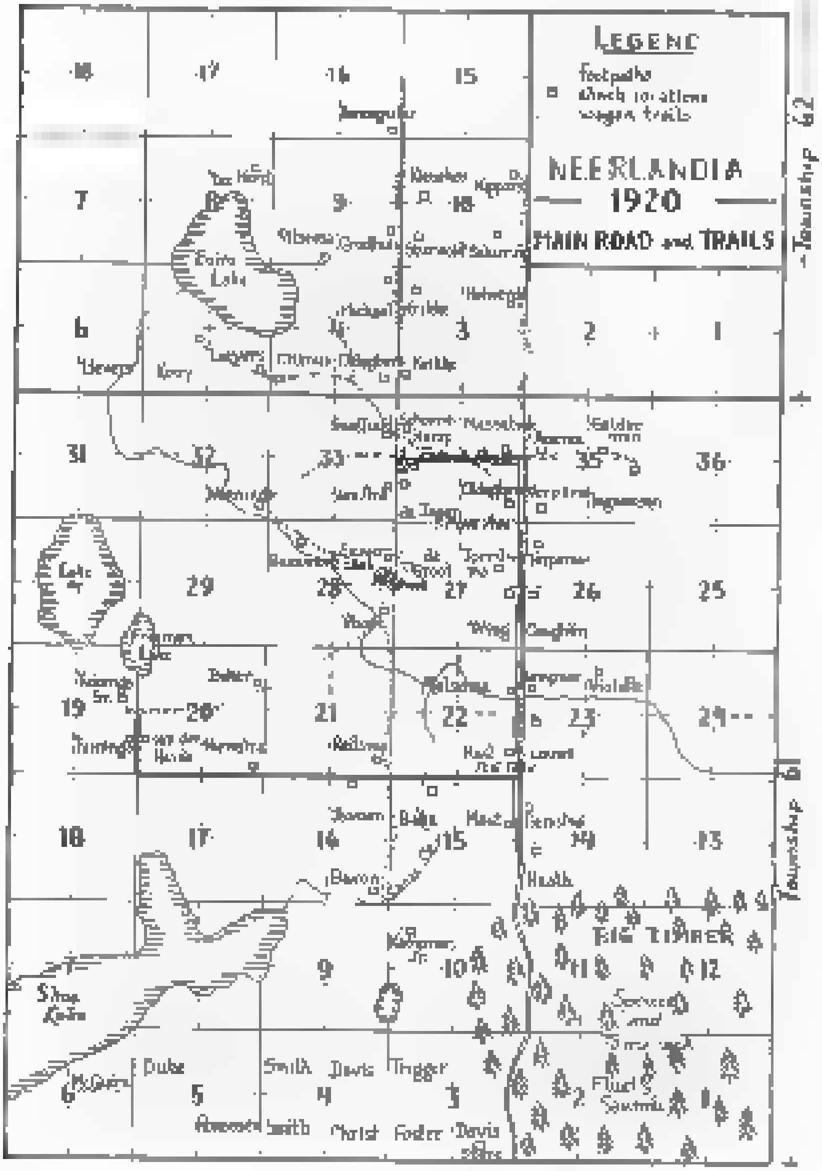
felt boot



Wooden Shoe

rubber

The original surveys of the land show road allowances every mile north and south and every two miles east and west. A road allowance was sixty-six feet in width but Jasper Avenue and the other early roads were only about twenty feet wide, with about ten feet of dirt down the centre. These roads or trails were meant for one-way traffic. Through the joint efforts of the settlers a roadway would first be cleared of bush with axes, then the stumps would be grubbed, and finally the trees would be burned off. Roots at the base of the trees would be removed but their lateral roots and also those from trees beside the roadway would be left and occasionally cause problems. The roots would become exposed on the roadway when ruts formed around them, causing the wagons to jolt when passing



over the top of them. Due to the hard work involved in making a rough road and the other tasks the homesteaders had to accomplish to even survive, there were only a few main roads. Jasper Avenue went north from Tiemstra's about three miles to the northeast corner of SE 34-61 3-5. The road then went west for a mile to the northwest corner of SW 34-61. This was called the Church Road since the church was built on the northwest of SW 34-61 in 1915. This road west was a forced road in that it was not on the surveyed road allowance. It was decided not to put the road through on the allowance one-half mile north because of the muskeg on the NW 34-61.

There was also a short trail from the church to the NE 28-61 when the school was built there in 1918. There was a wagon trail which entered Township 62 at the southwest of section 3, but this was not a main road until much later. East of Section 34 there was a trail chopped out in a fashion typical of other minor trails wherever the bush was lightest. This was a winding trail which led to the John Gelderman (NE 35-61) and Case Ingwersen (SE 35-61) farms. One more main trail came from the west along sections 15, 16, and 17 of Township 61, and connected with Jasper Ave. at the northeast corner of Koop Mast's quarter (NE 15-61). These were the main routes travelled by the homesteaders because they were the only ones generally passable. They were used to go to the store at Davis Corner and later to the Co-op store, to church, to school, and to visit one another. The roads were also the settlers' line of communication, as all messages had to be given in person.

Other ways through the Townships were merely rough trails which cut across quarters and would be cut through wherever the clearing would be easiest with little attention paid to road allowances. A good example of this was a trail which cut across the Jan Oldegbers farm. This trail exited his bush at the northwest corner and went into the NW of 34 at the southeast corner. The trail ended at his married daughter's farm — the Schoonekamps. Other trails were actually only footpaths followed by school children and used by all when the main roads were impassable by wagon. There was one footpath given the name of Pine Avenue which went west from Jasper Avenue along the southern edge of 34-61 to the school at the NE 28-61.

* * *

A good illustration of what could happen when one did not follow a trail and attempted to take a shortcut occurred in the early twenties. Henry Kannegieter decided to cut through the muskeg south of section 35-61 3-5. He was on foot and before long found himself stuck in the bog. He became frightened and start yelling for help. Fortunately Jan Oldegbers was haying in the area and heard Henry's cries. Upon his rescue Henry expressed his fear that he had imagined himself stuck for good and that he would never see "my Mina", his wife, again.

* * *

When the Church Road was built one-half of a mile south of the surveyed road allowance, Rients de Jager and Jan Oldegbers each donated four acres of their land for the roadway. It initially went as *far as Jasper Avenue but later farmers further to the east wanted the road to continue to their farms. To keep the road straight, the farmers on the south side of the road would have to give up some of their land. So Joe Holwerda came to Douwe Terpsma and asked if he would give the four acres needed to build the road. Douwe was willing, but he already had two acres cleared there and a fence up along the boundary of his quarter. Joe said they would give him two wires back for a new fence. Since Jan Arema would have the benefit of keeping Terpsma's original fence, he agreed to place a rail along the top of the new fence. The rail was needed so moose would see it and jump over the fence instead of through it. The road was put through to John Geldermann's homestead (NE 35-61-1-5), but the new fence never had more than two wires.*

* * *

Until 1928 Neerlandia was under the jurisdiction of Local Improvement District (L.I.D.) of Shoal Creek #618. Road foremen would be appointed by the provincial government for the various areas within the L.I.D. In Neerlandia Joe Holwerda became the first road foreman and he was responsible for looking after road improvements. The L.I.D. would supply the equipment needed and initially this was a horse-drawn grader and a scraper. Grading in the settlement began around 1918 and the Church Road and Jasper Avenue were the first roads worked on. First of all a furrow would be plowed about fourteen feet from the centre on each side of the roadway, creating a v-shaped ditch. The grader would then bring the dirt up to the centre of the road and level it. This extra dirt down the centre and the furrows on each side of the road would serve to give the road some elevation.

Generally three men and three teams of horses would be hired for the grading job. Two four-horse teams (handled by one or two drivers) would pull the grader on the straight pull and a two-horse team with one teamster would be on the side hitch. Before the use of leaning wheels on graders, the graders had a tendency to go out of line as the blade would push the hind end of the grader over. The team on the side hitch, which was hooked toward the back of the grader, had to compensate for this by pulling in the opposite direction. These horses had to walk a bit sideways whenever the side draft became too strong and if the same team did this job for more than a few days the hair would wear off their legs and open sores would develop. The man driving the side hitch team had to walk all day whereas the driver (or drivers) of the straight pull teams would be able to sit or stand on the grader. Joe Holwerda stood on the grader and operated the two hand-turned wheels, which controlled the depth and slant of the blade, also known as the moldboard.

* * *

The story is told that Arthur Terpsma was driving his father's team on the side hitch for one whole week. When Douwe saw what his horses' legs looked like he said, "No more, or not again until the sores are healed." This of course caused a standstill until Jacob Olthuis agreed to drive the side hitch team. After a week he too thought it should be someone else's turn. The next morning, on *hour earlier than regular starting time. Jacob hitched his team to the straight pull and sat down on the seat and waited patiently. When John Anema, who usually drove a straight pull team, arrived he was quite surprised to see Jacob sitting in his seat. Soon anger overtook the feelings of surprise and it took Holwerda about an hour to straighten things out and begin the grading.*

Leaning wheel grader. Sophie Anema, Joe Holwerda on grader. c. 1931

* * *

Often a scraper, which was similar in appearance to a big scoop shovel with two handles and pulled by two horses, would be used to fill the mud holes. This scraper with two handles was called a slip and could move one-half of a yard of dirt at a time. A scraper with a single handle and pulled by four horses was called a fresno. Dirt would be scraped into the bucket from the ditch or a field and dumped into the hole.

Leaning wheel grader.

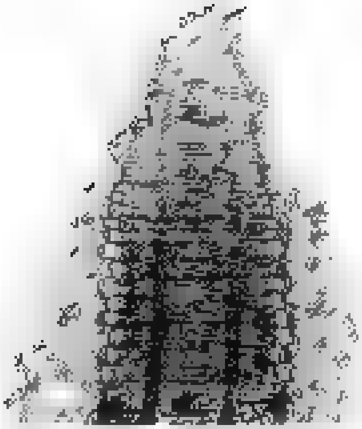
A road drag was used periodically to smooth the ruts created by wet conditions. A drag was made of timbers and had a blade attached to it. The blade could be angled a bit with levers. The grader, which was shared with other areas in the district, was not always available and the road drag was used as a substitute. It could be operated by one man with a team of horses, which made it easier

and more convenient to use than a grader when the need arose. Many different men operated the drag, as maintaining the roads was a community effort. The men and horses who worked on the roads were paid by the province's Public Works Department.

Grading was done when the roads were dry; the grader was not used to push snow. In the winter some people would make their own snowplows or the snow would just be packed down with use. Due to all the bush, drifting was not a problem. In relation to road conditions the presence of frost for six months of the year was a blessing, as it eliminated the problem of traveling through mud. In spite of these early efforts toward road improvement, the going was still rough and slow. A good illustration of this was the fact that it would take the Tiemstras an hour-and-a-half to get to church from their home — a distance of three-and-one-half miles.

State of roads early spring.

B690 E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta



A lot of the roads or trails went through muskeg and swampy ground with poor drainage. Corduroy roads were constructed in these areas. During the winter sixteen to eighteen-foot poplar or tamarack logs, four to ten inches in diameter, were cut and hauled to the road site. They were laid side by side crosswise on the road and the following summer the logs would be covered with dirt using the scraper. These corduroy roads would be about sixteen feet wide so that two wagons could pass each other.

At first the corduroy made a firm roadbed, looked quite impressive, and could hold heavy vehicles. But the ground all around was usually wet in the spring and summer due to the continuous problem of poor drainage and heavy bush, and even the v-shaped ditches would be filled with water. With such conditions it was natural that the logs on the road would gush up and down when the wagons and horses would go over them. The corduroy was not bad when crossed on foot, but was hard on horses and also on the passengers in the wagons. Riding on the corduroy could be likened to being in a churn, and if the wagon hit a big pole a passenger could be bumped right off the wagon. Women who were pregnant es-

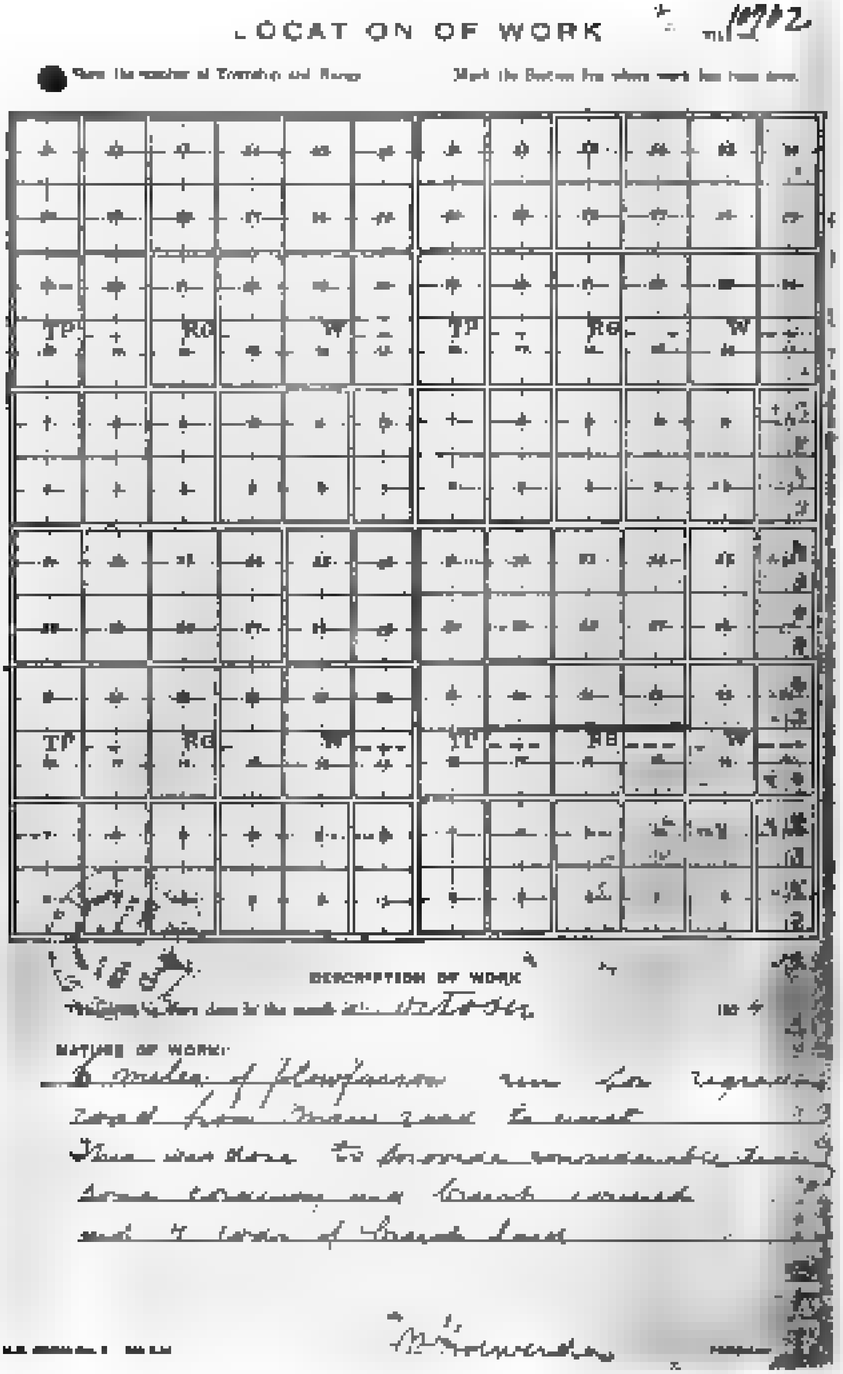
pecially felt the discomfort of being jostled and bumped about while riding on these roads, and would often remain home towards the end of their terms.

After several years some of the logs would rot, causing a hole in the corduroy. When a wagon wheel sank into one of these holes it would be firmly stuck and the corduroy would have to be repaired. There was one stretch of corduroy along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 to the southeast of 21-61-2-5, which was not covered with dirt and for years was left bare. This was due to the lack of government funds for road improvements. Because of general hard times, many found it difficult to pay their taxes. As a result some farmers paid their land taxes by deducting their road work hours from their tax bill.

A4606 Provincial Archives of Alberta

Corduroy roads.

Joe Holwerda would call meetings during L.I.D. years to hear suggestions for road improvements for the upcoming year. The farmers would then lobby for the roads which they thought important. At one such meeting it was pointed out that the above-mentioned stretch of corduroy should be covered. Holwerda said: "Yes, that corduroy should be covered this year." Ben Lievers reportedly responded by saying, "A child knows that, but will it be covered?" It was no doubt difficult for Holwerda to decide what was always the fair thing to do for all concerned. Being a bachelor, it was known that Holwerda enjoyed visiting those farmers who had daughters. It was a fact that a lot of work was done on the east-west road which ran north of sections fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen in Township 61. This road led to the farm of Klaas Tuininga, who had seven daughters.



LOCATION OF WORK 1912

Show the number of Township and Range. Mark the Section line where work has been done.

TP RG W TP RG W

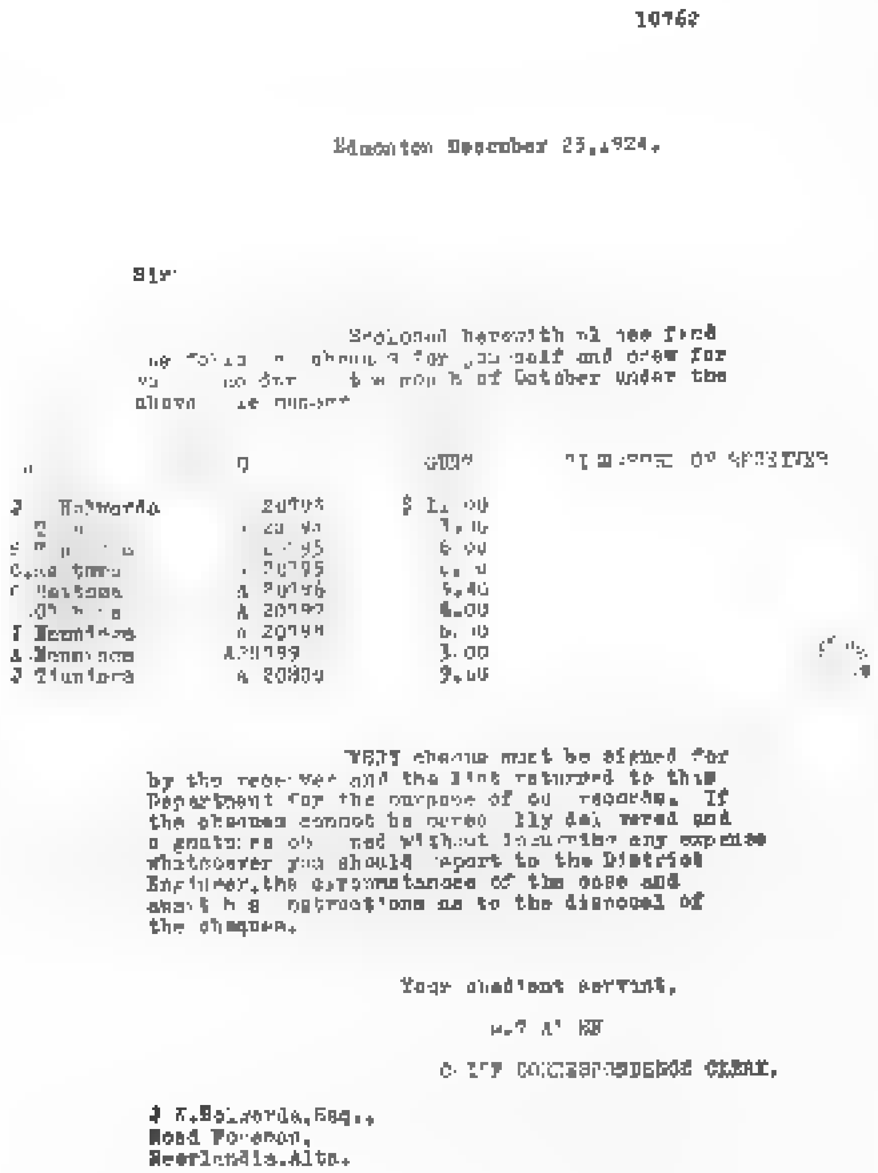
TP RG W TP RG W

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

The work was done in the month of October 189

NATURE OF WORK:

6 miles of plowfurrow run for repairing road from main road to west There was done to improve considerable trail some grading and brush cleared and 4 loads of brush laid



10762

Edmonton December 23,1924.

Sir:

Enclosed herewith please find [illegible] cheques for yourself and crew for [illegible] the month of October under the above [illegible]

EVERY cheque must be signed for by the receiver and the list returned to this Department for the purpose of our records. If the cheques cannot be personally delivered and signatures obtained without incurring any expense whatsoever you should report to the District Engineer,the circumstances of the case and await his instructions as to the disposal of the cheques.

Your obedient servant,

CHIEF CORRESPONDENCE CLERK.

J K.Holwerda,Esq.,
Road Foreman,
Neerlandia.Alta.

* * *

Pay List

Edmonton, August 19th, 1926.

Sir:

I am enclosing cheques for yourself and crew covering work done during the month of June 21st to July 17th under the above file numbers.

Name	Cheque No.	Amount	Signature of Receiver
J. W Holwerda	57447	$104 00	
J. Olthuis	57448	10.80	
W. Olthuis	57449	50 80	
W. Lievers	57450	25.65	
B. Lievers	57451	24.75	

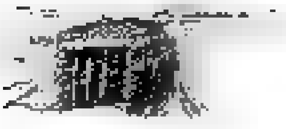
V Vrikke (sic)	57452	14.85
A. Nanninga	57453	33.70
H. Schoonekamp	57454	19.80
A. Emmerzael	57455	34.65
L. Sturwold	57456	29.70
C. O. Anderson	57457	14.85
O. Bonstrom	57458	14.85
J. Brand	57459	8.10
J. Howey	57460	27.40
J. W. Gelderman	57461	11.00
E. Reitsma	57462	16.00
S. Howey	57463	19.80
G. Tiemstra	57464	19.80
A. Tiemstra	57465	9.60
J. Reitsma	57466	11.40
H. Hiemstra	57467	22.05
H. Kippers	57468	21.60
W. Olthuis	57469	33.60
C. Ingwerson (sic)	57470	2.50

Every cheque should be signed for by the receiver and the list returned to this Department for the purpose of our records. If however any of the above cheques cannot be personally delivered within ten days, and without entailing extra expense the cheques should be returned to this Department along with the list.

Your obedient servant,
W. T. Aiken
Chief Correspondence Clerk

J. W. Hotwerda, Esq.
Road Foreman,
Neerlandia, Alberta

* * *



Pole culvert.

Another method of solving the problem of washouts in the low areas was the construction of culverts made of tamarack. First the men hired for the job would go to the bush to cut down the logs needed and drag them with horses to the roadside. Then they would dig a square trench across the road. Next, the two sides of the trench would be lined with logs which were nailed together and then braced. Crosspieces were attached to the top which would be covered again with logs. Finally a slip pulled by two horses was used to cover the logs with dirt. The culverts would be of varying sizes depending on the size of the washout. These culverts would sometimes be of little help. They froze up tight during the winter, and then during the spring break-up the water would run across the road on either side of the culverts rather than through them. These places caused a problem for anyone travelling with a loaded wagon because the wagon was bound to get stuck against the culverts.

By about 1920 the majority of the settlers had switched from oxen to the use of horses for work and travel. They were ridden bareback or with a saddle and pulled the various wagons. Around 1918 a livestock dealer travelled through the area and bought up some of the oxen for the slaughterhouse. The settlers in turn bought horses. Case Ingwersen sold all his cows in trade for a narrow-rimmed wagon and a team of horses. This was considered an improvement since horses have a higher level of intelligence than oxen and moved along at a faster pace. As with the oxen however, the Dutchmen were inexperienced in handling the horses. At the time there was a higher demand than supply of good farm-raised horses. As a result a lot of horses would be shipped in from the prairies and border towns such as Coutts and Sweetgrass and then would be sold at local auctions. The men from Neerlandia generally bought their horses at auctions in Barrhead or Westlock.

* * *

Some Horse!

Bill Olthuis, in a conversation with Albert M. Mast Sr., suggested that one horse was able to maneuver better than another in muddy conditions. Albert agreed. "You know that white mare I had? That horse could walk through a plate of soup without touching the bottom."

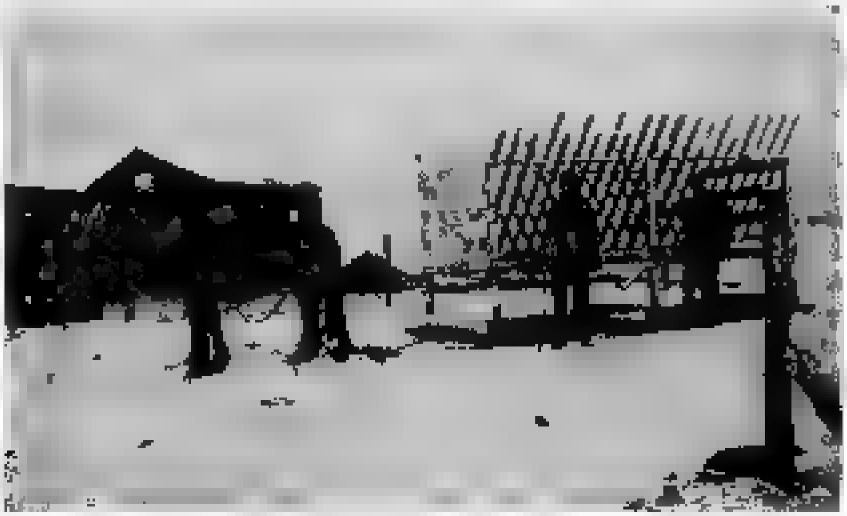
* * *

The horses bought at the auction sales were generally smaller than a farm-raised horse, were quite young, and were not broken to any type of work. A horse that appeared quiet at a sale often would later prove to be quite frisky. Some of these horses broke very well and others gave their owners more pain and grief then they were worth. They would kick and bite and strike out with their front hooves so fast that a person would find it difficult to get out of the way on time. One man had his pipe knocked from his mouth by a flying front hoof. Henry Michael reportedly harnessed his horses through a barn window for fear of getting kicked and Ben Lievers would call on his neighbour Jacob Olthuis to harness his green-broke team. Some individuals no doubt felt that the earlier major means of transportation, shank's mare — that is, on foot — had its advantages. In all fairness to the horses, it should be noted that a balky horse's behavior may have been a reaction to an irritation which the farmer was unaware of because of his inexperience. Perhaps it was a collar that did not fit properly or the horse had sore shoulders and was required to pull a load which was too heavy for him. Flying insects also troubled the horses. In bright weather and in the mornings the sandflies would be quite bothersome. In the evenings and in cloudy weather it would be the mosquitoes. If it was a sunny day the bull flies would appear. Bill Olthuis recalls that one night his horses walked around his cabin all night. They wanted to come in to escape the mosquitoes. Sometimes horses would seek refuge in abandoned buildings to get away from the flies. Once it happened that two of Dave Tuininga's horses wandered onto Oene Piers' land (SE 28-61-3-5) and into an empty house there. The door shut behind them and they could not get out. A few days later they were found dead by Oene. At other times a horse would be found alive in an abandoned house. After tramping around inside for a while it would weaken the floor and fall through into the dirt cellar. When found such a horse would be helped out and the owner would be relieved to have his horse back safe and sound. In spite of such occurrences and other-mentioned problems, horses were invaluable to the settlers. They played a major

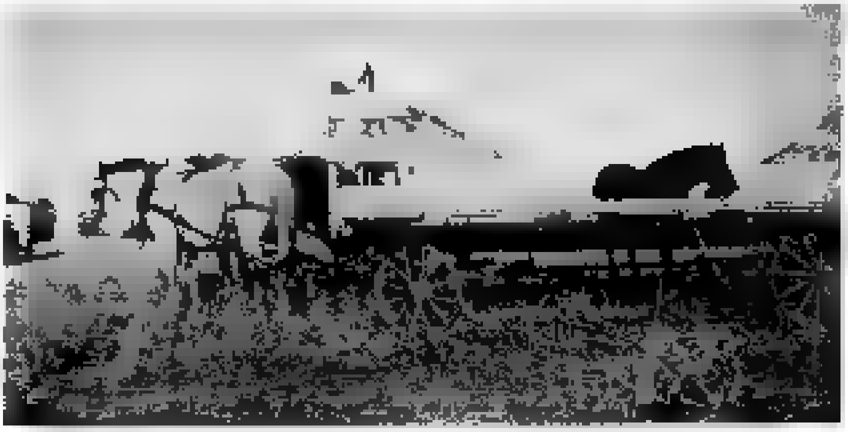
Grain wagon.

role in the development of Neerlandia. Their endless work helped to build the roads and clear the land. In addition they hauled feed and firewood, skidded logs and brought them to the mill, and transported the grain and produce to market.

There were a variety of horse-drawn vehicles used in Neerlandia from about 1918 until the early 1950s. The most frequently utilized was the farm wagon. Primarily it was used for hauling feed, produce, grain, and whatever else a farmer needed brought from one place to another. If the wagon was employed to haul grain, extra boards would be fastened to the top of the wagon box. This six to twelve-inch extension would enable the box to hold about sixty-four bushels of grain. The entire wagon box could be removed and a purchased grain tank, which had sides that flared at the top over the wagon's wheels, could be placed on the frame. If the grain was hauled in the winter, which was the easiest time to travel, the grain tank was placed on a bobsleigh and was pulled by a team of two or four horses. The grain tank could hold up to one hundred and fifty bushels of grain, which would be hauled to Westlock or, in later years, to Barrhead. The local farmers reportedly were a bit envious



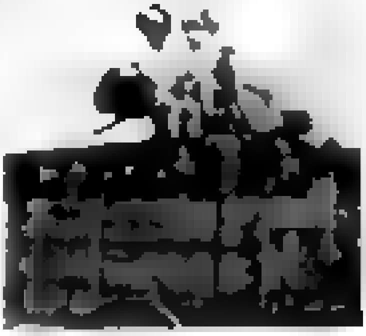
Hay rack.



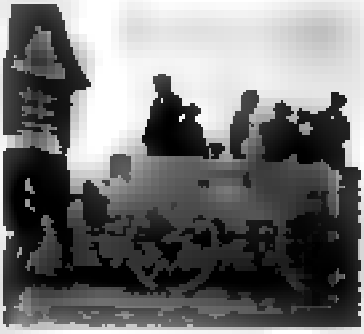
Bundle rack.

of Chris Wright, a Meadowdale farmer, who in 1924 had a huge grain tank capable of holding approximately two hundred and fifty bushels. During harvest the wagon box was removed and the wagon fitted with a hayrack onto which the bundles would be pitched. The wagon frame could also be fitted with a flat rack. The wagon's seat was built in such a way that its right side had a bit of a spring to it and did not jar as much when the wagon would bump along. Sometimes the wagon's single front seat had a regular spring beneath it. The seat could hold three people and if there were more in the family they sat in the box behind.

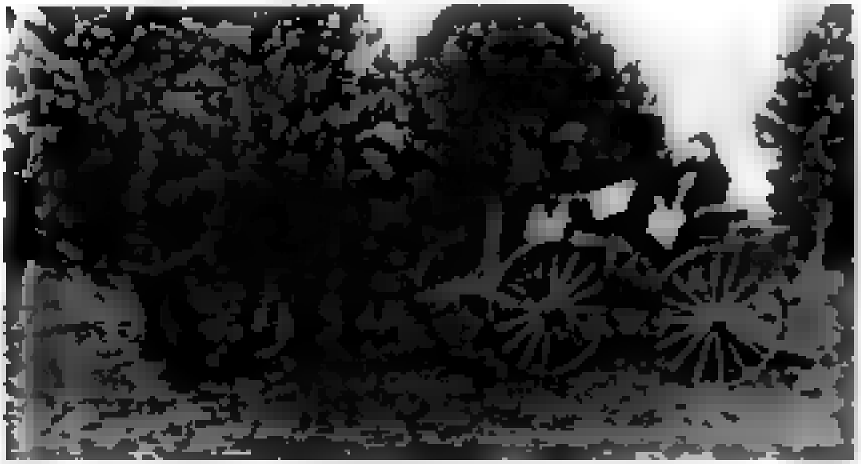
Eventually a few families acquired buggies or democrats to ride in. A buggy had a frame on springs and had a single seat. A democrat had a frame on springs but had a longer box than a buggy and had two seats. The rear seat could be removed, leaving a larger space in the back for carrying more people or other things. The Klaas Tuininga family had a large democrat, like a stagecoach, which had three seats on it. None of the buggies or democrats used in Neerlandia were covered and so the settlers had to protect themselves from the elements in whatever way they could.



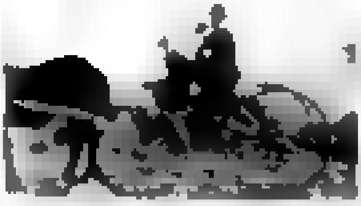
Wagon seat



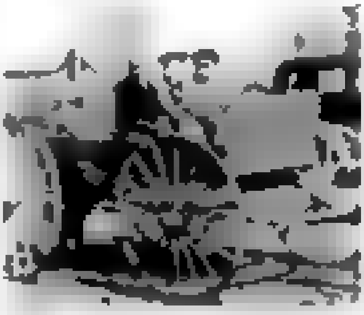
Going to church by wagon. Lievers family: Henry and Gladys Strydhorst, 1930



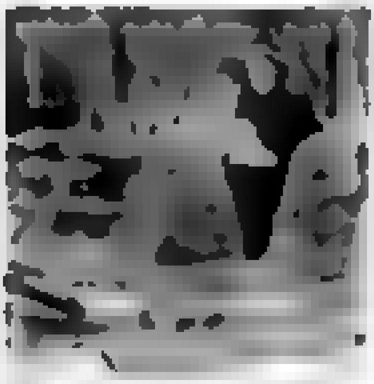
Democrat. Schoonekamps ready to leave



Buggy



In the winter the wagon box was removed from its wheeled frame and was placed on runners for going through the snow. These sleighs, which had four runners, were called bobsleighs and had all the uses of the farm wagon. Cutters, which were about half of the size of a bobsleigh, were also used. Whereas bobsleighs were bought, cutters were often homemade. Lightly-built cutters were drawn by one horse and larger and heavier sleighs were drawn by two horses. The advantage of a cutter over a bobsleigh was that it was small and cozy with a high back and front to break the cold winds. In the winter many people would put a large stone in the oven of the wood stove on Saturday night in anticipation of going to church on Sunday. By Sunday morning the stone would be quite hot and would then be wrapped in a blanket and placed in the cutter. The family would wrap a large blanket around themselves and the stone. They would be kept fairly comfortable with the heat from the stone, even in very cold weather.



A large barn had been built [illegible]

[illegible] wagon wheels and were broken.

What Horse?

[illegible] horse - we need it again."

[illegible] ophalen (I come to pick up the horse.)"

[illegible]

I said, "What?"

"Ja," *he said.* "Wel, ik had geen gebruik voor hem meer. *(Well, I didn't need him anymore.)*"

I can tell you I was really angry but Dad said, "No, never mind. We don't know nothing about it. Let it go." Then I thought I would ask about the cutter, because I had built that myself.

"We used that for firewood," was the reply.

Sometime later he came over and asked, "Heb je ook nog stro? *(Do you still have straw?)*"

Dad said, "Wel, je hoef toch geen hooi voor een dood paard. *(You certainly don't need hay for a dead horse.)*"

"Nee," *he said,* "Maar wel voor een levenden koe. *(No, but you do for a live cow.)*"

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Runaway Horses

In the early days in Neerlandia, the people would ride to church in a buggy or cutter. One Sunday after church, my dad hitched his horses to the cutter. This cutter had two seats. George, my youngest brother, was with Dad in the front seat. Mrs. A. Wierenga quite often rode with us. So Mother Terpsma and Mrs. Wierenga were in the back seat. They had gone but a short distance, when Gerben and Trentje Tiemstra caught up to them also travelling in a cutter. They had a sleigh bell on the harness of the horse. This bell seemed to frighten my dad's horses and they took off in high speed. The idea of getting out of the cutter as quick as they could seemed to strike both ladies at the same time — both of them rolled out of the sleigh — one on either side. When Gerben saw this he stopped until my dad could control his horses.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Another Runaway Team

Ekke Wierenga and his sisters went blueberry picking years ago. When they got close to the Athabasca River going down a hill, the horses bolted. Wierenga said to his sisters, "Remain seated, I will control them when we get down the hill." But one of his sisters, Johanna, doubted this and feared they might land in the river so she jumped overboard and while she was doing this her dress hooked on a nail. This ripped her dress from top to bottom. After having this pinned up, they went berry picking.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

A well-trained horse or team of horses hitched to a cutter or sleigh needed very little attention. They would jog along at a steady pace and if they met another sleigh they would pass of their own accord and then go back into the traffic lane. Often a team would be given free rein, enabling the driver to cover himself with his blanket. The horses would stop when they reached home. On one cold night Norman Terpsma gave his team free rein as he snuggled down in his blanket for a sleep. Norman awoke with a start to find himself on a neighbour's yard. The horses had lost their direction

and had wandered into the neighbour's yard. [illegible] with the groceries, then had brushed into the side of the neighbour's barn causing the wagon to jar against it.

* * *

In the late twenties several men, travelling by car, went to a horse auction at a stockyard on 66th Street in Edmonton. This sale was larger than the ones they usually attended in Barrhead and Westlock. The horses came from southern Alberta and most were unbroken. About twenty horses of varying sizes, ages, and colours were bought by men from Neerlandia and neighbouring areas. John Kippers, Ike Nanninga, and Bill Withage volunteered to drive the horses home. The three men each picked a likely looking horse to ride. But first, Bill chose a nice looking grey, but it proved to be unbroken and he soon chose another. As soon as they were ready to go, the horses were turned loose. That was fun! The horses scattered in all directions with Bill, Ike, and John in pursuit. Some of them got into farmer [illegible] fields where the municipal airport now is. Eventually the horses were all rounded up and headed out of the city. Men and horses were accompanied by Jack Nanninga and [illegible] who went by car. Along the way one of the horses went down a side road, and [illegible] and Jack went after it with the car and brought it back. Outside the city the likelihood of the horses wandering away was minimized since the roads were fenced on each side and [illegible] home. Travelling down the roads and trails with the horses was not a problem because traffic was light. At night the men would stop at a farmer's place. After they had given the horses oats bought from the farmer and had watered them, the men would bed down outside with the horses. The trip home took three days with stops to deliver horses at Lunnford, Barrhead, Mellowdale and Naples.

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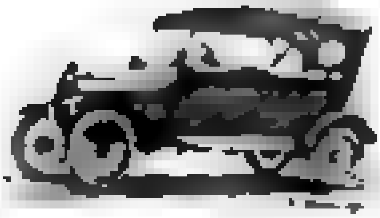

In the early twenties, a few cars were bought by the residents of Neerlandia. One of the first cars was bought in 1923 by John Terpstra. His car, as did the other early cars, served a good purpose in emergencies. John's car was used to take Ingwersen to the hospital after his runaway accident. When some people saw the first cars they reportedly said, "We are not up to that here yet. We better stay with horse and buggy for awhile." There were many reasons why the majority of Neerlanders did not own a car for another two decades. A primary factor was the condition of the roads. Although the roads had been improved somewhat by grading, and better timber bridges had been built over [illegible] Creek on Jasper Avenue and on the road going west from [illegible] place, the cars and trucks ran into constant difficulties. The main road problems were the mud holes and the general wet conditions in the spring and summer. Due to poor drainage and low spots, the ditches would fill with water. There was no way that a car or truck could get through these places without being pulled by a team of horses. The general impassability of roads in spring and summer was experienced by John [illegible] who ran a freight hauling truck from Barrhead. He brother Bill would have to go with his team and pull John's truck through a mud hole just south of Jasper Avenue. Bill would then go cross-country and pull John through another mud hole just west of Naples Road on Highway 18. This was typical of conditions that existed for almost twenty more years. Fred Toebes, whose parents homesteaded the NW 10-62-3-5, recalls living alongside the main road from Neerlandia to Vega in the early 1930s. "The road at that time was no more then a dirt trail, which had been plowed up and levelled a bit by using a drag pulled by horses. This road served very well for horse-drawn traffic but when the first cars and trucks came into the country these dirt roads presented many problems. I remember well one really bad mud hole just a little north of our gate, in which every vehicle would get stuck. Whenever I heard a car or truck coming down the road I would run to this mud hole and hide in the bush and watch all the action. With poles cut from the roadside trees and with much pushing and prying, the vehicles would be freed and on their way. I would then return home and wait for the next vehicle to come along. From some of these encounters, I picked up a whole new vocabulary which I was forbidden to use, even on the dog."

Hendrik and Willemina ter Horst.

A2483/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Scenes like this were common in wet weather 1930s. Note ear bonnets worn by the horses to give them some protection from the sandflies which would swarm in and around their ears. The coverings were sewn from flour sacks and enclosed each ear in a cloth sheath.

Due to the combination of rough roads and the poor quality of the tires, which tended to bruise easily, there were many flat tires. Fortunately the first cars were provided with tire repair kits. Other needed repairs were usually makeshift and reflected the ingenuity of the car owner. Other deterrents to buying a car were the cost factor and the unavailability of fuel. Some of the first car owners would try to run their cars on coal oil when they could not get gas. When the Depression years came all these problems were accentuated. Few could afford to run their cars and some would set them on blocks in their yard.

Joe Baker, Ed Visser, c. 1926.

As in earlier hard times, many found it difficult to pay their taxes. With a decrease in revenue the Municipal District of Shoal Creek #610, which had been formed in 1928, could not afford all the road improvements needed. Even the councillors, who were responsible for road conditions, had a cut in pay. However soon after the election of the first councillor for the Neerlandia area, Joseph Baker, the M.D. purchased a horse-drawn grader solely for use in his division. This grader proved to be a wise investment as it was put to good public and private use for over twenty-five years.

Leaning wheel grader pulled by tractor, 1944

By 1924 the Co-op store had moved to the southwest of the NW 34-61-3-5, directly across from the church and kitty corner to the school, and this area became known as the Centre of Neerlandia. The Centre was the new heart of the community but Jasper Avenue, one mile to the east, had continued to serve as the main route into and out of Neerlandia. This was because of the obstacle of the bare corduroy which went south along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 and the existence of a small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. The people who lived south and southwest had to go east to Jasper Avenue and then west again a mile on the Church Road to reach the Centre. To travel to Barrhead everyone had to go south on Jasper Avenue up to Davis' Corner, then west for one mile, and link up with the road running south through Mellowdale to Old Barrhead corner. Two major road projects, which provided a direct north-south road from Neerlandia to Old Barrhead, were undertaken during the early years of M.D. #610. The bare corduroy south of the Centre was covered sometime around 1928 and a corduroy-based road was built in 1930 around the lake. Since travel was slow the new main road meant considerable savings in travel time. It became known as the Neerlandia Road.

* * *

Was the Sermon Just Too Long?

In those days nobody seemed to know anything about antifreeze. In the winter when it was cold we used to put hot water in the radiator to get it started and keep it from freezing. When we'd get to church, we would throw a blanket over the radiator to keep it warm a little longer. Halfway through the sermon the minister used to give up a number of the psalms to sing so everybody who had a car outside could go out to run their cars awhile to warm them up. Otherwise the car would be frozen by the time we'd come out after the sermon. I think we did that for a few years until there were some brands of antifreeze coming on the market. No more missing part of the sermon then.

Sadie Tiemstra

* * *

Van Der Woude's Car

"Van Der Woude had a used car, an Essex, and it was using quite a bit of oil. Pete Louws, a bachelor who lived close by [Siebren] Tiemstra's had a mechanical mind. And he says to Van Der Woude, 'I'll overhaul that car for you.' So he did and brought it back and Van Der Woude paid him. And that very afternoon he says to me,

'Gerrit,' he says, 'You want to come along with me? We are going for a ride — I want to try out the car.' I says,

'Okay, sure.'

'We'll go around the block,' he says, 'All the way to Raymond Baker, Tiemstra, Anema, and back to the store.' So okay, fine. 'You drive,' he says to me. And I had never driven a car. 'Makes no difference,' he says, 'You drive.' So I got in there. We started out — it was in the wintertime and in low gear we moved along. And as soon as I shifted into second it stalled. Sounded like the motor. 'Heh,' he says, 'That must be some overhauling that die Pete gedaan heeft! Anyhow, we'll keep going.' We kept going and we never got into second gear. So I says to him,

'How are we ever going to get up the hill by Shoal Creek there once we get down over that bridge?'

'I don't know,' he says. 'I don't know. Maybe we'll have to get someone to pull us up.' Anyhow, we got down there. We tried to get up the hill. No way, low gear, we stalled. So finally I says to him,

'What is this here, sitting there, that little stick sitting right here?'

'Oh,' he says, 'That's emergency brake.' 'Is it on?' I say,

'I don't know.' So he pushed on it and ja, back it come and away we went up the hill. Like nobody's business. We had him in high gear — we had to open the windows already for the smell in the car."

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

In the early 1940s, Gerrit Kuipers owned a 1940 De Soto car. It ran well, but it had one bad habit. The roads were rough and bumpy and the muffler would break off close to the carburetor and then a fire would start. Clara and the girls would jump out while Gerrit threw sand on the fire to extinguish the flames. That did the trick, but then the sand would have to be cleaned off again before they could proceed.

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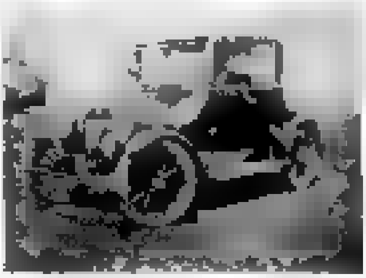
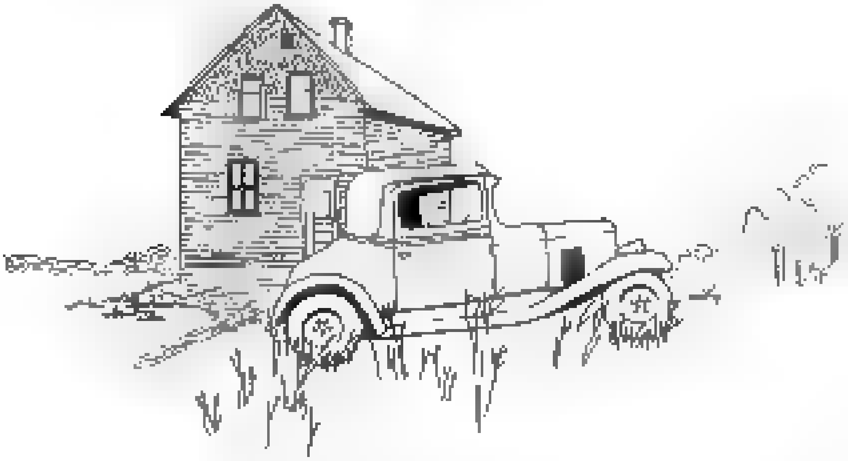


Dominee in his car

In the late thirties a few families acquired cars but the road conditions and the cost and maintenance of the cars were still a problem. After World War II a lot of improvements and developments occurred. In February 1943 the Municipal District of Westlock #562 was formed and Neerlandia was included in this new district. A motorized grader owned by this municipality was used occasionally to grade the main roads in Neerlandia. Steel-wheeled tractors came into use and doubtless dug up the roads with their steel lugs, undoing the work of the grader. Cars, which had been scarce during the war, became available for purchase and, as well, more people were able to afford them. Gas could now be conveniently procured by the barrel in Neerlandia at C. K. Mast's.



1934 coupe.

The majority of post-war Dutch immigrants, however, still relied on horse and wagon for their transportation. The horses would shy away from approaching cars or would jump sideways when passed. Norman Terpsma experienced this one winter day. He was bringing John Roth, who lived at the SW 15-61-3-5, home on the sleigh when a car passed them on the main road. It had snowed a lot the day before and the road had since been plowed out, leaving the surface quite slippery. As the car passed it spooked one of the horses and away they went, as fast as the horses could carry them. Since the road was slippery there was no way Norman could rein them in to a stop. He pulled on one line and drove the horses into the loose snow at the edge of the road. One horse fell in the process, causing the snaps to break and also the yoke. The horse which had caused the runaway pulled the sleigh on top of the fallen animal. The bobsleigh came to a stop on top of the fallen horse. This horse struggled underneath the sleigh causing Norman and John to bob up and down in the box. Norman got out of the box and managed to catch the runaway horse by its bridle. After some maneuvering he was able to get the runaway horse to pull the sleigh off the fallen animal. To his surprise the horse under the sleigh was all right. John, a bit shaken by the harrowing experience, kept saying "Crazy horses! Crazy horses!" Fortunately they did make it safely home.

In 1944 the Neerlandia Co-op had made a request to the provincial government for eleven-and-one-half miles of gravel from Old Barrhead corner to the store. Some years later pit run, which was coarse sand mixed with stone, was obtained from natural sand pits located in northeast Neerlandia and put on the main road. The sand pits were in section 1 of 62-3-5 and sections 6 and 7 of 62-2-5. The cost of the application of the pit run was to be shared three ways. The provincial government was to pay one-third, the municipal district one-third, and the farmers one-third. The farmers were to pay on a sliding scale in relation to their proximity to the road. The store contributed twenty-five dollars towards the cost in 1949 but it is not known if the other monies were collected from the farmers. Only the main road received this special treatment and it was a significant first attempt at making an all-weather road.

To protect this road surface and other roads in the area, road bans came into effect by a municipal act. Bans were placed on trucks and tractors when road conditions were such that the weight would damage the road surfaces. During the bans farmers would haul their produce by wagons, which were not affected by the bans, or by half-loaded half-ton trucks to Old Barrhead. The freight trucks would meet them at Old Barrhead corner and haul the produce to market.

* * *

On the way home the gravelled roads were rough and the mud roads were muddy. I helped the truck driver to unload freight and put his chains on when he hit the mud holes.

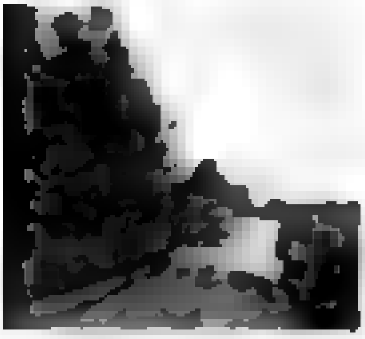
Ted Reitsma
Grade 5

* * *

Bridge being built over Shoal Creek, c. 1928.

Progress could also be seen in the construction of bridges crossing Shoal Creek. The creek at the SE 16-61-3-5 had a wooden bridge which had been constructed in 1928. This bridge eventually rotted and was replaced by a cement culvert. In the spring of 1948 the creek flooded and this culvert was washed away. A rowboat had

to be used to take the people across the creek. On the south side they would be met by Arie or Dick Fisher who would then take them to Barrhead by car. Kay Visser and Fay Emmerzael were taken to Barrhead hospital in this way when their babies were due. The roadway was repaired and another wooden culvert was put in. In 1955 a permanent steel culvert replaced the cement one and effectively eliminated the problem of road washout at this location. On the road formerly known as Jasper Avenue, the bridge crossing Shoal Creek was upgraded in the early sixties. The old bridge was replaced by a twenty-two-foot wide treated timber bridge with a prestressed concrete top. At the same time the slope of the hill was cut down and the road was built up to improve the grade.



Herman Goldeman on road north of his farm, spring 1950s

In 1955 the Municipal District of Barrhead #11 was formed and the new councillors tried to impress upon the provincial government the need for improved roads. There were roughly twelve miles of gravelled road and only three graders for the whole district at the time. In the spring of 1955 cars going to Neerlandia crawled at such places as on the Barrhead to Neerlandia road where the water ran over the road. In April 1955 it was decided by the municipality to supply culverts for farmers' driveways at fifty percent of cost. The culverts and also the brushing, which was done on the road allowances, undoubtedly improved drainage. However, travelers still became stuck in mud holes on the roads and visits had to be cut short when it started to rain so that the people could make it home before the roads became impassable. In time each councillor received a motorized grader for his area and provincial road grants were given for major road work.

* * *

Councillors

Joseph Baker was the first elected councillor for Neerlandia. He represented Division 4 on the Municipal District of Shoal Creek #613 which had been formed in January 1928. He was one of the six original councillors for this district. Joseph [illegible] was elected for three consecutive two-year terms beginning in 1930. His last term was not completed as he died in 1935. James [illegible] filled the vacancy on the District Council and was elected in 1936 for a three-year term. [illegible] was re-elected in 1939 and completed his term of office in 1942.

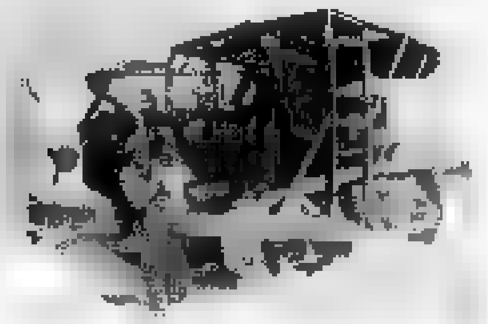
In 1943 the Municipal District of Westlock #562, comprised of seven divisions, came into being and Shoal Creek #613 was incorporated into this new district. Fred Claassen represented Neerlandia as part of the Shoal Creek area and was elected for two consecutive three-year terms. He served from 1943 until his death in 1949. On April 1, 1945, during Claassen's first term, the Municipal District of Westlock #562 was renumbered to M.D. #92. Fred Madsen succeeded Claassen on the Council for District #92 and actively served from 1949-1952.

In 1955 through an order in council by the Provincial Government, the Municipal District of Barrhead #11 was formed. The new district consisted of five divisions. William Olthuis was elected to serve Neerlandia and surrounding areas as representative for Division 3 on the first council. Olthuis served on Municipal council until the formation of the County of Barrhead #11 in January

1959. Under the County form of government there were seven divisions instead of the former five. From 1959-80 Olthuis continued to represent the Neerlandia and Vega communities as a County Councillor for Division 7. After twenty-five years of service William Olthuis retired and Albert Elgersma was elected to the Council. Elgersma is presently serving his second term as Councillor for Division 7.

* * *

The Neerlandia Road from Mellowdale north to the hamlet was surveyed in 1956 for widening to a total width of eighty-two-and-one-half feet, as measured between property line boundaries. Around 1958 Bill Olthuis, the councillor for the Neerlandia and Vega areas, proposed the building of a road on the road allowance through the small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. With a view to future road development, it was decided that it would be a waste of money to further improve the road around the lake since eventually the main road would be straightened. The first step in this project was to blast one-quarter of a mile west of the road allowance in the northwest corner of the lake so that the lake would drain into Shoal Lake. Dynamite sticks were placed fifteen inches apart in a single row for about one-quarter of a mile. The end stick, which had a fuse placed in it, was detonated. As a result of the ground's vibration, the whole area blew up at once, producing a sheet of black dirt. The water eventually drained out of the lake and that winter a roadway was laid by putting down a base of over 87,000 log feet for a distance of one-quarter of a mile. The black poplar logs used in building the base had been banned for plywood use and the municipality was able to purchase the culled logs at a nominal cost. The Spady brothers, who had supplied the logs, brought them to the road site. The logs were laid on the ice, then covered with dirt that winter and with an additional eighteen inches of dirt the following summer. Enough dirt was built up around the logs to insure that their ends


Snowplowing, 1948.

Homemade snowplow.

Blowout of the silt at the northwest corner of the small lake.

would be covered to prevent them from rotting. At first a four-foot wooden culvert was placed underneath the roadbed because there was concern that if a steel one was put in right away it might sink into the mud. The roadbed remained firm and was later gravelled.

Former road around lake, looking south.

Former road around lake looking east from new highway (Meetanda Road).

As time passed, surrounding roads in the community were gradually built up, soft places were filled in, and ditches were sloped and deepened. In addition road allowances and forced roads were straightened out. These roads, when first built, had followed routes which curved around sloughs and over high ground. Additional roads, which were not surveyed road allowances, were opened up. This was done to eliminate the inconvenience for some farmers who had to travel quite a distance out of their way on existing roads to get to their homes. Due to increased traffic, some of the roads were widened to make an average top of twenty-four feet. By the mid-fifties cars and trucks were the primary modes of transportation. A few of the young people also began to acquire their own vehicles and one could then find more than one car on a

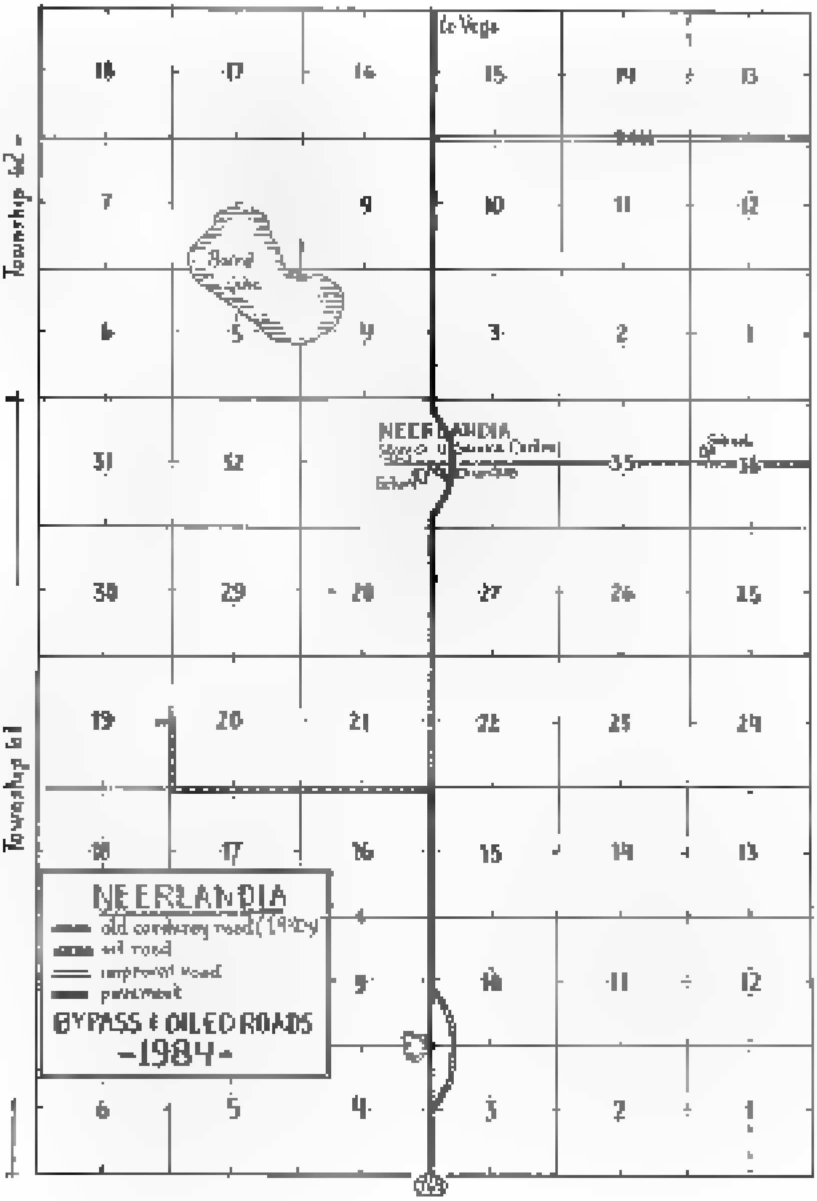
farmer's yard. Trucks were no longer used solely for freight but also for harvesting and for hauling of grain and livestock in and out of the community. Purple gas, which initially was much cheaper than orange gas, was used for farm vehicles and kept down the costs of running the trucks. Road traffic was also increased by the use of buses to transport the children to and from school. By [illegible] provisions had been made by the municipality for the upgrading and maintaining of bus routes.

Prior to the road widening and straightening program, electrical power had been put into Neerlandia. In [illegible] the municipality passed a motion that power poles should be placed eighteen and one half feet inside the property lines on all district roads. However, since most of the power poles had already been erected before this motion came into effect and due to the prohibitive costs of moving the poles, many were left in their original location. A good illustration of this, showing how a road was straightened and the poles left in position, can still be seen at the northwest of the SW [illegible]-61-3-5.

Ditches were changed from the early V-shaped ditches to ones of considerably more width and with flattened out bottoms, which inhibited soil erosion and improved drainage. The ditches were also back sloped for safety reasons. The normal maintenance of patrolling by grader, snow plowing, and patch work took place every year. As well there were construction and gravelling projects funded by government road grants and local taxes. These projects and general maintenance were the responsibility of the County of Barrhead #11 which was formed in January [illegible]. The work in Neerlandia was proposed and, after given approval by County Council, overseen by the county councillor for Division 7, Bill [illegible]. The changes and improvements of the roads were accomplished by ever-changing and efficient motorized equipment.

Gravel was hauled from the gravel pit in Vega and applied to various dirt roads in Neerlandia in a welcome attempt at making the majority of roads passable in all weather. There were comments made that the gravel was applied as with a salt shaker. Valid complaints of a serious nature were received in relation to the traffic produced by the gravel trucks hauling the gravel from Vega to various locations throughout the county. The trucks raised a lot of dust and were also viewed as dangerous when they passed through the Centre. For these reasons and also because of the general increase in car and truck traffic on the main roads, two major road projects were undertaken.

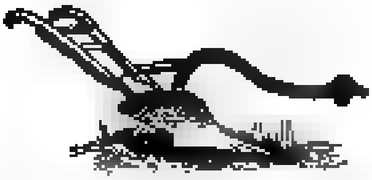
The first project took place in [illegible]. The County, under a Dust Control Program, experimented with applying bunker oil onto the surface of the main road running south from Neerlandia. The cost involved was minimal. Approximately [illegible] gallons of bunker oil per mile was applied at a delivered price of ten to eleven cents per gallon. The results were favourable in terms of dust control and gradually more roads were covered. In [illegible], however, only two roads are still treated with oil. They are the road running east from the hamlet to the SE [illegible]-61-3-5 and the road running west from the main road along sections 16 and 17-61-3-5. The primary reason for the discontinuation of oiling is the expense, as bunker oil now sells



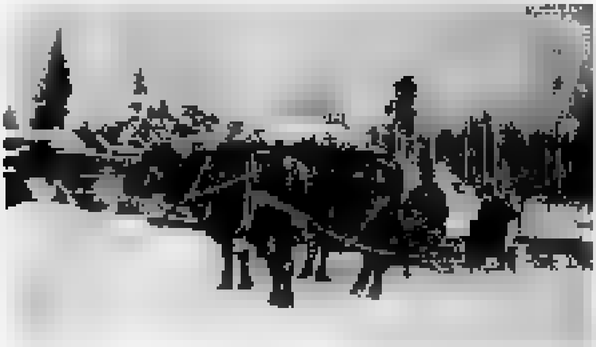
for $1.80 per gallon. Since oiled roads need to be re-oiled every two years, the cost weighed against the benefits is too great.

The second major road project was undertaken in 1972-75. The main road running from Old Barrhead north to the post office in Vega was built up and widened to a total width of 132 feet with a twenty-six-foot wide top. In addition a bypass was built around the hamlet of Neerlandia. To accommodate these improvements it was necessary to purchase additional right-of-ways for the roadway. At first the idea of a bypass for the hamlet seemed ridiculous to some people. The reasons for its construction were valid, however. The main concern was safety. The bypass would decrease the flow of traffic through the Centre and particularly beside the school grounds. The roadway was built in three phases from 1972-75. The road was also covered in three stages, first it was gravelled, then oiled, and finally, in 1976, paved. The Neerlandia Road was and is now officially known as Secondary Road #769. It continues to provide a smooth all-weather route, free of dust and mud holes, into and out of Neerlandia. This project had been anticipated in 1966 as part of the proposed provincial secondary road system. Another secondary road is in the process of being built through the area. This is Secondary Road #661 which runs east from the Athabasca River, south through Vega, east along sections 15, 14, and 13 in Township 62-3-5, then continues east through the province.

The progress and development of the roads and transportation in Neerlandia has followed the general progression of the community as a whole. Initially one found a pioneer settlement, where trails or roads were the vital link in communication and transportation for the few settlers who travelled on foot or by horse or ox-drawn wagon. In the present, one sees an agricultural-based community with increasing mobility and diversity. The roads serve the needs of its residents to travel by car, pickup truck, farm truck, or with farm machinery within the community, to transport farm products outside of the area, and to pursue other interests and jobs outside of Neerlandia.



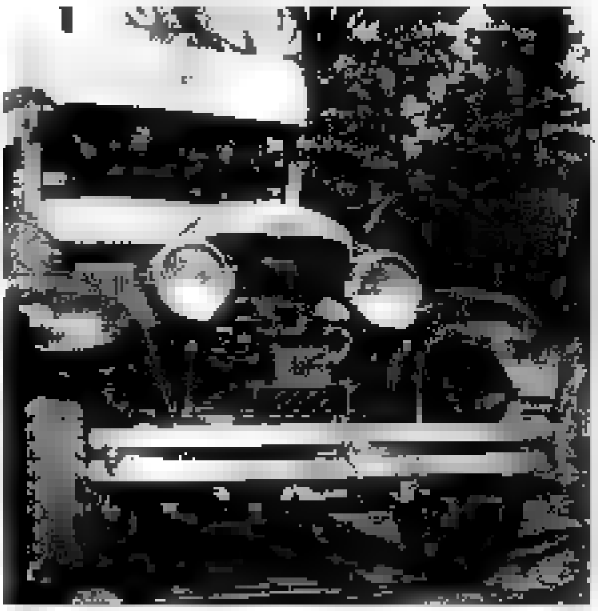
OXEN TO AIRCRAFT



Ready to leave with Flip and Pete. Wouter Groothuis with his son Dick who would say, "Flip is mine oss."

Horses used by the Ben Lievers family.

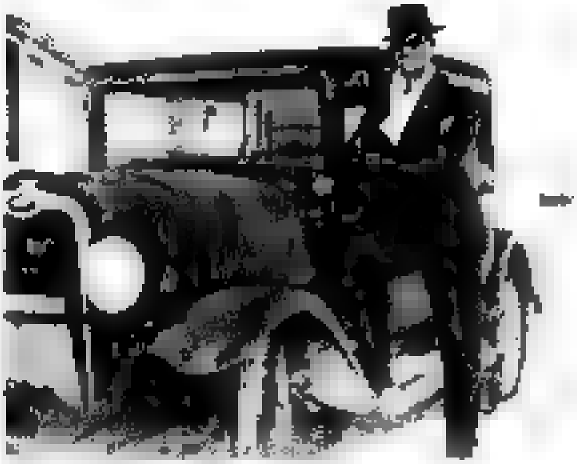
Riding home from field.



Billy Quick's bus

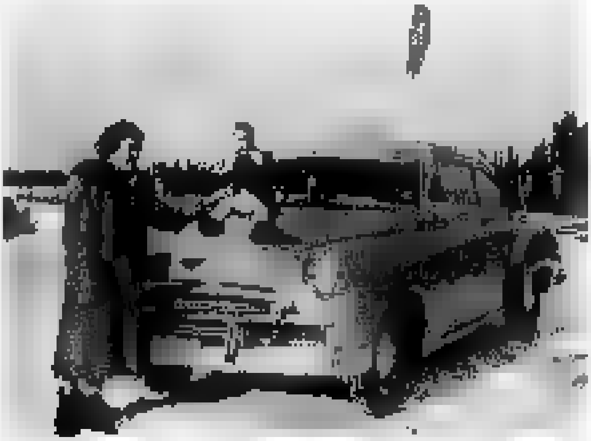
Heading for Peace River Country, 1936. Hendrik Lievers family.

1928 Model A Ford. Clarence Mast holding Alida, 1947.



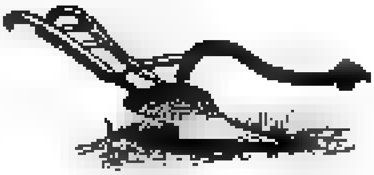
Chevy. Joe A. Wierenga's first car, 1947

C. K. Mast, Marilyn, and the car



1950 Chevrolet car. Sophie and Darlene Wierenga, 1952

Jack Janssen and his airplane, 1965



Co-operation and Enterprise

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THE NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Since 1912 when the first families arrived in Neerlandia, the very poor conditions they found themselves in made it necessary for them to help one another. They co-operated in the building of their cabins, a place of worship, and a school, as well as in the clearing and breaking of land. So it was not strange that they decided to co-operate in establishing a store to supply the articles needed in daily living.

At first the basic necessities of life were obtained in Westlock, Dusseldorf, or in the Davis store in Mellowdale. From 1914 on, Albert Mast Sr. provided some very basic supplies as well. A private store was operated by Peter Kampnar from 1917 till the opening of the settlers' co-operative store. Ted Reitsma wrote:

"Getting some groceries in 1913-14 was another heavy chore, as the nearest store was in Mellowdale. For some this was a round trip of more than twenty miles. This was mostly done on foot or with oxen, and was more than a day's journey. Many of the first settlers carried eighty pounds on their backs, plodding along bush trails, and fording creeks. This situation improved when in 1915 Mr. A. Mast opened a store serving the settlers for a couple of years. When he closed Mr. Kampnar opened a store on the north bank of Shoal Creek. This store operated until 1920 when the settlers started their own co-op store."

* * *

The first years the store was seven miles to the south and it was a problem to get in the supplies because Westlock, the nearest railway station, was thirty-five miles away. Sometimes we were weeks without coal oil for our lamps or without sugar, etc.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Bull Fur

Many Dutch pioneers bought their groceries at the Davis store in Mellowdale. They could also bring cream, which Davis shipped to Swift's in Westlock. Fur dealers would come to Davis' store once or twice a year, so pelts could be brought there too. Notices were often put up in the store, and one Dutch settler posted the following sign: "BULL FUR FOR SALE"

* * *

Some of the settlers said that if Kampnar had kept his prices at a reasonable level no thought of starting a co-op would have occurred. This assessment of the situation is probably not fair to Peter Kampnar. Though the evidence suggests that the prices were on the high side, it must also be stated that many of the settlers did not pay their bills, forcing him to charge more to be able to stay in business. It appears that in most cases the settlers were too poor to pay him. For the first ten years there was in most instances simply no money. Eventually Pete Kampnar found it impossible to continue and closed his doors.

In the meantime a group of Neerlandians met with the intent of starting a co-op store. It is difficult to establish the exact date that the Neerlandia Co-op began. The incorporation document states

June 31, 1922, but other evidence indicates that the Co-op was actually in operation before that date. Ted Reitsma, a former president, is quoted above as stating that the store began in 1920. Clarence Tuininga, another former president, stated in a taped interview, "The Co-op was incorporated in 1922 but, really, it started a year or two before that." In addition, according to oral tradition, the first year's receipts were three hundred dollars. The documents show the receipts for 1922 to be $1392.16. Furthermore, the Neerlandia Co-op was a cream-testing station for the Enterprise Dairy, which was in operation only from 1918 to May 6, 1922. If the store had not been in operation before its incorporation date (July 31, 1922), this would not have been possible. Final confirmation comes from the original share book. The first entry was made on May 20, 1921. Several other entries were made on June 12, 1921. One must conclude then that the Co-op was in the planning stages in 1920, in business in 1921, and incorporated in 1922.

First store.

* * *

Memorandum of Association

We, G. Baker, A. Ritsema, K. Krikke, H. Lievers, M. Nanninga, P. D. Schuring, H. Hiemstra, K. Tuininga, J. W. Gelderman, J. Tuininga, J. W. Holwerda, D. Terpsma, S. Tofte, O. Bonstrom, C. Ingwersen, J. Anema, W. Krikke, H. J. Kannegieter, R. de Jager, Mrs. E. Messelink, W. Groothuis, B. Lievers, T. Sturwold, J. Olthuis, P. Louws, S. Tiemstra, W. van Ark, Mrs. C. P. Mast, H. Michaels and J. Oldegbers do hereby express our desire to form an Association under the provisions of the Co-operative Associations Act.

The corporate name of the association to be The Neerlandia Co-operative Association Limited and the objects for which the association is formed are:

(a) To deal in hardware, twine, lumber, building materials, coal, machinery, and generally any and all commodities required or used by farmers,

(b) To carry on the business of marketing and selling livestock and farm produce of any description,

(c) To engage in the business of general Merchant,

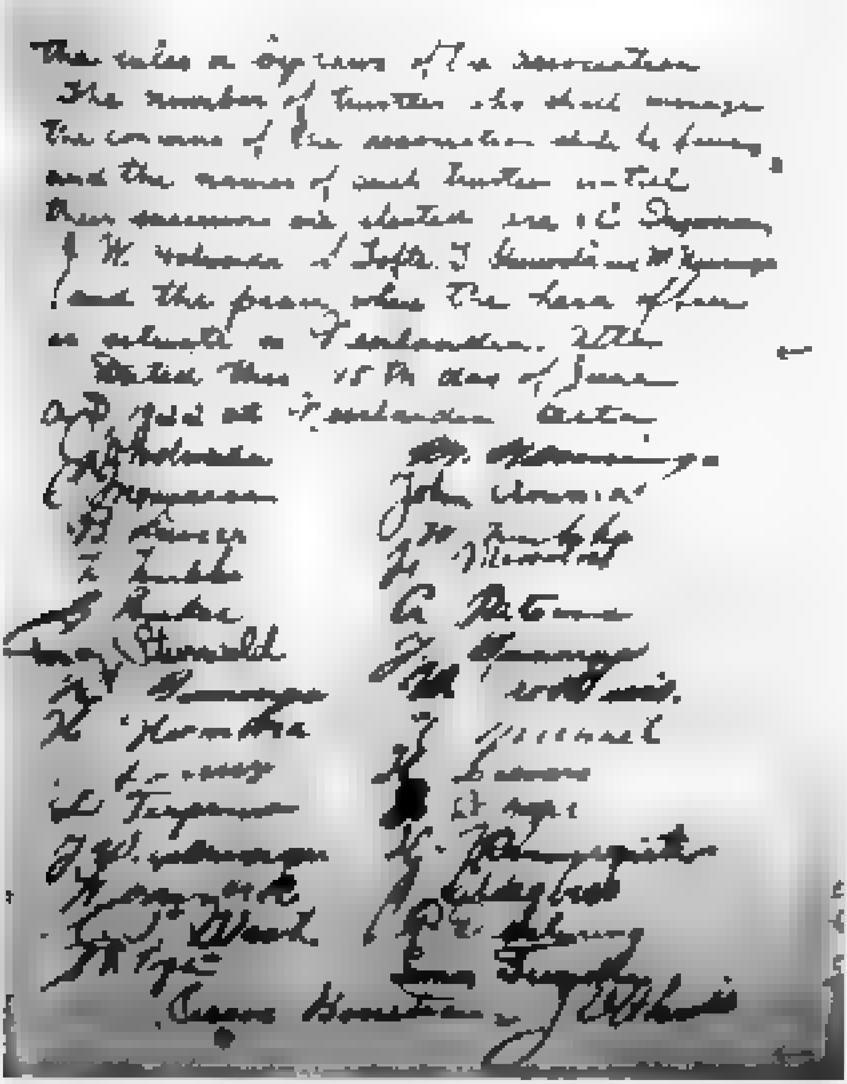
(d) To act as agents for any persons, firms or corporations engaged in the business of fire, life or hail insurance, or the business of loans and investments,

(e) To hold, buy, sell or otherwise deal in real estate or other property.

(f) To carry on any other co-operative business or businesses which may seem to the association convenient to be carried on in connection with the above, or calculated directly or indirectly to render profitable or enhance the value of the association's property or rights for the time being.

(g) Generally do such acts and deeds, including the borrowing of money from any person, firm or corporation, with or without giving security therefor (sic), as shall be necessary for the carrying on of the business of the association. The number of shares is to be unlimited and the capital is to consist of shares of twenty five dollars ($25.00) each or of such other amount as shall from time to time be determined by the rules or by-laws of the association.

The number of trustees who shall manage the concerns of the association shall be five and the names of such trustees until their



the rules or by-laws of the association
The number of trustees who shall manage
the concerns of the association shall be five,
and the names of such trustees until
their successors are elected are: C. Duggan,
J. W. Holmes, [illegible] Tefft, J. Hamilton and W. Yeomans
and the place where the head office
is situated is Tantallon. [illegible]
Dated this 15th day of June
A.D. 1902 at Tantallon Assa.

John [illegible]

(Signatures)

successors are elected are: C. Ingwersen, J. W. Holwerda, S. Tofte, T. Sturwold and M. Nanninga and the place where the head office is situated is Neerlandia, Alta.

Dated this 15th day of June A.D. 1922 at Neerlandia, Alta.

* * *

The store began on a very small scale and yet, some funds were needed. These funds were received from two sources, the pioneers themselves, and a man named Sigurd Tofte who was not a Dutchman. He was, however, one of the first pioneers to settle in the nearby community of Vega. He was an astute business man who was known as "the banker of Vega". He was also involved with the Neerlandia community because of his interest in the co-operative movement. He has the honour of owning share No. 1 and occupies the first page in the share book.

The share book is large and each shareholder is allotted one page, on which is recorded his ownership. The people whose names are recorded at this early date obviously had made a decision to begin a co-operative store. They had come to a position where words have been translated into action. They had purchased a book, elected a secretary, and most importantly, put money on the line.

The entry of May 20, 1921, is a loan from Sigurd Tofte for $100.00. This was a tremendous amount of money, and it became the foundation for the start of the store. Twenty-four others joined him with the purchase of shares. A minimum of $5.00 per person was required, with a full share to have a value of $25.00. Many entries took a couple of payments before a total of exactly $5.00 was attained and, then, it would be several years before the total of $25.00 was reached.

For instance, Klaas Krikke began by paying $2.79 in June 1921. In July he added $0.60, in August $0.77, and by September 1, he was able to put another $0.84 towards his account giving him the required equity of $5.00. He made six more payments, before his share was paid in full on November 26, 1924.

Of the twenty five people who are listed in the share book nineteen were able to pay the required $5.00 before the end of 1921. Three people had contributed $10.00 each. Eight more members joined in 1922, giving a total membership of thirty-three persons. The provisional board consisted of Joe Holwerda, Case Ingwersen, Menne Nanninga, Toney Sturwold, and Sigurd Tofte. Joe Holwerda sent the information to the registrar of companies.

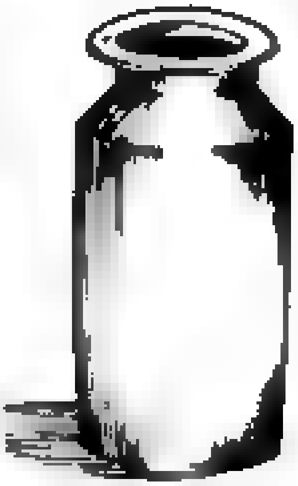
Throughout the early years Tofte continued to lend money to the association, by the end of 1927 he had lent $1450.00. The indebtedness of the association to him never went higher than a few hundred dollars, however, as they paid him back on a regular basis. Though Tofte was the first and largest source of funds, two others from Vega also lent money during the first eight years of the store. Oscar Bunstrom lent the association $100.00 and Charlie Anderson lent the association $450.00.

The first store was a 12 by 14-foot log building located on the NE 34-61-3-5, the Messelink homestead. The intent of the shareholders

was to have a store that would be open one day a week. Case Ingwersen wrote that there were no applications for secretary-manager of the store so he was talked into accepting this position since it was felt he had the most experience. At about the same time the Co-op received an unexpected bonus when the government made a policy that allowed for the testing of cream in small communities. Case Ingwersen went to Edmonton to learn how to test cream and had to pass an exam to obtain a license. According to the 1921 annual report of the Dairy Commissioner of Alberta, 334 licenses were issued to operators of cream stations, of which Neerlandia was one.

Items such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco were sold in the store. On the wall opposite the door were some shelves on which were such items as tallow and kerosene. By a small window next to the door was a small table and on it was the Babcock cream tester.

Westlock Creamery.



At nine o'clock each Monday morning the farmers would arrive by horse and wagon with cans of cream. A full can weighed eighty pounds, but most cans were not full. From each can a sample was taken and put in a numbered test tube. It took time to test the cream since it had to be heated to 140 degrees. In the interval the customers could be served. Once their needs were met it was time to test the cream for fat content by adding acid to the warm cream and spinning it in a centrifuge. Four settlers took turns hauling the cream to Westlock and from there it was hauled to Edmonton by train. The payment for the cream was made by cheque, but whether the dairy made them out to the Co-op or to the producer is not known.

* * *

No Money — No Bread

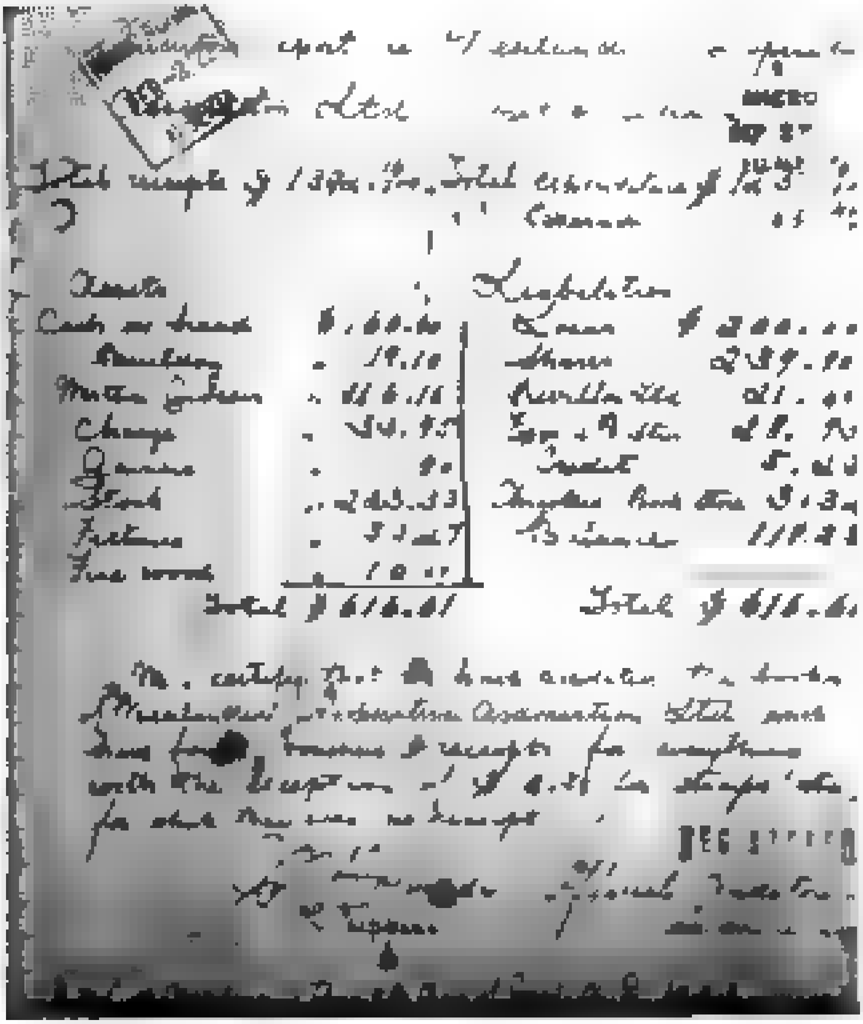
Once a young boy came to the store and stood in line at the counter. "Who's next?" asked the manager. The young boy asked for two loaves of bread. The manager had instructions from the board that if an account ran so high and was not paid then any purchases *had to be paid for with cash. The manager said to the boy, "Heb je geld?" (Have you money?) "No," said the boy. "Dan, geen brood!" (Then no bread!) said the manager, "Who's next?"*

* * *

In order to be a viable operation it was necessary, at first, to sell only for cash. Ingwersen wrote: "The storekeeper had to be hardened to deal with the poor housewife as orders were orders and he could not give credit. She sometimes went crying to Mrs. Messelink complaining about the fellow who refused to sell her supplies."

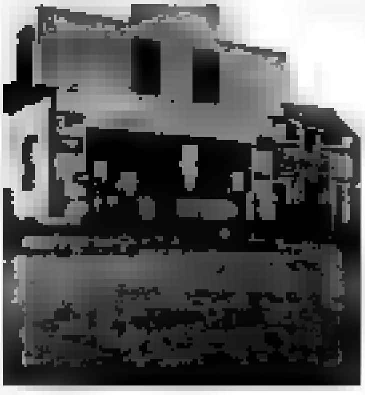
Quite soon after the store began, it became necessary to open on Friday as well as Monday. With this encouragement it was time to go on to a bigger store. Ingwersen wrote: "The second year of the co-operative it was decided to start a real store and to go into business 100%. The fall of 1922 a lumber store was built where the church (was) already standing. Now the romance of the first years was gone, the cream testing was terminated and all cream was sent directly to Edmonton." The association bought two acres of the NW 34-61-3-5 and constructed the new building there.

Ingwersen girls on the stoop.



Auditor's report

The financial statement of 1922 listed the receipts as $1392.16. The next year 1923, business increased dramatically to $6433.36, an indication the association had "start(ed) a real store and going into business 100%." In 1922 the value of the building was listed at $19.10. In 1923 the building's stated value was $25.00 and not until 1924 was it listed at $500.00.



As business increased it was necessary to expand the store building.

Only one person looked after the store till 1932, though from time to time some part-time help was required. Case Ingwersen's daughter Anne began by helping in 1926.

The store was expected to be opened whenever a customer called. This could be any time of the day or night, and if Ingwersen was not there they would go to his house to get him. The store handled all items needed by the settlers in those early years. Some of the items such as molasses (which came in a barrel) would be sold by bulk. Flour came in one-hundred pound bags. All items were on shelves behind a counter. Customers would give a list of items needed to the manager or clerk who would fill the order. Sometimes goods would be in short supply so the manager would tell the customer that he could have only a limited number of the item and that he had to leave some for others. A large heater that required constant stoking supplied the heat in the winter and men gathered around it to visit.

Store and Case Ingwersen residence

* * *

Next Week — Next Week

Mr. Ingwersen, manager of the Co-op store in the late 1920s, stood behind the counter serving the farmers. A couple of gentlemen had been standing in line waiting and when their turn came they asked for certain merchandise they needed. If it was not in stock, which happened quite frequently, Mr. Ingwersen would reply, "Not in stock. Next week!" One of these gentleman said he worked in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. and he said the birds would sit in the trees and sing 'Next week, next week.' The manager replied, "Zoo, zingen die het ook?" (So, do they sing that too?) A chorus of laughter erupted from the other gentleman and other onlookers.

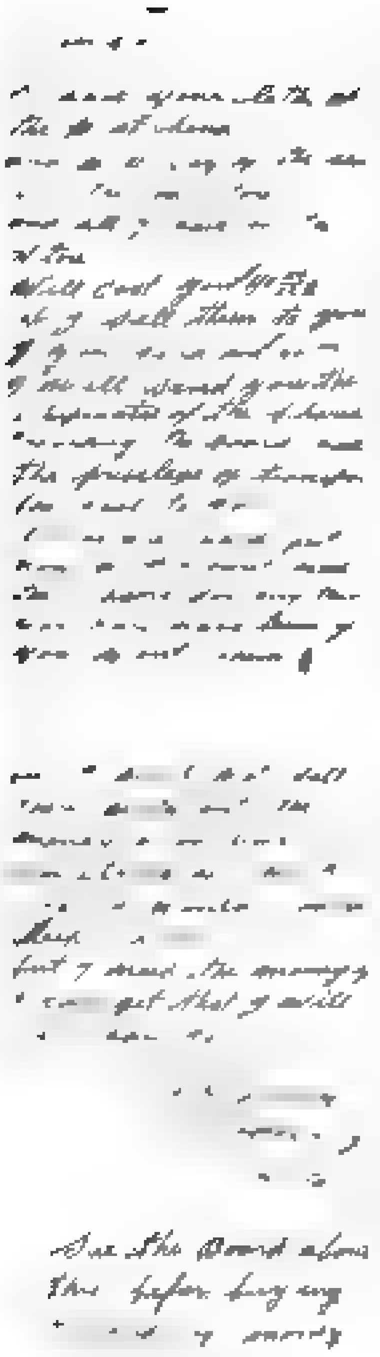
* * *

NEERLANDIA CO OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD.

Ingwersen resigned as manager of the store in 1933. He had given twelve years of service and said his desire was to go back to his original intention, which was to farm. He also said the constant pressure of dealing with the public was wearing him down.

The board was often made up of strong-willed people who, with the best of intentions, were determined to get their way. Thus controversy occurred within the board. Because people were so poor they watched every penny. Serving people under these circumstances was sometimes difficult. The weights were not always believed to be true nor the figures correct. At some point the change to giving credit had been made and collecting bills was also difficult. These same circumstances contributed to the tension between board and manager.

In the early years there was a five-member board who represented the shareholders. They were chosen at an annual meeting which was held in March. The store's financial year was from January through December. At the annual meeting of March 6, 1940, the members decided to increase the board members from five to seven. Originally the tenure of office was two years but, at the



annual meeting held March 22, 1947, it was changed to three years. Joe Holwerda was the official auditor and he was assisted on alternate years by William van Ark and Henry Kippers Sr.

There were two full-time people working in the store in 1933. This was the manager and one clerk. The only records close to that date list one full-time employee in 1931 and two in 1934. During the later years of Ingwersen, part-time help was used.

Jan Koning became manager of the Co-op in 1933. A second full-time employee, Lee Reese, had been hired as clerk in 1932. Jan Koning's wife helped in the store as well.

Though the men who ran the store were called managers, it is doubtful whether they were thought of as such. Most of the business at a board meeting was completed without the manager's attendance. Often a manager was called into a meeting and told who his clerks were and what to charge for the products.

In 1952 the board relaxed its control somewhat when a motion was made to the effect that the manager would have to see only the president and two others on the board if he needed to make a minor decision. Two months later they gave the manager the right to hire and fire his own clerks. Ironically, at the very next meeting, the board itself fired a clerk.

* * *

In the early years people bought shares to become members. Later people began transferring shares to help others become members. Many of the later immigrants were helped by Co-op members who transferred a $25 share to them as a gift.

The ability of the Co-op to pay dividends was sometimes questioned. As a result, some sold their shares at less than their face value. The following correspondence is an indication of this. (P. Louws' share value at the time was $55.94).

March 17

Mr P. Louws
Didsbury, Alberta

Dear Sir

Mr R. J. de Vries handed us your letter to him of February 13 in which you state that you are willing to sell to him your full interest in our Association, for the amount of $40 cash.

We decided at our last Board meeting to allow you to transfer these shares.

Mr R. J. de Vries deposited money in the store and on receipt of your shares we will send you our cheque of $40.

Kindly sign the shares for transfer. Hoping this will be satisfactory,

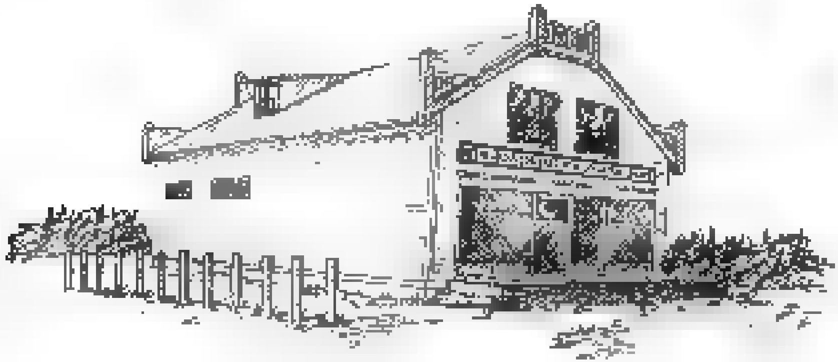
Yours truly,

* * *

In 1938, while Koning was manager and during the Depression, a larger store was built. The Co-operative Association purchased one-and-one-half acres of land on the NE 33-6-35 from William Swaffield. This move indicated the confidence of the set-bers in the Co-op. In a time when the world's economy was in a state of turmoil, the decision to forge ahead was made.

Already in 1934 a building fund was established. One third of the dividends allotted to each member from the profit on his purchases was put aside annually. After three years the fund totalled $1,241.01. The amount of each contribution was recorded and credited to the member's share record in 1938. Additional funds were raised by borrowing from many of the members. Even a few suppliers lent money to the Co-op during this period. The building project was begun in 1937 and completed in 1938.

Almost ready for use.



The total cost of the store was $12,073.25. It was a magnificent structure. It was well built under the supervision of Jerry Reitsma and Menne Nanninga. The roof was sturdily-built with many braces and rafters. Not only did this store have a much larger floor area than the old one, it also boasted a community hall on the second floor. In 1939 an additional $302.05 was spent on such items as finishing the hall, changing the fire escape, and levelling the ground in front of the store. For many years the store hall served as the gathering place for many functions, including the annual store meetings, wedding receptions, bazaars, educational films, and even moving pictures sponsored by machinery dealers. After the church building had burned down in 1948, worship services were also held in the hall. Chairs provided seating on the front part of the hall, but the back had two rows of bleachers. The high back rows were the favourite benches of the young men in the community.

* * *

Those that remember those days also remember the murals that decorated the hall. Drawn with colour pencil on tentest panels by Annie Nanninga, they depicted community life – people walking down the road, trucks in front of the store, and church and school activities. In 1984 one panel of this mural has survived in rather poor shape.

* * *

An awning kept the sun out.

Additional fixtures were purchased in 1940 at a cost of $546.33. One major item was a McKaskey register, a sort of filing cabinet designed to hold bills. A National cash register was purchased the next year and supplemented rather than replaced the McKaskey. Other fixtures purchased included a safe, three scales, an adding machine, a typewriter, and a duplicating machine. In addition to these items, filing cabinets, chairs, tables, and various other items were purchased. Five Coleman lamps were purchased for light. The store had become a modern and up-to-date business.

Neerlandia Cooperative Association

Business Turnover and Profit

Year	Business Turnover	Profit
1922	1,39216	16040
1923	6,436.30	237.66
1924	9,303.63	40.87
1925	13,22968	13103
1926	15,39558	28171
1927	21,09992	90768
1928	24,750.89	719.56
1929	30,79543	21731
1934	27,685.98	510.02
1937	46,19981	1,909.56
1941	60,290.94	1,855.07
1945	8574296	106083

* * *

At the present time only one type of share is held by the members. When the Co-op began, the intent was to have shares of twenty-five dollar amounts and each share was kept separate since they were accumulated through dividends on the shareholder's purchases. Here are some letters indicating what happened when the records became confused.

Mr. H. Kippers Sr.

I believe I sent to you 1 share No 143 to be transferred from L. Nanninga to G. Nanninga.

Mrs. G. Nanninga said that she wants a new M. Nanninga's share made out in G. Nanninga's name, instead of in M. Nanninga's. But M. Nanninga is not getting any new shares, he has more than 6.

If M. Nanninga wants to transfer a share to G. Nanninga, he will have to bring a share in and ask the Board. G. Nanninga should be a shareholder, if possible. Hilda says she will bring one of her father's shares to you to-morrow.

J. Johnman had 1 share when he left, and this share was claimed by P. Johnman during Jim's absence. The Board decided to allow P. Johnman to be the shareholder, as it had been made out in P. Johnman's name originally.

P. Johnman had the share transferred to J. van Ee on December 19, 1940. J. Johnman always was the shareholder. Ingwersen put down P. Johnman, but this was an error. Now the question arises. Jim Johnman is the shareholder, but how about Jan van Ee. Van Ee now has $39.69. Jim Johnman still has his share. Van Ee has a share too.

Mrs. D. Baker
Edmonton
12028 96 street

March 12, 1945

Dear Madam,

I discovered that Mr. D. Terpsma had already sent in his Ordinary Share No 8 and his Redeemable shares A and B. Sorry if I put you to extra trouble.

Our enclosed cheque pays for	1 ordinary share $		25
	1 Redeemable share A		12.69
	1 Redeemable share B		17.25
	Interest on 1 share 1944		1.25
			$56.19
Mr D. Terpsma still holds	1 Redeemable share C	9.67	
	1 Redeemable share D	8.37	
	1 Redeemable share E	.10	
		$18.14	
and the balance on his ordinary shares is		8.37	
		$26.51	

The Redeemable shares C, D and E are not redeemed yet. On the next Board meeting I intend to ask the Board of directors, whether the $8.37 balance on Ordinary shares can be paid out.

Yours truly
J. Koning

* * *

After twelve years of faithful service, Jan Koning left for Houston, B.C., in 1945. He had purchased his own store there. The board then hired H. J. Ten Hove as the manager and Aubrey Ashley as full-time bookkeeper — a task he had been doing on a part-time basis since 1942. H. J. Ten Hove resigned after three months because his ideas about operating the business did not coincide with the board's ideas.

Frank Visser was hired as manager in 1945. Aubrey Ashley took over this position in 1950, and he also retained the job as book-

What can I do for you? [illegible] ready to serve, mid-1950s

keeper. He had a good relationship with the board; his views on financial matters concurred with theirs.

* * *

Aubrey had been asking the board for a raise for some time and it had been tabled each time. Finally the board decided to raise his salary by $[illegible] per year. When he was informed of the decision Aubrey replied that $[illegible] per month was sufficient. As the minutes put it "The board quite willingly agreed to this."

* * *

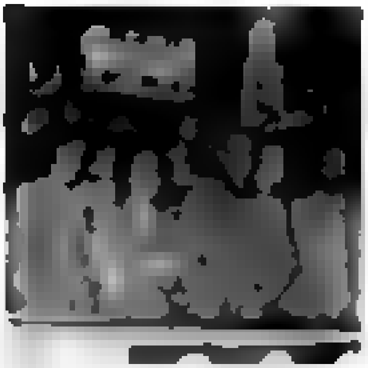
In [illegible] Bart Vander Wal was given the responsibility of manager and bookkeeper. In September [illegible] Mike [illegible] replaced him in the same role but he remained for less than three years. The role of manager and bookkeeper was again separated in April [illegible] when Gerhard Peters was hired as manager and John De Gier was hired as bookkeeper.

* * *

The store was closed on Wednesday afternoons. [illegible]

The Customer is Always Right

The customer is always right ... well, almost always. A few years ago a local farmer bought a pair of work shoes at the store. He had previously bought the same kind and now wanted a pair just like them. However, in a couple of months he returned to the store complaining that the shoes he had purchased were already showing signs of wear and demanded his money back. Well, the customer is always right, so although the manager found it difficult to believe that the shoes had worn out in such a short time, he refunded the money. Not long afterwards the farmer again came to the store and asked to speak with the manager. He shamefacedly confessed that he had been in the wrong in regard to the shoes. His wife had discovered the new shoes, still in the box in which they had been purchased. The farmer then remembered that he had decided not to wear them for a while because it was early spring and the ground was still wet and muddy. Later he had forgotten that decision and noticed only how badly worn his shoes were — he had returned his old pair of shoes.



[illegible] John De [illegible]

The 1960s, and especially the early part of that decade, marked the growth of not only the store but also the community. The association through the board made decisions that had impact on the community at large. The Credit Union idea was first raised by Chris [illegible] in a letter to the board in [illegible]. His idea was to have the store sell for cash only and to begin a Credit Union which would lend to its members the money needed to pay the store. This idea was received favourably and in May [illegible] the board asked the Department of Co-operative Affairs for a speaker to give them information on how to set up a Credit Union. In [illegible] the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union was established. A concrete vault was constructed to serve the needs of both businesses.

During the 1960s the store was offered a Cockshutt machinery dealership. They in turn offered it to [illegible], but he was not [illegible] in competition with the store

[illegible] the building sold

[illegible]

[illegible] and contributions to the buying of hockey equipment

[illegible]

[illegible] residence only

[illegible]

[illegible]

ary 1944 record the following: "Mr. asks the board to close our hall for moving pictures as the ladies in charge is used improper length and pictures are not for our children a proper education." It appears the reference is to the length of dress. This request to close the hall was granted but later some exceptions were made. For some years educational films and some machinery dealers' presentations were shown. John Deere Days (shown by Carl R.). Most was allowed but in some years only the promotional film was shown; the comedies were prohibited.

Another issue the Co-op faced was the question of membership in the Alberta Co-operative Wholesale Association (ACWA) and the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA). It is not known when the Co-op became a member of the ACWA but the first available minutes ([illegible]) indicate membership at that time. The ACWA was strongly supported by most members, and even credited with helping the cause of farmers in their struggle for fair prices. Some members, however, were concerned that the objectives and principles of the ACWA are not compatible with their beliefs. This question was debated over the years but motions to discontinue membership were defeated and the board continued to send delegates to the conventions of the ACWA, though at times it protested some of its views. At one time the board sent a resolution to the convention that no taking of the Lord's name in vain by the delegates shall take place. In 1954 those who wanted to discontinue our membership in the ACWA gained some support after a poem published in the Co-op [illegible] was deemed to be blasphemous. The board sent a letter of protest to the ACWA. This culminated in a decision of the 1955 shareholders to withdraw membership from the ACWA and not to join the UFA. Before this the store had been buying from the UFA but sharing only in a limited way with its profits. This same arrangement developed with the ACWA in 1955. This association became the Federated Co-operatives Association and in November 1972 the Neerlandia Co-op, by board decision, again became a member in full.

Other moral issues were also dealt with by the board. The manager was asked if the store had sold playing cards. He answered that if it had been selling them in the past it certainly would not do so in the future. Some stealing had also happened and it was the opinion of the manager that it happened mostly on Friday nights. A glass cover was put over the hardware counter to control this.

Another issue related to the original desire to have a separate community. In 1946 a request of a young man from outside the community to start a barbershop in a room in the store was refused. The board stated that if one of our own young men would start a barber shop this would be approved. [illegible] and Hoeman were granted use of a room at the store in 1948 and they used it for a couple of years to provide a service to the community. The question of membership was another such issue. In 19[illegible] it was decided that anyone who submitted to the principles of the Neerlandia co-op and who was financially reliable could become a member. As a result of this decision the Co-op received many new members and expansion of the Co-op facilities became necessary. People had came to believe the Co-op was a well run business and they desired to be a part of it. In fact the board had to deal with membership applications from as far away as Barrhead. The question of membership was resolved in 1974 when trading boundaries were established [illegible] membership was limited to that area. The board felt a responsibility to the entire area north to the river and this was included in the trading area. The concept of a trading area seems to have worked well and some expansion of the boundaries has been made since 1974.

To sell for cash or to grant credit caused much discussion over the years as well. With the establishment of the Credit Union a monthly limit of $50.00 credit was set. This was not satisfactory to some, and when the 1948 annual meeting decided to continue issuing credit, one of the board members resigned. He said he could not work in harmony with the board as long as the Co-op continued on a credit basis. Finally, in 1954 the decision was made to sell on a cash basis, and bills were to be paid every two weeks. Though the decision had been made, evidence suggests it never was put into effect. The 1955 annual meeting rescinded this motion as unworkable and credit for sixty days and later for thirty days became the policy of the store.

Self service was introduced in 1956. This was a major change not only for the clerks but also for the customers. It was hard for some men who were used to handing a list to the clerks to look for items themselves. Not a few would look at the clerk for sympathy and coax them into finding the groceries. With self service, writing the groceries on bills also ended and the clerks had to learn to operate a cash register.

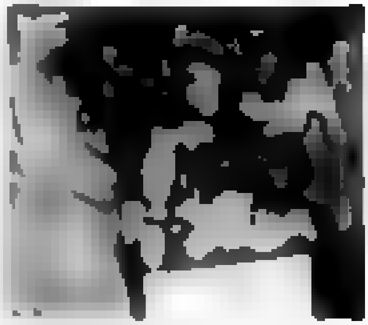
The years from 1963 to 1985 have been years of growth for the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. In 1966 modernization of the store took place with the installation of a new floor, new fixtures and doors.

Then in 1973 a meeting of the shareholders was called to discuss the branching out into other areas of endeavour. This meeting approved the installation of anhydrous ammonia equipment and as a result land was purchased, a portion of [illegible], and tanks were installed.

In another special meeting the shareholders agreed to again attempt the operation of a Co-op garage, but this time with the same board of directors as governed the store. The site of the original garage was repurchased and a new building was constructed. On April [illegible], 1976 the Co-op Service Centre was officially opened with Sy Vander Meer as manager and Fred [illegible] as mechanic foreman. Successive managers were Larry [illegible] and [illegible]. In 1982 Henk [illegible] became manager and Fred continues as head mechanic.

On April 28, 1979 further expansion of the Co-op took place with the opening of the fertilizer blending plant on the site of the anhydrous ammonia facility. The store was now able to offer expanded services in all types of fertilizer blends.

Yet another shareholders' meeting in 1983 gave approval to an addition to the store building. Rather than build a new store the decision was made to retain the old structure because of its sound



Serving a customer. Wilhelmina Meyers being helped by Henry Timinga and Bill De Boer.

ness and historical significance. The addition doubled the floor space, enabling the Co-op to offer its customers a wide variety of products. As one visitor said, the Neerlandia Co-op is "the Safeway of the north."

The "Safeway of the North" 1984

By 1984 the membership of the association had increased from the original 25 to 316. The number of employees had grown from one to sixteen and total sales had increased from three hundred to over five million in 1984. If the trademark of the Co-op has been its policy of granting credit, the payment of dividends is its benchmark of success. For years it has declared dividends on the purchases made by its members and these dividends have been applied to the members' shares. They have not remained only as shares however; from 1973 to 1983 $830,195.66 has been returned to the shareholders.

Throughout the years many people have been involved in the Neerlandia Co-op as staff members or as board members. With the customers they have contributed to the welfare and success of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association.

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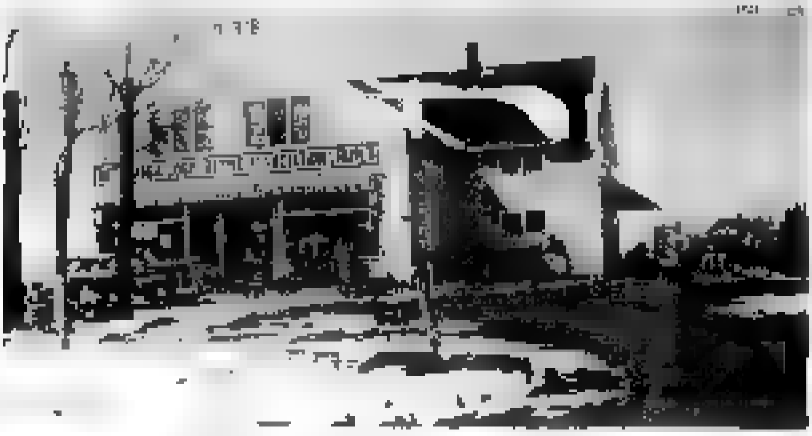
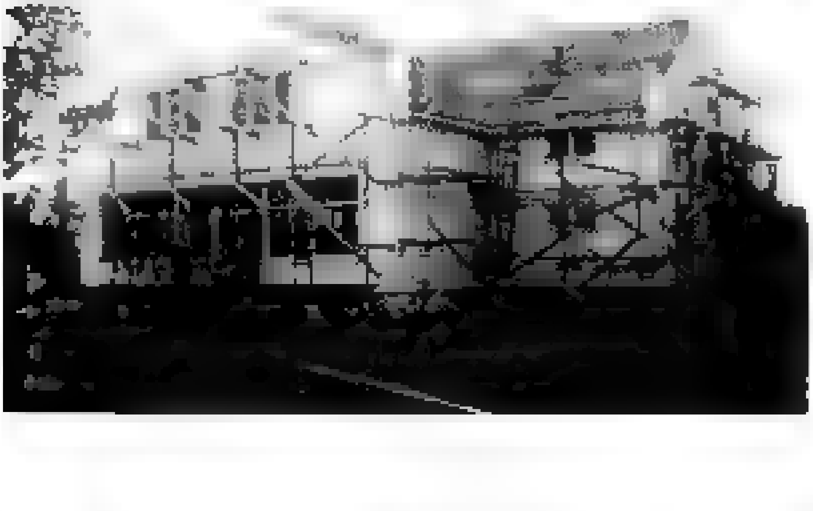
Tuininga, Clarence, personal interview, c. 1975-76, with Grace De Gier, Rose De Groot, and Ann Den Otter





Life as a Female Clerk at the Neerlandia Co-op 1946–49

The clerks at Neerlandia Co-op these days probably think they have it pretty good as they go parading down the vast aisles or standing at the till with ample room around them as they perform their duties. We, however, felt like "Queens of our Domain" in a much smaller store with less frills — and getting a much smaller wage at that.

We girls wore knee-length smocks over our dresses — pants were unheard of back then. I worked first with Grace Tuininga and later with Lola Kraake. Frank Visser was the manager and Mr. Ashley, our favourite old teacher, did the bookkeeping and ran the Post Office.

Our day would start by helping Mr. Ashley count out and record the cash needed for the day. The last job of the day would be to sweep the rough wooden floor and again count the day's money, hoping it would balance — it usually did, but there were times when we would have to stay overtime and rack our brains over all the bills and find the mistake. Of course, we would rather count the money than push the broom handle, so we usually took turns at these jobs.

The drygoods section was on the south side of the store, with an aisle between the shelves against the wall and the two counters. One counter was marked for measuring out yardgoods — flannelette, sheeting, featherticking, cottons, etc. These counters had heavy glass on top and we could display such things as bone china cups and saucers and ornaments underneath. There were sets of dishes displayed in the window. Drygoods on the shelves consisted of such items as men's bib overalls, Stanfield's all wool drop-seat underwear, Penman's fleece lined underwear, shirts, felt shoes, felt socks, woollen socks, rubbers, mitts and pullovers, tweed, appliques, sewing and embroidery thread, women's undershirts, bloomers and panties, skeins of knitting and darning wool, and much more.

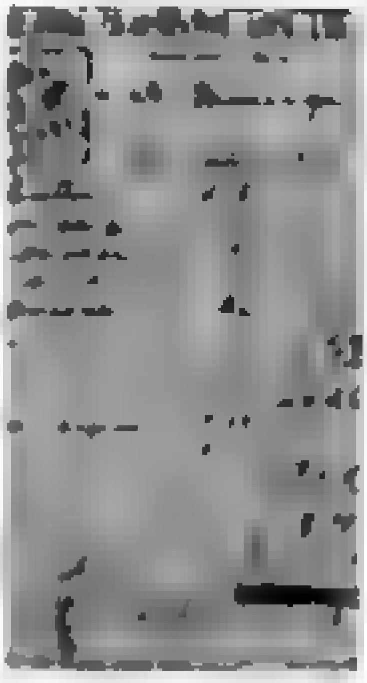
The hardware section was on the west side and included such supplies as milk pails, copper wash boilers, galvanized washtubs, stovepipes, airtight heaters, hand saws, axes, shovels, manure forks, kegs of nails, bolts, replacement handles, and lanterns.

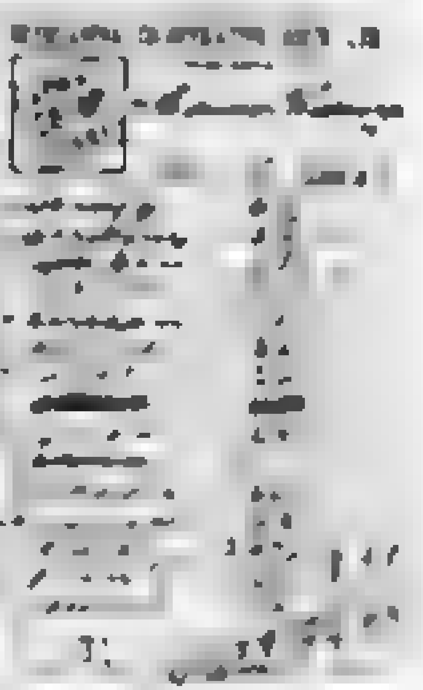
The groceries were kept on the north side, stacked on high, medium, and low shelves against the wall. Again, there was quite a wide aisle and one short counter on which the meat slicer stood and there was a roll of brown wrapping paper at the end. On the long counter was the McKaskey, where all the bills were kept, the cash register, a scale, and another roll of brown paper at the end. String hung from the ceiling on a big roll that unravelled as it was pulled. On this counter most of our work was done. There were two wooden stepladders readily available behind the counter for us to use, a high one and a low one, depending on which shelf the needed groceries were on and also depending on the length of the clerk's legs. We had a great time when the toilet paper would come cascading off the highest shelf while we were using a long-handled hook to get one roll down. It was our job to keep the shelves filled and groceries and drygoods ordered.

There were three or four large drawers underneath the grocery [illegible] and we had a few laughs over that one.)

[illegible] I must say that I was not as thrilled by it as he was.)

Customers would come in with their lists and either hand [illegible] enjoyed "doing the bills."





Saturday was the regular shopping day for many; the men would come to the store and visit with one another after handing over their lists to the clerks to fill out. Their weekly mail would also be picked up at this time.

There was one old bachelor in particular that would have practically the same order every time and you could almost write it down from memory before he could read it off: one pound Blue Ribbon tea, one pound butter, bread, two [illegible] soap, two cans of Alpha milk, one pound lard, a can of Old Chum tobacco, cigarette papers, and coal oil when needed.

Most of the groceries were bought in bulk — rice, tapioca, pot and pearl barley, brown beans, peas, peanuts, raisins, currants, dates, dried fruit, and peppermints. It all had to be packaged by hand into one or two pound paper bags, weighed, and priced. [illegible] came in large square tins, coffee in big [illegible], tea in three-pound tins.

Blackstrap molasses was bought in a big container and we would pour it into quart jars and sell it that way. In winter it would be cold and stiff and pour "as slow as molasses in January," so we would warm it up on the heat register. Little Frankie [illegible], the manager's son, would also seek refuge at the register to warm up after playing outdoors and he would love to lick that molasses. We had a lot of fun with him and he would make our day when he would sneak into the store and visit with us for a few minutes. Frankie knew that he was not allowed to be in the store and one time when he did get caught, his dad hauled him out by the scruff of the neck. Little did his dad know that we had been the ones urging him on to come into the store in the first place.

That one large heat register measured about two and one half feet square and two feet high and was meant to warm up the whole store; nevertheless the store was often very cold. We made many trips to that register to warm our feet and hands after pumping gas or doing other outdoor chores. We would pull the chain and the oil furnace in the cellar would just burn a little harder. It was also a good place to sit while putting the burrs on bolts. The burrs and bolts would then be put in separate compartments in a big high bin.

In those days everyone used coal oil or high test gasoline in their lamps and lanterns, and these were a usual item on the list. The one or two-gallon cans would have to be filled in the shed outdoors. It would really make our day when at about ten to six in the dead of winter — we were already envisioning warm thoughts of home — someone would come in with their little can and we had to trudge out in the snow and cold to fill it and "cheerfully" hand it to our customer with a frozen smile on our face.

Vinegar came in wooden barrels and people would bring their own containers to be filled. Wood alcohol also came in bulk.

Almost everyone bought flour, usually Robin Hood, in one-hundred pound cotton bags which were stored in the warehouse. When the men were not around, the two of us would heave it onto the cart, perhaps the same cart that was being used in the feed shed, or if there happened to be only one of us around at the time, we would push, pull, or drag it onto the cart by ourselves, unless we could find a willing customer to help. We would wheel it through the store, onto the porch, and the same procedure would take place to get it into the vehicle. Sometimes mice would get at the flour bags and chew a few holes in them. We did some fancy repair work on them with needle and thread, hoping the customers would not notice.

We also did our share of handling one hundred pound bags of feed at the feed shed. On occasions we would help unload the freight when the truck came in.

During the war certain items were hard to get. Laundry soap was one of them, and if we would get a case or two of it, usually Chipso, we would keep it under the counter and hand it out as fairly as we could. Another such item was currants, which we packaged into paper bags. They also went under the counter. We sold them sparingly until they got infested with worms and we could not use them at all!

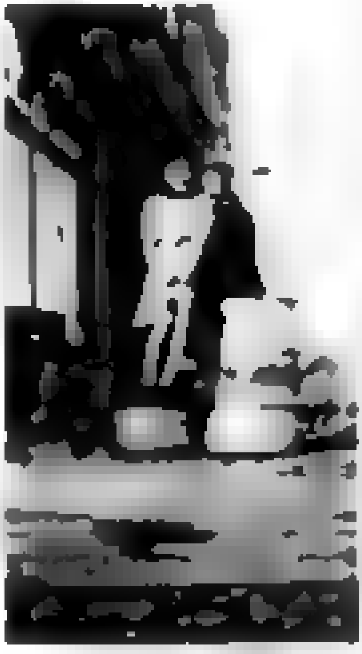
Everyone else had ration books because of war shortages and a certain amount of coupons could be used each week for such items as sugar, jam, butter and also gas. Some of the customers would leave their books in the store for convenience and we were once accused of stealing someone's coupons because he wanted more sugar than he could get.

There was a gas pump in front of the store which was hand pumped with a lever and could hold ten gallons of gas in a glass container marked in gallons, half gallons, and quarter gallons. It was usual to pump it full after every customer so it would be ready for the next one. Pumping gas was a nice break from our indoor work, especially in summer. There was also a gas and oil shed across the road to the east and farmers would get their gas in forty-five gallon barrels. We girls would often have to help get the gas for the customers. Where were those guys when we needed them? Of course, when certain customers came we were only too willing to go out there. First the barrel was weighed on a platform scale, then pumped full with a back and forth lever, then weighed again. A certain amount of pounds equalled forty-five gallons. The customers would come with one to five barrels at a time so that meant a lot of pumping.

We had one tiny sink located in the southwest corner of the Post Office where we could wash our hands. Since neither of us had running water at home, taps were a great novelty for us. One day [illegible] was fooling around at the sink and instead of shutting the tap off, she opened it full blast. I turned [illegible] back at her and she stood there dripping wet — amid peals of laughter from me, of course.

The manager's family shared their large two-door fridge with the store. Every Saturday it was cleaned out and if the bologna sausage or wieners became a bit sticky, we wiped them with a cloth dipped in vinegar so they would maybe last a few days longer.

On Monday mornings the store was the centre of activity and we had to open one half hour earlier, eight o'clock. It was cream hauling morning. Farmers were hired by Bob Fisher to pick up cream along their way to the store, where it would be unloaded onto Fisher's truck and hauled to Edmonton. They got paid twenty



[illegible]

five cents for each can of cream, and we were given a list as to how many cans each hauler had so we could credit it to their account.

Since we had no spacious, modern, indoor bathroom, we would sometimes have to "get away from it all" where the double outhouse, situated slightly to the southwest behind the old feed shed, left an indelible mark on mind and body, especially when hoarfrost gathered thick and picturesque around the seat in winter.

My biggest paycheck was sixty-five dollars per month. I started with bare minimum wages and was asked to give back ten dollars per month out of my meagre earnings. To the best of my knowledge, I was the only one who had to do this. Then one of the board members promised me that I would get a bonus when I quit, but I never saw that either. But in spite of all the disappointments, I still survived. I must say we got along really well and had many good times together — plus many hours of hard work, though we are none the worse for it.

Sophie (Anema) Wierenga

BUSINESS ENDEAVOURS

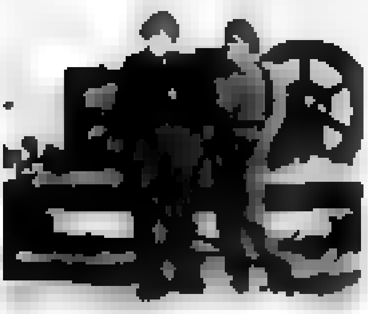
In the earliest times of the community it was difficult for anyone to survive on his own. No one who came had all the necessary tools, equipment, and ability to do all the work that was needed in a farming community.

Through the years there were many people who supplied a service for the settlers. The first years there was little or no charge for such services. The people helped each other, each doing the task(s) for which he had the necessary tools or skills.

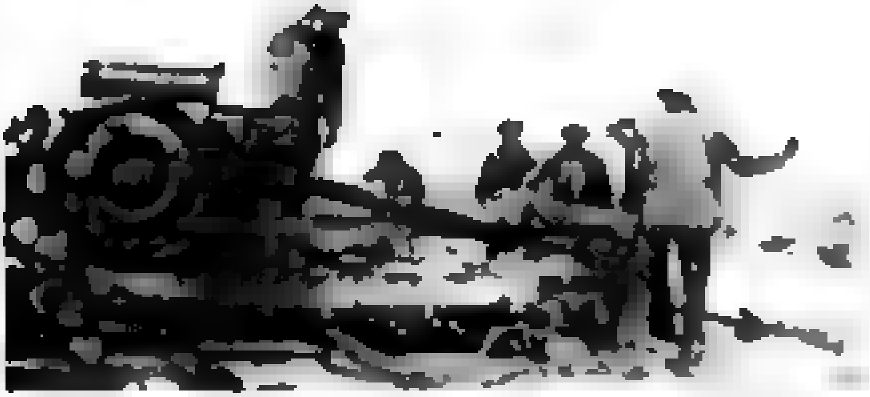
Some farmers owned either a horse or tractor-drawn breaker and did custom breaking for farmers at up to eight dollars per acre.

Henry Mast owned a small horse-drawn binder and went from farm to farm cutting grain.

Toney Sturwold was mechanically inclined and used his abilities to help others. Grain had to be ground up for livestock feed. Toney owned a buzz saw for sawing firewood, and a small grain crusher which he mounted on a wagon in summer and a sleigh in winter. These units were powered by a small four horsepower engine. Toney went to the farms, first grinding some clean wheat to be used for porridge, brown bread, or muffins. He then ground grain for the livestock. This grinding took a long time. Only a few bags of grain could be crushed in one day. If there was wood to be sawed, this was also done. Sometime later Toney purchased a larger seven-horsepower engine and a larger crusher was added. In the late 1930s he went around with a still-larger crusher and tractor. This crusher would be mounted in the farmer's granary and powered by belt and pulley from the tractor. Toney's sons, Lucas and Jake, helped with this work. Toney also did some blacksmithing. For much of his work people paid him cash or did some clearing for him on his quarter. After Toney retired from farming, he took up painting farm buildings. He went to the farms by bicycle, braving the gravel thrown by speeding cars, and carrying the paint on his bicycle carrier.


Luke and Margaret Sturwold in front of Toney's portable grain crusher

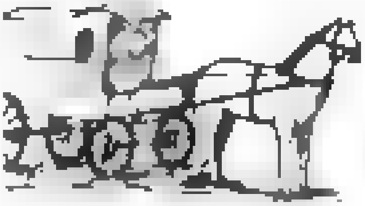
Arie Emmerzael supplemented his farm income by becoming a



Saw mounted in sleigh sawing the wood, 1941

travelling salesman. He travelled the countryside in an old bread delivery wagon purchased in Edmonton. He sold religious books, cards, Bibles, calendars, commentaries, and other materials purchased from the Baker Book House in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Other products he sold, which many farmers thought were quite good, were the Dr. Bell's Wonder Medicine line of veterinary supplies. He also sold battery-operated electric fencers. Arie travelled around the Barrhead-Westlock area selling his goods. Each trip lasted about two weeks depending on the route he took.

John Roth, a tinsmith by trade, installed many gravity coal furnaces in the area. These were central heating furnaces; many people claim that they provided a more comfortable heat than gas furnaces do. John also installed eavestroughs on houses and farm buildings.



George Forbes was an all round handyman. His particular skill was in the area of plumbing.

There were several carpenters in the area: Henry Bouwman, Ben Sievers, Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, and Popke Schaning. These men, and others in later years, built nearly all the houses, schools, stores, and garages in the community. The early carpenter did all his work using hand tools. Menne Nanninga had training in architecture in the Netherlands. He was seventy years old when he designed the Christian Reformed Church erected in 1949.

Beginning in 1945, Peter Tuininga operated a hatchery in Neerlandia for a number of years. For about two years he operated a ROP (Record of Production) hatchery. Later he started the Barrhead Electric Hatchery. In 1955 he sold the business to Albert Tiemstra. Albert moved to Mellowdale in 1964 and operated the hatchery there until 1975. Gerrit Gelderman operated a ROP hatchery for a few years but quit because it was so much work. Peter Tuininga and Albert Tiemstra sold a variety of egg type and dual purpose chickens. Gerrit Gelderman sold only the New Hampshire, a dual purpose breed.

Liz and Sharon Tiemstra taking off a hatch of chicks, 1970

Jim Kooistra went around the community with his John Deere tractor and did field weed-spraying. Jim sprayed several thousand acres a year for more than twelve years. He would start early in the morning and work until late in the evening. Jim was an interesting person to have around, he had an amusing comment on everything.

Henry Peters Sr. was an electrician, who had learned this trade in the Netherlands. He came to Neerlandia about the time that the rural power came in 1951. Henry had no problem finding work with all the wiring that had to be done at that time.

C. K. Mast

Carl Mast was a successful Neerlandia businessman. In 1938 he became a sub-agent for Oliver farm equipment. In 1940 he had his own Oliver agency. In one short period of time he had sold six Oliver tractors at a price of $1,400.00 each. Shortly after that he also obtained the John Deere agency. The John Deere Company was not pleased with him having two agencies so he was asked to drop one or the other. Carl continued with the John Deere. He sold a lot of equipment, the model "D" tractor being his biggest seller, and kept a good stock of parts on hand. He seldom took trade-ins during the earlier years, but in the 1950s, as the farmers' equipment line increased, he began to take some trade-ins.

Carl was an agent for auto and fire insurance and sold hunting and fishing licenses. He was an agent for B.A. Petroleum products. The sale of B.A. products was in direct competition with the Neerlandia Co-op, which sold U.F.A. products. The Co-op board was not pleased, but Carl felt he had the right to sell the B.A. products if he so desired. Carl also sold a line of paint and binder twine.

Carl's success was, in part, due to his sociability with people and his ability to know what was needed by the people of the community. Carl's wife, Ann, was always ready to help him with his business.

After Carl's death in 1956, Ann sold the John Deere agency to Neerlandia Motors. She continued to sell the B.A. products for a time and the auto and fire insurance until she sold out and went to Edmonton.

* * *

C. K. and the Combine

On the farm, combines were taking the place of the old threshing machines. Many people were using the small one-man pull-type combine with its own engine. One farmer was determined to get one, but there was such a big demand that they were soon sold out. There was, however, still one available in Neerlandia. The farmer was not too keen on getting that one, but he had no choice and the deal was made. It operated beautifully that fall, but the next fall the farmer could not get that engine started no matter what he did. Finally the only thing left to do was bring it back to the dealer. Well, it so happened that the dealer also sold gas and tractor fuel and I happened to be picking up a few barrels when the farmer was bringing his complaint. Carl K. Mast, the dealer, said, "Gerrit, do you know how to start this engine?" "Well," I said from the top of my head, "I know one thing, you need gas in the tank." I didn't have to say another word. There had been quite an argument going on by the looks on their faces. Now the farmer's face just changed from red to white. Carl got a little gas, poured it in the tank, turned *the crank a few times, and that motor ran like nothing had ever been wrong. (Remember Albert?)*

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Blacksmithing

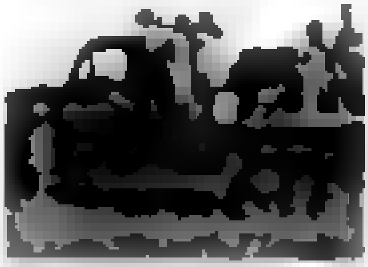
The trade of the blacksmith was used early in the history of the community. A blacksmith's equipment consisted mainly of a forge, an open firebox heated by coal, a hand-operated bellows to fan the flame to produce the heat needed for the job that had to be done, a heavy hammer to pound out the hot metal, and an anvil.

Plowshares were pounded out — a process whereby the cutting edge of the plowshare that had become dull was heated to a bright red heat and then hammered on the anvil to a sharper, thinner cutting edge. The share then had to be tempered by heat and water to the right hardness — not so soft that it would bend and not so hard that it would break or crack. Much the same process was done with the coulter — the upright cutting edge of the plow or breaker. If the farmer had a bent piece of equipment such as a beam from his plow or breaker, it could be heated and straightened out.

Although there were others who did blacksmithing, [illegible] and Walter [illegible] were the main ones. In the early [illegible] Walter [illegible] opened a blacksmith shop as his sole business. Walter set up a shop and living quarters on a small parcel of land on the northwest corner of [illegible]. In [illegible] he moved his business to a lot in the hamlet. Besides the blacksmith work, Walter did weldings and brazing with his oxygen-acetylene unit. He could also weld two pieces of metal together by heating them, applying a type of flux, and then pounding them together. Walter said that the fire had to get so hot for certain metals that it was hard to stand near it. He said that the tempering of metal was one of the trickiest parts of the job. He charged thirty-five cents for sharpening a plowshare. He paid one dollar for a one-hundred-pound bag of coal. Walter quit blacksmithing in [illegible].

Neerlandia Welding and Repair

Ed Visser started work in Neerlandia as a mechanic and welder. He had received training in gas engine, car and tractor repair at Washington State College. [illegible] he took training in arc and gas welding. He started working as a hired mechanic for the Neerlandia Co-op garage in 1946.



Neerlandia Welding, 1954

In the fall of [illegible] Ed went to work on his own, specializing in welding. He owned a welding truck that was used at the shop, on the farms, in the fields, and on oil well sites. He first worked on his own at the [illegible] farm. Later he built a cement block building across the road on his own property. This building became the home of Neerlandia Welding and Repair. In [illegible] Ed took home courses to upgrade his training in motor mechanics and advanced welding.

Before electricity came to the community, all the welding was done by a motor-driven welding unit mounted on the truck. The coming of electricity was a most welcome event. It made all his power tools more usable. He could now weld without having to first start the engine. The noise made by the motor operating inside the building was also eliminated.

He was an agent for a variety of agricultural products [illegible] manure handling equipment, [illegible] loaders and augers, and [illegible] products. He had on hand hydraulic systems and parts, [illegible] parts, bearings, and many other small items needed for the farm and home.

His customers were always his concern. He was good natured and would help them any time of day or night [illegible] even during [illegible] working long hours and [illegible] to charge enough for his work and people often had to remind him to make out their bills so he could be paid.

In 19[illegible] Ed expanded his business into a limited company with his son Aaron as partner. He continued his business until he became ill. In February [illegible] he passed away. Aaron continued to operate the shop for a couple of years.

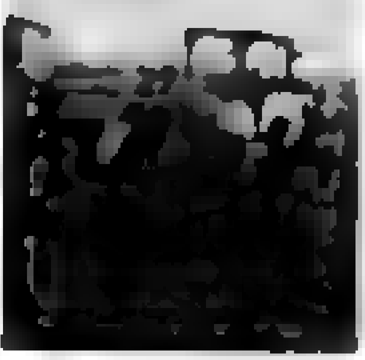
Land Clearing

Clearing land that was covered with brush was a difficult job. With oxen, horses, and the small steel-wheeled tractor [illegible] of the early days the opening of the land took a long time. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] could break the land between the windrows.

[illegible]



Two-bottom breaking plow, 1940s.

Jack Tuininga moved to Edmonton. Bill Olthuis bought out his share. Bill and Louis were then the sole owners. Later Bill bought out Louis' share and in 1964 Bill traded in the Cat at Dick Fisher's Massey-Ferguson dealership for some new equipment.

Moisture and wet land were always a problem. The water in the land was higher at this time and only the high land was cleared at first. The low land was never worked on until the more recent years, when water runs were cleaned out and straightened to allow the water to run away faster.

After the Cat had cleared the land of trees, the soil had to be turned over. This made room for people who owned breakers to do some custom work. Many people provided this service for the farmers.

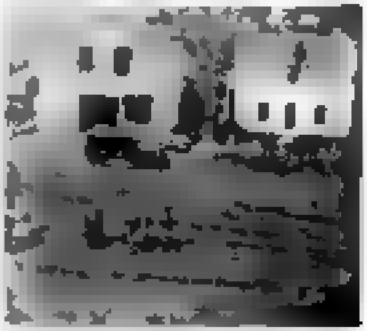
As time went on and the land became more open, the need for the big Caterpillar tractors decreased. There is still some work done by Cats today but in a much different way. Instead of just clearing bush, the Cats make dugouts for farm water supply, level land, and clean up farmyards.

Brushcutter

Service Garages

As the community expanded, the age of the horse and horse-drawn equipment came to an end. The era of simple machines and vehicles was also ending. In the early years repairs could be done by the farmer himself or by a handyman. Two handymen in the area were Lucas Sturwold and Peter Louws. These men had a good general knowledge of machines and engines and were able to help with the repair work.

As time went on almost all the fieldwork was done by tractor and many people owned cars. The need for specialized knowledge in the repair of vehicles and small engines grew. From 1940 on several men attempted to provide that service. All of them set up operations on the same site — the southwest corner of NW 34-61-3-5. All of them found it difficult to become financially successful. This difficulty increased when the garage was jointly owned. One of the reasons was the lack of enough machinery in the area to provide the garage with steady work. Another reason was the inability of the owners to accept trade-ins. They were operating with a limited trading area and a machine taken in trade could not be resold very easily. The first man to open a garage in Neerlandia was Simon Groot.



Simon Groot's garage and house

Simon Groot, a trained mechanic, came to Neerlandia in the fall of 1940. He was not only a mechanic but also an experienced blacksmith and acetylene gas welder. When he came to Neerlandia he took with him all the tools and equipment necessary for the work of his trade. Simon rented and set up his "Shop", as it was called, in the old Neerlandia Co-op store building and house.

Before Simon could start up his business, he had the chore of remodelling the old store into a useable and efficient garage. He built benches and put in new doors, including a large door which would permit the entry of cars and other types of farm machinery needing repairs. One area was set aside for the blacksmith work, because a large vent had to be installed in order to exhaust the fumes coming off the forge. In February 1940 Simon opened his shop for business.

Simon was a real handyman. He repaired cars when they needed fixing, he repaired many different farm machines, and he could also repair any home and yard tools. His talents included such things as soldering a kettle or getting a lamp back into operation.

Along with the work he did in the shop, he went out on many service calls. He went out to the farm or field and did the repairs on the spot, since many farmers did not have any tools or the know-how to do the repairs themselves.

Simon charged whatever he felt was fair for the job done. Much of the work done was charged out at less than one dollar. In April 1943 Simon closed his "Shop" and moved to Edmonton.

When Simon Groot left, the garage building was sold to John Gelderman who dismantled it for lumber, and the house on the same property was sold to Frank Kowalchuk. He in time sold it and it was moved to the Two Mile Corner. The absence of a service garage concerned the farmers, so in 1947 a garage was started under the auspices of the Neerlandia Co-op. A new building had been constructed to house the business. This garage was not successful so the doors were closed in 1949.

Louis Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, and Jack Tuininga bought the building in 1949 and the next year sold it to Henry Dieterman and Romke Stel. Stel later became sole owner and operated under the name Neerlandia Motors. Neerlandia Motors was sub-agent for the Oliver Farm Machinery Company and Ford Motor Company and in 1957 obtained the John Deere agency. At this time Simon Tuininga was part-owner of the garage. Since he was also a farmer and livestock dealer, they could take farm produce in payment.

The garage changed hands again, in 1959, when the building was sold to Gerrit Gelderman and Fred Toebes. They also purchased the land on which the building stood. The two men continued with the John Deere agency and sold small items as well. Fred, who had previously owned a garage in Vega, had the opportunity to repurchase it and in 1961 he returned to Vega. Gerrit continued to operate the garage until 1967 when he closed the doors and moved to Abbotsford, B.C. After a short closed-down period, the garage was reopened by Egbert Wever. Henry Meetsma purchased the garage from Gerrit and after renovating it, opened as Meetsma Motors in 1969.

* * *

Meetsma Motors was opened for business on September 7, 1969. The Meetsmas liked their daily contact with the customers and the general spirit of goodwill. The business they received from the Co-op was also a great help. They improved the appearance of the buildings somewhat, but it was a losing battle, although the installation of natural gas in the fall of 1972 had been a great im-government. The original structure with the arched roof was well built and sturdy, but the annexes were forever leaking. At their age, though, the Meetsmas could not invest in new construction. Besides, the work was getting too much for Henry because there was usually too much work for one man, yet not enough for two.

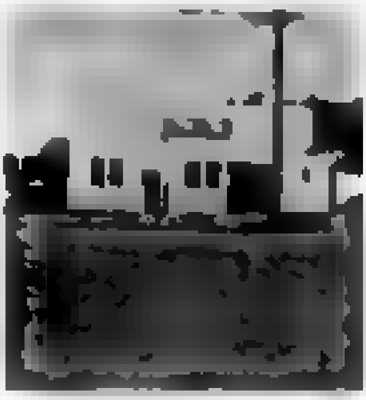
Meanwhile, the Neerlandia Co-op was planning expansion. They proposed to buy Meetsma's lot for the building of a complete service centre. The deal they made was satisfactory to both parties. In the fall of 1975 the co-op started building behind the old garage, while Henry kept on working through the winter. When the co-op Service Centre opened, he closed his shop on April 1, 1976. During those seven years the price of gas had gone up from [illegible] cents per gallon to [illegible] cents. When the price went over the [illegible] cent mark, Henry Meetsma had to change the head on the pump.

On the last Saturday in March, 1976, the Meetsmas held an auction. It was a cold snowy day, yet people came from far and wide. In a few hours nothing was left but the shell of the building. Later, Wilfred Hiemstra wrecked it and moved the arch to his farm for a cattle shed. The house followed and was demoted to a chicken house. One day Henry and Grace Meetsma came back and looked at the house while it was sitting on skids. The garage was already gone. Their little grandson tugged at Grace's arm and said, "Don't cry, Grandma, you got another house in Calgary." Little did he know that apart from their private feelings of something in their lives that had come to an end, there was the fact that Neerlandia would never be the same again. A landmark was gone. The new building may be sound and functional, but to the Meetsmas it will never fit in like the old garage and the little house did.

Grace Meetsma

* * *

In 1975 the Neerlandia Co-op bought the land and buildings from Meetsma Motors and erected a new building on the site. The Co-op Service Centre opened in 1976. With the large amount of machinery in the community by this time, its mechanics are kept busy with repair work. In addition it sells a wide variety of small items needed on the farms in the area.

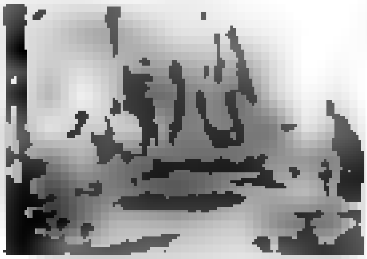


Meetsma Motors

Well Drilling

Our pioneers came to a land that had lots of water. All the lowlands and creeks had water that could be used for animals, but was not suitable for domestic use. During the long winters the ponds and creeks were frozen, making it necessary to find an alternate source of water for home use and for the animals.

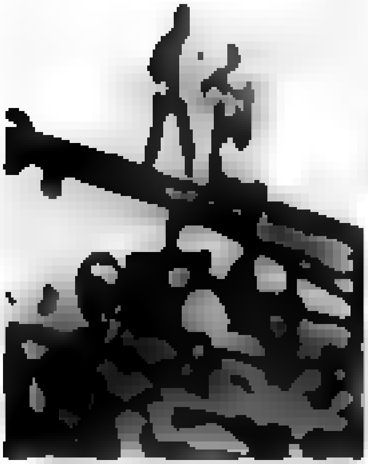
The first attempt to get water was to dig a well by hand. With pick and shovel settlers would dig a hole about four feet square in the hard ground, going down until water was found or to a maximum depth of about twenty-five feet. Two people were needed to dig a well, one to do the actual digging and the other to pull up the dirt in a pail. Once the hole was dug, cribbing was put in to line the hole to keep it from caving in. The water was drawn up with a special pail and rope or with a pulley attached to a frame above the well, making the rope easier to pull. Many of these wells were dug; some were satisfactory and others were not. This type of well



Boring a well

[illegible] someone quickly if they entered the well

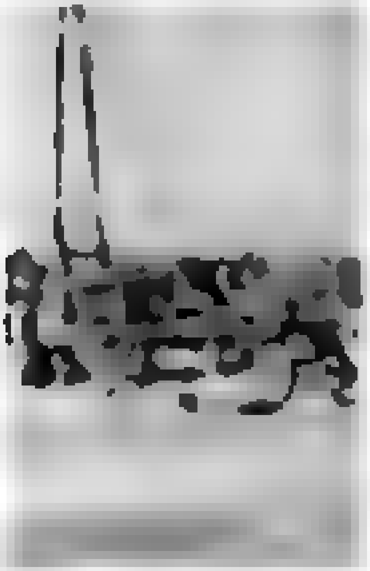
[illegible] purchased to make cribbing to fit the hole



Well drilling outfit

[illegible] pump jack run by a motor operated the mechanism

[illegible] Nanrunga, like Nanrunga, and others in the area



Well drilling on Lucas Sturwold's [illegible]

[illegible] himself

[illegible] would take a long time

[illegible]

four to eight inches in diameter, supply a much greater amount of water.

* * *

The Brewster boys had a well boring machine. This machine had an auger two feet in diameter and about three feet in length. It had two bevelled cutting edges on the bottom. The machine was powered by a horse that walked around and around turning the auger. The bevelled cutting edges would bite into the ground and fill the auger with dirt. When it was full it was winched up with the machine as the horse pulled it around. When it was winched up above the platform of the machine it was hooked to a swinging arm and swung out to the side. Then the auger could open on a hinge, the dirt would fall out and the auger would go back into the well to be filled again. This auger could bore through quite hard clay and even sandstone but if it hit a solid rock, that was it. A small stone could sometimes be blasted out of the way with dynamite but if it was too big to blast, that was the depth of your well. If you were lucky you had a well and if not you had a dry hole.

My dad hired the Brewster boys to drill a well near the house the [illegible] had. He went down sixty feet and hit a rock. It yielded barely enough water for house use, so the cattle still had to be taken to the muskeg to be watered.

Some years later Bob Hodge was drilling or boring wells with the same kind of machine. My dad thought he should again try his luck for a good well. Bob Hodge said he could tell where there was a good underground stream by using a divining rod. He would use a crotch from a willow branch. He would hold the two ends of the crotch, one in each hand, and point the single end of the crotch ahead of him as he walked around the yard. When the single end of the crotch would turn down, that was where the well had to be dug. He produced only enough water for house use.

We had a natural drain or slough running through our farm from one side to the other about a quarter of a mile from home. My dad had dug two shallow wells in this slough and they gave sufficient water for the summer and early fall months. Around Christmas time they were usually dry. Then a well was dug in the muskeg half a mile from home. This supply usually lasted until the end of January. Then we had to go three quarters of a mile down to where a creek ran through the far end of our grazing lease. There we had dug a shallow well. This one usually held out until spring break-up. I have taken the cows out for water through drifting snow on a thirty below zero day and when they got there they were so cold and miserable they didn't feel like drinking the icy water and would turn around and go back home without taking any. We had to haul the water for our pigs too. My dad had three forty-five gallon wooden vinegar barrels and put them on a stoneboat. The water for the pigs was hauled from the slough a quarter of a mile from home. He would have to do this every day or every other day all year long, depending on the number of pigs he had.

In cold weather the water barrels would get coated inside with ice even though they were kept in the barn. As the house was the only warm place on the farm, about once a week the water barrels would have to be rolled into the kitchen for de-icing, always under protest from my mother.

In 1938 Pete Wyngaarden started drilling wells. He had a machine that punched a two-inch hole, and was able to punch through layers of rock. He could drill to a depth of five hundred feet or more, and he always found a good stream of water. He was a bachelor and an alcoholic. He would work for a few days, and say he had to get his bit sharpened and needed a few dollars. Then he would go off to the Westlock hotel. After three or four days, when the money was gone and he had sobered up, he would be back punching down the well again.

My dad managed to scrape some money together and hired Pete to drill a well for us. He struck water at 100 feet deep and this time it was a good well. A two-inch galvanized steel pipe was pounded into the hole for casing, and a brass sleeve cylinder was secured inside the pipe below the water level. A wooden pump rod was used to lift the water from the cylinder to the top of the pump. Wood was used for this because it was light material and had a tendency to float in the water for easier pumping. This cylinder, however, was very small, and took twelve strokes of the pump to get a gallon pail, or a good hour of pumping to water the cattle.

The following year we bought a secondhand one-horsepower Stover gasoline engine and a pump jack. That was a great event. The engine didn't care how long it had to pump, and I could do other chores while it was pumping.

On the first Sunday after we had bought the engine my dad and I went out to do the chores, and I was ready to start the engine but my dad said, "Wait a minute — today is Sunday. Do you think that thing should run on Sunday?"

"Well," I said, "do you think the Lord would rather see me pump water for an hour on Sunday than that engine?" It took my dad a few minutes to get all this progress worked out in his mind. After a while he said "Yes, I guess you are right, you better start the engine."

George Anema

The Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union

In 1942 the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union was formed. Although the community was growing, times were hard and people had difficulty paying their bills. Credit was hard to get from businesses who were themselves struggling to make ends meet. Many farmers could not borrow any money.

A decision of the Provincial Government that required a business to go on cash basis only, for the protection of the businessman, made it difficult for many people to make purchases. It was a result of this decision that the Neerlandia Co-op, on a proposal by Chris Leder, decided to set up a Credit Union.

A committee was organized to study the benefits and problems of such an organization. After meetings and reports they decided to go on with the project. Members could buy a share and invest their savings in the Credit Union and in return receive a dividend on their money and borrow at a reduced rate of interest. The Credit

Union would be a benefit to those who could not normally borrow money at a chartered bank. They could borrow here because the local board would know their situation and their ability to pay back and, in most cases, would lend them the money.

In August 1942 the Supplemental By-laws of the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union were signed. Later that year the Credit Union opened for business in an office in the store with Henry Kippers Sr. as the manager and treasurer.

The Credit Union was set up with a board of directors of five elected members. Out of the board were chosen three credit committee members whose responsibility it was to approve or reject a loan application. They also checked out the security given for the loan. There were three elected supervisory committee members who checked the work of the treasurer, checked the loan applications, and made reports to be sent to the Department of Trade and Industry. The treasurer was responsible for all the daily business transactions of the Credit Union. He made out loan applications, managed the Credit Union, looked after the books, and made out the monthly and final statements.

If someone wished to become a member he had to pay a twenty-five cents entrance fee and buy a five dollar share that could be paid for in instalments of one dollar. The member received a passbook in which all his transactions were recorded. Many young people and children became members. They brought their money, often rolls of pennies that had been saved up over the years, to Mr. Kippers.

There soon was enough money in the Credit Union to enable a member to borrow a small amount to pay off one or more of his bills. To borrow money a member filled out an application form at the treasurer's office and found someone to co-sign his loan — in case he did not pay it back. He then went to two members of the credit committee for their approval and signature. Finally he returned to the treasurer and received the money requested. Very few applications were refused through the years. Losses from someone not able to pay back a loan were almost nonexistent. There were some members that had co-signed so many notes that they later wondered how they could have been so brave in taking the risk they did.

Henry Kippers was the first treasurer and an ardent supporter. He served from 1942-1962, working in his home at the Corner. Cand Reitsma was the treasurer from 1962-1970. Hilda Fisher took over from Cand until early 1980. Debbie Wierenga then held the position until the Credit Union was closed in March 1981.

The closure of the Credit Union was difficult to accept, but it had served its purpose and the time had come for it to close. The Credit Union was not large enough to provide the service needed for an expanding community. Chequing services could not be made available. Not enough people supported the Credit Union to make it possible to provide the larger loans required. Some people were reluctant to support it because they felt that it was not private — due to the fact that the board of directors were all local people. In effect the Credit Union did not keep pace with the increased financial needs of the community.

When the Credit Union disbanded, the member accounts and the assets were transferred to the Barrhead Savings and Credit Union.

Neerlandia Egg Grading Station

Chickens were one of the first animals to be raised on the farms. As years went by, farmers began to raise more chickens and many more eggs were sold to the egg grading stations. At this time chickens had the run of the farm, eating what they could find and thereby producing a dark yolked egg. Light yolked eggs were preferred by the consumer, so these producers did not receive top grade and top price for their eggs. By the 1950s however, many of the farmers in the area were starting to raise chickens in large numbers and housing them in barns, thereby producing eggs with a lighter yolk.

Local farmers who housed their birds felt that they were not getting a fair price for their eggs. The grading stations to whom they sold the eggs claimed it was on account of the dark yolked eggs.

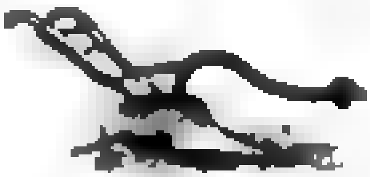
Albert Elgersma proposed to other farmers that he would establish an egg grading station in Neerlandia if they would patronize his business. To this they readily agreed. In 1950 he rented the vacant parts shop from Arie Mast and equipment was purchased, graders were trained, and the doors opened for business. The eggs were graded and shipped to Edmonton Produce. Random checks on grading accuracy were done by the plant in Edmonton.

Not long after the business started, farmers received a three cent a dozen premium for grade A eggs because they were shipping light yolked eggs. In comparison to what the egg prices were at the time, this was considered a good premium. This welcome bonus proved that their idea to start a grading station was a good one.

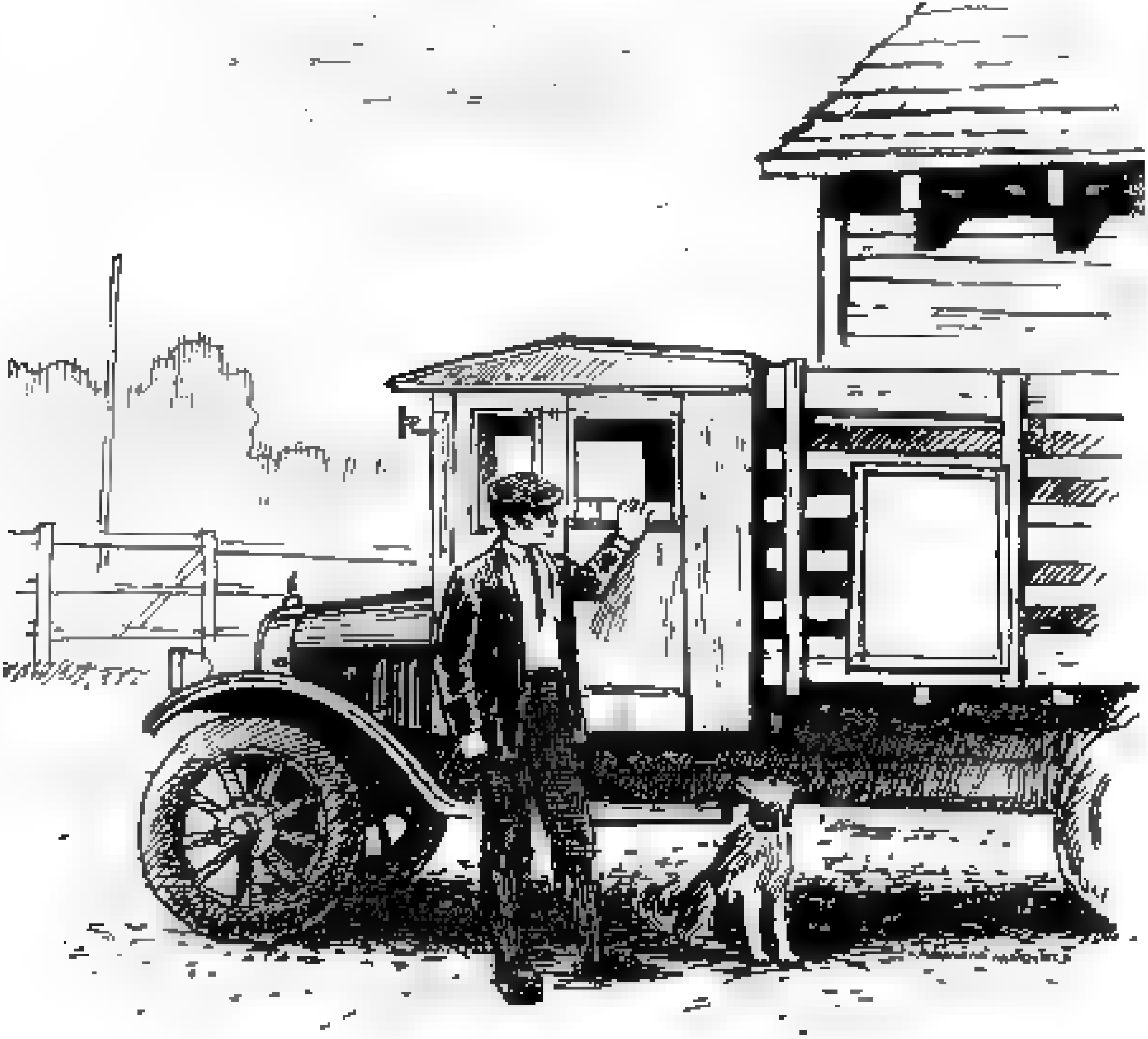
Henry Piers and Andrew Elgersma had gone to Edmonton to be trained as graders. Henry Piers was the first operator and Bernard Ingwersen was his assistant. The grader's job was to candle eggs by holding an egg in front of a strong light to determine whether the yolk was light or dark, whether there were blood spots in the egg, and whether there were cracks in the shell.

Prices for eggs were: 'A' large — 25 to 28 cents per dozen; 'A' medium — 18 to 20 cents, small — 10 cents, and cracks — 6 to 8 cents.

Albert Elgersma sold his business to Ike and Manny Nanninga in 1956. Manny operated it for five years but closed it down in 1961. Local graders were shutting down at this time because the Safeway Company trucks of Edmonton were coming to the district and picking up the eggs from the yard of larger farms. This simpler procedure enticed farmers to patronize Safeway, with the result that the local egg grading station was no longer financially feasible.



The Freight Haul



FREIGHT-HAULING

When the first settlers came to Townships 61 and 62 in 1912, the freight went all one way — north. Whatever the settlers thought they would need within the next year was carried with them. If they ran out of anything or had forgotten anything, their only hope was that someone could lend the needed item until it became possible to get to a store. There was no freight whatever going out of the area because scarcely an acre of ground was under cultivation and there was not an animal for sale: the eggs laid by the few hens on the homesteads were eaten by the family or put under a hen to hatch.

Whenever anyone went to the store at Mellowdale or, more rarely, to Dusseldorf, Westlock, or Clyde, he would carry lists of items needed by other members of the community. The estimated amount of money was given to the traveller so he would be able to purchase the items. If the cost was less or greater than the money given, an adjustment would be made upon his return.

After a few years farmers were producing enough eggs, cream, and butter to enable them to sell or trade some of the produce. Because so few farmers had horses, the trip to market was often made on foot with the produce carried in a sack slung over the man's shoulder. On his return trip he carried, in the same fashion, the goods that he had bought. Most of the items carried in this way were groceries or small items needed on the farm. But sometimes the farmer returned home with a struggling pig in the sack. Albert Mast Sr., who had a small store, carried some of the stock for his store in this labourious way.

* * *

Pigs

(1917?) Douwe and John went to Rossington and bought two weaner pigs, maybe forty or fifty pounds. They each carried a pig in a bag slung over their shoulder. They had no grain to feed the hogs yet in those years, so fed them potato peels and rabbit meat.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Gradually, as more settlers came to Neerlandia and as more land was cleared, the amount of freight going out of the area increased to the point that it became necessary to make regular trips to Westlock to deliver cream. The Dutch settlers set up a schedule whereby each week one producer took his turn delivering the cream. Then indeed, he became an errand boy for the whole community as everyone gave him their *briefjes* and money. This practice lasted until the Neerlandia Co-op was established in 1920-1922.

Arie Emmerzael, Henry Kannegieter, Ben Lievers, and Albert Ritsema were then hired by the Co-op to haul supplies by wagon from Westlock to Neerlandia once a month. They went in turn each week, leaving Neerlandia one day with cream and eggs and returning the next with supplies for the Co-op.

* * *

Teamster

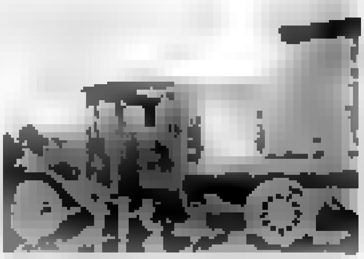
So we bought some cows from a neighbour who was moving out and started to ship cream. At first we shipped it to Mellowdale and delivered it by turns. Then, in the 1920s, we started the Co-op store in a little log cabin, so we could deliver our cream there. Three or four men, who each had a wagon, were hired to deliver it to Westlock once a week. I was one of them and at first I made a trip once in every four weeks. Then some teamsters resigned, so I made the trip every other week. We took the eggs and cream from the store in the morning and travelled that day to Westlock, so that we could be at the station at eight o'clock the following morning to get the cream on the train to Edmonton. During the day we sold the eggs in the store. We had lots of other business to do as well: a money order to Eaton's, taxes to pay, an order from the drug store, repairs for machinery, anything our neighbours had asked, we tried to do. Another had twelve dozen eggs and a list for groceries enclosed to buy in exchange for these eggs. I sometimes had a job to read their orders. They were not in German or Dutch — it was supposed to be English. (I puzzled more than once over those notes and did not always get the right thing.) I once got an order for a repair for machinery and the number was not known nor the name and he gave the size this way — "about as big around as your wife's sewing thimble." I did not fulfill this order. I told him I did not have a thimble with me so could not measure the size. After the trip, when I came home and delivered all my orders, I did not always have the correct money. One time I would be over and the next time I would be short. Once I had some money orders for the Post Office and the girl in the office said, "Leave your letters here and I will do it during the day and you pay me tonight." I paid her and the next time I came there she said, "How did you come out with your money?" I had three dollars over and she was three dollars short. So I handed her the three dollars, but not long after this it was the other way around — I was short and she handed me the money. The storekeepers were very glad to do business with us. It amounted to quite an amount sometimes and we received ten percent on all that we bought.

Ben Lievers

* * *

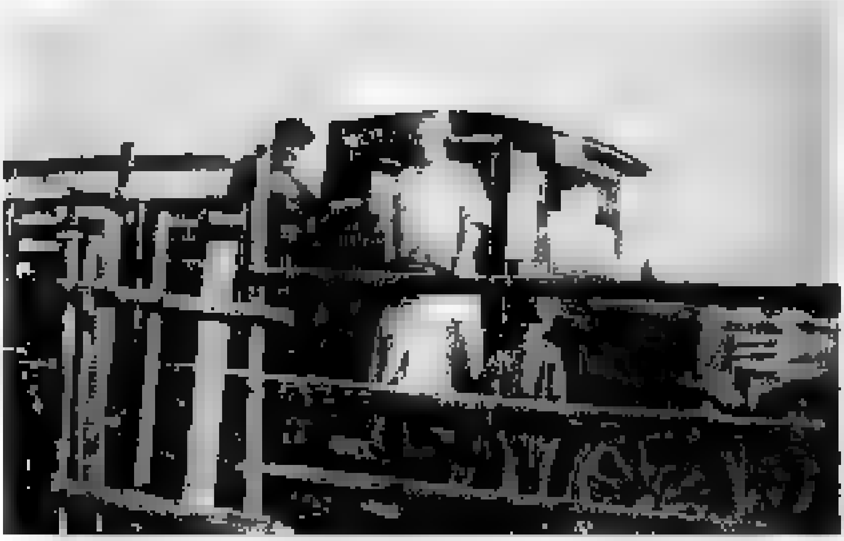
During the 1920s several men began to haul freight from Neerlandia. Dave Tuininga, who started the Neerlandia Truck Service, may have been the first one to truck for Neerlandia. He was given the contract to haul freight for the Neerlandia Co-op. On the trip into the city he carried livestock. On the return trip, in addition to supplies for the Co-op, he carried parcels ordered for individuals from Ramsey's Mail Order Store (located in the Tegler Building and later sold to T. Eaton Company). Dave sold his truck to Lorne Frizzell and Norman Lord because the carbon monoxide fumes bothered him and because he suffered from a bad hernia. Henry Mast and John Olthuis both trucked as well.

For all of them it was a difficult job. The roads were often impassable and the amount of freight available for hauling was



Dave called himself Tuinega; he thought it would be easier for his non-Dutch customers to pronounce.

Henry and Ina Mast with the Speedwagon, 1928.



The Olthuis truck with Rienk de Jager, Sadie Tuininga, and two boys.

small. The truckers seldom had a full load to haul perhaps a dozen cans of cream or the same number of hogs. If there were cattle to haul, they would simply be combined with a load of hogs with no partitions to separate or protect the animals from each other. The trucks themselves were small. John Olthuis drove a 1922 Ford one-ton truck which his father had purchased for $1,200.00. On a good week he would have a full load of about twenty hogs, picked up in ones or twos at the farms. On arrival in Edmonton he would go to either Burns or Gainer's because there he could make the best deal for his clients. Gas was not available in Neerlandia. John Olthuis purchased gas and had his truck serviced at Smith's Garage in Westlock.

In September or October 1923 the contract for hauling the Co-op's freight was awarded to John at ninety cents per hundredweight. He charged one dollar per hundredweight for livestock hauling. In addition to freight John carried passengers for a round-trip fee of three dollars. Two passengers could ride in the cab with the driver; any others would have to ride on the back. One man who started out from Neerlandia with John could not stand the rough ride and got off in Clyde to go the rest of the way by train. John's most memorable trip carrying passengers was when he took Minke Mast to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. This old lady was so sick that a cot was placed on the back of the truck for her to lie on. Her son Henry accompanied her. By the time they reached Westlock it was raining and the roads were bad. John drove the truck into a garage and left it there overnight. Minke remained in her cot on the truck. The next day they continued the trip.

All the truckers experienced bad road conditions. When Dave Tuininga was trucking, the truckers from the surrounding areas would travel together to help each other through the worst spots. Sometimes they had to travel through the fields because the roads were blocked. If Dave was traveling alone he would sometimes have to unload everything to enable him to get out of a mud hole and then reload it all again. Once he had to do this with a load of barbed wire. Other times he would be unable to get the truck out of the hole and have to stay at the nearest farmhouse until he could get help. The years John Olthuis trucked were the worst. There was so much snow during the winter of 1924-25 that the roads became impassable for a motorized vehicle. John had to use a team of horses and a sleigh while his truck sat uselessly at home. When he reached Southworth's he would leave his team there and continue on with a team hired from them. He went only as far as Westlock because the winter freight contained only cream and hogs. When spring came the roads were still impassable because of the melting snow so John did not resume trucking.

Lorne Frizzell and Norman Lord, whose main business was in Barrhead, also trucked for Neerlandia. They had the Neerlandia Co-op contract for two years. Once a week they would haul cream and eggs for the store to Westlock. They would haul livestock at ninety cents per hundredweight and groceries whenever this was necessary. Lorne Frizzell enjoyed the wine made by some of his customers. Even after they no longer had the store contract, the two men continued to have customers in Neerlandia until they quit trucking in 1929.

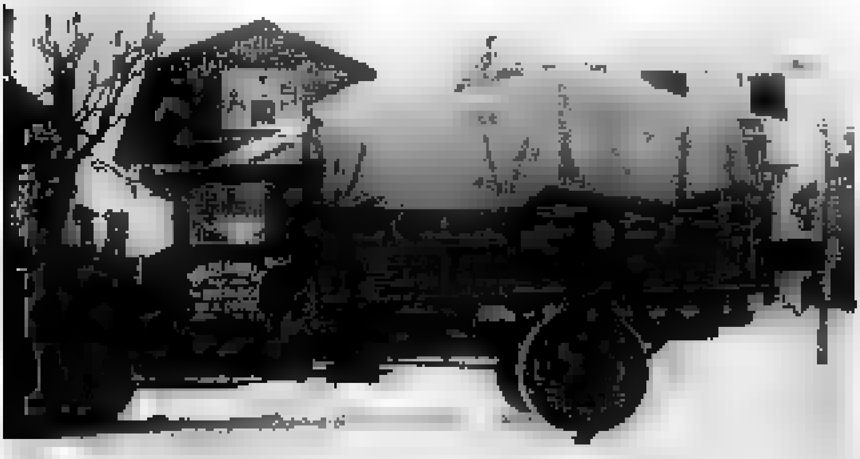
Trucking was not a profitable occupation in the twenties. There was little livestock shipped in the winter. Most farmers had no means of raising hogs over winter. Surplus animals were usually sold to a livestock dealer that came around every fall. In addition to the poor condition of the roads and the small volume of freight, the time it took to get anywhere contributed to the problem. A trip to Edmonton in a truck whose top speed was sixteen miles per hour took six to eight hours. This meant that a trucker had to spend money to stay overnight in Edmonton. When John Olthuis was trucking he stayed at the Acme Rooming House, where he paid fifty cents a night for a room and from eleven to thirty-five cents for a meal.

Despite the odds, Pete Tuininga decided to give trucking a try in 1926. He bought a truck from Harry Collette in Westlock and trucked from Neerlandia to Edmonton for about six months. This turned out to be another winter with a lot of snow. The roads were often drifted in, necessitating travel over the fields. On one occasion Pete and drivers from the surrounding districts got together to open up the road to Edmonton. It took them two days and the resulting track over road and through field was so rough that several trucks got broken springs.

Giving trucking a try, Pete and Tena Tuininga.

At that time the road from Neerlandia to Barrhead had brush on both sides and did not drift in. One of Pete's customers could not understand why the truck service was so slow and why, sometimes, the truck did not run at all. Pete invited him to go along on a trip. When they reached one of the rough spots the poor passenger bounced up and down like a cork. His head hit the ceiling of the cab — a wooden frame thinly covered with cloth and not at all gentle on a bobbing head. *"Dit is wat!"* (This is terrible!) exclaimed the shaken man.

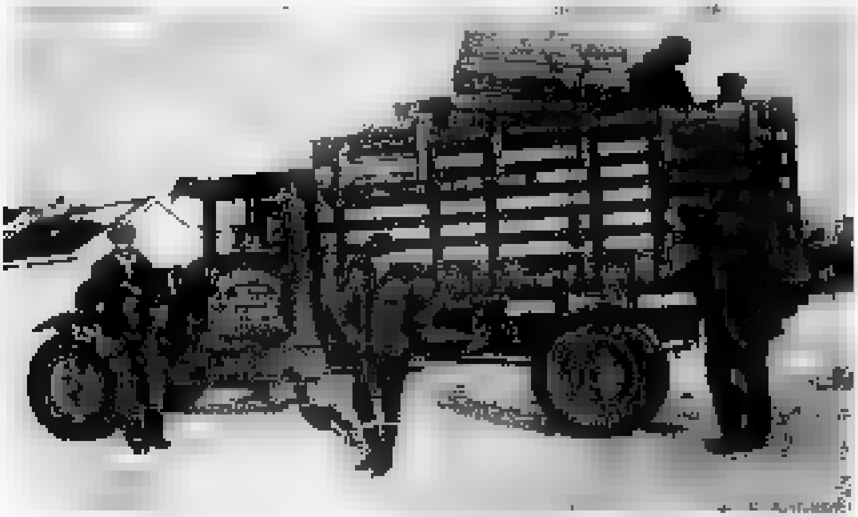
Pete Tuininga sold his truck in 1927 to Kees Stoové who, after trucking for a short time, sold the business to Billy Quick. Billy Quick was based in Edmonton. He would leave from there on Mondays with groceries and other supplies, stopping at Westlock, Rossington, Freedom, Naples, and Mellowdale before reaching Neerlandia. On Tuesdays he would return to Edmonton carrying cream in five and eight-gallon cans. Some of the cream went to the Burn's Creamery in Westlock and the rest to the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool in Edmonton. On Thursdays Billy returned the empty cans to the farmers at their gates. He also hauled hogs and cattle, most of which went to Gainer's packing plant in South Edmonton. Some of the farmers brought their stock to the Centre but many of the animals were picked up on the farms — one pig here, two or three there. The pigs were usually kept in a pig yard and had to be chased until they were caught. Then, because there were no loading chutes, the pigs had to be lifted onto the truck.



Billy Quick with his truck in Edmonton.

While in Neerlandia Billy stayed at the Schoonekamp home Rulie (Schoonekamp) Nanninga remembers

> "Mr Quick was a small man, probably about five feet eight inches tall, and not heavy-built He had a quiet, soft voice. When he came to our place it was often late in the evening. We would make supper for him and his helper. He had a garage built on our yard and in it he placed a cot on which he slept There was a wood heater in the garage and when the weather was cold, we would start a fire in it in the afternoon so it would be warm when Billy arrived. Billy ate with the family, paying twenty-five cents a meal. Billy carried the cream cheques and money in a leather pouch secured to his belt."

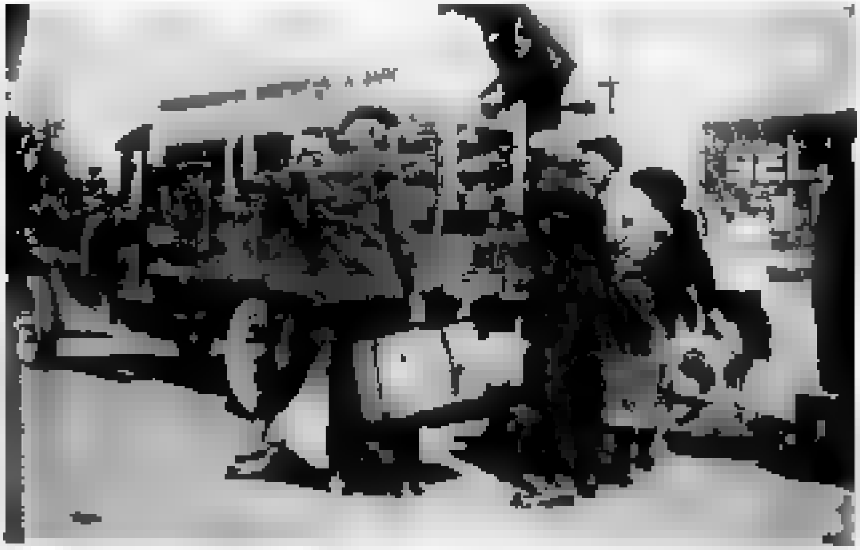


Lee Reyes, Charlie and Billy Quick

The truck often functioned as a bus, carrying passengers to and from Edmonton for a small fee When the Elzinga family came from the Netherlands, they came to Neerlandia with Billy Quick A trip by truck took a long time Anna (Elzinga) Schuring remembers.

> "We left Edmonton right after breakfast. Mother and Mabel sat in the front with Mr. Quick The rest of us rode on the back, sitting on cream cans or standing because you know what happens when you sit on cream cans We stopped many times along the way St. Albert, Morinville and I don't know where all. Every

> time the truck stopped we stood up to stretch our legs and my brother Pete would ask Mother, "Are you learning any English yet?" At 8:00 p.m. we finally arrived at Simon Tiemstra's place. Mrs. Tiemstra told us we didn't have far to go anymore — only four miles — but there were many stops to drop off cream cans. I don't know what time we arrived at Schoonekamp's. By then time had no meaning for us anymore."

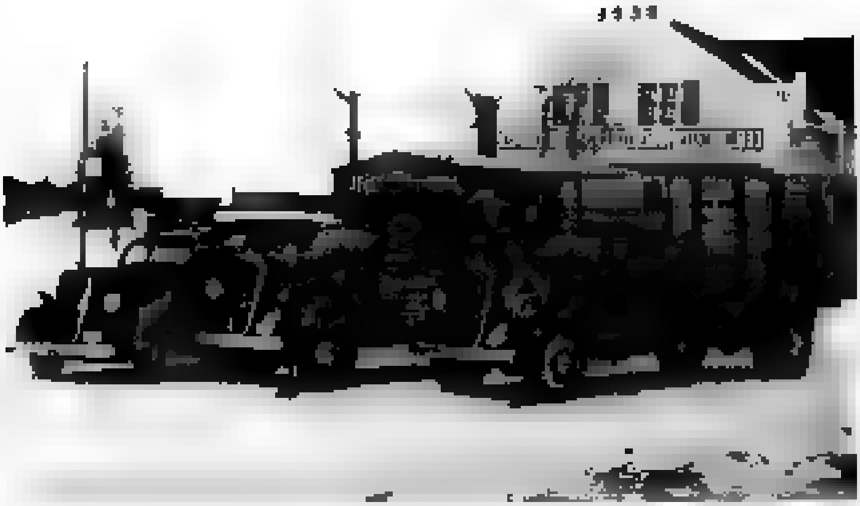


Neerlandia farmers heading for the Harvest.

The amount of freight being hauled in and out of Neerlandia increased steadily since there were not only more people living in the area, but more land was under cultivation and numbers of cattle and hogs were increasing. Road conditions were also improving. Billy Quick first hired John Elzinga, then Lodewijk Reyse, and finally Dick Fisher to help him. Billy's son Charley also helped. He was one of the drivers when, with two trucks, they took the Lammert Wierenga family to Neerlandia. Nevertheless, during Billy's career the Depression began. Many of his freight charges were paid in chicken, vegetables, or jars of fresh cream. Because the prices for hogs and cattle were so low, he often hauled them for next to nothing, thereby making next to nothing on a round trip.

Because of ill health, Billy Quick sold his business to Dick Fisher. Dick had driven for Billy from 1932 to 1934. Then he bought a used Reo truck and went into business for himself. When he bought Billy's business he hired his brother Art to drive for him. In 1936 Dick took his brother Art in as a partner; they named the business Fisher Brothers' Trucking.

The Fisher brothers began trucking at an advantageous time. Taking over Billy Quick's business meant that the Fishers also got the contract for the Co-op's freight. This contract was important to a trucker because it meant that he was guaranteed return freight. In addition, by the mid-thirties, the Alberta Livestock Co-op (ALC) established a monopoly in the area. With the co-operation of the local truckers the area was divided into the following zones: Branden got Vega, Weisgerber — Bloomsbury, Properzi — Naples, and Fishers — Neerlandia. This arrangement was a benefit to the truckers because then they were assured of hauling livestock for



Fisher Bros.' truck with Co-op clerks Lula (and Art) Fisher, Rulle Schoonekamp, Sadie Reitsma, 1939.

ALC members. The increased need for farm produce during World War II was a benefit as well. It not only meant increased freight but it also enabled them to get a badly-needed truck. In 1944 the Fishers were unable to buy a truck since there were none available. But because of the wartime demand for dairy products, the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool obtained a special permit for them to buy an army truck (in the traditional army-green colour).

The roads were not always in good enough condition for the larger trucks the Fishers now owned so, often, a one-ton truck was used to pick up the stock and take it to the main road, where it was transferred to one of the larger trucks. Several farmers were hired by the Fishers to haul cream from every corner of Neerlandia and deliver it, every Monday morning, to a Fisher Brothers' truck which would be parked on the side of the road between the store and the school. One by one the men on the cream haul would arrive in their wagons or trucks, back up to the big truck, and transfer their loads.

The Fisher brothers divided the work. Art hauled livestock and Dick hauled eggs and cream. Dick also hauled the store freight and one load of hogs a week. They both hauled grain. In addition Art and Dick usually employed one spare driver. Because depot fees were high the Fishers went from place to place in Edmonton picking up freight. Perishable items were picked up at the United Truck Depot. This method of handling freight took a lot of time, so the Fishers would stay overnight at the New Edmonton Hotel where they had a standing reservation. The Fisher brothers received the produce cheques at the packing plant and cashed them at an Edmonton bank. They would then deduct the freight charges and upon their return home, give the remaining cash to the producers. Payment for cream was often placed in the cream cans and given to the farmers in this way.

One of the problems the truckers faced was the livestock smell, which tended to permeate the groceries. To minimize the problem, the trucks were washed after unloading the livestock at the packing plant.

The Fishers continued the practice of carrying passengers back and forth to the city but made no charge for this service. Many people in Neerlandia remember being guests of the Fishers on a trip to the city. Art and Dick also advanced money to farmers on expected freight. Another service the Fishers provided was buying liquor for those who desired it. The nearest liquor store was in Westlock and that was a long way to go for a case of beer. Art obtained liquor order forms from the Alberta Liquor Control Board. Whenever anyone wanted liquor he would fill out a form which would enable Art to buy the desired beverage. He charged a handling fee of twenty-five cents for a case of beer or a bottle of other liquor. On occasion this service was rendered without the benefit of forms.

Fisher Brothers Trucking was a successful business for many years. The volume of produce freighted out of Neerlandia increased dramatically as land was being cleared with caterpillar tractors and as farmers were increasing their herds. Roads were steadily being improved. The road to Edmonton was first gravelled and then paving began. This made for less wear and tear on the trucks.

All the freight that went into and out of Neerlandia went on a Fisher Brothers truck because they were the only truckers in Neerlandia. The first one to successfully challenge the monopoly was Simon Tuininga. In [illegible] he bought a used two-ton truck and began trucking. The A.C. monopoly made it difficult for him to make a living at it. At first he hauled whatever he could get — horses for slaughter to Alaska Processors in Edmonton, scrap iron

CLASS

STOCKYARD LICENCE

which he bought and sold injured animals and coal. He also took out a livestock Buyer's license. Gradually he built up a clientele. Some herds were quite small so he sometimes had to go to fifteen or twenty farms to get a full load — about sixty five hogs. Then in 1955 the Westlock Co-op awarded the freight contract to Simon Lozinga and he was on his way. Simon enjoyed trucking, getting the most pleasure out of dickering at the buying station to get the best price for his clients.

Art and Dick dissolved their partnership in 1955, though both kept on trucking. Dick bought the Vega Mercantile and moved to Vega. His son Bill began driving for him. He had gone to business college for a short time but came home to make trucking his career because his father became ill and was unable to handle the business on his own. In 1970 Dick sold the bussness to Bill.

Art had already sold his business to Ted Kettern in May 1958. The business consisted of two trucks — a 1956 three ton and a 1948 one and a half ton. Ted hauled livestock and grain but no eggs or cream. During the winter months Ted's return freight was usually coal. All the coal had to be shovelled off the truck. In summer, building materials formed the bulk of his return freight.

Trucking was not without its hazards. In the 1950s and 1960s the truckers were loading hogs and chickens on an upper deck to increase the carrying capacity of their trucks. While this increased the efficiency of the operation it also increased the risks because the centre of gravity was raised making the trucks less stable. Hitting drifts, turning too abruptly or going into a skid often meant overturning the truck. One was almost guaranteed of upsetting the truck if it went in the ditch. Sometimes mechanical failure contributed to problems. Once Paul Fisher was heading back to Edmonton with a full load of pigs, cattle and chickens. When he approached the turn at Old Barrhead his brakes failed. He could not make the corner and over he went. Simon Fisher came along and helped him to recapture and reload the animals. He was unable to recover six chickens and two pigs. When he returned from Edmonton he found one of the pigs in the Tawatinaw bridge which was along the road, but the other was nowhere to be seen. He knew the pigs had gone into a nearby farmer's yard but since they, the Mortons, were on holidays he was unable to seek their help in locating them. When they came home they found the pig for Paul. It was alive and well in the potato bin in their basement!

Horses are difficult to haul since with their weight they can easily cause a truck to overturn. On one trip when Simon Lozinga was hauling a load of horses a brake line broke just as he was approaching a paving crew near Morinville. As soon as he realized that he was unable to stop he leaned on his horn and put his lights on. The paving crew jumped out of the way, hollering at him as he sped past. Simon managed to get through the construction area without mishap and, as soon as he could slow down, he stopped at Morinville to get his brake line fixed and to allow his racing heart to return to normal.

Loading hogs which were raised outdoors could be hazardous too. Bites from pigs outraged with the treatment they were receiving were common. Even the electric prod was not always a help

Sometimes a trucker slipped in a muddy yard and received a jolt from the end of the prod intended for the hog. By the [illegible] hogs were being housed in barns and, because of better loading facilities and less space for the hog to manoeuver, loading hogs was less of a chore. But 'stubborn as a pig' has not lost its meaning and bites are not a thing of the past.

In [illegible] Case Van Beek and Clifford Tuininga bought Neerlandia Trucking and renamed it Neerlandia Transport. In [illegible] Clifford sold his share to Case. Case was trucking in a period of many changes.

There were several improvements. Highway 18 was paved and the road north to Neerlandia was a good gravel road. Hoists and augers were introduced to make loading and unloading grain easier. It was now possible to get aluminum-bottomed trucks. Before this it was necessary to put a layer of cardboard on the floor before loading groceries. Often a layer of bagged concentrate was put down first. Groceries such as bags of flour could never be put directly on the floor. Now with aluminum floors the trucks could be thoroughly cleaned. Nevertheless, trucking in the sixties was a real challenge due to the variety of goods that had to be brought in by truck. Loads included groceries, livestock, grain, fertilizer, plywood, and furniture. Few farmers kept sows so Case would buy from 20 to 40 feeder pigs at the Edmonton Stockyards each week to fill the barns. In the fall feeder calves were also purchased at the stockyards for farmers who wanted to fatten cattle.

The peak period for the cream haul was from [illegible] to [illegible]. In [illegible] about three hundred cans of cream (half of them five gallon and half eight gallon cans) were shipped but thereafter it gradually declined. The opening of the fluid milk plant in Barrhead was the death knell for the cream haul and, when Bill Fisher sold his truck in 1980, it was discontinued completely.

By [illegible] as the trucking firms had again changed hands. In [illegible] Ted Bosma sold to Bill Fisher who renamed the business Bill Fisher Trucking. Neerlandia Transport was sold to [illegible] in [illegible]. Bill Fisher sold the Fisher Truck Service to [illegible] in [illegible]. [illegible] renamed the firm [illegible] Trucking Limited. The big change in trucking from [illegible] to [illegible] was the use of tandem trucks with longer boxes. In the eighties the change was made to tractor-trailer units.

Freight rates through the years have not changed greatly. From [illegible] to [illegible] the rate for hogs remained sixty cents per hundredweight for live hogs and eighty cents dressed weight. The price for cattle remained at sixty cents per hundredweight. In the [illegible] the rate first went up to $[illegible] and later to $[illegible] per hundredweight for hogs. Among the factors that made it possible for the truckers to maintain the same rate for so long, the main ones are the increased amount of freight and the improved roads and equipment. It is now possible to make the trip to Edmonton in two hours, driving over paved roads the entire distance and carrying not twelve, twenty, sixty-five or even eighty, but two hundred hogs.

Communications

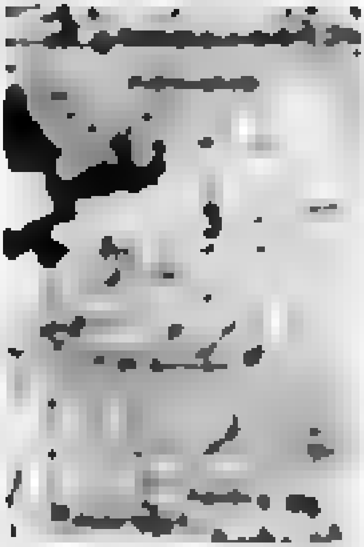
COMMUNICATIONS

Post Office

"We were fortunate to have mail service" was a comment often [illegible] provided to Neerlandia.

[illegible] by mail.

[illegible]



Map showing location of Post Office, 1917

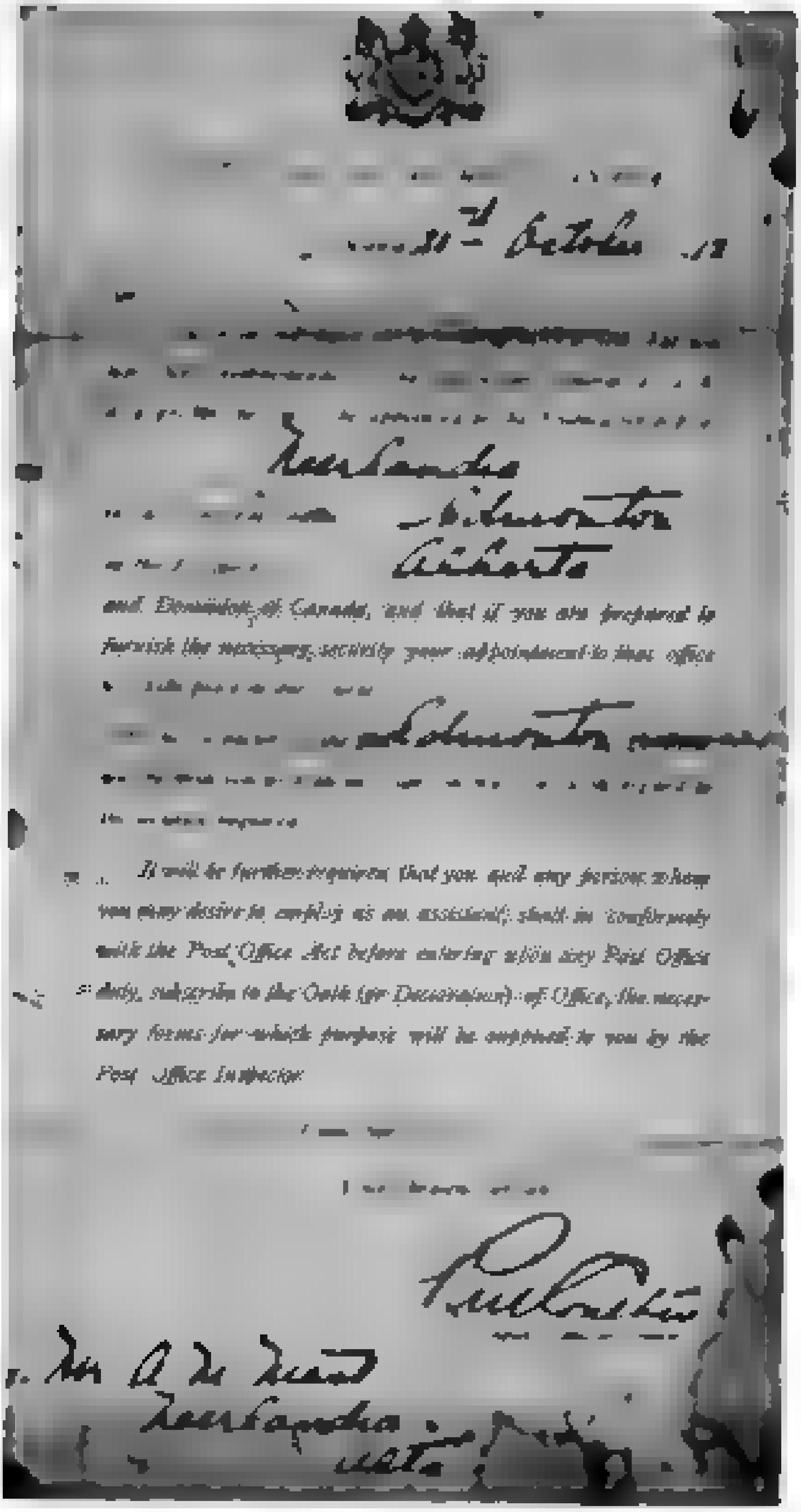
[illegible]

[illegible] death announcement.

[illegible] found a day or many days later.

Mail

[illegible]



31st October 19

[illegible]

Edmonton

Alberta

and Dominion of Canada, and that if you are prepared to furnish the necessary security your appointment to that office [illegible]

Edmonton

It will be further required that you and any person whom you may desire to employ as an assistant, shall in conformity with the Post Office Act before entering upon any Post Office duty, subscribe to the Oath (or Declaration) of Office, the necessary forms for which purpose will be supplied to you by the Post Office Inspector.

Mr A. H. Head
[illegible]
Alta.

Neerlandia Post Office was in a log cabin at the south end of the settlement, four miles south of our homestead. We took turns getting it, I one week and someone further on the next. This is how it was done. I would get it one week for the neighbours west of the Post Office and deliver it to a farmhouse for the north part of the settlement. One from the north would take it from there and deliver it around to his neighbours or to a central farm where they could get it. That way we only had to go every third or fourth week to the Post Office for mail.

Ben Lievers

* * *

In 1923 the Mast family moved to Edmonton. This resulted in the Neerlandia Post Office being moved to the local store on the NW 34-61-3-5. This proved to be a convenience for the settlers, since the weekly mail trip could be combined with shopping for groceries and farm suppies. From then on the post office became an intergral part of the local store. At that time there were forty-two names on the mailing list.

Ordinarily the store manager would have assumed postmaster duties, but one requirement for the position was Canadian citizenship. Case Ingwersen, who was not yet a citizen, could not hold the position. Instead William van Ark, a local schoolteacher, became

postal agent. Apparently by the ninth of April 1925 Case Ingwersen received his citizenship papers and took over the post office duties.

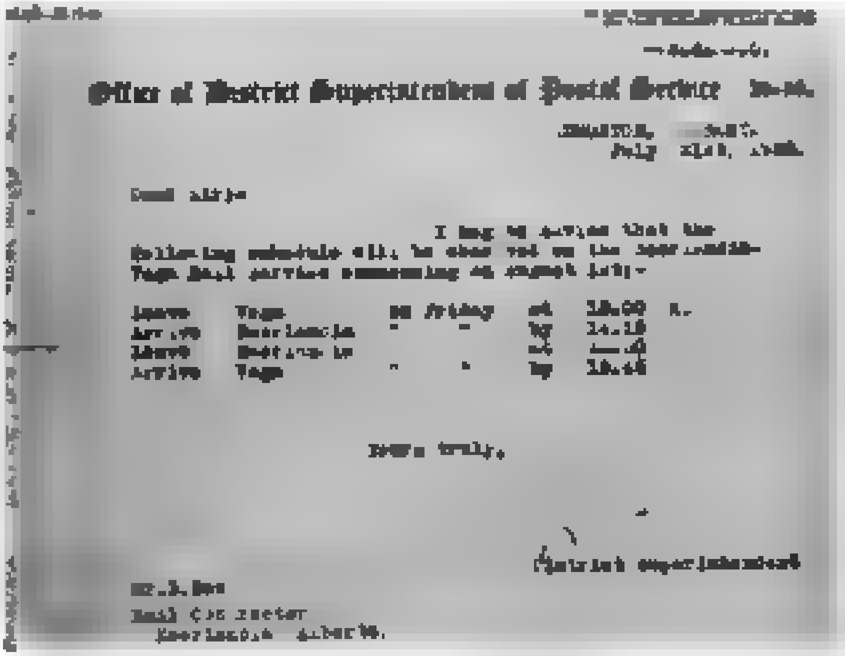
Case Ingwersen on the mail route

Case Ingwersen was not only store manager and postal agent, he also carried mail for a number of years. Hauling mail had its share of hardships — particularly for Ingwersen. How the runaway began is not known. It may have been the team was anxious to complete the weekly mail trip through the muddy trail or, more likely, they were spooked. Whatever the cause of the runaway, the result was that Case was thrown from his wagon and suffered broken bones which gave him a limp for life.

Though the post office was now in the store, the visiting with friends continued. While they waited for their mail, men, women and children chatted with those they met there. A major change in the mail route occurred in 1927, when Barrhead became a town and mail was brought directly into town by rail instead of being distributed out of Westlock. At the same time the post office at Fowler's was closed, and Mellowdale's post office was moved to their community store, located on the NE 27-60-3-5. After this Case Ingwersen fetched the mail from the Mellowdale store and Bert Bos brought the mail from Neerlandia to Vega. In 1932 this mail route from Barrhead through Mellowdale and Neerlandia and on to Vega began to be operated by one person.

First of these mail carriers was Leo Stolk, who carried mail by horse for four years until 1936. During this time Case Ingwersen retired as postal agent and on April 7, 1934, Jan Koning assumed the position.

When Pete Hoofdakker assumed the responsibility of mail carrier he added a bit more speed to the service, since he used a Massey-Harris tractor instead of horses. On occasion the RCMP would venture out to Neerlandia to uphold law and order. Part of their job was to check the mechanical condition of vehicles and, since Pete used a tractor on the road, it had to be checked. The incident goes something like this. On being stopped by the RCMP



Office of District Superintendent of Postal Service

Yours truly,

District Superintendent

For this service Bertus Bos was paid $85.00 per annum

Pete's reply was, "You can't stop the Royal Mail." "We only want to check your brakes," said the RCMP. This seemed a reasonable request, so Pete invited the officer aboard his tractor and said he would comply with the request. When, after going some distance, Pete did not apply the brakes, the RCMP wanted to know why. Pete replied, "I am waiting for the order to stop." So the officer said, "Stop." It was the word the mail carrier was waiting for and, without hesitation, he hit the brakes. The tractor stopped but the police officer did not. He ended up straddled across the tractor hood.

* * *

A Trip to Remember

When I was eight years old and my brother Norman was ten years old, we had the excitement of a trip to Barrhead with the mail carrier Mr. Pete Hootdakker. He was using an old Dodge car that was cut down and remodeled to form a small truck. With this he hauled mail and cream cans to Barrhead once a week from Vega, Neerlandia, and Mellowdale.

By the time he arrived at our place Mr. Hootdakker already had two other passengers in the front seat so we had to ride in the back with the mail and cream cans. After our last stop at Mellowdale, the canvas tarp was put over and tied down because it started to rain. The roads in 1936 being what they were, it took quite some time to get from Mellowdale to Barrhead. On top of this, the tied-down tarp trapped a good portion of smoky exhaust fumes, so by the time we got to the creamery in Barrhead my brother and I were awfully sick.

After unloading at the creamery we were dropped off at the livery barn where we spent the afternoon lying on a pile of hay and

wondering if we had been left there for good. Finally, in the late afternoon, Mr Hooldakker returned for us, bringing with him six of the best-tasting doughnuts we had ever had, fresh from the bakery. Then we got back into the truck and went to the post office to pick up the mail bags. The train had come in late so the mail was not all sorted yet and we had to wait till our mail bags were ready. Finally, by late evening, we started for home.

The rain had stopped but the roads were terrible. After going about two miles, the truck was stalled with a dead battery. After getting a push start from another vehicle we turned around and headed back into town for generator repairs. After these repairs we proceeded on our trip home without any further problems. We arrived home late that night, tired and hungry but happy with the experiences we had that day. The things that really made an impression was seeing the creamery, the grain elevators, and my first-ever steam train. All in all, a very good day.

Fred Toebes

* * *

Progress was again evident when Leroy Erikson became the next mailman, he used a closed-in truck which kept the mail dry and clean. He was employed for approximately two terms from 1938 to 1942. How long Ephraim Wagner was employed as mail carrier is not known for sure, but it was probably until 1952, since William Tansowny began carrying mail on the same route in 1952. Bill said that in 1967 the Mellowdale Post Office closed down and the rural route boxes came into existence. His route was then changed, adding a circuit through Shoal Creek and Linaria. Bill carried mail for a total of seventeen years. In 1979 Bill retired and Leo Reich was hired for the job.

* * *

For a number of years the mail was brought in by horse and buggy. The carriers usually lived in Vega and picked up the outgoing mail at noon and took it to the post office in Barrhead. On their return trip they were to arrive approximately 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. One of these carriers would sometimes have a little too much to drink and he arrived anywhere between 7:30 p.m. and midnight. He often had great difficulty standing up on his feet when he arrived. Jan Koning was not at all pleased with this kind of service. People were greatly frustrated by this also. They would come for the mail from all directions on bike or walking or by horse and wagon and many times had to return the next day as it had been too late to sort the mail. The carrier was graciously replaced by a reliable man with a truck. It was a good time for socializing when people gathered together waiting for the mail to come in.

* * *

It became evident in 1953 that the store manager had become too busy with business affairs of the Co-op and post office so on January 1, 1954, the post office duties were given to the bookkeeper, Aubrey Ashley. Apparently during this period individual lock boxes were installed in the post office. There was no longer any need to wait for the mail. Just insert the key in the slot, turn it, and remove the mail from the box. Many still continued the practice of standing around and talking to friends when they got the mail. When Aubrey Ashley retired as postal agent in May 1957, Oene Piers, a local farmer, was assigned the responsibility of postal agent. Bart Vander Wal, the new bookkeeper, was unable to qualify for the position because he was not a Canadian citizen.

On November 1, 1965, John De Gier, the Co-op bookkeeper, became post master. John said that mail service was increased to twice weekly in 1963, mail days being Tuesday and Friday.

By the early seventies Canada Post complied with increasing demands on the service and Neerlandia residents could enjoy mail service each working day of the week. At one time mail came to Neerlandia even on Saturdays, but that practice was short lived.

The pioneers have witnessed increases in the frequency and efficiency in the postal service. However, the one constant that has been retained is the habit of visiting with friends and neighbours on mail day.

POST CARD

Telephone

The Neerlandia area had its first government phone in 1919 in Elizabeth Melsome's residence on the NE 22-61-3-5. Tom Wilson, the foreman of the Chisholm Logging Camp, was instrumental in bringing it in because he needed it for his business. Business calls became social contacts, and wedding bells soon rang for Tom Wilson and Elizabeth Melsome.)

This phone, though previously called Shoal Creek, later had its name changed to Tipperary because the Shoal Creek Store, which had been built, was getting a phone and appropriated the name.

The luxury of a quick phone call to a neighbour was unheard of. As one settler recalled, "Who was there to phone? No one else had a phone . . . besides who could afford it?" Only calls of pressing need were made to the doctor in Westlock when there was severe illness. Occasionally the minister would be called to perform a marriage, baptism, or funeral.

* * *

"Hello, Sweetheart . . . "

Mr. Kampnar had a government phone. To use it one had to turn the handle on the side of the box and speak into a horn on the front. Many people travelling through, such as Frenchmen from Legal, would make use of the phone.

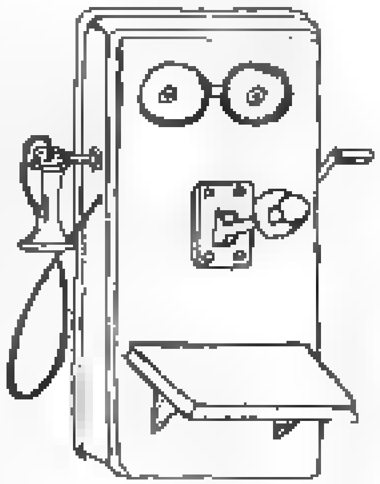
When Rev. Jongbloed was visiting the Neerlandia congregation, he would often make a call to Edmonton from Kampnar's. Once the operator was on the line he would say, "Hello Sweetheart. I want to speak to my wife." He would talk to his wife for five to ten minutes, finding out how she and the children were doing.

Ida Reitsma

* * *

When Peter Kampnar came and homesteaded on the NW 23-61-3-5, across the road from the Wilsons, he soon built a store and had a phone installed. There is a record of a 1921 AGT work order to move the telephone office from the store to his residence. Soon illness forced the Kampnars to move away. By this time the community had constructed a Co-op store in the hamlet; a phone was installed there, and, as a matter of convenience, the store manager Case Ingwersen became the AGT agent in 1925. Jan Koning became agent in 1935 and later the Neerlandia Co-op was named agent (1945). These were toll phones. The store building, which was constructed in 1938, had the phone enclosed in a booth. Below the phone but attached to it was the switchboard which contained three or four holes. Plugs which dangled on the ends of cords had to be plugged into the hole to connect the parties who wished to conduct a telephone conversation.

During this time there was also a small switchboard in the Neerlandia Store to service the line to Vega. This line had previously been erected about 1937 by Julius Boman, the owner of the Vega Store. By the mid forties the Vega Garage also joined the line.



* * *

Central at the Co-op

The Co-op was also the Central for the Telephone Company. It was the old crank system with two shiny bells, a receiver hung on the left side, crank on the right, and mouthpiece in the centre. The switchboard consisted of four lines which would be plugged in to reach the wanted party. These included the store, garage, Vega Mercantile, and the phone booth at the back of the store where people could use the phone privately. Sometimes an urgent message would come in for someone and we would have to see to it that it was delivered, one way or another. (I once made such a trip to Andrew Sattinga's place on Lambert's home-built motor scooter.)

I had the privilege of working with Mr. Ashley in the Post Office after Grace Tuininga left. The mail was sorted alphabetically and put into fairly big boxes. All the A's would be put together, B's together, and so on. Then it would be re-sorted when the customers picked it up. The store and Post Office were also open on Friday nights from seven to nine o'clock for a time in the summer.

Sophie Wierenga

* * *

Before we had phones the only way to let anyone know that you were sick and would not be teaching that day (there were no subs in those days) was to tell the bus driver. At each stop he would inform the students, "No school for grade four today!"

* * *

For several years there were no other phones in the community. Albert Davies and Ed E. Wagner of Melkowdale had phones, as did Herman Wierenga, who had purchased Tom Wilson's land. These men and other interested persons decided to form a telephone company.

The Melkowdale Neerlandia Mutual Telephone Co. held its first meeting November 26, 1949, and applied for a charter. The organizers were David Tuininga, A. W. Fisher, Lloyd Lee, Ed Trautman, and A. Wierenga Sr., with Katherine Tuininga as secretary.

The company was registered in August 1950 with the following signatures on the memorandum of association: A. W. Fisher, secretary-treasurer, A. Wierenga Sr., Lloyd Lee, Albert Tiemstra, E. Kubik, David Tuininga, H. Morrow, Earnest Morrow, R. W. Fisher, E. L. Trautman, and William Olthuis.

The capital of the company was $1425 with fifteen shares of $95 each. The subscriber rental was $2 per month.

AGT stipulated that the three existing phones were to be included in the Mutual but they could use the existing poles. The Mutual provided the wire and insulators and paid rent for pin space. With the Mutual came new job opportunities and [illegible] Ordze was nominated as maintenance man. Each new subscriber was expected to work for two days or eighteen hours clearing brush from the line.

Each of the fifteen subscribers could hear the ring of every other subscriber so each had to have a separate ring. They varied from three short to three long with all sorts of combinations in

Phone Ring	Subscriber	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

between. The most complicated ring was Ed Visser's: one long, two short, and one long. To call another person on the line it was necessary to turn the handle or crank on the side of the phone in the appropriate pattern.

* * *

Emergency Ring

One advantage of the old mutual phone system was the emergency ring. When there was a fire at Clarence Wierenga's they just gave that one long ring, and everybody dropped what they were doing and rushed to the fire. We formed a bucket brigade and got the fire out too.

One man was so excited when his garage was on fire that he just rang the emergency ring and hollered, "Fire!" and then hung up, leaving everyone to wonder where the fire was. We peered out of our windows, but snow was falling and we could see only a little way. Eventually someone found out where the fire was and we all went there. By that time it was too late, though, and the garage burned to the ground.

* * *

In the meantime Bart Vander Wal, the Neerlandia Store manager, found having the switchboard in the store very annoying. He confronted Carl Mast with a job proposal. After being approved by AGT, Carl and Agnes Mast had the switchboard moved to their residence on February 6, 1957. There were just four phones north of Neerlandia at that time.

It appears that Dick Fisher, Jack Janssen, and the Vega store and garage were the ones with phones but the line was so poor that it was "hard to say what was on the other end of it." In many cases electric fence insulators were used and it was strung with bare wire. The line went through trees along the road and when they rubbed against the wire on windy days it was impossible to hear what was being said.

* * *

Jack Janssen had bought an old phone from C. K. Mast. One day when Fred Toebes came to visit they decided to hook it up. The existing telephone pole was on the opposite side of the road. Fred and Jack realized that a wire attached to the pole and strung across the road would not be high enough for the traffic to pass underneath. They quickly solved the dilemma by attaching an insulator to a 2 × 4 and nailing that alongside the pole — as high as they could reach. They completed the hookup by using electrical wire and were the proud possessors of a working phone. After a year or two Jack received a phone call from Edmonton. "What's your number?" they demanded.

"I have none," Jack replied. "I just did my own hookup. It's three rings I guess."

"Oh," was the answer. Subsequently Jack got a number (97), but was never charged for the use of the service.

* * *

A meeting was held February 11, 1958, to organize the Vega Mutual Telephone Company (VMTC) and to discuss the possibilities of rebuilding the badly-dilapidated Neerlandia-Vega line. With forty-eight people present and eager to start, a board of directors were elected. Harry Branden, Jake Sturwold, Pleun Rylaarsdam, Ralph Neuman, Fred Toebes (president), and Peter Koch (secretary-treasurer) were elected. All those interested deposited ten dollars as a down payment on their share of the line.

Work began and AGT was contacted with the intended list of subscribers. A permit for cutting timber for the poles was obtained and the municipality was approached for approval and proper placement of poles. Every subscriber was to "bare his share of the line cost of material including clearing of his own share of the brush."

By August 1958 a public meeting was called and twenty-three subscribers requested a phone and a total of eighteen miles were to be covered.

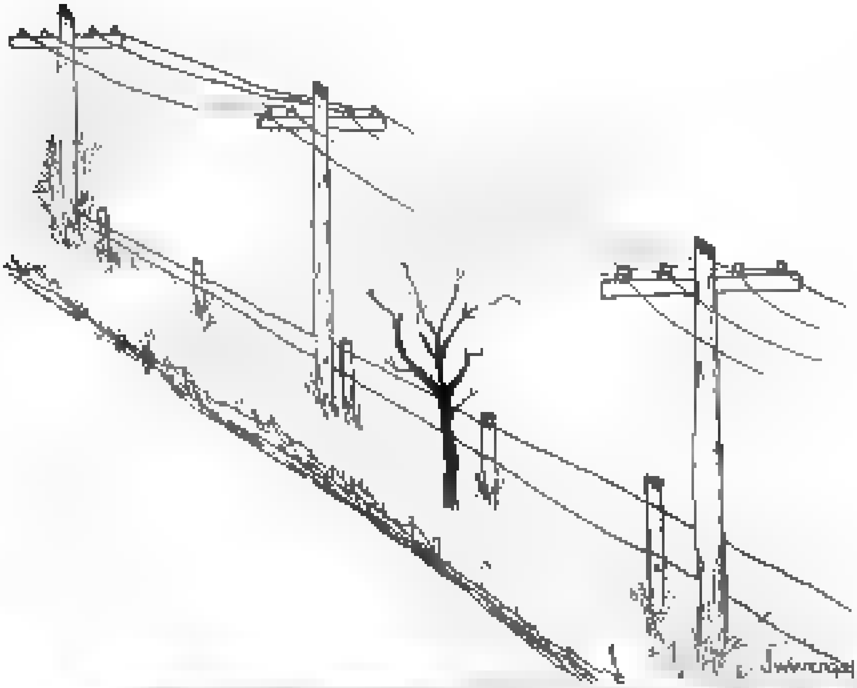
The problem of other parties listening in on telephone conversations had to be dealt with by the board of directors. The ultimate threat was disconnection. At one meeting a director had "positive proof" (he had seen it with his own eyes) of a guilty party and action had to be taken.

* * *

Then there is the temptation to listen in. One day my mother, while talking on the phone, said that she had too many beans and wished she knew of someone who could use them. About half an hour later, someone (on the same party line) phoned and said, "You wouldn't have any extra beans would you?"

Coincidence?!

* * *



Private hookups posed another problem. One man extended the telephone wire along fence posts to his son's house a mile or so away. Another made an "extension" to his son's house on the same yard. In both cases the guilty parties were required to remove the offending phone.

It was established that an alarm call would be one long continuous ring with all parties responding by listening for instructions. This worked well, except for one instance when a distraught farmer had his barn on fire. He dashed to the house and rang the phone off the wall. All the neighbours grabbed the phone and listened but no instructions came. In his excitement he had returned to the fire!

Even though the phone was a tremendous link with the world it became ineffective on one occasion when John Schuring was phoning the veterinarian about a sick sheep. Laying the phone down he demonstrated with his hands, saying "He has a head so *dik*." The vet never did get that message straight.

* * *

It was hard for people to get used to using the phone. They had been used to using gestures and facial expressions to convey their meaning, now it had to be all done by voice alone. Bill Olthuis had to learn to laugh aloud — something he had never done.

* * *

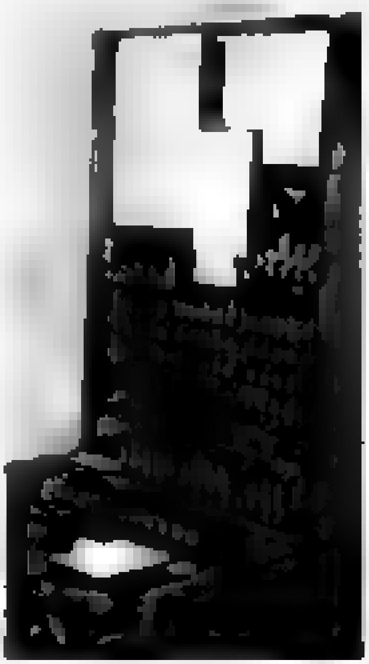
By 1960 the Mutual requested a two-hour extension to the telephone service. To this Carl P. Mast and AGT both agreed, making it possible to phone in the evening. Circuit #4 joined the V.M.T.C. at this time. To make this possible AGT had to go through the legality of revising their boundaries, then the area west and north of the store could be included.

When twenty-four hour service came into effect in 1961, a larger switchboard was installed in Carl and Agnes' home. Now telephone operators were hired to help out. Many cups of coffee were served by the Masts to customers making or waiting for calls. This diminished as time went on and people began getting their own phones.

By 1965 there were five lines in the VMTC and keeping them in repair was a big job. At the company's inception in 1956 Jake Sturwold was appointed temporary lineman, a job he kept until 1966. He requested release from the job at that time because his farm was demanding more of his time, even so he was on call till the company disbanded. He has installed many phones and climbed too many poles to count, all for the wage of one dollar per hour.

Several times the service charge was eliminated from the monthly bill because the company was in good financial condition. It would appear again when new lines were added or unforeseen repairs required.

In 1967 a meeting was called to consider AGT's proposal for underground multiparty service which was coming into the Barrhead area. It was accepted and so came the demise of the local operators' jobs. In recognition of eleven years of dedicated switchboard service, a plaque was given to Carl and Agnes Mast.



Switchboard in C. P. Mast's house, c. 1961

The Maats had enjoyed their work, especially for the social contact it provided. In the early days they made two trips in one day to Pleun Rylaarsdam through pouring rain and muddy roads. Two separate long distance calls had come in about deaths in the Rylaarsdam family.

In 1962 the Mellowdale-Neerlandia Mutual converted to dial phones. By this time there were about fifty subscribers per line, so five lines with eleven subscribers per line were installed. Calling someone became much simpler but the entrance of the dial phone meant the exit of the emergency ring. No longer was it possible to alert 14-15 neighbours at once.

Seven years later the AGT put in buried cable and the phones were changed to only four parties on a line and only two of the rings would be heard in any home. What a relief it was to not have to listen to all those rings. (And it was still possible, for those so inclined, to listen in on the phone.)

The rural telephone — what an exasperating, wonderful thing it was. How frustrating to try and get Central to find out that the rings might get through but the voices not. You could hear Carl say, "Number please" but no amount of shouting would make the voices carry through. Because of progress the lines were put underground but we miss our friendly operators. They knew where the fire was, where one might be reached if an urgent call came through, who just had a baby or was sick, or who had hung up as one dashed to the phone. Progress yes, but in many ways the old rural phone gave personalized service that is missing today.

Working in the Bush

LOGGING AND LUMBERING

Logging and lumbering played an important part in the life of the Neerlandia pioneers. Though farming was the main concern the lumber industry was important for two reasons. First, there was a need for lumber to construct almost everything on the homestead. Homes and many furnishings, barns, granaries, hay racks, grain boxes, and all outbuildings were made with lumber. Second, the jobs created by the lumbering industry provided much-needed cash for the pioneers to sustain and build up the homestead into a profitable venture.

One of the first sawmills in the area was Clemes and Fluet's sawmill which was set up in 1912 about three miles northeast of (Old) Barrhead. In 1919 Fluet bought the other half-share and moved the mill to Mellowdale. Many of the trees logged for the mill were from the Big Timber. Siebren Tiemstra and Tjibbe Reitsma were among the men who worked at the sawmill, which operated in Mellowdale until the late 1930s.

Cookhouse crew at Fluet's Sawmill. Dave Tuininga, fourth from right.

Lumber was seldom purchased in the 1920s. Often men would cut logs on their own land and bring them to a lumber mill. (Later a portable mill would move around the country.) The owner and operator of the mill would take half of the lumber sawed as payment and the farmer-logger would get the other half. Everyone seemed pleased with this arrangement. During these years much of the lumber was used rough.

There were also several logging camps in the area in the pioneer days, the best-known of these is Chisholm. It was known locally as Chisholm Mills or Chisholm Logging Company, and began logging in this area in 1921. The Chisholm logging camps were located along the Athabasca River anywhere from southwest of Fort Assiniboine to directly west of Neerlandia, and several places northwest of Neerlandia including Horseshoe Bend and Maykut Flats in Vega. Many Neerlandia men worked for the Chisholm Lumber Company.

Tom Wilson was hired by Chisholm as foreman, since he had previously done similar work in Minnesota. Tom knew the bush and was an excellent foreman. His job began in the summer, cruising the timber. He checked the thickest patches, the most accessible areas, the size of the trees and their proximity to the river. All the timber harvested was spruce since birch and poplar are too heavy to float.

* * *

Lost in the Woods

One of the first settlers intended to go to the sawmill about five or six miles south of his homestead. He left early in the morning. His wife had made a lunch for him to eat on the way. So he started off going south along the Klondike Trail. He walked for a long time and he thought, "I must be getting near to the sawmill. I better have my lunch first." So he sat down on a big log and ate his lunch, then started off again. Soon he saw a log cabin and said to himself, "I better ask how far it is to the mill." When he came near the cabin he saw some little huts with young chickens in them, and he said to himself, "Them huts are just like ours!" He knocked at the door of the cabin and his wife opened it and he stared at her and she at him. He said, "How did you come here?" She said, "You are back again?" Then he understood that he was home again and had never been to the sawmill, maybe never off his homestead. He was lucky to be home again.

Ben Lievers

* * *

One young Neerlandia fellow was going to work for Chisholm one winter. Before he left, his father warned him, "Remember, when you get a job, you don't work for any cheaper than anybody else. You have to get at least nineteen dollars a month." So the young fellow went to camp. When he started working he asked Tom Wilson, "What do you pay?"

"Twenty-five dollars a month," was the reply.

"Won't work for that," declared the young man. "I want nineteen dollars!"

"You want nineteen dollars — why?"

"Because that's what my Dad said, nineteen dollars, no less."

"Okay," Tom said, "You want nineteen dollars, you get nineteen dollars!" When the young fellow came home after a month, his Dad asked him,

"Hoe gaat het, jong (How did it go?)"

"O good. The others all got twenty-five dollars, but I'm the only one who got nineteen."

* * *

There are many stories about Tom Wilson. One concerns Tom and his boss Mr. MacMillan. Tom, with a bobsled cutter and his *beautiful team of horses Dan and Charley, was driving down the river showing the logging operation to the boss. Everything was going along nicely till the sled hit a hole in the ice and tipped. The men were dumped out and Tom's boss landed with his seat in the hole. The horses took fright and began to gallop away. Tom, having to make a choice, began pursuing the horses — until a yell from his boss made him change his mind. Mr. MacMillan, not in great danger, was rescued. Dan and Charley returned of their own accord. Tom must have been a valued employee for he continued in his position as foreman.*

* * *

During the late twenties and early thirties, working conditions were much the same in all the camps. Depending on the weather, November to March was the usual logging season. To get there, workers would walk or have someone take them with a team of horses. Once there, you could begin to make yourself comfortable. The bunks were lumber with no mattresses so the first thing to do was go to the barn for some hay. The hay was covered with several old army blankets and presto — there was your bed. Some camps had straw ticks for mattresses. Pillows — there were none unless you took your own from home but, if not, a jacket or pair of pants rolled up would be just fine.) There were about thirty to forty men sleeping in one bunkhouse and depending on the size of the camp there were three or four bunkhouses. Each bunkhouse was heated with wood-burning heaters and, for light, there were little coal oil bracket lamps hanging on the walls. There were two or more wash-basins provided for each bunkhouse for washing up. A barrel of water for washing and a bucket and dipper for drinking were supplied. Outside a "common john" was provided for the comfort of the men.

The camps were strictly a man's world. The best cooks would be hired, and could they cook. Cooking was a man's trade during that era. There was a day cook and a night cook and between them they prepared large amounts of food and baked pies, lots of bread, cookies, and other goodies. The menu was usually beef or pork with potatoes and vegetables, although in the later years it included chicken and fish. Some men loved working in the bush camp for the sake of the grub. It was superb!

Two flunkeys also worked in the kitchen. Their job was all the "fun" things like peeling potatoes, setting tables, serving food, washing dishes, and cleaning up after the cooks.

The men known as bull cooks were essential to the smooth operation of the kitchen. There were at least two in each camp. They hauled the wood, then sawed and chopped it for the cook stoves and bunkhouse heaters. They also had to ensure a supply of water for cooking and washing and took turns at washing the floors and hauling in the frozen meat from the storage shed. When the cook was going to bake bread, the bull cooks were instructed to get birch wood, for this made a hot oven fire for baking. Bill and John Oldham worked as bull cooks for Chisholm in 1927. The pay was thirty-five dollars a month for a six-day week, including room and board.

The logging was begun in a large ravine by the river. In the bush, trees were felled by two men, each working one end of a crosscut saw. The trick was to draw the saw back and forth smoothly and not ride it. To ride the saw (by putting too much pressure on it and being sluggish in letting the saw make the return stroke) caused the saw to pull through the log heavily and resulted in a twisted cut. As the loggers said, "A good sawing partner is a joy to work with, a poor partner a curse." A tree was never cut off totally. About two inches was left uncut and the tree would break off — otherwise it tended to twist and not fall where the logger wanted it to. The biggest trees at that time were about three feet in diameter and the smallest approximately eight inches at the butt end. After felling, the tree was limbed with a pole axe and topped. The logs were then cut into eight to sixteen-foot lengths, depending on how straight they were. (This type of logging is called short logging.)

Once the logs were cut, swamping took place. With a canthook or axe, the log was rolled over and limbed on the opposite side. The area around the log was cleared, so the log was exposed to the skidder. One or two horses were used, a chain tied around the log, and the log skidded to a roll way or skid way. A skid way consisted of two long logs placed six or eight feet apart, on which the short logs were piled crosswise. The front end of the skid way was on a head log to raise it to the height of the sleigh bunk.

From the skid way in the bush, the logs would have to be taken down to the river. To do this, first the logs would be loaded onto large sleighs ten or twelve feet wide. The loading was done by men using canthooks, and about twenty five to thirty logs were put on each sleigh. (During the thirties a log jammer was used at Chisholm to load the sleighs.) These sleighs were then moved by four-up teams of horses. The sleighs ran in ruts which were iced to provide easy sledding for the runners.

Bringing logs to the skidway. Note log jammer at left.

• • •

A log jammer was a tripod affair made of logs with one pulley on top and one down near the base and a cable going through them.

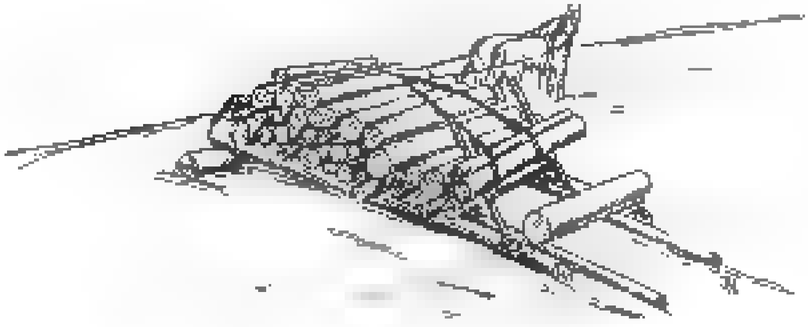
A team of horses pulling on the one end of the cable would pull three or four logs about fifteen to twenty feet up in the air right onto a huge sleigh. There would be one man on the load with a canthook, receiving the logs. When the logs were high enough, he would signal to the man driving the team of horses, who would stop the team and make them back up a few steps. The man on the load would then loosen the cable and the whole process would start over again. They would make huge loads ten to twelve feet high. A small thirty-horsepower Caterpillar would pull the load through the bush along well-cleared trails to a central area close to a hill which went down to the river. Here there would be more loads and as many as six would be tied together and a larger Caterpillar tractor would go behind these loads to hold them back from going too fast down the hill and onto the ice of the river. There would also be a man with a bucket of sand on each front runner of the front sleigh. They would throw sand in front of the sleigh tracks to keep the loads from going too fast. But even then the Cat would backfire trying to hold back that enormous amount of weight.

John Ingwersen

* * *

The icing of the ruts was done at night when the crew was resting. Water was hauled from the river, poured in the ruts, and left to freeze overnight. Sam Howey and Ike Nanninga did some of this work together in the 1930s. The "road monkey" had the job of keeping the ice road clean and free from horse dung, tree limbs, and other debris. One of the men who had this job was Arie Emmerzael.

Once on the sleigh, the logs were taken to the riverside. Here they were unloaded from the sleigh onto a bigger skid way and the piles were staked a notched pole was placed in front of the first logs to hold them back. These big piles of logs called decks were at least twenty feet high and up to two hundred feet long.



Piling decks at the river.

* * *

Sam Howes was a big man in more ways than one. One time when I was about thirteen (1912), I went to the logging operation of Chisholm with some friends. We ate a meal there and then went out in the bush to see the operation. We were watching them load a load of logs. When the load was completed, the Caterpillar tractor could not move the load because it was on some tree branches which had just been felled. Sam Howes came along — he was bush foreman — he soon had the load on its way by pulling one runner at a time for a short way and then the other.

John Ingwersen

* * *

A day in camp would begin with breakfast at 7:00 a.m. Quitting time was 6:30 p.m. A big camp bell was the summons to meals. It was a steel triangle and was struck, usually by the flunkey, in a circular motion by a steel bar — a wonderful sound to the men. After a big supper, the men would retire to the bunkhouses. Some would play checkers or cards, others would just talk or even rest. (There was always your saw to sharpen or, if you were so inclined, you could darn you socks or mend your clothes. A washtub and scrub board were provided in case you wanted to remove a little toe jam from your socks.) Wires were strung around the heater and at night these were always hung with wet socks and mitts. Four feet of the floor in every direction around the heater was covered with wet boots and shoes and other articles that needed drying before morning.

Evening was also the time for tall tales and the pitting of muscle against muscle in arm wrestling or broomstick pulling. But at 8:50 p.m. the foreman or bull cook would walk through the bunkhouse and announce the time. Everyone knew it was "lights out" at 9:00 p.m. and this was generally heeded. At 9:00 p.m. the foreman would walk through again and any light that was still burning would be put out. The foreman was much respected and highly regarded and not a man to be argued with. (After Tom Wilson, Sam Howes became foreman in the Chisholm camp in the early thirties.) There was no talking at the dinner table either. Men were allowed a "please pass the salt" comment, but any banter was deemed unnecessary. Discipline was strict, and almost always adhered to.

There were no bathing facilities, so the men never took a bath from the time they came to camp until the time they left. In some camps, cedar oil was used to keep down the lice population. If the oil was rubbed on chests and backs, the lice did not approve and disappeared to find a new home. Most local workers went home for the weekend, but others stayed in camp all winter. A huge dinner, along with nuts and oranges, was always provided for the men who stayed in camp over Christmas.

Towards the middle of February, a "chinook" could be expected. It generally became too warm to work and often three feet of snow would disappear in eight or ten days. Many men would get what the loggers called "spring fever" and they would leave, not to return for the season.

Each man was expected to work nine or ten hours per day, with hundred [illegible] all. The pay in 19[illegible] was twenty-six dollars a month with room and board but [illegible] when Carriage [illegible] working at Chisholm it had dropped to fifteen dollars a month as a result of the Depression. A timekeeper kept account of the hours each man worked and made out the month's pay cheques. Any necessities such as mitts, socks, [illegible] and extras such as tobacco or shaving supplies could be purchased at camp.

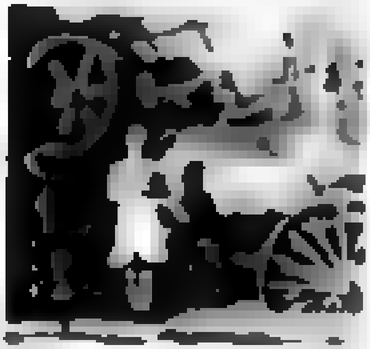
Bush work was hard, hard work. Many winters the crew had to work in three feet of snow, which was extremely exhausting. Nevertheless, the competition among the men was keen. [illegible] would [illegible] and [illegible] where [illegible] wages per [illegible] didn't [illegible] worth their board, never mind the wages. [illegible] each man did his best and the men were proud of their accomplishments and their partners.

There were very few accidents at the logging camps, but injured workers were sometimes given compensation. One time a group of men were cutting a trail through the bush for Chisholm [illegible]. Henry Schoenwetter was among them, and a tree fell on him. He had to go to the doctor after his back was injured and very sore. He worked in the [illegible] Henry did. The doctor said to him, "[illegible]." He did not even ask Henry to take off his coat. So much for the compensation pay.

When the snow became too soft, the loggers would be issued their final pay cheques and would move on to whatever work awaited them for the summer, usually farming. The winter's work, however, was only the first stage of the company's logging operation. When the river was high in the spring, the stakes holding the logs decked up by the river would be [illegible] and the logs rolled into the river to be floated on the big log drive to the town of Chisholm farther north on the Athabasca.

Chisholm Lumber Company continued this type of operation until 19[illegible]. By then they had harvested the big timber along the river and the big bush camps and log drives became a part of the past.

There were also a number of local lumber mills. These were established due to an increasing need for lumber on the farms. Harry Brandon, Bert [illegible], Napoleon Garneau, Matt [illegible], John Semmens, and [illegible] all had mills in the area. These mills included the whole operation from logging to sawing and planing the lumber. They were usually operated by [illegible] independent steam engines. The operators would dig holes in the muskeg to obtain water for the steamers. The [illegible] Creek area was full of beautiful spruce timber and many mills were in operation there. Most mills employed from five to ten people and the wages were often paid in lumber although, as one pioneer said, "You can't eat wood."


Steam engine at Garneau's mill. Mike Peters visiting, [illegible]

* * *

Old Stands

By the 1930s there wasn't much left of the old stands of trees. The government had tried its best to keep these groves standing since there was a lot of value in that wood. The surrounding farmers, however, who had to burn to clear the land, were [illegible] *too careful and fire would start in the woods. Then a number of men of the settlement would be called upon to, under the direction of the fire ranger, fight the fire. To do this trenches were dug all around the burning area, deep enough so that the uninflammable clay was reached. But woe betide if the rain held off and a wind arose. Then the whole surrounding country was covered in smoke for days. The sun was darkened until the greatly longed-for rain descended and man and beast could breathe again.*

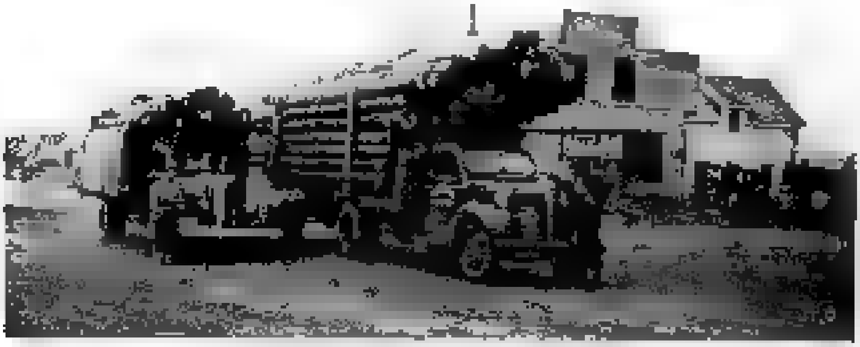
This burning naturally cost the government a lot on wages but, on the other hand, it helped the settlers to subsist during the first years. This continued until the government adopted another course and sold the stands of trees and sawmills sprang up. This again gave employment while it also helped the farmers obtain cheap wood for building houses and stables.

Case Ingwersen (memoirs)

* * *

Horseshoe Bend Sub-Contract

In 1923, Ben Lievers, Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, and John Terpsma made a sub-contract with Chisholm to log a small area near Horseshoe Bend. Andy and Ike Nanninga and Bill and John Olthuis were part of the crew and Tena Terpsma and Johanna Lievers were the cooks. The operation was begun by building a log shack and a barn on an island in the Athabasca River. The married men went home each Saturday evening, while the single men took turns staying at camp. One weekend when they were nearly finished, it was Andy's turn to stay. But he had a girlfriend and did not stay out that weekend either. When the crew returned Monday morning, they discovered the shack and barn had been ransacked and burnt down. Nothing was left — no tools or clothing or feed for the horses — so the partners made a deal with Tom Wilson to stay at the Chisholm Camp until they had finished their contract.



Hauling logs.

* * *

One winter four of us took a contract with the Chisholm Logging Co. Ltd. to cut logs along the Athabasca River. We built a

little log cabin on an island in the river and we cut logs to haul them on skidways along the river. Some of the others had their sons working with them, but mine were not old enough so my eldest daughter, Hanna, came along to cook for us. Most of us went home on Saturday night and came back on Monday with food for ourselves and the horses. On the last week of our stay all of us decided to go home and come back Monday to finish the job. We had to hurry because the ice was going out of the river and we had to cross the river to go home. So we came back on Monday morning and found our cabin and barn burnt to the ground. Our blankets and tools burned and no feed for the horses. So we stayed in the other camp from the Company and ate and slept there till we finished the contract. We never found out how the fire started but I believe someone stole our goods and put a match to the rest. We had horse blankets with buckles and rings and we could not find any of the buckles. John Terpsma had a box with a lock on it — we found the hinges where the box had been standing but the lock was twelve feet away in the corner of the building. We never found out and did not make much money on this contract but we did get experience in lumbering. In later years, we used that experience.

Ben Leevers

* * *

Dutch Mill

In 1943 four men from Neerlandia decided to try their hand at the lumbering business. They were George Anema, Gerrit Gelderman, Gerrit Ingwersen, and Cor Nanninga. This lumber operation became known as the Dutch Mill. Things were rather slow on the farming scene, and the men thought to make some extra money by having a small lumbering operation and selling the lumber.

An old prospector and trapper, Joe Caskenett, who lived in a cabin by the Athabasca River, took the men from Neerlandia over the timbered areas. They then applied by sealed tender to purchase a timber berth which would yield approximately one million board feet of lumber. This berth was mostly spruce and was located on the NE 34-63-3-5 in fairly steep ravines leading down to the Athabasca River. The timber was probably left by Chisholm Lumber Company because it was not very accessible and the trees were not yet mature at the time Chisholm was logging in that area.

The men moved to the site after there was sufficient snowfall and the ground was frozen. They built a cookhouse with an attached bunkhouse and a barn for the horses. The horses were taken from the farms. The cookhouse had two bedrooms and a cook stove, one table, and a few benches for storage.

There was already a road into the area, as the Lockwood brothers were washing gravel for gold in the flat nearby, but a tractor was used to repair the last stretch of road. Since the lumber was to be hauled out by trucks, a passable road was a necessity.

The crew would leave from Neerlandia early Monday morning by car or truck. Enough food to feed the crew of six or eight men, as well as feed for the horses, had to be taken along. As the winter wore on, the men encountered endless trouble with snowdrifts en route. Floyd Rauscher of Vega was often called upon to tow the vehicles through the drifts with his tractor. As soon as they arrived in camp, the work would begin: the food was unloaded, water was hauled from the river to the cookhouse and stored in a forty-five-gallon drum, and firewood was cut for camp use.

The work in the bush, not much different than in earlier days, began by felling and limbing trees. The trees were next cut into twelve to eighteen-foot lengths and horses were used to skid them to a skid way, where they were piled. The skid ways were built on the sides of the ravines so sleighs could drive by and load with a minimum of effort. From the skid way the logs were loaded on sleighs and brought by horses to the mill yard, where they were again piled. After a good winter's work, there would be approximately eight thousand logs decked in the mill yard ready to be sawed into lumber.

The first year the Dutch Mill was in operation the lumber was sawed in March. That sawmill was a makeshift affair. It did the job but the partners were not pleased with it because too much time was spent repairing it. Later they purchased a Coutts mill for about seven hundred dollars. The sawing was then done in the spring after seeding was completed on the farm. The partners were pleased with the new mill; it was fairly efficient with few breakdowns and repairs and capable of sawing up to fourteen thousand board feet of lumber per day.

At sawing time there was always excitement — this was the climax of the winter's work. The logs were moved by horse from the cold decks to the sawmill where they were sawed into one and two-inch lumber. Nothing was wasted but the sawdust which was either burnt or left to rot in piles.

Once the lumber was sawed, it was again piled, this time according to size to await the planer. Someone from Legal who had a portable planer came to plane lumber at the Dutch Mill. The planer smoothed the edges and the top and bottom of the boards. Tongue and groove lumber was also made at this time.

The partners sold most of the lumber in the spring after it was planed. The first Co-op garage was built with lumber from the Dutch Mill. Cor Nanninga built his house and barn with some of it and Gerrit Gelderman and Gerrit Ingwersen also made use of it in building. In 1944 the price of lumber was approximately thirty-five dollars a thousand board feet.

The mill also did some custom sawing. Andy Ilke and Louis Nanninga logged close to the river in that area and those logs were sawed by the Dutch Mill. Peter Hooldakker brought some logs to be sawed and so did some loggers from the Jarvie area who were logging across the Athabasca.

Logging and sawing was hard work, and the men were always hungry from the exercise in the outside air. Three big meals were served each day. At 7:00 a.m., a breakfast of porridge, eggs, toast and flapjacks was served. For dinner and supper, served at 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m., there was meat, potatoes, and vegetables. The cooks also made bread, pies, cakes, and buns. So many raisin pies were baked the first year that raisin pie still does not taste special to certain people!

John Peters cooked for a short time in the fall of 1943, but soon Rulie Nanninga took over. Her husband, Andrew, worked on the crew and they had baby Mark along too. With them came the family cow to provide milk for them and the crew. Later that year Cor took his wife, Sena, and one-year-old daughter, Reatta, to the camp. Rulie and Sena shared the honour of cooking for the crew. The next year (1944) Andrew and Rulie did not return but Gerrit Ingwersen had moved his family to the camp, so his wife, Grace, took her turn at cooking. Annie Anema and Bertha Gelderman worked together another winter as cooks. One winter Rita Gelderman worked as cook's helper.

Visiting the Dutch Mill. Fred Toebes. Hilda Nanninga. Grace Tuininga. Bertha Gelderman, Cobie Ledet.

One day Gerrit saw some moose tracks in the snow and that was just what he needed to get out his rifle and follow the trail. He was an excellent hunter and the crew enjoyed those moose steaks!

The help was all hired locally and the wages were three dollars a day plus room and board. The Dutch Mill is fondly remembered by many who worked there. Cor Hiemstra, Tim Jorritsma, Herman Gelderman, Ryer Krikke, Albert Mast, Cor Ledet, John Peters, Albert Schoonekamp, Dewey Terpsma, Albert Tiemstra, John Van Ee, Lambert A. Wierenga, and Henry A. Wierenga were part of the crew at various times. They were almost like one big family. Gerrit Ingwersen must have been the father, for it was he who said grace at mealtimes and gave needed encouragement to the hired help. The women often packed the little ones snugly in a small sleigh and took them for walks in the bush or on the frozen river. It was a time of fun and fellowship.

The hours of work for the crew were from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After supper, the men were usually free to do as they wished. They talked of Model A cars and guns, sharpened saws, and told jokes.

* * *

A farmer and his son went out to cut wood with a crosscut saw. While they were sawing, an Indian trapper came along. He stood behind the father for a while, watching. The trapper suddenly

kicked the father in the seat of his pants and said, "If the boy want um saw — let him have it."

* * *

On occasion they held a haircutting session with different men acting as barbers. They sat on big blocks of wood around a forty-five-gallon gas drum, which had been converted to a wood heater. Bedtime was 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. and the bunks were crudely fashioned out of rough lumber. The mattress was timothy hay and over that was an army blanket. Pillows were provided and more blankets for a covering. Long johns were worn to bed, and socks were often kept on to keep the feet warm. All wet mitts and clothes were hung on the inside clothesline near the heater. The men all used leather mitts with home-knitted woollen mittens inside, which provided the needed flexibility combined with warmth.

Someone had to stay on weekends to feed the horses and milk the cow and, more often than not, George Anema was picked because he was the one partner who was "unattached."

By the spring of 1947 the leased area was completely logged out. The whole lease was cleaned up and even the log buildings were taken apart and sawn up. The Coutts mill was sold that same fall. The partners never did get rich or even make much money, but they had a nice bit of lumber and had gained a lot of experience.

* * *

Beginning in 1946, power saws were introduced to the loggers in this area. The first power saws were heavy, clumsy, and awkward, and weighed around thirty pounds. They could be operated by one man and were much faster than the crosscut saw, which they eventually replaced. A tree could be sawed down in one minute flat. Each bush worker wanted one.

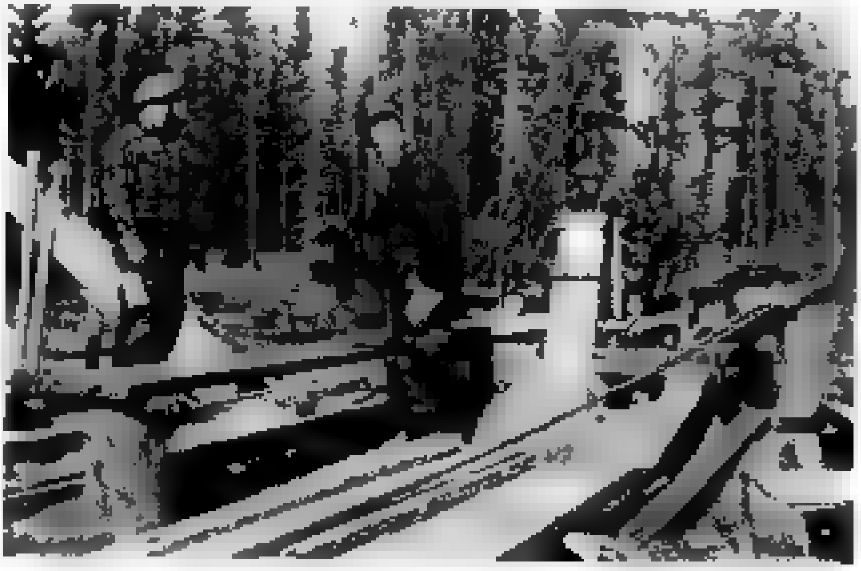
* * *

In the winter of 1948, John Ingwersen and Bill Olthuis cut spruce logs on 34-61-4-5, six miles west of Neerlandia. They obtained a permit from the Department of Lands and Forests. The cost was approximately three dollars for one thousand board feet of lumber.

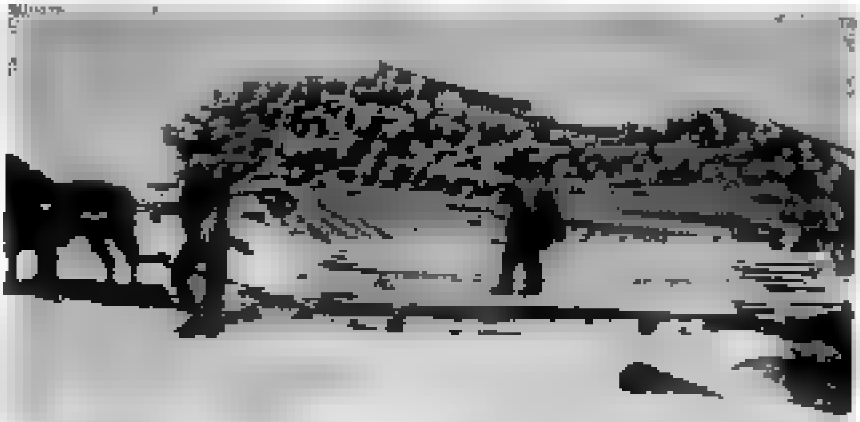
They built a little shack and stayed there with their four-man crew. The crew was Archie Howey, Jim Jorritsma, Aebe Plantinga, and Henry Bouwman, who was the cook. They worked there most of the winter of 1948-1949. The lumber was sawed on the site by a portable homemade mill, crafted by Bill and John. Most of this lumber was for farm use.

Working in the lumber camps continued to play a part in the lives of many men from Neerlandia. Even after World War II several worked for Jimmy Thachuk or Imperial Lumber in the Timeau area or in the area now known as Judy Creek. These workers were mainly immigrants who had decided to farm in Neerlandia, but needed some extra cash to achieve that goal. Frank Bearda, Gerrit Beyers, Tom and Simon De Groot, Henk Navis, Pete and Case

Skidding logs out of the bush, Dewey Terpsma.



Sawing lumber: Bill Olthuis, Ben Bouwman, John Ingwersen, Aebe Pieninga.



Hauling lumber: Norman Toebes driving horses.

Working in the bush, George Visser, Clarence Tiemstra, Simon de Groot, Frank Hessels. Dave Tiemstra, Ralph Bos, 1951-52.

Selles, and Arie Veenstra were among those who supplemented their incomes in this fashion. The wages at that time (early 1950s) were from fifty-five to sixty-five cents an hour, with $1.50 charge per day for room and board.

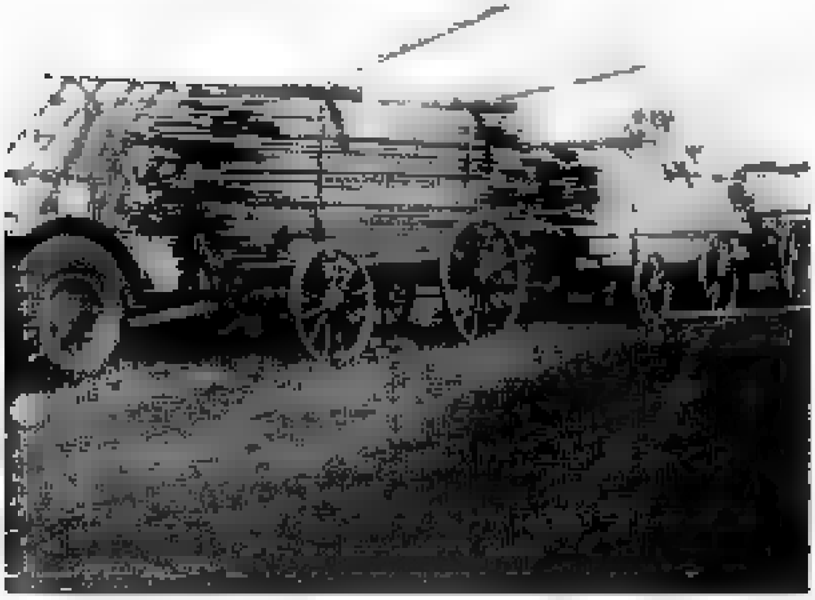
Accommodations in Thachuk's camp. Henk Nevis, Case Selles.

* * *

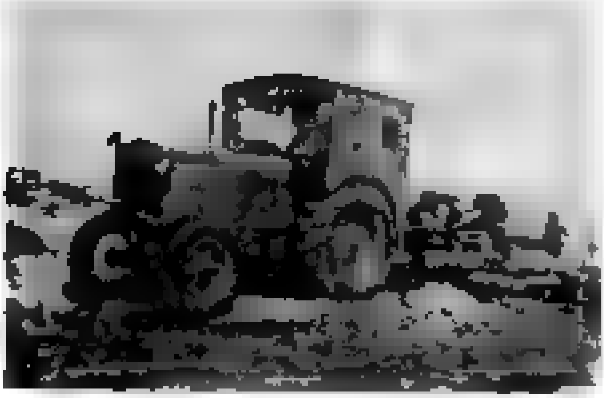
One year I and the rest of the crew, Simon and Tom De Groot and Bert Nanninga, sawed logs in the sand hills north of Vega. We had found a patch of about 100,000 board feet of lumber three miles from the end of the trail through sand hills and swamp. We did all the logging and sawing before Christmas. A trucker was going to haul the lumber out, but late in March the snow was melting and the lumber was still there. So with four men, two tractors, and sleighs we started hauling the lumber out to the end of the trail, for in the summer there would be no chance to get in there since there was a lot of swamp and if it was left the chances of it going up in smoke were quite real. We went in on a Wednesday and worked straight through day and night, managing to finish Saturday evening. That summer we took a planer in to plane the lumber and then hauled it home. A few years later we sawed logs north of Timeu (1953) and then in the sand hills north of Vega again (1954).

John Ingwersen

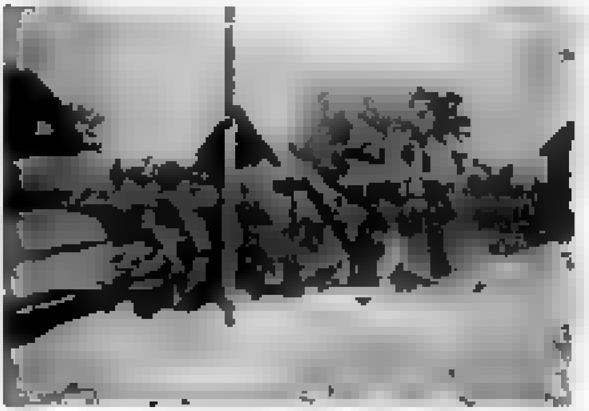
* * *



Bringing lumber home from the mill. Note the poles extending from the top of each load. These poles were twisted in the chain to keep the load tight.



John [illegible] sawmill loaded to take to Vega, April 1948. The Oliver 90 tractor has a homemade cab

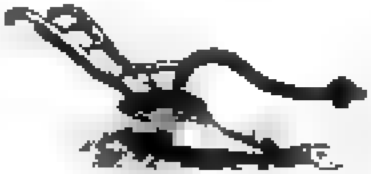


The final step in lumber production: planning. This is Gerrit Koppers on his farm, 1930s

Logging and lumbering have seen dramatic changes since the early days of crosscut saw and horse. Today, trees are felled with power saws, left in full length, and skidded to the landing with a machine called a skidder. There the logs are limbed and topped, again with power saws. Then they are decked into piles to be picked up later with huge front-end loaders. They are loaded on large truck decks usually pulled by Kenworth or Mack trucks, and hauled to the sawmill site.

At the sawmill the logs are cut into lengths ranging from ten to sixteen feet with an electric cut-up saw. The lengths are then run through more saws to make the lumber. The saws are operated by push buttons, with very little manual work involved, and are powered by electricity and air hydraulics. Once the lumber is cut, it is edged, trimmed, and piled. All refuse goes on a conveyor up a chute to a burner.

Some men from Neerlandia still work in bush camps today. Some of them work on a contract basis and others are paid an hourly wage, which varies from $6.00 to $8.50 an hour. The camp life can be compared to hotel living, with every necessity and more provided.



When Work is Done

Social Life

Celebrations and anniversaries, especially in early days, were participated in by the entire community.

* * *

Harda Terpsma: "I'll tell you one thing. We [illegible] young People's gatherings. Clarence Tuininga usually [illegible] and sometimes John would help him, and we had good times. After church, especially in the summertime, we would go to different homes, a whole bunch of us young people and we'd sing with the organ. [illegible] and coffee, and then finally we went home. In the winter we went for sleigh rides on the hay-rack, a whole bunch of us with a team of horses and we had a lot of fun."

Suzy Vanee: "Joe Holwerda used to take us out too — on sleigh rides."

Harda: "Yes, he did, and so we had a social life, and then like I said we had a choir. I always went to choir, John and I both. My brother Bill went too. We had a nice choir, and Kees Andriessen led us for the longest time. Henry Michael — he was really good too."

Gerrit Ingwersen: "Our social life was really something in those days. It was just like a big family. [illegible] had a [illegible] would be announced right after church, 'So and so has got a heifer calf!' Hooray! Today that's a lot different. We lived close in those days.

I'll never forget when my dad and mother were 12½ years married. We were in the barn, Corny and I, milking the cows. We didn't know what was coming off and the folks didn't either. They thought, 'Nobody knows about it.' We were busy milking, I says to Corny, 'Where's that noise coming from?' We opened the door, looked outside, and here was a whole string of wagons and people on horseback coming down the alleyway."

Annie Nanninga: "You could hear them come a half mile already."

Gerrit: "And they brought everything along to the party. [illegible] everything was there. We had a wonderful time."

Harda: "When Uncle Ben and Aunt Alice were married 12½ years it was such a surprise. My aunt was standing with her hands in the dough making bread and all of a sudden the noise! John and I were there, we were still living on their yard. Case Ingwersen made up all kinds of stories on paper, on great big cardboard papers. [illegible] and it was all about Oldegbers. They sang it, and it was about if there was a cow in need they called Albert Oldegbers and if it was a woman in need they would call Mrs. Oldegbers. They sang this and it was really cute."

Gerrit: "I'll never forget when your folks were married [illegible] years. [illegible] laugh so loud. Oh could she laugh. We used to sing 'Oh Tannenbaum, Oh Tannenbaum.'"

Harda: "That German song, that's the only thing I remember from German."

Gerrit: "And we used to play Ruth and Jacob Blindfolded. That was a game. We'd hold hands in a ring and set someone in the ring blindfolded. And then if he was a man he would have to call 'Ruth, Ruth.' His wife would have to answer."

Harda: "She'd say 'peep' or something like [illegible] lots of fun!"

Gerrit: "Sometimes he would get hold of the wrong woman, and hug the wrong woman!"

* * *

When a family went to visit a neighbour they sometimes would stay an entire day.

THE FAIR

When the men got together to clear land around the church, then the women had a fair day. We'd make all kinds of things out of flour sacks.

— I remember my mother used to embroider all kinds of fancy little cloths and baby stuff.

— They showed them on tables outside usually.

— And then they'd give prizes too, you know.

— They used to feed the men too.

— All kinds of lunch.

— And we had a picnic.

OLDTIME PICNIC

The place where the church was built was heavy poplar bush and it was suggested to clear

the ground on the first of July, the national holiday, and have a picnic. The men would use axe, saw, shovel, and oxen, and the women would look after the amusement as well as something to eat. Everybody was invited to be there on time that day with the needed tools. This was a real oldtime picnic — not sport, but work. The young men started to chop the trees down and some dragged them by ox team on piles to be burned later. The trees were cut about four feet above the ground and others pulled these stumps out with the oxen. The picnics and get-togethers were quite often the beginnings of a love story among the young folk and a time for showing off babies by the mothers and discussion of politics or religion among the men. One thing was missing in Neerlandia — country dances, because the Christian Reformed Church believes dancing is sinful.

Ben Lievers

RECOLLECTIONS OF PIONEER LIFE

The great highlights of the year for the pioneer children were the Christmas concert and the Dominion Day picnic.

Beginning about a month before the concert, we would get together at the log church to practice on Saturday afternoons. The Sunday school teachers taught us the verses. As far as I can remember these were Henry Kippers Sr., Siebren Tiemstra, and Dina Messelink. Popko Schuring was also musical and liked singing so he helped with the songs, perhaps others did too. The day usually started at 11:00 a.m. The Christmas story was told and the children were asked questions about it.

The programme was by the whole congregation. The three sisters Jennie Schuring, Martha Emmerzael, and Nellie Keyser were among those who sang, and they were much appreciated as they had good voices. The Messelink and Anema girls sang several songs accompanied by John Gelderman on the organ. Carrie and Sadie Tuininga also sang as did Lottie Anema, Tena Terpsma, and Gertie Tuininga.

For us children the highlight was the food. Large kettles of hot cocoa, sandwiches, cakes and cookies, which many of us didn't get very often, were served.

The concert would end around 4:00 p.m. since it grew dark about that time. Before departing, the children each got a bag of candy and a small gift such as a small storybook or a plaque with a text on it to hang on the wall.

The Dominion Day picnic was also looked forward to with anticipation. Several weeks beforehand we would practice racing, high jumping and broad jumping and so on. [illegible] people came in their Sunday best. Everyone wore hats and caps in those days, even to school and picnics.

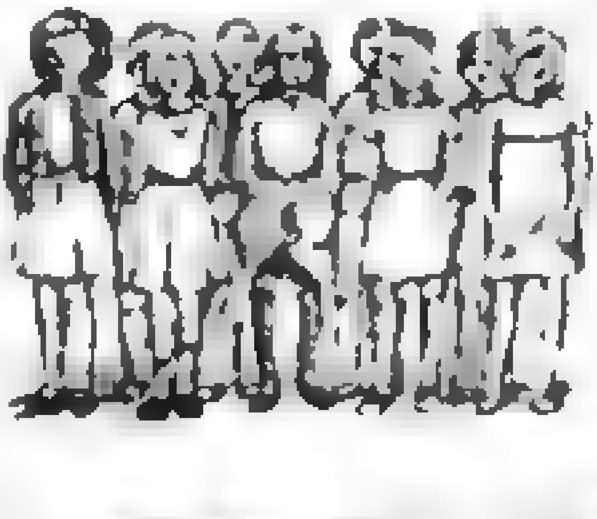
I can't recall what we had for refreshments in those days but do recall one lady having a large round tub of lemonade, made with lemon powder and water. It was sold for five cents a cup.

The day was spent with a lot of races: three-legged, relay, and sack race. Also high and broad jump. I can't recall any other games but there was no baseball at that time.

CHRISTMAS

We loved Christmastime. All the families would get together for a day. We all went with the horses and sleighs and some of us had bells on the harnesses. Sure sounded nice! We would sing Christmas carols all the way. Sometimes it was so cold the horses could hardly pull the sleigh.

The night before Christmas we would heat up rocks to keep our feet warm. The boys would fill the sleigh with hay or straw and we would take lots of blankets along too, so we could keep nice and warm. Each family brought something — cake, cookies, chocolate milk. We would have singing and hear the Christmas



story, have recitations and after the program was over we would all get a reading book and some candies. Boy, we were happy!

Sadie Tiemstra

CONTESTS

On the First of July in 1919 they held an obstacle race for the men. They put up things along the course to hinder the men and one of the obstacles was a raised rail that they had to jump over. As Albert Mast was running in the race his foot hooked behind the rail and he fell and broke his leg.

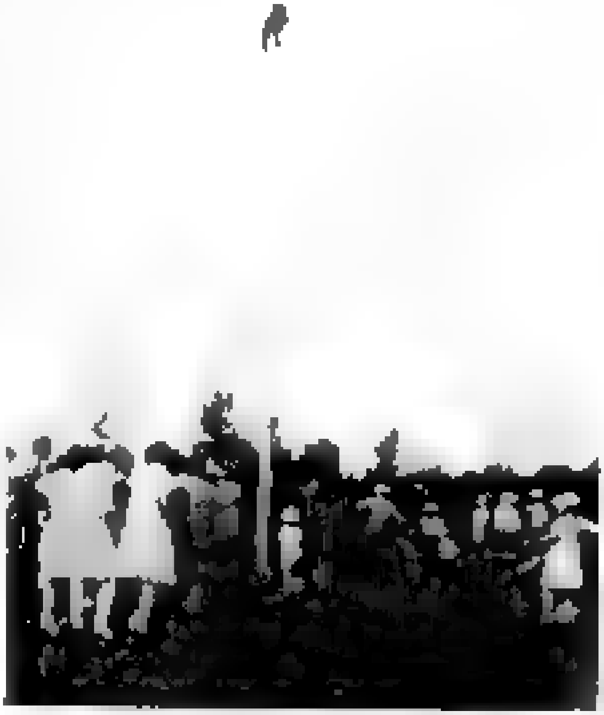
In another contest two men would sit astride a smooth log which was high enough off the ground that they couldn't touch it with their feet. They had to cross their legs underneath to keep their balance. Each man had a sack filled with straw that he tried to hit his opponent with, to get him unbalanced and make him fall off.

Norman Terpsma

LET'S GO OUT TO THE PICNIC

When picnic day rolled around on July First everyone would come out with wagon loads of kids and also older ones, because on picnic day we were called in to school to listen to a short speech by a school board member, usually about patriotism. I don't think too many listened to the speech because what they all were waiting for was the dime that was handed out after the speech. Most people were so poor that a lot of the children got only the dime which was handed out. I think this money was donated by the Co-op store as was also the prize money for races etc. Before the picnic could officially start the flag had to be hoisted on the flagpole. There was a flagpole on the school ground about twenty-five feet high. A rope had to be put through a pulley on top; this was usually done by one of the Henry Lievers boys as they were good at shinnying up a slippery pole. For their efforts they would also get a dime. The reward was later increased to twenty-five cents.

After this the races started — straight races, three legged races, sack races, wheelbarrow races. Then jumping — high jumping and broad jumping. This all took up several hours. In the afternoon there would be ball games — schoolgirls against the older girls not going to school. The same with the boys. They would play against the young men but that proved impractical as the young men were far superior.



Putting up the flag on July First

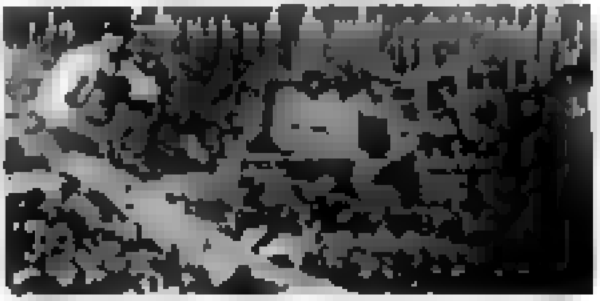
A 1923 twenty-five cent shinplaster could be used to buy five chocolate bars

PRIZE MONEY

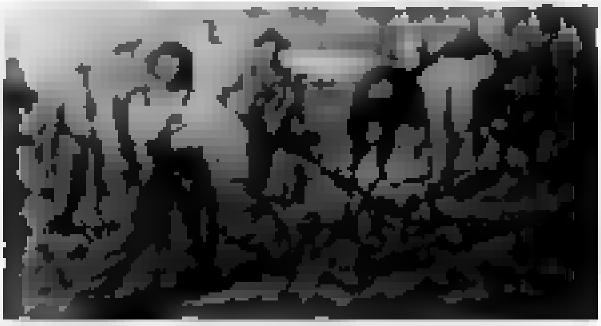
When I was a kid we didn't have much money to spend at the First of July. One of the older fellows who had won at some of the races gave me his prize money to use for treats. I sure appreciated that. I think it was ten cents worth. I bought a package of gum and a lollipop with it and I still had some cents left over.

Clarence Mast

JULY 1st ... A HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR

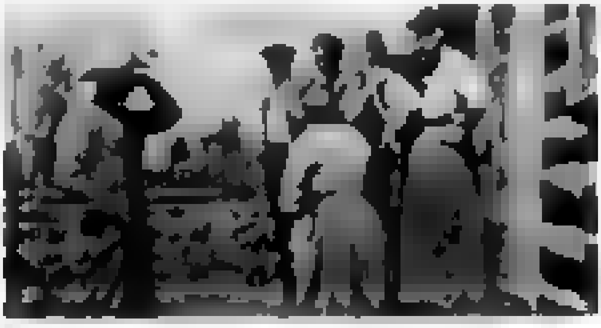


The first years, the day was spent clearing the churchyard. First the trees were chopped down, 1919. Klaas Tuininga, Peter Kampstra, Raymond Baker, Martin van der Heide ? ?

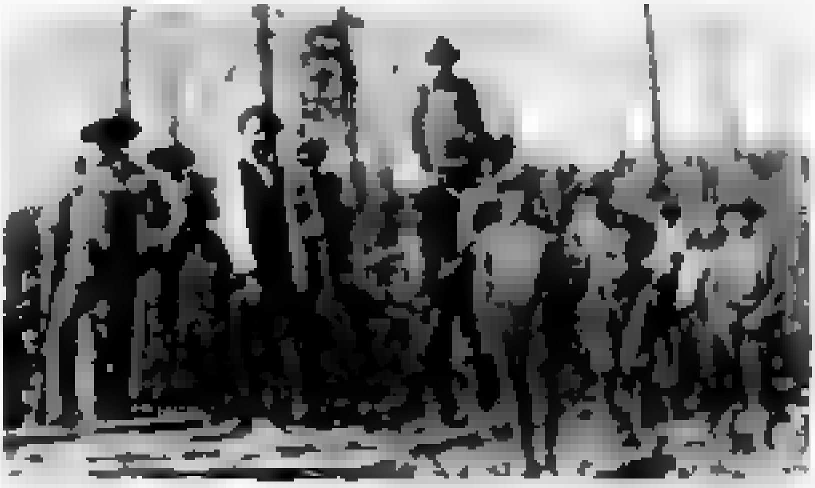


Plowing the grounds, 1919. John Oldeboers, Arie Emmerzael, Pete Louwe, John Terpstra

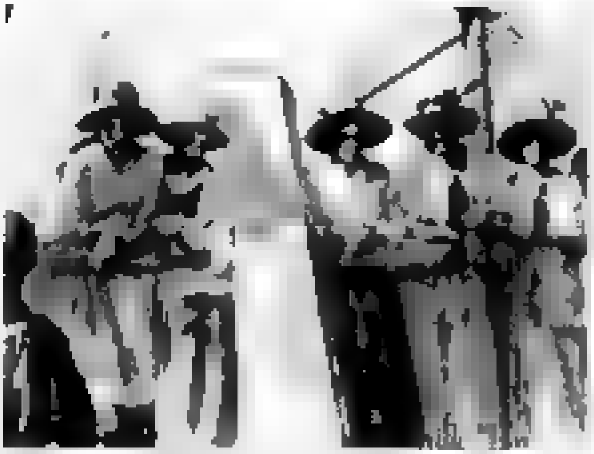
The logs were cleared away, 1919



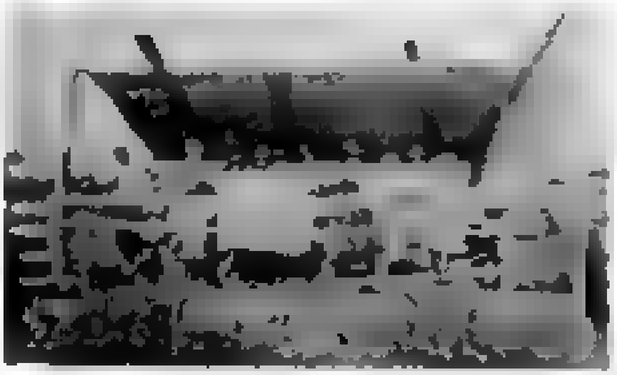
Coffeebreak in front of the log church, 1922. Klaas Kritike, Hendrik Kannegieter, Anna Michael, Dina Messelink, Jantje Schuring, Peterje Schoonekamp



Young and old worked together 1919. Front: van der Heide (?), John Olthuis, Gerben Terpstra, John Kippers, Gerrit Kippers. Clarence Tuininga standing on stump.



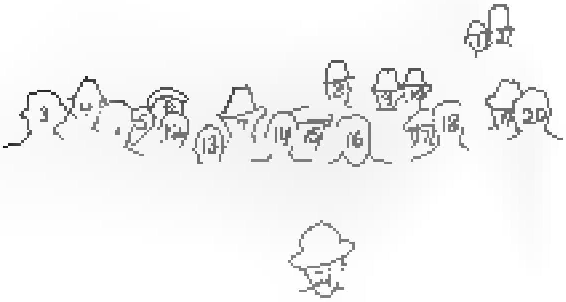
Some socialized, Gerben Tiemstra, Ida Kampner, Jennie Tuininga, Sadie Pitsema, Bertha and Ida Kampner, 1919



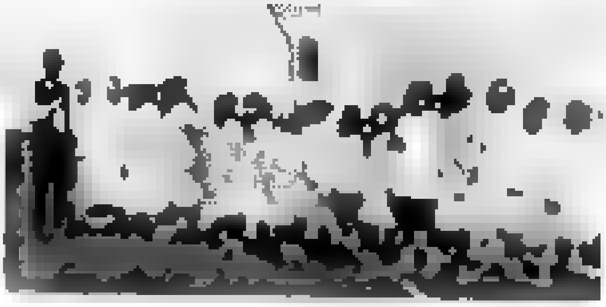
Refreshments were enjoyed under an improvised awning, 1919

The ladies of Neerlandia, 1919. Jennie Kampner, Ida Kampner, Sadie Pitsema, Hazel Violette, Nellie van Dalen, Anna Emmerzael, Jennie Tuininga.

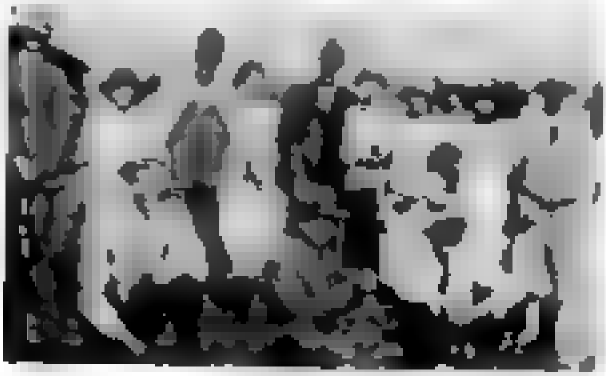
Some years later it became a day of socializing. Men came dressed in their Sunday best. 1. John Oldegbers 2. Dave Tuininga, 3. Douwe Terpsma. 4. Rienk de Jager 5. Hendrik Lievers. 6. Klaas Knikke. 7. John Louws, 8. Joe Holwerda, 9. Popko Schuring, 10. C K. Mast. 11. Albert Ritsema. 12. Hendrik Schoonekamp, 13. Pete Louws, 14. Jan Anema. 15. Toney Sturwold, 16. Case Ingwersen, 17. Jacob Otthuis, 18. Hendrik Kippers, 19. Wouter Groothuis, 20. Ben Lievers, 21. Willem van Ark



The women also had time to relax.



Ready for a three-legged race. William van Ark and school girls, 1923



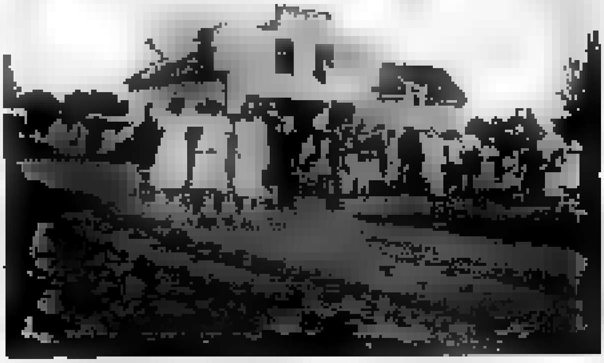
Some young people pair off, 1928. Back: Art Fisher, Susie Arema, Jerry Reitsma, Jennie Fisher, Jack Tuininga, Pauline Sturwold, Gerrit Tuininga, Tena Terpsma, Lievers, Dora Arema. Front: Charles Terpsma, Joe Holwerda, Frank Visser

Getting branches to swat mosquitoes, 1927

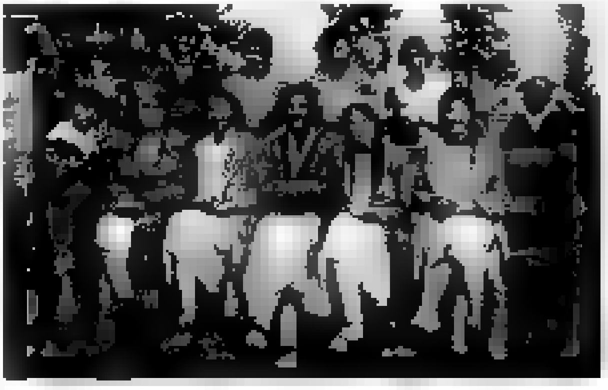
Young men at the picnic, 1928. Back: Bill Lievers, Willy Olthuis, Dick Fisher, Ed Visser, Gerben Terpsma, Joe Holwerda, Andy Reinenga. Front: Norman Terpsma, Jerry Reitsma, Jack Tuininga

Where are the boys? c. 1927. Back: Margaret Sturwold, Tena Terpsma, Minnie Lievers, Lula Sturwold. Front: Pauline Sturwold, Hardie Lievers, Hanna Lievers

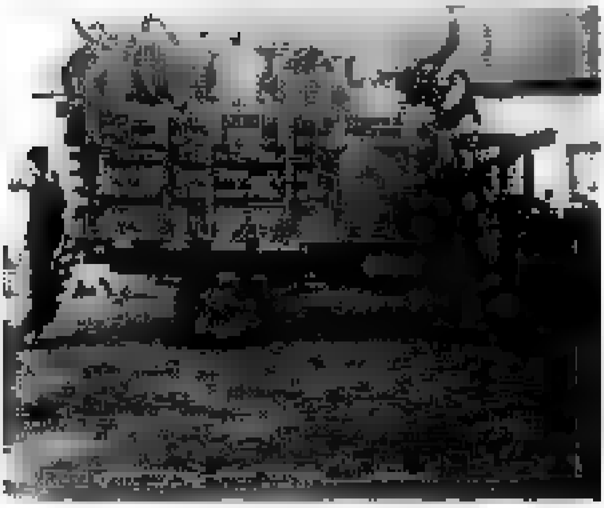
July 1, 1928. Everyone dressed in their Sunday best for the picnic. Carrie Tuininga in a light gray suit with old rose scarf. Her silk hat with a straw brim is also old rose. Annie Ingwersen in a pink dress with old rose flower and hat. Susie Anema in a medium-blue twill coat with embroidery. Her hat is also old rose — the fashionable colour that year. Their stockings are peach — also a new colour. Ina Mast in black dress and stockings. Back Row: Andy Naninga, Jack Tuininga.



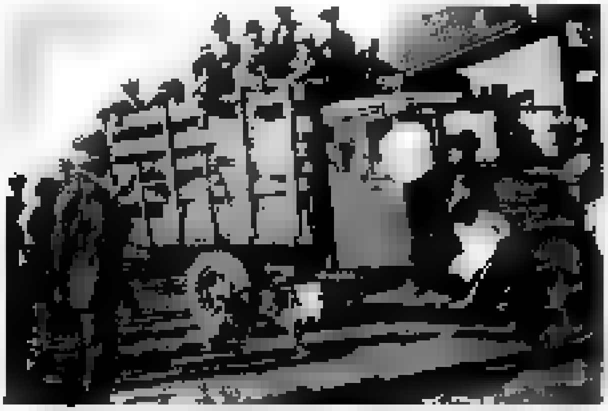
Everyone came. Foreground: Minnie Wiersma, Anna and Alice Elzinga. 1929.



Posing at the picnic. Back: Rev. Van Der Woude, Sophia H. Wierenga, Sophie A. Wierenga, Jennie Schoonekamp, Tena Anema, John Peters. Front: ? Annie Ingwersen, Grace Nanninga, Johanna Wierenga, Mabel Elzinga, Eva Olthuis, July 1, 1933.



Sometimes the young people of Edmonton came for the day. Homeward bound, July 1, 1930. Back of truck: Billy Quick. Front: John Elzinga.



Other years the Neerlandia young people went to Edmonton.

BLUEBERRY PICKING

That was a real excursion too every year, to go blueberry picking.

Oh, yeah, that was a picnic!

— That was the time of our lives!

CROSSING THE FERRY

August is nearing the end, our garden produce is all canned and on a beautiful display in our cellar, and now the great event of the year is here: blueberry picking.

George said tomorrow would be a good day to go as the grain was stooked and the threshing would not be until next week. Excitement filled our little home as we gathered up syrup pails for picking and milk pails to empty our full pails into until everything is filled. This year, we hear, the blueberries are big and plentiful.

Next morning the sun rises in golden splendour and we hurry to do our morning chores get lunch ready for the day, and we are off. Our oldest two look dejected as they have to stay home with the baby and do the evening chores.

It's a ten-mile drive. We pick up our two friends and try to hurry along. Our car lags a bit this morning. Perhaps the oil needs changing.

Before we know it we are heading towards the last part of the trip. We can see the sand hills. There is a face at every window of the car to behold the autumn beauty.

But suddenly we are at the top of a steep hill, and a large sign says, "Test your brakes." George puts all his weight on the brakes but finds out he has no brakes. We scream in fright and before we know it we are going down the hill at great speed, gaining momentum. We become very quiet, awaiting our doom.

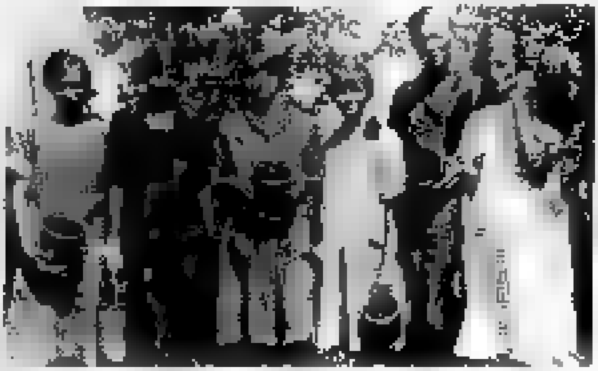
George hangs on to the wheel and we safely reach the bottom. Everyone settles down to again enjoy the scenery, which is now even more beautiful as the river comes into view. Hurrah! We arrived just in time — the ferry is

waiting. But there are two signs now: "Enter at your own risk," and "Test your brakes." What brakes? We all get out and think. We have two ropes but they are only short. Nevertheless we work with what we have. We put the car in neutral gear and it starts rolling. We — me, our friends, and four children — hang on to the ropes and rear bumper while the old Ford is going faster. We dig our heels into the sand but the car is still moving. Finally, after what seemed a terrifying experience, we get the old car stopped and it stands proudly on the ferry.

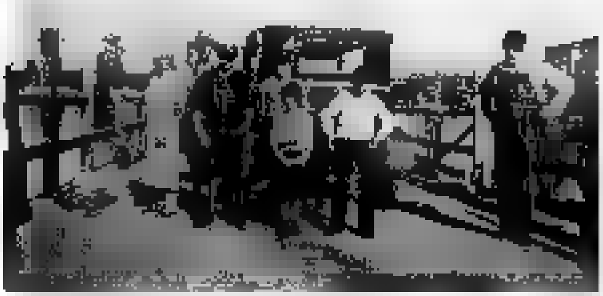
We all again enjoy the scenery and can laugh about our great adventure. We will deal with the huge hills waiting on the other side of the river when we arrive there.

The name of the driver in the above incident was changed to protect his identity.

BLUEBERRY PICKING



Going blueberry picking was a day's outing. Della Anema, Jennie Fisher, Tena Anema, Susie Anema, Charlie Reitsma, Carrie Tuininga, c. 1928.

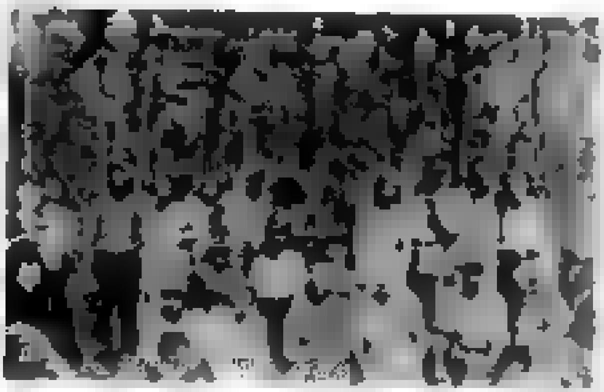


Crossing on the Vega ferry, c. 1938. Katherine, Hendrik, Jim and Ed Lievers, Violet and Frank Tillotson. Jimmy Fowler was the ferryman.

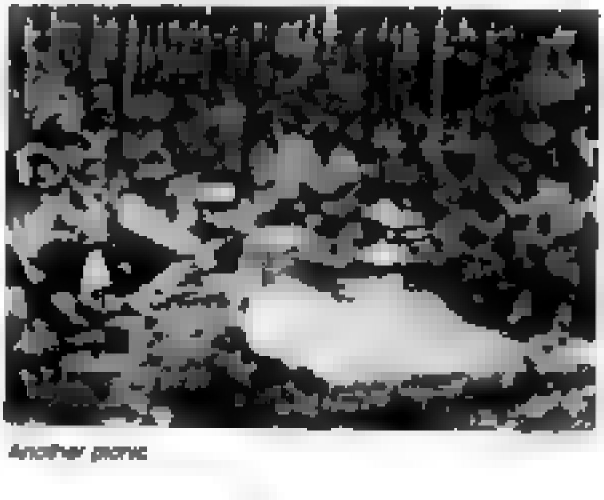
The best picking was across the Athabasca River in the sand hills. The Henry Kippers family on the ferry, 1930s.

Berry picking. Lucas Sturwold, Hendrik Kannegieter, Lute Sturwold. Dena Huinink in front, 1937

Some families went together. The A. Ashley, J. Ingwersen, W. Olthuis, and J. Reitsma families, 1941.



The Menno Henninga clan on a blueberry outing, c. 1940



Another picnic

INNOCENCE

"You know, we were so innocent in those days (1920s). We girls would walk to school together with the neighbour families and anyone else who happened to live along the way. On the way home, if it was a warm day, the boys would go skinny-dipping while we watched. We were all around twelve or thirteen years old then."

BRIGHT EYES

Brother Pete had a girlfriend who lived about four-and-a-half miles away and he mostly walked that distance through the bush. In those days there were quite a few bears around so he bought a revolver for protection. One night coming home he saw two bright eyes in the dark, so he [illegible] with gun ready. When he got to it he found a stump burning with the fire showing through the knotholes. After this he left the gun home.

Joe Tuininga

SHOT SUITS

John, Sid, and Peter Visser were in Neerlandia clearing the first ten acres or so on John's quarter section, which was a little northwest of Reitze and John de Vries' farm. This particular evening John Visser left to see his girlfriend, so Sid and Peter decided to wander over to the de Vries'. For a little excitement, Reitze made a shooting target on the wall of their granary in which they were living at the time. Only one gun was available; it was a .22. After each of the four had taken several shots, they found the target seen pretty well perforated. Reitze and [illegible] did not seem to mind the holes in the granary wall, in fact it might help to air the [illegible] a bit. However, they did not seem to feel quite the same way about their Sunday suits, harness, and other items hanging on the inside wall of the granary. The Visser brothers suggested that the suits could be mended, but the de Vries brothers considered the suits shot.

Peter Visser

SADIE'S WEDDING

Our folks were strongly opposed to strong drink, but when my sister Sadie married Charlie Tiemstra they decided to make an exception and have a little liquor at the party, which would be held at my parents' home. For this once they would have a jug of wine. When my brothers went to buy the wine they took advantage of the situation and also bought a bottle of brandy without the folks' knowledge. When it was time for a drink they mixed some brandy with the wine they served Dad and Simon Tiemstra. Well, it didn't take very long before the two men were feeling pretty high and [illegible] could play the accordion, oh boy, did he ever play. Mother wanted no part of this and she was really upset. She searched the house until she found the cause of it all and took the bottle of brandy outside and tried to break it by knocking it against a tree. When that didn't work she took the axe and smashed the bottle.

Joe Tuininga

SOCIAL LIFE
1933-37

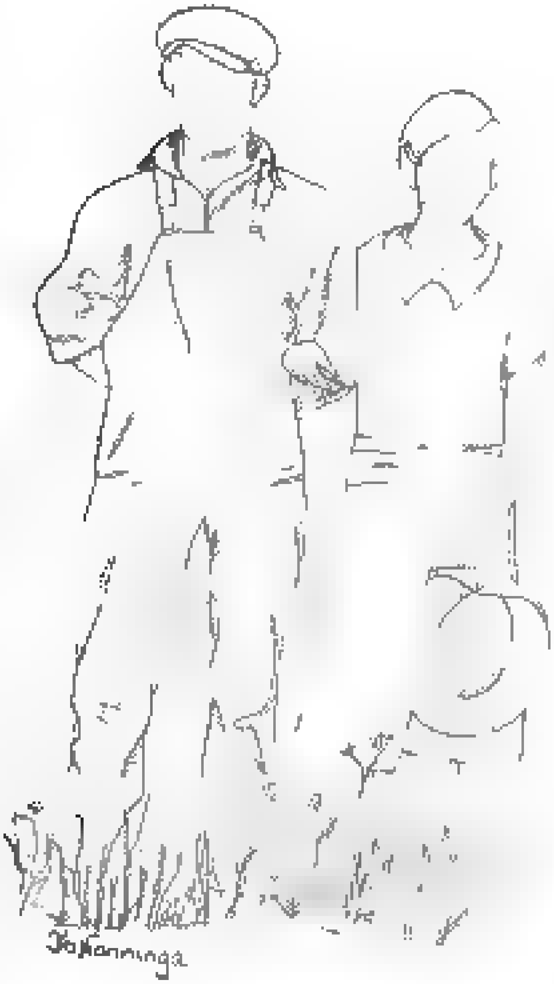
The Schoonekamps really made me feel at home. Since the girls — Jennie, Annie and Rulie — were approximately my age, it made it easier for me to get in with the young people and for a young person that is very important. We all went to catechism on Sunday afternoon after the church service. [illegible] the *Kort Begrip* was [illegible] lesson was in English and taught ably by Rev. Van Der Woude. Wednesday was choir night with Uncle John Gelderman as director and as we had no organ our parts were learned by the "do re mi" method. Our concerts were enthusiastically attended by one and all and were a highlight in the church community. Further, our entertainment consisted of skating on Shoal Creek. We often walked both ways in sub-zero weather. We also had a basketball team of no mean accomplishment, challenging the neighbouring teams and even winning now and then. This was the time of the horse-and-buggy days and, having neither, I would jog on the weekend, counting the rabbits (first years) on my way to visit my Uncle and Aunt.

Grace Boer

PAIRING OFF

The distant community-centre was four to five miles away, which most of the time was travelled shank's mare as the horses had been working in the fields and needed rest. By the time we arrived to play baseball, the sun was almost set. After that the boys and girls would pair off — the boy taking the girl home if he had the strength or ambition to do so, remember he had to walk back home yet.

Cor Fisher



Sweethearts

FEATS OF STRENGTH

"In the 1930s us young fellows would have contests to see who was the strongest. There was a huge stone on Ingwersen's yard and we would take turns trying to lift it. The other fellows would lay flat on the ground trying to see if there was a glimpse of light coming through underneath the stone. Some guys like John Wierenga or Jake Sturwold could wiggle it, but I think John Ingwersen was the only one that could lift that stone.

Another contest had to be done at the Co-op — the Co-op had a flat scale with a weigh beam on high. We used to squat on the scale and put our hands underneath the frame. Then we would apply pressure to see who could make the scale go the highest."

New Year's 1915

On New Year's Day we (Lubbe and I) invited all the bachelors in the settlement to a party. There were eight of us. We celebrated until midnight eating, joking, singing, and shooting firearms into the air.

Tjibbe Reitsma

A Bet

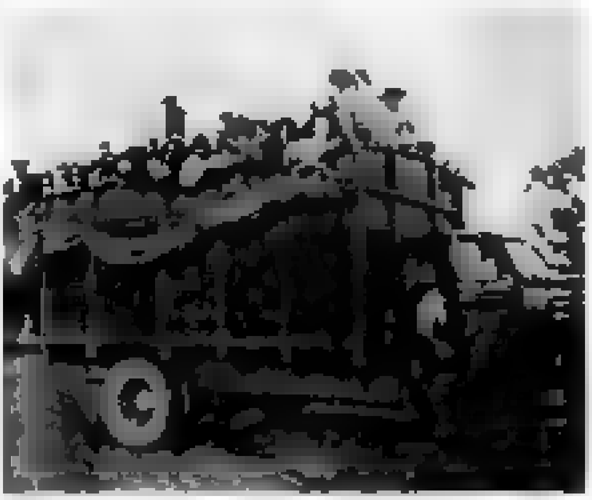
"One of my non-Dutch neighbours went to a dance out west of Neerlandia and after he came back, he was married. Some of us surrounding farmers were invited to his place for a bit of a celebration one night that week. Ike and Louis Nanninga and I made a five-dollar bet there with another neighbour, who was Polish, that he could not do the same thing — come back with a wife after a weekend. The neighbour borrowed my horse and Ike's buggy and left on Saturday. He came back on Monday or Tuesday with a wife. He owed one dollar for the horse and one dollar for the buggy, so we each had to pay him a dollar."

John Schuring

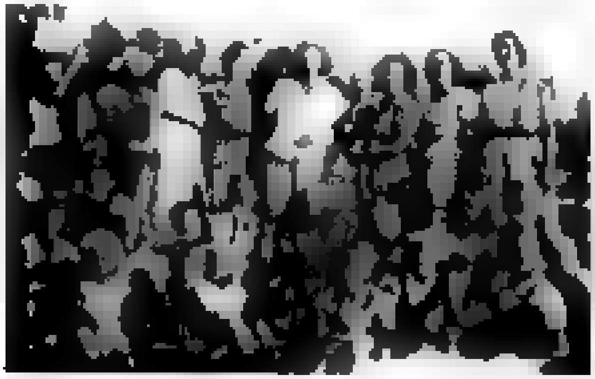
This picture was taken on July First, c. 1930. Notice the headbands the girls used to keep their hair in place while playing ball. Margaret Sturwold, Johanna Ingwersen, Lula Sturwold, Eva Olthuis, Alice Brown, Annie Tuininga, Annie Schoonekamp, Sophie A. Wierenga, Catharine A. Wierenga, Jenny A. Wierenga, Cor H. Hiemstra, Carrie Maat, Alice and Jenny Kippers. Seated: Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Jenny Schoonekamp, Susie Anema.

TO THE LAKE

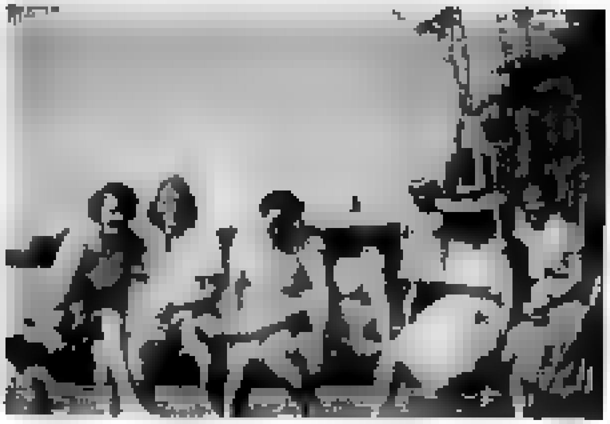
John Terpsma took the young people to the river for a day, c. 1927. Note harness on right. Charlie Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Bertha Kamoner, Nellie van Dalen, ?, Sadie Rinsema behind tree, Simon Keyzer, Frank Violette, John Terpsma. Foreground: Hazel Violette, Bob van Dalen (?), Ike Tiemstra.



In later years, Billy Quick or the Fisher Brothers took people to the lake. Going to picnic at Lac la Nonne, c. 1939



Several families made an annual trip to Lac La Nonne. Among them were the Gerrit Ingwersen, Cor Fisher, Willem Olthuis, Aubrey Ashley, Louis Hanninga, Art Fisher and John Ingwersen families.



Cooling their feet. Elsie Ashley, Tena Nanninga, Rose Ingwersen, Carrie Olthuis, Anita and Grace Ingwersen, Liz Fisher. c. 1949.

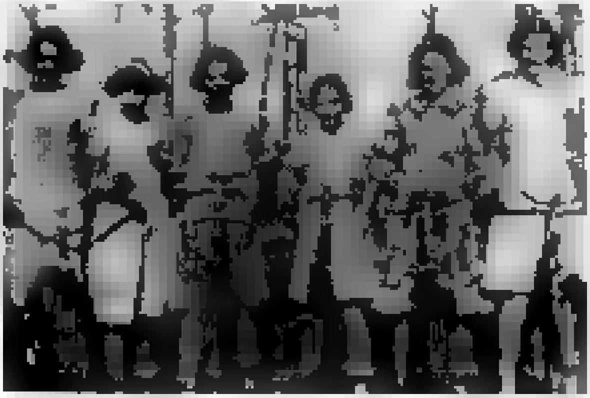
Farmer's Day outing at Clyde Lake 1956. Some people took offence that women and men went swimming together in the same lake. Peter Fisher, Albert Schoonekamp, and Steve Abday families.

Bathing beauties, c. 1949. Tena Nanninga, Carrie Olthuis.

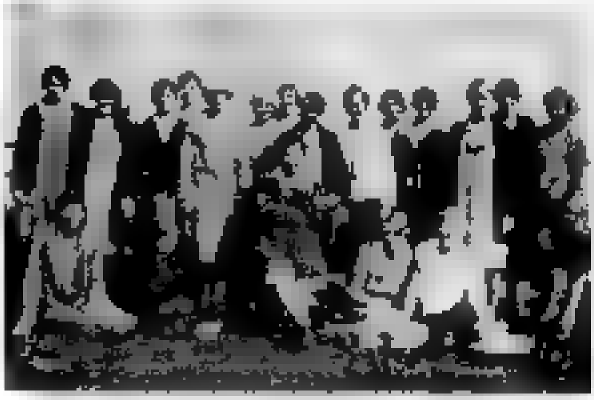
FRIENDS AND FAMILIES SOCIALIZE

Many men or women formed quartets and sang at programs. Rita Krikke, Fred Toebes, Herman Gelderman, Ralph Krikke, Peter Piers.

Of course, there were birthday parties. At the Messelinks, 1924, Minnie Lievens, Susie Anema holding Frances, Albert Messelink, Annie Schoonekamp, Tena Anema, Jo Ingwersen, Lily and Jo Messelink, Jenny Schoonekamp, Annie Anema

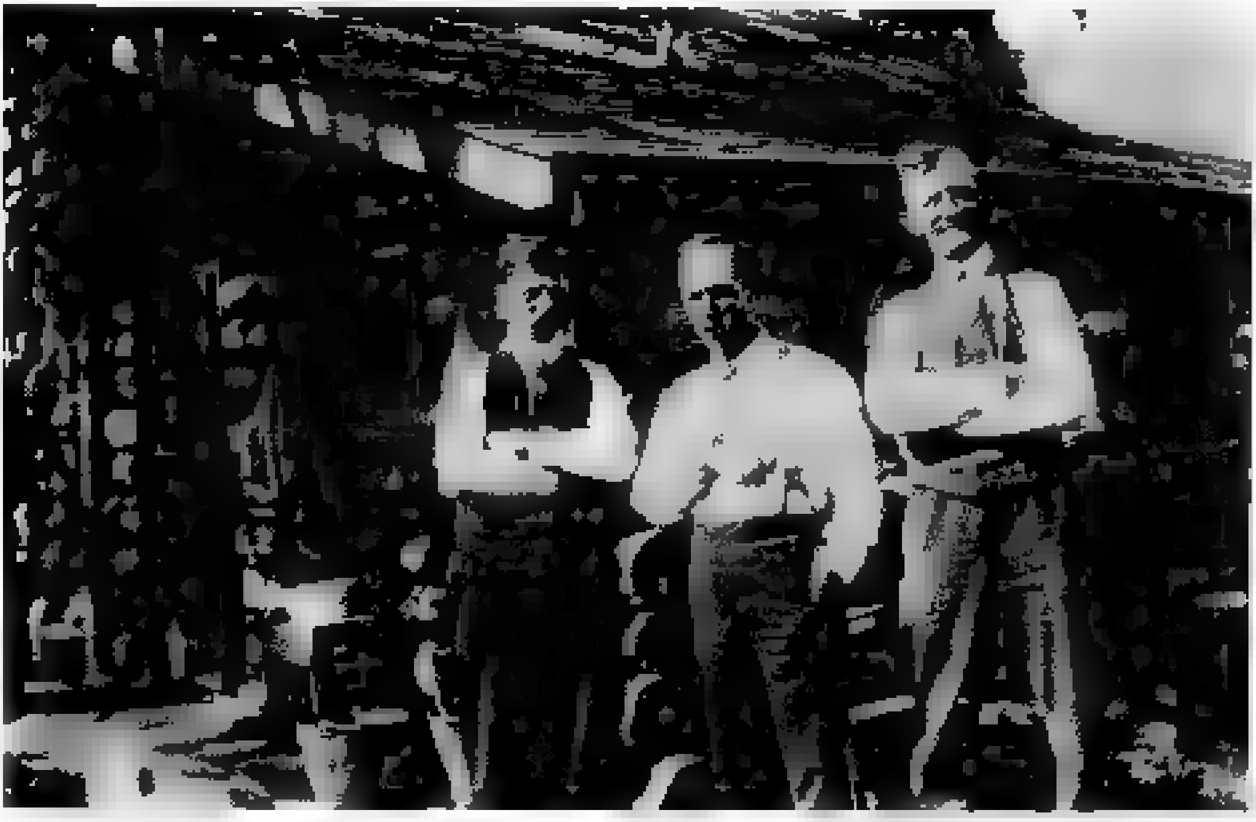


Sophie Anema's party, c. 1941. Katie and Jane Dieleman, Clare Oldegbers, Sophie Anema, Thelma Sturwold, Betty Koning.



The Girls club had a party before Trientje Wierenga got married, 1932

Lambert and Martin Wierenga, 1937



Hendrik Schoonekamp, Sietsen Tiemstra, George Toebes in front of Schoonekamps, 1920's

Back: Anna Bouwman, Rulle, Peterje, and Annie Schoonekamp. Front: Bill Toebes, Albert Schoonekamp.

Hendrik Wieringa, Simon Tiemstra, Johanna Wieringa, c 1939

Dorothy Baker. Patricia Boersma. Marilyn Mast.

Joe and Stewart Plantinga. c. 1936.

Won't Sandra be jealous?

Auction sale at Klaas Tuininga's Sr. 1943.

Susie Anema, Margaret Masselink

Lula and Margaret Sturwold

Al Terpsma's sale, 1929. Delle and Susie Anema, Carrie Tuinings, Tena Anema, Anna Tuinings.

MAMMALS

At one time the Neerlandia area teemed with wildlife. Beaver, moose, lynx, rabbit, muskrat, and even buffalo were some of the animals that lived there. But by the time the Dutch settlers arrived this had already begun to change.

There were no beaver, mink, or fox, and few lynx in the area. They had undoubtedly been trapped to extinction for delivery of their pelts to the fur trading forts. Beaver dams and other signs of beaver were plentiful. Dams were found along every stream in the area, but by the time the settlers arrived there were no beaver.

Buffalo skulls and buffalo horns were found from time to time when the settlers were clearing the land, but there were no buffalo. Hunters occasionally came upon bleached elk [illegible] elk was made by Bill Olthuis. In 1927 or 1928 [illegible] larger deer-like animals with a herd of deer. He was unable to identify them until he saw a picture of elk on a Wawanesa calendar years later.

At one time woodland caribou could be seen in the area, but by the time the Dutch settlers came they too were gone. Cor Fisher once found a set of caribou antlers near Shoal Lake.

Other animals were still abundant in the early 1900s. Most plentiful were three rodents [illegible] bits, bane or blessing depending on one's [illegible] bers fluctuated in a seven-year cycle, there always seemed to be lots of them. In the early years they were a welcome source of food for the men, their chickens, and their pigs. But rabbits were not so welcome when they invaded the gardens, necessitating the erection of rabbit-proof fences.

Squirrels scolded from the treetops [illegible] guns of the hunters. They were so plentiful that Bill Lievers and Bill Olthuis would each shoot twenty-five to thirty squirrels in a day's hunting, then go home and skin them.

Though no beaver remained in the area, their cousins the muskrats were plentiful. Many of the young men made spending money by trapping muskrats, and some of the family [illegible]

Of the canine family, only the coyote was [illegible] badger [illegible]

Except for mice, no wild animals are plen- [illegible] relation to, among other things, the number of [illegible] unable to combine their crops. The swaths in the field were like paradise to the mice. The following spring the area crawled with mice. There were the pretty field mice, their less attractive relatives the house mice, and the lemming voles who would stand on their hind legs to fight the gulls who tried to make a meal of them.

Because of the limited numbers of wild animals in the area, one thrills to the sight of the occasional mule deer seen in the grain fields and pastures. The song of the coyotes in the evening is enjoyed by many.

INSECT REPELLENT

When the Scott boys went hunting through the bush, they wore cheesecloth over their hats down to their shoulders.

Norman Terpsma

HUNTING STORIES

This happened about two miles north of us. A homesteader saw three bears playing together [illegible] This wounded one was killed a few days later by a hunter and he found the bullet in the body. One bear was left and the trapper I mentioned before said, "This bear will come back to the place where the first one was killed." So they made a dead fall from logs and put bait into it. The farmer went one day to look at the trap but found nothing in it and forgot about it for a few days. One morning he found the bear in it, so he went home to get some help. They had some [illegible] "You ladies want to see a bear? He's in a trap." "Yes, is he dead?" "Yes, he stinks! As dead as can be!" They went over — the two men and two ladies — and they found the bear dead with a load of logs on his neck swollen up and smelling. The men started to take the logs off one by one, and when the last log came off the bear started to roar "Rrrr . . . !" The women started to run and the men laughed and held their sides — the air came out of the bear's swollen stomach and that had made the noise.

Ben Lievers

In this part of the country it was quite easy to get lost in the bush. One trapper said he never was lost. He could go into the bush one day and hang his watch on a tree, then go the [illegible] trapped a bear. If we wanted it we could get it. [illegible] west from here for two miles and then a mile north along the surveyor's line, west again till [illegible] there and follow the blazed trap line." My [illegible] ried some of it home. On our way back we [illegible] caught quite a few. By this time it was getting late. We started home and were received with open arms by our wives — they had come together and wondered what had happened to [illegible] bear? And if we did not come back how would they find out what had happened to us? Worry, Worry! And we were fishing not far from home and came home with part of a bear and fish. Bear meat, the trapper said, was good to eat. "Well," the women said, "We will cook it and [illegible] pig," I said after trying the bear meat. The [illegible] it.

Ben Lievers

One day I was not home and the wife had an experience with one of these lynx. She did not know what it was, but she heard the chickens and saw the lynx running away with one of the chickens. He was not in a hurry to get away till the wife took a stick after him. Then she tried to lock the chickens in the coop and barred the door and told the neighbour women, "You better lock up your chickens. I had a strange animal [illegible] me till I went after him with a stick. I did put the chickens in the coop only the rooster I could not get in." When she came back from the neighbour's, the chickens were running around and the barred door was open. The rooster was gone and we never saw him again. When I came home that night I was told the story and I warned her not to go after that animal again with a stick. "If he does not get a chicken he would tackle you and you are more worth to me than all our chickens." The next morning when we woke and looked out of the window the lynx was sitting in front of the chicken coop waiting for his breakfast. I went out the back door to a neighbour's for a rifle and told Mother not to go after the beast with a stick but stay in the house. When I came back the beast was gone and we kept the chickens locked up that day. The following day I was working in the barn, the rifle handy, and we let the chickens out. Not long afterwards I heard a call from the house, "There he is!" I grabbed the rifle and took a shot at him but missed and had only one bullet left. So I ran after him to get a close shot at him. He was running away with a rooster and when he noticed me close behind he let the rooster go and came at me with open mouth. I fired my last bullet and he dropped dead. When I skinned him, I could find no bullet hole in the skin, so I must have hit him in his open mouth. His fur was worth more than the chickens we lost. I have never seen one again. There are not many left they say they travel great distances.

Ben Lievers

My neighbour and I were going into the bush to cut some logs and there was about an inch of fresh snow. "A skunk — where did it go?" "Here in this hole let's go back home for a shovel." I did not like the idea of digging a skunk out of his bed, but my partner said, "Nothing to it the fur is worth $2.00." After awhile we could see his tail. Jacob said, "Hold the shovel. I will get him," and he took ahold of the tail and pulled him out of the hole and hit him over the head with a stick, but not before the beast could use his defense and Jacob got the full spray of it. I nearly fell over but Jacob said, "Nothing to it. It is worth $2.00." His wife called out from the house, "Go away. Don't get near to the house. It makes me sick — go away!" I was feeling funny too and I put other clothing on, but Jacob said, "I will take the hide off." I was quite willing to let him and then divide the money evenly that did not stink. I found out later that Jacob could not smell. Later he dug a nest of young skunks out, three of them, and when he came home with them one was still living and spraying. "Nothing to it," Jacob said.

Ben Lievers

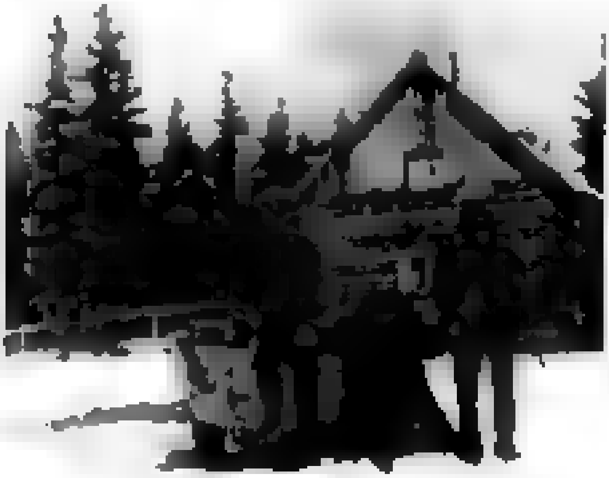
A district trapper shot a bull moose for a homesteader in dire straits. Now this moose had a record set of antlers well over seventy to eighty inches. So they decided to take this set into Edmonton and sell it. When the old-time homesteader tried to peddle it, he was arrested for an out-of-season moose. The magistrate was a compassionate soul and did not charge him or fine him, except to confiscate the head. But I'll bet that head is in his den.

Cor Fisher

ILLEGAL MOOSE

"Joe Holwerda was the game warden and one time we were hunting and Joe was going to go along. Before we went he says, 'Boys,' he says, 'Don't forget nothing illegal!' You know and we shot two cow moose. And boy, I tell you, old Joe, he sweated. That very night he took them heads and he drowned them in the

The huntress Rose Violette shot this hawk four feet from tip to tip lake, by where he was living. 'Boy, if this ever comes out,' he says, 'I'm in for it.'"



Hunters didn't have to go far from home. Bill and Harry Lievers shot this bear on the homestead, 1930

And this one at Germann's mill, Bill Lievers and Paul Stevens, c. 1940

ANOTHER BEAR HUNT

One November day Gerrit Ingwersen, Bill and John Olthuis, and Jack Tuininga were hunting northwest of Baird Lake. Their base for the day was a cabin on Fred Olthuis' homestead. They left the horses and sleigh there and then split up to hunt in pairs. Two of the men found a bear's den with a bear in it. They shot and killed the bear and then returned to the cabin. With a team of horses and a sleigh, the four men returned to get the bear. By this time it was getting dark so they lit a fire in front of the den. Bill was about to enter the den to pull the dead bear out when suddenly they noticed a movement inside the den. Jack pulled Bill back. It seemed that another bullet was needed to finish the bear off. While one of the men held a lantern, another shot. The bullet passed so close to the lantern that the suction of the air extinguished the light. Anyway, the bear was shot. When no further sounds emerged from the cave the men ventured in to drag the animal out. To their surprise they discovered three bears, a mother and two spring cubs. The men loaded the bears up and went to the Case Ingwersen house. There in the porch they sat skidding the cubs, tossing them from one to another, and celebrating their successful hunt with some of Mrs. Ingwersen's dandelion wine. They were soon feeling pretty good, and it wasn't because they were such great hunters.

FISHING

This is one topic where the truth has been stretched to the breaking point so I will stay on the straight and narrow. In the early years when very little land was cleared, the lakes and creeks held their level except in spring runoff or in a heavy rainy season. But today in the spring, runoff mostly lasts a few days — carrying a lot of silt from the farmland plus pollution from livestock, septic tanks, and drains. This was no concern in the early years. In the spring of 1927 there was a heavy runoff which lasted practically all summer, and thousands of fish were in the creek and lake, where they had spawned. During March of 1928, after the first thaw, the spawn came out of the lake by the millions. There were some fish eight to twelve ounces in weight — hundreds of pounds were caught, canned and pickled in vinegar. Most of these, however spoiled.

On a November day in 1928 a lot of pike (jackfish) were migrating downstream from Shoal Lake to the Pembina River much too late. These fish were between four to six pounds in weight. In one hour I caught twenty-six of these, which was only a small fraction of what passed me. The following spring, 1929, all the potholes in the creek were full of dead fish of every kind — pike, suckers, muskelunge, trout, ling, white fish, perch, plus every kind of fish that lives in the Athabasca watershed.

Shoal Lake is too shallow to winter fish in most years. The oxygen level gets too low in the winter. One part per million is minimum for pike, which can survive on the least amount of oxygen. Other fish require more. This kill is the worst I have seen but I have seen other losses like this a few times. It was a pitiful sight. Many enjoyable hours were spent in and by the old creek in the early days, even if we had to steal the time to do so.

Cor Fisher

A rare occasion when fish came up the creek between Tjibbe Reitsma's and Raymond Baker's farms, early in the spring. The men pitched the fish out with pitchforks since they were that plentiful. Early 1920s.

THOSE KRIKKE KIDS!

Ryer liked to do some squirrel trapping on Uncle Bill's place across the road from us. Then one day he went to check his traps and they were all closed. This happened a few times. We got the idea Bert Michael was doing this. So one night after school on our way to Clara's birthday we saw his trapping trail, so we followed it and put a stick in his traps. A few days later he came down and told us how somebody had done this. He figured the Sturwold girls did this. We never said a word. Don't know if he ever found out. (Hope he never reads the book.)

Gladys Mast

HUNTING AT HOME

One morning I had the barn door open as I was milking, and I spied a big buck deer crossing the field south of the house and going onto dad's homestead. The deer was big, no fooling, so I said to Grace, "You know, I'm going after this buck after breakfast." Earlier I had lent my rifle to my brother-in-law Bert but he had returned it. I had asked him, "Is it loaded?"

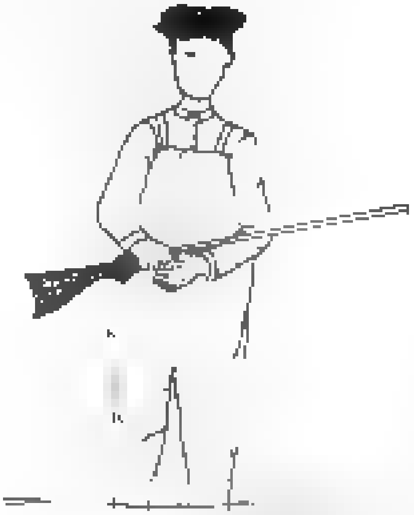
"You bet, the magazine is full," Bert had said.

"Fine." I thought, "I don't have to check, full is full." I took off after that deer and had just crossed the road allowance when I saw what looked like a bunch of sticks poking out of the snow. I walked on a little further but still could not see any more, so I raised my rifle and fired a shot where I thought the head should be. One of the sticks went flying and the buck jumped up like a shot and came straight for me. I pumped another bullet into the barrel and pulled the trigger, but it only said, "Click." I tried again and got the same result. The gun was empty and this buck kept coming in big bounds. I was right in the open and the only defense I had was an empty rifle. Would you believe it the buck stopped dead about ten feet away, neck arched and eyes rolling. We stared at each other for a while, then with one big leap the buck was off. What a relief — that fellow could have made mincemeat of me! I did get the buck a few days later. I could tell it was the same one because he had one antler broken off.

Gerrit Ingwersen

PLENTY OF WILDLIFE

In the fall we would often leave at 3:00 p.m.

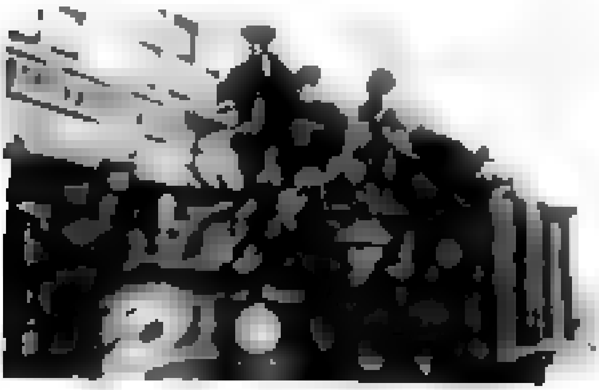


and be home at six with a two-hundred-pound dressed mule deer or sometimes a moose. When stooked grain was left in the field there would be dozens of sharptail grouse feeding on them; the woods would have plenty of ruffed grouse.

Cor Fisher

HUNTING PARTNERS

George Baker and Bertus Bos were hunting partners. Bertus usually wore a heavy parka with a thick fur collar and a fur hat. One day when they were out hunting in the Swan Hills area, George heard something ambling through the trees and, when he first looked through the trees, it appeared to be a grizzly. George cocked his rifle, then whistled, and the grizzly whistled back — it was Bertus! A short while later they were heading back to the cabin over the creek ice when Bertus fell through the ice, right up to his neck. George quickly held out the butt end of his rifle and pulled him out. Then George ran ahead to start a fire and make some tea while Bertus walked the rest of the way by himself. Once he got to the cabin, he pulled off his wet clothing and crawled into bed. After he had some tea and finally warmed up again, he was none the worse for his adventure.



After a successful hunting trip, 1945. Bill Olthuis, Joe H Wierenga, Aubrey Ashley, John Ingwersen, Albert Tiemstra

A HUNTING TRIP

One November day in 1938, George Baker and I went hunting in the Roach Lake area for moose and deer. We used four dogs for power — they pulled a toboggan with our grub and other necessities. That fall we had a fair amount of snow, but on the southern slopes the snow had melted and we had to help pull that first day. We made twenty-six miles before stopping for the night. The next day we made it to the cabin owned by George Baker and Bert Bos at 9:30 p.m., dead tired. John Bos had a venison stew ready and I never tasted anything so good. The first morning we were there we heard the wolves howling a lamenting [illegible] the dogs figured discretion was the better part of valour and took off for home. By the end of the week we ran out of coal oil for the lamp so the boys made a candle of deer fat with a rag inside for a wick. In a couple of weeks we had our game and it was time to head home. Because the dogs were gone, I had to walk, and the first day made twenty-six or twenty-seven miles. I made it home next day. On Monday Art [Fisher] took his one-ton truck and fetched the game. The trail was so narrow, the truck-box bolts left scars on the jack pines growing along the Kandahar Trail. Thinking about that trip makes me feel weary, but it cured my insomnia.

Cor Fisher

One September, a hungry hunter shot a fat, juicy deer out of season. Coming close to the road he heard a car, so he hid his rifle and started walking down the road, meeting the game warden coming back. The game warden stopped and asked him if he heard shooting. "Yes," he said, pointing. "Somewhere in that direction." So they hunted for a while but could find nothing. "Sure tasted good," he bragged later on.

Cor Fisher

FORBIDDEN TERRITORY

One day when I was just a lad, my dad and I were following the creek hunting muskrats. As we went, we crossed over the line from our land into forbidden territory — Dieleman's land. Old Dieleman didn't allow anyone to hunt muskrats on his land. We weren't having any success when Dad said, "*Kiek Jan, a dikke rouk*" (Look, John, a big crow). Sure enough there in a bush sat a big black crow. Dad took careful aim with his .22 and fired. Up popped the crow. It was a black hat on the head of Old Dieleman who had been sitting in the bush spying on us. Fortunately Dad's shot had missed but we were scared and headed home in a hurry. We followed the creek back but continued on beyond your yard. Old Dieleman followed us as far as the yard, but when he couldn't find us there he went back. When we thought it was safe we returned home, thankful that no harm had been done.

John Peters

BEAR OR BOAR

On at least one occasion a farmer had to butcher a fattener who had been ripped open. The boar was blamed and lost his tusks. A few days later another pig was dead, this one having several parallel gashes in its side, indicating that a bear was the likely culprit. Using the dead pig as bait, a hunt was staged. Numerous shots were fired at the bear in the early morning hours, but the beast made good his escape. Hearing all this shooting, Albert Krikke said he thought the Russians were coming.

NEERLANDIA ATHLETICS
OR
WINNING IS WHAT COUNTS

The backbreaking toil needed to survive in the wilderness left little time for recreational activities such as sports. Even if there had been time, sports were not considered to be of much value. This view was based on a Bible passage which stated, "bodily exercise profiteth little" (I Timothy 4:18). Furthermore, many settlers held to the commandment, "Six days shalt thou labour" to such an extent that some felt guilty taking a day off from their toil.

Nevertheless, on [illegible] having sports were always engaged in to some extent. The desire of young people to compete in athletic events with other communities however, met with at best a lukewarm reception by the old-timers of Neerlandia.

The first reason for their opposition was the desire to remain a separate community. Many feared that through competition with others their young people would become assimilated into the broader community. Gradually, however, this stand was eroded to such a degree that many Neerlandians now participate in sports with other communities.

A second reason was the fact that many athletic events took place on Sunday. The people of Neerlandia believe that Sunday is a day of rest and worship.

Even from the earliest days most people recognized the need for recreational activities. There is, of course, a difference between recreation and competitive sports and some question the value of competitive sports, especially as it results in an [illegible] extreme. Nevertheless, as the need for physical labour diminished, there was an increasing emphasis on participation in sports on both a recreational and competitive level.

Football

By the early twenties the school children were learning to play football. William van Ark coached a girls' team that made at least one trip to either Mellowdale or [illegible] to compete. Younger girls accompanied the team as cheerleaders. After each inning they were expected to shout with enthusiasm:

"K-yin k-yee k-yikkety fin
Come out of your shells and watch us win!
We're wild, we're woolly,
We're chuck full of zip
Neerlandia public school, rip, rip, rip!"

As the team fell farther and farther behind, however, the enthusiasm turned to embarrassment.

Girls' basketball team, 1932. Bill van Ark was the coach. Back: Gertie Anema, Tena Terpstra, Hanna Lievers, Clara Rijkeema, [illegible] -inga, Henrietta Terpstra, Santie Tuininga. Front: Susie Anema, Gladys Kippers.

A team from Mellowdale came to play against Neerlandia in the early thirties. Case Ingwersen was rather upset when he saw the

Mellowdale girls in their bloomer - like shorts and said Neerlandia should not participate in the game because of the improper dress of the opposing team. Rev. Van Der Woude's reaction [illegible] cerned people came up to him and asked, "Did you see those shorts?" he replied, "Yes, what's there to see?"

During the thirties, fastball was played on Sunday afternoons after the church service. Spectators also came to watch, among them Rev. Van Der Woude.

In fastball, the calibre of play improved by [illegible] had formed a team, began to look for competition in other communities. This caused some consternation, nevertheless they played in Vega and Mellowdale. The young men of the Edmonton Christian Reformed church had a team that came to play in Neerlandia. The city slickers had little trouble winning the games the first few years. Neerlandia teams also went to Edmonton travelling on the back of Fisher's truck. Eventually the Neerlandia young men became tired of losing to other teams, so with John Ingwersen as coach and with a lot of practice they began to turn the tables. In 1938, to disarm the confident Edmonton team, the Neerlandia team dressed in ragged clothes. In a memorable game played that July First, Neerlandia defeated Edmonton.

[illegible] many years. Games played between the mar- [illegible] feature. When the Lacombe, Edmonton, and Neerlandia churches held Young People's rallies, the respective teams played fiercely competitive games.

Although interest in fastball declined in the 1960s and 1970s, a renewed interest has developed since then. Both men and women's teams began competing in a commercial league in the County of Barrhead.

Hockey

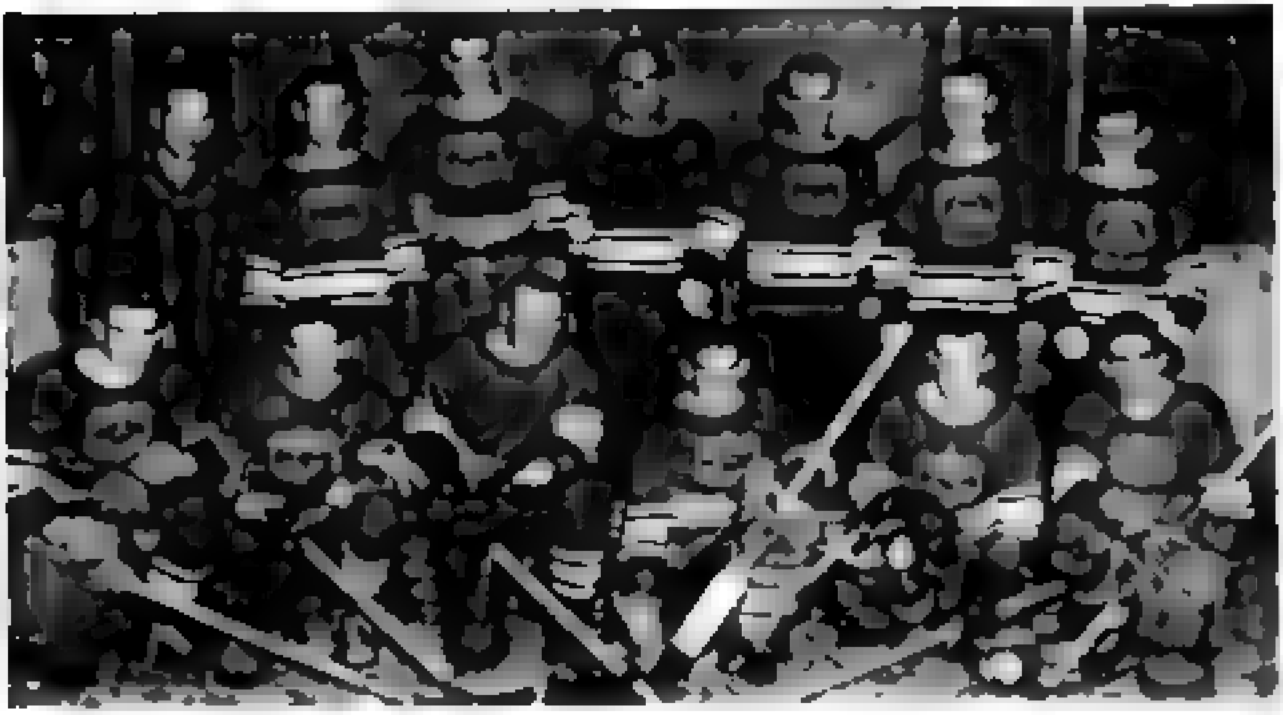
With the construction of a rink on the Co-op store property in 1944, hockey — the most [illegible] with little skating ability but lots of enthusiasm, Neerlandia teams were regularly defeated the first few years. There were a few experienced players who had been playing for the Mellowdale team and with the addition of these men — Jake Sturwold, Albert Schoon- [illegible] developed. Albert and Frank had played defense for Mellowdale while Jake had been stalwart in the net and was nicknamed "Stonewall Jackson". The highlight of the winter season for a number of years was the competition with the Edmonton church team. The rivalry became intense and some of the activities on the ice had little to do with brotherly love. When two young men, one from each team, were courting [illegible] the ice.

All of the practice by the school boys on the rink began to pay off when they began to take their place on the Neerlandia senior team. Not only did the Edmonton team to taste defeat at their hands but Neerlandia started looking for more competition at the local level. A rural hockey league was in existence and the team desired to join them. For some community members the idea of competition outside of their own circles was bad enough, the thought of joining them in a league was unthinkable. In 1952, a public meeting was held in the store hall to discuss the question, "Is it permissible to play hockey in such a league?" Rev. Mulder apparently favoured competition with other communities as did the majority of parents present at the meeting, although some were adamently opposed. After that meeting, Neerlandia joined the Barrhead rural hockey league.

Tim Berger and John Ingwersen provided leadership and coaching during those early years. As with most of Neerlandia's early endeavours in sports, the first teams were repeatedly defeated.

In 1956-1957, however, Neerlandia became league champions. They repeated the feat the following two years and gained permanent possession of the trophy. In 1959 a new regulation-size rink was built on the Neerlandia School property.

About 1960, the rural hockey league disbanded because hockey seemed to lose some popularity in the county for a time. Neerlandia had two teams that played in an Edmonton church league for a few years, though, and later a bush league was formed between Dapp, Jar- [illegible] Linaria, Fawcett and Neerlandia. It has been suggested that the reason for the decline of interest was the influence of Rev. Van Dyken, who was opposed to competition with other



Back: John [illegible], Albert [illegible], Clarence [illegible], Bert [illegible], Henry [illegible], Henry [illegible], Joe [illegible]. Front: George [illegible], Martin [illegible], Peter [illegible], Ed [illegible], Marvin [illegible], [illegible]

communities. The more capable players (if the parents permitted) joined the Barrhead team.

The Neerlandia Flyers joined the Barrhead Commercial League in 1975, and in 1976, after a new rink was constructed in Neerlandia, a second Neerlandia team known as the Homesteaders also joined. The Flyers won the league title for the first three years, and the Homesteaders won it in 1979-80. During these years trips were made to Abbotsford, B.C., where the best of both teams, who had formed one team, played in a tournament held each year during Easter break. These were hard-fought games. On several occasions Neerlandia was close to the top, but never won.

Hard work and determination had been the key to Neerlandia's success in hockey over the years. Without a minor hockey program where fundamentals were learned at a young age, hard work was the only way.

Since 1976, with more teams and coaching at the minor league level, the calibre of player at a young age is high. With the establishment of a County minor hockey league this has been proven. All Neerlandia's teams did well in their divisions in the 1983-1984 season.

Both the Flyers and Homesteaders hockey teams have been disbanded and at present Neerlandia now has one senior team called the Knights, which was formed in 1982. They compete in a commercial league. In 1984 the Knights organized a hockey tournament which was held in Barrhead and attended by five teams from Neerlandia, Edmonton, and Smithers.

Whether they win or lose, Neerlandia expects their players to play their best and to respect the other teams.

Horseshoes

Since horseshoe did not require many people, it was usually played at someone's place. Joe Baker Sr. and Jerry Reitsma were good at the game and enjoyed taking on any challengers. In the late forties, a group of men often got together to play horseshoe. They also competed a few times with teams from Vega.

Since 1975 there has been a renewed interest in the sport. Tournaments are sometimes held at the annual July First picnic. Some men get together in the summer and challenge each other in singles and doubles play and some have also participated in tournaments in other Alberta towns. Alvin Nanninga has entered the Alberta Provincial Championships, placing fourth in 1984 and the Alberta Summer Games, where he and his partner won a gold medal in mixed doubles in 1983. Travis Nanninga played in the Junior event and in 1983 won the gold medal at the Alberta Summer Games and in 1984 he placed fourth in the Canadian Championships

Curling

With the declining interest in hockey during the 1960s, some men took up curling. Two teams were formed and both curled out of Linaria for a number of years. Some of the curlers over the years competed in the Massey Ferguson Farmers playdowns and the Unifarm regional and provincial competitions

Badminton

In 1972 a badminton club, consisting of five members, was formed. Since then the game has been played by many during the winter months. Some tournaments have been hosted for players from the Barrhead, Manola, and Westlock areas and Neerlandia players who attend tournaments sponsored by other communities

Golf

Golf has been a popular summer sport for men, women, and children in Neerlandia. Neerlandia has held its own tournament at the Barrhead golf course during the summer months in 1983 and 1984. Many Neerlandians have participated in the annual church tourna[illegible]

Other

Mixed volleyball has made a comeback in the last couple of years. Eight teams have been playing on a regular basis. The teams are part of an intercounty league and play for recreation rather than competition

* * *

The Neerlandia School has introduced badminton into its sports program. Out of this has come a number of excellent players. Of those who played, six have gone through the local and regional competitions to qualify for the provincial finals of the Alberta Schools Athletic Association

Randy and Howard Gelderman (1982 and 1983) and Simon Strydhorst and Steve Vriend (1984) have won gold medals in boys' doubles at the provincial level. Brian Piers won silver medals in boys' singles in 1982 and 1983. Colleen Krikke won the gold in girls' singles in 1983 and 1984.

SPORTS

For recreation there was not much in those early days. In the summer there was baseball one evening a week. In the winter one evening a week was spent at singing society whether you could sing or not you went, if only to have a social evening. In later years we tried skating on the lakes. We would spend hours clearing a piece of ice, then skate for a while, and quite often the next time we came the cleared ice would be blown full of snow again

My first pair of skates (which I bought from [illegible] tied under the shoes. These cost me twenty-five cents. The second pair I bought for three dollars from a fellow in Edmonton — that is as far as I went in skating

Baseball was different, we played that at school, especially with Mr. Ashley who was sports-minded. In grades seven and eight we had a pretty good team, at least Mr. Ashley seemed to think so. He wanted some competition so he made arrangements with Vega to play against us a few times a year. In order to go to Vega, someone had to take a vehicle. I was allowed to take a team of horses and wagon and the whole team would ride in the wagon for the [illegible] miles to Vega. I don't think we ever lost — that made everyone happy

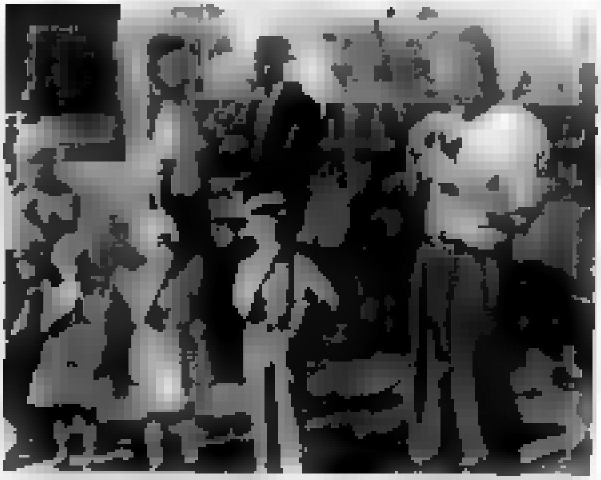
There was not much recreation in the wintertime in those years. During the mid-forties I was in the Co-op store board, and I mentioned at a board meeting that there was not much for the young people in regards to recreation. "I appoint you as a one-man committee," said the chairman. "You talk to the young people and see what you can come up with." I talked with some of the young people but they did not know what to do as there was not much money around. I reported back to the store board and asked for help, so the chairman appointed Bill [illegible] and together we set about getting something started. The first project was a small hockey rink right in the store ground. This proved popular as they had hockey games with various teams from around Neerlandia. So we decided to ask the school board if we could get a regulation-sized rink and a building for dressing right on the school grounds. This proved

PICNIC DAY

Baseball games were played and everyone watched, 1940

There were also races such as the sack race

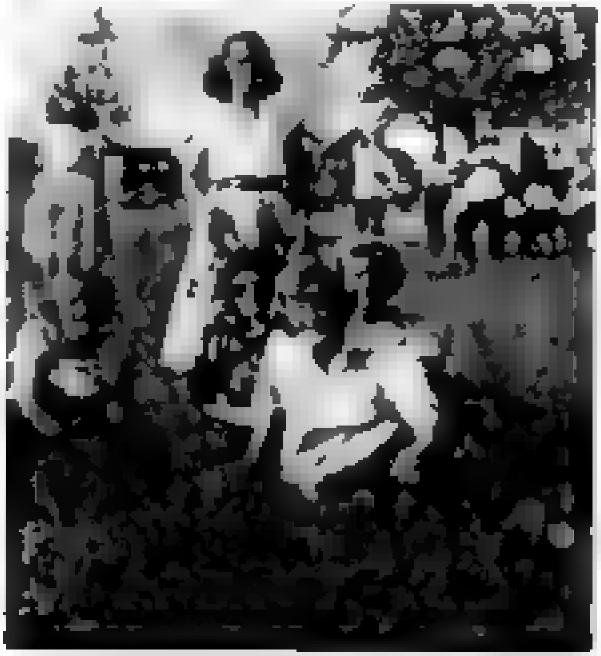
Or balloon race



Children enjoyed the treats: Hendrena, Hilda, Andrew, Henry Wierenga.

No money left for treats. Back: Elsie Olthuis, Manny Nanninga, Shirley and Joan Olthuis. Front: Marvin Nanninga behind George R. Visser.

Dela Peters, Annie Arkema, Grace Rutenga, Cor Fisher, Phyllis Rutenga, John Wierenga, Rube Ingwersen, 1937



Relaxing at the picnic: Ann Struyfhorst, Florence Baker (standing), Tillie Elgersma, Elsie Olthuis, Dina Wierenga.

successful as C. K. Mast was on the divisional school board and he had a lot of clout. They even got a well drilled by the school that could be used for flooding the rink. Not long after this, the young fellows formed a hockey team and asked me to coach them. We had a very successful time with the hockey team, first playing in what was called a bush league.

Of course the teams were not of very good calibre, coming from the bush. After a few years we were tops in the league. We then took on the Barrhead Juniors, but after we won the trophy for three years, they had enough of us too. We even played Barrhead Seniors — a team comprised of the best of Barrhead and Westlock combined. What a game that was, the arena in Barrhead was almost full of spectators. They thought they could teach us a good lesson, but as it turned out it was a six-all tie. In fact George Visser was just breaking in on goal and he did not miss too often so they rang the buzzer and called it a six-all tie; they didn't want to be disgraced by losing to a bush team. I have many fond memories of those years — the winning spirit that prevailed on those teams was a major factor in the success they enjoyed. The opposition did not always come from the teams we played, much criticism came from our own people. Many of them feared mixed marriages. This indeed came to pass, but the hockey teams certainly were not to blame for that.

In the sixties even a few teams were formed that went curling in the winter. We went mostly to Linaria and also to several bonspiels in Barrhead and Westlock, usually winning some prize.

We even sawed forty-four thousand feet of lumber for a curling rink one winter. All volunteer labour, except everyone's hours were kept track of in case it did not go through. That is exactly what happened. The lumber was sold and everybody got paid for what he did. There were so many hard feelings in Neerlandia over hockey that the committee in charge decided it was not worth starting with a curling rink also and creating more hard feelings.

John Ingwersen

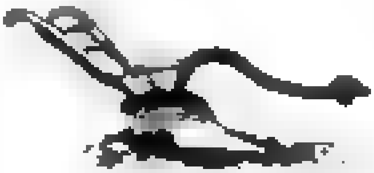
PICNIC DAYS

One year young married women played older men over forty. That was a real laugh — some of the older men had never played before. One of them hit the ball and ran to the pitcher instead of first base, another hit a home run and ran all the way home and asked, "What must I do now?" "Go again," someone said, so off he went again to first base.

Later in the forties there were quite a few married men who had played a lot of ball and they were challenged by the young men who were not married. This was always an interesting game and the people seemed to enjoy it.

There was much good feeling on those picnic days as a lot of people with a little more money than others would buy treats for many less fortunate. I was fortunate to be at one of the picnics a few years ago and it was nice to see the same tradition still being carried out.

John Ingwersen



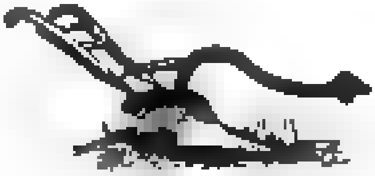
CONCLUSION:

From 1912 to 1984 is a mere seventy-two years — not long when viewed against the backdrop of world history — scarcely a man's life span. But in seventy-two years Neerlandia has changed from a wilderness to a thriving farming community. What was once undifferentiated forest is now farmland neatly divided into quarter sections and crisscrossed with roads.

The pioneers came to Neerlandia in 1911-12 in slow-moving ox carts. Their grandchildren speed about in cars, trucks, and airplanes. The pioneers laboured in poverty; their descendants live in luxury.

So many changes — but there is one constant. The pioneers came to Neerlandia to establish a Christian community, a place where they could live Christ-centered lives apart from worldly influences. Their grandchildren too try to live Christ-centered lives, though more exposed to influences from the larger community.

In a time when many rural communities have disappeared Neerlandia has remained. It has not only continued to exist but it has also grown. Though one factor in Neerlandia's continued existence is the desire of the residents to work together to maintain a Christian community, it is through the grace of God that they have been able to do so. With God's blessing on succeeding generations, Neerlandia will remain.



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Neerlandia has a Future

My first visit was Neerlandia, where Mr McFarland brought me on September 30, 1928]

This settlement of Dutch farmers had interested me from the beginning. Nowhere else [illegible] one better observe how Dutch farmers will fare in Canada with the demands that are put on the settlers

The [Neerlandia] pioneers had a specific purpose: they wanted to stay together as much as possible, they wanted to start a settlement where no other settlers had settled in order to [illegible] their unity. They were from [illegible] *Gereformeerde Kerk*

In north-central Alberta they established the settlement of Neerlandia, which has a population at present of three hundred. There are seventy children going to the school. They [illegible] to preserve their Dutch character as much as possible; as a church, they wanted to stay as one; they wanted to regulate the teaching of their children as much as possible themselves; and on a community level they wanted to work together so they would be better able to face the tremendous difficulties associated with the pioneering life

Neerlandia is not old enough to demonstrate the soundness of these principles, which [illegible] the basis for its foundation. The settlement of Neerlandia is based on a solid foundation, which alone makes it worthwhile to pay attention to the development of that settlement. In my opinion, it is the only Dutch settlement that has a chance to succeed. I don't claim that the settlers will succeed; that I cannot judge; nobody can at this time; that depends on factors that are not known to us. But, I have seen that the situation of the settlement is not unfavourable

Whereas a great number of Dutch settlements time and again have disappeared or become insignificant — I need mention only Dog Lake 110 miles north of Winnipeg where, of the 163 Dutch settlers brought by the committee of Van t Lindenhout, not more than three are left; Edam, in south Saskatchewan; Nijverdal, now called Monarch, in southern Alberta; the fast disappearing colonies in the cities of Winnipeg and Edmonton — therefore it is remarkable that a settlement that has such unfavourable conditions as Neerlandia has is so thriving

The Neerlandia settlers wanted to plant a church and school like they were used to [in the Netherlands]. They wanted to regulate the social and Christian training of their children so the bond among the settlers would stay as close [illegible] preserve unity between people coming from different places of the Netherlands — people with strong, differing characters and with different opinions. They believed and still believe that when church and school and home work together to train the youth, they run the least risk to lose their unity and that through unity they would be able to withstand the enormous difficulties that they would encounter as settlers. These ideas, which the settlers of Neerlandia have as a foundation for their community, answer the question, "How is it possi[illegible] situated settlement of Netherlanders in Canada, is in a favourable position at the present while many other settlements, located in better places, went backwards or disappeared through the course of the years?" If one Dutch settlement in Canada has a future, it is Neerlandia

I am not the only one making this judg[illegible] Washington, who stayed about four weeks among the settlers in Neerlandia, wrote in *de Wachter* of 15 September 1923, as follows: "What I noticed in Neerlandia was the fact that our people did not go there to get rich. It is the [illegible] than for some other communities in Canada and Montana. It seems to me that our people will be able to stay in Neerlandia and make a living because Neerlandia is progressing, not [illegible] gressing. In many congregations in Classis Pa[illegible]

The people of Neerlandia are full of courage. In the entire settlement I met only one women who would like to go back to the Netherlands. Otherwise, no one longed to return to the motherland nor did they consider immigrating to the United States. They would like to see the community enlarged by more immigrants of the same faith from the Netherlands. For Dutch people who have different ideas concerning church and school, family and society than those of the people of Neerlandia, I must say that Neerlandia is not a good place to settle; they will never feel at home there, although they won't lack help and support

J. J. Leys

Excerpts from a letter written to His Excellency, the Gover[illegible] [illegible] a Dutch immigrant making a living in Canada as compared [illegible] were together there

'The Settlement as the Nucleus'

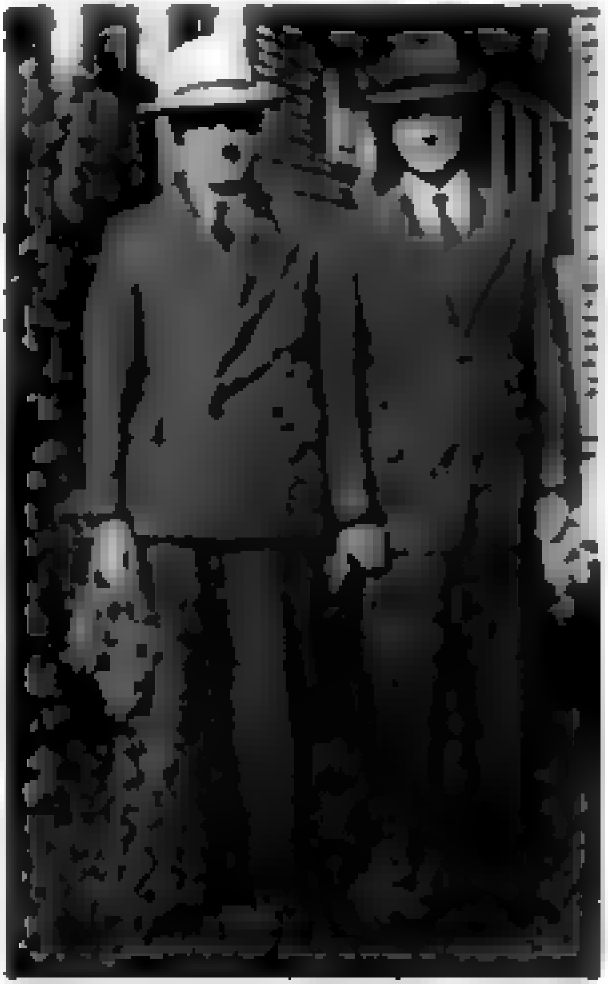
The individualistic character of the Dutchman also shows up when he goes to another country. One often sees immigrants from other nations, especially those belonging to the Slavic and Latin races, living together in settlements. The Dutch people, however, are often dispersed. Many settlements, which were established with the goal of working together against the difficulties of a strange country, were short-lived. Where the Dutch have stayed together, the character of a collective cooperation became almost totally lost. It was only in groups where the church is the focal point of the community that a remnant of a settlement still exists. A common faith seems to be a firm basis whereupon people of different characters, temperaments, and talents can work together and understand each other.

The spiritual unity overpowers the difference in social standings (in such a community). The Neerlandia settlement is a good example of this. It would probably, also due to its less favoured situation, have long since ceased to exist were it not for the spiritual bond and a firm faith which the pioneers maintained and encouraged.

[In the early years,] They kept some chickens, a few farmers had a cow, and now the men went with the eggs to a store eighteen kilometres away to exchange them for groceries and flour. They came back carrying a bag of flour on their backs and other packages under their arms or packed everything on a litter attached to two long poles and carried by four men. This was no beaten path and over the creeks there were no bridges. In the winter this was an especially difficult trip since there was no opportunity to rest along the way.

One of the pioneers, who during the mobilization of Dutch troops in WW I entered active service again, obtained a teaching certificate and now teaches the children ... in the history of the Netherlands also. Thanks to the liberal laws in Alberta, the gospel as the salt of the earth can be interspersed in the curriculum of the settlers' public school. They also have young men and girls' societies, boys' meetings, parent-teacher and slide show evenings, and so on.

On the way, one of the farmers was busy with the help of a stoneboat levelling out the roads. The stoneboat was pulled by a team of horses. We stopped a minute, made acquaintance, and in short terms [he] frankly told his experiences. His name was Tiemstra. He had come from the vicinity of Bolsward [Friesland] without a penny in his pocket. He had some help, had worked hard, and still had to work



[illegible]

hard, but could now say that he had fifty hectares of land seeded, thirty cows, ten horses, some machinery, and no debt. He was more than satisfied, and added cheerfully, "The grain looks good this year."

I would have liked to stay there for a few days.

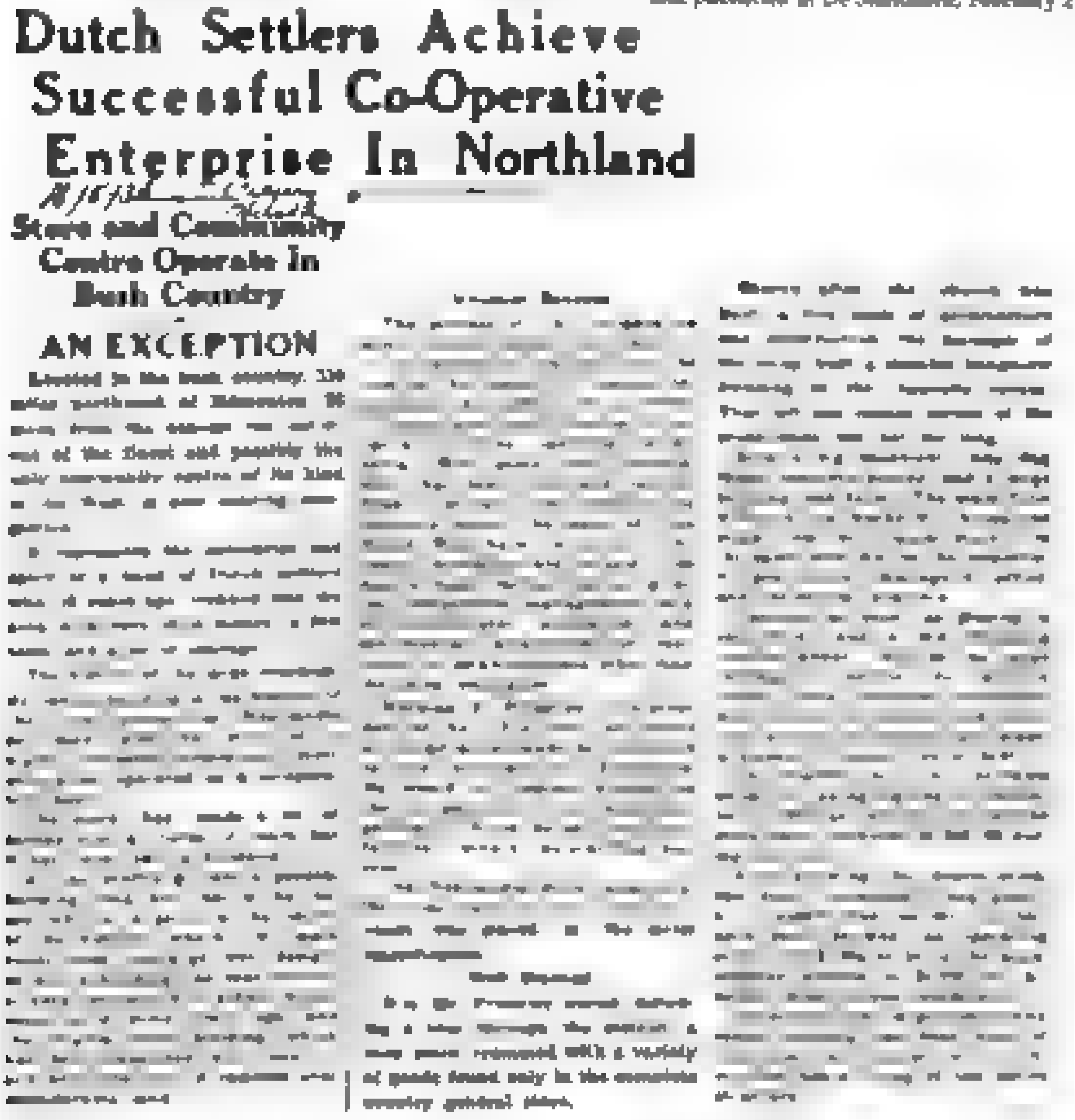
The atmosphere was so different from that in which we daily live [in the Netherlands]. In contrast to the word "absolutely" which is constantly on the tip of the Canadians' tongues, there shone through here in every conversation a feeling of increased dependence upon the Lord; it wasn't overly pious or put on but we understood that "the Lord willing" and "we hope" were realities among the settlers.

I believe that this settlement, which has a favourable climate and the so-called 'Indian summer' — soft sunny weather after a few cold October days, has a good future.

Colonies like Neerlandia, although they are still on the outside of Canadian culture, can become the nucleus from where not only our church, but also our rich Calvinistic lifestyle may testify to the Canadian people.

T. Croesen

Excerpts taken from "Across Canada" written by T. Croesen and published in *De Standaard*, February 27, 1925.



Dutch Settlers Achieve Successful Co-Operative Enterprise In Northland

M/16/38 — Calgary Herald

Store and Community Centre Operate In Bush Country

AN EXCEPTION

Located in the bush country, 330 miles northwest of Edmonton [illegible]

[illegible]

of goods found only in the complete country general store.

Article published in the Calgary Herald on May 16, 1938. Used with permission.

The Neerlandia Funeral Association (1983)

The birth of a new community was followed by the age-old reality of death and all the arrangements needed for burial. In 1915 Rienk de [illegible] was officially registered as the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church Cemetery since the land belonged to the CRC, but it was used as a community cemetery. The graveyard map consisted of ten blocks with each block divided into eighteen plots. In 1970 the size of the graveyard was doubled from ten to twenty blocks. In the early days, the plots were available for [illegible] dollar each, but the system was discontinued because few people bought plots. Con[illegible]

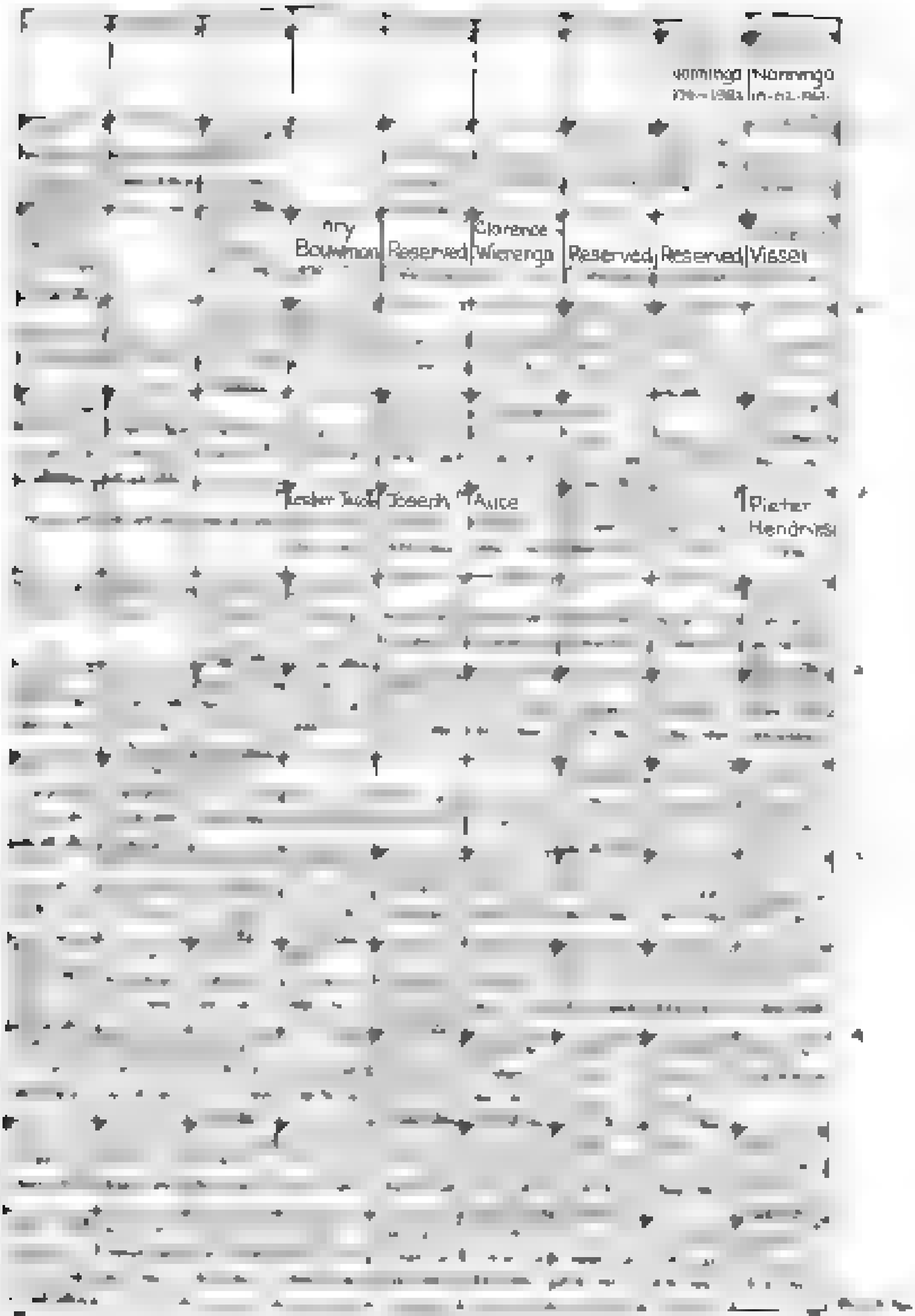
Koop Mast, who died in 1915, was the first to be buried in the cemetery. The body of his grandson who had died in 1914 and had been buried on Koop Mast's quarter was also moved to the cemetery at this time.

All of the coffins in the early days were [illegible] Menne Nanninga and Ben Lievers, local car[illegible] this difficult job had to be done whether the [illegible] frozen hard as in winter. Even when machines [illegible] graves were still dug by hand for some time. It [illegible] such a purpose. Until the early 1950s the bod[illegible]ly and kept at their home until burial. Later the bodies were kept in a small building at the graveyard until the day of the funeral. The fu[illegible] third day after death. Only when someone died in the hospital were the services of an unde[illegible] of an undertaker began to be used by everyone. The cost of a funeral at that time was about three hundred dollars.

The cemetery was administered by the consistory of the CRC until the Neerlandia Cemetery and Funeral Society was organized in 1956. Before the society was formed, Case Ingwersen had been the first person responsible for rec[illegible] the cemetery. Others who had continued with the recording were Henry Bouwman, Jim Merkus, Henry Kippers, and Carl and Agnes Mast. The first executive of the society consisted of chairman Jack Tuininga, secretary Corny Nanninga, and treasurer Henry Kippers Sr. At this time the membership fee was four dollars plus one dollar for administration (treasurer's fees). The services of an undertaker from Foster and McGarvey of Edmonton were then approximately $175.00. The treasurer was paid fifty dollars annually for his services.

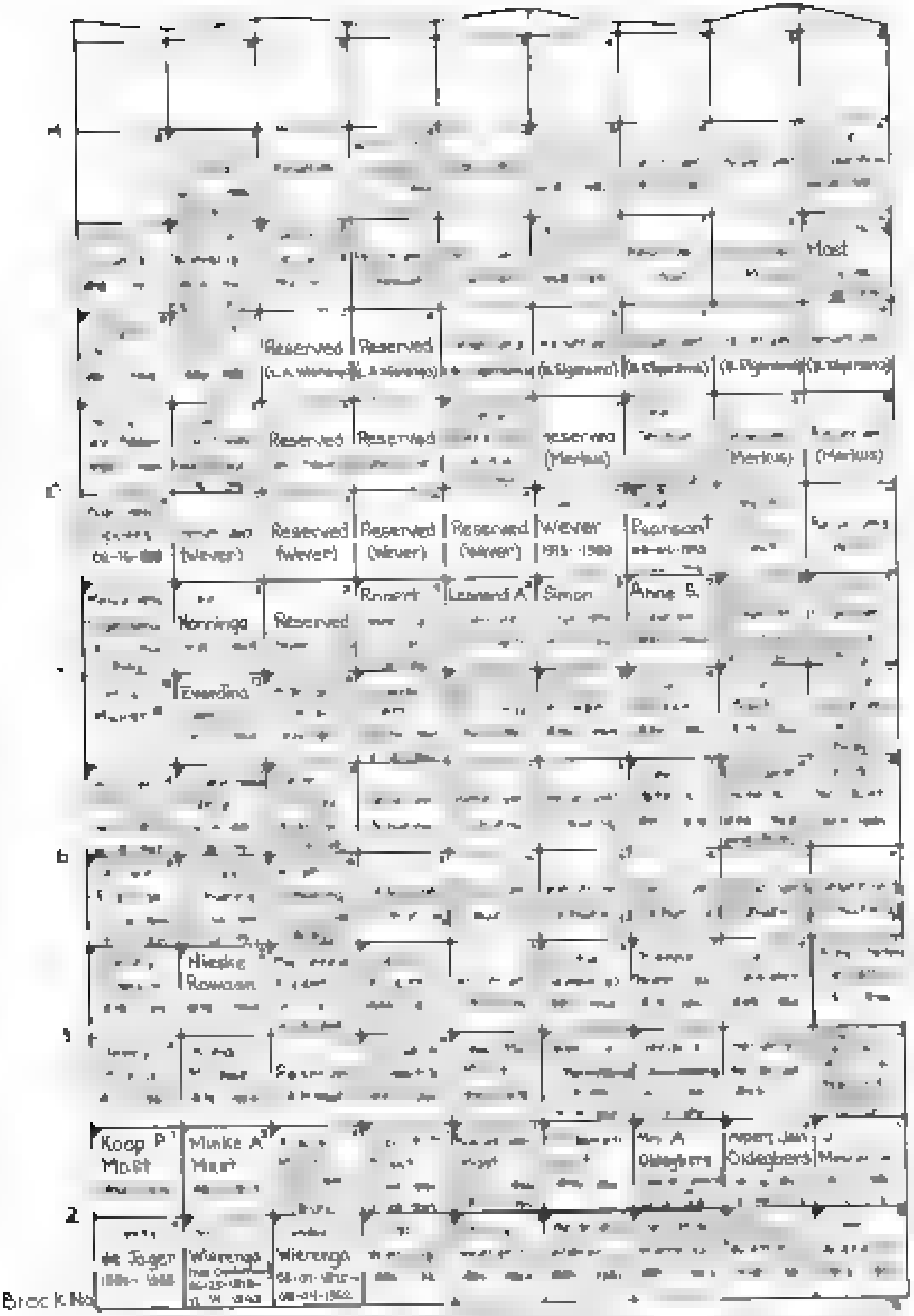
In February 1983 the society became known as The Neerlandia Funeral Association and a new constitution was adopted. The fee charged to become a member was set at a percentage of [illegible] mate cost of a funeral was twelve hundred dollars. The aim of the association as stated in 1956 is " to help one another in the occurrence of death in the family. This help shall consist of financial and personal support to lighten the burden of the bereaved. We recognize this as our Christian duty in the light of Galatians 6:2, 'Bear ye one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.'" Constitution (1983), Article 2 (a)

Although there was no official association to state such a purpose in writing, this had proba[illegible] the time of the earliest settlers as they dealt with one another in the time of bereavement.



▼ denotes headstone and dates tak
■ Elina Broadhead mother of Gwen (Broadhead) Lievers
▼ [illegible]

Plan of the Neerlandia Cemetery (north half)



[illegible]

* [illegible] entify unknown; probably Dorothy [illegible] aged 90 years).

[illegible]

Plan of the Neerlandia Cemetery (south half)

Glossary

ANEMA'S CORNER: the point one mile east of Neerlandia hamlet where the Anema family lived for many years, beginning in 1913

BACHING: one or more young men living on [illegible] clean, or otherwise care for them

Young men often bached on their homesteads

BAKER'S CORNER: a crossroads two-and one-half miles south of Neerlandia hamlet

The Raymond Baker family lived at this crossroads for many years

BANNER (*The Banner*): the official magazine of the Christian Reformed Church, alternately loved and hated by the subscribers depending on the editorial policy

BIG TIMBER: a stand of heavy timber south of Siebren Tiemstra's farm, a forested area untouched by the fire that burned over most of Townships 61 and 62 some years before the Dutchmen arrived

BLOOMERS: Underpants for women and girls.

Winter bloomers were usually fleece-lined for greater warmth

BROKEN-IN: the state of a horse trained to [illegible]

Horses could be saddle-broke or harness-broke

GREEN-BROKE: the state of a horse that has received very basic training and is likely to disobey on the slightest provocation

BUSH: several acres of woods or forest

WORKING IN THE BUSH: A term used to describe the practice of almost every Neerlandian male at some point in his life of spending the winter working at a logging camp north or west or northwest of Neerlandia

CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY: the first of the Christian colleges supported by Christian Reformed Church members and the only one directly supported by the Christian Reformed denomination; the training ground for ministers of the Christian Reformed Church

It was to Calvin that the first school trustees looked for Christian teachers. The graduates of Calvin do not compare themselves to anyone. They think the difference is obvious

CALVINIST CONTACT: a magazine started by and for the Dutch immigrants after the second World War, published in Ontario

CELLAR: a hole dug beneath the house, used for storage of fruits and vegetables, and home to many mice which scurried in every direction when anyone descended to its gloomy depths — lantern or flashlight in hand

Access was gained through a trapdoor in the kitchen floor

THE CENTRE: the Neerlandia hamlet itself also known as The Corner — the place where [illegible]

CHICKEN HAWK: one of the hawks that preys on chickens, probably the goshawk

When chickens were kept outside they could, at times, be seen scurrying for shelter as a hawk flew overhead

CHICKEN ROOSTS: bleachers for chickens; in pioneer days, made of rails

[illegible] on these rails [illegible] for the night

CHINKING: the practice of filling the cracks between the logs of a log building

Moss, clay, and manure were some of the materials used. Chinking was usually done to the exterior of a structure

CONFESSION OF FAITH: publicly professing [illegible] faith in Christ

At this time one assumes the rights and [illegible] Reformed churches. Most young people make [illegible]

CLASSIS: a meeting of delegates from [illegible] congregations of a Reformed denomination to discuss matters relating to all the churches in the area

CLASSICAL APPOINTMENT: an obligation laid upon a minister to preach to a congregation [illegible] according to a system established by a classis of a Reformed denomination

On classical appointment a minister might have to baptize several babies

THE CORNER: see CENTRE

CREAM OF WHEAT: Depression porridge; an unbleached coarse meal, a nutritious and tasty cereal

CROSS COUNTRY or ACROSS COUNTRY: to take a shortcut to get from point A to point B

When point A was home and point B was school, it usually took longer to get from A to B using the shortcut than going by the road. The reason for this was distractions caused by rabbits or other attractions

CRUISED TIMBER: walked through the

woods in order to estimate the amount of timber it contained in order to determine whether it was worth logging — done in summer.

DAY LABOUR the practice of hiring men by the day instead of contracting the job, considered cheaper

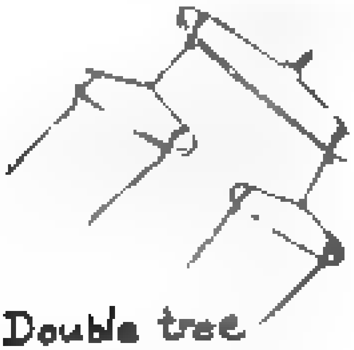
DOCTOR'S BOOK: the most important book, next to the Bible in most settlers' homes, used to diagnose all kinds of human ailments

On first perusing a doctor's book one resident thought that he suffered from most of the diseases described therein

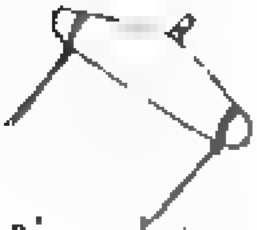
DORDT COLLEGE: one of four colleges most Christian Reformed postsecondary students attend; located in Sioux Center, Iowa, U.S.A

ELDER a duly elected official in the Canadian and Christian Reformed churches to oversee the spiritual life of the congregation, supposedly the wisest men in the church

EVENER: an arrangement of singletrees and doubletrees used to hitch four or more horses to a vehicle or implement



Double tree + evener



Single tree

FATTENERS: pigs between the feeder and shipping stages of their lives

FRONT ROOM local term for what is now called the living room used only on Sundays, for *huisbezoek* or other special occasions, derived from the Dutch voorkamer

FLINCH: a card game one of the few card games approved of by the leaders of the church

Pioneer children made their own cards

GAS, ORANGE AND PURPLE gasoline for vehicles

Purple gas has colouring added to differentiate it from the more expensive orange gas Purple gas may be used in vehicles registered as farm vehicles There is no tax on purple gas

HARVEST(the harvest): harvesttime on the prairies

Many men went to the harvest in either Alberta or Saskatchewan in late summer to help with the harvest there, before returning home to harvest their own crops which ripened later

HOUSE VISITATION (family visitation): the yearly visit by the consistory in pairs to each family in the congregation to determine their spiritual condition

KING'S COLLEGE (The King's College): the newest and nearest of the four postsecondary institutions favoured by members of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church a Christian college located in Edmonton

MAIN ROAD: the road from Neerlandia hamlet southward to Highway 18

MANGER FEVER an ailment caused by looking into an empty manger for too long, starvation

ON TIME: a colloquialism for buying on the installment plan as in "We bought the sewing machine on time because we could not afford to pay for it all at once "

PATENT to obtain title to a quarter section of land that was originally acquired as a homestead

PLUG: chewing tobacco a flat block of tobacco leaves with the stems removed and with molasses or other sweetener added

Men would bite a piece off a plug and commence to chew and spit Sometimes they would amuse themselves by trying to spit a pig or dog in the eye A conversation would be punctuated with a "p-r r r t" as the men would expel the juice generated by chewing Most of the chewing was done outside since the women frowned upon any spitting being done in the house

PRAIRIES: the grainfields of southern Alberta, one source of income for the early settlers

The term was used interchangeably with the Harvest

PROVE UP: to fulfil the requirements of the Homestead Act preparatory to obtaining title to a quarter section of land

SEPARATOR: 1. a machine used to separate grain from the stalks, also known as a threshing machine

The first one in Neerlandia, owned by Klaas uininga and Siebren Tiemstra, was known as the Coffee Grinder

2. a machine for separating cream from milk, operated by turning the handle, which in turn spun a bowl of discs causing the lighter cream to rise to the top and pour out of the narrow top spout, while the heavier skim milk poured out of the wider lower spout

This task was usually reserved for children

SHORTS: the dryish hull of the wheat, a by product of milling; feed for animals

STUMPING POWDER: a less-powerful form [illegible]

SULKY PLOW: a one-bottom plow

SUMMER COMPLAINT: a form of dysentery

TIME AUCTION: the original "buy now, pay later" plan; a farm auction at which everything was sold on time

No one had any money so when a family moved out the only way they could dispose of their belongings was by selling the items with [illegible] financing [illegible] them. The buyers would write out and sign IOUs and give them to the seller, who had to trust the people to pay later

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE: a Christian college in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., one of four colleges attended by postsecondary students of the CRC

Graduates of Trinity consider themselves superior to the graduates of Dordt

TRIO: a list of three ministers from which one is chosen by a congregation of one of the Reformed churches to come and be their pastor

On rare occasions the consistory dared to put up a duo, only two ministers

VACANT CHURCH: not an empty church building, a church without a minister of its own

Neerlandia was sometimes vacant for two or three years

WALKING PLOW: a single-bottom plow [illegible] pulled by [illegible] horses while the driver walked behind guiding the plow

WORLD (the world): a Biblical term used to refer to that which is not Christian

Some early Neerlandians had the notion that anyone and anything outside of Neerlandia was of the world

Glossary of Abbreviations

AGT: Alberta Government Telephones
B Ed: Bachelor of Education
BA: Bachelor of Arts
CLAC: Christian Labour Association of Canada
CPJ: Citizens for Public Justice
CPR: Canadian Pacific Railways
CRC: Christian Reformed Church
DA: District Agriculturalist
NAIT: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Edmonton
RBC: Reformed Bible College (formerly called RBI)
RBI: Reformed Bible Institute, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.
RCAF: Royal Canadian Air Force
RCMP: Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RNA: Registered Nursing Assistant
SAIT: Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary
U of A: University of Alberta

Dutch Glossary

AFSCHEIDING: secession; refers to the breaking away of a group in 1834 from the *Hervormde Kerk* to protest against its "apostasy"

Members of the *Afscheiding* strain stress living a devout Christian life

BEPPE: Frisian word for grandmother

BOEREN: farmers

BRIEFJE: note with written list of groceries and other needed items, sometimes difficult to decipher, written up by Neerlandia wives and given along with husbands when the latter went to the store

Before 1956 *briefjes* were given to clerks in the Neerlandia store, who then brought all listed items to the customer

BRIJ: a type of porridge usually eaten for dessert

One such brij was *watergruwel (krentenbrij)* which was made with red fruit juice, currants, and pearl barley

BURGEMEESTER: mayor

CHRISTELIJKE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN: churches formed in 1892 as a result of a union between those of the *Afscheiding* and those of the *Doleantie*

A large majority of the members of these churches were middle or lower class

DE WACHTER: a Dutch language newspaper first published in 1868, under the auspices of the Christian Reformed Church

De Wachter was widely read by *Gereformeerde* folk throughout Canada and the States

DESSO TAFELKLEED: a thick rug-like table covering

These table coverings are found in every Dutch home along with the short white lace curtains in every window, the ornaments on every available space of shelf or ledge and the Delft blue china in the cabinet

DIK: 1. fat, as in fat people
2. thick, as in thick soup
3. big, as in big drops

DOLEANTIE: a movement led by Abraham Kuyper in which many left the *Hervormde Kerk* to protest its liberalism in 1892 and, with many members from the *Afscheiding*, formed the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken*. Kuyper stressed the importance of a personal Christian life but also believed that Christians should be active in "every sphere of life."

DOMINEE: minister, title by which the minister was always addressed

ERWTENSOEP: a hearty thick soup made with green peas, cooked with pig's feet, ham bone or slab of bacon, depending on what was available

FRIES: an odd language spoken by the inhabitants of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands; unintelligible to the average Dutchman

FRIESEN: the inhabitants of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands

Groningers consider *Friesen* to be outspoken and boorish

GEBAKJES: rich pastries containing a variety of fillings, usually topped with whipping cream, and always served at celebrations

GEREFORMEERD: reformed

GEZELLIGHEID: a type of atmosphere in a home — a word impossible to explain to a non-Dutchman; the English word [illegible] falls far short of describing the way *gezelligheid* makes one feel relaxed and at home when having a *gezellig* visit

GRAUWE ERTEN: yellow peas

GRONINGERS: the inhabitants of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands

Friesen consider *Groningers* to be stubborn and boorish

GRONINGS: a throaty dialect spoken by the inhabitants of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands

GULDEN: form of Dutch currency worth one hundred cents

HEIT: Frisian word for father

HOLLANDS: the national language of the Netherlands

HUISBEZOEK: house visitation; a practice in Reformed churches whereby each family in a congregation was visited by the minister and an elder

This visit was made yearly to gauge the spiritual welfare of the family and was subsequently reported on to the consistory. *Huisbezoek* was always held in one's front room

KARNEMELKSEPAP: buttermilk porridge

KERSTFEEST 1. Christmas
2. Christmas celebration

KLOMPEN: wooden shoes

This footwear was worn by many Dutch immigrants when they first came to Canada

KOEK: cake, usually loaf cake

LIJST: list

MEM: Frisian word for mother

MOEKE: *Gronings* for mother

MOOIKE: *Fries* for aunt

NEDERLANDSE HERVORMDE KERK: state church of the Netherlands which was formed in the late sixteenth century as a result of the Protestant Reformation.

Generally, members of the higher classes attended the *Hervormde Kerk*.

OLIEBOLLEN: deep-fried dumplings made with raisins and currants, eaten dipped in powdered sugar; traditionally made on New Year's Eve and served on New Year's Day

OMA: grandmother

OMKE: *Fries* for uncle

OOM: uncle

OPA: grandfather

OPOE: grandmother

PAKE: Frisian word for grandfather

PAP: porridge; sometimes refers to pudding.

In earlier days, *pap* was the only food eaten for breakfast, with or without sugar, depending on the circumstances of the family

PET: cap

PRUIMPJE: the mixture resulting after tobacco has been chewed; every so often the juices have to be spit out

Chewing *pruimpjes* was indulged in by many Neerlandia old-timers, usually the men.

PSALMBOEKEN: songbooks originally containing only Psalms; later *gezangen* (hymns) were added.

A general rule of thumb was that the more *gezangen* that could be found in its *Psalmboek*, the more "liberal" the church.

PSALMEN: Psalms.

SCHANDALIG: scandalous, shameful

SIGAREN: cigars

STADHUIS: townhall

Every marriage in the Netherlands must be solemnized in the *Stadhuis*. The couple may, following that, have a service in church

STATEN BIJBEL: a version of the Bible published in the Netherlands in 1637; used in the Netherlands for many years before more recent translations became available

Often a *Staten Bijbel* was a big, heavy book passed from generation to generation. Births and deaths of all family members were carefully recorded in the front of the *Staten Bijbel*

STOEP: 1. steps, as in "There were four steps up to the door." 2. a porch.

STUIVER: form of Dutch currency worth one cent

TABAK: tobacco

TANTE: aunt

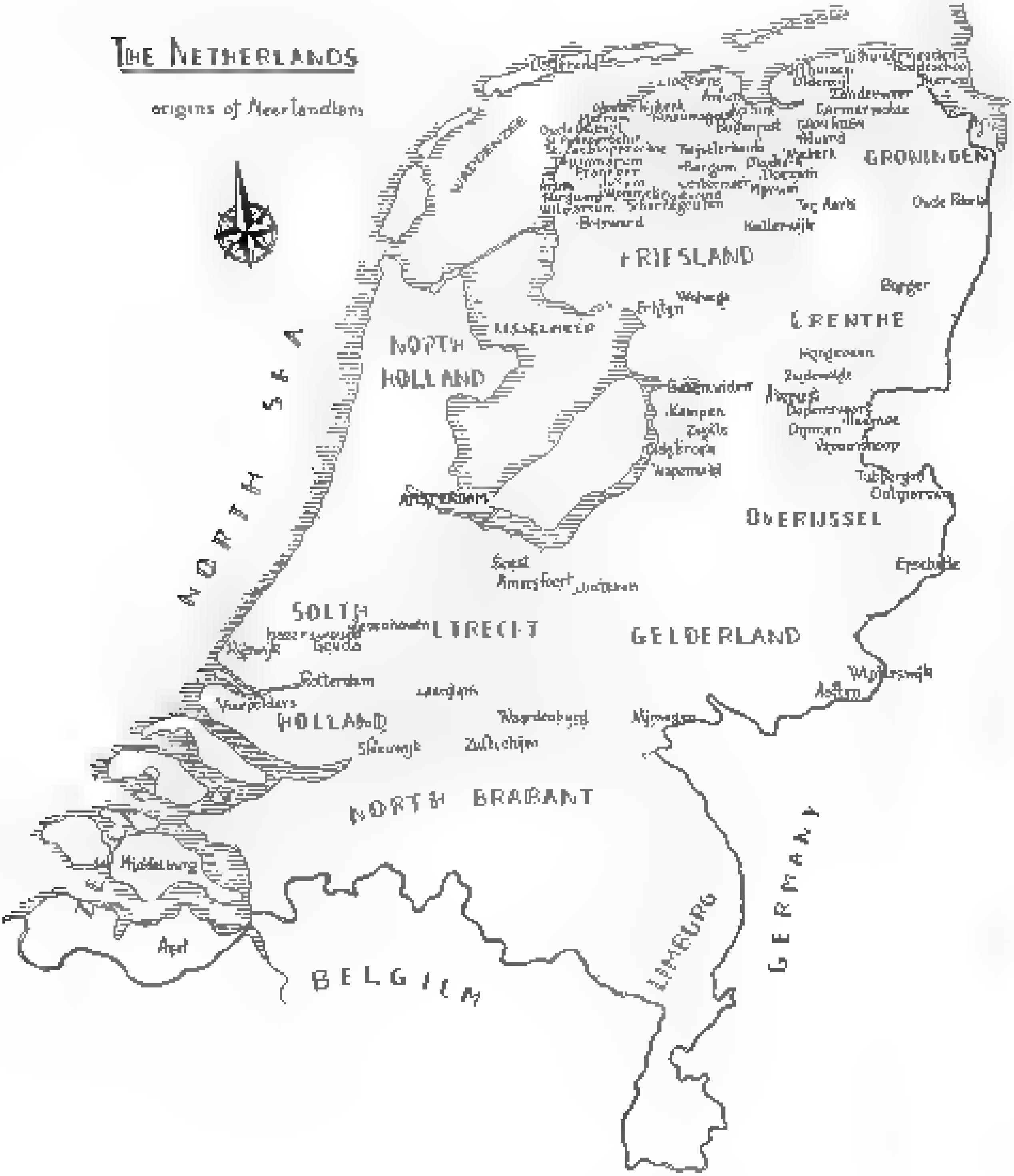
VOORZANGER: the leader of the singing in the congregation

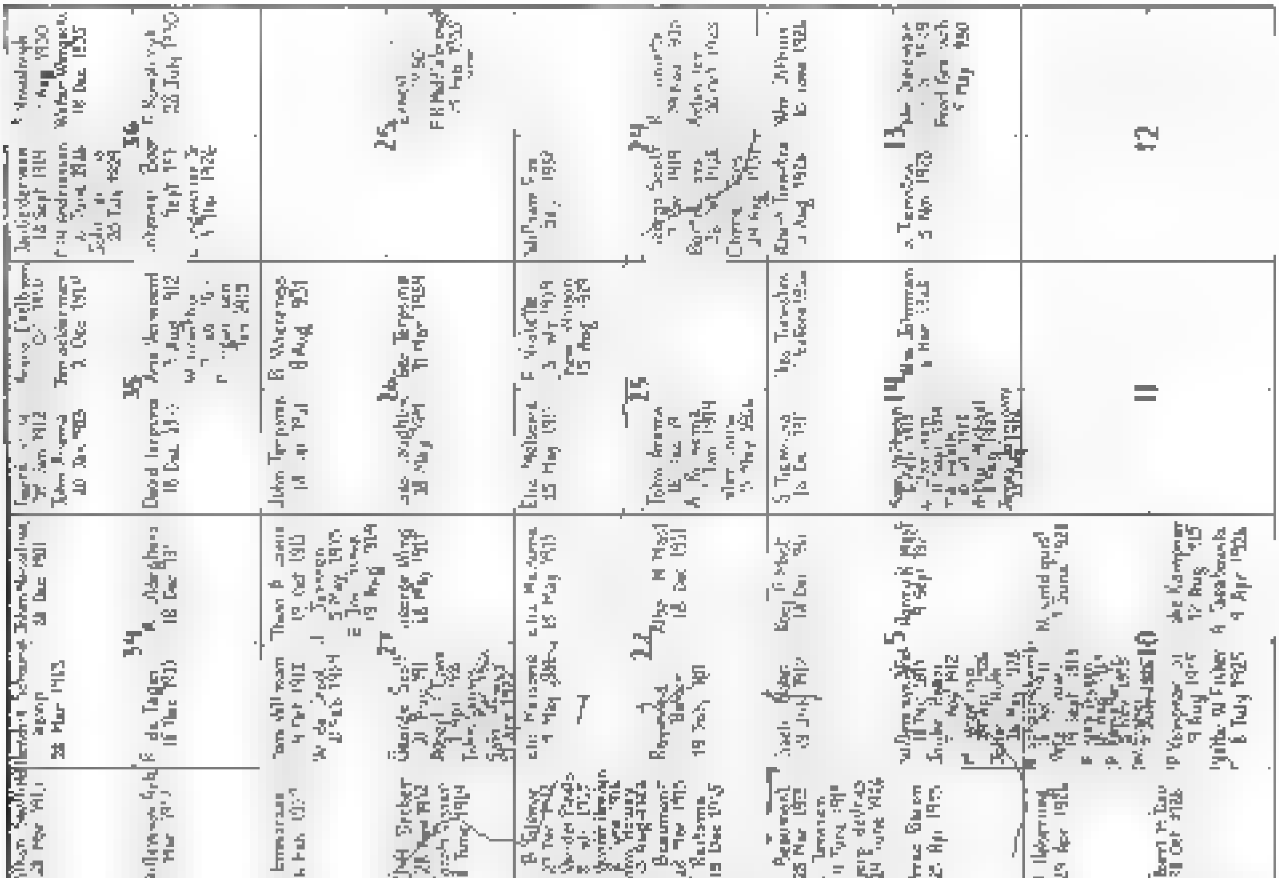
The *voorzanger* would sound the note on which everyone was to begin singing.

VROUW: 1. wife
2. woman.

WIJN: wine

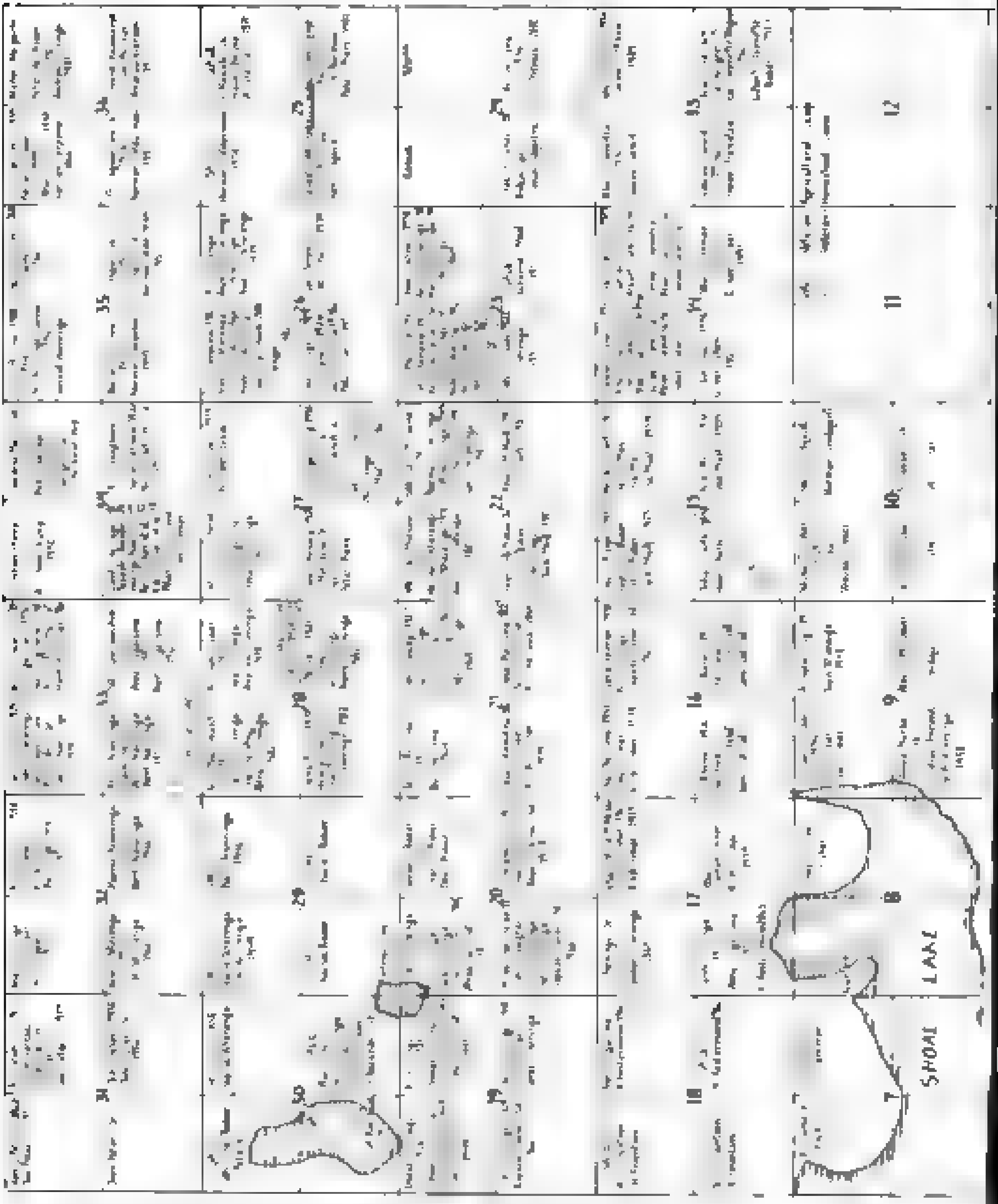
WILHELMUS VAN NASSAUWE: Dutch national anthem, always sung heartily by Dutch immigrants.


The Netherlands
origins of Neerlandiers
NORTH SEA
WADDENZEE
IJSSELMEER
FRIESLAND
GRONINGEN
DRENTHE
NORTH HOLLAND
OVERIJSSEL
SOUTH HOLLAND
UTRECHT
GELDERLAND
NORTH BRABANT
LIMBURG
BELGIUM
GERMANY
Uithuizermeeden
Roodeschool
Uithuizen
Oldenzijl
Zandeweer
Garmerwolde
Ameland
Buitenpost
Tzummarum
Franeker
Burgum
Wehe
Ter Apel
Oude Pekela
Kollumerzwaag
Harlingen
Wommels
Sneek
Bolsward
Borger
Wolvega
Hoogeveen
Zuidwolde
Kampen
Zwolle
Dedemsvaart
Ommen
Tubbergen
Oldenzaal
Amsterdam
Soest
Amersfoort
Enschede
Gouda
Rijswijk
Rotterdam
Leerdam
Waardenburg
Nijmegen
Winterswijk
Aalten
Vierpolders
Sliedrecht
Zaltbommel
Middelburg
Axel

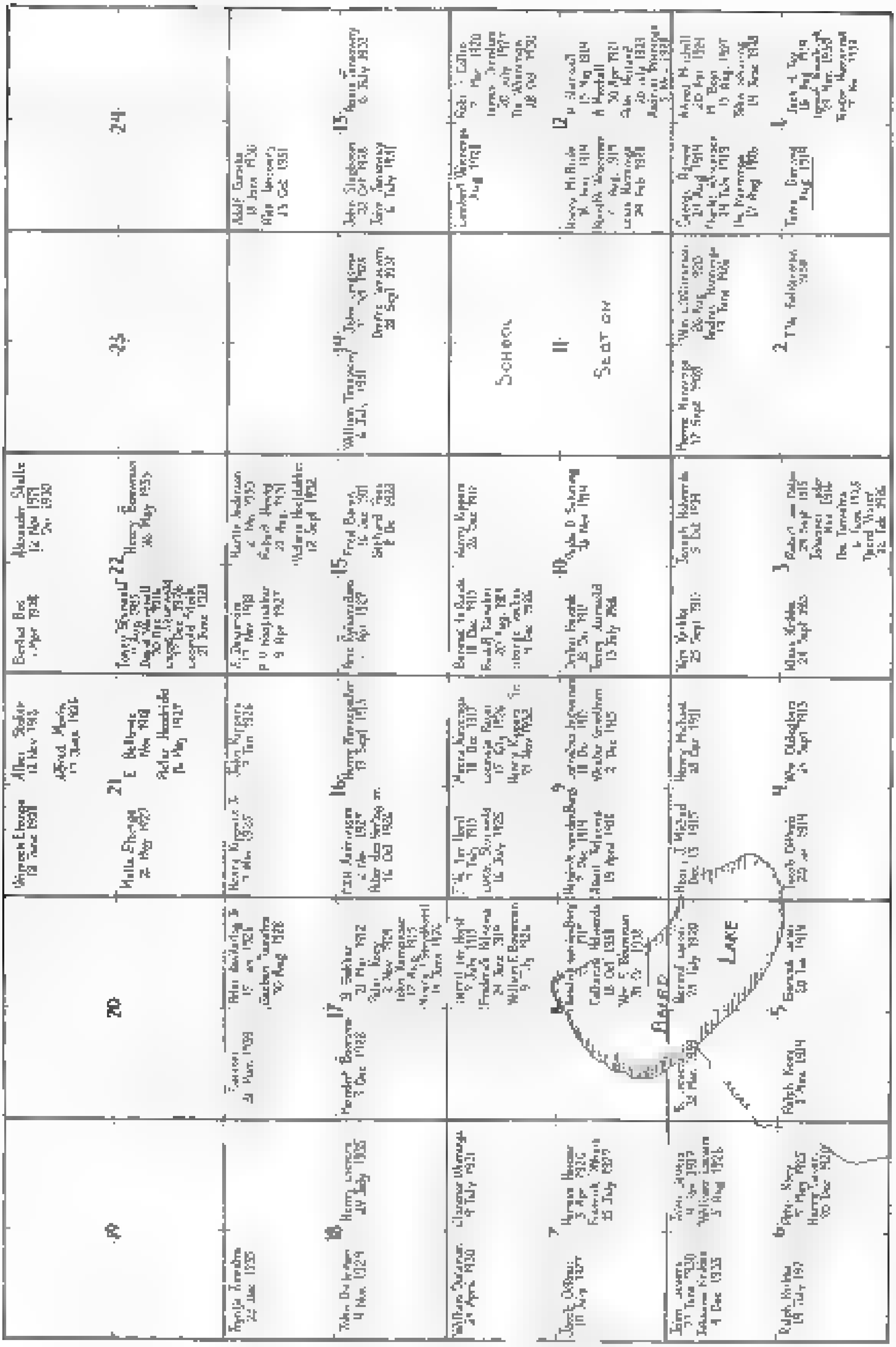


Map of Township 61 showing all those who filed on the homesteads until the land was patented. Information from Homestead Records.

Township 61 Range 3 West of 5th Meridian



Map of Township 61 showing homesteaders who received patent to the land and subsequent owners. Information from homestead records and present or previous owners. In many cases the year of purchase is approximate.



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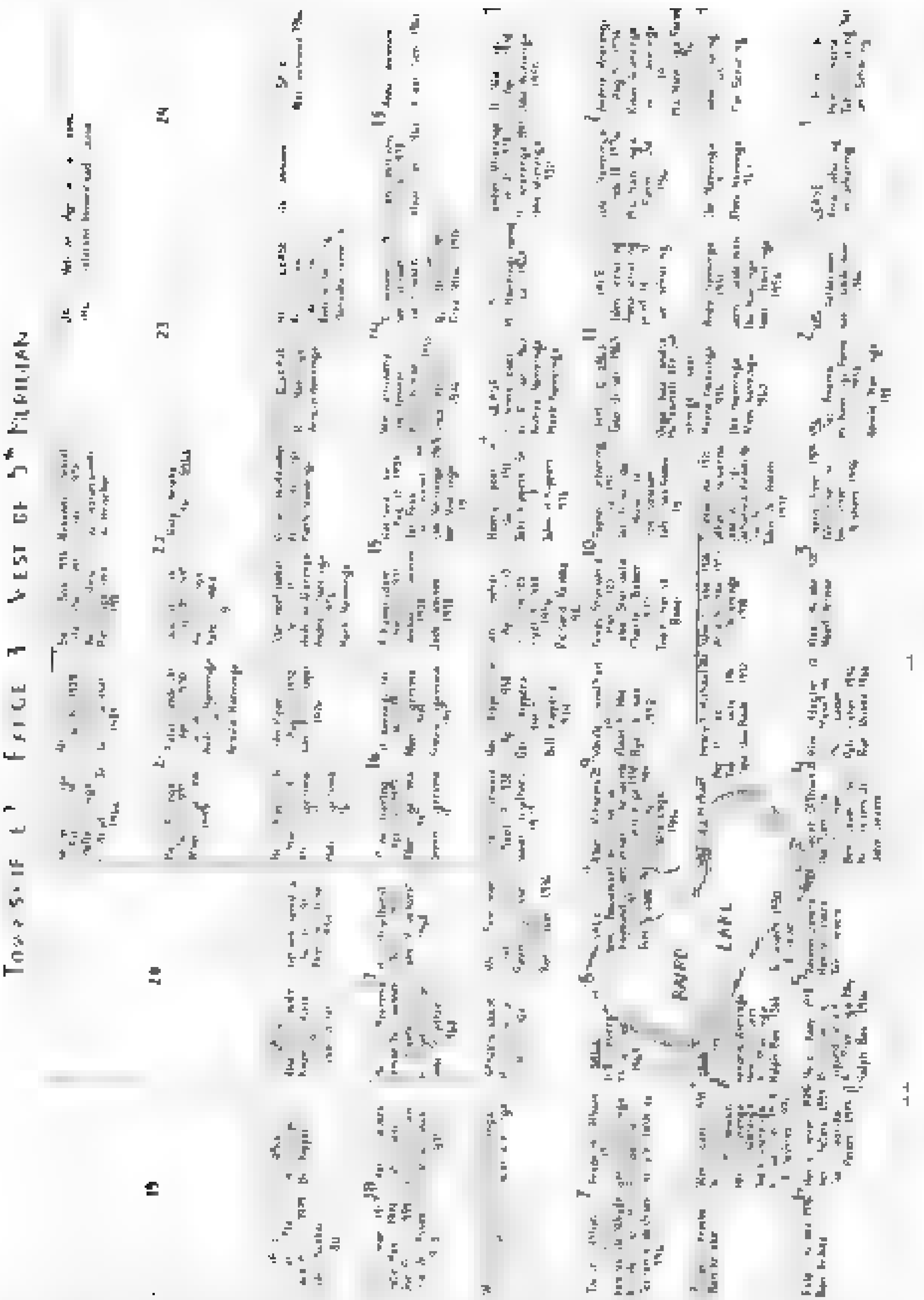

Map of Township 62 showing homesteaders who received patent to the land and subsequent owners. Information from homestead records and present or previous owners. In many cases the year of purchase is approximate.

World War II Veterans

Charlie Baker	Reserve Pacific Volunteers, 1941-1944.
Henry Bouwman	
Pete Emmerzael	First Canadian Corps Troops Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, 1941-1946; overseas 1942-1945
Simon Fisher	First Canadian Division, Royal Edmonton Regiment; served overseas.
Gerrit Gelderman	Antiaircraft Division; Artillery Division, 1942-1945.
Cor Hiemstra	Fifth Armoured Division; 1942-1946.
Bill Johnman	1941-1945; active duty in Africa and Italy
Jim Johnman	Royal Edmonton Regiment; corporal in Infantry 194 944.
Pete Johnman	Ordnance Corps, instructor 1940-1945.
Bill B. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment, jeep driver 194 1945
Bill H. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment, sniper. 1941-1943.
Harry Lievers	Royal Canadian Artillery; gunner 1941-1942.
Jim Lievers	Instructor
Clarence Mast	Seventh Reconnaissance Armoured Corps; 17th Duke of Yorks; 1941-1946; overseas 1944-1946.
Bert Nanninga	Vancouver Regiment, Irish Fusiliers. 1942-1946; active duty in Jamaica, one year
John Peters	Engineers, served one year.
Simon Tubbinga	Eighth Division, Fourteenth Infantry Brigade, King's Own Rifles, Air Force Flight 53; 1942-1946
Ed Visser	U.S. Army, 44th American Engineers, 1941-1945; overseas
Andrew L. Wierenga	Artillery, gunner; Infantry, sharpshooter 1942-1946.
Joe A. Wierenga	Heavy Artillery Sydney, Nova Scotia; 1942-1945.
Joe H. Wierenga	Light Antiaircraft, Artillery, Esquimalt, B.C. 1942-1945.

Teachers – Neerlandia Public School

Henry van den Burg	1915
Helen Kooy	1916-1918
J. A. Heath	October 16-November 13 1918
L. Dineen	1919-?
Simon Keyzer	May 1919-August 1921
Jenny Tuininga teacher helper	September 1919-1921?
R. Walton	May 1921-September 1921
Mr. Fisher	1922-23
William van Ark	1922-25
L. Thelma Hare (Levy)	May-November 1923, August 1928-December 1929
J. R. Levy	1925
Miss Spaulding	1925-26
John Hammond	March 1-April 6, 1926
J. R. Levy	June-November 1926
Jack Tracy	1927-28
Jean Carlyle	1927-28
J. R. Levy	1929-30
F. R. McKitrick	1930
Jean Rae	1930-31
John Dickson	December 1930-June 1931
Alice Brown	1931-32
Aubrey C. Ashley	1931-45
M. E. A. Smith	1932-33
Grace Boer	1933-37
Reta Speers	1937-39
Olive Young	1939-42
Clara (Visser) Schoonekamp	1942-46, 1947-48; September 22, 1952-67
W. Alberta Robb	1944-46
Wasel Doschiwnak	1945-46
John Van Riper	1946-48
Sophie Gordey	1946-47
Tine Abday	1947-80
David Smith	April-June 1948
A. Irene Fowler	1948-57
Fern Borden (supervisor)	September 1-October 2, 1948
Lewis Vandermeulen	October 4, 1948-September 22, 1952
Wilma Visser (supervisor)	1948-April 14, 1949
Ruth (Schoenrock) Janssen	April 23, 1949-1951, 1952-54; 1955-
Janet Sturwold	1951-52
Magdalena Baker	1952-55
Margaret Bouwman	1952-54
Eleanor Bauer	1954-55
Shirley Olthuis	1954-55
Elsie (Olthuis) Navis	1955-
Mary Tanasowny	1955-57
Joyce van Dijken (supervisor)	1956-part
James Tuininga	1957-59
Vladimir Bayduza	1958-62
Edith Sader	May 6, 1959-60
Reta Tuininga	1959-60
John Piers	1960-
Annie Tuininga	1962-64
Martha Kalmbach	September 30, 1963 (23 days)
Anna Churchill	May 3-June 30, 1964; 1967-1975
James Strydhorst	1964-65
Tena De Haan	1965-66
Sander De Haan	1965-67
John Bouma	1966-69
Ransford E. Dodd	1968-70
Joan Tanasowny	1968-69
Helene Zolkewski	1969-70
Carol Bomer	1970-76
Norman Bomer	1970-76
Beverly Nydam	1970-72
Elaine Cuis	1972-73
Hazel Nanninga	1973-74
Reta Strydhorst	1973-March 29, 1974
Robert Wiley	1976-77
Kenneth Wold	1976-77
Evert Vroon	1976-79
Joy Siebring-Wierenga	1977-May 1980
Liz Esselink	1977-1981
Margaret Dykstra	1979-80
Frank Rayment	1979-
Kathi Hellinga	May 1980-March 1984
Jim Bosma	1980-
Joanne Vanden Brink	1981-83
Ron Goetter	1983-
Brenda Schulz	1983-
Alvina Doet	March 1984

Teachers – Covenant Canadian Reformed School

Jacob J. Hoekstra	1977-1984
Aukina Janssen	September-December 1977
Jeanette Kingma	January-June 1978
Cor H. Aardappel	1978-1981
Jan Jongsma	January 1979-1981
Helen Dorgeloos	1979-198
Peter Koopman	1981-1983
Heres Snijder	198
Ailco R. Siel	198[illegible]984
Justine J. T. Vander Linden	September-December 10, 1983
Rene Beijes	February-June 1984

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Wel Bedankt*

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[illegible] *Land Bars*

For researching and/or writing articles we thank Shelley Bos, Dick De Vries [illegible] *pioneer life*

For editorial assistance we thank Jeannette De Gier, Reta Strolhorst, and Angela Tuininga

We thank Jo Ann Nanninga for co-ordinating the artists' efforts. For art work [illegible] *Nanninga, Jo Ann Nanninga, Joanne Nanninga, Henry Pham, Elaine Visser, Rita Visser, Chris Vriend, and James L. Wierenga*

For work on maps, charts, and diagrams we thank Carolyne Larsen, Beth [illegible] *you to Alice De Gier, Mabel Elgersma, Johanna Visser, Neil Vriend, and Winn* [illegible]

Thank you to the typists: Carolyne Aarsen, Connie De Gier, Alvina Dost, Sylvia Nanninga, Fred Olthuis, Sandra Olthuis, Crystal Piers, Kim Pikkert [illegible] *Karen Mast and Alida Tuininga, who did the bulk of the typing.*

Thank you to the many proof readers: Corinne Aarsen, Jeannette Bosma, Jeannette De Gier, Betty Gelderman, Pat Gelderman, Ruth Janssen, Arnold Nanninga, Dora Nanninga, Gerald Nanninga, Larry Nanninga, Liz Nanninga [illegible] *Tuininga, Marjorie Tuininga, Case Van Beek, Irene Van Beek, Shirley Van Beek, Diane Wierenga, Fern Wierenga, and Janice L. Wierenga.*

We thank Ann Tiemstra for co-ordinating the volunteers who helped to sort and [illegible] *Marjorie Tuininga, Anita Veldhuisen, Florence Visser, Joanne Visser, Fern* [illegible]

If we have inadvertently omitted anyone who helped, we apologize.

[illegible] *writing and publishing A Furrow Laid Bare.*

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Neerlandia District History

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Neerlandia Historical Society wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following institutions and persons:
Heritage Hall, Calvin College and Seminary
Provincial Museum and Archives, Edmonton
Lorne R. Buhr, Legislature Library, Edmonton
Allan Charles, county manager, County of Barrhead #11
Herman Frescher of Shoal Creek for his help in obtaining photos of coins and paper money
Herman Ganzevoort of the University of Calgary for material, advice, and editorial assistance
Al Granger of Friesen Printers for his assistance
Benita Hinse of Canada Post
Ellen Matheis of Sioux Center, Iowa, U S A for help with editing and design
Norman Matheis of Sioux Center, Iowa, U S.A. for his original drawings for the chapter title pages
Albert van der Heide of *The Windmill Herald* for providing photos
Bill Weber of Alberta Education
C. H. Weir for supplying data on the titles of the land in the hamlet
The society is also grateful for the grant from Alberta Culture

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ISBN 0-88925-465-6

NOV 13 1986

Published by
Neerlandia Historical Society
Neerlandia, Alberta T0G 1R0
Canada

First printing, 1985

Printed and bound in Canada by
Friesen Printers
16644-117 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5M 3W2
Canada
Head Office
Altona, Manitoba
Canada

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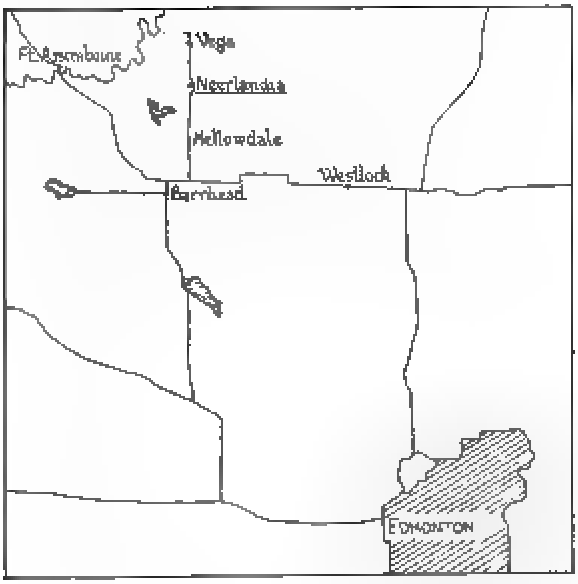
PREFACE

The Neerlandia community is defined as much by church affiliation as by the location of one's land. Therefore the boundaries have been delineated in two ways. Since those who began the community settled in a certain area of Townships 61 and 62, anyone who resides or formerly resided on these sections has been recorded in the book. In addition, anyone who is affiliated with either the Canadian Reformed Church or the Christian Reformed Church in Neerlandia has been included even though they live outside the physical boundaries.

We regret that we were unable to contact some former residents and that some residents did not submit family histories



INTRODUCTION

For many years the people of Neerlandia said to each other, "Somebody should write a book about Neerlandia," and everyone always agreed. For many years that is all that happened.

Then in 1982 a group of old-timers, children of the original settlers, met to discuss ways and means of recording the history of Neerlandia. Very quickly this group realized the immensity of the task which lay before them. Already in their seventies and with little formal education, they believed the task to be beyond them. They turned to us, their children, and we willingly shouldered the burden.

As we engaged in this labour of love, we grew to appreciate the sacrifices which our forefathers had made to provide a better life for their children. We began to realize the courage and faith they had, but above all we saw the leading of God in their lives.

Neerlandia, whose story we tell, is a unique community. Almost all of its residents, since 1911, have been of one ethnic background — Dutch — and of one faith — Protestants of Reformed persuasion.

There is more than one way to record the history of any area. We have attempted not only to record the events that took place in Neerlandia from 1911 to 1984, but also to show how a people whose express purpose was to establish a Christian community have worked toward that goal.

To you, the reader, we offer this book — a history of Neerlandia. We hope that the people whose stories are recorded herein become as real to you as they did to us.

Neerlandia Historical Society
Editors,
Elsie Navis
Joy Siebring-Wierenga

A FURROW LAID BARE

The title chosen for the book of Neerlandia's own unique story clearly speaks of the community's agricultural base. It carries within it the cultural mandate for man to subdue the earth and to have dominion over it. When our people first came they trod on virtually virgin land, rich and fertile, uncultivated, unbroken and wild, though clothed in luscious garments of natural growth.

A furrow is a vision, a hope, a dream, a beginning, a frontier, a challenge, a promise, an achievement, and a way of life. It's like the dawn, breaking forth, opening on the birth of a new day. Our people know the feeling; the analogy is overwhelming.

A Furrow Laid Bare is a furrow laid open to reveal fresh, moist, fertile soil — soil ready to welcome the rays of warm golden sunlight, to drink in the penetrating rain — waiting to be fed with seed or kernel, while anticipating wonderful miracles to occur and lending hope for an abundant harvest. It's an annual event, an on-going process year after year, coupled with faith and prayer. We plant and seed while God provides the increase in all areas of life.

Think of a furrow as only a small portion of any farm, but many furrows make a field. So Neerlandia is only a small part in God's vast creation, a small but significant piece of the entire mosaic. God sees it all from the beginning to the present and beyond. We tell our story — the joys and sorrows, the storms and rainbows, accomplishments and failures, births and deaths, struggles and victories, years of prosperity and times of poverty, striving and attaining — the bittersweet. We speak of milestones reached, of progress made, of houses fashioned, of roads crossed, and of lives lived. We are aware too that communities around us beheld our deeds, laid open and bare as a furrow.

A Furrow Laid Bare is an acknowledgement of dependence on our Creator. It is a testimony to the Lord's faithfulness and His great love.

A Furrow Laid Bare is a vision — the vision of a singular people in a singular community. And the vision remains unclouded.

Carrie Groot

HOW WE REMEMBER

Participants in an event frequently remember it in entirely different ways. Mention of a long ago sleigh ride may evoke fond or painful memories; noon hour games from one's childhood may be recalled with delight or distaste.

When accounts of the past differ from our own recollections, it is easy to consider others to be mistaken. The fact of the matter is that not only one's memories, but also one's immediate perceptions of an incident may differ dramatically from those of others.

Seldom do any two people experience an event in exactly the same way. A gold medalist's moment of triumph means defeat and humiliation for his competitors. A shared airplane flight may be experienced as exciting, boring, or frightening by various passengers. Witnesses to an accident often give divergent reports. That sleigh ride was not as pleasurable for the fellow whose leg was broken as it was for the girl receiving her first kiss. Those compulsory noon hour football games that delighted the older boys and their teacher were dreaded by the younger, more timid girls.

One's reactions to events in his life are influenced by such factors as his interests, abilities, size, appearance, reputation, and temperament. Rich and poor, strong and weak, young and old, men and women may perceive the same situation differently. In addition, an entire set of earlier circumstances colours one's interpretation and determines his impression of each new experience. Previous successes and failures, joys and sorrows have a bearing on his perception of this incident. And the way in which one remembers the past is dependent upon these varying reactions, interpretations, and perceptions.

Memory is selective; time serves to highlight or alter some aspects of an event, while minimizing or even obliterating others. Some people remember only the pain and unhappiness of the past; others, whose lives appear to have been similar, long for the "good old days". An episode in which both of you were equally involved may be remembered in vivid detail by you, but completely forgotten by your brother, for reasons of which neither of you may be aware.

No one, then, can presume to speak for others, regardless of the intimacy of the relationship. No one can say for all, "This is the way it was." At best, it is the way one person, with one frame of reference, happens to recall his perception of what actually occurred in the past. Someone else's memory may have perceived the event quite differently. Maybe you are right this time; maybe he is; maybe the truth lies somewhere in between.

Shirley Matheis

Part One

Historical Frame Work

The Setting

FLORA AND FAUNA

Neerlandia is set neatly on the border of the parkland and boreal forest regions of Alberta. The region is home to many animal species. It is impossible to accurately record all the plants and animals which live or have lived in the area. The following selections – factual or in story form — are intended to acquaint the reader with some of the inhabitants and portray life in days gone by

Plants

Townships 61 and 62 were once covered with a mixture of willow, poplar, spruce, and tamarack In lesser numbers birch, aspen, alders, and a few other trees could also be found A wide variety of shrubs grew beneath the trees or along the creek banks Nestled beneath the trees or in open areas grew numerous flowers.

Year after year, from time immemorial, the plants follow the God-ordained rhythm for their lives Let us follow the native plants through the seasons.

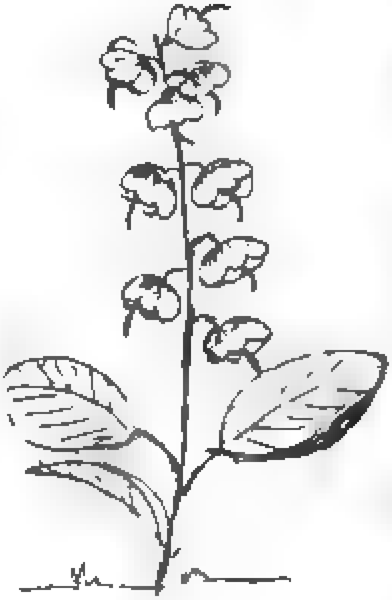
Before the snow is quite gone the prairie crocus is seen on sandy ground It is followed closely by the bright yellow dandelion In the meantime silver-grey pussy willows on dark maroon stems have been watching the coming of spring. The birch and poplar vie with each other to be the first to leaf out A common saying is "If the birch leafs out before the poplar the spring will be wet." Regardless of which wins everyone is eager to see the first green after the long winter. At the same time the black poplar buds are swelling Then almost overnight, all the trees show a hint of green, and after a couple of days of warm weather the leaves are out Soon the trees are flowering. To see the flowers one must look closely because all the flowers are small. Among the most spectacular are the bright red catkin-like flowers of the black poplar Having once seen these the observer will wonder why he did not notice them before Having learned to look closely, the observer will next admire the bright purple flowers of the tamarack which look like the tiny cones they will become

The tamarack is at the same time putting forth its delicate light green needles in little tufts, forming a lacy pattern In the muskeg beneath the tamarack in marshy, boggy places, golden patches of the yellow marsh marigold (buttercup) are seen

All the other trees and shrubs are also bursting forth in leaf and flower to make the most of the brief growing season Everywhere the fruit-bearing plants are displaying their white flowers Those that can be most readily seen are the chokecherry along the creeks and the saskatoon scattered throughout the area The dainty twining honeysuckle send forth a lovely smell. Their flowers are protected by two leaves which form a protective cup. Smaller bushes such as raspberries and highbush cranberries can be easily found too. Then the beautiful pink wild roses bloom abundantly filling the air with a lovely fragrance One must look closely at the ground to find the pretty wild strawberry flower. Other flowers may also be seen if one but takes the time to look.

Under the shrubs the bluebells and white fairy bells are starting to show up. On shady places in the woods the lovely pink twin flowers bloom with round, shining green leaves. Winter green shows waxen pink flowers with red stamens in April Other spring flowers that may be seen are the trillium with three leaves and the bunchberry, almost like the trillium, but with five leaves In shady spots the dainty Canada Mayflower with two leaves and a cone of white flowers are also among the early spring flowers Purple and white peavine grows everywhere

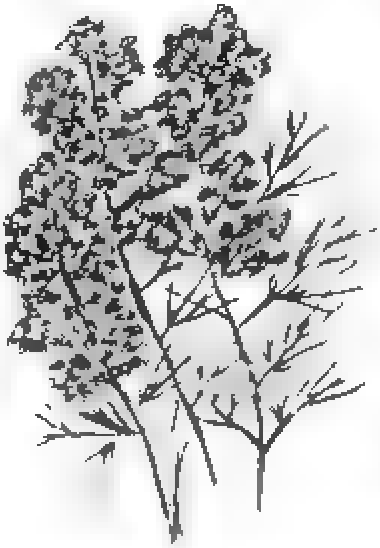
Soon the light green of spring gives way to the more mature dark-green of summer The early flowers quickly disappear as the plants begin to make seed The aspen, a poplar known also as the trembling aspen, shows its small roundish leaves Because its leaves shake and rattle with the slightest breeze the Indians called it the noisy leaf tree The black poplars stand majestic in their rough grey bark and are equalled only by the stately white spruce which, though green all winter now grow new needles. In the bogs the black or cat spruce are also growing and making new cones They are rather scraggly-looking trees, but they too have their place on the landscape



Now the fireweed is seen as it sends forth its spears of pink flowers in open sunny areas These cheerful plants are the first to grow on burned-over areas, so abundant when a fire set by the Indians or started by an electrical storm had cleared a piece of land

The beautiful tiger lilies and the northern bedstraw and other summer flowers now appear Tall meadow rue, white loco weed, and nodding wild onion with it long leaves and white flowers seem to want to crowd each other out In the muskeg are found the pink arctic bramble which smells so nice Silverweed grows in somewhat less-moist spots In the woodlands one will find the purple wild columbine The dark purple clematis, one of Alberta s few flowering vines, may be seen twining around some slender tree There too it is possible to find the pink or yellow lady slipper, which is really an orchid

Before long the goldenrod is seen along the trails, replacing wild rose pink with the golden colour of fall White daisies and red and pink Indian paintbrush make the meadows look like a painting by Monet Asters are also more noticeable as harbingers of fall The western dock with its rusty spiked head of seeds is seen throughout the area Its thick yellow roots were used by the Indians to make dye



The wild fruits are forming on the shrubs Chokecherries along the creeks are starting to hang in clusters forming their astringent fruits Saskatoons which in spring bloomed with beautiful white blossoms now grow purple fruits for which the birds and people compete The fruits of these two plants were used by the Indians in making pemmican On smaller bushes, about three feet from the ground, the red wild raspberries are ripening Here and there one may find wild currants In the muskeg, lowbush cranberries and muskeg berries will soon be ready for the ambitious picker

All too soon summer gives way to fall The rosebushes hang heavy with rose hips The beautiful dogwood flowers have formed flat clusters of white berries The high bush cranberries are ripe now The conifers, including the black spruce, are laden with cones which the squirrels are busily storing away for their winter food supply Every weed, shrub, and tree is full of seed The foxtail seed breaks loose and sails with the wind or lodges in an animal's fur. Sow thistle and dandelion have already sent their seeds sailing to new homes on fluffy parachutes. The brown-headed bulrushes stand proudly in the ditches and marshes waiting for the wind to tug away at their heads and release their seeds too.

In this season the plants are clothed in autumn splendour. The smaller bushes and shrubs form a bright red contrast to the golden yellow of the birch and poplar. Sometimes the aspen shows a faint tinge of red. The tamarack now reveal the beauty of the muskegs as their needles turn orange in striking contrast to the dark green of their evergreen counterparts, the black spruce. The beauty of God's creation and the abundance of seed and fruit for man and beast is a source of wonder and praise.

Then winter comes; the leaves are gone; the little plants lie dormant beneath their mantle of snow. The bare branches of the broadleaf trees form an intricate pattern against the sky. Only the spruce remains green, a symbol of the life which will emerge again in spring.

Birds

The Indian paused on the trail to listen to the faint honking in the sky. Looking up he saw a V-shaped wedge of birds flying far overhead. Spring had come at last he knew, for these were the great Canada geese returning from their winter home. He watched as they dropped to land on the water of Baird Lake. They would not stay long — just a few days to rest and then wing their way further north. But that did not matter. The Indian knew they were the heralds of spring.

The Indian did not call the birds Canada geese, nor was the lake known to him as Baird Lake. The event occurred before the white man arrived in the area now known as Neerlandia. Many birds lived in the area at that time.

Baird Lake and the other little lakes and streams nearby were home to an abundance of waterfowl. Besides the Canada geese, snow geese, swans, and a variety of ducks used the lake as a stopping place on their journey north. Many moved on but some stayed. The mallards with their iridescent necks and the pintails were some of those that spent the summer. The elegant black and white loon, so graceful in the water, nested on the shores of the lakes — its lonely but beautiful cry echoing over the still lake in the evening.

On the shore red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds wove their nests around the stalks of the bulrushes. Terns which nested on the ground made graceful flights in the air above. Shore birds such as the killdeer and sandpiper frequented the edges of the streams and ponds. The killdeer was one of the first birds to return in spring and soon its monotonous call would be heard constantly. During its courtship flight over the muskeg where it made its home, the snipe produced a haunting sound by winnowing the air through its tail feathers.

Besides the migratory geese and ducks, the first returning bird the Indian saw was a big black crow. Not fussy eaters, the crow would easily survive in the cold spring days. Before long all the birds had returned to their summer homes and the air was filled with song as each staked out its territory. There were the red-breasted robins bustling busily about the bluebirds quietly finding a nesting spot, and a host of warblers, sparrows, and finches flitting about One day the Indian saw a yellow-breasted greyish-brown bird with a distinct v-shaped black patch on its breast, which he had never seen before. Little did he know it was a meadowlark, gradually extending its range northward as the white man cleared the land Among the last to arrive were the goldfinches and when the Indian saw these bright yellow and black birds building nests. he knew that spring was over and summer had begun

Though the birds were all busy building nests and raising their young, they had to be alert for danger because birds of prey had also returned for the summer. They had little fear of the sparrow hawk, a pretty blue and brown bird that ate mainly insects, but when the pigeon hawk, the sharp-shinned hawk, the goshawk, and the red tailed hawk appeared the Indian would see the small birds flee in terror. The marsh hawk, which made its nest a few feet above the ground and dined on grasshoppers, mice, and crickets, was no threat to them

A wide variety of birds inhabited the area. In open areas the tall sandhill crane was sometimes seen. A mournful ah-hoo-hoo signalled the presence of a mourning dove And northwest of Baird Lake a pair of bald eagles nested From an aspen grove the melodious song of the house wren could be heard, though the bird itself was seldom seen. Among the tamarack or spruce, the western tanager made its home Ruby-throated hummingbirds nested in the woods but they, too, were seldom seen They sometimes followed the yellow-bellied sapsuckers around, sipping the sap from the holes the larger birds had made

When the Indian went hunting he would enjoy the graceful flight of the swallows overhead Occasionally he saw a tree-swallow's nest in a deserted woodpecker's hole Sometimes when he returned home late in the evening he would be startled by the sudden swoop of a nighthawk

As the days grew shorter and the leaves began to turn colour the birds. who had by then raised their families, began to return to their winter homes So silently and so gradually did they leave that not till the Indian stopped to rest one day did he realize that there were few birds around Then again he heard the familiar honking and looking upward he again saw the powerful geese winging their way across the sky He stood and watched for a moment and then went on his way; though many birds were gone, some would remain for the winter

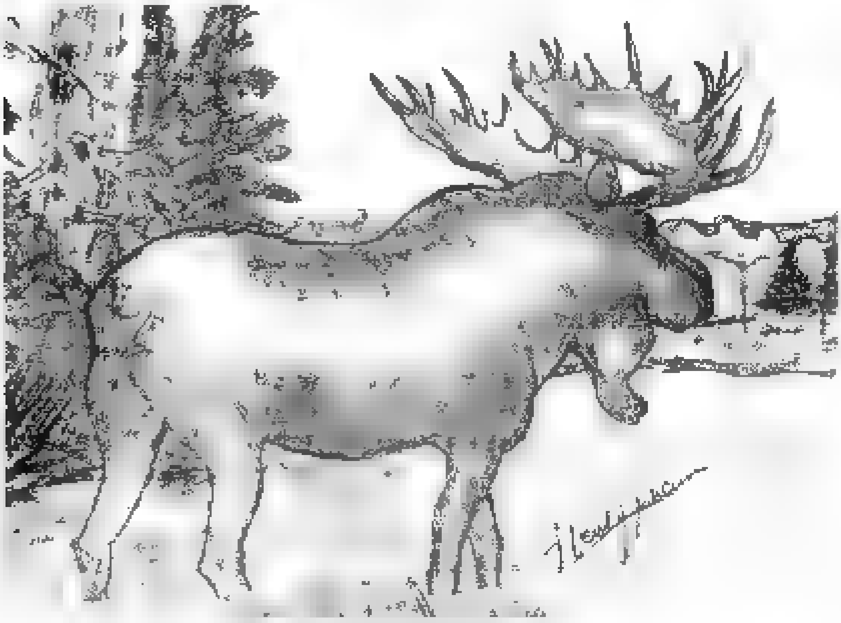
In the distance a woodpecker could be heard drumming on a tree It might have been a hairy woodpecker or its smaller replica, the downy woodpecker. It may have been the pileated woodpecker, a black bird the size of a crow but with a bright red crest But most likely it was the most common of the woodpeckers the common flicker

Time went by, all the summer residents were gone but it was far from quiet in the wood The cheerful chickadees hopped about and called to one another. The blue jays called too, in their strident voices At night the whoo-whoo of an owl could be heard The great gray owl and the great horned owl are two of the owls which lived in the area. The boreal owl, with a head that appeared as large as its body, could be seen sitting in a tree The Canada jay (or gray jay or whisky jack as it is variously known) was a frequent visitor to the Indian encampment, picking up what scraps it could.

Then one morning the Indian awoke to see a flock of snow buntings (snow birds) swooping about Now they appeared dark, now light, as the flock rose and turned as one He knew that fall was over and winter was at hand, for these birds never entered the area till October. Soon it would snow and winter would have come. Other birds that spent the winter would be seen. He thought of the long winter ahead and hoped that he would be able to shoot ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse for his family They were easy to spot because of their habit of roosting in trees, but they were so alert that they often flew away in a whirr of wings before he could release an arrow. The spruce hen, though not as tasty, was easier to catch As he mused the first snowflakes began to fall and soon the ground was covered with snow

Mammals

Standing at the edge of the timber on high ground, the bull moose surveyed his kingdom. To the southeast he could see a lake; to the west lay the muskeg The moose had lived here in the swampy land of Alberta for many years. On his hide were scars from battles fought with other males in the rutting season, but for the moment he was at peace. He lowered his head and began to browse on the tender willow that were all around him. As he browsed he gradually wandered into the muskeg.



Suddenly a rabbit (Mackenzie varying hare) came zig-zagging into view, pursued by a lynx. Neither of them liked this soggy terrain but in the race they had not noticed where they were going. The hare found a hummock on which to crouch and the lynx gave up the chase.

The commotion had disturbed the moose and he lifted his head and moved awkwardly to higher ground. After pausing for a moment on the edge of the muskeg he moved off into the woods. As he did so a tiny shrew, weighing less than four grams, scurried away unnoticed beneath his feet. Perched on a rotting log, a little northern chipmunk watched his progress and then went on gnawing a rose hip. Other animals marked his passing too — voles and mice in the grass beneath hesitated in their search for seeds. In the trees above squirrels scolded loudly as he passed, but the moose, lord of the land, paid them no heed. He was looking for deciduous trees with tender foliage.

As he travelled he met other animals — most of which he ignored. At one spot he met a porcupine that had descended from a tree and was shuffling along the path. After a moment's hesitation the moose stepped aside to let the smaller animal pass. A few paces further the moose met a coyote who had not been so wise. Frantically the coyote, who had hoped to make a meal of the porcupine, was trying to scrape off the quills which were firmly embedded in its muzzle. On seeing the moose it retreated into the bush.

The moose had been travelling steadily south and now it came to a small lake. Along the shore grew the succulent plants the moose loved. He waded into the water, lowered his head and began to feed, oblivious to the commotion he caused. Muskrats, whose untidily-constructed homes dotted the little lake, dived at his coming. Birds flew away at his approach. When they saw that he meant no harm to them, the smaller animals soon went about their business again.

His appetite satisfied, the moose turned from the lake and, following a trail which led to the northeast, he went on his way. He followed a creek which flowed out of Baird Lake. At one point he came upon a beaver dam behind which he could see several lodges. Skirting the dam he crossed the creek and wandered in an easterly direction. Occasionally he stopped to browse. He came to a heavy bush where there was a stand of big poplars. Here he found a comfortable spot and bedded down. He dozed and dreamed of younger days. Suddenly there was a commotion overhead as a marten pursued a squirrel. How the squirrels scolded as they scattered this way and that, but one was too slow and soon the marten retired to eat its meal.

The moose arose and, still travelling eastward, came to an open spot where four deer were grazing. He watched them curiously because they were not often seen in this wooded part of Alberta. Then he was on his way again, paying no attention to a weasel which popped its head out of a fallen log. The moose wandered restlessly here and there. In the distance he saw a wood bison standing quietly beneath a tree. He watched incuriously as a group of caribou (western woodland caribou) trotted by with a clacking of hooves. With greater alertness the moose watched a black bear as it overturned logs in search of insects

Suddenly the moose caught the scent of a wolf Though not common in the area wolves occasionally ranged this far in search of food As a healthy adult moose he was not in great danger from a lone wolf but, taking no chances, he lifted his head and raced to the south into a patch of deadfall to avoid it The wolf seemed not to be hunting, for it made no attempt to follow the fleeing animal

When the moose realized he was not being pursued, he stopped However, something seemed to be urging him on, so he picked his way through the fallen trees and ambled onward. As before, he met a number of animals as he went — a skunk family which was delicately searching through the remains of rotten log for insects and larvae, and a couple of bright-eyed foxes playing on a creek bank.

The moose turned and followed the creek past beaver lodge after beaver lodge — but nowhere did he see a beaver Not so long ago the streams were filled with beaver who slapped their tails and dived beneath the water at his approach. He did not know that the Indians had trapped and killed them for their furs. To his surprise he saw a mink slink along the creek bank. It was strange not only because mink, along with flying squirrels and bats, usually came out only at night, but also because there seemed to be fewer mink around than before. Perhaps the mink felt the same restlessness that the moose did.

Tired of following the creek the moose turned west, and here he saw something he had never seen before. It was a wooden structure built in a clearing About it, he noticed the smell of man — not the smell of the Indians who hunted him, but a strange, paler smell that he did not know. Frightened now, the moose made a wide arc around the area and fled to the northwest until he reached his home. Safe in the thick woods he pondered the strange thing he had seen and wondered what it meant As night fell the moose forgot the encounter, little knowing the change it would bring, not only to his life but to the lives of all the animals of the district.

Thunderstorm

Sometimes, after a stifling hot summer's day, with not even a wisp of breeze to give some relief, clouds can be seen gathering on the horizon — a thunderstorm is brewing Thunderstorms can come up very fast The faraway rumbling, which seems to come from the bowels of the earth, soon becomes sharper and rolls from horizon to horizon The glaringly bright jags of lightning seem almost audible, like the cracking of a whip or the hissing of a viper. When the thunderstorm is right above, lightning and thunder blend together in a frightening concert. But still no refreshing rain. Suddenly great gusts of wind blow up dust and loose objects fly across the fields. Then the rain starts pouring from the dark, black sky Now the thunder and lightning diminish and the thunderstorm moves on. But the rain, falling more gently now, keeps on — the mild aftermath of violent thunderstorms, refreshing man and beast.

The Northern Lights

Those who have seen the Northern Lights have looked in awe at this display of heavenly beauty. There is something so fragile and fleeting, yet so awe-inspiring, about the rays and bundles of light which seem to chase one another across the sky! At first a few bundles appear, then suddenly the sky is filled with rolling running spikes of white, yellow, green, pink, and blue light! They disappear and re-appear and tumble over each other, first here, then there like beautiful long fingers of coloured light. At times the rustling, tinkling sound of the Lights can also be heard.

Hoarfrost

How lovely the landscape is transformed by the first pure white blanket of snow! But a far greater beauty can be seen some winter mornings — every tree, stalk of grain, blade of grass, everything that can raise its head above the snow is covered with hoarfrost. Shrubs, grasses, and weeds are also covered with the beautiful, white, snowlike icy foliage, a display of such great beauty by the Creator. Then the sun comes up and makes the hoarfrost sparkle and dazzle like myriads of diamonds. But the sun also ends this phenomena. With soft plops, the white covering falls to the ground to blend with the soft white snow. So ends a world encased in glittering crystal, again to appear during some other winter night.

Early Sojourners

EARLY SOJOURNERS: PRE 1911

Neerlandia as a township has a relatively young history, compared to the thousands of years before white settlers moved in. Then the land belonged to native tribes of Indians who hunted, trapped, and traded here as recently as thirty years before settlement began. In those times the land was thick with trees, scattered full of treacherous swamps, and teeming with wildlife The native peoples thrived here for centuries, and their traces go so far back in time we can scarcely begin to piece their whole story together The few remnants left give clues to their lifestyles, and we must depend on our knowledge of geography, archeology, and geology for the rest.

Pre-history in the Neerlandia District

The pre-history of Neerlandia is obviously sketchy all there is to go on are the tools, largely projectile points, which were left behind The artifacts reveal that a culture did exist here many years ago, and it existed for some time Beyond that, it is difficult to say anything conclusive

There are many theories of how man came to live in Alberta, much of it speculative. The following ideas are generally agreed upon by archaeologists.

1. Early men arrived in North America from Asia, bringing such characteristics as copper-coloured skin, straight black hair, and high cheekbones.

2. They came by way of the Bering Strait which probably was dry land at one time, owing to the larger quantities of water frozen at the earth's ice caps.

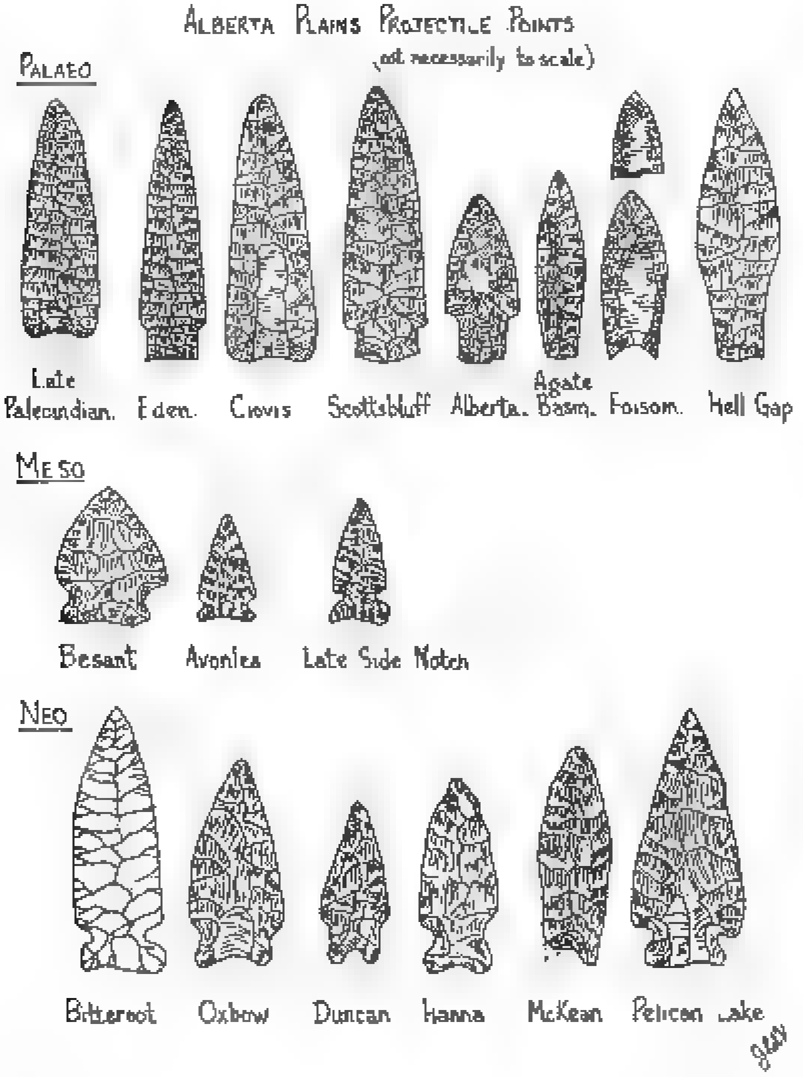
3. These people were a Stone Age people, highly skilled at flint knapping (chipping stones) to fashion tools, the word 'primitive' is a misleading adjective to describe these early inhabitants.

4. They came when much of North America was frozen, and travelled through an ice-free corridor through modern-day Alberta.

While many projectile points have been collected from around Shoal Creek and Shoal Lake, very few are arrowheads. The points used for arrows were rarely larger than one-and-one-half inches and the bow and arrow was a relative late-comer to the local people's weaponry. Archaeologists think that the bow and arrow probably 'arrived' in Alberta around 200 A D , and the projectile points made before that time are more accurately termed spearheads. (Not all spearheads however are older than 200 A.D.)

As to the points themselves, much can be learned. Various styles of points have been found in Alberta and are grouped according to periods of history Palaeo points are the oldest and Neo points are the most recent Each particular point has a name based on the location where the first such point was located, not necessarily in Alberta

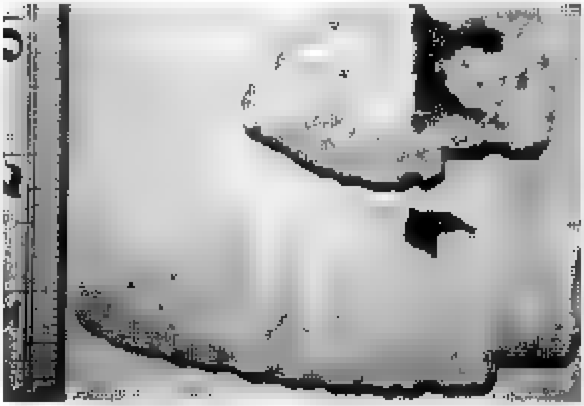
Clovis and Folsom points, first found in the American Midwest, are the oldest category of points found in Alberta They are characterized by a hollowed-out portion near the base of the point



— a so-called 'fluted' point. This type of point is unlikely to be found in the Neerlandia district.

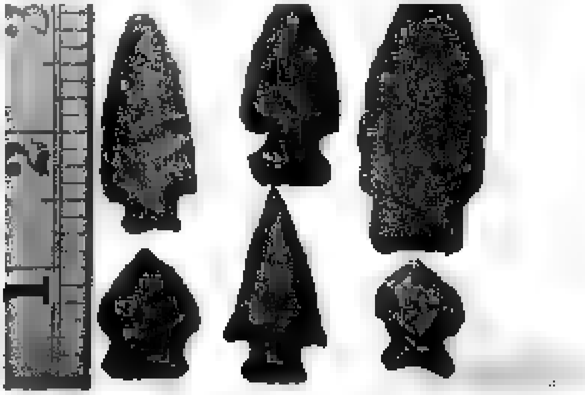
Other Palaeo points, however, have been found. Several fine specimens of Eden points have been located near Shoal Lake. One such point (shown in photograph), though broken and insignificant-looking, is special because of the type of stone used in its construction and the quality of work it displays. Apparently this point was made from Beaver River sandstone, a rock unique to the Fort McMurray area. This may indicate trading patterns between the two regions or a seasonal (or permanent) migration of Indians from that area to the Neerlandia district. This point is also special because the quality of workmanship shows concern for aesthetics as well.

An Eden point from Beaver River sandstone. Note: All artifacts from collections of Cor and Russel Fisher.



Eden and Scottsbluff points.

Oxbow points, smallest point Besant, broken point unknown.

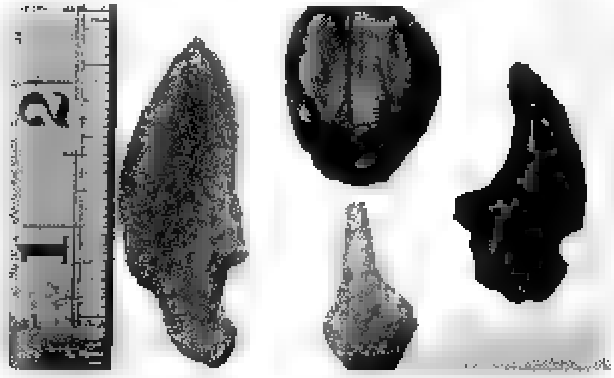


Top: Hanna, Pelican Lake, Scottsbluff. Bottom. Besant, Pelican Lake, Besant

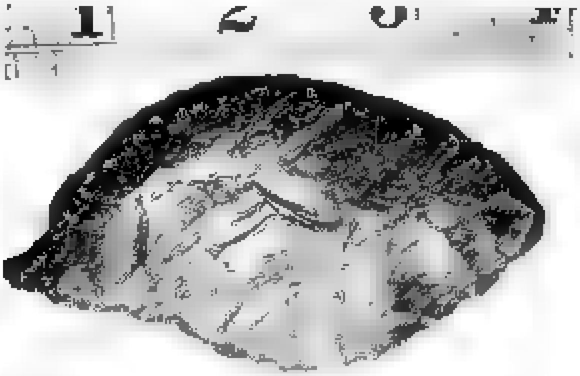
Another almost-intact Eden point was found along Shoal Lake and was constructed from another foreign type of rock — a so-called Knife River flint, commonly found in North Dakota. The stone is a dark translucent colour and is encased in a limestone-like shell. Since archaeologists rarely locate Eden, Scottsbluff, and Alberta points north of Edmonton, these projectile points are quite significant.

A variety of points have been found in the area, but Oxbow and McKean points are probably the most common in the numerous collections around. In addition to what has been noted thus far, other factors to consider when studying the points for identification are size, notched or straight ends, concave or convex bases, the angle of the point, and the kind of chips taken off the point. Even experienced archaeologists find it difficult to categorize all points.

Early man used stone for a great many of his tools, not simply for projectiles. One such small tool was probably used as a spokeshave. This object was bound to a small wooden handle and used to shave the shafts of wooden spears of arrows. Another tool, a small unifacial cutter (worked on one side only), was perhaps used to cut animal hides. Some cutters were constructed of obsidian, which was highly valued for its cutting qualities. The nearest source of obsidian to the area's early inhabitants was most likely the interior of B.C. More common than cutters were bifacial scrapers— large granite or quartzite scrapers chipped on both sides, commonly known as hide scrapers.



Blade, cutter, spokeshave. Front: punch.



Scraper.

Stoneworking was an art common to early man. Judging from the artifacts, he had to be highly skilled, have great strength in his hands, and have a great deal of patience since flaking required this. Often, a piece of moose or caribou hide was placed in the palm to protect the workman's hands from cuts and bruises. Antlers or other stones were probably used to shape the stone. A flake could be expertly chipped from both edges of a projectile point, generating the rib-like design illustrated by the Eden point. Skill was required in selecting the right kind of stone as well, and a brisk trade in Beaver River sandstone from a quarry site near Fort McMurray may have developed.

Early man used his weapons sparingly. Since most points were chipped or broken upon contact with animal bone, hunters wanted to be sure a hit meant a kill. Weapons such as spears and arrows were used in conjunction with snares and deadfalls, with the projectile weapons usually 'finishing off' the prey.

Native Peoples in the Neerlandia District: The Beaver, the Cree, and the Assiniboine

Before 1740, bands of Beaver Indians made their camps along the shores of Shoal Lake near the mouth of the creek and hunted the forests. The migratory Indians had one primary concern: food. When they were unable to bring down large game, which was often the case, they would eat the plentiful hares, unless of course these were low in their cycle. Survival was a relentless chore; starvation was reality.

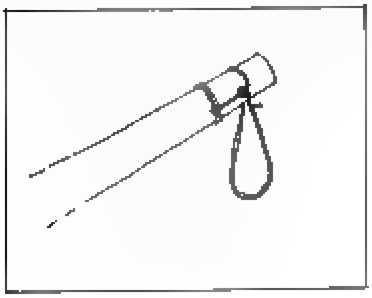
In the hunt, snares and deadfalls were frequently used. Weapons like the bow and arrow and spear were more rare, used usually to kill a snared animal. It was far easier to allow the animals to trap themselves than to expend precious energy chasing them.

Snares were used on animals whose heads were larger than their necks: grouse, hare, fox, lynx, caribou, moose, and bear. The

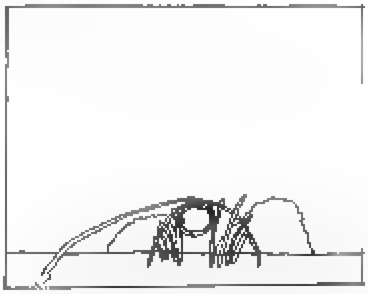
Flint knapping. Drawn from a sketch in National Geographic. Used with permission.

pole snare required a human nearby. The noose snare, probably made from black spruce rootlets gathered in the fall, may have been used to strangle animals already trapped in a set snare, so as not to damage their furs. A spring pole snare required no human assistance.

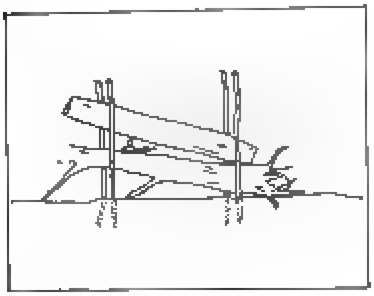
Deadfalls were traps constructed of logs and a bait. When an animal tugged at the bait a heavy log would come crashing down onto its back or neck. The animal rarely lived as a broken neck or crushed skull was enough to cause death.



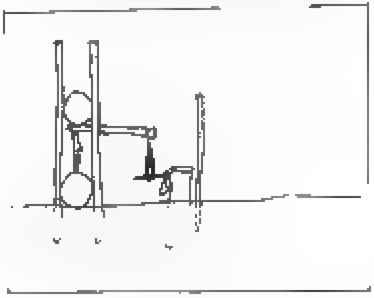
A pole snare



A spring-pole snare



A deadfall

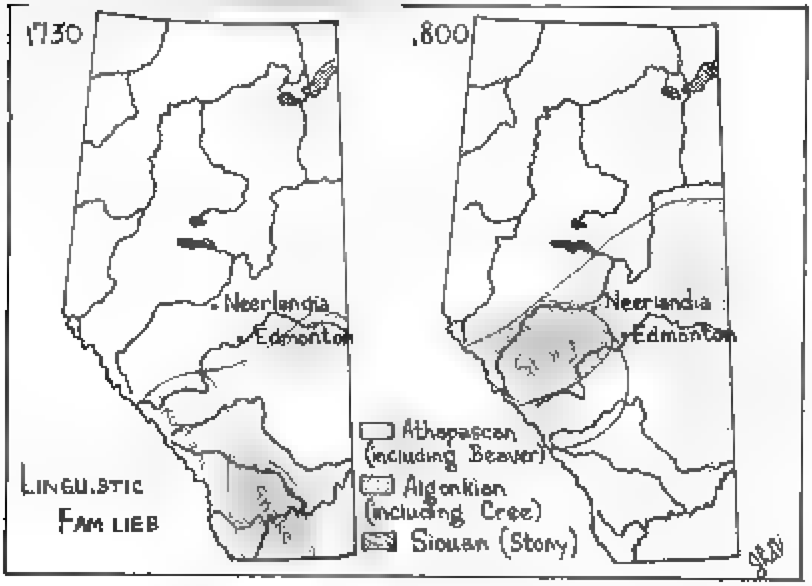


A single-lever deadfall

These hunters lived as an integral part of nature. They believed that the animals they hunted allowed themselves to be killed to prevent the hunter from starving. The Beaver Indian considered himself a part of the environment, not a master of it.

The local Beaver Indians experienced the effects of the fur trade (probably as early as 1740) when they began trapping furs for their eastern neighbours, the Cree. The steel trap may have replaced the traditional snares and deadfalls as early as 1800. Yet the benefits of the fur trade — metal goods, guns, liquor, and beads — found their way slowly to the isolated regions of northern Alberta, and European influence on the Beaver way of life was indirect.

By the mid-1700s, events were transpiring that would eventually disrupt the Beaver way of life in the Neerlandia area. The Cree Indians in the Northern forests of Ontario and Quebec around Hudson Bay had begun to exhaust the furs in that area. As well, Canadian merchants began building forts farther and farther westward. The Crees began to migrate in advance of the fur trading posts, in search of more pelts. As they moved west, they put pressure on other tribes, such as the Beaver, to make way. Resistance to the Cree was not feasible: the Cree had the advantage of



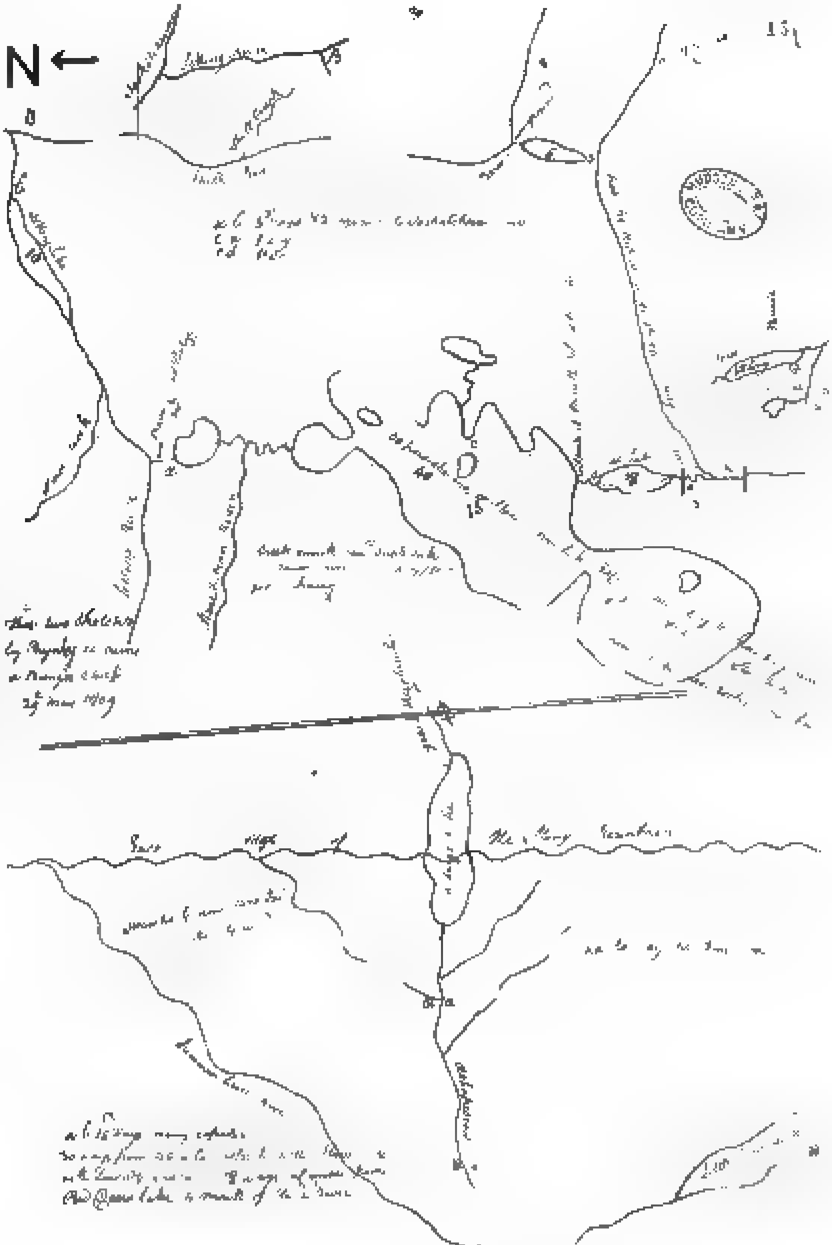
firearms acquired from the Europeans. The local Beaver Indians then began to vacate the Neerlandia area in the late 1700s, moving northward into the Peace River country.

The Cree, a forest people like the Beaver, also migrated in search of food. Since the game they hunted moved in small groups, their bands tended to be smaller family units. They may have wintered on the edges of Shoal Lake, then in the spring moved to the prairies, forming larger bands to hunt the plentiful herds of buffalo.

The Neerlandia district was also the hunting ground of a few scattered bands of Assiniboine Indians. A European explorer, Alexander Henry, reported in 1811 that there were thirty lodges of Swampy Ground Assiniboines at the juncture of the Pembina and Athabasca Rivers, sixty tents of Strong Wood Assiniboines at the MacCleod and Athabasca Rivers (near Whitecourt), and thirty tents of Cree, Assiniboine, and Métis in the forests northwest of Edmonton House.

The Assiniboine Indians had once been part of the larger Yankton Dakota tribe, a powerful group in the mighty Sioux nation. They broke away sometime around 1640 and migrated north to the area above Lake Superior, then westward into the future provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Allying themselves with the Cree, in part for protection against the powerful Blackfoot Confederacy, they eventually found themselves in the former hunting grounds of the Beaver Indians. Some Assiniboines, the Strong Woods, preferred the fast pace of life on the prairies and the excitement of the buffalo hunt. Those who drifted into the boreal forests northwest of Edmonton became known as the Swampy Grounds.

For the Swampy Grounds, life in northern Alberta was not unlike that the Beavers had experienced previously. They hunted the big game — moose, deer, and forest species of caribou and bison



This map was drawn for Peter Fidler, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Lesser Slave Lake, by a Bungee Indian chief in 1909. It shows the future Neerlandia district, bounded by the Summerberry (Pembina) River and an unnamed tributary of the Athapascou (Athabasca) River — The Macleod River — to be the hunting grounds of the Swampy Ground Stony or Assiniboine Indians. The chief indicated to Peter Fidler at that time that these Assiniboines had formerly hunted around Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

for food, probably by shooting them as they swam across Shoal Lake or chasing them as they migrated through the district Beavers and muskrat were often trapped or dug out of their lodges along the creeks or on the edge of the lakes Birds were lured by decoys and shot, or snared using willow - shoot snares. Starvation was part of everyday life, however, as game was not always available in abundance. When bands became desperate for food, it was the hunters who were the first to suffer starvation Every unsuccessful day spent in search of food sapped the hunter's strength making him less able to continue the following day

The wanderings of both the Cree and Assiniboine seem to have stopped by the early 1800s By then, two successive smallpox epidemics had reduced their populations by one-sixth More important, European traders were establishing fur posts in Alberta

The Local Indians and the Fur Trade

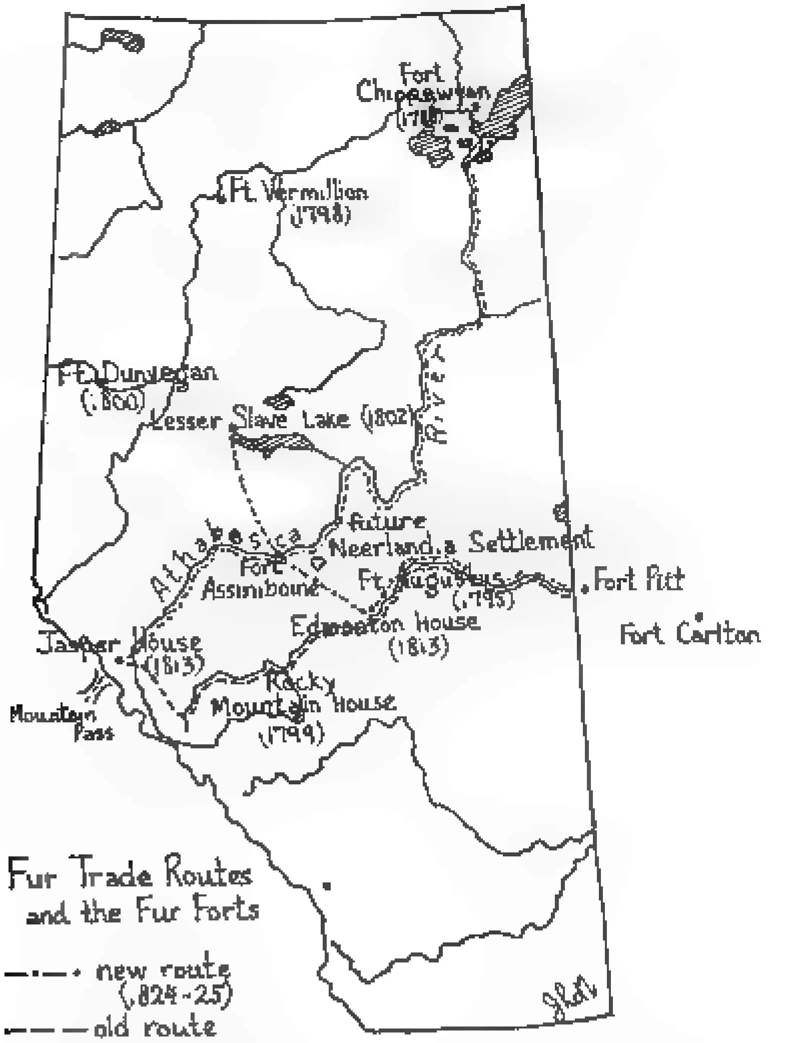
After the turn of the nineteenth century, the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company began a rivalry that put many native tribes in a favourable position The Northwest Company was the first to set up operations in present-day Alberta The Hudson's Bay Company countered by establishing Edmonton House on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River More forts followed, including one at Lesser Slave Lake This competitive situation ended, however, when the two companies merged under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1921

This was the context of the first permanent European presence in the Neerlandia district In 1822 the Hudson's Bay Company's Governor of the Northern Department gave the go-ahead for the construction of another fort — this one to be built on the Athabasca River. The fort would serve one main purpose: to drain activity from the fur-depleted Lesser Slave Lake region One year later, the fort was built at the junction of the Freeman and Athabasca rivers. R. MacDonald was the first official in charge of Athabasca River House, later called Fort Assiniboine, which probably consisted of no more than a few buildings at first. The governor had decided that the local Strong Wood Cree and Assiniboine Indians would be "attached" to the fort, and every effort was to be made to encourage these Indians to trade there

From the early Fort Assiniboine journals, it appears that the local Cree and Assiniboine (including the Indians in the Shoal Lake area) were unwilling to trade at the new fort In the past, these Indians probably traded at Old White Mud Fort, west of Edmonton Two representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company, Patrick Small and George Wood, were instructed to tell the natives in the area that the doors of Old White Mud Fort would henceforth be closed to them, but the Indians refused to comply They complained to the Chief Factor of Edmonton House, John Rowand, about the situation, indicating that they preferred to obtain their supplies from Edmonton House Rowand encouraged them to trade at Fort Assiniboine, lavishing them with small parcels of tobacco and ammunition.

Although the new fort never did meet the expectations of the Hudson's Bay Company, the region became an important link in the Company's transportation system. Canoes and (after 1824) York boats carrying Outfits (shipments of trade goods) travelled from York Factory on Hudson Bay, along the Saskatchewan River system, to points west and north through Edmonton House. With the addition of Fort Assiniboine, the Company would make use of the Athabasca River system to transport Outfits to forts further west

The route required an overland connection to be built between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton House, since the two forts were on



different river systems. To that end, George Simpson commissioned the construction of a road between Fort Assiniboine and Edmonton House. It was cut in the winter of 1824-25, and ran just south of Shoal Lake. The trail's construction attracted some Métis and Freemen (traders independent of the Hudson's Bay Company) to the Neerlandia area. Apparently one such person, Jacques Cardinal, helped cut the trail in this region, before going on to be the horsekeeper at Fort Assiniboine several years later.

The relation of the surrounding Indians to the Fort, even though its fur trade never amounted to much, was one of dependence. The Indians relied on the credit system — they bought supplies with any money that remained. They subsisted during the spring and summer by supplying the post with game — mostly deer, moose, and geese.

The Fort also provided charity in periods of illness and starva-

tion. Frequent cases of starvation were reported in Fort Assiniboine's journals. The Fort dispensed liquor to the natives as a reward for good behaviour during the summer or to encourage winter production The bands that most often frequented the Fort were the Dipents, François, Wolf, and Bull bands of Cree and Assiniboine Indians. Le Petit, You-yare, Blue-Earth Son, Man-ne-nah, Ch-a, Fere Cassée, the Little Crow, and Cree-Speaking Son were all mentioned several times in the journals as coming to the Fort to trade

The trail from Edmonton to Fort Assiniboine opened up the region. The trail, however, was never a good route it was constantly rendered impassable by deadfall and fallen timber, bogs and mud holes were a continual problem The route from Holmes Crossing to the Pembina, passing just shy of the southern shore of Shoal Lake was particularly bad One traveller from Edmonton in 1855 reported that "to the crossing of the Pembina, (the track) was good, but thereafter we encountered swamps, fallen trees, and mosquitoes, the latter in myriads and all hungry"

The missionaries, as usual, were not far behind the fur traders The famous Methodist missionary, Robert T Rundle, began working out of Edmonton House in 1840 and reported great success among the Assiniboines northwest of that post According to reports, he even conducted several 'crusades' at Fort Assiniboine and found the local bands receptive to the gospel message

The life of the local Indian population until 1861 revolved around the fur trading post of Fort Assiniboine They were troubled by bouts of starvation and plagued by lack of game They travelled in small bands during the winter, roved on the plains closer to Edmonton House in the spring and summer, and probably looked with reluctance upon the encroaching European civilization Epidemics of smallpox in 1784 and again in 1838 reduced their numbers drastically

The Local Indians and the Treaties

By 1861 the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine road as part of its transcontinental transport system, bringing isolation back to the Neerlandia area Fort Assiniboine became little more than a way station which connected Jasper House and Lesser Slave Lake to Edmonton House Fur transport parties were redirected over a new trail that from Edmonton House to Athabasca Landing, built in 1862. The road from Fort Assiniboine to Edmonton House, always a difficult road at best, fell into further disuse The fur trade, a limited success even in the early days, soon lost its importance in the 1870s since beaver pelts were no longer in high demand Beaver hats, which had long been stylish in European countries, had been replaced by silk ones By 1877, Fort Assiniboine was abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company

The disappearance of the buffalo also ended the traditional Indian way of life Local Indians in the district may have depended on the buffalo to some extent, but the starvation that became rampant among the Plains Indians may not have been as severe for the Swampy Grounds. In any case, the slaughter of entire herds for little more than tongues and skins led to the animals' virtual extinction by 1879, and ended what little independent life the natives had enjoyed

More important in the end was the sale, unknown to the Indians, of Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories to the fledgling Dominion of Canada in 1870. Although clumsily-engineered, the sale was to have a great effect on the Indian way of life Following on the heels of the land sale were Indian treaties — agreements to extinguish the land titles.

Apparently, the Indians in the Neerlandia area themselves requested a treaty. In 1871 W J. Christie, then Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Edmonton House, reported that he "had a visit from the Cree chiefs . . . The object of their visit was to ascertain whether their lands had been sold or not They referred to an epidemic that had raged throughout the past summer, and the subsequent starvation, the poverty of their country, and the visible diminution of their country . . ."

The government called together the various tribes, two isolated bands of Assiniboine Indians northwest of Edmonton asked to take part in the "ceremonies" These bands, led by their chiefs, Paul and Alexis, had lived apart from many of their tribe, hunting and fishing in the boreal forest region in northern Alberta The proceedings were held in Forts Carlton and Pitt in the late summer of 1876, and not long afterward the Indians chose their reserves — approximately five square miles per family — near their traditional hunting areas. The treaty was later called Treaty No. 6 and covered all the territory south of the Athabasca River in central Alberta

Meanwhile, independent traders began working in the Timeu Creek area and perhaps some Indians there did not go to live on reserves. Most likely, they began supplying the traders with furs until 1899. The majority of Cree and Assiniboine Indians, however, stopped trapping altogether, resigned themselves to their new status, and abandoned the area to go to the newly-created Alexis and Alexander Reserves.

The Settlement Period Begins: The Gold Rush and the Dominion Lands Survey

Although the Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine trail was little-used, settlement was following the trail from Edmonton outward in concentric circles. Settlements such as St. Albert (1894) and Rivière Qui Barre (1895) sprang up along the road, and a store opened up (1896) on the Pembina River at McDonald's Crossing, later called Belvedere

The next year, 1897-98, was the year of the Klondike Gold Rush. Public meetings were held in Edmonton to discuss the Gold Rush and its transportation needs A good number of Klondikers embarked on their way to the Yukon from Edmonton. There were many routes one could follow. One route, from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, then via the Athabasca, Slave, and McKenzie rivers, involved a trip of 2500 miles Another, from Edmonton to Lac Ste Anne, Whitecourt, and Fort St. John using the old Edmonton-Fort Assiniboine road, was only 1500 miles though it was far more difficult. In all, 766 men, 9 women, and 400 horses chose the latter route — only 160 of the men arrived. The road was a difficult one:

during the construction of the route through the Swan Hills 2000 horses had died of starvation due to lack of hay pastures. Ferries were installed to make the trip easier — one near Fort Assiniboine and one at McDonald's Crossing at Belvedere.

The impact of the Gold Rush on Townships 61 and 62 was, however, limited. It did resurrect an almost-forgotten trail and, in a limited way, pave the way for future settlers, but the Rush was short-lived, lasting only three years. The firm of Henderson and Dunlop set up trading posts along the trail at Belvedere and Bloomsbury in 1900-1905. Americans settled Manola in 1906, Paddle River was settled in 1905, Lunnford settlers had been squatting on their land since 1904, and settlers in the Glenreagh and Mellowdale districts began filing for homesteads in 1906-07.

A surveying system for the land had already been decided upon when the Dominion acquired it in 1869. A checkerboard pattern would be followed, after the pattern the Americans had used in their great Midwest. Meridians running north to south and baselines running east to west twenty-four miles apart would be surveyed first. This would be followed by townships blocked-out thirty-six miles square. Each one-mile block was to be further subdivided into four quarter sections.

With a few modifications, this system remained in effect until 1930 when the provinces took over the control of their own public lands. Certain sections were designated as school sections, while the Hudson's Bay Company was given two sections from every township. The teams of surveyors, generally from eastern Canada, faced the monumental task of imposing a giant man-made grid over a seemingly-infinite expanse of territory, not all of it conducive to surveying work. Each team consisted of a deputy-surveyor of the Dominion Lands Survey (DLS) and two chainmen. The latter were required to stretch out a long chain perfectly level, using a plumb bob, in accordance with the transit operator's directives. The team also had the services of two flagmen to help with the setting out of township and section markers. These men were often employed as axemen in the more heavily-wooded areas, to clear the path for the chainmen and transit operator. In the early years each crew was allotted one cook, one horse and cart, and a ration allowance of sixty cents per day. The total daily budget was $13.60.

The deputy-surveyor used the stars to superimpose the grid on the land — a system which required a great deal of accuracy. Any errors immediately became apparent when teams of surveyors failed to intersect each other's paths. The DLS official made field notes on every township surveyed, often describing the desperate conditions of the Indians, the temperature, the tree cover, the trails, as well as giving other information. He was required to give technical information about his daily work of cutting through the bush, traversing streams and lakes, and setting up iron post markers at quarter and section corners. More importantly, however, he reported on the suitability of each township for settlement. These field notes were then handed in to the Surveyor General.

Townships were marked out with wooden posts in the early days, but by the time Neerlandia was surveyed, steel township markers were in use for township and section corners. Lack of feed for the horses, storms, blizzards, and shortages of good water and food were common problems experienced by the surveyors, not to mention the difficulty in keeping good men The reward was often no more than the crossing of new crests and looking upon virgin lands The job was practically complete by 1914, 1 110 000 quarters were marked out – a phenomenal total of 178 million acres!

Cutting a survey line.

C. H. Weir A.L.S

R. W Cautley Surveys the Baseline Through Neerlandia

Townships 61 and 62 Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian, were not surveyed by any single crew Meridians and baselines were usually surveyed before other crews came in to survey the individual townships Since the sixteenth baseline follows the southern edge of Township 61, the men who surveyed it were the first surveyors in the area

Surveying the sixteenth baseline west of the fifth meridian began in the summer of 1904 L F Fontaine, DLS. began working west along the sixteenth baseline, and on June 22 he recorded putting iron post markers at the section corners, and wooden post markers at the quarter section corners. Each marker was mounded using the dirt from four large pits (about two-and-one-half feet square) surrounding the post, the posts were inscribed in Roman numerals with the legal descriptions of the four quarters in each direction Where it was not possible to mark the corners in the normal fashion because a corner was located in a swamp or lake, a witness post was erected at the nearest suitable spot on the quarter section lines Unfortunately Fontaine's personal diary (which all DLS officials were obliged to keep in addition to their field notes) has not survived

All packed and ready to go.

C. H. Weir A.L.S

The next surveyor to enter this country was R W Cautley, who was instructed by the Surveyor General in the fall of 1904 to continue where Fontaine had left off He was to locate the sixteenth baseline and proceed west until he reached the sixth meridian, where work was being carried out by Arthur Saint Cyr Cautley's diary has survived and gives some interesting insights into the conditions under which this area was surveyed.

Swannell, Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

Surveying a lake shore.

Cautley left Edmonton in early November with his crew of fourteen men and six wagons, four of which were contracted from local people. The party arrived in Rivière Qui Barre the same day and, using a government-supplied patronage list, bought additional supplies, including about 10,000 pounds of oats for the horses, from the approved merchants. This done, the group moved on. As they descended the banks of the Pembina River, an axle on one of the government wagons broke, and Cautley had to send a man back to Edmonton to get it replaced.

Cautley used native people from the Lac Ste. Anne area reserves to help him transport supplies. The Indians, presumably once from the Neerlandia area, offered to help Cautley pack his load to his destination. Cautley reports this in his diary: "spent 2½ days haggling with Indians over packing rates, they demanded a daily wage for themselves and horses, but as I was not going with them I refused to consider anything but a flat rate per (pound), which was fortunate as the Indians whom I subsequently started out from Ste. Anne with myself made the trip in exactly half the time that the first outfit took." In any case, Cautley apparently valued the help and especially the Indian ponies supplied by the Indians.

C. H. Weir, A.L.S.

Packing supplies.

C. H. Weir, A.L.S.

A food cache.

Upon locating the sixteenth baseline a short distance west of the Neerlandia district, Cautley set his men to building a log cache (cabin) to store his supplies. This camp would then service his daily camps, the so-called "flying camps" set up along the trail. With the wagon repaired and camp set up, the crew was ready to begin work. On November 21, Cautley "sent packers ahead to make camp six miles east on the line." He left "Archie, Duncan, Bert, and Tom to cruise a road out west and finish log cache, etc., etc. Myself with picketman, two chainmen and cook (were) working out along line toward east. Surveyed five miles." Upon making contact with Fontaine's last post marker and confirming its accuracy, he was ready to continue west towards the Fort Assiniboine district. Of the Neerlandia area, Cautley noted only the great stretches of windfall and brulé (burnt-over woodland), at times almost three feet deep, which made chaining difficult. (The burnt-over forest was presumably a result of the giant forest fires that raged prior to the settlement period.) The temperature that day (November 22) was +10 F., though it was too cloudy for Cautley to make an observation to verify his position.

Surveying Townships 61 and 62

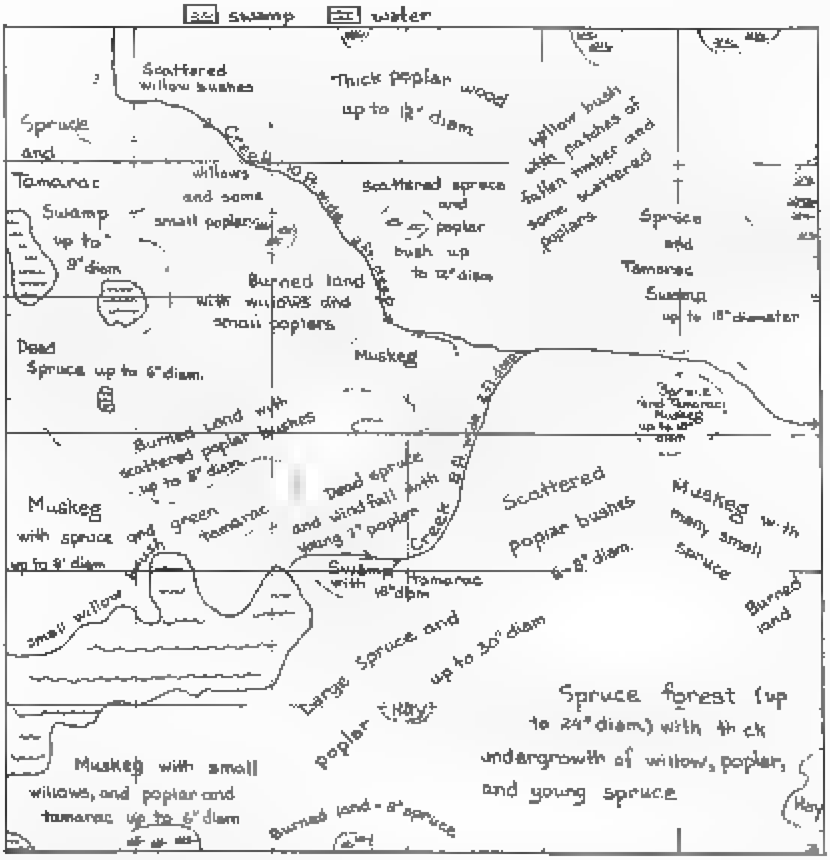
A more substantial survey of the Neerlandia area was carried out, not by R. W. Cautley, but by two other men. In 1907 R. H. Knight surveyed Township 61 and in 1910 Allan Findlay did the same for Township 62. Although their personal diaries are not available, Knight and Findlay's field notes are a source of information.

R. H. Knight led a crew of thirty-three men into the area of Township 61-3-5 in September 1907, and finished his surveying job in approximately three weeks. The entire cost of the survey, including wages, equipment, and iron posts was $1,794.39. This all-British crew had three assistants, one cook, a teamster and packer, eight chainmen, four mounders, and two axemen crews of seven men each. Knight's report to his superior, the Surveyor-General in Ottawa, ran as follows.

> "The best route by which to reach this township from Edmonton is by the old Klondike wagon trail as far as section 19 township 60 range 3, thence by a poorly-constructed wagon trail north easterly which enters this township in section 4.
>
> "The surface of this township is gently rolling and the surface soil is composed of black loam averaging about five inches deep with a subsoil of clay, if once cleared of bush, would be well-suited for mixed farming. There is no prairie and sections 3 and 4 contain all the light scrub in the township.
>
> "There is a large quantity of first class spruce and tamarack timber in sections 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.
>
> "The remaining sections are covered with poplar up to eight inches in diameter accompanied in many places by young spruce of the same age. There are muskegs adjacent to Shoal Lake on the north. Sections 30 and 31, and the west halves of sections 29 and 32 are practically all muskeg. These muskegs are nearly always covered with young spruce or tamarack up to six inches in diameter.
>
> "The only hay found is that growing about the shore of Shoal Lake. There are large quantities here, but the ground is wet which would make the cutting of the hay difficult.
>
> "The water of Shoal Lake is good, also that of Shoal Creek, which runs through the township in a northeasterly direction from the lake.
>
> "The chief source of fuel is the abundance of good wood. Coal is likely to

be found near the surface, but does not outcrop. There are no stone quarries nor minerals of economic value.

"Game in this township is limited to moose and bear of which traces are frequently seen."


swamp
water
Scattered willow bushes
Thick poplar wood up to 12" diam
Spruce and Tamarac Swamp up to 8" diam
Creek 10 ft wide 3 ft deep
willows and some small poplars
Scattered spruce and poplar bush up to 12" diam
Willow bush with patches of fallen timber and some scattered poplars
Spruce and Tamarac Swamp up to 18" diameter
Burned land with willows and small poplars
Dead Spruce up to 6" diam.
Muskeg
Burned land with scattered poplar bushes up to 8" diam.
Spruce and Tamarac Muskeg up to 10" diam
Muskeg with spruce and green tamarac bush up to 8' diam
Dead spruce and windfall with young 7" poplar
Creek 8 ft wide 3 ft deep
Scattered poplar bushes 6-8" diam.
Muskeg with many small spruce
Swamp with Tamarac 18" diam
small willow
Burned land
Large Spruce and poplar up to 30" diam
Hay
Spruce forest (up to 24" diam) with thick undergrowth of willow, poplar, and young spruce
Muskeg with small willows, and poplar and tamarac up to 6" diam
Burned land - 8" spruce
Hay

Surveyor's description of Township 61, 1907

The bodies of water in this township are Shoal Lake, Freemen Lake, Lake No. 1, and Shoal Creek. One member of the surveying crew was an axeman named Freeman. Knight recorded the name of the lake as Freeman Lake, later writing it as Freemen Lake, so it is possible that the lake was named for one of his axemen. Shoal Lake presumably got its name by being the source of Shoal Creek, which had been named earlier by another surveyor. The source of the name of Lake No. I remains a mystery.

The crew who surveyed Township 62 was led by Allan Findlay, DLS. The crew worked in this area from June 23 to July 16, 1910, three years after Knight had done his work further south. The crew had two transit men, Allan Findlay and James A. Findlay, four chainmen, one cook, one teamster, and eighteen axemen and mounders.

The field notes describe a township swampy in several places, with much deadfall and brulé. The creeks leading into Baird Lake were measured according to depth, flow, and direction of flow. For example, the creek going into Baird Lake from the north was two feet deep at the time and had a flow of one hundred yards per hour.

(One chainman was named Ivie Baird, and it is possible that Baird Lake, the only body of water in this township, was named after him.)

In the muskeg.

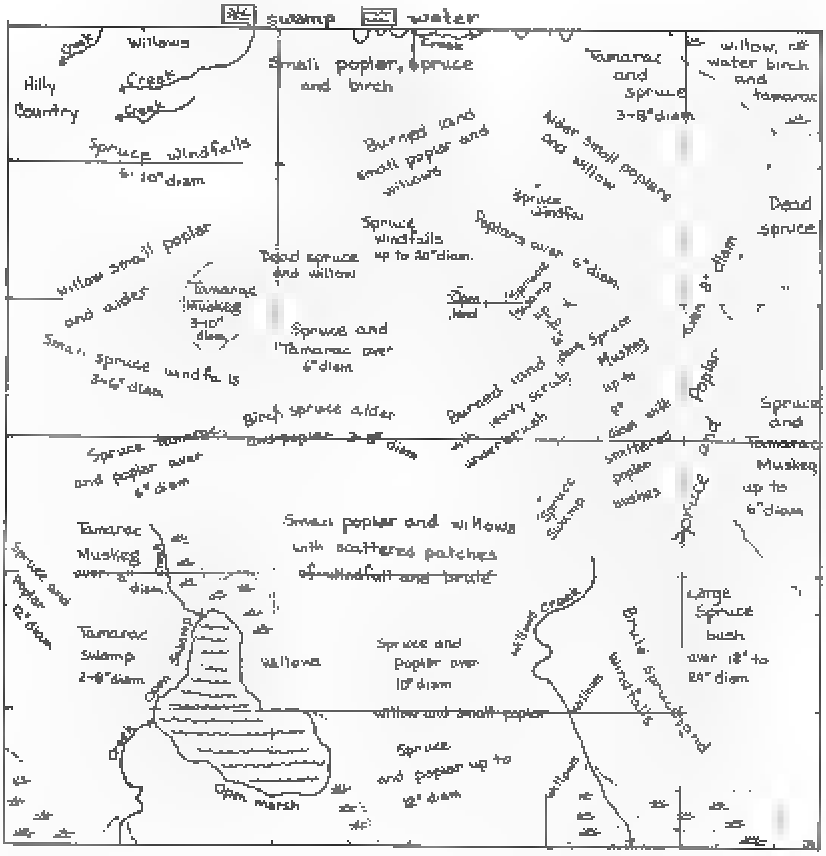
C. H. Weir, A.L.S.

In 1910, Findlay was able to report that "This township is reached by a road running north from Mellowdale P.O. The road had previously been as far as Shoal Lake. It was boggy in a couple of places and somewhat blocked up by windfalls." Findlay reported cutting a road entering the township at the S.W. corner of Section 3 and leaving it at the N.E. corner of Section 33. He continues his report to his superiors as follows.

> "The surface of the township is fairly level, the main height of land being in the vicinity of the north boundary of section 28. In the swamps there is a considerable depth of moss and peat, the higher ground being composed of 4" to 10" black loam with heavy clay subsoil and being very suitable for mixed farming. Some slough hay can be obtained from the vicinity of Baird Lake.
>
> "There is an abundance of fresh water conserved by the forest growth and the muskeg. A number of small streams flow out of the township, but there are none flowing in, and there is no liability of floods nor any opportunity for the development of water powers. There is a plentiful supply of rain throughout the summer months. Some very hot weather was experienced in July, and no frosts were noticed until the latter part of August. Firewood can be procured in all parts of the township, former forest fires having left tracts of dead spruce, tamarack and poplar ready seasoned for use. There are no minerals, coal, or stones suitable for quarrying. Quite a number of black bears were seen; also moose, jumping deer, and some smaller game. Partridge are plentiful. Muskrats, mink and other fur-bearing animals are also to be found."

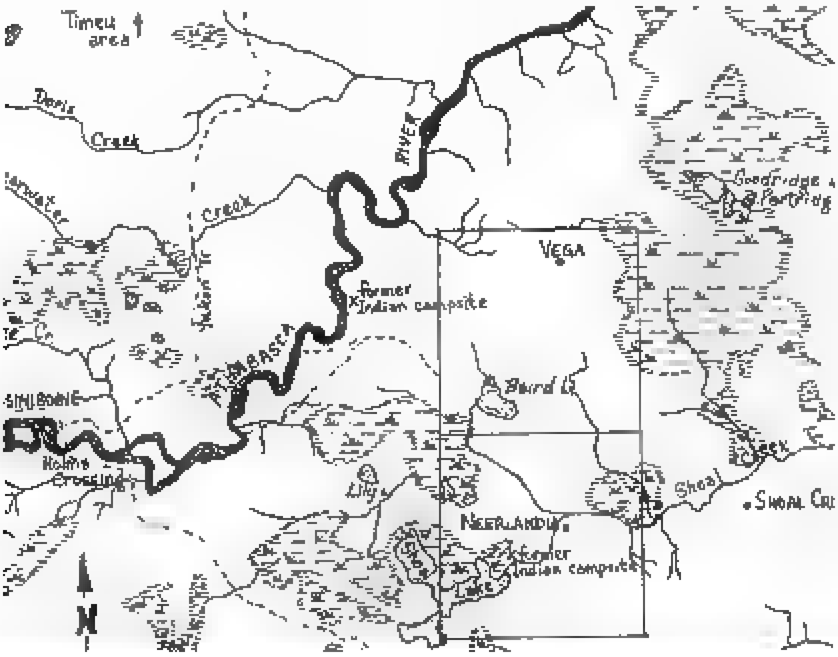
Early Settlement in the Neerlandia District

Settlement in northern Alberta prior to the turn of the century had to await the conclusion of the treaties and settlement of Indians on reserves after 1876. The discovery of new strains of wheat suitable for Alberta's growing season in the late 1800s was also a prerequisite. More importantly, settlement depended on a land survey, and this was achieved by 1907.

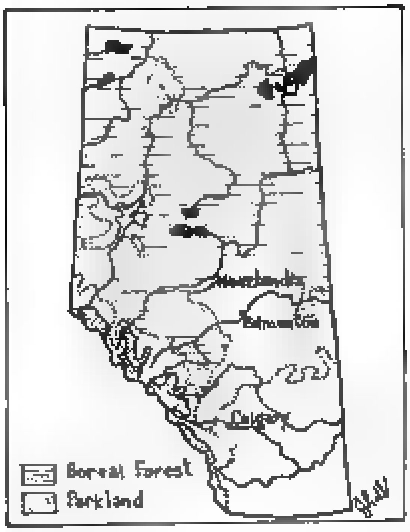

swamp
water
Creek
Willows
Hilly Country
Creek
Creek
Small poplar, spruce and birch
Tamarac and spruce 3-8" diam
willow, or water birch and tamarac
Spruce windfalls 6-10" diam
Burned land small poplar and willows
Alder small poplars and willow
Spruce windfall
Dead spruce
Spruce windfalls up to 10" diam.
Poplars over 6" diam.
Dead spruce and willow
Willow small poplar and alder
Tamarac Muskeg 3-10" diam
Spruce and Tamarac over 6" diam
Small spruce windfalls 3-6" diam
Open land
Burned land with heavy scrub underbrush
Spruce Muskeg up to 8" diam with scattered poplar bushes
Birch spruce alder and poplar 3-8" diam
Spruce and Tamarac Muskeg up to 6" diam
Spruce tamarac and poplar over 6" diam
Spruce swamp
Small poplar and willows with scattered patches ~~of windfall and brule~~
Tamarac Muskeg over 6" diam
Spruce and poplar 12" diam
Tamarac Swamp 2-8" diam
Willows
Spruce and poplar over 10" diam
Willow Creek
Brule spruce and windfalls
Large Spruce bush over 18" to 24" diam
Open Swamp
Creek
willow and small poplar
Spruce and poplar up to 12" diam
Open marsh
willows

Surveyor's description of Township 62. 1910.

G. H. Watt A.L.S.



Early settlement in the Neerlandia district



Many factors had made settlement prior to this date undesirable or even impossible. This district lies on the edge of the boreal forest region. Compared to the parkland region around Edmonton and as far northwest as the Pembina River, the land (Townships 61 and 62) was less suitable for homesteaders. The area northwest of Edmonton also suffered from the lack of good transportation. Early settlers coming into the area prior to 1907 probably used the Klondike Trail (the old Fort Assiniboine-Edmonton road). C. C. Fairchild, DLS, in his survey of the area, commented on the poor condition of the trail. It apparently was in no better shape in 1909 that it had been in 1827 or any time in between, for that matter.

By 1909 the area was ready for settlement and by 1910 settlers had filed on homesteads in the southern sections of Township 61. The Dutchmen were not the first people in this area, nor the first Europeans. Of the native groups, all that remain are a few collections of artifacts, caches of pemmican, and faint memories of now ploughed-under campsites. The natives themselves had all but vanished by the time this district was settled.

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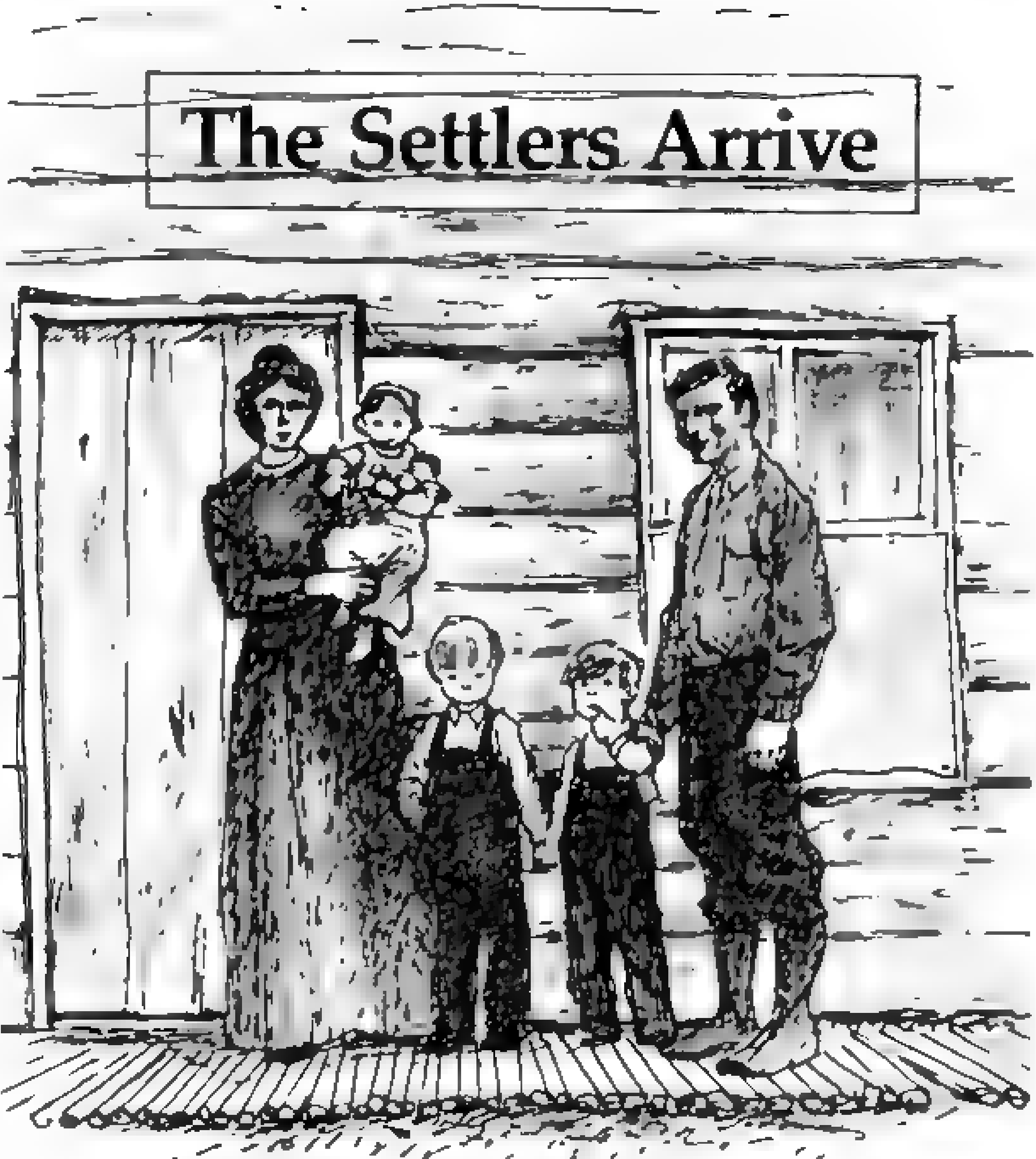
The Settlers Arrive



THE SETTLERS ARRIVE

Emigration

Townships 61 and 62 were settled by emigrants from the Netherlands. To leave one's country in the early 1900s and travel across thousands of miles of ocean and continent to settle in an uninhabited area of central Alberta was a tremendous undertaking. Yet in 1909 and the years immediately following many families did just that.

Although the individual reasons for the move vary, it is clear that they did not leave for religious reasons; there was religious freedom in the Netherlands. Though many reasons can be given, most have ties to and are primarily rooted in economic conditions. These economic conditions were the result of various pressures put on the Dutch economy by forces within and outside its borders.

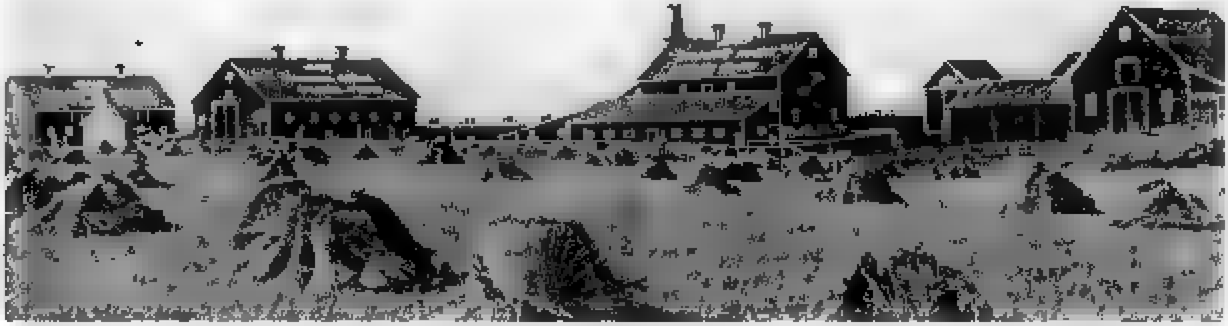
The Netherlands is a very small country. In 1909 it had a population of close to six million. Canada, 272 times as big, had only seven million. Given the lack of resources and the density of population, it seemed the Netherlands was unable to provide sufficient opportunities for all its people. Even though the reclamation of land from the sea had helped over the years to provide more room and to help support its need for resources, it was not enough to alleviate the problem of room and finances for many of the Dutch people. Besides low wages for the labourer and little opportunity to begin farming, unemployment was high. The young especially saw little opportunity for advancement in the future.

Not all emigrants left the Netherlands for strictly economic reasons. Some were looking for adventure. A few were anxious to leave because of the compulsory two-year service in the Dutch army. People in the Netherlands were also very class-conscious, and for this reason those of lower and middle class often longed for a country where people would be viewed, not by their standing in a community, but on their own merits.

Once people began to look for alternatives to life in the Netherlands, they were encouraged by emigration societies and agents. The former were concerned with the welfare of the emigrant, the latter often tried to get as many bodies as possible to use the facilities of the transportation company they worked for. Each agent was paid, by the company, for each person he recruited.

Although the emigration societies were intended to help potential emigrants avoid the pitfalls encountered in Canada, it seems few availed themselves of their services. The societies' intent was to curtail the activities of unscrupulous agents, whose main concern seemed to be numbers rather than service. The societies never accomplished this goal, as both the Dutch and Canadian governments failed to pass laws regulating the activities of these agents.

There were many agents working in the Netherlands during this period. Although other transportation companies such as the White Star lines, Red Star lines, the Cunard line and the Holland-Amerika line also actively recruited people to leave the Netherlands and come to Canada, the CPR agents were most active. The CPR had a dual reason for recruiting immigrants since they also owned large tracts of land in Canada that they wished to sell to bonafide farmers. The agents that toured the Netherlands before 1914 emphasized in their lectures the things they felt would have the most impact. They said there was lots of free land and they handed out literature illustrating immense harvests and indicating yields per acre that staggered the imagination. The agents held magic lantern slides showing threshing gangs, prairie homes, fields of grain, and pictures of the Rocky Mountains. They emphasized the 160 acres for only a ten-dollar filing fee, but did not relate the saying popular in Canada at that time: "The government bets you ten dollars you can't last three times six months on your homestead." They played down the long, cold winters as not that severe, besides, a person could live to a ripe old age breathing the "Champagne Air."



Scenes such as this enticed people to immigrate to Alberta.

1161/Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives.

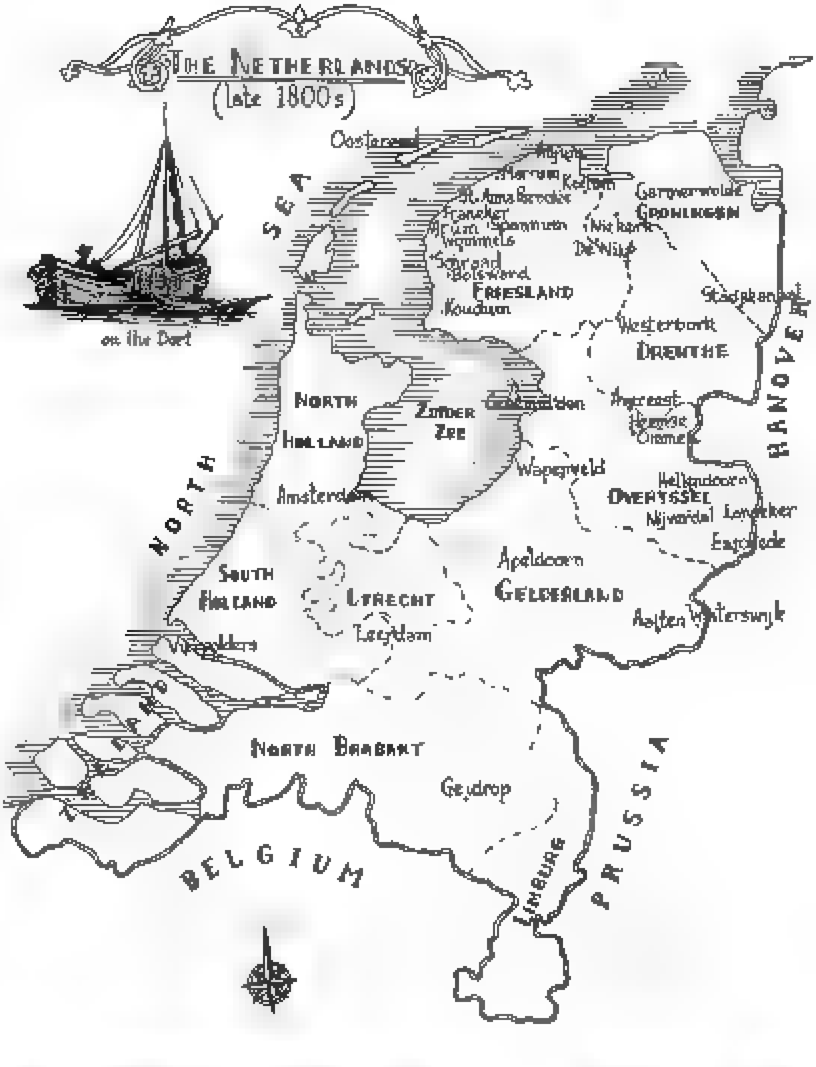
Few emigrants failed to be influenced by the stories and exaggerated claims of a land flowing with untapped resources and potential wealth. Once a person immigrated to Canada he too became a potential agent. If he wrote home that things were going well it would influence his family and friends. Often these letters were published in papers without critical comment. One such booster of Canada was Henry Kippers Sr., who wrote articles for Dutch newspapers extolling the virtues of the west.

The kind of emigrant that left the Netherlands at that time was described in a pamphlet written about 1913.

> "Most of the emigrants are not reckless young people who throw themselves boldly into the adventures of a new and strange life. Naturally there are some among them, but most of them either quickly return or learn through privation and experience to accustom themselves to a set task. The great majority of Netherlands emigrants have outgrown the years of reckless and adventurous desire. They are mostly lower middle class or labourers, store clerks who can look forward to no significant promotion; salesmen who have been put out of competition; small businesses who are being pressed to death by larger companies, factory labourers who foresee a dreary life of hard work and no advancement whether for themselves or for their children, and especially farm labourers who, pulled often by enticing offers supported by each others example, often easily leave their district and homeland in large number."

1240/Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives

CPR propaganda photo, late 1880s.



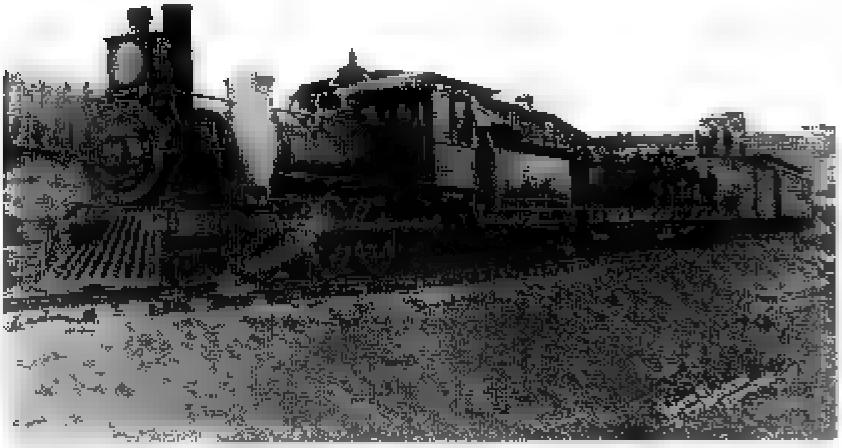
The towns the pioneers came from.

Once the decision to leave was made, the question of where to go occupied the emigrants' minds. It would seem logical that those of Reformed persuasion would consider going to the United States, where there were well developed and thriving Reformed churches of considerable stature This, indeed, did seem a favourable destination but most of the desirable land available for homesteading in the U S A had been claimed by 1890 What was left was considered of poor quality Of course land was available to purchase, but most of the would-be immigrants had little or no money The possibility of going to the Dutch colonies in Michigan or Iowa and working as a labourer was also considered but that would mean they would still not have their independence These appear to be the main reasons why Canada began to be looked on as the only place left The overwhelming desire was to become independent, to get out of situations they considered to be little better than slavery, and to own their own land

In turn, the Dutch were regarded by Canada as desirable immigrants because of their work habits and because they were familiar with the governmental system A letter to H Dixon, Consul-General for the Netherlands, from the minister of the interior of Canada, T M. Daly, dated December 20, 1892, states "The minister regards the people of Holland as a specially desirable class in the North West, being particularly adapted to the system of local self government everywhere vogue in this country." Such a positive assertion of the acceptability of Dutch immigrants was welcomed in the Netherlands The Canadian government clearly thought Dutch immigrants would fit into Canadian society without any problems

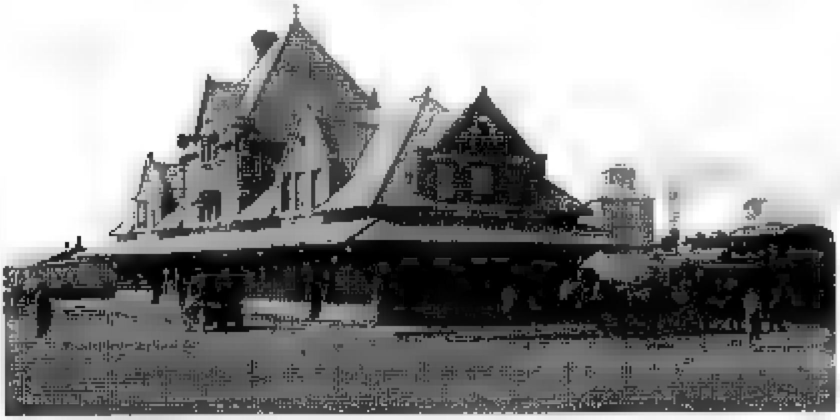
For those leaving home the excitement of going away on this adventure often prevented them from realizing the extent of the anguish for the family left behind The knowledge that a son or daughter was reading promotional material and showing some interest put a stab of fear in many a parent's heart When this interest was transferred into action and the announcement was made of the decision to leave, the grief was sometimes equal to a death in the family There was no guarantee of ever seeing each other again and for many this was the case Most of them had little money, though relatives and friends sometimes provided them with some help, they left with little cash and few belongings, but much hope Before leaving they had to put their affairs in order, say goodbye to friends and relatives, and look carefully over the familiar surroundings which many would never see again.

When all the arrangements had been made and tearful goodbyes said, it was time to board the boat For most of the emigrants it was no luxury trip. Some travelled steerage class since this was cheaper For families it was particularly trying The emigration societies and agents encouraged emigrants to travel in the early spring so they would have the summer months in Canada to become settled At this time of the year the seas were rough and icebergs could be a hazard The trip normally took ten to fourteen days and stories about seasickness are legion What a relief when they were finally able to set foot on the firm soil of Halifax or Montreal The immediate benefits of landing were a chance to get a glimpse of the new homeland and to obtain relief from nausea and illness. However, new problems began immediately. Those immigrants who travelled with CPR encountered few problems, since the CPR made all the necessary arrangements. For others, though, the disembarkation became a blur of lost baggage, upset children, custom inspection, and a desperate effort to find the right train.



CNR train coming into Edmonton.

B6202/E. Brown, Provincial Archives of Alberta.



CNR Station. 1913.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta.

When they found the right train the immigrants realized that no food would be provided, and a rush to buy bread and sausage began. (Later immigrants were advised to bake currant bread to take along, since it seemed the currants would keep the bread fresh for the long journey.) If the trip seemed long, the immigrants accepted it as part of the bargain. For the Dutch, who measured distance by minutes, the train trip seemed endless. Distances between cities were measured in days, and it seemed there was no end to Canada. Day after day they stared at trees and waste land and, except for small areas, it seemed unsuitable for agriculture. The train was smoky, the benches were hard, and the stops at major

stations became a mad scramble to buy some food. Finally they arrived in Winnipeg, where they had a stopover and could refresh themselves.

From Winnipeg they set out for their final destination, Edmonton. When that was reached, the journey was over.

To The Homestead

* * *

The Edmonton newspapers report business as usual for the burgeoning capital in the spring of 1911. The official opening of the Legislature, a Lieutenant Governor's breakfast, and the progress of the High Level Bridge project all make the newspaper headlines. Not as prominently displayed is another noteworthy item. "More foreigners arrive" — foreigners meaning non-British people. The official pomp and ceremony alluded to in the big headlines are a far cry from the dingy Immigration Hall quarters where most of the newcomers stay while the men look for work.

* * *

B4739/E Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Edmonton, looking east from 2nd Street, c 1911.

Of the Dutch people who later homesteaded in Neerlandia, Fred Baron and his family were probably one of the first to arrive in Edmonton. They came in 1906, and other future Neerlandians soon followed including the families of Cornelius Ingwersen and Henry Kippers. There was little group awareness at first among these Dutch immigrants, but one tragic event occurred to change that situation. In the spring of 1910, two of the Kippers children passed away from scarlet fever. When the *Edmonton Journal* reported the deaths, Dutchmen from Edmonton who read the article visited the Kippers' family to offer their sympathies. Shortly after this, Henry Kippers, undoubtedly moved by the feeling of "communion of the saints" invited a group of Dutch people to his home. He wanted to discuss a matter that concerned many of them, namely the setting up of a Reformed church such as they were used to in the Netherlands. Some had already begun to worship in mainline Canadian denominations, but the group decided to send Henry Kippers to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A. where the Christian Reformed Church was holding a meeting of Classis Pacific.

There was other talk among the Dutch immigrants too. Many of them were not entirely satisfied with their new way of life in Canada. Some of them had been lured here by the promise of free land, but the lack of cash prevented them from venturing outside of Edmonton to start farms of their own. A dream of starting a farming community of their own caught hold of some of them. For the time being, though, these Dutchmen agreed to stay on in Edmonton until their circumstances changed.

In October 1910 Henry Kippers returned from the Classis meeting in Lynden, Washington. With him was Rev. J. Van Der Mey of Manhatten, Montana, sent to help organize the First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. The founding members consisted of nine families, one single person, and twenty-three children. Elected as elders were Henry Kippers and Fred Baron.

When it was cold, the church services were held in private homes, otherwise they met in a large tent pitched on the corner of 109th street and Jasper Avenue. Here, among the poplars, the people gathered together to hear the word of God proclaimed and sing the beloved *Psalmen*. In 1911, the tent was sold and the immigrants rented a room in the Reed and Robinson Building for their Sunday services.

Henry Kippers, besides being responsible for the organization of the church, also became secretary for an immigration society organized in 1910. In that capacity, he wrote articles for Dutch and American papers such as *Patrimonium* and *De Wachter*, encouraging Dutch people to settle in Edmonton. His persuasive pen had the desired effect. On April 4, 1911, a front-page headline in the *Edmonton Bulletin* read, "Nucleus of Dutch Colony is En Route." The article explained that fifty Dutch residents of Whitinsville, Massachusetts, left town that day for Alberta, Canada. The Baker and Mast families were part of that group. Around the same time the families of Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema came to Edmonton from South Dakota.

* * *

A Dutch Colonization Society

In Edmonton, Canada, our church has a congregation. There is also a society to establish a Dutch colony (settlement) in that area. The society consists largely of members of our congregation there. Brother H. Kippers, secretary of this society, and at the same time clerk of the consistory, writes the following concerning this matter:

There is here a Christian Society which purposes to establish a Dutch colony (settlement) in a good area. Nearly all members of our congregation have joined this society. This spring they will go to look for land (this was to have been done in the fall, but due to circumstances they did not have opportunity to accomplish it) to a well-known area and, with the Lord's blessing, are sure to succeed. Everyone will then receive 160 acres of the best land free by the drawing of lots. You need not worry that you will not have a church or school. You can be positively assured of those.

To be a member of this society you contribute ten dollars. Send this to the treasurer J. H. Ter Horst, Pine Ave , Edmonton, or to the undersigned who is also the secretary of this society Besides this, it is required that you are able to speak the Dutch language Not only the head of a family, but every young man older than 18 has a right to 160 acres, so each claimant is required to pay ten dollars into this society.

If you desire more detailed information, write soon since a great number are interested. If you have little or no money, or if you are thinking to come to Canada to farm, we advise you to join (us), come in the spring, work in Edmonton the following summer and go with us to the farm As much as possible, the consistory will supply work and housing. I may not ask for more space Write for information, as soon as possible, to the secretary of the society, who is also the clerk of the consistory This is necessary, for of course it would not do to make the congregation a colonization society. Therefore the consistory would also like this to be placed under "Letters". Thank you for the allotted space.

For the consistory,
H. Kippers, Clerk
118 Griesbach St. Edmonton, Canada

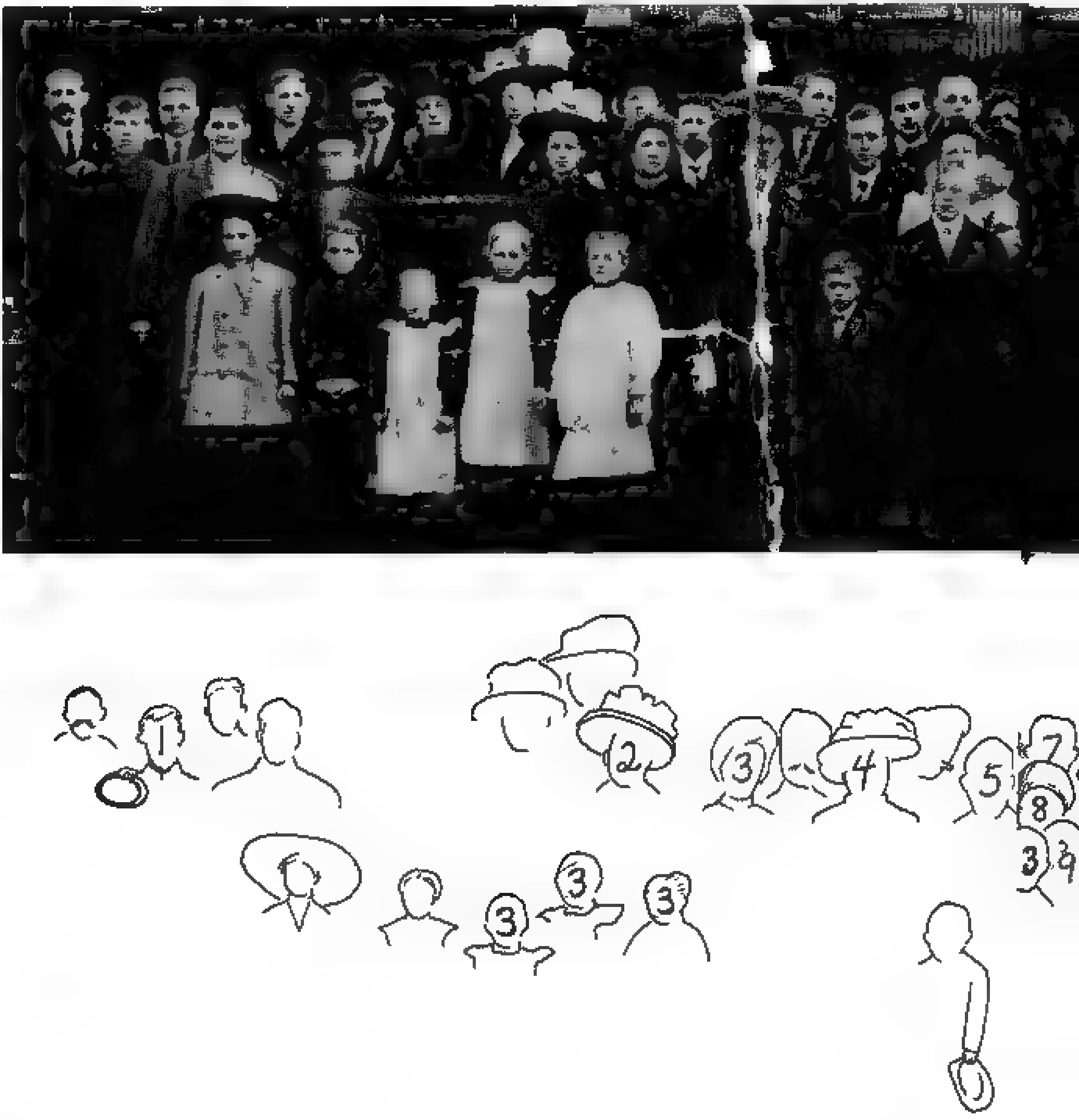
The above letter was written in Dutch and published in the January 11, 1911, issue of *De Wachter*

* * *

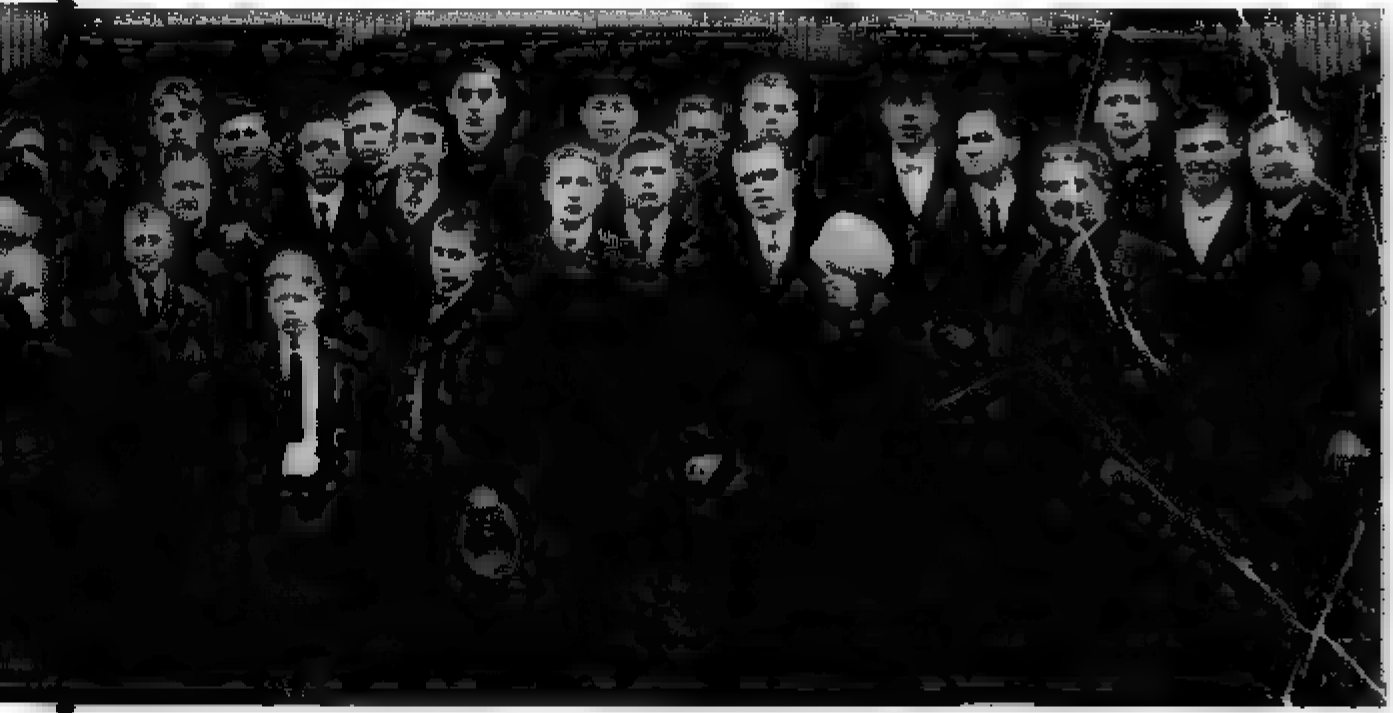
The dream of owning their own land was the reason why these people had come and on April 28, 1911, seven men filed on homesteads in what are today the Thorhild and Abee areas of the province: Jan Anema, Jouke Baker, Cornelius Ingwersen, Henry Kippers, Koop Mast, Albert M Mast, and Siebren Tiemstra. However, in the summer of that same year, these men all abandoned their homesteads Jan Anema wrote that his homestead had too much muskeg on it and Cornelius Ingwersen wrote, "Everyone of my friends is leaving . . . and I wish to join them elsewhere "

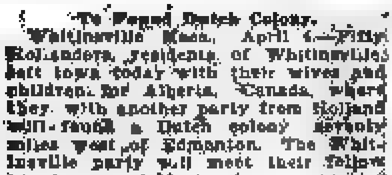
Many more immigrants came from the Netherlands in the spring of 1911 and, by the summer, the Dutch community was firmly established. Most of them were anxious to begin homesteading, but they first had to work to make money

Many of the Dutch immigrants had homes in Fraser Flats — homes that sometimes consisted of tents or crude shacks Other Dutchmen lived in the Parkdale area of the city. The women's chores included washing clothes on washboards, hauling water, gathering firewood, and learning to bake bread Most of the men had steady work, though it may not have been the best-paying. (It helped, of course, that employers held Dutch workers in high regard) More often than not their work involved heavy physical labour. Some of the men worked at Little's Brickyard or the lumber mill, which were both in Fraser Flats, others found jobs with the City Water Works department or working on the new High Level Bridge Many also found work at Swift's or Burns packing plants. While living conditions were not what they had been used to, the future looked promising to most of the immigrants



The group from Whitinsville (with some railway officials) after arriving in Edmonton, April 1911. 1. Raymond Baker, 2 Katie Baker, 3. Mrs. Hempel and three daughters, 4. Magdalena Baker, 5. Albert Mast, 6. Joseph Baker, 7 Gaele Baker, 8. Aaltje Baker holding 9. George. 10. Catharina Baker. 11 Minke Mast. 12 Koop Mast. 13. C K Mast, 14 Henry Mast, 15. Dick Baker. Mrs. Hempel put the clean white aprons on her girls a short time before they arrived, but after reaching the Immigration Hall and seeing the dirty quarters there, she immediately took them off.

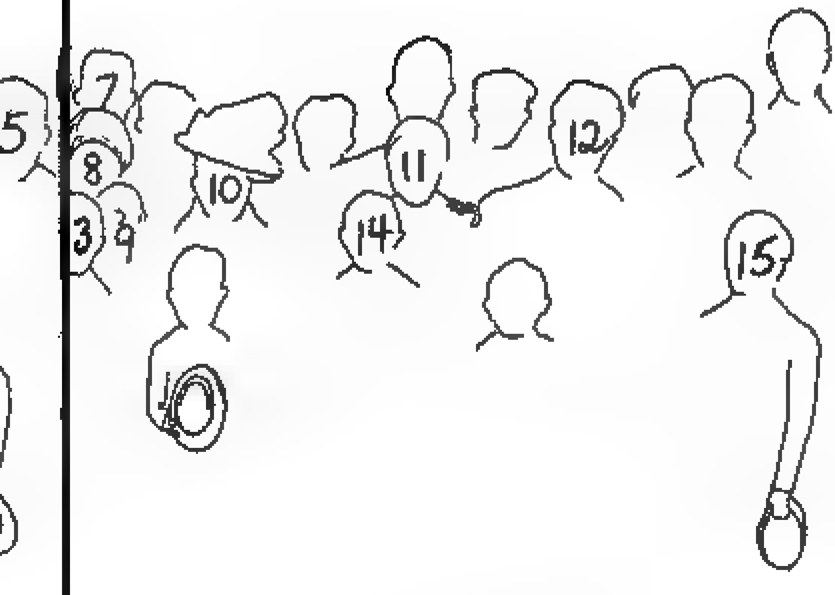


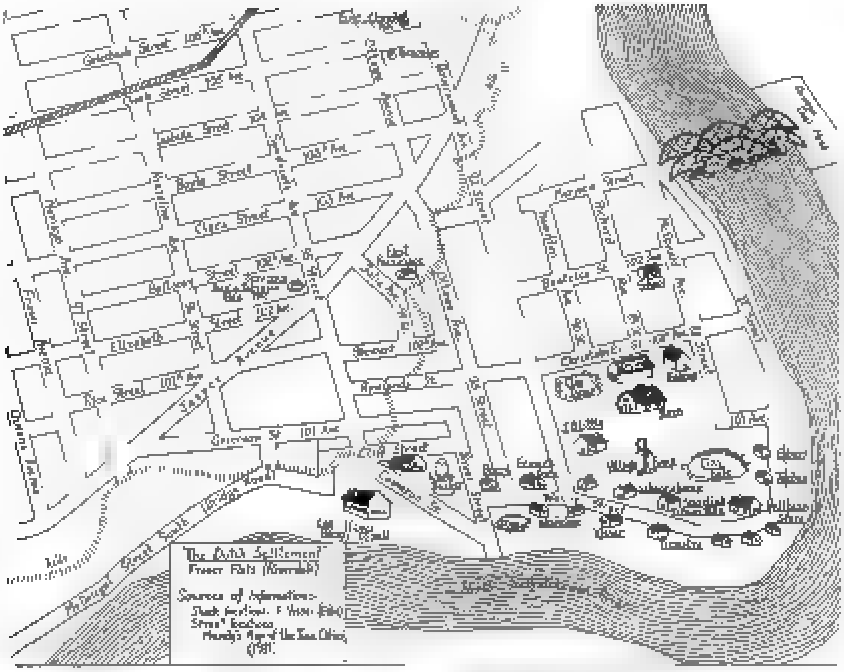


To Found Dutch Colony.

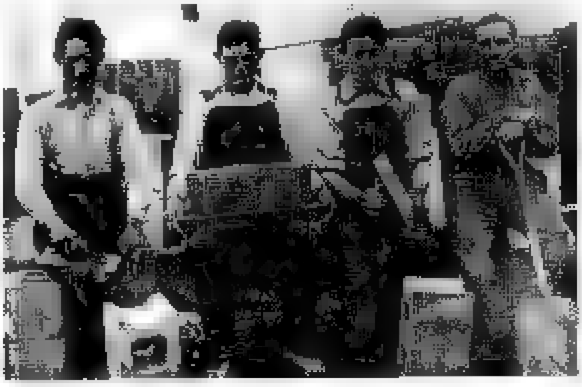
Whitinsville Mass., April 4.—Fifty Hollanders, residents of Whitinsville left town today with their wives and children for Alberta, Canada, where they, with another party from Holland will found a Dutch colony seventy miles west of Edmonton. The Whitinsville party will meet their fellow countrymen at Montreal.

Edmonton Bulletin, *April 4, 1911.*



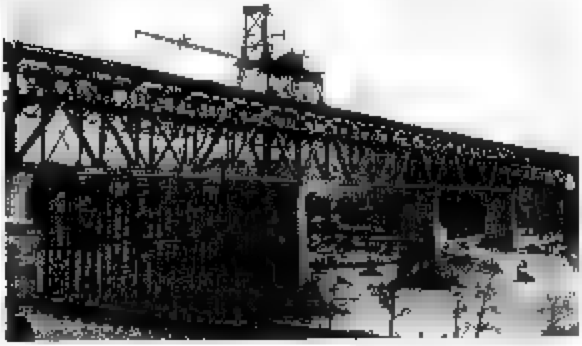


Baron's store. James, Maggie Baron.



Working in brickyard. John, Gerrit, Willem ter Horst, ?

At Burns Meat Plant. Lizzie Baron, ? Ada Terpsma.



Construction on High Level Bridge, 1911.

The dream of establishing a Dutch farming community was still alive. It seems sometime in 1911 a committee was established to look through the land records to find a suitable location to begin a settlement. The mandate was simple: find an area where other settlers had not yet gone, where there would be enough land to establish a Reformed community, and where there would be room to expand.

By that time, the good land surrounding the city was already occupied by settlers of many nationalities. Even good land at great distances from the city had settlers interspersed throughout. The committee did, however, find a recently-surveyed area to the northwest that seemed to hold some possibilities. If the dream of a place of their own and a settlement that would allow them to carry out their objectives would ever materialize, it would have to be soon. The committee urgently recommended that they should take a look at Townships 61 and 62, Range 3, west of the 5th Meridian.

Dutch immigrants in Edmonton, November 1911. Back: Jan Terpsma, Hendrik Schoonekamp, Jelle Holwerda, Arie Emmerzael, Jan Anema. Front: Rienk de Jager, Elke Jorritsma, Willem van Ark, Jouke Baker, Gerrit Gotzen.

As a result of this recommendation, about twenty men who were interested made a trip to the area in early December 1911. Because there was no snow yet and temperatures ranged from forty to fifty degrees Fahrenheit, they travelled by horse and wagon. Even though the weather was warm for the time of year, the soil was frozen so the trip was pleasant and mostly easy. They followed the road north from Edmonton, passing through well-settled areas. Along the way, they stayed at stopping places. After they crossed the Pembina River the population was sparse, but there was still a

passable trail. Once they passed Naples, though, they came to a heavily-timbered area and had to cut their way through the bush to reach Township 61.

The group spent a few days looking over the area, then returned to Edmonton. It seemed that everyone was satisfied with what they had found. Six quarters were not available since they had already been taken up by George Caughlin, Tom Lewis, Elizabeth Melsome, and George Wing.

The men had noted the quarter sections they thought suitable for farming. To divide up the land in a fair and orderly way, they put the quarter numbers of the good sections of land into a hat. Each man picked a number from the hat and that became his quarter.

On the morning of December 18, 1911, the following men filed in Edmonton at the Dominion Lands Office.

John Anema	SW 23-61-3
Rients de Jager	SW 34-61-3
Drikus Huinink	SW 10-62-3
Cornelius Ingwersen	SE 09-62-3
Albert M. Mast	SE 22-61-3
Koop Peter Mast	NE 15-61-3
Johan Messelink	NE 34-61-3
Henry J. Michael	NE 04-62-3
Menne Nanninga	NE 09-62-3
Albert J. Oldegbers	SE 34-61-3
Hendrik Schoonekamp	NW 34-61-3
Berend te Ronde	SE 15-61 3
Douwe Terpsma	SW 35-61-3
John Terpsma	NW 26-61-3
Siebren Tiemstra	NW 14-61-3
Willem van Ark	SW 15-61-3

Three others filed shortly thereafter:

December 26, 1911

Fred Baron	SE 15-62-3
Henry J. Kippers	NE 10-62-3

February 6, 1912

Arie Emmerzael	NE 28-61-3

These men formed the group whose determination was responsible for the beginning of a new community.

* * *

On December 19, 1911, both the *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* and *The Edmonton Journal* noted that a group of Dutchmen had settled on land near Edmonton. The *Edmonton Daily Bulletin* reported:

> HOLLANDERS FILE ON HOMESTEADS
>
> Yesterday a party of sixteen Hollanders appeared at the land office and filed on homesteads. They had spent considerable time in looking over the country adjacent to Edmonton and returned to the city satisfied that it was a good enough place for them to live and make their permanent home. The Hollanders located on land that will bring their homesteads all together, making them close neighbours.

* * *

Early in January 1912, some or all of the men who had filed returned to their homesteads to build houses, since their intentions

were to begin homesteading as soon as possible The men helped each other build the houses

* * *

First trip to Neerlandia

It was in the fall of the year that the settlers of Edmonton saw a strange parade leave the city early one morning. It was so interesting that a reporter from the *Edmonton Journal* made a report and took a photograph

The wagon was pulled by two big horses and loaded with such things as groceries, tools, and rifles. The driver was a sturdy man from Gelderland named Buinik [Drikus Huinink] About twenty Dutchmen, from almost all the provinces of the Netherlands, walked alongside or sat on the wagon Frisians were in the majority, but Gelderland and Overijssel were amply represented. The aged Jan Oldegbers was there, who would come later with his brave wife Through good times and bad, they would later be the leading couple From North Brabant was the always-cheerful Henry Michael and even two Amsterdamers were along [Ingwersen and van Ark]

The big aim was to find living space adaptable to expansion, with good land and preferably not too-heavy bush. The first day they travelled about thirty miles through beautiful country but everything was taken up by French settlers. These farms conveyed prosperity. At the twelve-mile mark was the town of St Albert. Twenty miles farther was the beautiful town of Morinville, and farther on were the hamlets of Legal and Vimy So far they had been going north through the French area, but now they came to the Scottish settlement of Clyde, which was at the end of the railroad. [From Clyde they travelled west.]

The journey now went to places that were less populated. There was no lack of stopping places, though, in spite of the sparce population. Everywhere they came they were received with open arms Humble meals were supplied and sleeping place was provided, even if it was mostly in the hay

If they had wanted to, there was opportunity to take up land in that area, closer to the city and the railway. However, then they would have been among settlers of other nationalities, and the idea was to establish a *zuiver Nederlandse kolonie* (pure Dutch colony).

Now the men had to cross the Pembina River Luckily a short time before a wooden bridge had been built. They followed the advice of many to go north from the Pembina River. There was already a settlement in that area called Dusseldorf, settled by Germans from Rhineland

In Dusseldorf lived Mr. Munsterman, one of the German leaders who had started a store His neighbour was an Englishman, Mr. Southworth A bit farther west was a new settlement called Naples, started by Italians

A day's travelling brought the landseekers to the edge of a very ancient bush. There lived a heavily built Scottish man by the name of Wilson and his family His buildings were built of large logs and the homestead had a big fenced-off clearing, where a few cows and a pair of horses were grazing. Against the background of large trees, the site was very picturesque. When they asked him where he got feed for his animals he pointed to the hayloft which was full of hay. In the woods, he said, there were enough clearings where an abundance of grass grew, which he had mowed and brought home.

The rest of his land was covered with rotten and burnt tree trunks, which made it difficult to clear. He said the whole area to the Athabasca River had been very heavy bush. Thirty years ago, however, there had been such a great forest fire that over one thousand acres were burned. Only a four or five-mile area of the old bush had been spared.

The landseekers had only to work themselves through this bush, and the promised land would be before them. They had to use an axe to make a trail for the wagon. After a night's sleep in the hay at the Wilson place, with pancakes and bear meat for breakfast, everybody was curious to see what was on the other side of the forest. It was not an easy job to make a trail through the virgin forest, but after much sweat and toil they reached the other side in the early evening. Before they went any farther they made a camp, since there was a greater difficulty ahead — a seemingly endless field of moss which had been built up over the ages since there was poor drainage in the country. It was nearly impassable. The settlers now understood why the fire had stopped at the bush. After a long search, they found a place that could be forded; with logs and poles they improvised a road for the wagon to go over.

Finally the promised land was in sight, the place where the future Neerlandia would be. It was not an open area because over the thirty years since the fire an abundant growth of shrubs and trees, especially poplar, had grown over the land. Here and there were patches of old trees which had been spared from the fire.

The area was not absolutely uninhabited. The Dutchmen had been informed that three hunters and trappers lived three miles north, so they planned to find them. They made a little clearing and left the horses and wagon in the care of some of the older men while the others divided into groups to look over the land and make contact with the three hunters.

Soon they found the survey lines and it was not long before they stood in front of a little settlement. It was a friendly and romantic scene with three small log houses amidst low growing bush and shrubs. The houses were not very close together, but each the same distance from the corner of their homesteads. Getting acquainted was pleasant and surprising. Tom Lewis was a tall broad-shouldered Englishman with a clean-shaven, kindly face. His friends were quite the opposite — two rough-looking bearded Irishmen named George Wing and George Caughlin. They were pleased to see the group of Hollanders and looked forward to the area being inhabited. They made their living by hunting and trapping fur-bearing animals. Wild animals were plentiful and big game like bear, moose, deer, and coyotes abounded. Rabbits were as numerous as a plague. The landseekers enjoyed tender moose steaks for the first time, and they had bear meat as well. A good meal was an absolute necessity since walking in that wild country proved quite difficult.

In the evening, after a very tiring day, they sat around the campfire. The Dutchmen were divided into the three cabins and each host told their group his own history. They had been in the area a number of years already, and knew the country through and through. Summer months were used for prospecting — walking the length and breadth of the country. The cold months were for trapping and hunting when the season was open and the fur was most valuable. They each had their own traplines, mainly in the area of the Athabasca River.

That same winter in January, after celebrating Christmas and New Year's with their families, the men travelled again to the area to build log houses. Again Mr. Buitnik's wagon was loaded with necessary provisions and brought to the destination.

In Neerlandia they were divided into groups of four or five men who, as neighbours, helped each other build. First they had to cut the necessary logs, forty to fifty for each building. Each group had a large bush in the neighbourhood where they could saw down straight trees. After that, horses were used to drag the logs to the building site. A stable for the horses was the first priority and a thick layer of hay was put over it to make a roof. Half of the stable served as sleeping and living quarters for the builders. It was not too comfortable but warm. The meals consisted of brown beans, rice, and rabbit meat.

The foreman [Nanninga] was a careful, capable man from Groningen, a carpenter by occupation and an architect. There was also the Brabanter [Michael], who looked very serious, but in reality was a cheerful and humourous man, in contrast to the single fellow from Gelderland [te Ronde] who saw everything from the pessimistic side. Soon our friend from Gelderland left, the foreman also went back to Edmonton in the beginning of March to leave the finishing up for the rest.

In a few days, the weather began to change so much that it looked as if spring had come. The rest of the men [the three left of that group] prepared to return home. Early in the morning they were to leave, and three o'clock they were ready. It started to rain and a terrible wind came up. It was pitch dark, and the rain changed to icy water. The melted snow began to stream and on top of it all, they completely lost direction. Daylight came and they noticed that they were in a totally-strange country. But what else could they do except keep on walking? Finally, they were happy to come to a small clearing with a house on it, inhabited by Italians. These people gave them a place by a warm stove so they could dry their clothes. Instead of going south the men had walked east and had arrived in Naples.

After being shown the right direction, the group continued on their way. It rained and snowed so heavily, however, that they were soon soaked again. The water began to stream from every direction. One of the three, who was in front, thought, "I'm wet anyways, it makes no difference if I get wetter." So he waded right through streams and creeks which were at times several feet deep. The others were more cautious and if they noticed that the leader was going through deep water they found shallower places to go through. Close to evening, the leader was so stiff that he could

hardly walk. Just in time, after a thirteen-hour struggle, they reached an old store, the so-called Post Office at Hazel Bluff. There they could enjoy a good warm meal and a decent place to rest.

Early in the morning, after a good breakfast, they went on again. Luckily for them, they would now follow a travelled road. It was clear, a bit frozen, and everything was covered with a layer of fine snow. It seemed like the difficulties of the day before had not done much harm, only the leader was now the follower. He could not move his left leg very well, the muscles had become stiff. After several miles, he had to quit completely, but it was six miles before the nearest stopping place. Not too far away was a farmhouse, so the invalid went there while the two others continued on their way.

The invalid was received with typical Canadian hospitality by the couple Brown and remained there for two days with rest and a massage with petroleum (the only medication they had on hand) which helped a lot. He felt good enough to continue his journey and, even if he limped somewhat, he could travel the eight miles or so to a certain Marshall, who had a big democrat with two big mules pulling it. Marshall brought him in a few hours to Morinville where he could catch the train to Edmonton. There was a happy reunion with his wife and family and in no time his leg was back to normal again.

Cornelius Ingwersen

Excerpts taken from memoirs written in Dutch by Cornelius Ingwersen during the 1950s.

* * *

Arie [Emmerzael] and more young men had built their log cabins the year before [1912] and I will tell you a few stories about the building program as told to me. There were ten or twelve young men who went together from Edmonton to build a log cabin for each. They were living together in a log barn of an older settler.

They bought wholesale tools — saws, axes, stoves, and heaters — and some groceries, not forgetting brown beans and some salted pork, salt, tea, and coffee. "And they had all things in common (Acts 2:44)."

Different characters were together: one ex-officer from the Dutch army [Willem van Ark], a father and son [Koop and Albert Mast], and Arie [Emmerzael], an ex-laundryman. Also one or two had been farmers in the States [Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema]. The older man [Koop Mast] was installed as cook and handyman. The young men went into the bush cutting logs and building cabins and once in a while some of them went looking for a homestead.

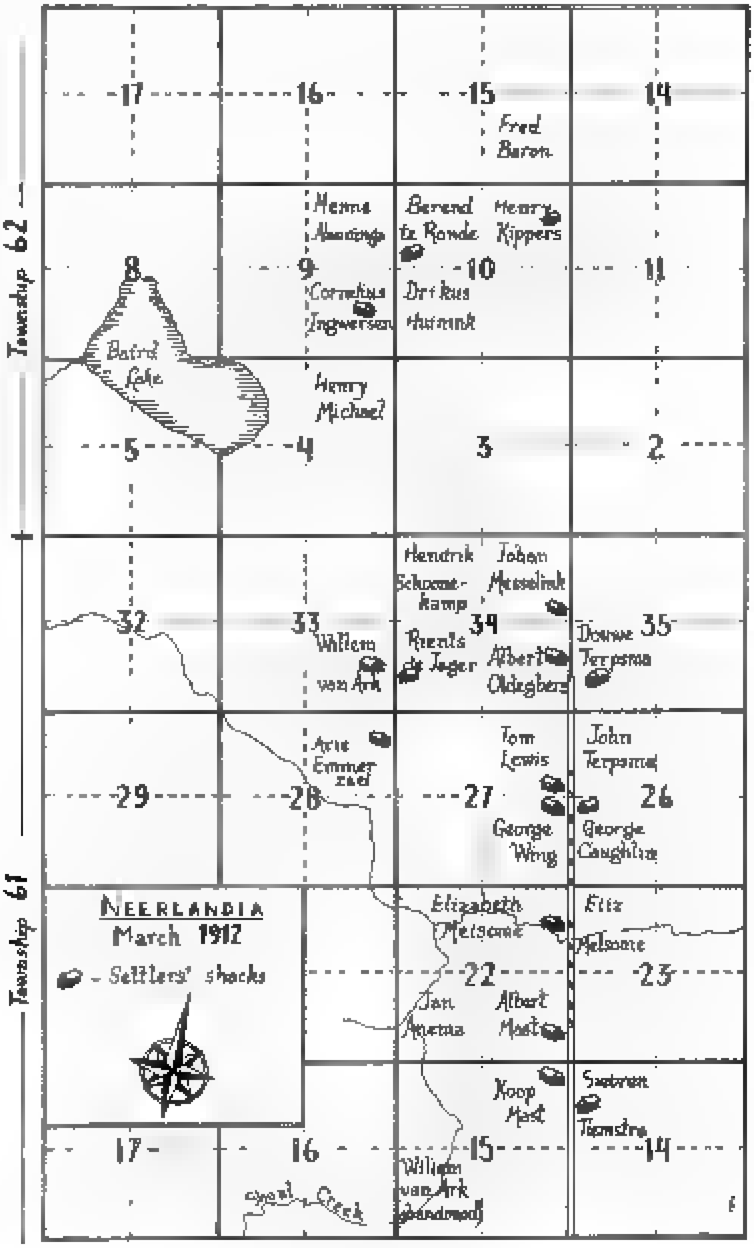
Remember it was winter and snow was on the ground. There were thousands of rabbits at that time and they had their trails all over the snow. Since there was no well, the cook had to use snow water for cooking. It happened one time they were eating beans for supper and the ex-officer was picking out beans and laying them on the table. The cook said, "Are they not done?"

"Yes," was the reply, "They are done alright but not the right kind. They are rabbit beans!"

The cook's son jumped up and said, "Dad, I told you before, you should put the water through a cloth!" A few days later the ex-

officer came into the kitchen and saw the old man using the towel for a sieve to clean up the snow water. That night the officer would not eat beans at all, since the towel had been used by all the men beforehand.

At one time a few of the men had been out looking for land and they were returning home over the frozen creek. But Arie was all in and could not go any farther. It was decided the officer should go ahead and Arie should follow slowly. "But stay on the creek so you will not get lost," the officer told him "and I will get you something



to eat. After a rest you will make it home." The cook was just baking pancakes so he took some and met Arie and fed him some pancakes and they made it home.

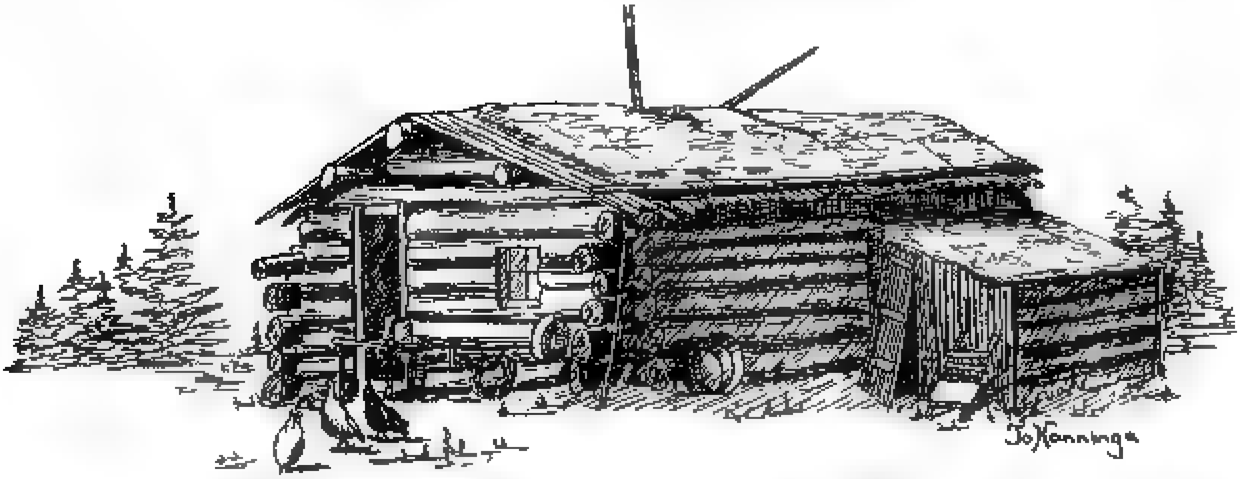
Ben Lievers (memoirs)

* * *

By May the building project was completed. At least twelve cabins had been built. According to homestead records, these men had cabins on their homesteads by the spring of 1912: Rients de Jager, Arie Emmerzael, Cornelius Ingwersen, Henry Kippers, Albert Mast, Koop Mast, Johan Messelink, Jan Oldegbers, Berend te Ronde, Douwe Terpsma, Siebren Tiemstra, and Willem van Ark. After their return to Edmonton most of the men continued at their former jobs. The Mast, Oldegbers, and Terpsma families were the first to leave for their homesteads.

To begin homesteading took courage and determination. Though Douwe and Betje Terpsma were in their thirties the other couples were much older. Albert Jan Oldegbers was sixty-four, his wife, Johanna, was fifty-four. Koop Mast was fifty-eight, his wife Minke was fifty-three. At an age when most people contemplate retirement they were beginning a new and difficult life. Both the Oldegbers and the Masts had their youngest children with them. John Oldegbers was thirteen and Henry Mast was fourteen when they came in 1912. For the Terpsmas it was no less difficult. They had five children to feed — Norman, the youngest, was only two years old.

By the fall of 1912 the area had a name — Neerlandia. The pioneers wanted a name that reflected their Dutch origin. There were several suggestions but at a meeting it was finally narrowed down to Neerlandia — Willem van Ark's suggestion — and Hollandia. A vote was taken and most votes were for Neerlandia, a name which more accurately reflected that the background of the pioneers was from many Dutch provinces.



During 1913 more settlers joined the first pioneers. The families of Gaele Baker, Henry Kippers, Albert Mast, Johan Messelink, and Siebren Tiemstra came as well as six other men: Arie Emmerzael, Rients de Jager, Anne Rintjema, Berend te Ronde, Jelle Tuininga, and Willem van Ark.

The main road of the new settlement was called Jasper Avenue. Those who came to Neerlandia during its early history would first reach the south end of Jasper Avenue, the only route into the settlement. Since their homestead was at the south end of the settlement, the "welcoming committee" was the family of Siebren Tiemstra. Tiemstra was qualified to be sitting at the "gate of the city." He was a small and energetic man who was always optimistic. This family gave food and shelter to many visitors and potential settlers. Siebren guided each would-be homesteader to the available land and gave them advice.

Siebren

The Great War, which began August 4, 1914, had some effect on the settling of Neerlandia. The economy began slowing down in Edmonton and jobs were becoming scarce. People began to think it would be wise to move to the homestead. This option was even more attractive to those young Dutch citizens who were subject to the draft from their homeland. (A few did accept the free passage home to join the army.) For others whose dream of becoming a landowner was still burning those events gave them the boost needed to become homesteaders.

During the war years the provincial government tried to entice families to move to the homestead as a means of reducing unemployment in the city. Some people were given food and other necessities for the winter if they would go to the homestead.

PA18755/Public Archives Canada

Settlers on trail north of Edmonton

• • •

During the early years of the settlement, some homesteaders received the Dominion Government Provision Loan. The amount loaned seems to have been thirty to forty dollars. According to homestead records, John Anema, Drikus Huinink, Cornelius Ingwersen, Berend Lievers, Douwe Terpsma, Siebren Tiemstra, and Klaas Tuininga were among those who obtained this loan.

• • •

A few families that moved to Neerlandia in 1914 left again the following spring. Most people, however, who came in 1914 stayed and contributed to the growth of the community. By the end of the year more than eleven more families and several single men had begun homesteading.

More settlers came in 1915 and with the arrival of Menne Nanninga in 1916, all those who filed in 1911 had returned to Neerlandia. Of the nineteen who filed, only two did not stay. Berend te Ronde lived in Neerlandia for only a few months and Drikus Huinink left in 1915.

During the pioneer years it was difficult to make a living on the homestead. Some men left their families in Edmonton and worked on the homestead during the summer. Others took their families to the homestead but found it impossible to stay since the money supply was inadequate; they left their families alone on the homestead while they went elsewhere on earn money. Many of them went to southern Alberta during the fall and helped with the harvesting. During the winter they worked at sawmills or in logging camps to provide a source of income. When the men were gone, it was a period of loneliness and hardship for those left on the homestead. Some families moved back to Edmonton until they had earned enough money to continue homesteading. Still others spent the winter in Edmonton and returned to the homestead in summer.

Michael's cabin.

If the homesteader did not live the required six months on his land, another interested party could request cancellation of the quarter. The homesteader was notified and the quarter was cancelled if he did not move to the homestead within a certain period of time. Some quarters in Neerlandia were cancelled, but many more were abandoned.

A homesteader would declare abandonment if he did not have money to prove up the quarter or if he was dissatisfied with the one he had chosen. Later, though, he could refile on another quarter. If some improvements had been made to the abandoned quarter, these were listed and paid for by the next person who filed. Usually, the stated value was contested and the land inspector would be sent out. (In most cases, he thought the improvements were worth less than had been stated.)

The Dominion Government required a homesteader to cultivate five acres of land per year for three years. He was also expected to reside on the homestead for six months of the year. When these obligations were fulfilled the homesteader could apply for the patent to the land. To receive the patent he had to be a Canadian citizen, and if the patent was granted he became the legal owner.

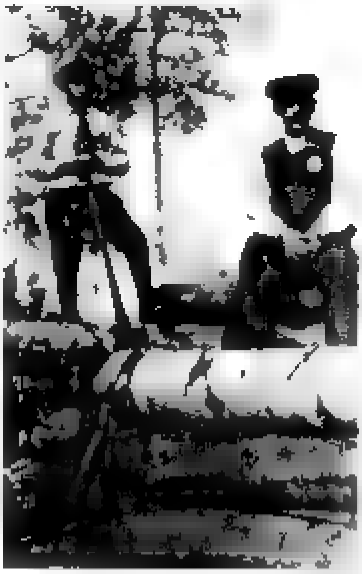
* * *

Before building a log house, a small piece of land was cleared. There were plenty of trees available to use for the building project. The straightest trees were cut down with saws, then limbed using axes. After the logs were dragged to the clearing with horses or oxen the building could begin. The ends of each log were notched so they would interlock with the logs that formed the adjoining wall.

The cabins were built rather low and all had peaked roofs, though they were not very steep. For the roof, poles four to five inches in diameter were placed close together over the ridge pole. Over these poles a fork-handle length of hay or grass was spread, then covered with thick grass sods. Sometimes dirt was put over the sods.

After the walls were up, the door and windows were cut out. There were usually few windows and they were small. The glass was brought from Edmonton. The door hung on hinges of metal or leather. If the family could afford it, lumber was used for a floor, otherwise it was dirt.

* * *



Log building under construction.

The resident requirement was the easiest to keep. Only part of the family had to reside on the land to fulfill this requirement. For single men this was more difficult to do, as they often had to work off the farm to obtain cash.

The requirement to clear and break fifteen acres of land in three years was a difficult task. Not only was the standing bush difficult to clean up, but in many cases the fire that had levelled the area years ago had left many logs laying on the ground. Because of standing trees, deadfall, and undergrowth the ground remained wet, adding to the homesteaders' difficulties. The clearing of land with axe and oxen was a stupendous undertaking. If the pioneers were unable to meet the land-clearing requirement they could fulfill their obligations by the ownership of a certain number of cattle.

Most of the early settlers applied for a patent on their land after four years of residence. By that time each applicant had cleared from five to twenty acres. By 1920 most settlers had ten to twenty head of cattle, including oxen, and about half owned two to four horses as well. From the homestead records it appears that the government accepted any combination of acres cleared and animals owned. Since the main objective was to get people to farm the land, the government accepted any application that indicated a sincere effort to make one's home on the land. It appears that all the patents were approved, the government recognized the difficulties the pioneers encountered.

By 1920, about ten Neerlandia settlers had received the patent to their homesteads and there were more than thirty families living in the community. These early settlers were the pioneers who established Neerlandia. They set the tone for the future and defined the direction others followed.

Mr. Henning, Mr. Schuurman, Willem and Klaas Krikke, Hendrik Schoonekamp.

Song of the Dutch Canadians
Come ye, who boast of Dutch descent,
Sons of the Netherlands,
Who found a home in Canada
Far from "Old Country's" strands,
Let us unite in festive song
And praise this blessed land,
To which God in His providence
Did lead us by His hand

We love the land across the sea,
We glory in its past,
We pray for its prosperity,
May it forever last!
But though we love old Holland still,
We now, with all our might,
Must love and live for Canada,
For justice here, and right

Oh grant, we pray, our fathers' God
That by Thy guiding hand,
We may become a blessing here,
For our adopted land!
Infuse the best of all our past,
And what we are today,
Into the life, into the deed
Of blessed Canada!

Author Unknown
(Tune: *"Wien Nêerlandsch bloed . . ."*)

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The Depression

DAYS OF MEAGRE RETURNS

"It was the fall of 1930 We had no radio, no newspapers I did not know a thing about the caving in of the stock exchange in New York — did not know how it started I went to Barrhead to look for a job A Dutch man owned the Creamery there and quite a few farmers came there with cream. I wanted a job on a binder and asked a farmer what he paid and he said, 'Two dollars a day ' I said, 'What?!" (I was used to five dollars a day) He said, 'What do you think with a Depression on?'"

Henry Strydhorst, Sr.

Depression

When the stock market fell at the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929, the worst crash in its history, it is unlikely that any Neerlandia farmers immediately heard or read about it, or about the panic and recession that followed Since the main farm papers of the day made little of the news, the farmers would not have been alarmed even if they had read about it In any event the news did not immediately affect them because they had no money invested in the stock market As the economy ground slowly to a halt, however, the effects of the Depression were felt — even in Neerlandia.

The Depression, though a difficult time for all, did not have as much of an impact on the Neerlandia community as it did on other parts of Canada Since Neerlandia did not suffer the drought experienced by other parts of the prairie provinces, the fields and gardens continued to produce abundantly Furthermore they had never experienced real prosperity and, though things had been improving for a brief period, they had in many ways never left the pioneer lifestyle

Generally though, the established families in Neerlandia were better off during the 1930s than more recent immigrants. They had more land cleared and owned more livestock and, even though they got the same low prices, had more to sell and consequently more income The families who had begun homesteading in the late twenties, especially those with younger children, went through the difficult time of making a beginning on their homesteads while also experiencing the hardships of the Depression

For Neerlandia the Depression was a contradictory time. On the one hand there was an abundance of farm and garden produce The animals too continued to produce normally The problem was that the produce was worth next to nothing on the market Prices for farm products dropped to a fraction of pre-Depression days Wheat dropped from $1 59 to $.18 per bushel Barley went as low as eight cents, and oats as low as seven cents. A hog weighing two hundred pounds netted the farmers as little as $2.00, down from $24 00. One farmer shipped a 350 pound sow and, after paying the freight, had only $.75 left. A five gallon can of cream was worth about $3 00 - less than half of the $8 00 it would have brought before Since marketing their produce was the only way the farmers could obtain cash, they had little money Thus, using the produce from farm and garden, one lady in Neerlandia was able to bake pie every Saturday but was unable to afford a Sunday coat.

* * *

"I remember that first year. My husband worked for his dad and he did all the cropping and everything and we had to buy wheat at one dollar a bushel, Garnet wheat. You know, by the time fall came it was worth nothing nineteen cents. And then we had all the threshing and everything done and we could not pay all the costs. We were in the hole."

Harda Terpsma

* * *

How do you like that?

"I remember my dad shipped pigs and then he got five dollars apiece for them and the truck driver Loe Reyse got two-and-a-half dollars, so my dad got two-fifty apiece. And [Siebren] Tiemstra bought cows on a sale for eight dollars apiece. And I know John Terpsma took one hundred bushels of oats to the elevator and he got eight cents a bushel . . . he got eight dollars for that big load and he had a top on top of his sleighbox yet . . . And when he came back, he needed something for the knotter head of the binder and didn't have enough to pay for it. How do you like that? One hundred bushels of good oats!"

* * *

Average Value Per Animal in the Prairie Provinces

Year	Hogs	Horses
1929	1539	5460
1930	1480	4714
1931	583	5229
1932	346	3252
1933	775	3652
1934	862	4197
1935	1038	4723
1936	1021	5480
1937	1112	5345

Taken from livestock statistics M.C Urquhart and K.A.H Buckley eds., *Historical Statistics of Canada* pg 37

For $1.99, in November 1933, you could buy

Amount	Item	Price
2 lbs	meat (roast or stew)	13¢
2 dozen	eggs	45¢
1 lb.	butter	21¢
1 lb	cheese	19¢
3 lbs.	flour	09¢
1 lb	sugar	08¢
2 lbs	rolled oats	07¢
1 lb	rice	07¢
2 lbs.	molasses	15¢
3 loaves	bread	12¢
1 lb	tea or coffee	32¢
3 bars	soap	11¢

Food and Clothing

In spite of the hard times most people ate well. The food was plain and unvaried — meat, potatoes, and vegetables — but there was lots of it. The women continued the practice of raising good-sized gardens and storing the produce for the winter. They preserved wild fruit as well. There was plenty of meat available too. Every farmer had cattle or hogs to butcher. The old sows provided plenty of lard, which was used in baking and cooking and even, with a sprinkling of salt and pepper, as a spread for school lunches. In many cases the meat supply was supplemented with game.

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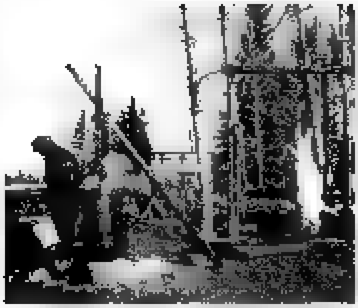


Butchering time.

"We had pigs, we had cows, whatever few dollars you could get from selling them. My dad would take a load of wheat to the flour mill in Barrhead and get twelve to thirteen hundred pounds of flour plus the bran and shorts and whatever else came out of that and that lasted a year. In the fall we would butcher a cow and a big fatted sow and have a whole pile of lard and that would do for all the frying and baking. And you had eggs. In the winter you had a deep freeze (outside) and whatever came through the winter you could can, otherwise it was canned right away. It was a lot of work. Everything was either smoked or salted or canned."

Susie Vanee

* * *

In those days, the hunting laws were not strictly enforced. Gerrit Kippers shot a moose out of season, but only wounded it and followed it for three miles until he came in the neighbourhood of the game warden's house (John Tansowny). Gerrit had no bullets left and, knowing the game warden had the same kind of rifle, went to ask him if he could borrow some. It was already getting dark and the game warden said, "Wait until morning and I'll help you. I'm not a game warden for farmers, only for strangers."

* * *

A Good Meal

"Once in a while I would eat at the Ohio Cafe in Barrhead. Slim, a Chinese man, was the proprietor then. For thirty-five cents you got good thick pork chops, two of them, a wedge of pie — not an eighth or a sixteenth piece like nowadays — almost a quarter of a pie, usually raisin or apple, coffee, vegetables, and potatoes.

It was a good meal."

Bill Olthuis

* * *

But many items could not be grown or raised, so the people had to make do in other ways. Many roasted peas or barley in the oven, then ground them for use as coffee. Some collected peppermint leaves and dried them to use instead of tea. Women made their own brown soap from rind or lard, that had gone rancid. The Elzingas made syrup from sugar beets to use as sugar. Hendrik Wierenga, a heavy smoker, dried sweet clover and fireweed to use in his pipe for smoking. Clarence Tuininga, though, decided to simply put his pipe away until he could afford the tobacco. Some things could be neither grown nor made, but the cream cheque provided the settler the means of obtaining goods that had to be paid for in cash.

* * *

"People always used to say, 'Cream cheque — you don't make nothing on cream.' But it was pretty nice to get. That was the only thing that kept us through all those things. It was a real life saver."

* * *

Many families could afford only the necessities — yeast, sugar, salt, coal oil — and these were used very sparingly. There was often not enough money left to buy material or clothes for the family. Every mother spent evenings putting patch upon patch, mending clothes to get the most use of every article. Some families had only one set of underwear per person and the family members had to spend most of wash day inside the house waiting for the clothes to dry. On a rainy day one had a long wait. Others did not have enough footwear for everyone and mother and father or mother and daughter would take turns going to church because they used the same footwear. John Visser Sr. used cardboard for soles in his rubbers, something many others did too.

For families with school-aged children, obtaining clothing was a concern. The children needed coats, boots, and other clothing to be able to go to school through the winter. For many children, the only "new" clothes they got were handed down from older family members or remade from used clothing. Shoes and rubbers were also hand-me-downs. Lulla Bos had a pair of rubbers with heels in them, but no shoes to wear in the rubbers. To go to church, she would put a potato in each heel and by the time she had walked the four miles to church, the potatoes were mush.

* * *

After school one day, a young fellow from a family that had it somewhat better than others bought a new pair of laced rubber boots and threw his old well-used pair in the ditch. Two other boys saw the rubbers being thrown away and both made a dive for them. They got there at the same time and an angry fight followed over who would get the rubbers. Since it was after school there was no interruption by teachers and other classmates encouraged them to continue. Eventually one of the boys was victorious and went proudly home with the rubbers.

* * *

Enough

"What else did we need? We had enough to read, enough to eat, enough to listen to. We also visited quite a bit. I worked for fifty cents a day plus board in Edmonton. I could save fifteen dollars a month. Pants were one dollar, jackets were one dollar, combination underwear was one dollar. Fifteen dollars went a long way."

Melle Elzinga (interview)

* * *

Paying the Bills

During the Depression, goods were exchanged for services rendered, since there was no cash to pay anyone with. John Schuring cleared land for Sigurd Tofte of Vega in the spring of 1931 and received two heifers in payment. Henry Strydhorst gave one hundred bushels of seed oats to George Toebes in the spring of 1932 in trade for a sow ready to farrow. (The sow had twelve young ones. After fattening the pigs and keeping two — one for butchering and one for increasing the herd — Henry sold the others for only twenty-eight dollars.) Sometimes a trade could be made for groceries: the Elzingas brought their eggs to the Vega store and took home groceries in payment; the Strydhorsts sent their eggs via the mailman Bill Jansowny to the Red and White Store in Barrhead and gave along a list of groceries that had the same value to be taken back.

During the 1920s, financial conditions had improved to the point that some Neerlandia farmers had bought fuel-powered machinery. But once the Depression hit, gas became an item they could not afford. Klaas Tuininga did not use his tractor during the thirties and Joseph Baker took the tires off his car and left it up on blocks for many years.

The families that had older sons or daughters usually did alright. The older children could find odd jobs in Neerlandia or work in Edmonton, and they sent the money earned home to their parents. There were one or two families in Neerlandia who simply could not make ends meet. They finally applied for and received relief during some of the Depression years. Relief amounted to three or four dollars a month.

* * *

One Dollar

Can you imagine having a little girl whose heart is set on a doll in Eaton's catalogue that only costs ninety-eight cents, a little girl who spends every chance she gets to look at that doll, dreaming of what it would be like to have this precious doll to be her very own, and you do not have ninety-eight cents to buy that doll? I was that little girl and someone owed my father one dollar, but that man did not have one dollar either. My parents, realizing how dear that doll was to my heart, promised me that should they ever collect that one dollar, I could have that doll. Imagine when this man came and paid the one-dollar debt to my father and I could have the doll! They kept their promise and I can still remember that doll. I think I must have been the happiest and the luckiest little girl in Neerlandia.

Now I realize the great sacrifice it must have been for my parents to fulfill my wish, when that dollar was needed for so many other important things.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

Health Care

If money was scarce for clothing, it was equally scarce for medical expenses. One went to the hospital only in emergencies, and then special arrangements had to be made to pay the bill. Many women still had their babies born at home with the help of a midwife, even though Dr Verreau was practicing in Barrhead and a hospital, St Elizabeth's, had been built there Gerrit Kippers had his appendix taken out in 1932 or 1933 by Dr Verreau and, as Gerrit said, "I think he took a pig for my appendix." Sophie Wierenga also had her appendix taken out in the Barrhead hospital in 1936. Her father, Hendrik, paid off part of the bill by bringing Dr Verreau a wagon load of lumber. Sophie paid off the rest by working in the hospital doing the laundry In 1936, three-year-old Cornelius Schuring needed treatment for osteomyelitis Dr. Verreau was paid with eggs and veal Later Cornelius had to go to the General Hospital in Edmonton for an operation which cost one hundred dollars, the subsequent eighteen month stay cost an additional one hundred dollars To pay this enormous bill, John Schuring made an agreement with the hospital and a packing plant. He would have animals brought to the packing plant and the meat would go to the hospital. The hospital credited him with one cent more per pound than the going price for the meat

The provincial government initiated some free medical assistance during the thirties In 1935, a Travelling Clinic came to Neerlandia and the medical team did a number of minor operations. The annual report of the Department of Health in 1935 stated that the Travelling Clinic visited thirty-four centres.

> "This clinic was in the field from May 20th to September 28th During this time 4,105 persons were examined and 888 operations for the removal of tonsils and adenoids were performed, as well as a considerable number of minor operations. The staff consisted of a surgeon in charge, one physician, two dentists, three nurses and two truck drivers. and the same high standard of service was provided as in previous years. The dentists on the staff examined 5,044 children, gave treatment to 2,149 and extracted 2,238 teeth "[7]

* * *

The Clinic

The two-room school was turned into a miniature hospital. The little room was used as a check-up room and a recovery area. The big room was the operating area. The Travelling Clinic had come in a large transport truck equipped with recovery cots, operating tables, and all other necessary medical equipment. All school children were supposed to be checked and anyone else needing attention was able to get it.

It was a very hot day in August. The children who came were given a physical examination and, if further attention was needed, they were sent to wait their turn in the cloak rooms, one for girls and one for boys. When his or her turn came, the nurse helped the patient onto the operation table, and the doctor administered ether. No one who was operated on that day will ever forget it the smell of ether, trying to count, the ringing sounds in your ears, and the flashing lights as you went under When the patient awoke in the recovery room it was a gruesome thing Everyone was sick and came out of the ether spitting up blood and wondering where they were and what had happened. Volunteers helped to clean up the patients and get them ready to be picked up by parents, then *changed the cots to get them ready for the next patients. One child followed the next in quick succession. A large number of children had their tonsils and adenoids removed and found when they woke up that they had teeth missing too. (They all missed the tooth fairy.) It must have been very difficult for the parents to take those sick children home over bumpy roads in wagons or democrats.*

After the operation, most children had very sore throats. With some children the bleeding did not stop quickly and they were sick for many days. Others were up and eating the next day. Still others were out herding cows two or three days afterward.

The Clinic left the next day and returned at regular intervals to administer the innoculation program. It is amazing that not a patient was lost.

Sadie Prins

* * *

Bill and Carrie Olthuis, wedding photo, 1934

John and Johanna Visser, wedding photo, 1934.

Getting Married

It took courage to get married during the Depression years — courage and trust in the Lord who holds the future. Couples that got married during the thirties began housekeeping with little in the way of material possessions, although things were cheap if you could afford them. It was more difficult for some than for others.

Bill and Carrie Olthuis, who married in March 1934, had a new little house but could not afford to put linoleum on the floor. It was merely oiled. They could not afford the heavy paper that was generally tacked to the walls before wallpapering, but they did buy wallpaper — at ten cents a roll. Carrie papered the walls. It looked nice too, until the wallpaper dried and cracked along every board. What a disappointment! Bill and Carrie bought a bed, a stove, and some unpainted chairs with fifty dollars Bill had borrowed from Sam Howey. For twenty-five cents they got a rocking chair without rockers. Jim Johnman made some for it. When their wedding day came, Bill got married in his brother's shoes because his own had the soles worn through — and that would be visible when they knelt for the wedding prayer.

John and Johanna Visser, who married in the fall of 1934, were better able to buy the things they needed. John had the proceeds of his crop to spend. With the two hundred dollars he received, he first paid Menne Nanninga the one-hundred he owed for threshing. Then he and Johanna went to Edmonton to buy some household items with the rest of the money. Dick Fisher, the trucker, offered to freight the items at no charge for a wedding present. In town John and Johanna bought a new bed and mattress and some second-hand items such as a sewing machine, a wood-and-coal stove, and a dresser. They even had money left for a set of rings which cost fifteen dollars and a wedding picture taken at a photographer's — about eight dollars. Johanna had worked in Edmonton for two months at $12.50 a month. With her earnings, they bought a dining room table, five chairs, and one armchair.

Government Work Camps

The Canadian federal government financed work camps from 1932 to 1935 to relieve the problem of the unemployed. A govern-

ment agent came to Neerlandia and went from farm to farm to find anyone that was willing to have a land-clearing camp set up on his land and/or willing to have his land cleared. Siebren Tiemstra and Henry Kippers Sr. each agreed to have a camp set up on his quarter.

On the camp site, canvas tents were erected as living quarters for the men. Each camp had a full-time cook who cooked plenty of good food. (The Tiemstra children would get the empty cans of jam from the camp cook. The cans had enough jam left in them that the children could use it on sandwiches — a real treat.) Besides the cook, two men stayed in camp each day to cut up firewood using a crosscut saw. Each weekday morning at about eight o'clock, the rest of the men would walk single file to the area that had to be cleared. They were well-outfitted for the work of clearing, being provided with double-bitted axes, mattocks, adzes, and crosscut saws. After cutting down the trees and bushes, the logs and brush were piled up teepee-wise so that water could drain off easily. The men went back to camp for lunch and their work day was over at five o'clock.

* * *

Regulations for men in the land-clearing camp included the following.

"The conditions under which these works will be carried out are as follows:

(a) Accomodation, food and medical care will be provided in kind, and an allowance not exceeding 20 cents per diem for each day worked in Camp, exclusive of days in transit proceeding to camp, will be issued in cash.

(b) Clothing which is issued to personnel on Unemployment Relief Projects does not become the private property of the individual.

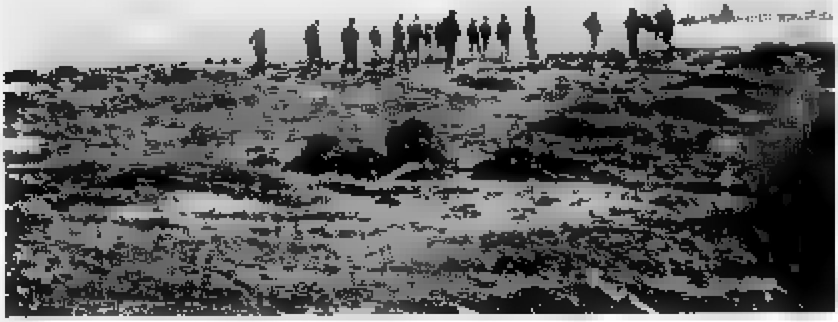
(c) The clothing which the man may be permitted to retain on discharge will be strictly limited to essential articles on his person. Spare underwear, socks, 'Necessaries' etc., will be withdrawn and returned to camp stores.

(d) Rubbers and Boots, Knee, rubber, are station (camp) stores and will be issued from time to time only as required for specific purposes."[2]

* * *

One land-clearing camp was located on the NE 14-61-3-5. It had forty to fifty men and they cleared land for Siebren Tiemstra, Henry Mast, Bill Olthuis, and Jim Johnman. They spent most of one winter there. Gerben Tiemstra, who was hired to haul water for them, went once a day with a team of horses and a sleigh with four empty barrels on it to the Kalmbach farm in Mellowdale. The Kalmbachs had a good well with a windmill, so if there was a wind Gerben did not have to pump. The water was pumped into the barrels using a hose, but once Gerben got back to the camp, he had to unload the water with a pail. The job took him about four-and-a-half hours. The other camp, which employed one hundred men, was located on the line between the north quarters of 16-62-3-5. These men cleared on quarters belonging to Henry Kippers Sr., John Kippers Sr., and

Bill Bouwman Gerrit Kippers hauled water for the camp. There was hardly any snow that winter, so he used the horses and wagon. Every morning at about six o'clock, he left for camp where he picked up five 45-gallon barrels and drove to a natural spring north of Bonstrom's in Vega. Once there he and his assistant, a man from the camp, filled the barrels using pails. They made it back to camp around one o'clock Gerrit often had a meal there before going home again On Saturdays, he had to make two trips, the second one to Baird Lake to provide water for the men's Saturday-night baths.



Workers leaving the land clearing on Kippers'

Kitchen crew, land clearing camp on Kippers'

The farmers had to pay the government five to ten dollars per acre for the clearing done on their land, depending on how heavy the timber was. After the clearing had been done, though, some of the farmers could not afford to break the land and the brush grew up again Most of them could not afford to pay the government either, so in later years much of the debt was forgiven

* * *

Camps

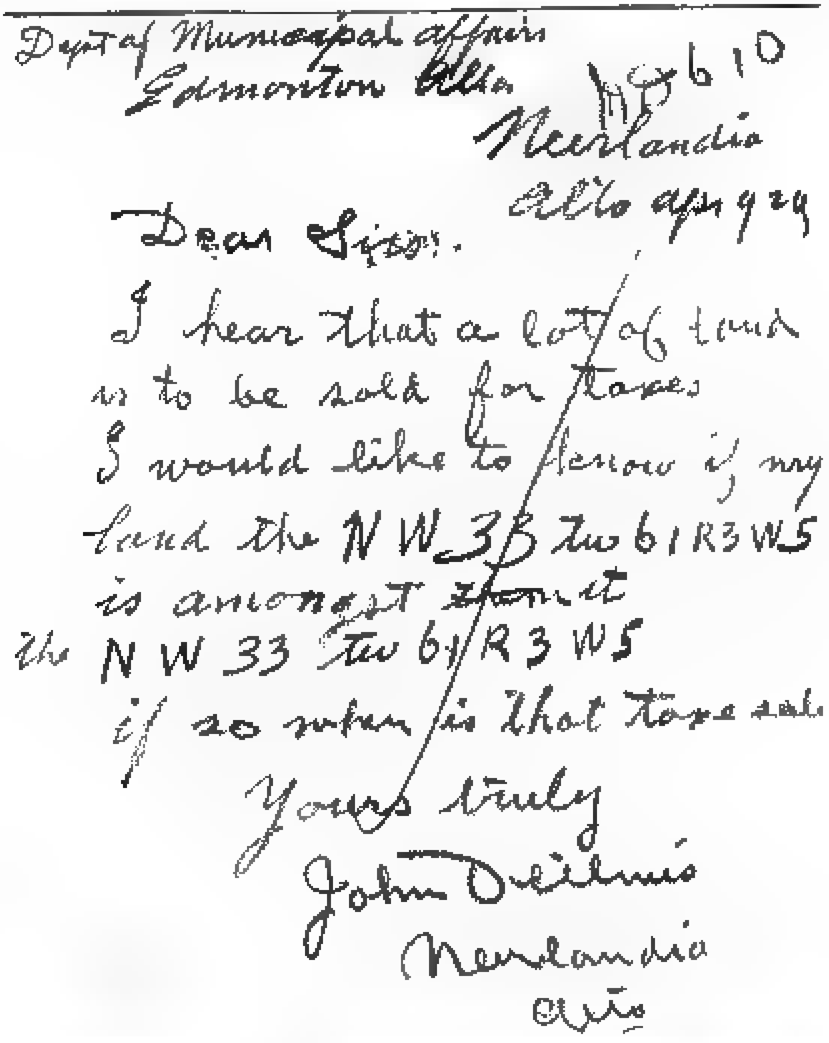
"During the Depression the government was afraid men would rebel. They made camps for men and provided food and a small wage. Siebren [Tiemstra] had a camp. They cleared more than one hundred acres. Farmers were supposed to pay the government six dollars an acre. The government passed a debt adjustment act because people could not pay for it. The debt was wiped out. They got off pretty good. It took a lot of nerve to venture that. There was a lot of jealousy about it."

John Ingwersen (interview)

* * *

Government Aid

The federal government initiated some programs to aid the farmers. During 1932, under R. B. Bennett, the government



Dept of Municipal affairs
Edmonton Alta

610
Neerlandia
Alta apr 9 29

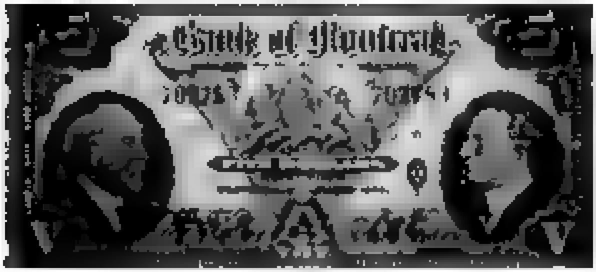
Dear Sirs.

I hear that a lot of land
is to be sold for taxes
I would like to know if my
land the N W 33 Tw 61 R3 W5
is amongst ~~them~~ it
the N W 33 Tw 61 R 3 W 5
if so when is that taxe sale

Yours truly
John Dillmis
Neerlandia
Alta

awarded grain farmers a bonus of five cents a bushel at a time when wheat was nineteen cents a bushel. In 1936-1937 the government of Mackenzie King set up a seed program. In Neerlandia the crops had frozen during the fall of 1935 (threshing was charged by the hour that year) and there was not enough feed for the winter and no seed grain for the next year. A government official came to Neerlandia in the spring of 1936 and set up his office in the church basement. Anyone who needed seed grain was advised to see him. The basement was filled with people and, unfortunately for some who had come early, he called everyone up in alphabetical order.

The Depression created many difficulties for the farmers but, as one farmer said, "The worst was the taxes", there was just no money for taxes. Taxes were calculated according to the land assessment. In 1929, Rienk de Jager had paid a municipal tax of $31.05, Henry Kippers Sr. had paid the amount of $20.10 on his homestead, and Joseph Baker had paid $24.45. That kind of money was difficult to obtain during the thirties. The government did allow farmers to pay off some of their tax debt by working on the road. Oene Piers worked on the road one winter clearing land on the road allowance along the SE 21-62-3-5. Henry Strydhorst also worked off some taxes on the road for the wage of one dollar a day. The government added interest each year to taxes owing. One day in 1936 or 37, a notice was posted in the post office of the Neerlandia store listing the tax quarters which the government would sell if taxes on them were not paid. (And there were some who thought this would be a good opportunity to buy land cheaply.) Henry Strydhorst's name was on the list, he had a high tax bill including compound interest. He and his father-in-law went to the municipal district office in Freedom to talk to J. C. Allen, the secretary-treasurer. Mr. Allen accepted a small payment on the debt, as long as the farmers were willing to pay on the debt the government was satisfied. As a result of government legislation, taxes could be consolidated. The penalties and interest were removed and a yearly payment plan was set up for each farmer. One farmer could not pay his taxes and did lose his quarter.



Only a few immigrants came to Neerlandia during the thirties — partly because of the world-wide Depression, but also Neerlandia was considered full in regard to available land. On January 11, 1933, William van Ark, a colonization agent and former resident of Neerlandia, wrote:

> "Neerlandia always had large families, some even 14 children. The children who were small when their parents moved in, are getting married now. The number of marriages will increase every year. These young people desire to

> secure land in the same district if possible, because they do not wish to lose the church connection but the land available is very limited and quarters marked as no good are taken. To the south is a strip of heavy timber, to the north the sandy hills of the Athabasca River, to the west swamp and muskeg and to the east more unsuitable land.
>
> Neerlandia can be called a district with an overflowing population and if a number of them have to secure land elsewhere they will insist on going to a district where they can start or join another group of the same denomination."[3]

He encouraged Dutch immigrants to find another place to settle.

* * *

Councillors

In 1932 the councillors had their payment for each Municipal District meeting they attended reduced from five to four dollars. In 1933 it was further reduced to three dollars and sixty cents. The councillors also received payment for mileage to and from the meetings and for mileage covered doing supervisory work. The mileage rate of ten cents per mile remained the same despite other cutbacks.

* * *

The thirties, in spite of the hard times, were fascinating years. During that decade such things as ballpoint pens, nylon stockings, refrigerators, cellophane, and canned soup and baby food made their appearance in Canada though it took some time before they could be seen in Neerlandia. In Neerlandia, the new thing was the radio. The whole family would sit around the radio to listen to such programs as "Amos 'n Andy" or "The Happy Gang" and friends would be invited over to listen as well. With the coming of the radio, people had an increased awareness of the outside world. Farm magazines such as the *Free Press Weekly* or *The Country Guide* had always been read, but the news was at least a week old — even if you had a subscription. If it was passed along a few times, the news was even older. But with the radio, one could follow world events as they happened. People could hear reports on the hunt for the Mad Trapper in 1932 or on the mining disaster in Nova Scotia in 1934. The birth of the Dionne quintuplets was an event that everyone heard about, whether they had a radio or not, and which captured everyone's attention. Some people listened to Edward VIII's abdication speech in 1936, while others heard King George's inaugural speech, remembering that he stammered and that it was reported that Queen Elizabeth held his hand to give him confidence.

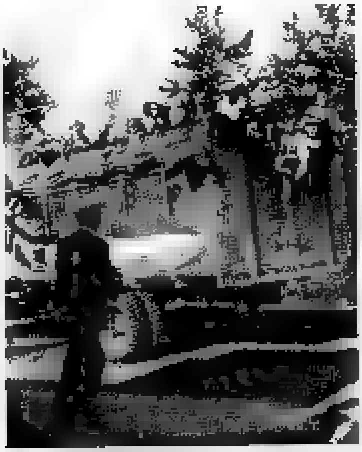
* * *

Our First Radio

In the year 1931, my father built a radio powered by a large car battery. We used earphones and could hear programs from Edmonton. Once we even picked up a program from Seattle. How thrilling it was, we let our imaginations work, and could almost picture the people we were hearing. The radio was truly a great source of excitement.

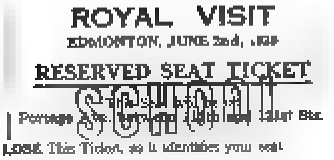
We took turns listening, and one day Simon heard that anyone hearing that program who lived in the country could write in to the station and tell them where they lived. Then the one living the farthest away would win a prize. Simon, only thirteen at the time,

The Royal Visit



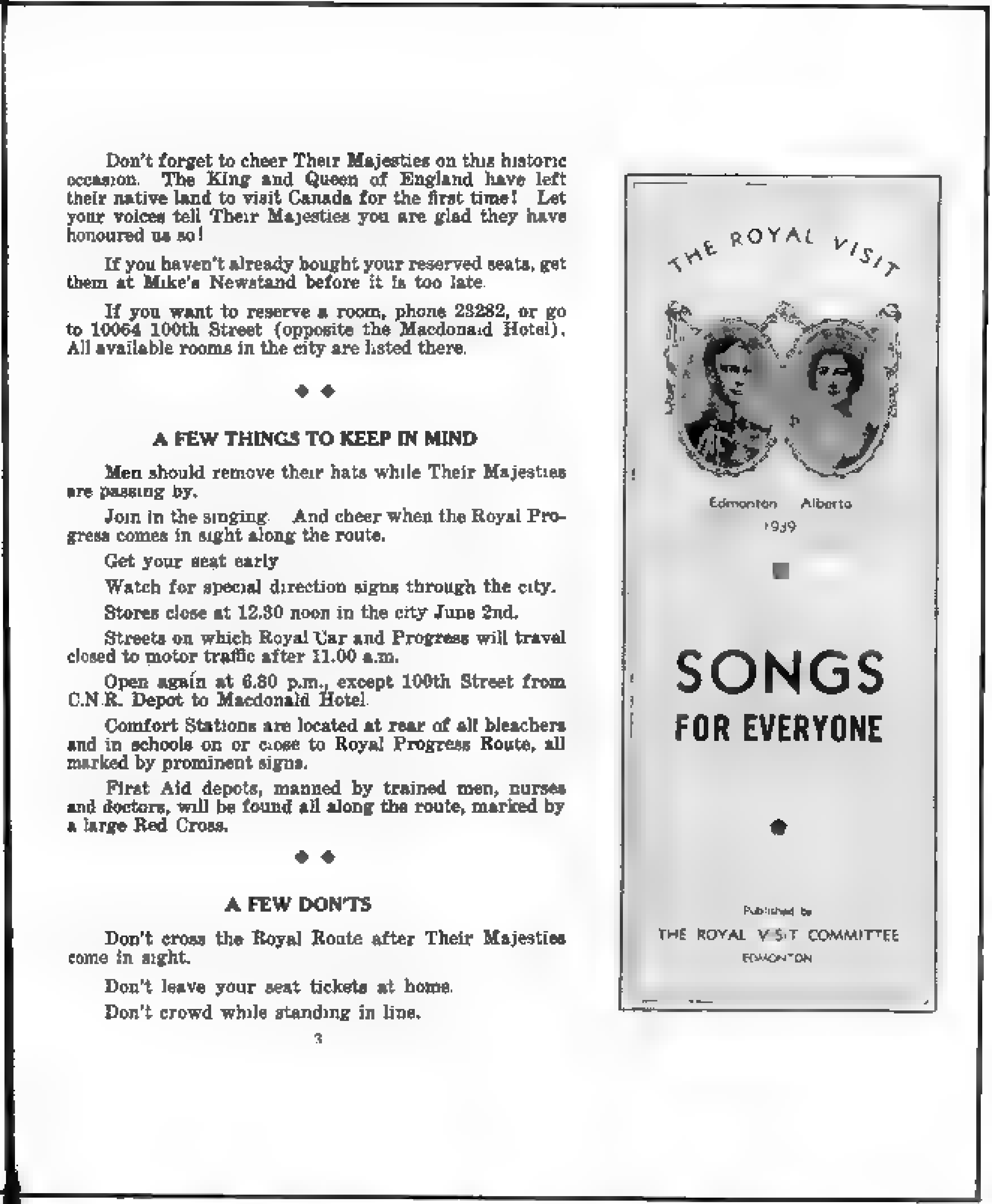
A truckload of pupils and some women of the community left Neerlandia at 8:00 a.m. of June 2 1939. to see King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Mr Ashley (foreground) took the students of grade four and up. A group of students from Shoal Creek went along too. Mr. Fisher provided the transportation and put seats in the back of his truck to accommodate the passengers.

When the truckload reached Edmonton, they went to the river flats at Laurier Park, where they ate lunch. A cream can of chocolate milk was supplied by Mr. Fisher. After lunch, they drove to Portage Avenue (Kingsway) where bleachers had been set up. The area was still bush and was called The Hudson's Bay Reserve.



ROYAL VISIT
EDMONTON, JUNE 2nd, 1939
RESERVED SEAT TICKET
SCHOOL
Portage Ave. [illegible] 121st Sts.
Keep This Ticket, as it identifies your seat

When the Parade was over, the group returned to Neerlandia, arriving home at about 10 p.m.



Don't forget to cheer Their Majesties on this historic occasion. The King and Queen of England have left their native land to visit Canada for the first time! Let your voices tell Their Majesties you are glad they have honoured us so!

If you haven't already bought your reserved seats, get them at Mike's Newstand before it is too late.

If you want to reserve a room, phone 23282, or go to 10064 100th Street (opposite the Macdonald Hotel). All available rooms in the city are listed there.

◆ ◆

A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Men should remove their hats while Their Majesties are passing by.

Join in the singing. And cheer when the Royal Progress comes in sight along the route.

Get your seat early

Watch for special direction signs through the city.

Stores close at 12.30 noon in the city June 2nd.

Streets on which Royal Car and Progress will travel closed to motor traffic after 11.00 a.m.

Open again at 6.30 p.m., except 100th Street from C.N.R. Depot to Macdonald Hotel.

Comfort Stations are located at rear of all bleachers and in schools on or close to Royal Progress Route, all marked by prominent signs.

First Aid depots, manned by trained men, nurses and doctors, will be found all along the route, marked by a large Red Cross.

◆ ◆

A FEW DON'TS

Don't cross the Royal Route after Their Majesties come in sight.

Don't leave your seat tickets at home.

Don't crowd while standing in line.

3

THE ROYAL VISIT

Edmonton Alberta
1939

SONGS
FOR EVERYONE

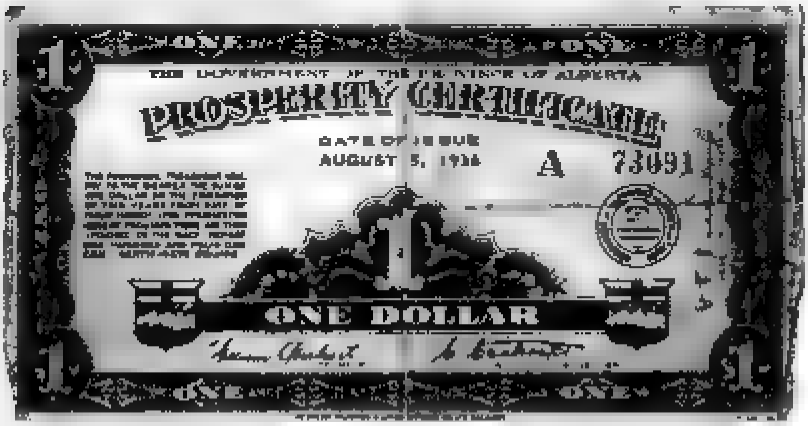
Published by
THE ROYAL VISIT COMMITTEE
EDMONTON

eagerly wrote in. The household was filled with suspense and excitement in the hope we would win. Win we did, and one day we received the parcel! Inside was a beautiful mauve taffeta cushion. What a luxury for our old furniture to have such a pillow sitting on the couch!

Grace Wierenga

* * *

A popular radio program in the early 30s was William Aberhart's Sunday afternoon broadcasts, during which he preached, and expounded some economic ideas as well. William Aberhart, or Bible Bill, as he was often called, was chiefly responsible for forming the Social Credit party in early 1935. There was to be a provincial election on August 22, 1935, and among Aberhart's proposals during his election campaign was a program of issuing money in which every adult in the province would receive a twenty-five dollar certificate each month. Sometime before the election, the secretary of the Social Credit party, J. H. Unwin, held a meeting in the Neerlandia church basement. The place was packed. He also promised twenty-five dollars a month to everyone and some people "took it in like water." In the subsequent election Aberhart's party carried fifty-six seats out of a total of sixty-three. The United Farmers of Alberta party was soundly defeated, failing to get a single seat. Many people in Neerlandia voted for Aberhart but they maintained it was because he was a Christian, not because they believed his election promises of monthly dividends.



Funny money.

Aberhart did issue some prosperity certificates in 1936 which earned the name "funny money." Some people in Neerlandia received a certificate, but at the cost of one cent a week to put the required stamp on the back of it, the certificate was considered too expensive and quickly redeemed. Anna Schuring was given some certificates by her brother Peter, who had received some from his dairy customers and could not use them all. Anna, who was in Edmonton since her son was in the hospital there, went to the Army and Navy store to buy some clothes. Not all stores would accept the funny money, but at the Army and Navy she was able to buy herself a grey summer coat and a dress and some clothes for the children, all in exchange for the certificates. Aberhart's plans for monthly dividends soon vanished, but his party's popularity remained.

On September 10, 1939, Canada declared war on Germany. After Canada became involved in the war, the prices of farm products went up and the Depression was over.

* * *

Making Ends Meet

Even though there were not many jobs available, some found other ways to work and make ends meet. Bill Olthuis bought two heifers from Bill Krikke for thirteen dollars. After butchering them himself, he peddled the meat through the settlement for two cents a pound. He had the hides tanned at the tannery in Edmonton. After selling the meat and paying for the leather, he broke even, although he had kept some meat for himself and could use the leather for repairing his horse harnesses.

* * *

Depression Period

The year 1929 found us well-established on our farm. Prices for agricultural products were good. A five-gallon can of cream sold for $8.00. Wheat was $1.59 a bushel, hogs 12¢ a pound. We could not afford a large home. Prospects were rosy from the business viewpoint. Banks were already granting loans to responsible farmers, and after much discussion, we agreed to do what we had never done before: go into debt and borrow to build our home. As security for the bank loan we had sixty acres in crop, five brood sows with forty-eight young ones. The yield of wheat for that year had been sixty bushels per acre with forty bushels for barley and eighty for oats. So we got the loan and I got busy building our home.

That very fall, for the first time in my life, I was in debt. I was building a new house with a bank loan and I sold enough wheat to pay my threshing and store bills and kept the rest to be sold the next spring. But, alas, the same wheat which had sold at $1.50 to $1.80 the previous year sold the next spring for 19¢ a bushel.

As a member of the Alberta Wheat Pool, I followed the advice of the elevator operator and decided to hold my grain for a while. In the spring of 1930, the whole world economic system collapsed. I hauled grain to Barrhead and, contrary to expectations, had to let it go for 19¢ a bushel. No one could explain the causes of the market crash but everyone was affected by it. Everything followed: hogs sold for $4.00 a head, dairy products were just as low. In short, we were flat broke and heading for bankruptcy (which had never entered our heads since we had come to Canada).

In fact we were worse off than when we started fifteen years before. Little by little, wide-scale unemployment spread throughout the cities. Money became scarcer and scarcer. Wages dropped to a low of 10¢ per hour. Farmers could hire a man for $5.00 per month plus their board and room. In some cases, the Bennett government was refunding the farmers five bucks just to get the men away from crowded centres. In others, men were willing to work just for their keep as it was impossible to get even that in cities. No matter how hard one tried, there was no work or money available.

In a way, people in the country fared better than people in the city They could grow their own food and always managed to have plenty of it. The farmers hauled wheat to get it ground into flour and paid the miller with half the grain On this trading system we managed to get our wheat, oats, and barley threshed for all our needs. The miller would generally accept grain in return for the milling of flour, cream of wheat, and other needs. Those of us who had grain to spare would give some to those of us who had none The animals supplied meat milk, and eggs The gardens produced all kinds of vegetables and the land provided hay for the cattle and horses and grain for the farmer's own needs, if he had succeeded in getting enough seed to sow the land in the spring

Clothes and equipment had to last. Shoes had to be repaired as best we could. Many were worn-out. Not being able to replace them, some people went barefooted, especially the children, whose feet grow quickly. Some of us became self-taught blacksmiths and farm mechanics in order to keep our farm equipment running And so it was. Life carried on and people survived.

Ted Reitsma

Taken from *The Struggles of a Dutch Immigrant,* written by Ted Reitsma in 1968

* * *

The Hungry Thirties

Then came the Hungry Thirties. On the prairies the farmers were dried out and many were on relief We managed to get groceries, but we had to pay back the government before we could get the title to our land Those were hard years. I sent four cows to Edmonton and received twelve dollars for them A pig sold for three dollars, cream was eleven cents a pound butterfat, eggs were five cents a dozen, wheat twenty-five cents a bushel, and oats you could not sell for any price Calves you could not give away so we killed them as they were born. Klaas Krikke and I took a load of wheat to Westlock. The elevator man said, "I have no room for it everything is full to the top. No cars to ship it — but you can go in the grocery store and buy some gunny sacks and we will put your wheat here on the scale " And in that way we did get rid of it. A fellow with a load of oats was not so fortunate It was standing on an open lot, he could not even get a meal for it We went home and I don't know if he sold his load of oats or not It was not worth taking back the seventy miles. That was the time of the unemployed marching on Ottawa, the rides on the freight trains and the soup kitchens in every city. People had no money to pay taxes so the government had to mark 'paid' on the taxes, even if they had only paid a part of it. I'm sure the government lost on that But we did not starve; we were just poor in the midst of plenty!

Ben Lievers

* * *

* * *

Oil Money

After working for farmers for seven days a week for the grand sum of twenty to twenty-five dollars per month, John Vanee was lured to Turner Valley by the prospects of making big money in the oil fields. In the spring of 1928 he began working as a roughneck for ninety-three cents an hour, fifty-six dollars a week. Living expenses were one dollar per day, allowing John accumulation of excess money to play the stock market Prior to the crash of 1929, he was worth approximately $20-30,000 on paper (In 1930 John and a friend took a trip to Ontario for a month in a 1930 Essex) By 1931, however, John arrived in Neerlandia driving a Model A Ford and owning about three thousand dollars to begin homesteading. He traded the Model A for a cow For furniture he purchased a solid brass bed, a stove, and a table and chairs, which were brought from Edmonton by Mr. Quick. Four horses and harnesses were purchased at an auction in Edmonton John also bought a walking plow, a disc, harrows, a wagon, a sleigh, and a buggy. All these purchases, as well as the building of a shack and a barn, pretty well took care of the three thousand dollars.

Frances Vanee Churchill

FOOTNOTES

Annual Report of the Department of Public Health, Province of Alberta, 1935, pg. 16.

[2] Extract. Regulations, Unemployment Relief Works, 1933, Provincial Archives of Alberta Edmonton.

[3] Memorandum for Mr. H S. Kent RE: Holland Settlement, Neerlandia, Alta , January 11, 1933.

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The War Years

THE WAR YEARS

Most Neerlandians first became interested in the war events happening in Europe when Germany invaded Poland in 1939. They said to each other, "Those poor Dutchmen, they will be next." Everyone hoped Britain and Germany would settle their differences, but that was not to be. Canada, as a country in the Commonwealth, felt its interests lay with Britain and entered the war on September 10, 1939.

The radio was full of news about the war, and those who did not have a radio heard the news from neighbours. *The Free Press* and *The Family Herald*, farm papers that came to most homes, recorded the events vividly. The older generation remembered World War I with its hardships and deprivations and parents hoped and prayed their sons would not be called to serve. Many shed private tears.

When the eligible men heard about the war and realized they could be called up, many felt like running for the bush. This was the first reaction, but more sensible thoughts soon followed.

Jim Johnman in Naples, Italy, 1944

Jim Johnman was the first local man to enlist (about 1939). He was of Scottish origin and probably felt strongly about the defense of his native country. The army also offered employment, which was hard to come by right after the Depression. Perhaps he saw enlistment as a means to keep his family fed in hard times.

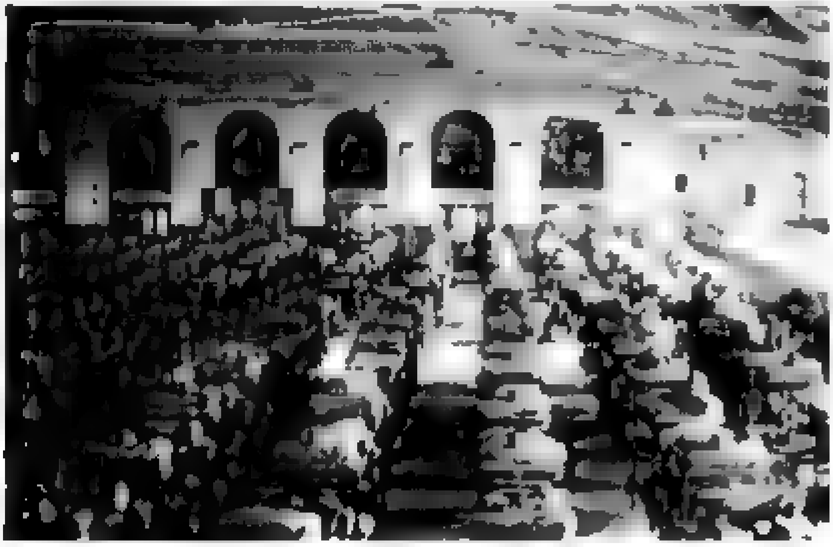
Canada's military forces were few and the government used draft laws to increase the armed forces. The able-bodied men from twenty-one to thirty five years of age could be conscripted, although one could enlist at age eighteen. Farmers were exempt because they were producers of food needed by the forces. The government usually allowed one young man to stay on the farm to assist his father with the farming. A person could also be exempted for medical reasons.

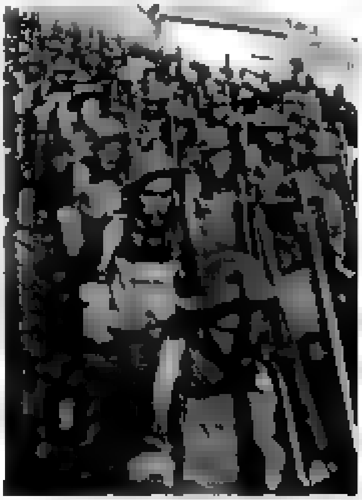
In January 1941 four Neerlandia men received notice to report to Camrose for basic training: George Anema, John Ingwersen, Henry B. Lievers, and Clarence Mast. John Ingwersen was disqualified for medical reasons so soon returned home. George Anema came home after one month because he was needed on the farm. After these first men were called, the community realized that even their little settlement was to be actively involved. Men went, not with a sense of loyalty to the Netherlands, but because they were concerned citizens of Canada. They went to defend the country they loved.

In training, Moose Jaw, 1942. Simon Tuininga.

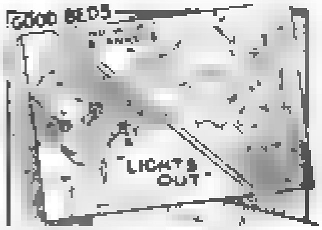
Never before in their sheltered lives had the men from Neerlandia been exposed to experiences such as in basic training camp. Discipline was very strict. They were taught to obey orders without question. There was an army slogan that said it all: "It's not to say why, just do and die." Route marches to build stamina were the order of the day. The men went on drills, and learned how to shoot rifles the army's way, not the farmer's way. They learned how to operate machine guns and other heavy artillery. Everything was cleaned and polished every day. Can you imagine these farmers' sons scrubbing floors? They did, and if orders were not obeyed there were more floors to scrub, maybe even the same one ten times over for punishment. One trainee put it this way, "Along with the lye and homemade soap there were always others who were there beside you, also learning to scrub and obey."

At training camp the boys were exposed to other things. Some contracted measles, mumps, or chicken pox, others became very homesick. For many this first time away from home was traumatic — many had never even been to a barbershop before. Others realized this was only training camp and considered it an adventure. Basic training lasted anywhere from one to four months. At first the boys were allowed to return home on leave after basic training was completed.

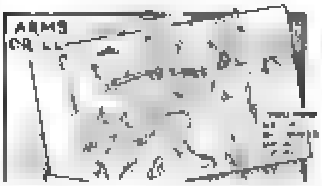




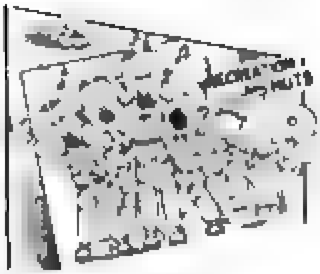
Soldiers leaving parade ground after review.



Sleeping quarters. Note rolled-up bedding.



Jim Lievers, Clarence Mast, John Peters, John Bos, Joe H. Wieringa.



There were many promotions to persuade men to enlist for overseas duty. Catchy tunes were played on the radio. Everyone heard songs like "Pack Up Your Troubles", "It's a Long Way to Tipperary", "The White Cliffs of Dover", "Whistle While You Work", "Lili Marlene" and "Danny Boy". Soldiering was portrayed as adventure-filled and glamourous. Were you not patriotic? There were rumours of Hitler and his idea of a superrace. Men were challenged to defend the world against domination by Germany. However, these promotions did not affect the boys from Neerlandia much.

As the war progressed, the conscription policy changed and once a soldier was in basic training camp, he could receive orders for active duty overseas. After this preliminary training, depending on one's qualifications, the men could choose the branch of the military in which they wished to serve: army, air force, or navy. Most local men served in the Royal Canadian Army but Henry Bouwman and Simon Tuininga joined the air force.

George Lievers, c. 1942

The wages for serving the country were $1.25 per day if the soldier remained in Canada, and $1.50 per day if he was sent overseas. The men usually sent one-half of the overseas pay home to their wives or mothers. The other half was kept for spending money, though all needs, except items such as cigarettes and beer, were supplied by the army.

Once the first shock was over, most of the local boys stationed in Canada enjoyed the forces. They had no say over matters anyway so they realized they might as well make the best of it. They received a furlough once a year which entitled them to two weeks leave. For this leave the army paid the train fare home and back. If a soldier was needed on the farm he could also get a harvest leave of four to five weeks. First, however, it had to be proven that the need was there; a letter from a minister or other authorized person was required as proof. If a soldier stayed away a few extra days his pay would be docked and he would be put on detention. Any time army personnel rode the train, even for personal reasons, the fare was automatically half price if they were in uniform.

In uniform. Bert Nanninga, 1944

Uniforms actually did wonders for those boys! Girls in Edmonton went wild for uniformed fellows, especially at first; they were always offering to take the soldiers out for coffee. When a soldier came back to Neerlandia on furlough, he could have his pick of the local girls. The younger boys of the community looked at the uniforms and dreamed of glamour and adventures in faraway places.

The men in army camp did not find it difficult to practise their religious beliefs. Every Sunday morning they had church parade. In uniform, they were marched three abreast and would split up to attend either a Catholic or Protestant service, usually held in the drill hall and led by a chaplain. The chaplain would give a Biblical message and the group would sing songs and pray. A song often requested was "Oh God Our Help In Ages Past".

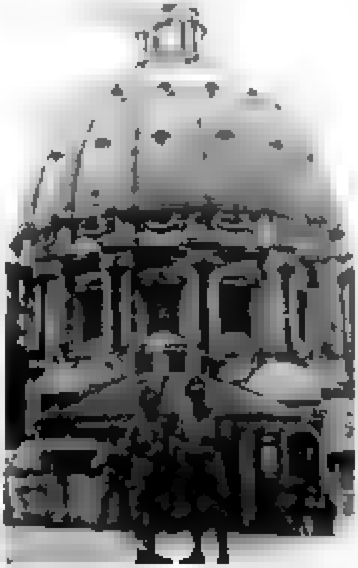
Naturally there were many undesirable things a Christian would face, among them continuous swearing and drinking. The local boys soon picked their chums from those they had things in common with and whose life-style was similar to theirs.

Before the men were sent overseas they were given a few days embarkation leave — that was spent saying goodbye to family and friends. All prayed that their lives would be spared and they would be reunited with their loved ones. Once they were back with the forces again there was little time to think about these things because of the full routine.

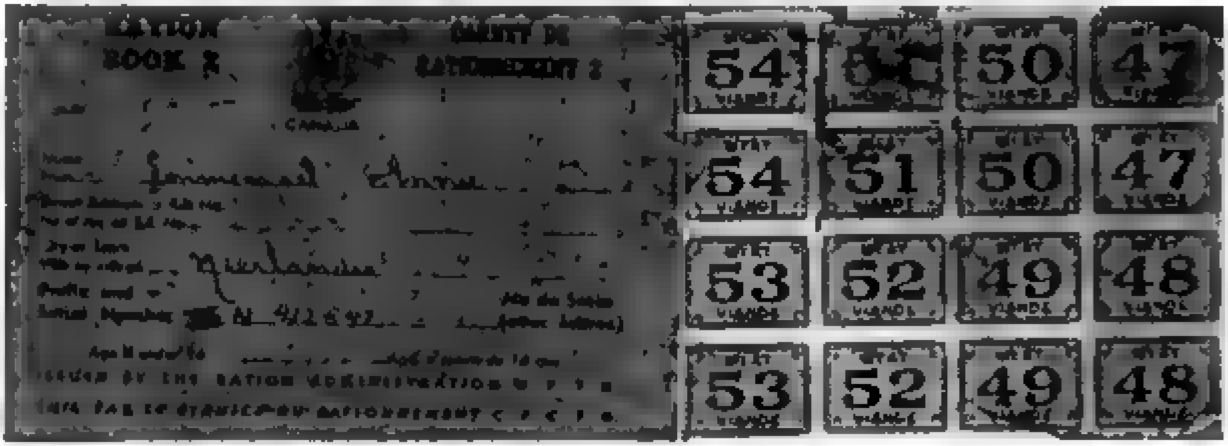
While overseas, a few had opportunity to visit some famous sites, including St. Peter's and the Colosseum in Rome. The sights were very impressive, but the soldiers were unable to appreciate the beauty of a country under the adverse circumstances in which they were seeing it.

Canada was also involved in the war effort on the home front. Plants that had made vacuum cleaners before the war began to make machine guns. Automobile factories were converted to manufacture airplanes, engines, and tanks. Women filled positions to release men for combat. Jennie Hiemstra of Neerlandia worked at the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Edmonton. No women had worked there before the war, and the managers were pleasantly surprised at what women could do.

Many food items were in short supply during the war. For some items that consumers had to buy on a regular basis, ration coupons were instituted in 1942. The items rationed were coffee, tea, sugar, butter, and, later, preserves and meats. Shoppers had to take their coupons with them when they shopped and surrender a certain number of coupons for each rationed item they bought. The rationing of butter, meat, and preserves did not affect Neerlandia residents much. Almost everyone milked cows, made butter, put up their own preserves, and had animals to use for meat. The local people were probably most affected by the sugar ration. The Strydhorst family traded their sugar and butter coupons for used dresses from the Elzingas. Some started drinking their coffee and tea without sugar while others drank milk instead. A few families, such as the Henry Hiemstras, Albert Masts, and Pete Tuiningas, kept bees to supplement their sugar requirements with honey. The Blue Ribbon Manufacturing Company did put out a Blue Ribbon Cookbook during the war which contained sugarless recipes for cakes and other baked goods. In the fall, during canning time, extra sugar was available.



At St. Peter's in Rome, 1944. Pete Emmerzaal on the right.



RATION BOOK 2

CARTE DE RATIONNEMENT 2

CANADA

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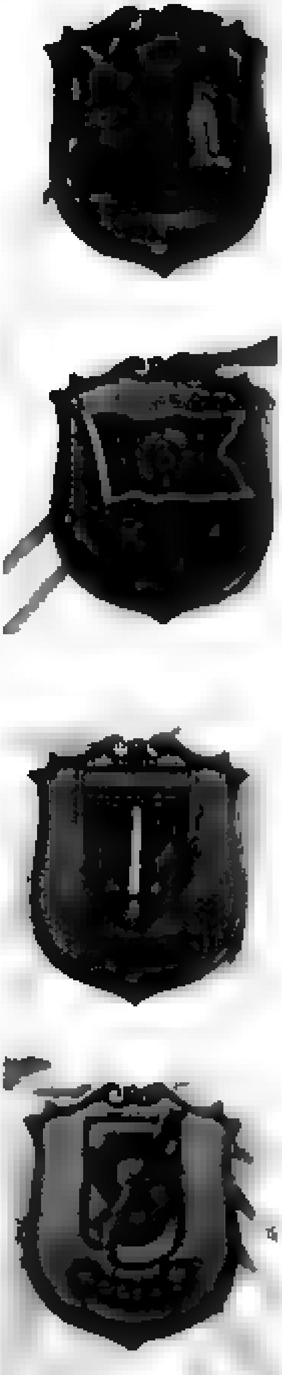
54 51 50 47
53 52 49 48
53 52 49 48



Plaques received by Henry Kippers for selling Victory Bonds.

Coffee or tea was available with one coupon. If the coupons were used for tea, then one could not buy coffee. Aebe and Minnie Plantinga dug up dandelion roots, scraped them, cut them into long thin strips, and dried them. The strips were then roasted in the oven and ground, and used instead of ground coffee. There may have been a small amount of bartering for ration coupons, but most of the people made do with what was available. They were not accustomed to luxury and tried to live within the bounds imposed upon them. Besides, there was always plenty to eat on the farm.

Gasoline was also rationed, but it was not used extensively in the community and there was no rationing of purple gas. With some advance planning there was no need to run short of gas. Truckers could get permits to buy the needed amounts to operate their business.

There were many other shortages too, since raw materials were being used for the war effort. Certificates were issued for automobiles, tires, stoves, and washing machines. These certificates were given on the basis of need, and one had to prove to the local ration board that he had a genuine need for a particular item. Rubber tires had recently become available in this area and if one was fortunate and had bought some before the shortage, he would not need new tires because they were expected to last from six to eight years. Tires bought during the war, though, were made of synthetic rubber but seemed to be composed of sawdust and other foreign material held together with rubber, they fell apart in no time. As the war progressed, farm implements became almost impossible to buy. Used tires and aluminium were collected at the school for recycling. Secondhand items were difficult to obtain too. A few farmers in Neerlandia managed to buy a secondhand car, but one remembers looking for a car and finding only one lone advertisement of a car for sale in an Edmonton paper — and that car was in Saskatchewan!

Several other smaller, but crucial, items were difficult to obtain. Rubber rings for canning jars were in short supply. Clothespins with metal springs were unavailable and peg clothespins were sold instead. These usually were too thick or too thin for the line and soon cracked in half. If one ran out of clothespins, clothes were draped over the clothesline or a fence. Toothpaste was sold in tubes and John Gray, the Watkins man, had to have the empty tubes back before he could sell the householder a new, full tube. This was also the case if shaving cream was purchased in tubes. Elastic, though available, was of very poor quality. It did not have much stretch to it and what it did have was soon lost.

Nylon stockings were almost unobtainable during the war because nylon was being used to make parachutes. In order to be fashionable, the girls would paint their legs beige with a sponge. A friend would draw a black line down the back of the leg for a seam, completing the "stockings."

Farm prices rose during the war years because of the great demand for the food the farmer was producing. With extra income, but a shortage of items to purchase, some farmers had extra cash. In order to finance the war effort the government sold Victory Bonds and Henry Kippers Sr. became the agent in Neerlandia. One family remembers buying at least three thousand dollars worth of these Victory Bonds because there was not much else to spend their money on A small amount of interest was paid to the buyer and these bonds could be cashed at any time

The women of the community did their part too Jacoba Koning was in charge of the Red Cross effort in this community She would give wool to any woman who had the time to knit Socks, scarves, and toques were among the items made by various volunteers. Old sheets were cut into strips, rolled up, and sent to the Red Cross for use as bandages on the front lines

As much contact as possible was kept with the soldiers who were away Parents and friends prayed for the safe return of each one gone The Young People's Society took turns writing to their members and *The Banner* was sent to some Clarence Mast recalls that he was asked the name of his favourite hymn. His choice — "It is Well With My Soul" — was sung by the congregation one Sunday Letters from home were always coveted by the soldiers and they enjoyed the local newspapers that were often included Family and friends also sent them parcels containing personal items such as cigarettes, chocolate bars (when available), gum, cans of Spork or Spam, or some little item the soldiers had requested Sometimes the men would not receive the parcels, but the families continued sending them with the hope that someone (other than the enemy) would use and appreciate the contents.

Jan Koning, manager of Neerlandia Co-op, was very patriotic and interested in the war effort He had a world map tacked up on a wall in the store and used coloured pins to show the advance or retreat of the Allied forces — the pins were moved according to the different areas of combat This map became a gathering place for customers who were also interested in the war

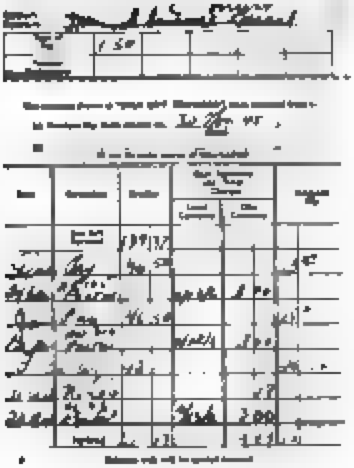
The eight o'clock news every night was a very important time (Who does not remember the voice of Matthew Halton or Lorne Green coming from the CBC?) Children had to either be in bed or very quiet Some of them had the strange idea that after the war was over there would not be any more news

Finally good news was heard, "Victory in Europe!" There was much celebrating in the Allied nations when V E (Victory in Europe) Day was declared May 8, 1945 Huge bonfires were lit in England where Bert Nanninga was stationed Simon Fisher was also in England and he recalls church bells ringing and people singing and dancing in the streets Clarence Mast was in Germany but although they knew of the victory, the troops there were still on the alert because of sporadic fighting by small bands of Germans Later thousands of soldiers came together in drill halls to be entertained for over a week. This victory celebration included nightly variety shows with much singing, band playing, and other entertainment performed by army women and men

After that wonderful news the soldier's life became more relaxed. The troops did not parade much and now put in time overseas waiting for a ship to take them home No more spit and polish either! The peace and quiet was a dramatic change from the previous constant noise and activity.

While the veterans had been away fighting, the farmers at

Young People's had a picnic celebration in Vega sandhills after V-J Day, 1945 Thelma Sturwold Frances Anema, Annie Leder, Sophie Anema.



home had done well. After the war, legislation was passed to help soldiers get on their feet again in farming. The Veterans Land Act entitled the returning soldiers to nonrepayable grants for clearing and improving farmland. Money was also available for purchasing farmland at an interest rate of 3½ percent with a twenty-year repayment term. Later other loans were available at five percent if obligations had been met on the first loans. There were no taxes on land owned by veterans until one year after they were home.

When the soldiers returned home they found Neerlandia and its citizens had changed very little — the soldiers were the ones who had changed. They were no longer "bush rabbits" and their thinking was slightly different. They had known many soldiers, come into contact with many different ideas, and came home with a broader view of life. Neerlandia seemed sheltered and removed from reality and yet they were thankful to be home. Neerlandia seemed awfully quiet, but they were glad to relax. No community welcome was given to the returning men. No fuss was made on their account and most soon became involved in farming again. But the change was almost too dramatic. For those who had served on the front lines it took a long time to be at ease again and a shot or any loud bang would make them drop to the ground immediately. The army had given them a sense of comradeship which they now missed. The men were somewhat at loose ends and unsure whether they wanted to continue farming, though most eventually did. Even though Neerlandia residents did not give the returning soldiers a hero's welcome, they were also glad that the war was over and their sons had returned.

A Prisoner of War

I was drafted in June 1942 at the age of twenty-six. The army put me in Infantry and I was sent to Grande Prairie for my basic training. From there I was sent to Calgary for advanced training. I took sick then and after I recuperated I had to wash dishes and look after the Mess Hall. In February 1943 I went to England for more training and I stayed there about four to five months. While in England, I met Jim Johnman who was in the Royal Edmonton Regiment, a group of six hundred men.

From England our division was sent to Sicily by boat. It was July 1943. The invasion of Sicily had taken place four days before, and sixty thousand Italian soldiers had been taken prisoner. This happened at the time when Italy had surrendered to Eisenhower and the Germans were retreating. Many bridges had been bombed and rivers had to be crossed by pontoons (inflated rubber boats). We stayed in Sicily for one week, then chased the Germans up to Cortona, the winterline, which was one hundred and fifty miles northwest of Rome. We also called it the static line. It was hard for us, as well as the enemy, to move because of the mud. I did patrolling while there at Campobasso, Italy, which was one hundred and twenty-five miles southeast of Rome, and got hit by machine-gun fire in the leg. The doctor put a cast on and I was flown to a hospital in Phillipville, North Africa.

I was at Cassino, Italy, seventy five miles southeast of Rome in the spring of 1944. The Germans had a strong hold on the city and

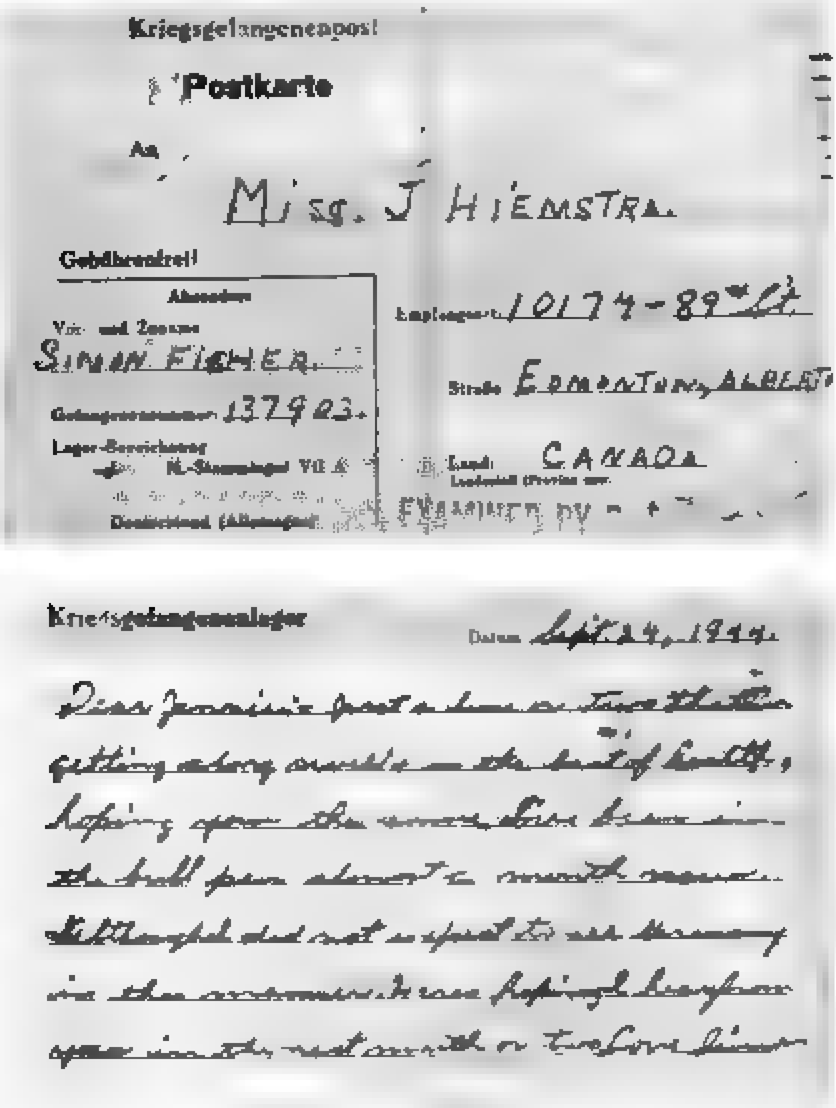
On the move in Potenza, Italy. Simon Fisher sixth from left.

resisted Allied attempts to seize it. We fought a battle there for eleven days, and many soldiers were killed. After this we regrouped and went to the east coast of Italy to fight. While advancing one time at Montechicardo, some of us went about two miles too far ahead of the rest of the army and were taken prisoner. We were shipped to Moosburg outside of Munich in Germany. It was here that we saw carloads of people taken to the concentration camps by train. We saw the smoke go up and could smell the burning bodies at Dachau. I was placed in prison — Stalag 7A. The diet was seven hundred calories per day and consisted of turnip soup, cabbage soup without the cabbage, and black bread. Once a week we had a slice of sausage or a potato. Again I took sick and when I got better they made me work in the kitchen. Once I had baked some potatoes and Jackie Thompson, one of my comrades from Fort Assiniboine, sliced them up to distribute amongst the soldiers. But by the time they made the rounds there wasn't a crumb left for me. The Germans stole these potatoes from the Netherlands.

Our beds were made of boards — bunk style. We had one grey blanket and never saw new clothes. Every other day we had to go to Munich to clean up the town or to fix up railroads after the bombings by the Allies. There were thirty four thousand prisoners in this camp. I stayed for nine months. During the first month I received a few Red Cross parcels. The family sent parcels and Jenny sent one parcel each month. Many parcels and letters were lost or stolen by the German Army and kept in halls and churches for Hitler's last attack. We knew this through the underground grapevine.

I became a truck driver for the Red Cross and had to promise I would not escape. On one trip there was a German officer along

Pte. Simon Fisher, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. Fisher, Morinville, have received word he is a prisoner of war in Germany. He was born in Edmonton and attended Jasper Place school before the family moved to Morinville. He was previously reported wounded. One of his brothers is in France with the United States forces.



Kriegsgefangenenpost

Postkarte

An

Miss. J HIEMSTRA

Gebührenfrei!

Absender:

Vor- und Zuname: SIMON FISHER

Gefangenennummer: 137903.

Lager-Bezeichnung: M.-Stammlager VII A

Deutschland (Allemagne)

Empfangsort: 10174 - 89th St.

Straße: EDMONTON, ALBERT

Land: CANADA

Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

EXAMINED BY

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: Sept. 24, 1944.

Letter from Stalag 7A.

who often wanted to stop for a bit of gas. I could not figure him out, but later found out he was stalling for time. He knew we would be running into the Americans, which we did. They captured us. I was not in too good a shape and it was through a Swiss doctor that I got back on my feet at Konstanz, Germany. The date of my rescue was April 13, 1945.

From there they flew me to England. At that time I only weighed ninety pounds. They gave me one bottle of Stout beer to drink at every meal. It is a nice beer and nutritious. On June 10, 1945, I went home. I took up farming in Neerlandia with the bullet still in my leg. It will stay there till my dying day. As I recall those days I must say they were dangerous. I hated it at times. We had been trained to kill, to destroy, and that scared me after I came home.

City Man Helped American Advance

Staff Sgt. Edward W. Visser, of Lynden, Wash., former resident of Edmonton, is a member of the Sixth Army Group in France which has constructed the two longest Army-built railroad bridges in France, according to information received here.

A dispatch, released from the headquarters of General Jacob L. Devers' 6th Army Group, states that some of these combat engineers, opening supply lines in a matter of hours after an area was captured, fought in the line as infantrymen and others have stopped work to fight off enemy fire.

Their rehabilitation of miles of rail road and their construction of 460-foot and 450-foot bridges across the Doubs and Moselle rivers were cited by Lt.-Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army commander, as "the finest type of military engineering."

Staff Sgt. Visser attended Jasper Place and Oliver schools in Edmonton. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Fisher of Neerlandia, Alberta.

Recently in Germany, Staff Sgt. Visser met his youngest brother, Pte. S. Fisher, when the latter was released from a prisoner-of-war camp in southern Germany. Both took part in action in Italy.

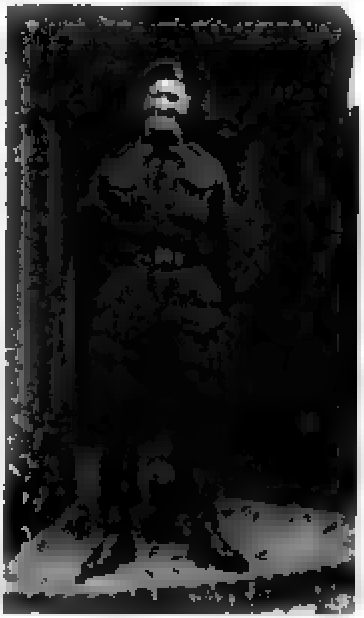
Now that all is behind, I find it also interesting, even though I still have nightmares about it at times

Simon Fisher

My Wartime Experiences

It was 1941 when I got into a uniform to serve my country I had to report in Edmonton and from there had basic training in Camrose Basic training had for its aim self-discipline The officers in the army ordered us to polish our shoes, the buttons of our uniform, and our guns every day When we were almost finished our basic training I got sick and had to have an appendix operation That meant I had to take my training again for two months. For the winter we moved on to Dundurn, Saskatchewan, for advanced training as a driver in tanks, jeeps, motorcycles, and army cars After that we were sent to the court for guard duty for a while Then we went back to Wainwright, Alberta, for more advanced training with other units in war games.

From Alberta we went to Nova Scotia, and from there on to Halifax where we boarded a ship to England After about six days on the water, we landed safe on the other side We were, however, not exactly safe In fact we had our first hair-raising experience of war sirens were wailing and bombs could be heard in the distance We were sent into field training that same week This time it was the real thing. We lived under ground sheets and under the stars Most of the time it was raining, and I was glad when field training was finished



In front of an air raid shelter. Clarence Maat

From there we were flown to Kent, Belgium, in bomber planes We were there for a while until we landed in the Netherlands and moved on through into Winschoten, the Netherlands, where I met my future wife, Grace We had just met when I had to go into Germany again It didn't take long since the end of the war was coming We stayed in Germany about six weeks, and in the meantime I joined the occupation force We moved back to the Netherlands and had a good rest We were allowed to visit through the Netherlands, and I looked up my girlfriend again. Then I went to Enschede to find my relatives We were soon back in Germany to keep things in order.

At one time I brought some prisoners of war across the border to Germany These soldiers had been in jail in the Netherlands but had to be put in prison camps If they had any badges or decorations on their uniform, they were taken away from them They were not allowed to go back to Germany with any sign of bravery or distinction They were not allowed to even pick a flower from the roadside to put on their lapel One soldier tried to get away with it and kept the badge on his coat When I noticed this, I ripped this badge off the soldier's lapel. I took it with me and still have this badge at home

I had a nice job of border patrol and was able to see my girlfriend as she lived only twenty to thirty miles from where I was stationed After about six or eight months, on March 6, 1946, we were married in Utrecht Then it was back to Germany My wife stayed by her grandparents in Winschoten, close to the German border, and so we saw each other quite often.

Clarence swearing an oath that he does not have a wife in Canada.

Grace and Clarence alighting from the coach on the way to the Stadhuis.

Later on the Dutch government closed the border, so we could not cross into the Netherlands. I remember one incident that happened with a friend of mine, Kotie, who was in the secret service. He said he could use me as an interpreter. When he told me all about it, I got cold feet. But he talked me into it. I had to have pips on my shoulder to look like an officer. One time when we came along on our motorbikes at this small crossing I noticed guards there, but Kotie, ahead of me, waved me on. As I came close, the guards came forward, saluted me, and sent me on. That was the shaky start. I drove to Winschoten close to where my wife was. When I arrived I saw a jeep, and lo and behold, there was my major. I said to Kotie, "Well, my goose is cooked."

"That's nothing," Kotie said, "If your goose is cooked, so is his, because he is not allowed to be here either." It all turned out good as Kotie said and I went with him several times. Sometimes I did go to help him but other times I used the excuse to visit Grace. We would not cross the border at the main crossroads, but sneak around a mile down.

Finally the day came to go back to Canada. I came back in the first week of July 1946. Grace came to Canada two months later.

Clarence Mast

Boy Meets Girl

During World War II, I was teaching in Ede, Gelderland, a town about twelve kilometres from the town of Wageningen where I lived. I biked to and from school daily. My best girlfriend lived in a pleasant villa in Ede with her parents and sister, since their house in Bennekom had been destroyed in the war. One day on my way home from school I dropped in at my friend's house for a cup of tea. Three Canadian soldiers were visiting there too. (Because the Netherlands had been liberated by the Canadians, the Canadian soldiers were welcomed in the Dutch homes.) One of them was Steve Abday, and I was immediately attracted to him. One might say it was "love at first sight."

When I got up to leave, Steve asked me if he could accompany me on my way home. He had rented a bike for the day at the cost of a carton of cigarettes. During that first bike ride together, Steve asked me about my family and inquired as to whether he might visit us some evening.

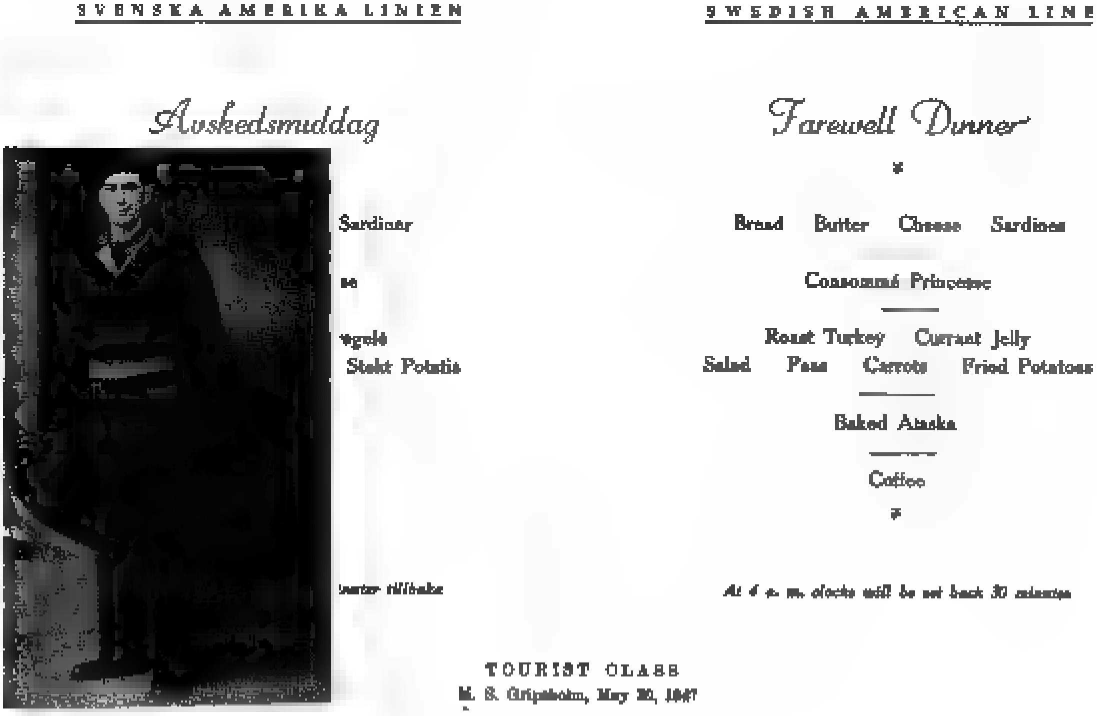
The following night Steve arrived with cigarettes, butter, tins of luncheon meat, etc. Everyone liked him. He visited us whenever he could. We learned that Steve Martin Abday was born July 28, 1920, at Saksenhill, Saskatchewan. He grew up on his father's farm, with four brothers and six sisters. During the Second World War, he joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He was sent overseas and served four years in the army as a mechanic and truck driver. The summer of 1945 passed pleasantly and all too quickly.

One day my mother said, "I don't know what to think about that Canadian soldier visiting us so often, and you, Tiny, sometimes going on a biking trip to show him the surroundings. I also heard you once saying 'Steve dear'."

Then quite unexpectedly came the message that the Regina

Rifle Regiment, of which Steve was a member, was to be discharged and was returning to Canada at the end of November 1945. At that moment we both realized that "parting is (not) such sweet sorrow."

Steve promised to send me a subscription to the *Family Herald* and the *Free Press Weekly* so I could learn more about Canada. Moreover, he would let me come to Canada as soon as possible. We didn't anticipate that it would involve much red tape, and that it would take two years before we'd see each other again. The Canadian War Brides could go to Canada right away and their passage across the Atlantic was paid by the Canadian Government. But the fiancées had to go through a lot of red tape, and their husbands-to-be had to pay for the Atlantic crossing.



SVENSKA AMERIKA LINIEN

Avskedsmiddag

Sardiner

se

vgelé

Stekt Potatis

uter tillbaka

SWEDISH AMERICAN LINE

Farewell Dinner

*

Bread Butter Cheese Sardines

Consommé Princesse

Roast Turkey Currant Jelly

Salad Peas Carrots Fried Potatoes

Baked Alaska

Coffee

*

At 4 a. m. clocks will be set back 30 minutes

TOURIST CLASS

M. S. Gripsholm, May 20, 1947

Dinner for the "War Brides". Inset: Steve.

Finally Steve got all the papers approved and on May 10, 1947, I landed in New York on the *Gripsholm*, a ship of the Swedish-America Line. Four other Dutch girls came across with me. Three were headed for Winnipeg and two of us for Saskatchewan. It took three ticket agents at New York Central Station to find the province of Saskatchewan on the map. They had never heard of it and concluded, "Only Indians must live there!"

The trip by train seemed endless and the melancholic blowing of the whistle made me very depressed. But Steve sent a telegram that he'd meet me at Rivers, Manitoba. How happy we were to be together again! Before long we arrived at Melville, Saskatchewan.

From Melville we drove forty-five miles by car to the farm of Steve's parents in Dubuc

Now it was the end of May, and very warm The rolling prairies were colourful with blooming wild carnations and tiger lilies. Although the prairies have their own characteristic beauty, I didn't like them. There weren't many trees, only the silver willow bushes, and by the farmhouses there were some maple trees and lilacs. A dry hot wind blew constantly It made your skin feel rough and dry.

The skies, however, were imposing. They seemed so high and majestic. Thunderclouds towered like castles and the sky behind was a beautiful azure! Very frightening was the first thunderstorm, the thunder rolling on over the prairies for minutes on end Devastating were the hailstones and the rain falling in bucketfuls from the sky Everything was so great and overpowering! Still, I didn't want to live there after I heard the stories of wintry blizzards which caused snowdrifts as high as telephone poles

I remembered that I had a distant relative, G. G Dyk, living in Westlock, Alberta I persuaded Steve to visit him with me so that we could see what Alberta was like We thought Alberta was beautiful with its abundance of different trees and green shrubs. Mr. Dyk took us to Neerlandia and to the Christian Reformed Church service on a Sunday I felt right at home going to church there and meeting all the Dutch people After the service, the people stayed talking outside the church, a custom unknown in the Netherlands.

Upon hearing that I was a Christian Reformed teacher just arrived from the Netherlands, Herman Wierenga and Carl Mast asked me if I wanted to teach in Neerlandia. "There would be work enough for Steve too," they assured us We liked Neerlandia very much and so it was agreed that I would start teaching grades 4, 5, and 6 in September

Steve and I went back to Saskatchewan and got married in the United Church in Melville on July 10, 1947

Tine Abday

The First War Bride

After the war was over in 1945, the Canadian soldiers started to look for a girl to take home I met Clarence Mast, and after ten months we decided to get married. He was a farmer, and I a city girl who had never seen a cow close up. Clarence went to Neerlandia before I did The Canadian Army paid for my trip I left home on August 24, 1946, and was trucked to Antwerp, Belgium There were one hundred war brides, and we waited for French and Belgian girls to join us. The boat was named the *Lady Rodney*. We were in Antwerp harbour for three days.

Then we set out for Southhampton, England. We had a terrible storm on the North Sea and all the brides were filling up the cardboard boxes. I was the only one not sick and helped all day with throwing boxes overboard, until I got in our sleeping hut. Then I ran back and filled a box up, as the smell was horrible in the hut It was a small boat and only crossed the North Sea

From England we went on a big ship, the *Aquitania*. After ten days on the ocean the boat anchored in Halifax. A band was playing "Here Comes the Bride" for the war brides on board I then travelled five days by train from Halifax to Edmonton, and the rest of the way by car. I arrived in Neerlandia on September 9, 1946, two months after Clarence. I was the first war bride in Neerlandia.

So we started farming. Our quarter was all bush except for thirty acres — the rest had to be cleared. Of course we had no water and electricity, but Clarence said that water was no problem. After a few days with pick and shovel we had a ten-foot well with lots of water, although it was not very clear. Then he set off picking roots and clearing the bush. At night his clothes were just like the soil, and oh, what a job trying to clean them on a scrub board! Our light was a coal oil lamp and later on we had a gas lamp. I was afraid of that gas lamp. Sometimes when I lit the match, the lamp would give a puff and I would jerk the match and break the mantle. So we sat in the dark till we had transportation to go to the store. The roads were very narrow and in the winter there was lots of snow. Good thing there were not too many cars in those days for there was no room to pass anyone.

We had the cook stove going all day, even in the hot summer. We had to heat all our water for coffee or tea on the stove. Also, the baker didn't come to the house to deliver bread and cookies, so that was another job I didn't know of. Mom Mast taught me how to bake bread. I have to admit my first loaves were like rocks, but we lived through it all.

We had two cows given by Mom and Dad Mast, and I was scared of the things. Once Clarence was gone all day getting logs cut for building and then it happened: the cows, who were staked out since we had no fences, broke loose. I thought that I better get them in the barn before the boss came home, so I picked up both chains and started walking. Every time I looked back, I thought the cows were going faster and faster, but it was I who was almost running. At the barn I opened the door and let the beasts in. I didn't dare put them in their stalls.

Another time I was sick and had to go see a doctor. The sleigh and horse stood ready. On the sleigh was an old heater with blocks of wood and an old chair which was bought at a sale for one dollar. So I was sitting pretty and warm. We had to go for nine miles to the folks' place and from there by car to Barrhead to see Dr. Keir.

So you see, it was quite a change for a city girl, and being the first new one here, nobody understood how lost and lonely I felt. It was nice, however, to come to a Dutch settlement where you could speak your own language.

Grace Mast

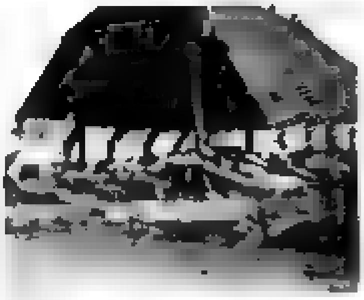
Postwar Immigration

POSTWAR IMMIGRATION

The end of the Second World War signalled a new phase in Neerlandia's history, namely the coming of a third wave of Dutch immigrants. The immigrants who came this time were different from previous immigrants and the times in which they came were quite unlike previous times. More significantly, they found in Neerlandia a well-established Dutch community with close friendship and kinship ties and on its way to Canadianization. The background and the experiences of the postwar immigrants coming to Canada differed from that of the Neerlandians and adjusting to life in Neerlandia meant adjusting to conditions which differed from those to which they were accustomed.

European Background

The people who came to Neerlandia after World War II left behind a war-ravaged country. The small nation of the Netherlands had been occupied by German taskmasters for most of the war. This had the effect of levelling the social classes and creating a large middle class. Loss of loved ones touched a significant number of Hollanders: 250,000 had died as a direct result of the war. The loss of property was also evident everywhere, since factories, small businesses, and buildings had been confiscated to aid the mighty German war machine. Germany had also requisitioned many young Dutch labourers to man her factories, forcing some to go underground to avoid this forced labour. Even in defeat, Germany managed to strike a few parting shots when their fleeing troops bombed out dikes, flooding large areas of farmland in southern Holland to impede the progress of their would be captors. By war's end, a severe housing shortage and crippled industrial plants became the major problems for Dutch citizens.



Viersen's house after the Germans flooded the polders

Added to these problems, there was an armed guerilla uprising in the Dutch East Indies soon after the war ended, necessitating the enlistment of 127,000 Dutch soldiers to stamp out this new threat. This colony had accounted for one-sixth of Holland's revenue before the war. (Future Neerlandia resident Gerrit van Dijken was one of the men drafted in 1949 and sent to the South Pacific.) In 1950, as it became obvious that the Netherlands would lose its grip on her old colony, more than 100,000 expatriates and refugees sought refuge in the Netherlands, forcing an already-tight housing situation to the critical level.

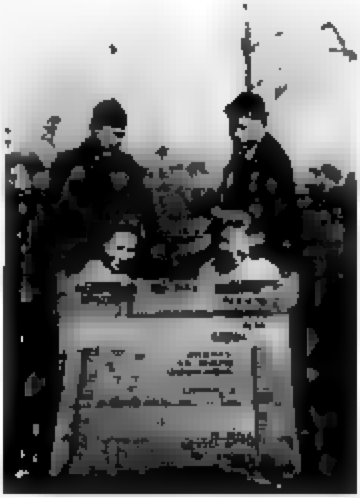
'Emigration Fever'

Many Dutchmen had no stomach for renewed conflict and the immense reconstruction problems that lay before them. The fear of Soviet invasion in Western Europe also loomed large in many citizens' minds. As a result, an unprecedented 'emigration fever' hit the population. The Dutch had never been an emigrating people; in previous years, while other nations encouraged emigration as a solution to economic, political, and religious problems, the Dutch stayed home. The earlier emigration that had resulted in the establishment of Neerlandia in 1911 had been an anomaly. Now, however, Dutchmen from all walks of life were pressuring the government to let them out of the country. Canada was the destination for many, perhaps because it was Canadian soldiers who had liberated the Netherlands in those final joyful days of World War II. For many of those destined for Neerlandia however, the choice was even easier. These people for the most part had relatives in Neerlandia with whom they had kept up a close correspondence during the years before and after the war. Mabel Elgersma and others had kept writing their families throughout the war and even sent 'Care Packages' upon hearing of postwar shortages. Johannes Peters also kept up the lines of communication with his brother Hendrik who was in the Netherlands. For these people and others, when emigration fever caught hold of them, Neerlandia was the place to go.

Emigration Begins

Fortunately, the Dutchmen who immigrated to Canada before World War II had built up a good reputation among their neighbours and government officials, being known for their industriousness, integrity, and farming expertise. Thus Canadian government officials were not against letting more Dutch people in when a request was made by the Dutch government to open the doors once again.

Canadians had some hesitations initially. There was the concern that the economy would not react as well to peace as it had to war. The government was also intent that the poor treatment of returning World War I soldiers would not be repeated and that enough job opportunities would be available for them. As many farm workers had left and moved to the cities for lucrative factory jobs, however, Canada's farm labour pool was experiencing severe shortages. The Canadian government thus quickly warmed to the idea of importing Dutch farm labourers as immigrants. By January 30, 1947, Mackenzie King agreed to allow sponsored agriculturalists from the Netherlands into the country and in June 1947 the first boatload of such immigrants docked in Halifax aboard the *Waterman*. One family destined for Neerlandia was on the boat: the Jan Paas family, sponsored by Jan's uncle Gerhard, who had made the trip to Neerlandia some twenty years before. Even before the two governments signed formal agreements later that year, another boat, the *Tabinta*, unloaded more farmers destined for Canadian farms in September 1947.



Ready to leave Zuidwolde, 1948. Bill, Henk, Christine, Lily Navis.

The War Brides

Technically, the Jan Paas family were not the first Dutch immigrants to come to Neerlandia after World War II. Two women, one married and the other engaged to Neerlandia soldiers, had arrived the year before. After the war in 1945, the military was under extreme pressure to send back Canadian soldiers and their wives and fiancées, but the 100,000 soldiers generally took precedence. Dutch women who married Canadian soldiers lost their Dutch citizenship, creating an awkward situation for the Canadian Embassy in den Hague, and in December 1945 a Dutch Wives Bureau was set up so that the speedy passage of Canada's newest citizens could be accomplished. By mid-1946, the problems of insuring the women's luggage, providing passports and other documents, and changing their Dutch *gulden* to Canadian dollars were resolved.

Thus it was that newly-wed Grace Mast (nee Dop) and Eve Gerritsen, fiancée of Pete Emmerzael, began their trip to Canada

Grace went by train to Antwerpen, Belgium, along with one hundred other Dutch war brides and eventually made it to Canada aboard the *Aquitania* in September 1946. Eve left her native land some months later aboard the *Gripsholm*, arriving in Neerlandia in May 1947. Unknown to Eve, Tine Bouma was also on that same ship, though Tine was destined for Melville, Saskatchewan, where young Steve Abday was awaiting her. Steve and Tine later made their way to Neerlandia where Tine had been hired as a teacher.

How to Emigrate

A trip to *Stichting Landverhuizing Nederland* was necessary to determine if a person met the minimum qualifications to emigrate. Dutch authorities, of course, wanted emigrants to be model citizens in their new land, and criminals, debtors, and other undesirables were not permitted to leave the country. Secondly, the successful applicant had to have skills that the Canadian government wanted and that the Dutch government was willing to part with. In the early years (1948-49), it was mostly agricultural workers who were permitted out of the country, but as the years wore on people of all walks of life were allowed to come to Canada. At one point, an emigrant applied to leave but was denied since his blacksmithing skills were in high demand in the Netherlands. The Canadian government also imposed restrictions on welders, factory workers, and bricklayers, as there were surpluses of these labourers in Canada. Finally, it seems that many of the emigrants were required to sign a pledge in which they agreed to stay with their sponsor for at least one year.

Once the emigrant cleared that stage of the emigration process he was placed on a waiting list to obtain a sponsor. This could take a long time depending on the availability of sponsors who came forward to Canadian officials. Then, a telegram received in the night might mean only twelve hours notice to get to Rotterdam. Many of the emigrants destined for Neerlandia, though, had secured their own sponsor through contact with a near or distant relative living in Neerlandia. Neerlandia farmers could apply to sponsor a specific immigrant family simply by filling out the appropriate form at a National Employment Service office, immigration offices in Edmonton, or at the Colonization offices of either of the major railways. This application was then sent to Canadian officials at den Hague and matched up with the application for emigration filled out by the other relative.

Compared to the pioneers who had left the Netherlands to settle Neerlandia in the early 1900s, the destiny of the emigrant was in the hands of a well-organized bureaucracy. This bureaucracy involved such organizations as the Christian Reformed Churches of North America, the comparable *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands, the major Canadian railroad companies, and branches of the Canadian and Dutch governments. With all these thumbs in the pie, there was some confusion. Yet, considering the numbers who left the Netherlands in these years, it was a surprisingly smooth operation.

Prospective emigrants could first of all become members of the popular *Christelijke Emigratie Centrale* (CES) for an annual fee of ten *gulden*. This organization took care of the spread of information about Canada, secured visas for its members, and handled placements with the various Canadian sponsors. The work of the CES was done as soon as the emigrant became immigrant, whereupon the Christian Reformed Church of North America could take over. That body had set up a committee at its 1946 Synod to handle the anticipated influx of Hollanders of the Reformed faith to its fifteen Canadian Christian Reformed churches. This committee, which later hired fieldmen and home missionaries, was responsible for the publication of a small booklet entitled *De Gids* which enlightened the emigrant about church matters in Canada.

De Gids was published shortly after the committee was struck and two thousand copies of the booklet were distributed through *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands. It contained a brief description of fifteen Canadian communities, including Neerlandia, where Reformed people had already clustered together. Of Neerlandia the guidebook spoke quite highly, saying that although there was no room for group settlement of any kind, there was room for several farm families. The article erroneously stated that there were potential jobs for five different tradesmen: a barber, coppersmith, ironsmith, painter, wallpaper hanger, and carpenter. A wage of $1.00 to $1.50 per hour could be expected in these trades. Working as a hired hand on a farm could bring in sixty to eighty dollars per month. Farms were hard to come by, the report said, averaging eight to nine thousand dollars for a quarter section. For those who wanted to live out their Calvinist faith, Neerlandia was a welcome place, boasting a large church and a well-established ministry of catechism, men's and women's societies, and boys' and girls' societies.

In *De Gids*, the principles for emigration were also laid out in typical Reformed fashion. Emigration had a scriptural foundation in the cultural mandate found in Genesis 1:28, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth . . ." Deep in the heart of every emigrant should be the Christian pilgrim's zeal that looks forward to the Heavenly city (described in Hebrews 11:1). The writers encouraged people to remember this in their quest for material prosperity. "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but loses his own soul?" the booklet rhetorically asked.

The Dutch government actively supported emigration in the postwar years. Emigration was one solution to the country's monumental economic problems. Emigration offices were placed in economically depressed areas of the country to encourage people to leave the Netherlands. The government sponsored "how-to" seminars for those wanting to leave but unsure of how to go about it. By the early 1950s, the Dutch government was giving subsidies to immigrants unable to pay the boat fare.

One government stipulation that created some hardship, especially among the many people wanting to begin farming in Canada, was that no more than one hundred dollars per person could be taken out of the country. This led to many people transporting all the furniture and household possessions they could, but prevented those with sizable amounts of money from applying it to a down payment on a Canadian farm.

The Dutch government also pressed the Canadian govern-

Kota Inten.

ment quite strongly to allow Dutch immigrants to enter the country. An agreement had been signed late in 1947 to allow for the entry of ten thousand agriculturalists. At a press conference the government outlined its 1948 program, the result of which saw many more emigrants embark on the long journey to Neerlandia. The *Kota Inten* and *Tabinta* were chartered for a total of thirteen trips, each transporting 770 passengers bound for Canada. The first boats docked at Halifax in March (the St. Lawrence was still frozen) and subsequent boats docked in either Quebec City or Halifax. The 1948 run of emigrant boats carried the largest number of immigrants for Neerlandia, beginning with the D. H. Navis and F. Hessels families. The *Kota Inten* and the *Tabinta*, the ships by which most of the immigrants headed for Neerlandia travelled, were unsuitable for the task, one being a converted freighter and the other a troop carrier. Some of the later immigrants to arrive in Neerlandia travelled in remodelled transport ships such as the *Waterman*, the *Groote Beer*, and the *Zuiderkruis*, which were luxurious compared to the earlier immigrant ships.

Volendam.

Why They Came

De Gids gave a pious rationale for emigration, but few emigrants came to Neerlandia to fulfill the cultural mandate (besides, according to some, Neerlandia was already filled). The prime motivation for many seems to have been to escape their war-ravaged country, to provide a better future for their children, or to seek better opportunities in a new land. One person claimed he left the Netherlands to escape the Dutch government's ever-reaching grasp.

At the same time, several families who came to Neerlandia state that they came after speaking with either Lammert or Andries Wierenga. Indeed, these two Neerlandians (they had made the move to Canada already in the 1920s) paid their first return visit to their birthplace in Groningen in 1947, and spoke to several people who were considering making the move. The brothers were accompanied by Lammert's daughter Catherine Holwerda and her two children. It was a family visit, not intended to be a recruiting trip, since Lammert had two sons in the Netherlands who had not emigrated with the rest of the family. However, it was quite common in those days for a visiting Canadian to be asked by people to give more insight into what Canada was really like. The Wierengas did encourage people to come to Neerlandia, and not long after they returned to Canada, Hollanders came "knocking at their door." After speaking with them, the George Weigers family in Uithuizen and the Adrian Hamoen family in Utrecht decided to come to Canada. The Wierenga brothers also visited the Hendrik Peters family who later also immigrated.

One of the family members remembered seeing slide shows in the Netherlands about Canada, picturing lumber camps, beautiful grain fields, and wild country, it was a captivating picture for some.

The Voyage

The long boat trip gave people mixed feelings, to say the least. For some it could mean ten to twelve days of seasickness. For others, like Gerrit van Dr ken, who had become used to the seas while in Indonesia, the trip was ho-hum. Apparently, the trick was to stay on your feet as much as possible, for lying down only worsened your condition. The early ships were not designed for immigrants, however, and the trip was not the most pleasant. Marten de Jong, on his way to Neerlandia in August 1948 aboard the *Tabinta*, wrote that "women and children were all in one big room, sleeping in three tiers. There were probably about three hundred women. The men from ages twelve and up were in one room also, but at least we didn't have crying babies. My wife was seasick the whole time, and she was seven months pregnant." The segregated sleeping quarters was the result of the ships having been used to transport troops to the Dutch East Indies. Hammock-style beds and inadequate facilities for small children were still vivid in some people's minds thirty years after the trip! Other hardships were quickly forgotten. One immigrant noted that as soon as Halifax was sighted seasick passengers miraculously forgot their ailment.

In many cases, a Catholic or Protestant chaplain was provided by the *Deputaatschap* on the boat. Regular devotions would be broadcast over the ship's loudspeaker system or in a prearranged

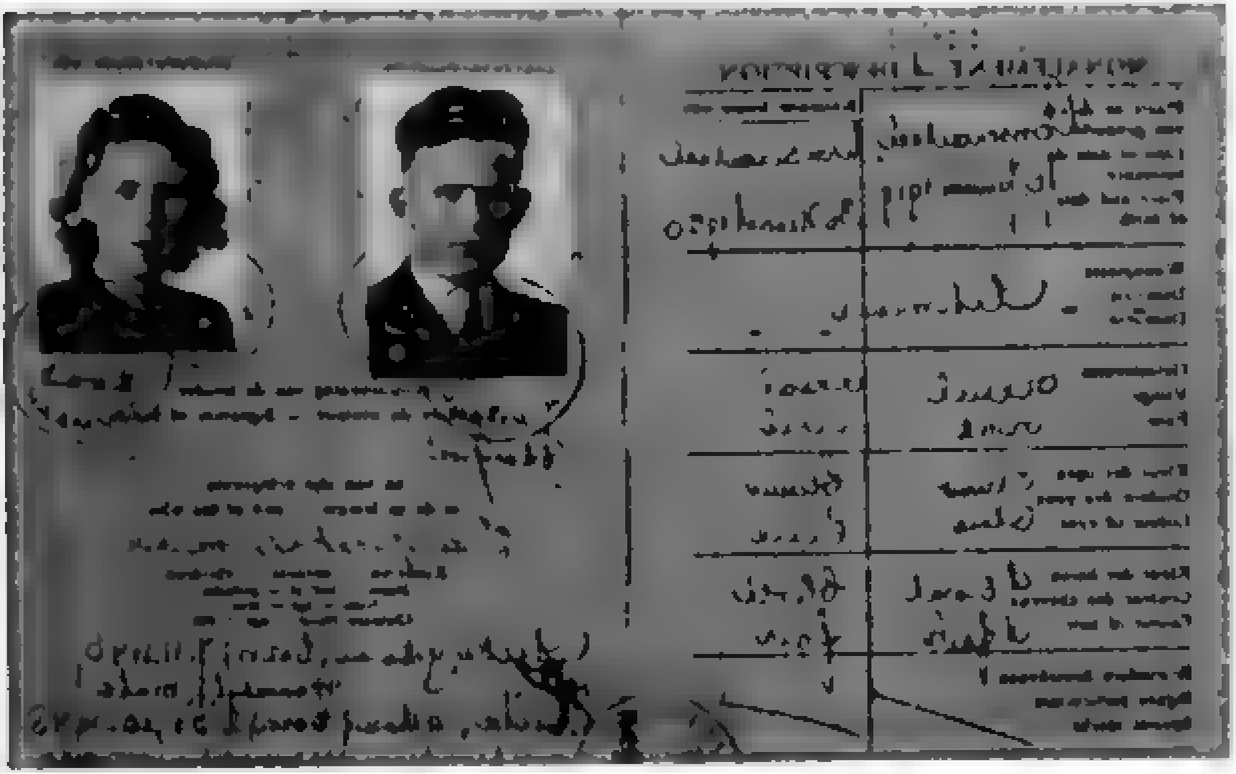
What you mean I swim to Canada? 1948.

meeting place. One immigrant from Groningen, Dick Froma, walked in on a service held one evening and sat down. He quickly realized that the language of the service was unintelligible to him but out of politeness suffered through it. When the minister was finished and got up to leave, Dick casually asked his neighbour if he understood English. "English? That was *Fries*!" was the reply.

The Atlantic Ocean, known especially for its violent storms, made the chaplain a busy man at times. Being in the hull of a huge ship during a storm was a frightening experience. Tjamke Moes recalled fervently singing the familiar words of Psalm 121, "*Ik sla de oogen naar 't gebergte heen*" (I will lift up my eyes to the mountains), during a church service as mirrors were falling off the walls. One can imagine that children would be hard to control at these times too.

The meals and other necessities provided on board were included in the cost of passage. The food was acceptable, though some undoubtedly had no stomach for food. Aboard some ships where the dining room was too small to handle all the passengers at once, eating was done in shifts. For some, the white bread eaten on board the ship is the only food they remembered, because it was such a treat after eating only the heavy brown bread throughout the war years. Others remembered the fresh fruit with special fondness. Another shipboard luxury was showers.

Some people met others destined for Neerlandia aboard these immigrant ships. For Simon de Groot, eighteen and "just off the



Tom and Ida de Groot's passport

yard" for the first time, meeting Marten de Jong was a godsend. The immigrant ships carried not only Hollanders, though, as Rotterdam was the gathering place for French and other European immigrants as well.

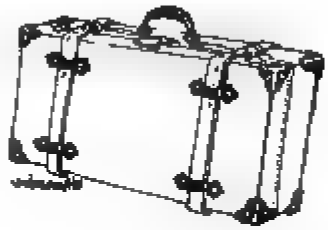
Language was not a problem until the boat docked in a Canadian port, but even here the *Deputaatschap* provided helpful services for the immigrant. Some ships had *tolk* (interpreters) aboard, generally they were university students, fluent in English and Dutch, whose trip was provided free of charge. Their job was to try to eliminate complications that could arise once the immigrants arrived at Canadian Customs. No amount of translation seemed to help Marten de Jong and his family of ten children (with as many suitcases and trunks) solve his problem. A five-dollar bill to the right man, however, was enough.

When the ships reached Halifax after the long trip, the city offered a beautiful panoramic sight if it was viewed at night. The lights dotting the gently sloping hillside was a sight not soon forgotten by one immigrant For another, the squalor and slums of Quebec City's harbour side was his introduction to Canada

* * *

Leaving the Netherlands

We had never been anywhere before we left. Oh, sure, we had visited neighbouring towns, and we had watched the Germans come — and go. But when Dad decided to emigrate, there were so many new experiences in such a short time we could not take it all in. We had never been in a big city. Now we had to go first to the Hague to get the necessary papers and then to Rotterdam to board the ship. There were so many new things to see in the city and the harbour Then there was the ship and the trip itself. Next came the train trip across Canada, the immigration hall, the trip to Barrhead, and finally, Neerlandia and the snow. It was a case of information overload Some things will never be forgotten, and others seem not to have happened at all



* * *

All Aboard!

For most immigrants, however, docking in one of Canada's harbours was merely a brief interval before being whisked away for a four-day trip in an immigrant railcar to western Canada The trip was different from the boat trip. Meals and showers were not provided, putting a burden on immigrants who were unsure how far their one hundred dollars would take them. One immigrant had the unpleasant experience of having the washrooms locked up by the conductor for someone's misbehavior An added unpleasantry was the dirt and grime which accumulated as a result of the coal-fired engine spewing billows of smoke backwards toward open windows, but at least there was no seasickness. One immigrant recalls the men and boys sitting atop the roof of the car for parts of the trip. For this 'luxury' these men sorely needed a bath when they reached the Immigration Hall in Edmonton Another thing which characterized the immigrant cars were the lines of clothes hanging in each car, making a simple trip to the washroom a veritable obstacle course. It was a wonder that nobody was hung!

Language was a problem for most of the new arrivals. Dick Froma remembers being asked to remove his coat when he entered the dining car (what was he doing there?) and when the waiter realized Dick was unable to understand, he began tugging at his sleeves. A fistfight was narrowly avoided by Dick's wife hustling him back to their seats. For Simon de Groot, the fact that Marten de Jong knew English was helpful. The train stopped at various places en route, and often the passengers were allowed a fifteen-minute break. One immigrant left his seat to buy a thirty-five cent cigar, and came back just in time for the train to leave, but with a jar of marmalade! The storekeepers must have seen the immigrants coming. One immigrant did not make it back to the train on time and was rushed by taxi to the next station.

The scenery was fantastic as immigrants entered upon a new land flowing with many lakes, creeks, and rivers. But, as one immigrant noted about his trip from Quebec, "You can only be excited about scenery for so long." As the monotony of the Canadian Shield wore on, many a passenger must have asked, "But where is Neerlandia?" The distances were hard to comprehend for even those Dutchmen who had been forewarned. To some, a sign indicating that Alberta was ahead was the best sight they had seen in three days. Upon entering Alberta, one naive immigrant's curiosity was aroused by the sight of many small wooden granaries near farms; she asked her husband if he thought people lived in those places. "They must," he replied and, after some thought, comforted his wife by saying they must be for bachelors since none of the buildings had chimneys. The woman's fears were laid to rest.

The Fieldman

The immigrants were met, either in Edmonton or near Lloydminster, by Herman Wierenga. He was a Neerlandia farmer who began working for the Christian Reformed Church as fieldman in 1948. His job was to coordinate and assist the placement of *Gereformeerden* in northern Alberta. His job was a demanding one. He acted as chauffeur, shuttling immigrants to their prospective sponsors; he acted as host, inviting immigrants to dinner; he acted as ombudsman, hearing complaints from irate immigrants whose sponsor had left them high and dry. In short, he tried to make their adjustment to Canadian life as easy as possible.

The fieldman's job was at times complicated by the immigrants' attitude. In one article Herman Wierenga wrote for the *Calvinist Contact* in 1951, he complained that people who paid ten *gulden* for membership in the CES expected the Immigration Committee of the CRC in Canada to begin "working for them" once they got to Canada. Wrote Herman Wierenga, "I would appreciate it if the CES always told their members that the ten guilders does not give anyone the right to expect help. . . . This help is given free by (our) churches, the Canadian government, and the railroads." The fieldman's annoyance was unmistakable.

If the immigrant was a bit demanding, it was understandable. Many came to this foreign land not understanding English, forcing the few who did understand it into the position of translators. As well, sponsors were notorious for opting out at the last minute, something for which there was no solution. Many sponsors were obtained in the winter so as to guarantee a late-summer arrival date for the immigrant, in time for the fall work. However, winter was a difficult time for any farmer to predict his needs for the following harvest. Farming was a capricious business! The Wever, de Boer, and Werkman families all were left without a sponsor before they came to Neerlandia. For others, like Ruend Vander Veen, the sponsor was unable to pay the required wage of seventy-five dollars per month after several months had gone by. In this case, a cancelled sponsor would have been preferable.

The fieldman of the CRC was an active and, later on, an integral part of the immigration bureaucracy. By 1951 they located more sponsors among Christian Reformed Church people than authorities could muster immigrants for. Armed with a list of Christian Reformed sponsors, the fieldman could match up families whose sponsor had reneged on his agreement and usually could have the situation well in hand without any significant delay. However, as the fieldman became more and more important to the incoming Dutchmen, he was also taking more and more responsibilities, often to the chagrin of government authorities. In one case, a government official became quite irate when the fieldman began redirecting Dutch immigrants away from government-appointed sponsors (in many cases non-CRC people) towards Christian Reformed communities and Dutch sponsors. One immigrant had this experience when he arrived in Edmonton and was hustled off to Neerlandia with five other men to help with the harvest in Neerlandia. The fieldman's actions were admirable: in this way, Christian Reformed people would not be isolated in places far from people of their own faith. At the same time, it annoyed government officials considerably.

One of the chief reasons that immigrants experienced difficulty upon arriving in Edmonton was their lack of knowledge of English. Herman Wierenga was clear on this when he wrote in an article in *Calvinist-Contact*: "It is the lack of knowledge of the English language which causes the immigrants the greatest difficulty. Therefore, it cannot be said enough to the people of the Netherlands. Learn English!"

This is Neerlandia

Neerlandia, by war's end, was a comfortable place in which to live. The war had affected the community somewhat (some of her native sons had enlisted, although not all Neerlandians were in favour of enlistment), but generally life had gone on unchanged. Higher prices for farm products did enable some farmers to get on their feet financially and many farmers were able to purchase tractors and cars during these times. Other farmers, latecomers to the community perhaps (if you were not there by 1919, you were a latecomer), who had a harder time getting started, got out of debt a bit during the war years. Land was beginning to be cleared in large portions, as Caterpillar tractors began doing the work which had once been done by hand and horses. With new machinery and some newly-cleared fields, many of the young men were able to get established quite quickly

The hamlet itself boasted a frame church built in the late twenties, a three-room school built in 1943, a large Co-op store, and a garage — each on one corner of the crossroads. By the end of the war, the size of the hamlet was growing since the first of the pioneers were already building retirement homes at the Corner The pioneers had a lot to be proud of, and proud they were, a fact attested to by an immigrant store clerk who reported that the old-timers loved to talk Neerlandia history at the store

Another obvious feature of the community was a subtle spirit of Canadianization Just how far Canadianization had proceeded is hard to gauge, but it can be measured by the passage of the community from Dutch to English language usage Just before the war, catechism classes began to be conducted in English out of concern for the young people Dutch was still used in church but only in the morning service, later on the Dutch service was held in the basement with an elder reading Dutch sermons. By the time Al Munneke was hired as a clerk in the store in 1949, the condition for employment was that only English was to be the language of commerce in Neerlandia. To be sure, Dutch was often used in everyday speech, but increasingly it became the language of the old timers. (As early as 1926, a Dutch visitor noted that school children did not even know their Dutch anymore!)

This is Neerlandia?!

Some of the immigrants journeyed from Edmonton via their sponsor's vehicles, others either travelled by train or bus to Barrhead, where they met their sponsor. One can imagine the somewhat tense situation that developed as immigrants, weary from over two weeks of motion, gazed distractedly, waiting for their sponsor to reveal himself from among the dozen or so people at the station. Often all the immigrant saw were scrutinizing glances, piercing looks, and curious glances as a would-be sponsor searched out the immigrants for a distant relative of whom he knew very little Once contact was made and formalities exchanged, the short trip to Neerlandia began. The immigrants who arrived in the spring will often recall how they got stuck along the way and had to get out and push or walk the rest of the way (in Sunday shoes, too yet). For

Moving Gerrit Beyers' house, 1955. Steve Abday, John Peters, Gerrit Beyers.

one, his first job was to drive a tractor back and pull the vehicle out.

The first meal was a tense occasion, too. A plate of corn on the cob was placed in front of one man who hesitated and watched to see what his Canadian hosts were going to do with that chicken feed. But usually, after such a long time away from home, the Neerlandia dinnertime was a real *gezellige tijd* (cozy time).

Housing the immigrants necessitated some preparation by the sponsor and, more often as not, an old house was dragged onto a farmer's yard to make a new home. Thus, the Cecil Tuininga house was moved to SE 15-62-3-5 to provide housing for the Jan Paas family and Louis Nanninga's old house was moved to the Abday's new farm south of Neerlandia. Indeed, houses were moved from place to place so often in the post war years that it seems tractors were used for little else.

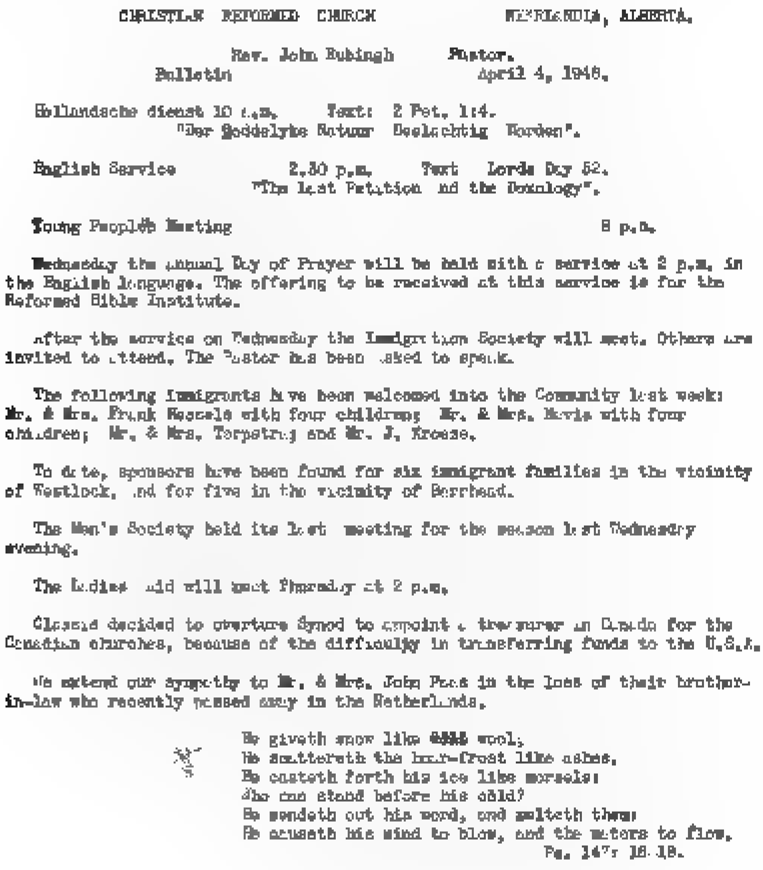
Often the houses were not of the best quality, a fact sorely evident once winter set in. But then, even the houses of the Neerlandia farmers were not much different, the farmers did their utmost to make the living accommodations as good as possible. For a single man who boarded at his sponsor's place, housing was no problem. A lot depended on the financial state of the farmer for whom an immigrant worked. Generally, people were taken care of as well as could be expected.

The community helped the immigrants in various ways. Many of the immigrants reported that a shower providing canned foods and many other necessary household articles was held for them when they arrived. Rev. Rubingh's wife helped several newcomers by taking them out grocery shopping or by having the young immigrant girls over several times. The consistory of the local CRC organized church members with cars to drive immigrants from outlying areas to church Sunday mornings. Immigrants would then stay with a family for the day, and return home after the second service. Neerlandians were also interested in visiting with the newcomers, partly because news from the "old country" was sought after.

The men who came to Neerlandia went to work immediately and did a variety of farm-related jobs. If one came in August, the harvest was at hand and an extra man was often needed for stooking and threshing. Of course, with the amount of clearing going on in those years, root-picking became a common job. "We picked roots 'til we were roots," reminisced one immigrant. It could be a lonely job — all day in the field, doing an unfulfilling job. It was a job that had to be done, however, and most immigrants did not complain about it. The farmers who got to be respected by the immigrants, however, were the ones who did not expect the immigrants to do what they themselves would not do.

Some immigrants found jobs helping to build the new church. (A fire had destroyed the old structure and a new building was begun up in the summer of 1949.) If other work was scarce, one could cut firewood for a few days and haul wood to various farmers' woodpiles. In the winter, one could often find a ride to one of the lumber camps and do some bushwhacking for a few months.

The men were the ones that were hired, but that does not mean that the women were idle. Wages were set at a minimum of forty-



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH NEERLANDIA, ALBERTA.

Rev. John Rubingh Pastor.
Bulletin April 4, 1948.

Hollandsche dienst 10 a.m. Text: 2 Pet. 1:4.
"Der Goddelyke Natuur Deelachtig Worden".

English Service 2.30 p.m. Text Lords Day 52.
"The Last Petition and the Doxology".

Young People's Meeting 8 p.m.

Wednesday the annual Day of Prayer will be held with a service at 2 p.m. in the English language. The offering to be received at this service is for the Reformed Bible Institute.

After the service on Wednesday the Immigration Society will meet. Others are invited to attend. The Pastor has been asked to speak.

The following Immigrants have been welcomed into the Community last week: Mr. & Mrs. Frank Wessels with four children; Mr. & Mrs. Nevis with four children; Mr. & Mrs. Terpstra and Mr. J. Kroese.

To date, sponsors have been found for six immigrant families in the vicinity of Westlock, and for five in the vicinity of Barrhead.

The Men's Society held its last meeting for the season last Wednesday evening.

The Ladies Aid will meet Thursday at 2 p.m.

Classis decided to overture Synod to appoint a treasurer in Canada for the Canadian churches, because of the difficulty in transferring funds to the U.S.A.

We extend our sympathy to Mr. & Mrs. John Poos in the loss of their brother-in-law who recently passed away in the Netherlands.

He giveth snow like wool;
He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.
He casteth forth his ice like morsels:
Who can stand before his cold?
He sendeth out his word, and melteth them:
He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters to flow.
Ps. 147: 16-18.

five dollars a month for a single person and seventy-five dollars for a family, indicating that more work was expected from a family. Often while the men were in the field, an immigrant's wife was required to help the farmer's wife in the kitchen, in the garden, or bringing meals out to the fields. In those days, a woman's pride was her garden, and fall time meant reaping its fruits. Young women often found work keeping house. Thus, Tjamke Moes kept house for Grace Piers Sr. and made meals for the Piers men. Hers was a 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. job, for wages of forty dollars a month.

* * *

Going to catechism was difficult. The minister would usually indicate by looking at a person that he was the one chosen to answer the question. Unfortunately for us, the minister was cross-eyed.

The Neerlandia young people had learned how to tell who he meant, but we couldn't tell. We either answered when we should not have or didn't answer when we were expected to.

* * *

Immigrants were teased a lot in those days, although most of it was good-natured. One man was told to be ready at 6:00 a.m. the next morning to begin loading bundles; at 6:00 a.m. in the morning he found the harnesses hopelessly tangled, forcing him to arrive late that day, amidst laughter and the mock frustration of the boss. One man was instructed to fetch the hay wagon but could not move it more than a few feet. He whipped the horses to no avail — the wagon spokes had been tied to the undercarriage.

Work in the lumber camps was an adventure for many of the Hollanders. Two immigrants nearly froze when they were given a lift on the back of the pickup to a lumber camp in Fort Assiniboine. Once there, the numbed immigrants were told they had to walk a few miles into the bush to get to the camp. They were prodded along by enthusiastic comments from the ones in front, "There's a nice dancehall at the camp," and "There'll be lots of music and fun," and "I can just make out the lights ahead." The joke was on all of them, however, as the camp had been moved to an altogether different spot the day before.

To the immigrants, life in Neerlandia was strange in many ways. Most expected that the hamlet would have been bigger — they expected more civilization. The roads left a lot to be desired, and the lack of electricity, indoor plumbing, and telephones meant a retreat into the Dark Ages for many. But this was Neerlandia, home to many a proud pioneer family. After all, the community had been little more than a wilderness not thirty years before.

* * *

One immigrant remembers being offered a stick of rhubarb, and politely declined, saying, "We don't eat rhubarb raw in the Netherlands, we cook it." That immigrant walked away none the wiser as the rhubarb had really been a stick of celery.

* * *

To the amazement of some of the immigrants, farmers in Neerlandia wore gloves while working in the summer. Little did the newcomers realize how necessary the gloves were for protecting the hands while doing manual work. They wore the strangest-looking denim bib overalls and all the men, young and old alike, wore flat caps. More striking still was the custom of the truckers taking out their tally books after church on Sundays to record the Monday morning run of hogs and produce to Edmonton. For others who had left crops already a foot high in the old country, it was strange to find on their arrival in Neerlandia that farmers were just getting into the fields.

* * *

Chamber Pot

One newly-arrived family went to Mr. Elgersma's at Neerlandia Corner to get milk. Every morning one of the children, carrying a large chamber pot with a handle, went to the Elgersma family to get *their daily supply of milk. Curtains were opened a little bit and a little snickering for sure could have been heard in each house*

One day the lady of the new family asked me, "Why do people grin when our children get the milk?" Then I told her that it was quite unusual, if not very comical, to get milk in a chamber pot. We both had a hearty laugh. Exit chamber pot — for milk, I mean.

Tine Abday

* * *

In turn, the immigrants seemed a strange bunch to native Neerlandians. They dressed strangely too; the boys wore short pants and their dads wore *petten*. The immigrants could eat, oh could they eat! Their appetites seemed insatiable. (The immigrants defended themselves by noting that the food so abundant in Neerlandia homes was scarce in the Netherlands.) Language was a problem for immigrant young people, especially at Young Peoples' Society on Sunday evenings. One Sunday it was decided to ask a recent immigrant to close in prayer; she, not knowing a word of English, prayed the Lord's Prayer in her native language. Many of the Neerlandia young people did not welcome the immigrants. Traditions and friendships were firmly established and they saw no need to change either. Furthermore, the newcomers were considered too rowdy and too liberal. Why, they even wanted to sing secular songs at Bible Camp! The immigrants were noisy in church and the women flipped up the hem of their coats before sitting down. What strange behaviour — at least so it seemed.

Some of the immigrants were greenhorns at farming. The story is told that two young men stooked for a half a day putting the heads upside down, before an irate farmer corrected their mistake. One young man was sent into the fields to harrow and after about six hours, the farmer decided to find out what was taking him so long. He found the harrows hitched up behind each other rather than side by side. Immigrants often got lost in the fields after being given directions several times. Yes, there were many things to learn!

Immigration in Retrospect

Most of the immigrants arrived in the Neerlandia community in the years 1948-1949. A lot of single young men and a few families came after that. In 1951 six young men stepped off the train in

Dutch Immigrants in Neerlandia, 1948.

Barrhead, ready to help with the harvest in Neerlandia Because of early snows, that bunch left almost as suddenly as they had come.

There was not enough room for a wholesale influx of people Farmland was expensive here and some immigrants, who came to Canada intent on farming, thought this was not the best place to get started and left for other communities. Several men were able to borrow money locally and so buy a farm. Others took up homesteads. Many supplemented their income by working in the bush during the winter Some borrowed machinery from old-timers, free of charge Still others got a few pigs or a cow to start with and repaid their benefactors later. Several of those who had come to Neerlandia were not farmers and soon moved on to the towns and cities

For those immigrants who stayed, Neerlandia became home The single men and women married native Neerlandians — to the benefit of both The married couples saw their children grow up and marry old-timers' children One elder, on *huisbezoek*, encouraged two immigrant boys to date the Neerlandia girls "We need new blood in this community," he said, "After Young Peoples' just grab my daughter by the arm and take her home " In any case there soon was a free exchange of ideas between the two groups of young people The parents had always had amicable relationships Before long, immigrants served in the consistory and other boards and held managerial positions in the store and garage

The basic direction of the community did not change with the influx of immigrants, but it was subtly altered In Europe the immigrants had been exposed to cultural ideas and activities not readily available to the Neerlandians Thus a greater appreciation for art and music developed partly because of the immigrants' influence Many did, indeed, hold a more liberal view on the relationship to the larger community and these too influenced decisions made in Neerlandia

Gradually, this last wave of immigrants became an integral part of Neerlandia. By the 1980s they had become a part of this close-knit community and have firmly-established friendship and kinship ties. Both old-timers and newcomers benefited from their relationship as the community continued its development.

EXPERIENCES OF AN IMMIGRANT

When my wife, **Jo-anne** (Vellema), and our two-year-old son, Jim, and I arrived in Neerlandia in the spring of 1948, there were flood conditions Our trip that far had been far from glorious. It took nine days on an army transport ship to take us across the ocean, and five days in a dusty, sometimes smoke-filled train to take us from Quebec City to Edmonton. There we met our sponsor, who took us by Fisher's truck to Barrhead Here we had our first meal in a restaurant, where our sponsor paid for my wife s and son's lunches, but I had pay for my own. a good example of old-timer thrift. We still had to go from Barrhead to Neerlandia, but the bridge over a creek north of Mellowdale was washed out So here our suitcases were unloaded from Fisher's truck, carried across a log laid over the creek, and loaded in a smaller truck on the other side All went well till about a mile past the store towards the east; the road was so muddy that a tractor had to pull our truck through the most soggy spots Finally when we arrived at our destination, my wife said with a sigh of desperation, "I don't think we will ever get out of here again!" and I tended to agree with her. However, after three days of sunny weather, the road had completely dried up and we were able to drive where we wanted

We were among the first post war immigrants to arrive in Neerlandia and lived there from 1948-1952, less a one-year interval when I worked in Lacombe

During the first spring and summer I worked on the farm, initially for our sponsor The wages were seventy dollars per month, for which salary my wife also did the housekeeping Since it was a late spring, it was crucial to get the crop in, and I have sat on the tractor from four o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night Conditions were far from ideal, especially since my sponsor assured me that he could not guarantee me any work for the winter. Moreover, Jo-anne had been brought up rather sheltered in the Netherlands and could hardly cope with the hard work in the farm household and with our total lack of privacy. So, after work at night I often took my bike to the store to look for some better lodging. After a few weeks of trying, I met George Baker, who agreed to rent me his house on the church quarter for twenty dollars per month When I asked when I could move in, George said, "Tomorrow morning!"

The day before, Jo-anne had gone by Fisher's truck to Edmonton to see a doctor because she had become so homesick for the Netherlands that she developed dizzy spells to the point of fainting.

That night, after George promised me the house, I went back to the farmer elated, but found that our sponsor and his son had already gone to bed. The next morning when I came out of bed at 4:00 a m , they were almost thunderstruck when I announced, "I am going to move!" They asked, "When?" and I answered, "This morning!" I still did not have the faintest idea who was going to move me, but I knew that the farmer next door, a certain Tansowny, had a truck, so I biked to him at 6:00 a m. He agreed to move me with his truck for ten dollars per hour. We loaded up in about twenty minutes, drove to our new location in about twenty minutes, and unloaded in about twenty minutes — so the whole moving cost me exactly ten dollars.

That day I unpacked everything, put things in place, and met my wife at the arrival of Fisher's truck with the exclamation, "You don't have to go back we got our own place!" This became one of the happiest evenings in our lives

Now I had to look for other work and luckily our neighbour, Simon Tuininga, who proved to a be a true friend to us, hired me for sixty cents an hour Often I worked twenty days a month for ten hours a day and almost doubled my former salary. That same fall, Simon lent me a team of horses and a hayrack to work on his brother Jack's threshing outfit, and during that time I got paid for both my team and my labour and made, for the standards of the day, lots of money I don't have to describe here the life with a threshing outfit, travelling from one farm to another. I will never forget the amounts of food we absorbed there, and I can truly say that those were the most glorious days of my Canadian farming career.

After my uncle in Lacombe found me a steady job, we moved down there until a year later, when Jack Tuininga offered me a job by phone as a store clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op store But since he phoned me from a board meeting in session, and there were other candidates to consider, I had to give an answer right away Without consulting anybody, I said, "Yes," and had my next job. We now moved into the dwelling above the store, and belonged to the privileged few who had running water and electricity. The first thing we bought was an electric washing machine, and the back-breaking work of hand washing was finished and with it Joanne's dizzy spells.

One condition on which I was hired was that I had to speak only English in the store, which was hard to do, since many old-timers insisted on accommodating me by speaking Dutch, *Gronings*, or *Fries* to me, and it was my duty to respond with my limited English, but, somehow, we got by Of course, in my position of store clerk, we got to know the Neerlandia settlement a lot better and our lives became a great deal more agreeable

Personally, I loved talking to the old-timers around the store, and spent many a time discussing Neerlandia history with people like Klaas Tuininga Sr., John Anema, Henry Kippers, and Joe Baker. However, you could never discuss Neerlandia history without touching on religion, which was the "hobby" of many an old-timer, and were they ever knowledgeable — but hardly up-to-date! They came to this continent when two branches of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands united, namely those of the *Afscheiding* (group A) and those of the *Doleantie* (group B). Most of the Tuiningas were notable group B persons and, I think, there were not many people better versed in the old works of Dr. Abraham Kuyper than Klaas Tuininga Sr. The Wierengas however, were mostly group A people, and adhered to the works of Bavinck and Lindeboom. When we arrived in Neerlandia in 1948, we found that they had managed to keep this controversy going for almost fifty years and were still bravely discussing the merits of A and B.

This condition was pretty hard for the ministers that came to Neerlandia, because the people tried to pin every minister down as A or B, in which case he could never hope to get more than half of the settlement in his favour In case a minister defied classification, he was judged as kind of a nobody Consequently, Neerlandia was not the easiest place for a minister and was often vacant

It was our privilege to give board and room to most of the ministers who came to fulfill classical appointments for the Classic Pacific Northwest because, above the store, we had a bathroom with a bathtub and a flush toilet — which evidently were "bare necessities" for ministers Sometimes we had ministers that stayed for a longer period of time, and one of them was the Rev Posthumus, a retired minister who lived in Lynden, Washington. His first stay was very successful and everybody was pleased It took a full year before he came back, and during that year he must have had a great deal of time to meditate, because during this time he "discovered" a new explanation of baptism and he wrote a series of ten sermons on this topic. Armed with these sermons, he arrived in Neerlandia and, at our place, lost no time in giving me a full explanation of his views. Most of the time I agreed with him for the simple reason that I did not know exactly what he was talking about. After he had delivered the first four sermons, he got a visit from the consistory and the brethren told him that he would keep preaching in Neerlandia on condition that he would not give any more sermons on the topic of baptism. The next morning the old minister packed his bags and said to me, "Al, I don't teach these farmers how to plow and they don't have to teach me how or what to preach." This was too bad, because he was a delightful old gentleman.

Finally we got a permanent minister in the Rev. Bert Mulder, who succeeded to manage both parties of A and B rather well.

In Neerlandia our family increased with two members. Both **Arthur** (May 20, 1950), and **Patricia** (May 3, 1952) were born in the Barrhead hospital.

Life was good in Neerlandia in those days, even if we spent hardly any money. We had a garden plot across the road and during the hot summer days our spare time was mostly occupied with seemingly-endless harvesting and canning, to lay up supplies for the winter. The berry-picking outings with groups of people were veritable highlights in our daily existence. The saskatoons were canned with rhubarb and the blueberries made fabulous pies. Once in a while we splurged and went to Dick Fisher for a bottle of whiskey which he took back from Edmonton by truck, but for plain parties we used the locally produced potato champagne — a very heavy drink which was brewed from a concoction of potatoes and citrus fruits. Potato champagne used to produce a terrific elation at night and a terrible headache in the morning — but I shall never forget the beautiful parties we had in Neerlandia.

One year in September, Rom Stel and I agreed to try our hand at the production of around five gallons of potato champagne which we placed in a plastic vessel behind our cook stove. It would supposedly be ready for Christmas. During the first couple of weeks the stuff really brewed and foamed so that you could smell it through the whole house. But after that, although the brew was still covered with a layer of foam, it settled down. As a good wine maker, every night I tested how the fermentation was progressing. I tested by sticking a straw through the foam and tasting some of the liquid. It wasn't too bad. The trouble was that, after several weeks, the level of our champagne was going down, so I had to add some lukewarm water. A few weeks later a repeat performance of this procedure was required. As Christmastime was approaching, Rom came over one night to see if our potato champagne was ready. I will never forget his reaction to the first sample, "Not very strong!" he said.

Of course, we tried to cut other corners as well. A favourite with new immigrants was the consumption of cheap horse meat, a custom which was frowned upon by old-timers and "real" Canadians. But horses were cheap, since machines had taken over their work. One day I bought a horse for ten dollars but, since a whole horse would be too much for our small family, I agreed to split it with Gerrit Kippers — each half a horse for five dollars. On a Saturday morning in the late fall we went out to butcher the horse. Gerrit arrived with a gun over his shoulder and a few knives in his hand. Of course, I was totally inexperienced in something like that and when Gerrit told me in a matter-of-fact voice that, if I would shoot the horse, he would cut its throat, I exclaimed, "But Gerrit, I have never shot a horse before!"

"Well," said Gerrit, "In that case I will shoot the horse and you cut its throat." This sounded even worse to me. To accommodate me, Gerrit said in Dutch, *"Hoe moet dat dan?"* (How must we do it then?) and I responded, "That is very simple really, you both shoot it and cut its throat!" To this proposition Gerrit finally agreed and, consequently, the horse was killed. We ripped the skin off in pieces, and discovered later that we could have sold it for ten dollars in Barrhead if we had taken it off in one piece. I came home with half a horse. This proved too much for us, and we cut up only the hind quarter. Two days earlier, a certain Merkus family had arrived in Neerlandia from the Netherlands and I asked him if he would buy some meat. "But I don't have any money!" he replied. When I told him that he could have the front quarter of a horse for two cents per pound, he was delighted, and I had my five dollars back. Sad to say, my wife did not like the horse meat, and when my brother-in-law, John Vos, immigrated from the Netherlands, she gave the whole works to him. What an effort down the drain for nothing!

And what more can I say? Starting to write these memoirs, I realize all of a sudden that I would have enough material to write a whole book, and I can truly say that, through all these experiences, Neerlandia became our home-away-from-home, and we are really thankful for the time we were allowed to spend there.

Al Munneke

EXPERIENCES OF A YOUNG IMMIGRANT

What makes a twenty-one-year-old Dutchman move to Neerlandia?

Well, I can tell you that watching the Canadian Armed Forces shoot back the enemy into Germany had a lot to do with it. They were kind in passing us the cigarettes and gum, but businesslike in disposing of the enemy.

Then came the romantic stories about Canada. A Mrs. Aberson-Uges of Winnipeg travelled our province of Groningen with speeches and slide shows that filled every building to the rafters. She showed the transformation of cheap land into elegant farms complete with Cockshutt tractors, Case combines, and De Soto automobiles. We also talked to a visitor, Mr. Veenkamp, who came from Nobleford to our area. He was Christian Reformed and his reassuring advice made my folks relax. His daughter, who was with him, did beautiful petit point and my youngest sister, in admiration, thought Canada was okay. Then the Christian Reformed Church got into the act by issuing a booklet *De Gids*, complete with church locations, pictures, and wage scales. So via Rev. Hoekstra of Calgary and Herman Wierenga, fieldman in Neerlandia, my folks felt it safe to let me go. The departure from the Netherlands did not go smoothly — too many parties. The pastor's wife composed a twenty-five line farewell poem that made my eyes swell with moisture, but the next day I forgot all that again when my friends and I whooped it up in a grandiose manner. My wooden suitcase carried all the novels of my favourite writer, Anton Coolen, triple-thick

Bill, c. 1948.

underwear imported from Sweden, a bike, and a guitar. When the *Tabinta* pulled from the Holland-Amerika dock in Rotterdam, the band played the national anthem and triggered our tear ducks again. I had my first sensation of seasickness in the English Channel and decided to make the rest of my trip in horizontal position, with feet facing toward Canada and an enormously interesting book, *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

The *Tabinta* was a converted Liberty freighter with bunkbeds for troop transport and segregated quarters for men and women — the latter in the midsection, where there was less turbulence. This was fair because a lot of young mothers were breast feeding their babies. The first morning there were hundreds of dairy farmers whose "alarm clock" went off at 4:00 a.m., milking time. We heard a cacophony of wooden shoes on steel decks until they were ordered back to bed by the loud speaker.

After nine days of bobbing and weaving, the *Tabinta* slid into the St. Lawrence Seaway; all the passengers scrambled to the upper deck to admire the magnificent landscape that slid past. Before we transferred to a train, we watched huge wooden immigrant boxes being unloaded. Some looked so quaint, with Canadian and Dutch flags painted on them, that many a grubby-looking longshoreman could not suppress a smile.

The four-day train trip was no luxury, but passable. Every two-and-a-half hours the train stopped to allow refilling of the boilers with water. We utilized the time by scrambling over railroad tracks to the nearest grocery store to stock up on food, which was not available on board. In Winnipeg, we were joined by fieldman ten Hove of Blackfalds, Alberta. When he saw my name matched to the Kippers family in Neerlandia, he looked over his glasses and said, "How good are you at washing diapers?" then added, "They have seven children." We all laughed.

In Edmonton, First Church gave us a warm welcome. George Sonnema and his son Allan took me by pickup to the Immigration Hall where a delicious supper — mashed potatoes, green beans, and roast beef — was waiting.

The next day we ventured into Edmonton unchaperoned. Yes, I knew a few English words but when I helped a fellow immigrant purchase some chewing gum, the storekeeper produced a bottle of Coke. Later we met fieldman Herman Wierenga, who escorted us by train to Barrhead. We were dressed in our Sunday best. Among cream cans, cow hides, and other paraphernalia of the agricultural industry, we must have looked like mission-minded Mormons.

That same afternoon I met the Kippers family. They were very cordial and let me sleep and rest to my heart's content. A new bedroom had been added to the second floor and they did everything to make me feel at home.

After a long sleep, I rubbed my eyes and saw what Neerlandia was all about. Instead of electricity they had gas lamps, gasoline-powered washing machines, and water pump engines. The word 'refrigeration' was unknown. All the produce and meat were canned and the cream and butter were lowered into a cold, deep well by pulley and rope. Mrs. Kippers baked bread every week. Her husband helped with the kneading and the whole house filled with the delicious aroma while it was baking. With nine members in the family plus a hired hand, she displayed a lot of ingenuity to keep cinnamon buns from being snitched prematurely. With such a large family and so many mouths to feed, it was not easy. I will give you one example:

To take a bath meant chopping down a tree by Vega, bringing it home by horse and wagon, cutting it into sixteen-inch pieces by saw hooked to the power takeoff of a Case tractor, chopping it by hand into smaller chunks, and curing it for nine months. Then you would put it into the kitchen stove and light it with an old *Winnipeg Free Press*. After forty-five minutes, you would carry a basin of hot water to your upstairs bedroom. With all the rigmarole, you might be tempted to just use a little extra deodorant.

The outhouse was a novelty, but I resented the wasted footsteps in case of unexpected occupancy. Finally, I resorted to a mental rollcall to see if anyone was missing, but that took time too.

My socializing consisted of Norman and Fred Toebes calling in their white Chev to take me to the ball game on Friday night. I found playing baseball very complicated and when I was at bat and hit the ball right, I would wait for screamed instructions from the spectators gallery before I sped downfield. Afterwards we would drive north, stock up on goodies at the Vega store, and weave through the sandhills. If there was good music on the car radio, we would turn off the road to stop and listen. Sundays meant dinner invitations to people such as Krikkes, Toebes, Geldermans, Wierengas, and others. The Krikke girls did some very fancy oil painting and the boys were hard to beat at chess. All these people were good-hearted and provided Christian fellowship.

Bible Camp 1948 at Cooking Lake was also a highlight. The Kippers let me go and I was briefed for weeks on all the gorgeous girls from the south. I remember names such as Konynenbelt, ten Hove, Meindersma, and others. We were housed in granary-type cabins with squeaky doors that squeaked doubly loud after bedtime. The camp curfew was 11:00 p.m., but our personal cabin curfew was 1:00 a.m. Anyone entering after that faced a contraption over the door that made a pail of water tip over. Some of the victims are elders now . . .

No immigrant was worth his weight in salt unless he had done considerable root picking. For days, my lonely figure moved about piles of roots and fields that never seemed to get cleaned up. A break in the monotony came when a Kippers kid came over the horizon and brought coffee and cake with icing real thick. Being by myself had advantages because I could sing to my heart's content ("In the Mood" and "Woody Woodpecker" were in). Cowboy songs were my favourite and yodelling was a cinch . . . I was quite some singer.

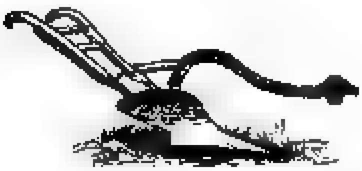
I smuggled a guitar into Neerlandia, but was betrayed and invited to sing at a wedding above the store. The selection was *Sarie Mareis*, a South African song written in pidgin Dutch, a sound that was not too unfamiliar to Neerlandian ears. Norman and Fred Toebes volunteered to be part of the trio. On the way to the festivities, we practiced once more on the Sturwold road. After the performance everybody applauded so vigorously (Neerlandia style — clapping hands, stomping feet, and whistling) that we did not have the nerve to admit to a one-song repertoire and disappeared on the pretense of going to the bathroom.

My farm chores included taking cows to Elzinga's bull, a mile to the north. While the bull played host to my cow, I had coffee with the Elzingas in their kitchen. The topics of conversation usually centered around Article 31 in the Netherlands, immigration, and Frisians and Groningers. Elzinga wanted me to be a Frisian because of my name; I declined since I was born and raised in Groningen. On the return trip, I mulled over this conversation and concluded that Elzinga's insistence was prompted by the fact that fieldman Herman Wierenga had imported too many Groningers. Anyway, Groninger or Frisian, my cow went crazy from mosquitoes and black flies, took a giant leap and disappeared into the dense bushes, not to be recovered till three hours later. That evening I read about the merits of artificial insemination in *The County Guide* and agreed, wholeheartedly.

Watching Frank Visser auctioneer the annual Ladies' Aid Bazaar was fun. His enthusiasm opened wallets for the benefit of blacks in Nigeria. The lighting in this hall was dim and Frank could not always see the bidder. The back benches were occupied by young people who threw in fake bids and then pointed fingers at a sedate Neerlandian as the originator. Those smart alecks also watched Klaas Rowaan's wife bring down an armful of blueberry pies to the trunk of the Model T Coupe, only for her never to see them again . .

The above events happened thirty-six years ago and a lot of things have changed — progress has changed farming standards and life-style. But my happy memories of Neerlandia will stay the same, thanks to all the Neerlandians.

Bill Braaksma



Part Two

The Generations

1911-1920

Yearly Anecdotes

1911-1920

The first decade of the Dutch in Neerlandia — what a time that was! The immigrants, many of whom had never driven an ox, wielded an axe, or constructed a building, struggled to make a life for themselves in the wilderness. Their lives the joys and the sorrows — are recorded in the family histories which follow

The basic information for the family histories was submitted by those whose names appear at the end of the stories. For the sake of clarity we have in most cases changed the stories to the third person. We have attempted to flesh out the histories by talking to friends and family. Some passages — in particular characterizations — have been added as a result of such research. Please read the family histories in the light of this statement. We have made every attempt to be accurate and apologize for any errors.

The editors

MEMOIRS OF BEN LIEVERS

I was born the 30th of December 1885, in a little town called Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands I was the oldest of eight children My father was a weaver in a factory I was brought up in a Christian home, went to a Christian school, and attended an Assembly Sunday School The education I received would be about the fifth grade

By the time I was going to school there were one or two little brothers and my mother was going out working — washing or even working a neighbour's garden Somedays I had to stay home to watch the baby. When I was older, Father had a cow and I had to herd the cow along the country roads Some days I did not like to go to school, so I stayed between the school and home till school was out The outcome was that I did not learn much When I was eleven my parents thought I was old enough to help a little, so they sent me out to a farmer to herd the cows Wages? Board and room, a pair of wooden shoes when needed, and some old clothing which my mother would alter to fit me or my younger brother

After about a year, an opening for a boy came in the factory and I was the "lucky" one to get in to learn weaving. Father was my teacher and I liked the change at first It also felt good to have real money every Saturday night But I had always wanted to be a carpenter, although Father said, "Impossible, boy You have to apprentice two years without wages and we can't afford that." So I made bird cages from sugar boxes at night It so happened that a carpenter friend came over one night He told my dad, "That boy should be a carpenter I have plenty of work. I will take him and give him board and room. I have a small farm and if he helps once in a while on the farm I will give him a few cents." So I became a carpenter, but I found out that I should have gone to school more and studied more when I had the chance

Alice (Aaltje) **Walvoort** (born in Aalten, May 22, 1883) and I were married the 24th of October 1907 We were both working at first I in carpentry, she in a cotton factory in Germany. Our first child was stillborn. Our second child, **Hanna** (Johanna), was born April 18, 1909 Around that time I picked up a paper about Canada and took it home to read It was very interesting. Canada — I knew it was in North America, but had no idea how big it was or what the climate was like - I did know there were wild Indians there! The paper told me there was land for anyone who wanted it A homestead it was called — 160 acres and for the sum of ten dollars it was yours! — 160 acres that was bigger than any farm in our neighbourhood! I could not believe it, so took it with a pinch of salt But I did write to the given address in Belgium and received photos of farmers in the prairies in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Territories. I thought, "If it is half as good as claimed, then it is still better than in the Netherlands."

I started to talk about it with Alice, but she would not even listen. "Foolish I don't believe they will give you so much land for ten dollars. I am not going there to live among wolves, bears, and wild Indians. No, I am not leaving our home and nice furniture and families and friends to go to that wild country!"

But I kept on writing for more information and heard of others who were thinking of moving to Canada At last we called a meeting and a man from Belgium came over and told us how good it was in Canada He had a sample of the wheat that they were raising in Saskatchewan and told us where to write for transportation, etc As a result, some of us decided to immigrate My dear wife had agreed to go with me, so I started writing to a man [ter Horst], whose address I got from a neighbour woman He advised us to come He had a homestead at Eastburg, Alberta and told us that further west and north there was more free land So we wrote for passage and the cost We had a piece of land that we had intended to build our house on, but we sold it to buy our tickets to Canada and then we had a public auction of our household goods We had boxes made for the stuff we could take along clothing, bedding, some utensils, and so on The day of the sale arrived — one of the hardest things for Alice! There was the "Going, going, gone" — the nice clock, a wedding present from friends, sold for a few *gulden*. Then the new baby buggy Alice had saved so long for — sold for half the price Oh yes, Minnie (Wilhelmina) had arrived [January 13, 1911], by now she was three months old So the sale went and we made enough money to pay the passage with a few *gulden* left over. Our house was empty so we moved in with Mother and Father for the night We had had a family gathering just before the sale and I remember what my uncle said, "We are here to say farewell. God be with you in that faraway land Remember that the Cross and the Throne of Grace are as near in Canada as in the Netherlands Go to the Throne of Grace in believing prayer and the Lord will hear your prayers there as well as here " We found it so, as you will see

The next morning we left on the train to Rotterdam We left Father and Mother, each quite sure that we would not see each other here on earth again When we arrived at Rotterdam, as had been promised, someone helped us get our tickets for the boat to Hull, England, and the train to Liverpool, where we were to board the Allan Line *Victorian*. We had to cross the river to get to the Hull boat, but the ferry was out of order, so we had to walk over the bridge I had two suitcases and two babies to carry, so I managed it this way a baby under each arm and a suitcase in each hand! We arrived at the boat and found more immigrants on the way to Edmonton We were given a nice clean room and our party consisted of myself with Alice and the two girls, two young men — Herman, a carpenter, and Ben [Ebbers], an engineering student; a pair of newlyweds, Henry and his wife, a family — George [Visser] and his wife with four or five children, and a young man named Jelle [Holwerda] We travelled together all the way from Rotterdam to Edmonton in April 1911 Some wondered what the paper boxes in the room were for the young bride was the first to find out as we crossed the North Sea! It was rough and some were seasick. I was all right but Alice was sick all the way. By morning we reached England and as soon as we touched the ground all seasickness was forgotten. Now it was all English, but not the English we had studied in a booklet, *English in a Few Lessons*. In England they could not understand our English, nor we theirs! A guide took us to the train for Liverpool where another guide, again provided by the shipping company, was waiting for us. We were transported by a double-decker bus pulled by two horses. I found out that in England they drove on the left side of the road, not on the right like in the Netherlands. We soon arrived at the dock, where the *Victorian* was to leave in the morning. There we were herded like sheep into a big waiting room. It was a great hall with an open coal-burning fireplace in the middle and benches along the walls. One mother was nursing a baby and alongside her was a young man playing an accordian. In front of them some folks were dancing. All around was talk in different languages. A real babble! Our children started to cry because they were afraid of the noise. I thought, "Do we have to sleep here overnight?" But after a while somebody came and brought us upstairs and we had a room for ourselves and we had a good rest.

LN2 Liverpool City Libraries

Downtown Liverpool, 1908.

The following morning we were brought to the boat and had to show our papers and be examined by a doctor. Our oldest girl, Hanna, had *dauwworm* (ringworm) on her head. I was carrying her and when the doctor looked, he put me aside. Somebody came and took me and Hanna to a separate room — the hospital. I did not feel too good. "What if they send us back?" But as soon as we were out of

LHS/28 Liverpool City Libraries

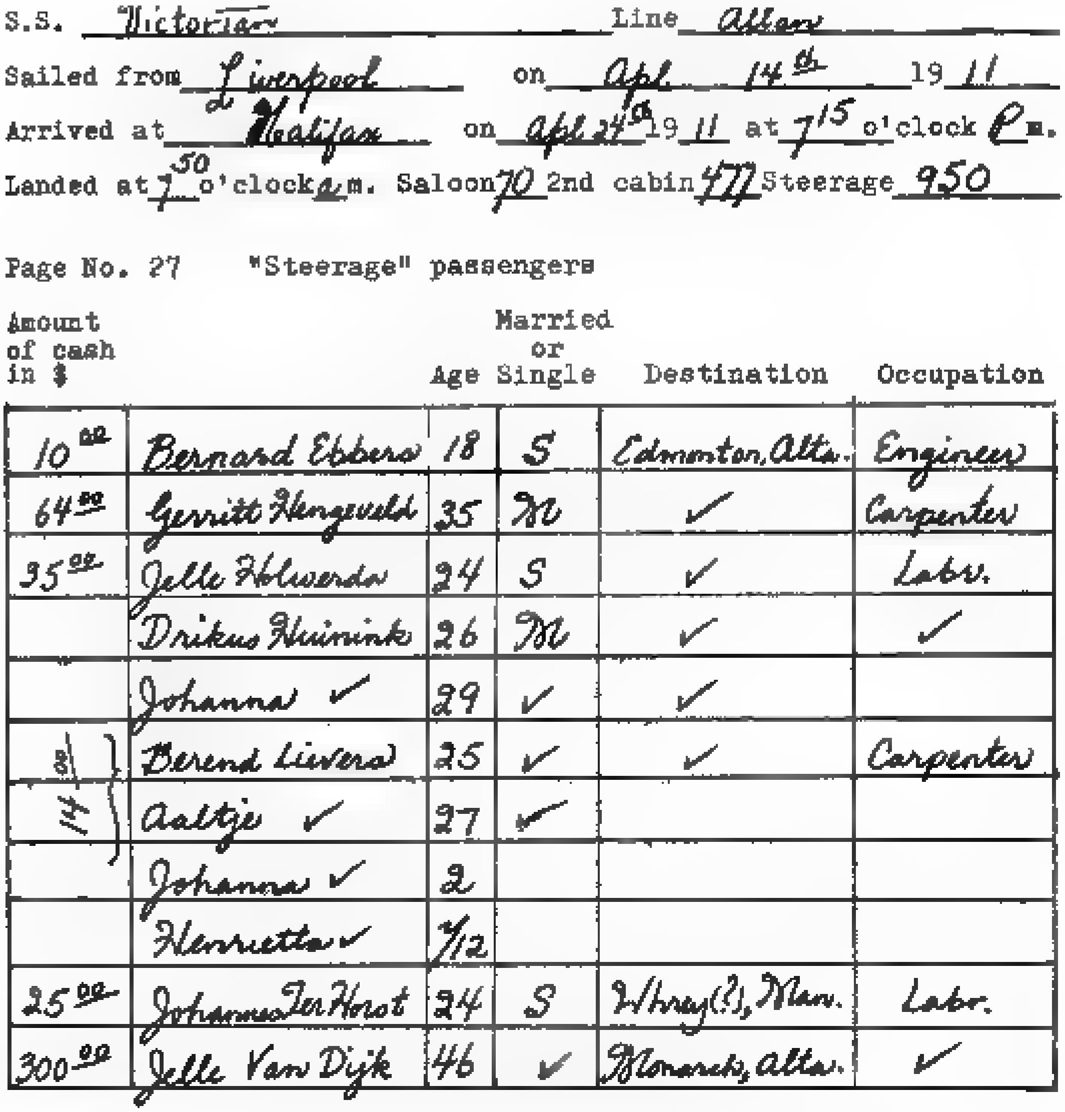
The Victorian.

the harbour somebody came and brought us to our room. Alice and Minnie were already there. This boat did not look as clean as the Hull boat and the meals were not as good, but most of the passengers did not eat much because we had a rough crossing.

The first day the sea was calm, but the second day nearly everyone was seasick, except for the children. Alice stayed in bed for the seven days we were crossing. The sea was rough for the whole trip; some days we were not allowed on the deck because the waves were going over it. After a while ropes were stretched over the deck to hold on to, so you would not be washed away overboard. Once in a while the propeller would come out of the water with an awful noise — it did not feel too safe! The worst was over after about three or four days, but I never saw the sun in those seven days.

After seven days, we were nearing land. We saw one or two ships passing us and one iceberg in the distance. The sea gulls were flying around the ship now — a sign of land. It started to rain and blow so the upper section of the ship was all covered with ice and it became dangerous to be on deck on account of the ice falling. Soon we were nearing Halifax and the pilot came on board to bring us safely in, but a heavy fog settled over the sea and we were not able to move till it cleared. As soon as the fog cleared we saw Halifax city on the one side, and on the other side hills with houses here and there and covered with snow — still winter in Canada and when we had left the Netherlands the tulips were coming out. I thought, "Maybe the wife was right, it was foolish to go to this wild country." But we were here now and we would make the best of it. Our baggage was unloaded first. The next morning we came off the ship and were looked over by a doctor and had our papers checked. Then our baggage was inspected. After this we were herded on to the train and were soon on our way to Edmonton. Alice said, "This is better than the ship — I will never go over that sea again!"

I liked the Canadian passenger cars better than the English ones, we could go from one car into the other, not like in England



S.S. Victorian Line Allan

Sailed from Liverpool on Apl. 14th 19 11

Arrived at Halifax on Apl 24th 19 11 at 7^{15} o'clock P m.

Landed at 7^{50} o'clock a m. Saloon 70 2nd cabin 477 Steerage 950

Page No. 27 "Steerage" passengers

Amount of cash in $		Age	Married or Single	Destination	Occupation
10^{00}	Bernard Ebbers	18	S	Edmonton, Alta.	Engineer
64^{00}	Gerritt Hengeveld	35	M	✓	Carpenter
35^{00}	Jelle Holwerda	24	S	✓	Labr.
	Drikus Huinink	26	M	✓	✓
	Johanna ✓	29	✓	✓	
3	Berend Lievers	25	✓	✓	Carpenter
14	Aaltje ✓	27	✓		
	Johanna ✓	2			
	Henrietta ✓	7/12			
25^{00}	Johannes Ter Horst	24	S	Wbrey(?), Man.	Labr.
300^{00}	Jelle Van Dijk	46	✓	Monarch, Alta.	✓

The above information was obtained from the manifest of the Victorian.

where they were divided into different rooms. Those immigration trains were just right for travelling — the seats were made so that two made one double bed, and above was a collapsible platform for a double bed that during the day served as a place for the baggage. There was a coal stove in every car on which to make coffee or tea, but we had to supply our own food. It was in Canada that we first saw bananas and tasted pie

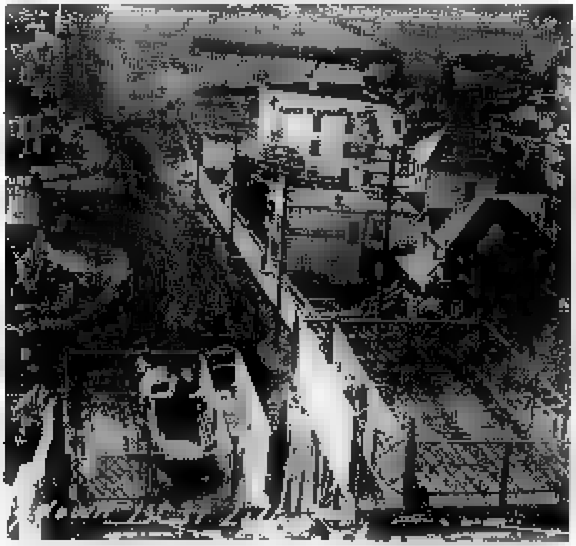
Looking out of the train, we did not like Canada. Small houses, we thought, but the distance fooled us. Ontario was wild bush country: rock, spruce and poplar, and muskeg that we mistook for the heather that we knew in the Netherlands. This cold wild country was not for us! We saw some small lakes full of logs and I wondered, "What are they going to do with all those fence posts?" When we came further west, in the prairies, it was also not good. no trees, no green grass, some cows and horses, and plenty of gophers that we thought were rats! No, Canada did not look promising So far we had not seen anything of those big barns and houses pictured in the Dutch papers. And the English language — we would never learn that! Most of us could understand German, though Herman spoke German best, so he was our interpreter.

When we arrived at Winnipeg, we changed trains. We stopped there for one hour, but did not see much of the city because we were afraid of getting lost. From there, we went to Calgary and then on to Edmonton. There it was more parkland and, farther northwest, heavy timber — more like the part of Gelderland we came from That we liked, but not Eastern Canada or the prairies "We are nearing Edmonton," the conductor told us, so we gathered our stuff together and got the little girls dressed. George sent a telegram to the elders of the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton to meet them at the station We had nobody waiting for us because the man we had been writing to was not in Edmonton but on a homestead in Eastburg.

CPR Station, Strathcona, 1890s.

A2886/Provincial Archives of Alberta

Well, at last we were in Strathcona, not yet in Edmonton. George's family had white roses in their lapels, waiting to meet the elders of the Church. Only it seemed there was nobody looking like an elder — just a couple of fellows in dirty overalls and they turned out to be the elders. They took George and his family but we were left to the CPR. They brought us by horse and wagon over the Low Level Bridge, as the High Level was just being built then. To get up McDougall Hill there was a platform that we, the horses, and the wagon were loaded on, and a steam engine on top pulled us up. Then we were brought to the Immigration Hall It was April 28, 1911


First street lift, looking south.

B9301/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Lift (incline railway) looking north.

B9295/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

The CPR took good care of us, but we were more or less on our own in a strange city, not understanding a word of English! At the Hall the caretaker told us, in German, that we could stay for a week but that we should get out as soon as possible because immigrants were coming in on every train. We had a room upstairs, but the kitchen and dining room were in the basement. All the utensils needed to make meals were there, and we had to clean up after every meal, of course. We decided to make *pannekoeken*, but had nothing to make them with. So Herman went to the store to get supplies. He came back with salt, fat, yeast, and cornmeal. We did not know what corn was, but meal seemed nearest to the Dutch *meel* (flour). The women made *pannekoeken* with it, but they did not taste very good.

Dining area, Immigration Hall, c. 1911-12.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta.

The next day, Herman found us a shack on Namayo Avenue (97th Street) for ten dollars a month. So eight of us, six adults and two children, moved into the two-room shack, which had a coal shed at the back. Our boxes were used again: one for a table and the other for a cupboard. For chairs we had firewood blocks from the poplar trees growing in front of the shack. Some of us slept on the floor and the bedding was piled in a corner during the day. The women cooked and the men went out working and we all shared.

Edmonton was booming at that time. There was plenty of work for everybody. We lived together for a month and then Henry and his wife moved out.

I found out that we could rent a plot of ground from Mr. Little on Fraser Flats, build a shack there, and use water out of the pump by the backyard, so we decided to do that. I built a shack after hours and we moved out there. All the rent we paid was a dollar a month, no taxes, and free firewood out of the river. We liked Canada. In the Netherlands they would have condemned our house for a chicken coop, but we were satisfied with it and the freedom here. If we wanted to dig a hole — alright, lots of room around us and if we wanted to go hunting we could do that too around Edmonton. Not knowing the English language was a drawback in getting work. Here is one example: at that time there were Employment Offices staffed with people who understood different languages. For a fee of one dollar they would give you an address where you could go for a job. They would advertise, "Carpenters wanted: twenty-five cents per hour" and you would pay a dollar and they gave you the address and you would go there and find a job, maybe for a day. Then the employer would send you away and the employment office would send another man and receive another dollar which it split with the employer. Between times I built a better living place, not a tar paper shack now, althought still not a Dutch house. But it was all our own and it was all paid for, which we would never have been able to have in the Netherlands. So we were well satisfied in Canada.

Nevertheless, we were still thinking of a homestead and most of the Dutch were still talking about it as well and they clung together and sent some men out to look for land for a Dutch settlement. They intended it to be a Christian Reformed Dutch settlement and that is what it became, known as Neerlandia. A few had settled there already and others had gone there the winter before to build log houses, so six of us started off one morning [summer or fall, 1912] with wagon and team to see Neerlandia. The distance from Edmonton to Neerlandia is about ninety miles, fifty of which were fairly good roads. There were a few small towns along the way: St. Albert, Morinville, Clyde, and further on a few stopping places, farmers' places mostly.

The first day we did quite a few miles — the roads were good and the horses and men were not yet tired. We stopped at a farmhouse for the night and had supper and a good bed and breakfast. It cost twenty-five cents per meal, bed twenty-five cents, and feed for the horses about the same. The next morning we made an early start again. The country was about the same: lots of bush left and the cultivated parts getting smaller and farther apart — but not

82836/E Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Morinville, c. 1910.

enough open homesteads here for a Dutch settlement. We travelled that day as far as Edison, the start of a little town with a school, church, livery barn and a few farm houses. After we left Edison, we decided to try to find a stopping place for the night but this was not easy for a team of horses and six men. At the first farmhouse we asked for room for six men, but the answer was "No, not for six of you." It was the same at the next and the next till at last we decided to settle down under spruce trees for the night. But one of us said, "I will ask at the next house and that will be the last." The next house turned out to be a little shed, but they said they would have room for us, although we were wondering where they would put the six of us. The farmer came out and helped to get the horses in the barn. When we came in, after we had a wash at the well, the table was set. After a good supper, I wandered around the barn for awhile and then found the others were in the house, and when I came in the fellows were all lying on the floor from one wall to the other. I dropped between two of them on the floor and it was a tight fit, but being young and tired I slept well. After breakfast the next morning we started again. We paid for the food and the night's lodging, leaving the lady of the house with more money than she had maybe seen for a long time.

The third day on the road we did not go as many miles because the roads were not so good and the horses were getting tired. But we reached a farmer's place about fifteen miles from Neerlandia and we stopped there overnight. Some of us slept in a granary full of oats and I found that better than a wooden floor for a spring and had a good sleep.

The last day of our trip was the hardest because we were in real timber country. No roads, although there was a trail around sloughs and around big trees. A few settlers had been over it with oxen or horses but we found creeks and sloughs and one of us went in front of the horses with a long stick measuring the depth of the mud to see if it would be safe for the horses to go through. We made it without accident, and arrived at the outskirts of Neerlandia that night, the Simon Tiemstra farm. They had a log cabin and said if we were content to sleep on the floor, we could stay there. So we

bedded down on the floor with a couple of horse blankets and a coat for a cushion. But since I found the boards hard, I was glad when the sun came up! After breakfast we were ready for land seeking and Mr. Tiemstra was willing to be our guide. We went along the Klondike Trail and then along the surveyor's line from one corner stick to the other, having with us a plan of Townships 61 and 62. The land that was open for settlement was marked on these plans in the Edmonton Lands Office. We did not take any of the homesteads at that time, but returned to Edmonton with a better idea of what a homestead was. For the time being I forgot about homesteading, as I had work and was making forty-five to fifty cents an hour!

In 1912 a neighbour [Joseph Baker] got sick with typhoid fever and my wife was helping his wife with a new baby. My wife got the same sickness and was brought to the hospital. The doctor did not give much hope. But after eight weeks in the hospital she came home — not even ninety pounds left of her and she had lost all her hair, but it all came back very quickly, darker than before. A neighbour woman looked after the baby. The Lord heard our prayers and Mother came home again. Yes, we were just as near to the Throne of Grace as we were in the Netherlands and He did bless us in this new country.

In 1912 and 1913 more immigrants came from the Netherlands, among them my brother Henry, his wife, and two children, as well as my younger brother John.

In the winter of 1912, I went to Neerlandia again and picked out a homestead (SE 5-62-3-5). On April 5, 1913, another daughter, **Rieka** (Hendrika), arrived — our first Canadian! I had made an agreement with another young man [Arie Emmerzael], who was going to Neerlandia and had a log cabin, that we could stay there while we built our log house. So in the fall of 1913, my brother John and I went back to build a log cabin. We did not go by horse this time, but by train as far as Clyde and from there by stage as far as fifteen miles from Neerlandia. We came to Clyde in the afternoon and on the platform was a fellow shouting, "Stage for the West!" He was going as far as Southworth that night. There was another passenger, a lady teacher, who wanted to get to Westlock by eight o'clock that night for a dance. She got the best seat in the front with the driver. I heard her say to the driver, "One dollar extra for you if you are there on time." The stage was a democrat with two mules to pull it. That was my first stage ride and I will never forget it! "Hold on," the driver said and he used a big stick on those mules. Hold on we had to, with both hands and feet. The ride was fast and rough, but he made his extra dollar! We reached Southworth's that night, and slept at a place where I often stopped in later years on trips to Westlock. Mrs. Southworth was a motherly woman. We had a good rest, and after breakfast my brother and I left with our packs, which contained tools and clothing. One pack was heavy and the other light, so we decided to take turns carrying the heavy one. John said he would take the heavy one but he, not being used to that, slowed down after a few miles and changed with me! We had fifteen to seventeen miles to walk, and it had snowed the night before, but we made it to Tiemstras that night.

In the morning we started on the four-mile trek to Arie's log cabin. He had left Edmonton the day before us so he could clean the cabin before we arrived, but we arrived and no Arie. He came that night, though. Since we needed groceries, the next morning Arie and I borrowed a team of oxen and a sleigh to go to the store, which was seven miles south and was open only one day a week. It seemed that the whole country was there — oxen, horses, sleighs, saddle horses - so we had to wait our turn. It was dark when we started our homeward journey, but after getting stuck behind a stump and losing some groceries, we made it, with one driving the oxen and one walking behind.

Arie had the necessary pots and pans, so we started housekeeping. Arie and I took turns making breakfast, since John was younger and needed more sleep. Arie was a better cook than either John or I so we left it mostly up to him to bake bread, etc. He was older than I and not married and I was spoiled already because I had a wife who was a good cook, except in baking bread. (She had to learn that in Canada, and the first batches she made were quite heavy, but I had all my teeth yet at that time and an empty stomach, so it did not matter.) One morning I got out of bed and said to Arie, "Look, there is a fire in the roof along the stovepipe." He said, "That's all right. Let's have breakfast first!" A mud roof with a layer of snow on top does not burn fast so we had no trouble getting it out after breakfast.

As soon as we were settled in Arie's cabin we tried our hand at cutting logs but, being green at it, made mistakes. John had never used such tools before, but with the help of neighbours and their oxen we did manage to get the logs to the place. We started to build the frame, got eight feet high, then left it at that, and went back to Edmonton.

B4791/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Edmonton, looking west from 2nd Street, 1914.

The city of Edmonton was growing like a toadstool with the selling of building lots all around it. Real estate offices were doing a great business, selling lots to immigrants who did not understand a word of English. Many found out afterwards that the lot they had

bought was a duck pond or a slough or miles out of the city. We did not buy because we did not have money. We had paid my brother's fare from the Netherlands and the doctor and the hospital for Mother's sickness. Many Dutchmen did buy, but as far as I know George was the only one to build a house on his. The rest lost it all in taxes to the city. When the war started in 1914 the boom collapsed. No lots were sold, no houses built, no City Water Works — unemployment as never before. People could not make the payments on lots and houses and the city took them for taxes. Young men enlisted for the war thinking to have a free trip overseas, but many did not come back. Nobody believed it would take years to smash Germany. My brother John received a call from the Dutch Government to come back for military service and since he had no work at that time, he went back to the Netherlands. He served in the Dutch army, but he never came back to Canada. He was sorry he ever left Canada.

As I have said, the boom in the city had collapsed, so after looking for work and not getting any, we decided to move to the homestead. We sold our little house in Edmonton and some of our furniture and bought some groceries and tools. We rented a team and wagon, and hired a teamster to bring us to Neerlandia. We loaded up most of our stuff, but it did not all fit on the wagon, and I made a trip back later for that. On August 29, 1914, during the month and year the First World War started, Alice and I and our three girls, along with John Ebbers, a brother of Ben, who wanted to see Neerlandia, set out from Edmonton. The boxes that we had brought from the Netherlands were used again, this time as a seat for the wife and children by day and a bed by night! Our cook stove was at the back of the wagon facing out, we only had to put a piece of stovepipe on it when we wanted to use it. We had a tent over the wagon, but did not need it because the weather was fine.

The first day we made about thirty miles and found an empty schoolhouse to sleep in. There was also a pump for water and a barn for the horses there. After a good night's sleep and a good breakfast, we travelled on. The next night we reached what had been the start of a little town [Edison], but only the livery barn was still there, so we used it for the horses and for us to sleep in. In the morning Alice bought some butter from a farmer's wife and asked for some milk for our year-old baby, Rieka. The woman said, "What, a baby and no milk?" So she gave us milk for no charge — just for the poor baby! That day we came to the Pembina River and the water was very low, so the ferryman asked, "How heavy is your load?" We did not know, so he said he would try it, but we got stuck on the sandbar. We had to pull the ferry back, unload some of the goods and come back for them. The ferryman warned us, "There is a mud hole on the road. You have to go around it. Turn left into a farmer's yard and follow the trail and you will come out behind the mud hole." We did that and came up to a wire fence. The teamster took our axe and loosened the wire from the post and two of us stood on it and we went over it back onto the road. So far so good — but we did not go very far. A man on horseback came up to us and said, "You fellows broke my fence and I am demanding you fix it or pay me a dollar! Yesterday one of them homesteaders broke my fence

Hanna, Rieka, Minnie, 1914

and I had to hunt for my cattle." So I handed him a dollar. I heard later that in following years he charged ten dollars. That night we could not find an empty building to sleep in, so John and the driver found a haystack to sleep on and we settled down on the boxes in the wagon. Alice thought she heard a bear, but it turned out to be some cows eating our horses' feed.

Until then, we had had graded roads to travel over, but now there was only a trail. However, we did reach Tiemstras that night, even though the wagon had broken down in a mud hole about one mile from Tiemstra's cabin. Mrs Tiemstra made us a good supper: moose meat, potatoes, and homemade bread. She said, "Eat your fill of the meat, as there is lots more in the bush! We have a neighbour, a real hunter; he hunts the moose and my husband, having an ox team, gets it out of the bush so we always have fresh meat. We are helping each other, one is a hunter, another a carpenter, and so on. We work together to make a start in this wilderness."

The next morning, after a breakfast of oatmeal and moosemeat, we got the wagon out of the mud hole. It had started to rain that morning, and our house was not ready — no roof, doors, or windows in it, so Mr. Tiemstra said, "You go as far as Klaas Krikke's and there are two cabins there, just one mile from your land. He will take you in." So we went to Klaas Krikke's cabin and knocked on the door. I noticed some writing on the door, it said, *Kasteel Nooit Gedacht* (Castle Never Thought). Anyhow, nobody was there, so the teamster said, "We better leave your wife and children here and unload the necessary . . ." "Oh, no," Alice said, "What do I say when the owner comes home?" Well, he came home that night. He had been helping a neighbour build a cabin and he told me afterwards, "When I came home that night I saw smoke coming out of the stovepipe and I thought there must be fire in the stove." As he came nearer he heard a baby cry and found a woman with three children in the house, and a very embarrassed woman too! Alice did not know what to say at first, but Klaas took it well and went to the next cabin, where there was also a bachelor, and slept there. He had left the cabin the day before, naming it "Neverthought" and that was a good name because, as he said, "I left it a single man and came back to find a woman and three children." Anyway, we had gotten our goods to the log cabin and the teamster went back to Edmonton — just in time, because after that three-day rain, no wagon was able to get through.

We stayed at the Krikke cabin for those three days of rain and then went to ours to put on a roof of poles, hay, mud, and sod. I had no experience building with logs, but the neighbours helped me. I had made the windows and one door in Edmonton. I put them in and filled between the logs on the inside with moss and on the outside with clay. Then I borrowed a few boards for the floor — enough for the table and chairs to stand on. It was impossible to get to the sawmill after the rain. The table stood firm, but the rest of the house was clay and weeds, the girls played in the grass inside. Alice hung up blankets to divide the house into rooms. It was nothing fancy, but we had a roof over our heads and a wall around us. We found out that the roof was not waterproof, nor the walls mosquito-proof!

As soon as we raised a little garden the rabbits helped us eat it and when we had a little patch of grain — all around the edge it was eaten by the rabbits for about a rod wide and in the fall when the grain was in the stook the rabbits would climb on top of it and make a manure pile of it. Yes, there were millions of them and you could not possibly eat all of them. But our little garden grew and we shared it with the rabbits the first year, but the next year I had a fence made from sticks to keep them out. The summer frosts took their toll on the gardens too in the early years. Sometimes it froze as early as June or July, so we did not have beans in the first years.

In the spring of 1915, I made the trip to Edmonton to get the rest of our goods and collect the money for the house, because our money and groceries were gone. I borrowed Mr. Oldegbers' team on the condition that I take along his son John and Klaas Krikke, who was engaged to his daughter. So we started off — the three of us with a sleigh and the team — an ox and a bull. We had no load on the way in, so we made good time. When we arrived in Edmonton, it was two o'clock in the morning. The bull stopped at every streetlight and looked up, till we came to the corner of 103 Street. There was a theatre very brightly lit and all at once the bull turned from the street, went over the sidewalk and intended to see those bright lights. I managed to turn the team back to the street. A policeman standing at the corner came running. "What have we here? Do you come from the country and how far? And how do you steer these beasts? I have never seen them before." And he walked along with us for a block or more, wondering and asking questions. The next morning we started for home, just John and I, as Klaas stayed in longer. But the snow had gone, so we had to borrow a wagon, and when we came out of the city there still was snow, so it took seven days to return. I don't remember much of the seven days, only one day we were discussing what day of the week it was. I did not know and John did not know. We stopped for supper and asked the lady of the house what day of the week it was. "Don't you know? It is Sunday." A good thing the owner of the oxen did not know we worked his oxen on the Sabbath — he was very strict on Sabbath-keeping and very careful with his animals. When we came home he felt the oxen and said, "They have been sweating." "Yes, I sweat too when I work." When I asked him how much he wanted he said, "You are a carpenter and you can help me sometime fix up the new house." And that I did afterwards.

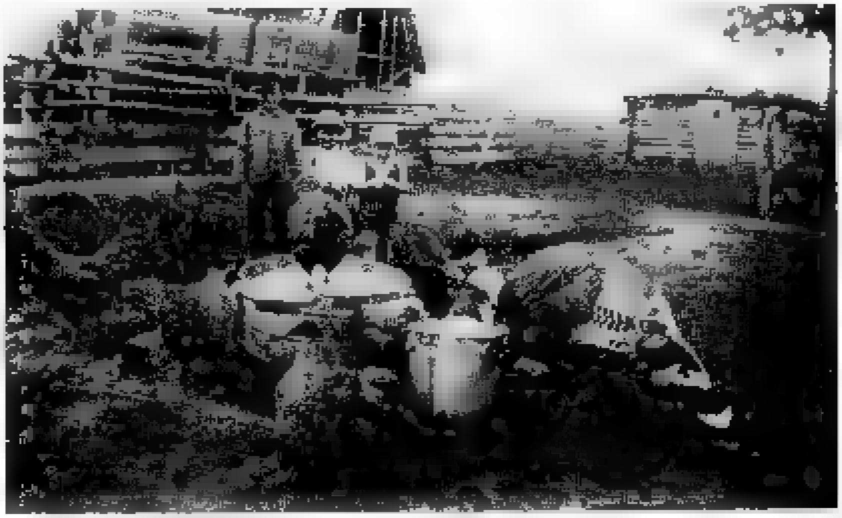
I came home with some more furniture and a few dollars and we bought a cow for that — our first animal on the homestead. Soon after this two of us went out to buy a cow. We went fifteen miles south and there we bought it. I bought a heifer that was supposed to be in calf and the owner had a small heifer he would like to sell as well, but I did not have enough money. My partner said, "I will lend you the money." So I bought the heifers and he bought a cow. It turned out the nice heifer was not a good milk cow and the little one was our best cow for years to come. Now we had a start at farming — two cows and after awhile two calves. One of the calves grew into our first ox and I bought another ox. As a boy, I had seen a farmer make a harness for his oxen. So I went to the bush to look for a crooked birch tree and I made the harness with binder twine and moose hide. Now the job was to break the ox. I put on the harness and put him in front of a stone boat — everything went fine till I said, "Get up!" But the beast did not know what I meant so I gave him a little pat with my stick but he did not move a little harder hit with my stick and there he went, right into a haystack! One thing I learned and that was that an ox will not back up! After much hard work I did get him trained to haul my firewood or go to the store. I also did some plowing with the two oxen later on.

We did progress, though, and soon had a few cows. We made butter, which we traded for groceries, and also had a few hens and sold the eggs if we could.

Rieka, Hanna, Alice holding Johannes, Ben, Minnie, Henry, Bill, 1918.

In the years 1915 to 1918, we were short of money and there was no work in Neerlandia, so some of the men went harvesting on the prairies. I received a letter asking if I would come and do some carpenter work. I went after April 28, 1915, because that is when our first son, **Bill** (Willem), was born. A few days later I left for Nobleford with my partner, Popko Schuring, and we worked together in Nobleford, Monarch, Granum, and Bendhill building houses, barns, and a church. I stayed away for five months while Alice and the girls did the homesteading. I made fifty cents an hour plus board and room. I made good at that time and came home with about five hundred dollars, with which we bought some haying machinery and a sewing machine for Alice, as well as other things. I went again the following years and in that way we made a start on our homestead. It was not easy and there were many hardships but the family grew and we got a second son, **Henry** (Hendrik), on September 28, 1916. Our third son, **Johannes**, was born November 10, 1917, and passed away March 5, 1919. Another son was stillborn on June 18, 1919.

The winter of 1919 was long and cold and many cattle died because of shortage of feed. We lost some in the spring too. Our last daughter, **Alice** (Aaltje), was born November 25, 1920. Three more sons were born in the 1920s: **Ben**, March 17, 1923, **John** (Jan), January 6, 1925; and **Gerrit**, January 17, 1929. All of them were born at home with just the womenfolk helping one another.



Lievers boys on homestead, late 1920s.

The house Ben built in 1932

When our children were older, the girls worked out cooking in the lumber camps. We got a permit from the government for one dollar for about a hundred feet of lumber. We had to cut the logs, bring them to the sawmill, and then bring the lumber home again. This had to be done in the winter, as the mill was on the south side of Shoal Lake. The boys and I would start early in the mornings to cut logs, and one of the girls worked at the sawmill as a cook to supply the money for the sawing. Alice and the younger children stayed at home to do the housework and chores. Alice had to bake bread every day to keep us in lunches. We finished the logging that winter and the sawmill had it all sawed, but by that time the ice was melting. We did get all the lumber home before the ice went out of the lake, though. The next year I started to build our third house which is still standing today (1966).

Excerpts taken from memories written in 1966 by Ben Lievers Sr.

JAN AND FROUKJE (EERDMANS) ANEMA

Jan (John) Anema was born May 8, 1884, in Arum, Friesland, the Netherlands, to parents who were farmers. Froukje Eerdmans was born January 25, 1886, in Bolsward, Friesland. Her father was in the business of buying and selling hides. John and Froukje met and became engaged in Bolsward.

John had worked for dairy farmers in the Netherlands but, lured by the promise of streets paved with gold, John and his stepbrother Siebren Tiemstra sailed to the U. S. A. in 1906. Froukje, accompanied by members of her family, followed him in 1907. She went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, because some of her family were already there. John and Froukje were married September 19, 1907, and went to Harrison, South Dakota, where John and Siebren had rented a farm. Two children were born to the Anemas there: **Della** (Dirkje), on December 11, 1908, and **Susan** (Sietske), on February 12, 1911.

Few trees grew in Harrison so buffalo chips had to be gathered for fuel. Drought (the second one in twenty years) hit the state, and South Dakota did not live up to the promise. John and Siebren were attracted to an advertisement placed in *De Wachter* by Henry Kippers of Edmonton, indicating his desire to establish a Dutch farming community near Edmonton. John responded to the advertisement, and in 1911 the Anema and Tiemstra families

Froukje and Jan's wedding photo, 1907

Susie, Froukje, Della in Edmonton, 1913.

arrived by train in Edmonton and settled in Fraser Flats. Although many other immigrants lived in tents, the Anemas were able to get a shack. John found work at the Edmonton Water Works, and he and his wife saved as much money as they could so they would be able to begin homesteading.

At first John filed on a quarter in the Thorhild district, but on December 18, 1911, he filed on the SW 23-61-3-5. This too was temporary. By the time the Anema family moved to what later became Neerlandia, he had refiled on the NW 35-61-3-5 (January 20, 1913). The big move came in 1914. By this time there were three children to take along since a baby girl, Tena (Katharina), had been born March 22, 1913.

John hired one of the teamsters who made a business of taking new settlers to their homesteads by horse and wagon. The Anemas loaded all their possessions on the wagon beds, one dresser, a stove, a heater, a wringer, a sewing machine, and many other necessary items. On the trip Froukje's hat was knocked off and sank out of sight in a mud hole. The loss of the hat was in itself not so important, but it dramatized the drastic change that was taking place in her life. Her childhood had included maids, stylish clothing and the amenities of city life in the late 1800s. Now she was being jounced over a muddy trail in a wagon to an unnamed spot in the wilderness.

On their arrival the family stayed with the Siebren Tiemstra family until their home, a cabin with a sod roof, was built on the homestead. This house consisted of one large room partitioned by curtains to form two bedrooms on the end. The Anemas purchased chickens, pigs, and cows and began growing potatoes. They also grew grain, but the first crops were often poor because of early frosts.

The wringer brought from Edmonton saved Froukje many hours of wringing out the wash by hand. It could be attached to a washtub and then turned to also serve the rinse tub.

The area in which the Anemas settled was still wilderness. Clearing the land had begun but there were few trails. To get to the Tiemstras, it was necessary to walk part of the way along a trail on which logs were placed to make it possible to cross streams or wet, low spots. On at least one occasion Della slipped off a log and arrived at the Tiemstras wet to the waist.

John worked hard to make a home in the wilderness. By the time he patented his land in November 1917, he had cleared sixteen acres, built a log house, barn, and granary, dug a twenty-foot well and constructed two miles of log fences. He had acquired three head of cattle and two horses. A second house was built in 1919, and the old one converted into a barn. The new one was a two-story log house with a proper roof. The downstairs had a front room and a large kitchen; upstairs were three bedrooms complete with closets. The beds were made of wood or iron; the mattresses were stuffed with straw. In winter the house was cold, but quilts, handmade from scraps of old clothing, kept the family warm at night.

This new land was good to the Anemas. here their only son, **George** (Gerrit), was born January 20, 1919. Another daughter, **Anna**, was born June 4, 1921.

Froukje was an excellent seamstress. She made many clothes for the family from hundred-pound flour sacks, some of which she dyed in different colours. Clothes were also received from relatives and Christian Reformed churches in the Grand Rapids area. These were skillfully made over to fit the children. Knitting was a favourite pastime, and Froukje became so proficient at it that it was almost as natural to her as breathing. The constant clicking of her needles sounded like a cricket in flight.

Back: Jan, Della. Middle: Tena, Froukje, Susie. Front: George. c. 1921

John, being a farmer's son, usually raised good crops. Other income was derived from the sale of eggs, butter, and cream. Hay grew in the sloughs and was cut with a scythe and stacked in the barnyard for cattle.

On the frontier, regard for the law was sometimes lax. One summer day John was burning brush without a permit, when the long arm of the law reached as far as Neerlandia. The officer arrived at the Anema farm and told John that the penalty for this infraction was a ten-dollar fine or three days in jail. Since John did not have the ten dollars he was taken off to jail in Edmonton by the officer. When they arrived, by horse and buggy, in Clyde, someone in higher authority decided that the penalty was foolish and allowed John to return home. Only this time there was no ride for him, so he walked the forty miles home.

Tena, Della holding Annie, Susie, George, c. 1924.

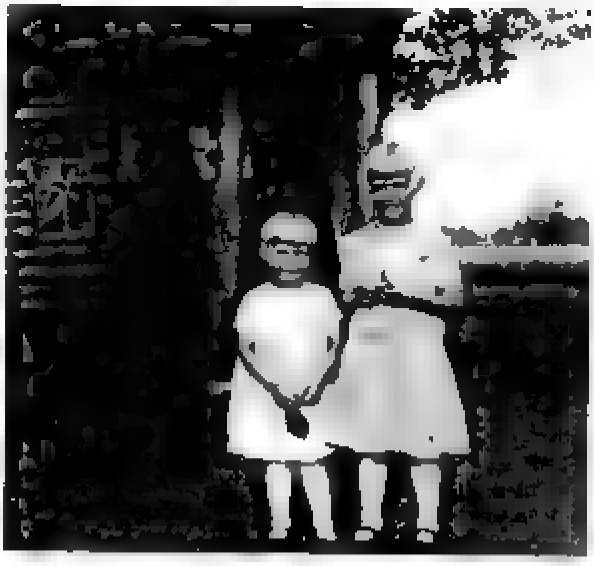
Since John did not like working alone, he often had his children working alongside him. At other times he would share tasks with his neighbours. Della and Susie were milking and doing other chores by age eight or nine. They also would go on horseback to get the cows, who had to be driven to the slough for water. In the winter a hole had to be chopped in the ice so that the cows could drink. When the girls were older they also had to help with the cutting of the wood in the winter. They helped with plowing, harrowing, and stooking, and there was also a large garden to be weeded and piles of wood to be chopped.

Two more girls were born to John and Froukje: **Frances** (Froukje) on December 26, 1925, and **Sophie**, on October 8, 1928.

Lunch at stooking time, c. 1930. Della holding Frances, Susie, John.

There was plenty of work to do, but the Anema house was always open to visitors. On Sundays many older single men such as Ike and Charlie Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Henry Strydhorst, and Oene Piers came for lunch. Families who lived too far from the church to go home between services sometimes stayed at the Anemas for lunch. Froukje would prepare a big pan of soup, loaves of her delicious bread, and a huge slab of white or chocolate cake. Froukje also baked, washed, ironed, and mended for the Visser brothers. Sometimes she would be down to her last loaf of bread when they came, but she would give it to them and then whip up a batch of baking powder biscuits for her own family. She did a lot of sewing for friends, relatives, and neighbours. The Messelink and Anema girls were often dressed alike because Froukje had made all the dresses.

Although there was enough to eat and wear, there was never any spare money. Froukje called the farm a *bodemloze put* (a bottomless pit). During the Depression, cows were not worth feeding, so the calves were taken out in the bush where John cut their throats.



Sophie, Frances in front of the log house, 1933.

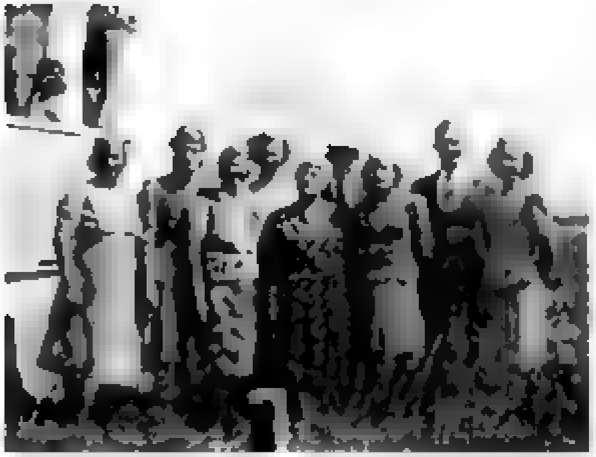
All the children went to school until grade seven or eight or age fifteen or sixteen. Della and Susie were school janitors for some years. They would arrive early in the morning to start the heater, using kindling cut the night before, and shavings which they brought from home. With their first year's salary, a table was purchased for the living room. Later, Della went out working in Neerlandia and Edmonton. While working in Neerlandia she continued to help on the farm. She married Raymond Baker in 1934.

When Susie was fifteen, she went out working too, and sent most of the money home where it helped to pay for a new sewing machine, a winter coat, and false teeth — all for her mother. She also contributed toward the purchase of a new family buggy. Susie married John Vanee in 1933.

Tena's first paying job was babysitting at the Levys', who were both teaching in Neerlandia. She also did housework in Edmonton, earning fifteen dollars per month. Free rides to Edmonton were given by Billy Quick, the trucker. Tena married Louis Nanninga in 1935.

George, who was called Boy with a certain amount of pride, completed grade eight and then stayed home to help on the farm. He was called to join the army, but was gone for only one month because he was needed on the farm. He married Tina Velema in 1951.

Since John had chronic bronchitis and asthma, he found farming difficult, so in 1945 John



Della, Tena, Susie, Annie, Froukje, John, Sophie, George, Frances, 1944

and Froukje moved to the hamlet and George took over the farm. The Anema house was located directly north of the Co-op store. From there John could see everything that was going on. He had always enjoyed being with people and now just a few steps would bring him to the hub of Neerlandia's activity. This central location made it easy for the grandchildren to come for a visit. They spent many happy hours playing Flinch or checkers with *Pake*. An avid reader, John enjoyed the many books sent by Froukje's relatives who owned Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses in Grand Rapids.

Anna helped many families in the area when a child was born or a mother became sick. She kept house for George until her marriage to Jerry Haagsma in June 1950. They lived in Edmonton where Jerry, who was a mechanic, had his business. After Jerry's death from a heart attack in 1980, Anna took up babysitting, a job she loves. The five Haagsma children live in or near the city.

When Frances was nineteen years of age, she entered the Reformed Bible Institute to become a missionary. There she met Jake Bol. They were married on June 24, 1949, in a double ceremony with Sophie and Lambert. Fran and Jake worked among the Navajo Indians in Rehoboth, New Mexico. Six children were born to the Bols. Frances died of cancer on December 15, 1964. Jake died in 1967 in a chemical plant explosion.

Sophie was the only one of the Anema family to complete grade nine, but school was not her only interest in life. Sophie loved working outside and was driving tractor at the age of thirteen. She drove for various farmers and was adept at it. She weighed ninety pounds and could pull a John Deere D fly-wheel weighing about 250 pounds. And you can bet she got that tractor started too! She went to work as a clerk in Neerlandia Co-op in May 1946. The work was interesting and good times were shared with the other girls, Grace Tuininga and Lula Krikke, who worked there at the time. But the real fun was what happened behind the counters or in the warehouse when the boss was away and no customers were around. Sophie worked at the store until her marriage to Lambert Wierenga in 1949.

In 1962, John and Froukje gave up their little white house at the Centre and moved to Hillcrest Lodge in Barrhead. There they lived happily together until Froukje died on September 14, 1965. John lived there alone until his death on May 1, 1967.

Anema Family

GAELE AND CATHARINA (VISSER) BAKER

Gaele Bakker was born July 31, 1858, in Koudom, Friesland, the Netherlands. His parents owned a bakery, which Gaele later took over. Gaele married Catharina (Catarena) Visser (Visfer) on May 17, 1884, in Witmarsum. Catharina had been born March 9, 1864, in Terwoude.

Gaele and Catharina immigrated from the Netherlands in 1899. With them came their seven children: John (Jan, February 2, 1885), **Joseph** (Jouke, November 6, 1886), Jenny (Jacobje, April 4, 1888), **Raymond** (Riemer, January 13, 1891), Magdalena (February 21, 1893), **Dick** (Dirk, June 20, 1895), and **Katie** (Grietje, April 8, 1897). Catharina's parents had immigrated to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A., many years earlier, and her brother Dirk Visser had come back to Friesland with reports of the good conditions in Whitinsville, so that was their destination. Once there, Gaele found work in the Whitin Machine Works. The Bakker children went to school and, as they grew up, found work in the Machine Works or in the cotton mills. There was a Dutch Christian Reformed community in Whitinsville, and Jenny and Joseph married into Dutch families. While

Back: John, Raymond, Joseph, Magdalena. Front: Catharina, Katie, Gaele, Dick, Jenny, c. 1910.

in the States, the Bakkers changed their last name to the English "Baker". It seemed the Bakers were well settled in their adopted country.

Then the Bakers read an article in a Dutch newspaper, that told of good farmland available in Canada for free. The Bakers corresponded with the writer and were told jobs and houses would be waiting for them It looked promising, so they made the move to Edmonton. John decided to stay as did Jenny and her husband Joseph, his wife Aaltje Mast, their one-year-old son George, and the Mast family, as well as a number of single men, all travelled together. The group arrived in Edmonton on April 8, 1911. The Bakers were disappointed, things were not as they had expected. There were no jobs or houses awaiting them, in fact they spent their first nights at Immigration Hall. Some of the single men who had come could afford to go back to Whitinsville, and they did

Soon, however, the Bakers found work. Gaele got a job working on construction of the High Level Bridge He also found a place to live — a shack in the Parkdale area. Joseph and Aaltje lived in a tent nearby.

Magdalena, who was eighteen years old, often had stomach pains. But Gaele and Catharina did not go to a doctor unless absolutely necessary In Edmonton, when Magdalena had a recurrence of the trouble, they finally decided to take her to a doctor. He diagnosed an inflamed appendix. Magdalena was operated on immediately but her appendix had already ruptured, and she died September 4, 1912.

On July 19, 1912, Gaele and his son Raymond each filed on land northwest of Edmonton where the Masts and some other Dutchmen had taken out homesteads. Gaele filed on the NW 15-61-3-5 and Raymond filed on the quarter north of his father's Gaele and Raymond built a cabin on Gaele's quarter, and in February 1913 Gaele and Catharina moved to Neerlandia with Raymond and Katie. Dick had a good job in Edmonton and never did try homesteading.

Gaele and Raymond kept cattle on their homesteads from the first year they were there; the cows were kept in a fenced pasture The creek running through their land provided the necessary water for the livestock. Gaele made a watering trough by hewing out a balm log with an adze. Every day he would pull water up from the creek with a bucket and fill the trough One day Gaele came to the creek to find the trough had disappeared. After checking around, he found it in the creek, where it had been dragged by a beaver attempting to build a dam

Gaele, Raymond

Raymond worked to clear the land. He used oxen for breaking, but found them exasperatingly slow. He often said that he wished they would go on a runaway so the work would speed up. One summer day Raymond got his wish. while he was working with the breaking plow the oxen went through a hornet's nest They took off on the run, going right through the creek and up the opposite bank, making a furrow as they ran. In later years Raymond would relate this incident and laugh about it

The Bakers had dug a well near their log house, but the water was too hard to use for washing clothes, so it became Katie's job to carry water for the wash from the creek. While at the creek, she would often spend some time fishing for jackfish with a snare They were so plentiful that she easily caught a few and would then clean them and take them home for supper. One time she caught a fish that was much bigger than usual. Seeing that one snare was too weak, she quickly grabbed another snare and doubled it. Later she weighed the fish -- twenty-three pounds

Baker homestead.

The first two years that the Bakers lived in the settlement there was no organized church Gaele was the designated elder from the church in Edmonton and read the sermon each Sunday. The services were held in various homes, most of which had less-than-adequate roofs One Sunday the service was held at Douwe Terpsma's house. A box had been placed on a chair to serve as a pulpit, and Gaele stood behind it to lead the service. It was a rainy day and dirty water was coming through the sod roof Betje Terpsma held an umbrella over Gaele's head to keep the water from ruining the Bible or wetting the sermon book

In the States, the Bakers had owned an organ, and most of the children had learned to play Dick especially played the organ well and was later organist in the Edmonton church Once they were on the homestead, Gaele bought an expensive organ and had it brought from Edmonton. Both he and Catharina enjoyed listening to the organ and singing with the family. Katie would usually play while they sang.

Gaele proved up his quarter by 1916. On his application, he indicated that he had fourteen acres cleared and three brushed In 1914 he already had nine cattle and two horses on the homestead. He and Raymond had built a 25 by 30-foot log house, two log stables, a hen house and hog pens. Their well was dug forty-five feet deep and they had put up two-and-a-half miles of wire and pole fencing. Raymond received his patent in 1920. He then had eleven acres cleared on his homestead. On it he kept twenty-six cattle, two horses, and four hogs.

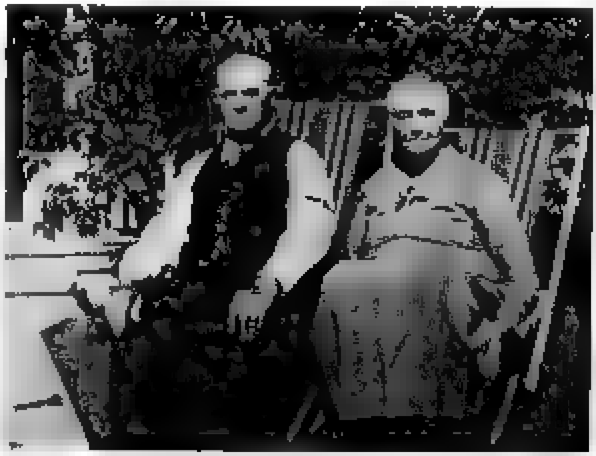
Gaele was fond of animals. When he sat down at home the family cat would drape itself across his back and the dog would sit on its haunches beside him. At mealtimes they would do the same, both waiting for a morsel of food. When Catharina was not looking, Gaele would quickly give them a piece of meat on his fork. One animal Gaele never did learn to handle, however, was the horse. He never rode one and the only horse he liked was a tame pony that his son Joseph gave him in 1921, which Gaele made use of by hitching to the stoneboat.

Gaele never lost his baking skills. His specialties were marzipan letters and shortbread. For special occasions, he would bake *gebakjes*. One such occasion was the wedding of his son Dick to Florence Terpsma in 1917. Generally though, Catharina did most of the daily baking. She always had white bread and cookies or cake in the house. This food was a real treat for her grandchildren, who did not get such food at home.

Ada Terpsma, Katie, Flora Baker, Catharina, Gaele with his dog, early 1920s.

Gaele and Catharina enjoyed working in the garden. They raised many vegetables and also kept a strawberry patch. In 1918, at the local fair in the church, Gaele exhibited ripe tomatoes — something many of the settlement children had never seen. Catharina canned most of the vegetables in jars which she had taken along from the States.

Katie married Henry Hiemstra in 1919. Raymond lived and farmed with his parents until 1934 when he married Della Anema. Around that time Gaele and Catharina had a small house built on Henry and Katie's farm and moved there. Raymond took over Gaele's quarter.



Gaele and Catharina, 1942

Catharina was blessed with simple faith and love for all. She was content wherever she was. Gaele was of a different temperament. In his old age he wanted to move again, this time to some distant place such as California where his daughter Jenny was living, but the Lord provided for him just the person to temper him. Catharina was as patient as he was impatient and as satisfied as he was of a roaming nature. Catharina died in February 1943 at the age of 79 and Gaele died May 26, 1945, at the age of 87.

Baker Family

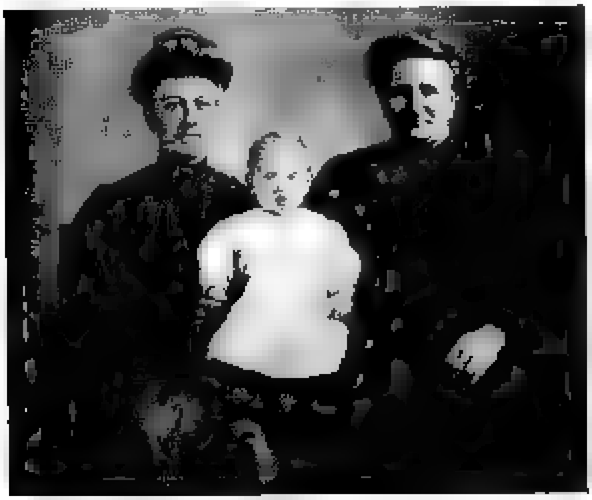
JOUKE AND AALTJE (MAST) BAKER

Jouke (Joseph) Baker, at the age of thirteen, immigrated to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, U.S.A., with his parents in 1899. While he lived there he went to trade school, and became a journeyman machinist at seventeen years of age. He married Aaltje (Alice) Mast on September 4, 1909.

Jouke worked on a repair gang, where the work was more interesting than some of the other factory jobs in Whitinsville. But Jouke was not completely satisfied, so he was drawn to an article he had read in a Dutch paper that told of farming opportunities around Edmonton. The Bakers corresponded with the writer, who sent an encouraging reply. He mentioned,

Jouke and Aaltje's wedding photo.

among other things, that even though the Dutch immigrants there had only been in Canada a few years, they already had water and light in their houses. It sounded attractive, and Jouke and Aaltje decided they would try homesteading. As requested, Jouke sent some money to provide for a search party to find suitable homesteads.



Aaltje, George, Minke Mast, 1910.

In April 1911 Jouke, Aaltje, and their one-year-old son, **George** (Gaele, April 8, 1910), moved to Edmonton. (With them travelled both Jouke and Aaltje's parents and their families.) Conditions in Edmonton, though, were not as they had anticipated. Jouke first lived in a tent close to his father's shack in Parkdale. In their tent they did have light and water but, as with the other Dutch immigrants, it was nothing more than the light coming through the window and the water standing in the barrel. Jouke's tent had boards on the floor and at the end of it he built a lean-to big enough for a double bed. Aaltje used the tiny woodstove inside for cooking as well as for heat. Jouke again took up his trade, working for Coutts Machine Shop and for Nickel Brothers. He often travelled far to different sawmills or other industrial shops doing repair work.

In front of Baker's shack in Edmonton. Minke with George, Alice with Minnie, c. 1912

A daughter, Minnie, was born to Jouke and Aaltje in July 1911. The following year an epidemic of summer complaint went through the Dutch community. Minnie became ill and died of the sickness on August 4, 1912. Aaltje received great comfort from her mother-in-law, Catharina, who lost a daughter shortly afterward. The two women would often sit outside in the warmth of the autumn sun holding hands and not saying a word. On November 4, 1912, a second daughter, also named **Minnie**, was born into the family.

Jouke had filed on a quarter in the Thorhild area on April 28, 1911. He abandoned that quarter and in 1912 filed on the SW 15-61-3-5 in Neerlandia. He hired Albert Mast to build a log house on it and clear three or four acres. Since coming to Edmonton, Jouke had worked hard, frequently nights as well as days, to make some money. Often the children only saw him on Sunday. Jouke was able to buy twenty-six lots in what is now the Forest Heights area of Edmonton. The prices for real estate had been going up but, after World War I began, the market slumped. Eventually the taxes on the lots were higher than the price Jouke could sell them for, so he let the city take them over.

In 1915 Jouke filed on the NE 20-61-3-5 in Neerlandia and let the other quarter go. He paid fifty dollars for the improvements on the new quarter. There was already a log house on it, so the Bakers moved their belongings in with the intent of homesteading in earnest. But this house with its contents burned down, so Jouke decided to stay in Edmonton to work and have Albert Mast build another house for him.

In 1917 Jouke and Aaltje were ready to move to the promised land. In preparation, a team of ponies, a light wagon with two-inch-rimmed wheels, and a harness had been bought, all for three hundred dollars. On the wagon they packed a pump organ, a cookstove, bedsteads, bedsprings, tools, clothing, groceries, and many smaller household items. The team was much too light for such a load, but Jouke had no idea what to look for in regards to horses. The trip took them five or six days. Aaltje drove the ponies because she was better with animals. Besides, Jouke had a weak shoulder and could not raise it up, making it difficult to guide the reins. It was the beginning of April and the frost was coming out of the ground. Jouke walked alongside the wagon and George and Minnie sometimes joined him. Many times, the ponies could not pull the wagon out of a mud hole. One of the ponies would lay down flat out of total exhaustion. Then Jouke would have to ask a nearby farmer to come with a team of horses to pull them out. When Jouke saw the team of big grey Percherons one farmer owned, he realized what kind of horses he ought to have purchased.

When they stopped at night the cook stove would be taken off the wagon, and Aaltje would cook a meal and also extra food for the day ahead. When they reached Neerlandia, they first stayed at Koop Mast's place. Koop lent them a team of oxen to move their goods to the homestead. The trail was tough, with sloughs and muskeg and mud holes. The oxen were powerful but slow, so Jouke told Aaltje to drive the oxen home herself and he would walk ahead to start a fire and make some tea. After some time he became concerned because the ox team had not arrived, so he went to investigate and found the oxen lying down in a mud hole resting and contentedly chewing their cud. After using a not-so-gentle persuader, they got home.

That same year, on September 25, 1917, Kay (Catharina) was born. Before her birth, Aaltje, when she knew it was time, walked from the homestead to her mother's place. Along the way, she stopped at Catharina Baker's for a rest. Aaltje's mother, being a midwife, helped deliver the baby.

At that time the price for grain was good, but Jouke had no open land so he had no grain to sell. Therefore, the first task was to get the land ready for cultivation. They also needed some livestock, which they soon obtained. Jouke and Aaljte cut hay from around the lakes and sloughs for winter feed. They encouraged each other so that the land of promise became the land of promises. In the summer they spent their time clearing and doing whatever else had to be done. In the winter Jouke went to Edmonton to work in the shop, leaving Aaltje and the children on the homestead to care for the livestock, which was not an easy task. For firewood George would chop down a tree and drag it to the house using a horse. After cutting it into six or eight-foot lengths, he took the wood into the kitchen. There Minnie would have to sit on one end of a log and Aaltje would hold the other end so it would not roll, while George sawed it using a one-man saw.

During the winter of 1918 Jouke worked in Edmonton again. Besides helping with chores, George and Minnie would bring butter and eggs to Kampnar's store and exchange them for groceries. That winter of 1918 was the winter of the flu epidemic. Because they feared contamination, the authorities allowed no one to mail letters, and the Post Office was closed. Aaltje did not hear from Jouke for many weeks. Reports were that in the city many had died from the flu, and Aaltje had no way of knowing if Jouke was alright. One day when George and Minnie came to the store with some butter, Bertha Kampnar told them that their father had phoned just five minutes earlier to say that he was doing well. George and Minnie hurried home to tell Aaltje. But instead of being ecstatically happy, as they expected, she burst into tears! Jouke never did come down with the flu, but when he returned in May the rest of the family caught a bout of it.

The following winter (1919) Jouke again worked at Nickel Brothers machine shop. On the homestead, there were six cows and six horses to care for. Each day it was George's task to take the animals to the muskeg one-half mile east to water them. Jouke had put up a considerable amount of lake hay for winter feed. He thought it was red top hay, but it was actually blue joint wild hay, which has no food value. Aaltje and George would pack the mangers tight with hay at chore time but by 9:30 p.m., when they checked the animals before going to bed, the mangers would be empty and have to be refilled. None of the livestock died that winter, but in the spring two cows died after calving.

Another son, **Charles** (Karel) was born March 30, 1920. That fall Jouke left to work in Edmonton for the fourth winter in a row. In 1921 Jouke moved the family back to Edmonton, where he was still working in the machine shop. While there he bought a good bungalow home and got clear title to it. On November 17, 1923, **Magdalena** was born, a wee twerp of three pounds. In 1924 *Beppe* Mast, who was suffering from cancer, came to live with the family until her passing away in 1925.

In the spring of 1926 Jouke moved the family back to Neerlandia, this time to stay. By 1928 they had about one hundred acres under cultivation, and Jouke's favourite expression became, "Wait until the second crop from one hundred acres, then we can do this or that". In the fall of 1929 he had a good crop. Wheat was one dollar a bushel, but by spring it was sixty cents and later that year it went down to sixteen cents a bushel.

As the Depression got worse, people found ingenious ways to make do. Jouke had a flock of sheep, and the German women from nearby districts took wool on a fifty-fifty basis. They carded and spun the dirty, oily wool, then paid for it by giving Jouke half the yarn. Well, after

Minnie plowing, 1929

Aaltje washed the first sweater she had knitted from this wool, it came down to the knees and past the fingertips — and the socks would have fit a kangaroo! The women soon learned from their mistake and washed the wool before selling it. To make clothing, Aaltje would get flour bags, then bleach and dye them to make shirts or other things for the family. For purple dye Aaltje used the juice of Saskatoon berries. If she needed red colouring, she used the reddish cluster from Strawberry Blite. She would save onion skins and boil them to produce a yellow-orange dye.

In 1931 or 1932 Aaltje became desperately sick with an acutely infected gall bladder and went to Edmonton to see a doctor. He told her there was nothing to do but go home and wait for the end. She went to another doctor, however, who consulted a specialist, and they decided to operate. After a lengthy convalescence, Aaltje recovered. The specialist's bill was twenty-five dollars and Jouke made an agreement with him to settle for two dressed lambs. The doctor took Jouke's house in Edmonton for payment.

As things got worse, everyone had to adjust. All produce was sold to get the money to buy the things that could not be grown such as tea, coffee, and sugar. At first Jouke smoked dried sweet clover but later, to keep peace in the family, he turned to leaf tobacco. Vegetables, potatoes, and tallow gravy were common fare

Most of the tallow had to be scraped out of the mouth afterwards. Without money one soon learned to barter. Jouke grew many vegetables, which he sold to the government relief camp on Siebren Tiemstra's place. Green peas were brought to Morneault's grocery store in Barrhead in trade for tobacco. (A sixty-pound bag of dried peas sold for about three dollars.) It was possible to trade a can of tobacco for lumber with the millworkers, who took their pay in lumber. George kept the family supplied with wild meat such as moose, deer, and prairie chicken

Aaltje was a brave woman who would take on anything in the way of first aid She would tend to some bad cuts and bruises and if someone had to go to the doctor she would first put splints or bandages on the injury If people were sick or epileptic, she would help them too. For many years she served as midwife and, according to her records, she attended 111 birthings. She was also a great help with the livestock.

Jouke's greatest asset was his ability to walk. When he worked in Edmonton he used to walk to Neerlandia to visit the family Later he served as councillor on the Municipal District of Shoal Creek and walked to the meetings, which were held in Shoal Creek. He would take a lantern to light the path, and the dog for company. Later he served in the consistory, store board, and school board. To those meetings or when going to church services, he always walked. He had a difficult time handling horses and never did ride one

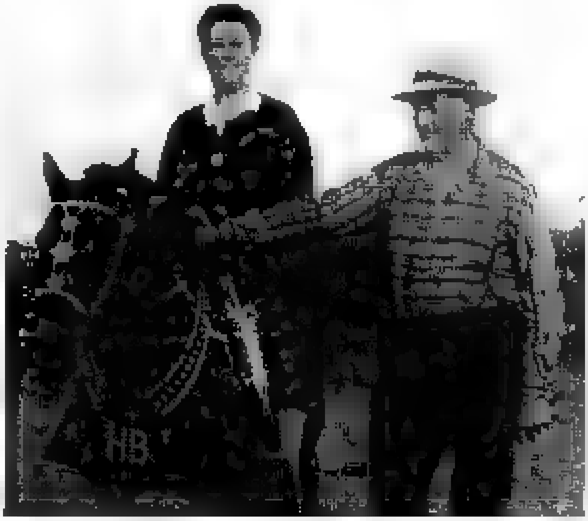
Things remained quite difficult through the 1930s, and no doubt Jouke and Aaltje sometimes wondered if this was the promised land. In 1939 war was declared, and that added to their anxiety for the sons that would be called up to serve in the armed forces. Things did get better financially They stayed on the farm until 1944, when they moved to the hamlet of Neerlandia

All the children had left home by that time George Baker married Georgine Steddick of Strome in 1945 Minnie had married Aebe Plantinga in 1932, and Charlie had married Betty de Jong in 1944

Kay, after completing grade ten, continued her education later at Alberta College, attending classes in bookkeeping and secretarial work. She first obtained a position with the Provincial Auditor's Department, then in the late forties became secretary-treasurer of the Barrhead School Division She married Earl Anderson of Barrhead in 1952. They had two daughters. Kay died in February 1965 of complications resulting from a congenital heart defect

Charlie, Kay, Minnie, Alice, Joseph, George, Lena, 1954.

Magdalena, after graduating, went to Normal School in Edmonton for one year. After teaching for three years in Neerlandia, she taught in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, and Kalamazoo, Michigan, then returned to Canada and taught in Edmonton. She retired in 1984, but is involved in various church activities



Alice, Joseph, 1959.

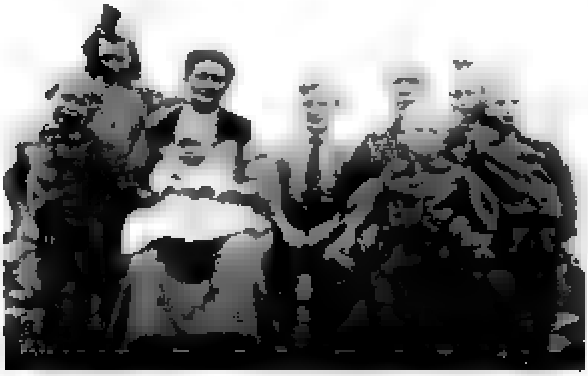
Jouke and Aaltje enjoyed a lengthy and, for the most part, healthy retirement. Aaltje died November 8, 1965, and Jouke died May 4, 1966, both at 79 years of age.

Charles Baker

FREDERICK AND MAGGIE (BODE) BARON

Fred (Foppe) Baron was born April 21, 1858, in de Wilp, Groningen, the Netherlands. He immigrated to the U.S.A. in later years and married Maggie Bode (June 3, 1875) on December 14, 1894. They first lived in South Holland, Illinois, but soon moved to Montana with their children **John** (Jan, September 12, 1896), **Lizzie** (Elizabeth, December 9, 1899), **Hendrik** (November 11, 1901), and **Rikkie** (December 17, 1903). After a year they moved to Edmonton (1906).

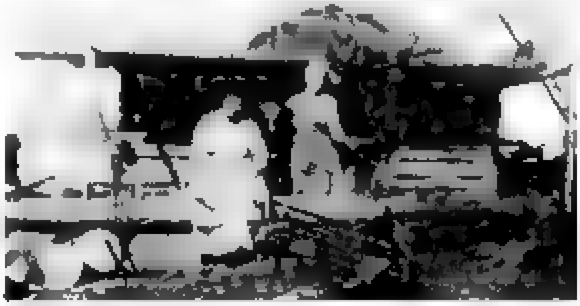
Fred first found work in the coal mines in Edmonton and later in a meat packing plant. The family lived in the Parkdale area of the city. Fred was instrumental in organizing the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton and was elected as one of the elders of the newly-formed congregation. That same day (October 21, 1910) the three Baron children who had been born in Edmonton were baptized. Elis **Geertje** (May 14, 1906), **Bill** (Wybe, October 1, 1908), and **Bennie** (Barend, December 30, 1909). Two years later another son, **James** (Jannes), was born (July 10, 1912).



Bennie, Rikkie, Maggie holding Lawrence, Henry, Fred with James, Gertie, Willie, 1914

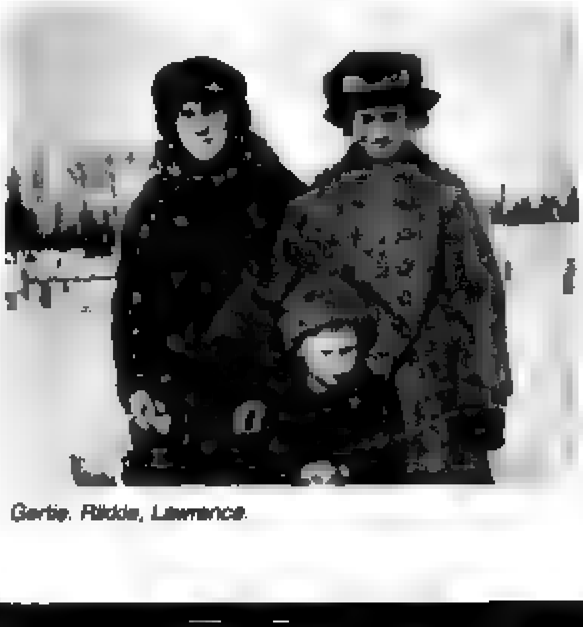
Fred had taken out the SE 15-62-3-5 as a homestead on December 20, 1911, but let that quarter go and filed on the SE 16-62-3-5 on April 25, 1913. He built a 22 by 30-foot log house in January 1914, but the family did not move there until March 1915. Another son, **Lawrence** (Floris), was born December 24, 1915.

John Baron took out the SW 16-61-3-5 in 1914. During World War I he served in the American army from March 1918 to August 1919. Although he lived with his father, he made improvements to his homestead — he built a log house and a stable, dug a well, and put up some fencing. He also kept livestock; by 1920 he had seventeen cattle and six horses. He only cleared five acres though, and never cropped any of the land.



On the homestead. Maggie and the children.

Fred Baron applied for the patent to his homestead in September 1920. According to the records he was cropping eight-and-a-half acres and had seven acres brushed. He owned sixteen cattle and three horses. Besides the house, he had built two log barns and put up a one-and-a-half mile fence made of poles.



Gertie, Rikkie, Lawrence.

While they lived in Neerlandia, Bill and Bennie ran a trapline for muskrats. Sometimes they also caught mink and weasels. One year they made $300.00 from the sale of the pelts. North of the Baron place there was a large section of muskeg. When the family walked to church their footwear would get soaked from the wet trails.

In the fall or winter in 1920 the Baron family moved to Minnesota, U.S.A. They had a time auction to sell everything on their place — even the lumber off the roof of the house. After six years the Barons moved to California. Maggie died August 1, 1927, and Fred died in June 1935.

Ben Baron
John Sankey

HARRY AND HATTIE (SWAFFIELD) BEAUMONT

Harry Beaumont had been born (c. 1888) in Yorkshire, England, and was a toolmaker by trade. He moved with his wife, Hattie, from Cleveland, Ohio, to Edmonton around 1913. On March 28, 1913, he filed on the NW 28-61-3-5. The same day, he filed by proxy on nearby quarters for his father, **Henry** (c. 1857), and brothers **John** (c. 1886), **Clarence** (c. 1890) and **Earle** (c. 1892), who all lived in Cleveland.

Harry and Hattie moved to the homestead in April and the others soon moved to Neerlandia as well. Earle and Clarence lived with their parents on their homestead until they returned to Cleveland about a year later. In early 1915, Earle also left for Cleveland, having cleared about six acres on his homestead. Clarence also left Neerlandia during those years.

John and his wife, Edna, came to the homestead with their two-year old child in August 1913. They moved to London, Ontario, in March 1915. John listed the following improvements on his declaration of abandonment: "1 House, 1 Barn, 1 Water closet, 1 cribbed well, 1 chicken house, 1 rabbit tight fence around kitchen garden ... ."

Harry and Hattie continued living on the homestead until 1917, when Harry obtained the patent to it. He had cleared eighteen acres and built a log and lumber house, two hen houses, and a log barn. He had dug a well and put up two miles of fence. Hattie was a delicate women and the homesteading life was too vigorous for her, so the Beaumonts moved to London, Ontario, with their son **Ralph**.

GEORGE AND CHRISTINA (MACKENZIE) CAUGHLIN

When George Caughlin came to the wild bush country of northern Alberta around 1911, there were already homesteaders living in Mellowdale but the rest of Township 61 was untouched by axe or grubhoe. George had been born in November 1880 in Lobo, Ontario, the third son in an Irish immigrant family of nine children. He had learned farming on the family farm and was also trained in carpentry, as his father had insisted that all his sons should know how to build a house. George loved the wilds and had spent much time hunting as he was growing up.

George came to northern Alberta with a friend, George Wing, who was also skilled in trapping and hunting. They both filed for homesteads on May 13, 1911, George Caughlin on the SW 26-61-3-5, and Wing on the quarter next to his. That fall they each built a log house on the north corners of their homesteads so the cabins would be close together. George's maternal uncle, Tom Lewis, later took up the quarter just north of Wing's, and his log house was built on the southeast corner, so all three houses were on adjoining corners.

The three bachelors often went trapping and hunting in the area. George built a narrow sleigh that could be pulled by one horse and used to take the freshly-killed game out of the bush. When the Dutch people came to the area, George helped many of them become skilled in hunting and trapping in the woods. Except for a few of the men, most of the Dutch people could not speak English.

Every spring and summer, George worked on the land, breaking and clearing. During the winter, he often left to work elsewhere. For two winters, he worked in Vancouver as a carpenter at Caughlin Shipyards, which was owned by relatives of his.

George did not mind baching at all, he could cook and bake bread as well as any woman. One of George's brothers lived in Vancouver and in 1913 George went there to stand as best man for him. One of the bridesmaids at the wedding, Tina (Christina) MacKenzie, got George to thinking of marriage as well. After a courtship of two years, they were married December 16, 1915, in Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary. They went East after the wedding to

Tina, George, 1915.

introduce Tina to George's family and spent their honeymoon at Niagara Falls.

Tina had been born May 22, 1880, in Tighna-mara, Ross-shire, Scotland. She was a nurse, and had also trained in Belgium as a chef. Since there was not much employment in England, she had come to Canada. After nursing in Hamilton, Ontario, she had gone to Vancouver, where one of her brothers lived.

When George and Tina came to the homestead, they lived first in the small sod log house, although George had begun building a new one. The new house was 16 by 22-feet, two storeys high, and had a shingled roof.

Tina had never lived on a farm before, so homesteading was quite an experience for her. George, by this time, had one riding horse as well as two work horses. Tina, however, did not know a thing about horses and never did learn to ride one. Later George began breeding horses, something his father and grandfather had also done. Once, after he had sold a few horses, he bought Tina a pretty little gold brooch with part of the proceeds.

George was tall and slim, smoothly-shaven, and had light brown hair. He was a great reader and took many courses to further his knowledge. One of his hobbies was photography, he developed the photos himself in enamel developing trays. George was also good at playing the Jew's harp.

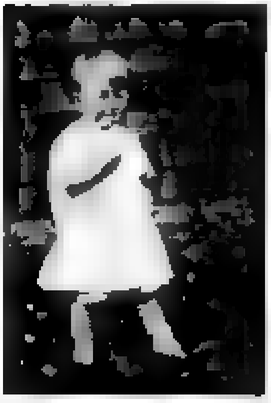
Tina was much shorter than George. She had heavy red hair that was long enough for her to sit on. She always parted her hair in the centre, either putting it up in a bun or plaiting it into two thick braids and wrapping them around her head twice, securing them with bone hairpins. Tina was a warm, happy, outgoing woman, always calm. She loved to bake, and would often bring baked goods to George Wing or Uncle Tom Lewis, who had moved to Mellowdale by that time. Though she was an accomplished chef, George had to teach her how to make bread. Tina had taken a portable Singer along to the homestead. George built a stand with drawers for it and also converted it so it could be used with a treadle instead of a hand-crank.

In the winter of 1916, George went to work in a box factory in Edmonton. Since George never left Tina alone on the homestead when he was working out, she went along. That winter on December 10, a daughter **Isabelle** Christina Sarah Ann, was born to them in the Royal Alexandra Hospital.

The following spring, after they returned to the homestead, George applied for the patent to his land. Besides their house, he had built a log stable and chicken coop, was cropping fifteen acres of land and had five more broken, and had also put up a 180-rod rail fence. After inspection, the patent was granted.

Each year, Tina put in a garden to provide vegetables for the family. She loved the wild strawberries that could be found in the woods nearby and often went blueberry picking. The family always had plenty of wild meat to eat, and one year they butchered a steer. The only time Tina ever complained about life on the homestead was after one incident when George and Wing had gone away for the day. Tina was home with Isabelle when a grass fire came right to the edge of the buildings before burning itself out, a terrifying experience for Tina.

Isabelle was George and Tina's joy, even though Tina was kept busy watching that Isabelle did not get into trouble. Tina had to lock the drawers on the sewing cabinet so Isabelle could not get into them. Isabelle loved to pester their big dog Blue, who on one occasion picked her up by the hair and brought her to Tina, dumping her at Tina's feet. During the summer of 1919 there was an epidemic of whooping cough, and Tina caught it. The doctor thought Isabelle had it too, since she would whoop right after Tina did. However, Isabelle would also laugh immediately afterward — she had found out that she could imitate her mother!



Isabelle, 1918.

In the winter of 1917 George and Tina, with Isabelle, went to Vancouver since George had work there. The following winter the Caughlin family went on a cruise to Hawaii as guests of the captain, who knew Tina's brother. Albert Christ, a bachelor from Mellowdale, usually took care of the horses when George was gone. In 1919, when the Caughlins returned to the homestead, they found their house had been broken into. Most of Tina's good silver, a wedding gift from the family, was gone as well as her good set of china. Her sewing machine was taken, the drawers on the stand had been broken open, and some pieces of fabric that she had intended to sew up were stolen as well. The mattress on the bed had been cut open as had a dark velvet pincushion on which Tina had done some cross-stitching.

George Wing would often stop by the Caughlin house late in the day and, after some casual conversation, would reach into a back pocket and pull out a piece of liver or some other choice part of an animal he had killed. The Caughlins visited often with Uncle Tom Lewis and George's maternal aunt Belle, and her husband, Wellington Trigger, who lived in Mellowdale as well.

One hot Sunday morning, September 5, 1920, George hitched up the wagon and he, Tina, and Isabelle left for Uncle Tom's, who had invited them to come over that day. They arrived at Tom's place before noon and Tina offered to cook dinner. Tom had a forty-five-foot dry well in his yard where he kept meat and dairy products, so George and Tina walked there with him since he wanted to get some meat up to use for dinner. Tom had rigged up a windlass on the well and was pulling up the meat that was in a bucket at the end of some cord when the cord broke. Tom went down a ladder which was on one side of the well but, unknown to Tina and George, fell when one of the rungs near the bottom broke. When Tom did not come up, George went down to get him. Meanwhile Tina went to the house, but soon returned. When George did not answer her call, she decided to go for help. She first ran across the road to the Davis homestead, where there was a store and a phone. No one was home so Tina went half-running, half walking, dragging Isabelle along with her, to several other places. But no one was home until she came to Albert Christ's house. He was baking bread loaves but since they were nearly done, he took them out of the oven and then left on the run for the Lewis homestead. Tina continued on and asked twelve-year old Herbert Klabunde to go for help also. He notified Jimmy Fowler, George Heileman, and George Kemp, who all arrived at the homestead at about three o'clock. Albert Christ had gone into the well, but had not come up either. Jimmy lowered a lantern into the well, but it went out at about fifteen feet, indicating that there was gas in the well. The men tied up a bundle of hay and burned it with a rope in the well to remove the gas. Then Jimmy went down and found the three men dead. They had all died from inhaling the gas in the well, a gas the old-timers called "black damp". The bodies were brought up using the windlass and a few days later all three were buried in the same grave in the Mellowdale cemetery. George had been thirty-nine years old.

Tina and Isabelle left Neerlandia soon after. They moved to Vancouver, where two of Tina's

brothers and some of George's relatives were living. There she worked as a nurse-housekeeper. Later she owned a rooming house there. Tina first leased their land in Neerlandia to Tom Wilson and Albert Scott, then sold it to Douwe Terpsma in 1926. Tina died in 1963, at 87 years of age. Isabelle wrote, "My father never did get to complete all his plans for the farm, but from my mother and from his Aunt Belle Trigger, I know he was happy there. Had he lived I, too, might still be living in Neerlandia."

Isabelle Spouse

WILLEM AND HENDRIKA (BLOM) DE GROOT

Willem de Groot was born December 1, 1851, in Oldebroek, Gelderland, the Netherlands. He was a widower with six children when he married Hendrika Blom on April 25, 1890. Hendrika had been born February 26, 1849, in Apeldoorn. Her first husband, Jan Wonink, had died of tuberculosis. They had a family of three or more children. A daughter, **Manna** (Gerritdina Hermanna) was born to Willem and Hendrika on December 3, 1892.

In 1912 Willem, Hendrika, and Manna immigrated to Canada aboard the *Corsican*. Two of Hendrika's children (daughters) had died of tuberculosis, but another daughter, **Wip** (Willemina), came with them as well as some of Manna's cousins (de Groots). They travelled third class, but Manna would go on the first class deck and mingle with the people. She could get away with it because of her beauty and nerve.

The de Groots went to Edmonton where Wip's sweetheart, Jacob Visser, was living. She and Jacob were married that same year. The de Groots lived in Fraser Flats while in Edmonton. Hendrika was an aunt to Aaltje Olthuis, who also lived there.

In 1914 Willem took up the NW 27-61-3-5 as a homestead. He built a 16 by 24-foot log house on it and he and Hendrika moved there in the fall. Manna stayed in Edmonton to work and married Willem van Ark. They moved to Neerlandia in 1916.

The land on the homestead had to be cleared, and Willem often had Hendrika help him. At times she would have to pull on the rope winch while Willem chopped at a stump to get it out. They did clear enough acres that by 1921 Willem was able to obtain the patent to his land. Over seven acres were being cropped and Willem owned nine cattle, two horses, five sheep, and two hogs. He had built an addition onto the log house, a hen house, and three-and-a-half miles of pole fencing. A sixteen-foot cribbed well had also been dug.

Bill van Ark, Hendrika holding Gertrude Visser, Wip Visser, Willem, Jacob Visser.

Soon after receiving the title to his land, Willem sold it to Klaas Tuininga, who wanted to move closer to school. Willem moved onto Emmerzael's quarter and built a house near the southeast corner.

Willem was from the *Gereformeerde Kerk* and held the views of those of the *Doleantie*. He often visited Klaas Tuininga, who was like-minded. The Tuininga children brought milk to the de Groots and when they came, Willem would give each of the children — Annie or Simon — a lump of brown sugar as a treat.

Willem never learned to speak English. He knew how to say 'hello' and 'good-bye', but got the two words mixed-up and said them at the wrong times. He became upset when he saw one of the schoolteachers, Jean Carlyle, who was boarding with the Tuiningas, crocheting on Sunday but, not knowing any English, he could not tell her so.

Hendrika died in 1923 or 1924. Some years later, Willem left Neerlandia. He moved back to the Netherlands where his daughter Manna had moved with her family.

RIENTS DE JAGER

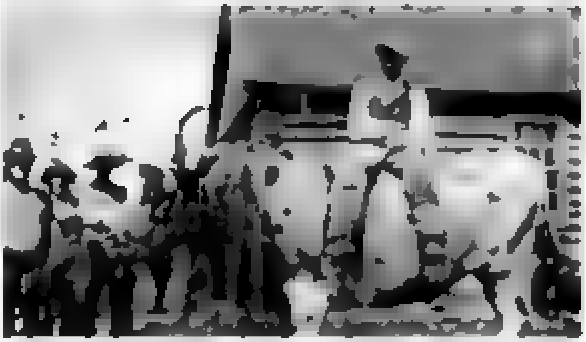
Rients de Jager, a single man, was among the first group of Dutchmen that took up homesteads in Township 61 and 62 on December 18,

1911. He had been born December 30, 1880, in Spannum, Friesland, the Netherlands, and baptized in the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*. He was working in South Holland when he decided to emigrate, coming to Edmonton. There he found a job at Swift's Packing Plant where other Dutchmen were also working.

Rienk, as everyone called him, filed on the SW 34-61-3-5. He built a log house there in early 1912, but did not take up residence until March 1913. With the help of the two oxen he had brought along, Rienk began to prove up the land. He broke three acres that first year and put two of them in crop. Rienk, like many of the other early settlers here, was not experienced in all aspects of farming. When he first seeded grain, he moved from spot to spot on the clearing, standing in one place and spreading it as if he were feeding chickens. The grain grew up much too thick. Eventually he learned the correct way — a brisk walk across the field with the grain thrown up high into the air. After he had harvested his few acres of crop that first fall, Rienk went to work in the harvest in Saskatchewan, but returned in the new year.

Rienk made enough improvements to his land that by 1917 he could receive the patent to it. By then he had built a 14 by 18-foot stable, a 12 by 16-foot shack, a chicken house, and a hog pen. He had dug a 19-foot well and put up two miles of wire fence. Sixteen acres of the bush had been broken but he was cropping only ten. Rienk also owned five cattle by that time.

Rienk's favourite animal was his part-Ayrshire ox. It was one of the nicest oxen in the settlement, a beautiful animal with a big pair of curved horns. That ox, with its partner, formed a team that was known among the settlers for its laziness. The following story was often told about them. After the church was built the men of the community spent the first of July clearing land on the churchyard. One time Rienk and his oxen were given the job of pulling out the stumps on the clearing. The oxen pulled and strained, but it was to no avail. Then two younger men devised a test: unknown to Rienk, they hitched the oxen up to a stump that was loose. Again the oxen leaned forward, appearing to exert all their strength, but they could not move the stump. Finally the men, in great amusement, walked up to the stump and pushed it over by themselves.



Rienk sitting on his favourite ox during a break while clearing the church grounds, 1918. John Anema, Klaas Tuininga Jr. Peter Kampner Jr. beside the ox, Siebren Tiemstra behind its tail

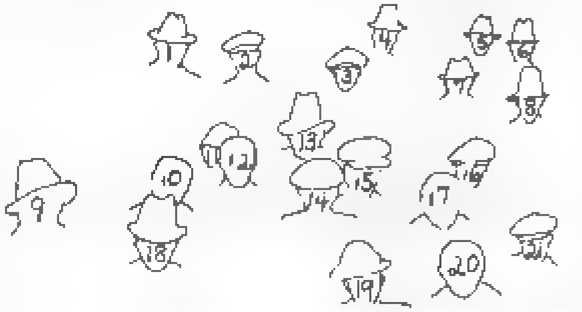
Many Neerlandia people were sick with the flu during the 1918 epidemic. Rienk was one of the few people who did not come down with it. He did chores for many others who were sick. During the next winter a Vega bachelor, James Kaloran, died and was buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. After watching the burial, at which only three men were present, Rienk commented, "So now I see how they bury a bachelor."

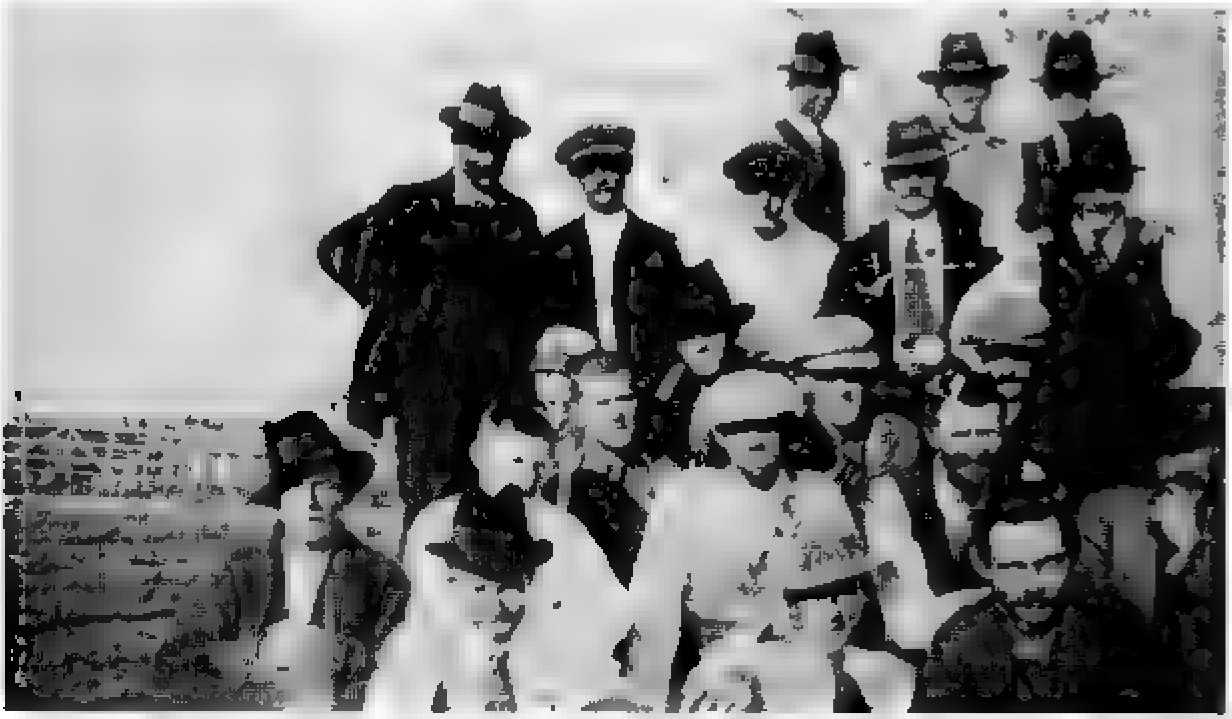
In the early twenties, when many Neerlandia farmers began using horses instead of oxen, Rienk bought a pair of mares. Then with the help of some neighbours, he butchered his favourite ox. Later Rienk went to help a neighbour butcher his milk cow. He took along his 12 gauge shotgun but when he came, the neighbour wanted to get one last milking from the cow. Rienk waited while it was being milked, then finally asked "*Ben' je klaar*? (Are you finished?)" When the answer "yes" came from under the cow, Rienk immediately took aim and shot. Down fell the cow, right beside its owner, who in alarm said, "*Man, je kun mij ook geschieten hebben*! (You could have shot me too!)"

Rienk was dark-skinned, had dark hair, and wore a mustache. He always limped, the result of an open sore on his thigh caused by tuberculosis. He kept the spot bandaged and had to change the dressing a couple times a day. Rienk was a meticulous person. He kept himself neatly dressed, and his house was always clean and tidy.

The house was a cozy place with a wood-burning cook stove and a heater in the big living area, pictures on the walls, and curtains in front of the windows. The kitchen table was covered with an oilcloth that had a design of berries on it. Rienk would often say to a young visitor, "You're probably wishing that was real fruit on the table, heh?" Besides the living area, there was a small bedroom downstairs and an extra bed up in the loft. Rienk did all the household chores himself. He churned butter; baked bread, cookies, and cakes, and kept a garden in summer to provide vegetables for himself. For fresh meat, he sometimes went hunting near the slough on the south of his quarter. There he would wait behind nearby trees to see if he could shoot a meal of wild duck. Rienk also washed his own clothes, although he brought his Sunday shirt to Petertje Schoonekamp. He mended his clothes over and over until there was patch upon patch.

Rienk was a quiet, reserved fellow, yet sociable. He often visited his neighbours, the Schoonekamps, for morning coffee. Whenever one of the Schoonekamp children had a birthday, he brought a gift — sometimes a homemade one. One day he brought Rulie a chest of drawers: four matchboxes glued together, covered with wallpaper, and buttons on them for drawer pulls. Rienk also visited the Joe Baker family. During the winters that Joe worked in Edmonton, Rienk would sometimes help George and Minnie Baker with the chores, such as chopping down trees for firewood. When the Klaas Tuiningas moved to the quarter south of Rienk's in the late twenties, Rienk enjoyed going there and speaking *Fries* (Rienk never did learn to speak much English). Of the Tuininga children, Annie was his favourite. Annie





Some men of the community posing for a photo on the First of July, c. 1922. 1. Rienk de Jager. 2. Klaas Krikke, 3. Pete Tuininga. 4. Joe Holwerda, 5. C. K. Mast, 6. John Oldegbers. 7. Popko Schuring, 8. Dave Tuininga, 9. Douwe Terpsma, 10. Hendrik Schoonekamp, 11. Ryer Krikke, 12. Pete Louws, 13. John Louws. 14. Jan Anema, 15. Toney Sturwold, 16. Jacob Olthuis, 17. Case Ingwersen, 18. Albert Ritsema, 19. Willem van Ark, 20. Ben Lievers. 21. Henry Kippers.

loved cornflakes, but her family could not afford to buy them. For her fifteenth birthday, though, Rienk brought her three skeins of embroidery cotton and a box of cornflakes.

Through socializing with friends and attendance at church, Rienk kept close tabs on the current affairs in the community: which men were back from the harvest, which woman was expecting a child, and who had purchased something new. Rienk also faithfully read the Dutch papers that he received, thus keeping himself current on other matters as well.

Being a thrifty person, Rienk watched his money carefully. He tried to save a bit of money from his weekly cream cheque, and once it was put away he would wait until the next cream cheque before he gave out any cash. One time after asking a young woman to wash the curtains in his house, he paid her with some sugar sacks (which were used to make embroidered dresser runners). When he paid someone wages, he was concerned that the recipient spend the money wisely. It seems that one time, after writing a letter to his sister in Friesland, he put the letter in an envelope addressed to the bank and money in the envelope addressed to his sister. Discovering the mix-up too late, Rienk was upset. Others, however, said it must have been the Lord's will, since his sister needed the money.

There were not many eligible single women in the settlement and Rienk would sometimes jokingly say, "If I could only order one of those women in the Eaton's catalogue . . . " Being alone on the homestead, it was difficult to remember which day of the week it was. To keep track, he would put a check mark on the calendar each day. One Sunday morning Klaas Tuininga stopped at Rienk's before church and, to his surprise, found him patching his overalls and heating his Saturday meal of *erwtensoep* on the stove. Gaele Baker sometimes stayed at Rienk's for Sunday dinner, since Gaele always walked to church services and Rienk suggested he stay there between services instead. After one morning service Gaele found Rienk busy kneading bread dough. Gaele asked, "Are you doing your work on Sunday?" In spite of it being Sunday, the bread was most likely baked anyhow.

When the threshing crew came to Rienk's, though, he did not do the cooking and baking, but sent for Petertje Schoonekamp and her daughters to do it instead.

In 1927 Rienk made a trip to Friesland to visit his sister. When he returned he brought gifts for his friends, including a rubber ball for baby Stewart Plantinga. About two years later a son of Rienk's sisters, **Ima Jongema**, wanting to see something of the world, came to visit Rienk. Ima was still a young fellow, and Rienk promised him that if he would stay and farm with him, he could eventually take over the farm. But Ima stayed only about two years, and then went back to the Netherlands. He did not like this country — there were too many trees to suit him and, if it was part of the world, it was certainly the backward end of it!

The sore on his leg continually bothered Rienk. He never rode his horses, and when he was on the wagon or cutter, he went on his knees to ride instead of sitting. In the early thirties he hired one of Albert Mast's boys, Carl, to help him during the spring and summer. Carl helped him put in the crops and did the tasks that were more difficult for Rienk, such as walking behind the harrows.

The ill effects of the tuberculosis increased as Rienk got older. In April 1927 he jarred his leg after stepping over a fence onto ice, causing him to be laid up for three weeks. Rienk asked Arie Emmerzael to do the chores and his daughter Annie to help with the housework. Still keeping a watchful eye, Rienk had Annie wash the cream separator outside so the kitchen floor would not get wet. Rienk, now fifty-six years old, was more reticent when women were around, but later that year, on his birthday, when Annie came to haul water from his well, he told her to go inside the house. He had some hot chocolate and a piece of cake for Annie.

In January 1938 Annie again came to help because Rienk was ill. But within a few days he went to the hospital in Barrhead and was transferred later to an Edmonton hospital. He died there on September 4, 1938, and was buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. There was quite a crowd of people at the funeral service. C. K. Mast, Jan Koning, and Klaas Tuininga were executors of the estate. Joe Baker bought the farm and everything else was auctioned off. The money was supposed to be sent to Rienk's relatives in the Netherlands, but the war had begun in Europe by then and the Canadian

Government would not send money overseas, so it seems the money never was sent

ARIE AND MARTHA (VAN DALEN) EMMERZAEL

Arie Emmerzael came to Edmonton in May 1911 as a single man. He had been born October 5, 1878, in Vierpolders, South Holland, the Netherlands. Before coming to Canada, he had worked in a laundry. At the time he decided to immigrate, he was working in Germany and some German acquaintances made the trip to Edmonton with him.

On February 6, 1913, Arie paid the ten-dollar fee and filed on the NE 28-61-3-5. He was among the first Dutch settlers in the area later known as Neerlandia. He had a 16 by 18-foot log house built for himself and worked to prove up the homestead. Every fall, he left to go out working in Edmonton or southern Alberta, usually returning in the early spring of the new year.

After Arie had been in Neerlandia for some time, he met Martha van Dalen. They were married January 20, 1918, in the log church in Neerlandia with Rev. Jongbloed of Edmonton officiating. Children were soon born into the family: **Annie** (Aartje, January 13, 1919), **Peter** (Pieter, February 19, 1920), and **Helen** (Hilligiena, October 16, 1921). All were born with the help of midwife Johanna Oldegbers.

Martha, Annie, Arie holding Helen, Peter, 1923

Arie received the patent for his homestead in 1922. According to the records, he was cropping twelve acres and had five head of cattle. Besides a log house, he had a log stable, a hen house, and one-and-a-half miles of rail fencing. It was noted that the twelve-foot cribbed well was in quicksand. All these improvements were valued at $700.00. Earlier, in 1917, Arie had given two acres of his quarter to the Shoal Creek School District. The acreage for the school site was "32 rods long, 10 rods wide — 1029 feet South of the NE corner."

Martha's sister, Jennie Schuring, had been caring for their aging parents, the van Dalens. But in 1923, when the Schurings moved to the U.S.A., Arie and Martha moved into the Schuring house so that they could take care of her parents. In those years Arie farmed both the Schuring quarter and his own, as well as often working on the prairies in the fall.

While they lived on the Schuring place, two more children were born to Arie and Martha: **Leonard** (Leendert) on February 3, 1925, and **William** on December 23, 1926. Both those times, Petertje Schoonekamp came to help with the births. The year after William was born, Arie again went to Nobleford to work. While Arie was gone, William took sick one Sunday. Martha immediately sent a message to Arie, but William died on Wednesday (October 19, 1927) before Arie returned home. Arie did not come home until Friday evening, so the burial was on Saturday. Menne Nanninga made the coffin.

Another incident almost led them to believe they had lost another son. Arie would let his cattle out to graze during the day. They would wander out to the east and usually came home at night on their own. One Friday night, however, in 1928 or 1929, the cattle did not come home. The next morning Martha sent Pete to look for them. Pete took along their dog Bobby, and headed east. It was an overcast day and, though he eventually found the cattle, Pete became hopelessly lost. The cows refused to go in the direction he herded them, so he finally decided to leave them and go home to get his dad's help. Meanwhile Arie and Martha were getting worried and, towards evening when Pete still had not come home, they began looking for him. Martha went as far as Wiscarson's, but was unable to find a trace of Pete or the dog. She feared that Pete might have drowned in a slough. They hunted until midnight, and the next morning John Kippers went on horseback to the Co-op store to call the RCMP to come out with a tracking dog. John also alerted the people at church, where the service was to begin shortly. The men decided to search in groups and, if Pete was found, to fire gunshots.

The evening before, Pete had wandered north, and he and the dog had spent the night beside a fire on a spot where some men had been clearing land. He woke up early the next morning and, after some more walking, found a farmstead (SW 26-62-3-5). It was about six o'clock and the farmer, Gregor Popatnig, was in bed. Gregor brought Pete to Julius Boman whom he thought might know where the Emmerzaels or their neighbours, the Kippers family, lived. Julius did not know either, but he did know where Toney Sturwold lived. Pete knew how to get home from Sturwold's place. From there, he walked across the quarter to his folk's place. The group of men from the church had just arrived when he walked onto the yard. Bertus Bos was the first to see Pete and he fired off the shots, ending the search.

Opoe van Dalen died in early 1929. Later that same year the Schurings sold their land. Arie's log house had burned, due to a change of wind direction while Arie was burning a straw pile, so the Emmerzaels and *Opa* van Dalen moved into van Ark's empty log house just north of Arie's quarter. Arie continued to crop on his own quarter while on van Ark's quarter he kept livestock — cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys.

Arie also owned a cayuse named Dolly; she had reddish-brown colouring and a black mane and tail. She was a gentle horse, although at times she could be quite stubborn. She was often used to bring the cows away to pasture on the quarter west of van Ark's. One day when Arie had Dolly hitched up in front of the potato cultivator for some work in the garden, she refused to move an inch. In frustration Arie finally hit her with a switch, but he happened to hit her in the wrong place: right behind her ears. She fell over unconscious, but having given Arie a proper scare, she came to after awhile.

Among the turkeys running loose on the yard was one aggressive gobbler. The teacher, Mr. Dickson, who lived in the teacherage on the southeast corner of van Ark's quarter, had to pass the Emmerzael place on his way to and from school. The mean gobbler had an aversion to the red socks Mr. Dickson wore, and whenever the gobbler spotted them he would give chase and send the teacher on the run. Rev. Van Der Woude would come to visit *Opa* van Dalen wearing, as usual, his black felt hat. The gobbler did not like that hat either, and often the Reverend would come running into the house and say to Martha, *"Missus, war heb je de broom?"* (Mrs., where do you have the broom?) He would then rush out with the broom and chase the gobbler away.

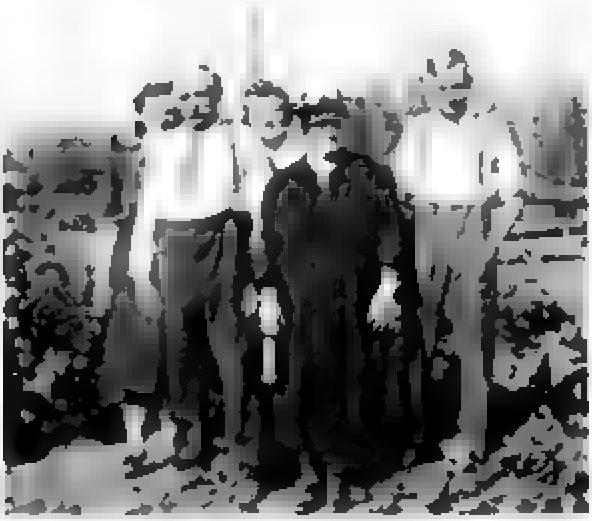
Peter, Opa, Leonard, 1931

Arie was a shy man. As he got older, he grew quite stout. Martha had always been stout. She loved to read, and borrowed Dutch and English books from Froukje Anema, who received boxes of books from her relatives, the Eerdmans. Martha also enjoyed knitting, and at night would often sit by the lamp, knitting and reading at the same time. She could sing well and taught the children many Dutch songs, as well as English ones such as "Old Black Joe" and "Tipperary."

As they grew older, the children did their share of the work — getting the cows, doing the milking, gathering eggs, and, in winter, sawing firewood for the stove.

Opa van Dalen died in 1932. During the hard times of the Depression Arie lost his quarter. He began selling Dr. Bell's products around

1934. Dr. Bell's products included spices, flavourings, feed additives, medicines for man and beast, and many salves and ointments. One of the medicines was Dr. Bell's Medical Wonder, an animal cure which sold for one dollar a bottle It was a black liquid, good for colic in horses. The directions were to put it on the tongue — thirty drops for horses, five for dogs, and two for cats. One woman told Arie that she had even used it for herself! A medicine for humans was Anti-Pain Drops, also a black liquid, that had to be put in hot water and mixed with sugar. It was taken internally for stomach ailments or rubbed on externally for rheumatism. Arie bought a covered laundry wagon to use for selling the goods in summer, and in winter used a cutter He went as far as Vega, Mellowdale and Pibroch, sometimes being gone for two weeks at a time. He would stay overnight at the homes of various customers. Later, Arie sold Christian literature from Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses. Psalters, commentaries, daily Bible calendars, and cards. He travelled with these through the Vega and Neerlandia area


Back: Annie, Helen, Leonard. Front: Arie, Martha, 1942

During the war years, the Emmerzael family experienced many changes. Pete was drafted into the army in 1941, Helen married Clarence Wierenga in 1942, and a year later Annie married Lucas Sturwold. After a short illness, Leonard died of cancer on January 5, 1944, at nineteen years of age After the war, in 1947, Pete married Eva Gerritsen, whom he had met overseas

The Emmerzaels continued living in van Ark's log house, but in 1943, Arie bought the NE 31-61-3-5 from Adriaan Dieleman, and he and Martha moved there Martha passed away December 31, 1950, at the age of 67 After her death, Arie bought Albert Reinsma's house. He moved it onto Pete and Eva's yard, and lived there until he passed away November 8, 1954.

Annie Sturwold

JOHN AND REKA (WICHERS) GELDERMAN

John (Jan) Willem Gelderman was born August 1, 1892, in Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands As he grew older, he helped his father in the family bakery Since there did not appear to be much of a future in the Netherlands for him or his parents, it was decided John would go to Canada and look for work The plan was that he would then return to the Netherlands and prepare for a possible move to Canada with the rest of the family As it was, he remained in Canada for lack of money and never saw his parents again

It was 1911 when John and his cousin Jacob Visser immigrated to Canada. John was only 19, so Jacob was to keep a brotherly eye on him. They went to Edmonton where John's sister's fiancé, John Boer, and his brother, Jacob Boer, were already living There John Gelderman had various jobs, including ones at the Hotel Macdonald and on the High Level Bridge

In September 1911, John and the other three young men each took out a homestead in the Darwell-Gainsford area. There John did logging. During one winter he did not receive any pay, only his room and board. His homestead there was cancelled in 1913, but by that time he and his three companions had already returned to Edmonton. The following year, John and his cousin Jacob took out homesteads in Neerlandia. John filed on the NW 36-61-3-5 in September 1914. A month later he abandoned it, stating that it had too much muskeg

The second homestead John took up in Neerlandia was the NE 35-61-3-5 on December 2, 1914. This one John began proving up, soon building a log house on it But in 1916 he left for Granum where he and Bill Oldegbers worked as farmhands for William Williamson. That fall, John met Reka (Hendrika) Hermina Wichers, and later began courting her. Reka (born March 20, 1896) and her family had just immigrated from Nijverdal, Overijssel. She was the oldest of eight children. The Wichers had been advised by relatives in the Granum area to come to the good country of Canada. After they came Reka found work at her cousin's, William Williamson, doing housework. Later Reka worked for other families and John found work with an English couple who had no children. For the three years John worked for them he lived in with them and was treated as their son. While there he learned to speak English well.

John Gelderman, John Ebbers, Bill Oldegbers.

In September 1919 John returned to Neerlandia to work on the homestead. He bought five cattle and two horses and began clearing land. He also fixed up the log house, putting in cupboards and making a table and a set of chairs. On July 1, 1920, John and Reka were married in Edmonton, since there was no minister in Neerlandia or Granum. Reka travelled from Nobleford by train while John went to Westlock by horse and wagon (which he left with a farmer) and then on to Edmonton by train. The wedding took place in the home of the minister, Rev. H. J. Ruys, and those present were John's brother Jacob, his sister Hendrika Boer, and her husband John. The reception was lunch at the Boers' home with some friends. After spending a few days in Edmonton, John and Reka left on their honeymoon to Neerlandia. Travelling with them was George Toebes, who was curious to see Neerlandia, Bill Oldegbers, who had a homestead in Neerlandia; and Hendrik de Groot, who wanted to visit his brother, Willem. In the morning they all caught the train to Westlock and from there they continued by horse and wagon. John and Reka camped overnight in the bush with the three men and a host of mosquitoes for company. They arrived in Neerlandia the following morning.

Some days later a reception was held for the newlyweds. Everyone in the settlement came. Among the gifts John and Reka received were a bread pan and a hen with chicks. These gifts came from people who had not much more to give than their help and kindness. The Young People's Society gave them a gas lamp.

The year after he was married, John received the patent to his homestead. According

Reka, John, 1920

to the records, by 1921 he had broken fifteen acres of land, was cropping nine acres, and had cleared twenty acres of meadow. The herd of cattle had increased to ten but his horse herd had decreased from three to two. Other improvements listed were a 22 by 24-foot log and lumber house, a 20 by 30-foot log barn, an 18-foot well, and 1¼ miles of fencing.

In the early years of farming, life was difficult for the Geldermans. They lost one horse per year for seventeen years. It was thought that they died of swamp fever or from poison plants somewhere along the creek where they grazed, since the horses kept at the yard were not affected. Through all problems, there was always enough for the family to eat and they experienced the Lord's blessings.

One blessing was John and Reka's family of eight healthy children: **Gerrit Jan** (May 9, 1921), **Sena** (Gezina, August 23, 1922), **Bertha** (April 8, 1924), **Herman** (Hermanus, February 2, 1926), **Rita** Hermina (October 25, 1928), **Jean** (September 5, 1931), **Henry** John (September 11, 1935), and **Joanne** May (April 28, 1942). All of the children except Joanne were born at home with the help of a midwife — either Johanna Oldegbers or Petertje Schoonekamp. All were born with dark hair except for Joanne, who was blond, and John wondered if they had taken the right baby home from the hospital!

Back: John, Bertha, Gerrit. Front: Jean, Reka, Henry, Rita, Herman, 1939

Shortly after they were married, John purchased a used treadle sewing machine at Pete Kampnar's sale. In the Netherlands, Reka had worked in a clothing factory where she had learned sewing skills. She sewed most of the family's clothes, many of them from flour sacks. Sometimes her family sent material or used clothing from Nobleford. One afternoon Reka set about making herself a dress out of material sent by the family. But she was quite frustrated by the time John came home — there was not quite enough fabric, and she told him that no matter how she tried it, she could only get three sleeves out of the material!

One of the weekly household chores was doing the wash. Reka, however, had it better than some: instead of a washboard, she had a tub with a vane inside that was turned by moving a handle on the tub right and left. But since it was heavy work, the task often fell to John, who found it a boring chore.

During the early 20s, John cleared land for Jan Oldegbers and received a pump organ as payment. John enjoyed music and played the organ for church services. He also gave organ and violin lessons. Some organ students came to the house, but for many John gave lessons in their homes. He spent one day a week giving lessons, traveling from place to place during the day. Usually that same night there would be choir practice in the church. For many years he directed the church choir, which was made up of young people. The first few years he taught them without the use of the organ and they learned to read music with the help of the syllables do-re-mi-fa. A group of married men also came regularly to the Geldermans to practice as a quartet or double quartet. The Geldermans as a family or with friends often sang together around the organ.

John and Reka were a loving father and mother. They believed Christians had to show in their lives who they were. John told his children, "If you look for the good in people or situations, then their faults or the bad will not seem so important or will even disappear." When the children criticized people, John would remind them that those people were also brothers in Christ.

John held firmly to the basic truths of the Bible but not to what he felt were rules and traditions made by men. Thus the Gelderman girls were allowed to wear slacks for sports.

Visitors from Edmonton at the Gelderman home.

John pressed for the use of English in the church services. He felt that since they lived in Canada they should learn and use the language of the land. When the children were young he bought an English story Bible so he could read to the children in English and at a level they could understand.

John was always actively involved in community activities. He was a charter member of both the Neerlandia Co-op and the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union and served on the boards of each. He served as an elder in the Christian Reformed Church for many years and during those years was a delegate to Classis Pacific on several occasions and to Synod in [redacted].

Back: Herman, Joanne, Bertha, Sena, Gerrit, Henry. Front: Jean, Reka, John, Rita, 1960.

As the Gelderman children grew up, they all married and raised families of their own. Four of them married into the Nanninga clan. Gerrit to Hilda Nanninga, Sena to Corny Nanninga, Bertha to Bert Nanninga, and Joanne to Alvin Nanninga. Two of them married into the Krikke family. Herman to Lula Krikke and Rita to Ralph Krikke. Henry married Betty Fisher.

Jean spent most of her life away from Neerlandia. After graduation she attended RBI, where she met George Spee, whom she later married. He became an ordained minister and they served on the Nigerian mission field for twenty-six years. They have four daughters. George and Jean are still working in missions.

John and Reka retired in 1960, bought Seibren Tiemstra's house, and moved to the hamlet. They lived there until January 1977 when they moved into the Emmanuel Senior Citizens' Home in Edmonton. John passed away October 11, 1977, after a brief illness. Reka continues to live at the home and is in reasonably good health.

Gelderman Family

WOUTER AND JOHANNA (BOSCH) GROOTHUIS

In the winter of 1915 Wouter Groothuis, at the age of 34, came to Neerlandia to clear some land and build a log house for his future bride and himself. The land he chose was the SE 9-62-3-5, close to Baird Lake, with neighbours Henry Michael and William Krikke living within a mile. He had filed for it on December 2, 1915. When the homestead was ready, he went back to Edmonton to marry his bride, Johanna G. Bosch, on January 23, 1916. That same week they left for Neerlandia.

Wouter had been born on March 9, 1881, in Genemuiden, Overijssel, the Netherlands. He had emigrated in 1910 because, besides there not being much opportunity to begin farming in the Netherlands, nearly everyone in his village was related and Wouter did not care to get married to his relatives. He had first gone to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A., where he had worked as hired farm help, and then he headed for Montana. Soon after he returned to Lynden and, upon hearing about the opportunities in Canada, decided to go to Edmonton. He had read about the land available in Alberta in an article written by H. Kippers in *De Wachter*. Wouter first found work building roads in the city of Edmonton, but was interested in homesteading. On February 7, 1913, he took out the SE 35-61 3-5, although he never lived on the land and abandoned it on November 19, 1914, stating that it had too much muskeg.

Johanna had been born in the city of Enschede, Overijssel, on October 13, 1884. She had started working in a factory when she was twelve years old, and had continued to work there into her adult years. During those later years, the man to whom she was engaged contracted tuberculosis. When he died, Johanna, needing a change, had quit her job and immigrated to Canada in 1915. Her father had accompanied her, as single women were not allowed to travel alone. She went to Edmonton because her paternal aunt Willemina ter Horst and her husband, Jan, were living near Edmonton in Eastburg. After Johanna and Wouter had met and decided to wed, they made plans to begin homesteading. Johanna, having grown up in the city, had no idea what that involved, but was not afraid to tackle it. Thus began what were some of the hardest years of their lives.

When Wouter and Johanna arrived at the homestead after their wedding, Johanna asked, "Where is our house?" Even after Wouter pointed it out, she could hardly see it through the thick bush. The main floor of the house consisted of one large room which served as kitchen and living area. Off the kitchen was a small pantry. A stairway led to one big bedroom under the rafters.

Wouter and Johanna soon bought a few cows, some chickens, and a team of oxen to help with the clearing and breaking. There was plenty of work to do. First of all, the land that was already cleared had to be broken. Wouter decided it would be best if Johanna drove the oxen and he held the plow, as holding the plow was the more difficult task. What a disaster that was! Johanna simply could not keep those oxen in a straight line! Wouter was extremely frustrated by this, but could do nothing other than trade places with her. Johanna did, however, learn to milk cows and even shoot the chicken hawks that tried to steal the chickens.

On Friday, January 26, 1917, Johanna went into labour with their first child. The midwife, Johanna Oldegbers, sensed something was wrong, but help was difficult to get with the doctor thirty miles away and it being the heart of winter. The baby still had not been born by Sunday, so Siebren Tiemstra went on horseback to summon the doctor, who arrived the next morning. After examination, he said that he thought he could save Johanna but had no hope for the baby. The child was a boy and, though he was blue and purple when he was

Dick, Sina, 1918.

born, through a miracle he survived. The baby, whom Wouter and Johanna named Dick, could not keep down the milk that Johanna fed him. Nothing she gave him stayed down. One day Oom Jan and *Tante* Willemina ter Horst came for a visit. *Tante* Willemina knew what to do; she advised Johanna to cook cream of wheat in water, put in a piece of *koe vet* (cow fat) as well, and feed that to Dick. Johanna tried that and Dick started growing and continued to grow, eating cream of wheat cooked with *koe vet*

A second child, **Sina**, was born March 25, 1918. Wouter and Johanna soon noticed that she was not in good health as she often turned completely blue. Again, there was no doctor available and it was too far to take the baby by sled or wagon all the way to see one. When the doctor next came to Neerlandia, he stopped at the Groothuis farm. He examined Sina and found her heart to be very weak. She lived for only fourteen months

Another daughter, **Sena**, was born March 12, 1920, and a second son, **Hendrik**, on January 14, 1922. Wouter had made sufficient improvements to the homestead during that time that in November 1921, he could obtain the title to the land. By then, he was cropping six acres and had three more cleared. There were also two stables on the homestead to shelter the sixteen cattle he owned

Every fall, Wouter left the homestead to work elsewhere. He needed to make money to provide for the family through the winter. Johanna would stay home to care for the children and do the chores. She had to bake bread and churn cream into butter. She also had to tend the chickens, milk three or four cows, and haul drinking water with buckets from the well for the cows and the two oxen. Later she often told her children that those animals never seemed to get filled up

In the fall of 1923, Wouter went 300 miles south to work with a threshing crew in Granum and Monarch. Johanna stayed on the homestead as usual. This time, all three children became sick with chicken pox and whooping cough. This meant that, besides being busy with her daily chores and caring for the livestock, Johanna was up half the night with the children. Hendrik, who was nearly two years old, also came down with bronchitis. Johanna used many remedies to try to break the high fever and stop the choking, but they did not help. The doctor was fetched, but by that time it was too late Hendrik died. Wouter was still in southern Alberta and could not be contacted immediately, so it was some time before he arrived home Johanna was exhausted by then, she managed to get through the funeral, but collapsed afterwards. Sena remembered, "The funeral for my little brother was held in our home and Dad made some benches so all the people could sit down. There were so many people at our house. I just couldn't figure out why we had so much company."

Sena, Henry, Dick, 1923

After all this, Wouter and Johanna decided to leave the homestead and in 1924 they went with their two children to Everett, Washington, U.S.A., where Johanna had relatives. The two children, Dick and Sena, later married and raised families of their own. Dick lived to be 63 years old, and Sena lives (1984) in Lynden, Washington, with her family.

Sena wrote, "I never knew my mother to be healthy as she coughed as long as I can remember and her health had been broken, for the family doctor often told us she certainly was the image of a pioneer mother, never to regain her full health." Johanna died in 1942 at the age of 57. Though the years had been hard, Johanna had many happy memories of Neerlandia. She often spoke of the beauty of nature in Neerlandia, of the long summer days; of the people living together as one big family, sharing each other's joys and tears, and, through it all, the evidence of God's goodness.

Wouter often longed to go back to Neerlandia for a visit, although he never managed it

He lived to be 77 years old and died in 1958. He, like his wife, had often told the children of his pioneering days. He would say that he wondered if it had been worth it, but would then remark, "Somebody had to be the first."

Sena Sterk

JAMES HEATH

James Alberto Heath was sixty-two years old when he took up SW 14-61-3-5 in 1918. He had been born in the U.S.A. and came from Texas. On his homestead entry, he listed his previous occupation as Baptist minister.

James, who had some veterinary skills, was called Dr. Heath by the people who knew him. He would help Mellowdale farmers if they had problems with their livestock. He taught in Neerlandia for a short time.

Dr. Heath owned a 1914 Model T Ford that had an open top and a coal oil lamp on each side. He acted as chauffeur on occasion — one time to take Hilda Lindquist of Mellowdale and Lizzie Melsome to Edmonton because Hilda needed some work done on her dentures.

Dr. Heath stayed in Neerlandia for about two years, but never made any improvements on his homestead. His homestead entry was cancelled in 1922.

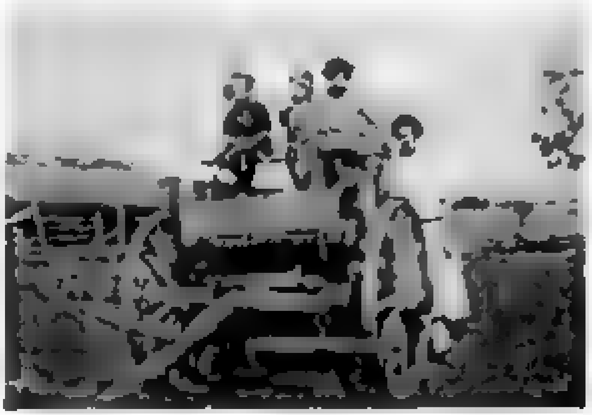
HENRY AND KATIE (BAKER) HIEMSTRA

Henry Hiemstra (September 20, 1890), was raised in Friesland, the Netherlands. From age twelve to nineteen, he worked in an asylum. After seven years of work there, he had contributed sufficient gratis time and was offered two hundred *gulden* or a suit of clothes and a trip to America. Henry chose the latter and so in 1911 he boarded the *Anacosti*. He went to Kitchener, Ontario, and left from there with a Lutheran pastor to Bruderheim, Alberta. Soon Henry left for Edmonton where he worked for a short while at the City Water Works.

In 1914 Henry applied for a homestead (SE 20-61-3-5) in Neerlandia. After building a log house, though, he stayed for only six months and then left to work elsewhere. He returned to the homestead in 1918. Henry married Katie Baker on March 22, 1919, in the Granum Presbyterian Church. They set up residence in Neerlandia. Their first son, **Cornelis**, was born January 16, 1921.

In 1921 Henry obtained the patent to his homestead. At this time he was cropping ten acres of land, and owned eight head of cattle and three horses. Hiemstras lived in a 20 by 30-foot log house. On the homestead there was also an 18 by 28-foot log barn, an 8 by 14-foot hen house, and a fourteen-foot cribbed well. Henry also had put up three miles of wire-and-rail fence.

When Cor was a small child, Henry went to work in the States for several months. One day sometime later, Cor saw a frightening stranger — a great big, black, bushy bearded guy — walk into the house. He scared Cor but Katie threw her arms around him. Henry was back.



Jennie, Corney, Catherine, Katie, c. 1927

More children were born to Henry and Katie: **Catherine** (Katharina, March 30, 1923), **Gertrude** Richtje (August 6, 1930); **Gilbert** (Gaele, September 19, 1934); and **Donald** John (July 17, 1937). As well as farming, Henry worked for several years as foreman for a road construction crew in the area. He was also of help with the sick because of the knowledge he had gained while working in the asylum.

Henry and Katie moved to B.C. with Gilbert and Donald in 1948, and left the farming to Cor. Catherine married Harry Janssen. Gertrude had gone to B.C. before her parents. She married Peter Houweling and they live in New Westminster. Katie passed away November 21, 1970, and Henry on November 11, 1975.

Cor Hiemstra

JOE AND CATHERINE (WIERENGA) HOLWERDA

Jelle Wieger Holwerda was born December 30, 1886, in Anjum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Jelle's parents owned a farm, but he received a good education and later did some teaching. In April 1911 he traveled to Canada with the Tjeerd Visser family, to whom he was related. They sailed aboard the *Victorian*. Jelle had thirty-five dollars with him to make a new start in the country of Canada. He lived in Edmonton for the first few years and bought some real estate there but he wanted to live among his own people so soon moved to Neerlandia.

In March 1912 Jelle had filed on the SW 28-62-3-5 as 'John Holwerda', but by the time he took up the NE 3-62-3-5 on September 5, 1914, he wrote his name as Joseph (Joe). He soon built a 14 by 22-foot log house on that homestead and began living there in November.

Joe, who was one of the better-educated men who pioneered in Neerlandia, played an active role in public affairs. He could speak and write English well, he spoke it with hardly a trace of an accent. Joe was soon appointed road foreman over the Neerlandia area by Frank Thompson. In this position he was responsible for the road work that had to be done and also for hiring and paying the workers. He was a fair man to work for and well-liked by his employees. Joe also became Justice of the Peace. If there was trouble between neighbours, he was the one to see. Once he presided over a hearing held because of a disagreement between two non-Dutch settlers to the south of the settlement. The hearing was held in the log church and Joe admonished the witnesses, "Speak the truth, in the name of the King!" Joe was the game warden for a number of years and he was also the person to see if one needed a fire or logging permit.

Joe suffered from a bad knee, the result of an accident. Once he had been working with a breaking plow when it got stuck. Joe urged the horses on and while they were pulling the evener broke in two and one end hit Joe in the legs. His knee was dislocated and after that it went out of joint easily.

Joe worked hard, often working long hours and consequently not eating regularly. Yet, he was an easygoing, cheerful person.

Joe obtained the patent to his land in 1920. He was cropping six acres and had fifteen acres broken and four acres slashed. Besides the house, he had put up a 30 by 34-foot log stable and 2½ miles of pole fences. The well on the homestead was twenty-three feet deep. In 1920, Joe had ten cattle and two horses. Joe rode horseback wherever he went and, while riding, was never seen without his hat.

When the Neerlandia Co-op was begun, Joe was involved in many ways. He became the storekeeper's righthand man. He was the official auditor of the Co-op books until 1931 or later, having been approved by the Minister. He was a member of the store board for some years and also served as chairman.

During an afternoon church service, a fire that was burning on Joe's land burned his shack down. When Joe discovered it, he felt very badly about it because in the shack had been a gold watch that he had received as a gift from his father.

Joe obtained the SW 9-62-3-5 and the SE 10-62-3-5 during the twenties on government sales and moved into the log house on the SW 9-62. During the twenties, Joe obtained more horses. By 1929 he had nine horses, but only two cattle. He acquired the SE 8-62-3-5 as a grazing lease for his livestock. During those years, there was a forced road fenced off between William Krikke and Toney Sturwold's quarters. It was wide enough for four horses abreast. Joe made good use of it as he could go straight east from his grazing lease to his homestead.

Joe bought a big breaking plow that he used with six or seven horses and he did custom breaking for others. In the late twenties, he hired Oene Piers and Henry Strydhorst to help him with clearing and plowing. Henry often stayed there while he was working for Joe. By that time Joe had learned to cook for himself (his specialty was baking powder biscuits), but he had not learned many sewing skills. One time when two of his overalls were completely worn out in the front, he put both of them on, but wore the one backwards so that all the holes were covered.

In early 1928, some of Joe's relatives came from the Netherlands and stayed with him. **Dirk Visser**, a schoolteacher, and his wife **Sjieuwke Hovinga**, a seamstress, were hoping to find work here, but they left after seven or eight months.

Later in 1928, three Wierenga families and their many girls moved to Neerlandia. Joe was already forty years old and still single, so he did not mind the girls at all. He was attracted to Catherine, one of Lammert Wierenga's girls, but she had some growing up to do — she was only seventeen at the time. But eventually, one month after her twenty-fourth birthday, Catherine became Mrs. Joe Holwerda. It was a double wedding ceremony with Bill Olthuis and Carrie Tuininga on Sunday, March 11, 1934.

Joe, Catherine, 1934

Joe had been elected councillor for Neerlandia in 1930. He was elected two more times, each for a two-year term. The meetings were held about two miles east of the Shoal Creek store on Jim Allen's homestead and Joe rode there, as usual, on horseback.

On December 15, 1934, a son, **Wilfred**, was born to Joe and Catherine. Joe was very proud of his son and vowed that he was going to have a good education. But human intentions and plans can only be performed as far as the Lord permits. The Lord called Joe home three months later on March 15, 1935. He was unable to fight off a bout of pneumonia and died after being taken to the hospital.

Wilfred was *Pake* and *Beppe* Holwerda's only grandson. A highlight in Wilfred's life came at the age of twelve years (1947), when Catherine took him to the Netherlands to visit the Holwerda family. *Beppe* had passed on, but *Pake* was still very fit at the age of eighty-six years. The two Holwerda uncles were both living too. From that experience Wilfred could form an imaginary father-image.

Elle Wierenga, Haltine Elgersma, Wilfred, 1943.

Wilf Holwerda

DRIKUS AND JOHANNA (NIJMAN) HUININK

Johanna Nijman was born August 21, 1881, in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands. Four years later, Drikus Huinink was born in Winterswijk on January 31. Drikus and Johanna were married in early 1910. Drikus was a *vrachtrijder* — he drove a large team of horses and made deliveries. Johanna worked in a comb factory.

Drikus and Johanna were acquainted with Henry Kippers who was living in Edmonton and who wrote to them about the good land and opportunities there. Consequently, the Huininks decided to immigrate to Canada. They sailed on the *Victorian* in April 1911. After landing in Halifax, they took the train to Edmonton. There they lived in Fraser Flats, sharing a shack with the Tjeerd Visser family. Drikus soon found a job with the City Water Works.

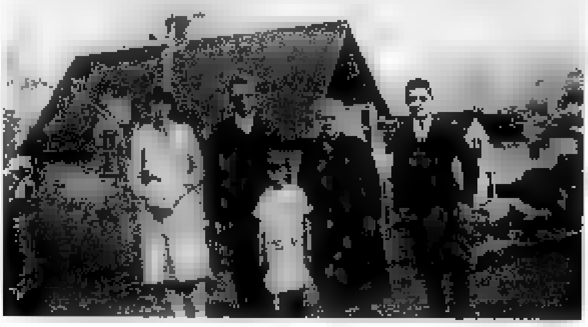
Johanna, Drikus, 1910.

Drikus, like many other Dutch immigrants, wanted to farm in Canada so he went with a group of Dutchmen to Townships 61 and 62 in 1911. When he returned, he was thrilled to find that a daughter, **Margaret** (Grada), had been born while he was away (December 10, 1911). Drikus filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on December 18, 1911. A son, **Henry** (Hendrikus) was born in 1913.

After coming to Neerlandia in 1914 or 1915, the Huminks spent about a year on the homestead. But when it became clear that Johanna's health was such that she would not be able to handle the homesteading life, Drikus reluctantly gave up the homestead. He abandoned it in December 1915, stating that he had resided on it for fourteen months, had built a house and a stable, had broken two acres and cleared ten. He had sold his cow to Jacob Olthuis (which thereafter became known as "old Humink").

Drikus resumed employment with the City Water Works and the Huminks remained in Edmonton for many years. Another daughter, Dena, was born in 1919. The Huminks had become good friends with the Kannegieters and often came to Neerlandia to visit them as well as the Ben Lievers family. Johanna died September 30, 1963, and Drikus August 17, 1970.

Humink Family



In Edmonton. Margaret, Drikus, Dena, Johanna, Henry. 1920s. Riverdale in the background.

CORNELIUS AND HERMINA (GOTZEN) INGWERSEN

In 1909, Case (Cornelius) Ingwersen immigrated to Canada, at the age of about 29 years. He left behind his wife, Hermina, aged about 23 years, a small son, **Corny** (Cornelius, born September 17, 1908), as well as parents, brothers and sisters. Parting was not easy, but life for him in the Netherlands had become more and more unbearable. Working with his father in an upholstery business was boring and tiresome. The urge to be free and get away from the narrow confines of the store had become an obsession with him. Moreover, he had read in a Dutch newspaper of the wonderful opportunities there were in Canada. Land was literally being given away. For a mere ten dollars one could buy a whole quarter section of land. That was too good to pass up, he thought. After he talked it over with his family, they reluctantly consented to let him go. It was decided that Case would go alone first, and when he had a house and a job, Hermina would come and join him. She was not very happy with that decision, but she also saw the merit of it.

So it was, that Case Ingwersen arrived in Edmonton. Things were not as rosy as he had expected. Jobs were hard to find, and then there was the language problem. He found it very hard to understand these Canadians, and they could not understand his language either. As for living accomodations, all he could afford to rent was a small shack in Ross Flats, along the Saskatchewan River in Edmonton. He was glad his wife was not there to see it. Being alone did not bother him too much. There were more Dutch people living there, so he had companionship.

For a number of months, things went on quite normally. Case found the odd job, and was quite content with the way he lived. But if only he would receive some news from Hermina. He faithfully wrote to her, but never got a reply. Finally, he went to the post office and complained to the post master about his predicament. After Case told him that he was C. Ingwersen, the man started looking through the mail. He soon came back with a stack of letters that he had filed under the name C. Tingwersen (the written Dutch *I* looks much like a *T*) — they had never been claimed. Case was overjoyed! He started reading the letters — beginning with the earliest and reading through them to the latest. When he got to the last one, he found that his wife was coming to Canada to join him! Their second child was due soon, and she wanted to be with Case. What was he to do? He had neither time nor money to get a better house and his wife was used to the finer things in life. He was horrified! But there was no way out — they would just have to make the best of it.

Hermina had a bad trip across the ocean because she was seasick most of the way. Arriving in Edmonton, Hermina was happy to finally be with her husband again. But when they came to their so-called "home", she broke down and cried. What kind of a place was this that he had brought her to? Had she come all the way from the Netherlands to live in this little tumble-down shack? There was hardly any furniture — a homemade table, two chairs, and a bunk with straw on it. It was just too much! Case, of course, felt very badly, but promised things would soon be better if only he could find a steady job. Hermina did not realize what she would have to go through before things would get better.

When winter set in, the days were dark and dreary. Inside the shack, it was not much warmer than it was outdoors. Into this situation, their second son, **Gerrit** (Gerhard), was born on December 10, 1909. The neighbours were very good to Hermina and helped her out as much as possible. Gerrit grew well since he was healthy and strong, and when he learned to walk, he became a handful to take care of. He would continually walk away — to the neighbours or wherever he found things of interest. One day, Father and Mother Ingwersen had to search for him for hours before they found him. After this scary experience, they decided to tie him with a rope to the house. That put an end to his wanderings.

The Ingwersens lived in Edmonton for five years. Two girls were born during that time, **Annie** (Agneta Jane) on January 29, 1913, and **Johanna** on October 12, 1914. Case did find more steady employment by painting and wallpapering for people. They also moved to a different house after a few years, it was an improvement over the tarpaper shack.

The desire to homestead and have his own land was never far from Case's thoughts during these five years. Case filed on the N.E. 33-60-21-4 on April 28, 1911, but abandoned this land in July of that same year. He then joined a group of sixteen Dutchmen and filed on the S.E. 9-62-3-5, in what later became known as Neerlandia, on December 18, 1911. Not all of these men went to their homesteads at this time and Case was one of those who chose to remain working in Edmonton. He abandoned his quarter in 1912, stating that it had to much muskeg and heavy timber. Later, he traded with Wouter Groothuis, who had taken up the S.E. 35-61-3-5. Case filed on that quarter on January 2, 1915, and it became the Ingwersen homestead.

Case built a log house and when all was ready, brought the family from Edmonton. Hermina tried to make a cozy atmosphere in the house with the things she had taken along from the Netherlands.

The house was not very well built, and one morning the family viewed the sky through the gable end of the house. Everyone moved out, and Case did some repairing. They moved in temporarily with John Gelderman, a bachelor who lived across the road. He was quite happy with his new boarders, because Hermina did the cooking for him, but the arrangement was short-lived. As soon as the house was repaired, the family went back to their own domain. The roof of the house was made of sods, and when it rained, the dirty water would drip everywhere — onto the beds, the floor, and, worst of all, onto the table with Hermina's beautiful *Desso tafelkleed* on it (the only thing which resembled her home in the Netherlands).

In the winter, the cracks between the logs would let in the outside air. Although the cracks had been "chinked up" with moss, the cold would shrink the moss and the family had free refrigeration. It would be so cold that water standing a few feet from the stove would freeze solid. Even with all the cold and misery, no one became seriously ill, although Hermina often suffered from toothaches and pleurisy.

The living conditions on the homestead were a sharp contrast to what Hermina and Case had been used to in the Netherlands, and it bothered Hermina the most. For her, the pioneering life was very trying, and she was often tempted to write to her parents about the sad state of affairs. They would gladly have sent money to pay for the trip back to the Netherlands. Case, however, had no desire to go back. He rather enjoyed this adventurous life. After all, they were healthy, they had a bed to sleep on, and they had enough to eat — what more did they need? Their food consisted mainly of rabbits and prairie chickens, which were plentiful in those days, and, of course, they got milk from a cow or two.

Relatives in the Netherlands would often send parcels with used clothing, toys, and so on. When one of the parcels arrived, there was rejoicing at the Ingwersen household. Hermina was a good seamstress and transformed the clothes into something suitable for her children to wear. She seldom wore any of the beautiful dresses her family sent her, as they would have been out of place in that setting. But many evenings, she would sit with a needle and thread by the light of a coal-oil lamp, sewing clothes for her children. Later on, a relative sent money so Hermina could buy a sewing machine. The machine was a big help, and she treasured it more than anything else.

Case spent many winters working at a sawmill or doing roadwork. He would stay away until Saturday, when he would come home with a bag of groceries. The boys, small as they were, would have to milk the cows; Hermina was scared stiff of those creatures. With just one switch of their tails, they could send her running home. She was not cut out for that pioneering life, although she certainly made the best of the circumstances.

Case was one of the pioneers who put oxen to work. He bought one ox and another he raised himself. The one he bought was a large beast with a great set of horns. It was a reliable creature and usually a willing worker, although

John, Hermina, Annie, Johanna, Nellie, Case, Gerrit, Corry, c. 1922 very slow. The one he raised himself was tempermental, very stubborn, and evil-looking These two oxen Case paired up to pull stumps, haul firewood, and, for a while, to pull the wagon as a means of transportation One day when he was going to do some work with them, the small one refused to move After many unsuccessful attempts to get some action, Case picked up a switch and gave it a thrashing. With one leap, it took off. Case had the reins tied around his waist, and away they went at top speed. Case was dragged over the ground, and could not get free until they got tangled up behind a tree He was not seriously hurt, but there was not much love between him and that ox afterward It remained stubborn as long as it lived

At that time, people in the community travelled to Mellowdale to get groceries. Since that was a rather long and tiring distance to travel, they decided to start a co-operative store in Neerlandia. This log store they built on the N E. 34-61-3-5, thinking it would be central for everyone. Only the most important things such as sugar, flour, tallow, and tea were sold At first, it was open for only one day a week, but later it stayed open for three days a week. Case became the "storekeeper", as he had some business experience. Soon he also took a cream-testing course Now farmers could bring their cream to the store, where it would be tested and then shipped to Westlock by horse and wagon. How good that cream was when it arrived in Westlock was never known, but the farmers received their cheques, which was the main thing.

This little store soon became too small for the community's needs, so a much bigger one was built. Times had slowly improved, so it was decided to build this one of lumber. It was built across from the church and Case, as the manager, was expected to live nearby. So he built a new house of lumber which was, for that time, quite impressive-looking. But when winter came, the family found that the lumber house was just as cold as the log house had been.

The Ingwersen family by this time had five children. A little girl, whom they called **Nettie** (Antoinette), was born on April 5, 1916, when they were still on the homestead. She was rather small, and was a poor eater — a child of the poor times. Their last child was born a few years later, on July 17, 1918, a healthy, robust boy whom they called **John** (Johannes)

The two oldest boys, Corny and Gerrit, were growing up and were doing their share of the farm work. Corny was always the milker and a better one could not have been found. Gerrit was handy with machinery and doing fieldwork. Corny took up the quarter Section east of the homestead, S.W. 36-61-3-5 So, while their father was looking after the store, the boys were keeping busy working on the farm

Case Ingwersen was also the mail carrier, and once a week he travelled to Mellowdale to pick up the mail. In the spring of 1924, he took the horses and the democrat for his usual mail-hauling trip. It was a very warm day, and the bull flies were out in hordes. They bothered the horses so much that the horses took off on the run and Case lost control of them. He fell off the democrat and his legs caught in the spokes of a wheel. He was dragged along for a ways with the result that both his legs were broken and one knee was crushed After lying helpless awhile in the hot sun, he was found and brought to Edmonton in Dave Turunga s car. He was in the hospital for eight weeks, but his one leg never straightened out completely. He remained crippled for the rest of his life. Hermina had to take over the store-keeping job while Case was in the hospital This was an added burden for her, having six children to care for as well. It was a relief for her when her husband finally returned and was able to take over again

Andy Nenninga, Nettie, Gerrit, John, Philip Eggerman, Johanna, Corny.

Case was the store manager for fifteen years, until the business became too much for him to handle alone. He decided to quit and go back to farming again. He bought the N.E. 33-61-3-5 from William Swaffield. There he built a new house and again took up his life-long ambition of farming. The children, by this time, were leaving home. Annie went first. She married Andy Nanninga. Johanna was next to leave; she married John Visser. Gerrit eventually bought both the old homestead and Corny's section. Corny remained single, and stayed with the family, as did Nettie. John married Rose Tiemstra.

Case Ingwersen never was cut out to be a farmer, and that became more evident as time went on. John eventually took over the farm work. Case and Hermina sold the farm to him and moved to Edmonton, along with Corny and Nettie. They lived there about five years. During that time, Case bought and sold three different houses.

When in 1946, Annie and Andy decided to move to British Columbia, Case could not resist the temptation to move there too. So, once again packing up their belongings, they moved to Burnaby and later to Abbotsford, where they bought a house and retired. There Case kept himself busy growing vegetables and flowers. Always a lover of nature, he could enjoy his old age among his beloved plants. Eventually the other children moved to B.C. also, except for Johanna.

Corny, Gerrit, Grace, Johanna, Nettie, John. Seated: Case, Hermina.

The elder Ingwersens often made the trip back to Neerlandia, since they could not easily forget the place where they had spent the better part of their lives. In spite of all the hardships, their hearts were still there. They had spent many happy years in Neerlandia, which was remarkable, as they had been used to a very different life-style in the Netherlands. Pioneering had a great effect on them. There was no distinction between rich and poor on the homesteads - everyone was poor. The pioneers came to appreciate one another, helping each other out in times of need. The Ingwersens made a number of trips back to the "old country", but they never showed any desire to stay. They had come to love their adopted land.

One thing Johanna remembers well about her parents was their love of music and singing. Father and Mother Ingwersen were both good singers. As a family, they spent many evenings around the organ, singing together while Annie played. The elder Ingwersens seldom went out, so as a family they were together often. When the children got older and had boy friends (or girl friends), they were expected to spend part of the evening with the family. They did not always appreciate this at the time, but realize now that those were times well spent.

Another thing that was evident was the Ingwersens' faith in God. Amid all the trials of life they never relinquished that. Case spent many years as elder in the church. As a schoolboard member, he worked hard for the education of the children of the community.

Case passed away in 1973, after a short bout with pneumonia. He had always been a strong, healthy man, and lived to be ninety-two. Hermina, although she had often been sick and had many operations, lived to the age of ninety-four. She died in 1979. Nettie died a few years later, in 1982. Case and Hermina had lived together for sixty-six years, and Hermina was able to see her great, great grandchildren — certainly many reasons for thanksgiving.

Johanna Visser

LAMBARTUS AND BOTJE (HOGGERHUIS) JANSSEN

Lambartus (Bart) Janssen was born in Waardenburg, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on July 4, 1888. As a young boy he helped his father in their mill, grinding grain into flour, but when he grew older, he decided to join the mounted police in the the Netherlands. After a few years with the police force, free land and adventure drew him to Alberta, where he settled in the Fraser Flats of Edmonton.

About 1912, he walked out to the Neerlandia area with his friend, Sam Vandergoot. His wife Botje and son **Lambert** stayed behind until a homestead could be filed on. The men found two Dutch homesteaders already in the area — the Oldegbers family and the Mast family.

When Bart and Sam arrived at one of these homes, they were invited to stay for dinner. They gladly accepted, as they were hungry. In the dimness of the log house, they could make out a pot on the stove, with leg bones protruding above the top. The good woman of the home placed a rabbit on each plate. It was delicious and when Sam told her so, she beamed and put another rabbit on each plate, despite their protests. That was the last rabbit Bart ever ate!

Later, Bart asked the woman's husband how he managed to get so many rabbits without a rifle. Bart was taken behind the house and was shown a pit covered with fodder. At night, when the rabbits came to eat, they fell into the pit and so there was always a good supply of meat on hand.

Sam never applied for a homestead, but Bart Janssen did, at about the same time his friends, Simon Tiemstra and John Anema, applied. The first quarter he filed on was never proved up. In 1914, he filed on the SW 14-61-3-5.

Some time later, a log store was erected. Pete Kampnar, who had come from Montana with a herd of cows and some horses, was the storekeeper. He will always be remembered for two great kindnesses to the Janssen family. One day, there was so little to eat in the house that Botje Janssen was in great despair — no money and no food. Then there was a knock on the door and in came Peter Kampnar with a hundred pound bag of flour on his back. He had carried it all the way from his store. Another time, one of Kampnar's bulls gored his stallion while they were in the corral together. Pete had to kill the horse and brought a quarter of the meat to the Janssens. This, too, was a real blessing!

Not many days later, two Mounties came to the door and asked for a meal. They were hunting an escaped criminal and were very hungry. Botje Janssen asked her husband what she should cook — somehow she felt Canadians would never eat horsemeat. But Bart told her to cook some steaks. He aplogized to the Mounties for having moosemeat out of season, but they told him not to worry; they felt the homesteaders would never waste meat. After those delicious steaks were eaten, Bart mischievously asked his wife (in Dutch) if he should tell them truth about the meat. His wife became quite flustered, as she thought he was serious. How embarrassing – Mounties eating horsemeat!

One fall, before the store was erected, Bart planned a trip to Edmonton to buy winter supplies for himself and his neighbours. The orders were for beans, peas, sugar, flour, and at least one pair of shoes. Times were hard and there was no money. One man proposed they all catch rabbits and let Bart sell them to hotels and cafés in Edmonton. Then Bart could bring back the desperately needed supplies. The weather was cold, the pile of rabbits grew higher and higher.

On arrival in Edmonton after three days on the road, Bart managed to sell a few rabbits to

Lambertus and Sam Vandergoot after a hunting trip in B.C., c. 1918.

some cafés, and then rested for the night. During the night, the weather changed and the following day was warm and sunny. By midday, the health inspector had visited the wagon and condemned the whole load. Bart had to dispose of the rabbits in the city incinerator. Those that had already been sold barely paid for the expense of burning the others. To return home to his neighbours and friends, totally without the supplies they so desperately needed, was almost more than Bart could bear. This was one story Bart often told to his children and grandchildren, always with a touch of sadness.

Then came a day when the butter was almost gone, but there was some lard left. Botje put the butter away for company and said that the family had to use lard on their bread. Bart got up from the table and got the butter. "We will have butter," he said, "and if folks drop by, they will have to use lard. And furthermore, if things are in such a state, we are not staying here any longer." He packed up their meagre belongings and moved his family back to Edmonton, via oxen.

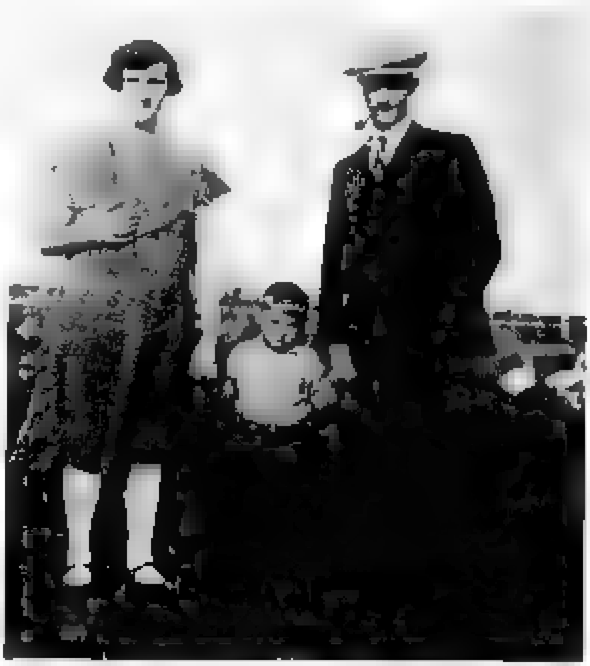
The next few years involved a number of moves for the family — to Everett, Washington, to work in a sawmill, to Vancouver, to Engen (near Vanderhoof, B.C.), and back to Edmonton. The move to Engen was made with a number of others, including George Toebes, in a venture to set up a community there. But Bart was still drawn to Neerlandia, so he and Sam Vandergoot came back once again.

In June 1919 Bart took up the NE 16-61-3-5. The family, which now included two boys, Lambert Albert and **Harry**, and one girl, **Agnes**, lived in a granary rented from Tjibbe Reitsma, while their own house was being built.

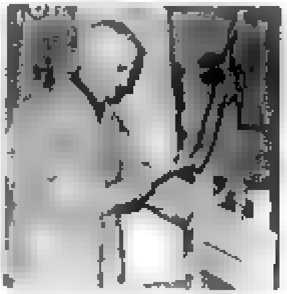
Bart often talked about the winter of 1919. The first blizzard of the season arrived on October 7th. That was also the night Botje had their fourth child. Raymond Baker, a neighbour, was called upon to get Minke Mast, the midwife. Driving through the blizzard, over a newly-made road of sorts, Raymond upset his buggy. However, after a harrowing trip, Minke arrived in time to deliver a four-and-a-half pound baby girl, **Rene**, complete with two teeth!

More oustanding was the fact that the snow never left after the October 7 storm, and many old-timers recall the winter of 1919 as the coldest winter in memory. Many cattle died. Speculation was that cattle would be very high-priced by spring, if you could keep them alive. Bart Janssen crammed his cattle into a square shed and threw them a little hay everyday. He had very little feed for them. But it was all for nought. The market slumped still more and cattle were worth very little the following spring.

Not only had the cattle suffered through that terrible winter, but so had the family, so in the spring Bart loaded up his possessions once again for yet another move to Edmonton. With his cattle he began dairying, selling milk for ten cents a quart. This venture proved quite successful, and the family lived there until 1938. It was during this time (1928) that their youngest son, **Jack**, was born.



Botje, Jack, Lambertus in Edmonton, c. 1931



Lambertus, c. 1970.

Jack, Albert, Rene, Lambertus, Agnes, Harry, c. 1978

Since the dairy farm was beside the airport, the city bought the land in 1938 (the land is now the very centre of the present Industrial Airport). Once more the family moved to Neerlandia, this time to an improved homestead, the SW 15-62-3-5, which Bart bought from Arie Rylaarsdam.

Botje died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-eight in 1948. Bart lived a rich, full life until he passed away in 1978 at the age of ninety.

Rene Wierenga

ELKE AND JANKE (DUIMSTRA) JORRITSMA

Elke Wynia Jorritsma was born December 16, 1885, in Franeker, Friesland, the Netherlands. His mother died when he was born, so he was raised by his maternal grandparents, who were farmers. When Elke was twelve or thirteen years of age he started to work for a feed company. When he was nineteen, training in the army was compulsory. He served two years in the Dutch mobilization, Cavalry Division and, after his release, again worked for the feed company. His mind was already made up to go to Canada so he saved his money and immigrated to Edmonton with Douwe Terpsma and family in the spring of 1911. His first job was at Pat Burns' packing plant, but he did not like that work. He then worked on the construction of the High Level bridge and the Tegler Building.

During the time in Edmonton, Elke became acquainted with a group of other Dutchmen who were looking for land. Elke filed on a homestead (NE 27-61-3-5) in Neerlandia on April 18, 1914. He built a log shack on the land and began clearing. There was no money to be made clearing, so that fall he went to the Saskatchewan prairie to help with the harvest.

After a few years of working the homestead and harvesting in Saskatchewan, Elke rented his land to Peter Kampnar. Then he went to Portland, Oregon, with Popko Schuring. There they worked loading railroad ties on flatdecks. Unfortunately, Elke was hit by a train and severely injured — he broke twenty-two bones. He spent eighteen months in the hospital recovering. His friend Popko often visited Elke and even helped him to shave. When Elke was able, he returned to Neerlandia. Instead of baching, he boarded with Douwe and Betty Terpsma to regain his strength.

In 1917 Elke was called up to serve in World War I for Canada, but by the time his enlistment papers came the war was over and he did not go. By this time he was again living on his land and going to harvest in Saskatchewan each fall. He visited with his neighbours and bought his butter from Froukje Anema for ten cents a pound. He helped with the construction of the first log church.

In 1921 the Westerbaan family came to Neerlandia and Elke decided to sell them his quarter. They moved into the house and cropped the land but they did not stay, so Elke took his quarter back again.

During the years 1911 to 1926, Elke went back to the Netherlands seven times to visit relatives. While there he met Janke Duimstra, whose family was living in the same area. Janke had been born in Sexbierum, Friesland, on June 28, 1898. Her parents were herring fishermen. As a teenager Janke worked for a neighbouring farmer in the fields. She fed calves, picked weeds, transplanted cabbage, and hoed potatoes. She contacted hoof-and-mouth disease from the calves she fed and this malady crippled her hand for life.

Elke and Janke courted by letter until 1927, when she arrived in Edmonton accompanied by Roelof Krikke. She spent the first night at the Immigration Hall. Then she stayed with the Pete Schuurman family until her marriage to Elke on June 27, 1927, in Edmonton. Elke had built a new log house for his bride and had about thirty-five acres cleared. Janke took some pretty things from Friesland to make the cabin home.

The Jorritsma's first son, Jim (James), was

born April 24, 1928. A year-and-one-half later another son, **Norman**, was born prematurely and died six weeks later. A third son, **Edward**, came on March 22, 1931, and a girl, **Tena** Ida, was born April 16, 1934. Elke was busy all the time. He built a new lumber house in 1931 and a large barn in 1932. He was a powerful man who loved animals, especially horses. He always had one or two milk cows, as well as horses, pigs, and chickens. He cleared his whole quarter by hand, using all the wood on his farm year by year until only four acres of bush remained. Wheat, oats, and barley were seeded.

Janke was good-natured and very patient. She knitted many pairs of socks and mitts for her family and mended all their clothes. Her best friend was her neighbour Rika Wierenga and they spent many hours together.

The boys grew quickly and were helping to milk cows by age five. Their other chores were wood hauling, feeding pigs, and pumping water. They loved to go swimming in the nearby creek with Martin Wierenga.

In September 1934 Jim was six years old and had to go to school. He thought everyone spoke *Fries* as they did at home. He walked to school with the Terpsma, Tiemstra, Fox, Mast, and Wilson children, and was teased by Mary Wilson because he knew no English. When the other children went into school, Jim ran into the bush. He did that for six weeks until Tom Wilson finally told Elke that Jim was not going to school. Meanwhile Jim was making slingshots, hunting rabbits, smoking, cutting firewood for his fire, and generally enjoying himself. Much to Jim's displeasure, Elke brought him to school and laid down the law - school from now on.

Jim and Ed loved making slingshots and bows and arrows, and were very accurate at shooting rabbits, birds, and telephone insulators.

Elke's first tractor was purchased in 1942 from C. K. Mast for $1127.35. Nevertheless, Elke never liked working with machinery. He never bought a car but always travelled by horse and buggy or cutter. When the boys were old enough they drove the four horses for cutting the grain and did a fair bit of work for neighbours such as George Anema, Henry Mast, and Norman Terpsma. Summers were filled with haying, stooking, and chores. There was no time for play, except to sneak away for the occasional swim in the creek.

Elke, niece, Ed, Janke, Janke's brother, c 1950

In 1944 Jim quit school and went to work at the Dutch Mill for a short time. The next year he went back there and after that sawmills and lumbering became a permanent part of his life.

Ed did not like school much either; he enjoyed working on the harvest crews when he could. Ed and Jim did contract stooking at seventy-five cents an acre and could stook about two acres an hour together. That made nice spending money in 1955.

At sixty-seven years of age Elke was a sick man. He sold his farm to Ed and Jim and bought a house in Barrhead. He moved there in May 1952 and died the same year on September 26 from a brain tumor. Janke continued living in Barrhead and remarried in 1956. In 1957 she had a stroke which left her paralyzed. She lived in St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, Edmonton, until her death on March 3, 1983.

In 1952, Jim had purchased a rig for sawing firewood. He and Ed did a lot of custom wood sawing. In 1953 Ed spent five hundred hours sawing firewood at three dollars per hour. Jim liked that business and still does some wood sawing today (1984), especially now that wood heating is back in vogue. Jim also bought a weed sprayer in 1952. He did custom spraying in the area until 1982.

In 1955 Ed decided he needed a change. He moved to B.C. and worked in sawmills year-round. He is married and lives with his wife and their three children in Merritt, B.C.

Tena grew up accustomed to working and playing with boys. She could run fast and wrestle right along with her brothers. On a visit to her uncle in Burlington, Ontario, she met and fell in love with Henry Seitzema, a Dutch immigrant who was trained in agriculture. They got married and now live with their three children in Port Dover, Ontario.

Jim remained single and kept the family farm, where he spends his summers cropping the land. The winters are spent in bush camps doing what he loves best — working as edger man in the sawmill.

Jim and Ed Jorritsma

Editors' note: According to the Homestead Records in the Provincial Archives of Alberta, the correct spelling of Elke Jorritsma's name is Eelke.

PETER AND IBELTJE (LUINSTRA) KAMPNAR
PETE AND ANNIE (KERKSTRA) KAMPNAR

There are various ways of spelling Kampnar. This version was used by the Peter Kampnar family in the U.S.A. Originally in the Netherlands it was spelled Kampenaar or Keempenaar.

Peter (Piebe) Kampnar was born in Kollum, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 2, 1862. He married Ibeltje Luinstra in 1883. Times were very difficult in the Netherlands and the Kampnars had a family to feed. In 1903, they moved to Germany to try to find better-paying jobs. The two oldest sons, Pete (October 29, 1884) and John, went to Chicago, Illinoir, U.S.A. All of them saved money until the rest of the family were able to sail on the *Ryndam* in 1905 to join the sons in Chicago.

In Chicago, on February 21, 1907, Pete married Annie (Antje) Kerkstra. All the Kampnars moved first to Wisconsin and then to Montana. Then the stories of fertile land and good weather drew them to Neerlandia. The first to arrive were Pete and Annie and their children **Ida, Nelly**, and **Jennie**. Pete filed on the NW 10-61 3-5 on March 5, 1915.

Peter Sr. was persuaded by his son to pull up stakes in Montana and take the remainder of the family north. Pete had taken up the SW 10-61-3-5 for his brother Jake. By this time Peter Sr.'s wife had passed away, so he was accompanied only by his children, **Bertha** (Boukje) born March 15, 1895; **Jake** (Jacob) born November 29, 1897, and **Ida** (Itje) born March 18, 1900. When the Kampnars sold out in Montana they had to get their cattle and house-hold effects to the train. The nearest station was at Conrad, about forty-five miles away. Jake was responsible for driving the cattle and horses during the two-and-a-half-day trip. When he arrived at the station he had to wait a week for a stock car. It was a very hot, dry August, and Jake quenched his thirst with water from the ponds nearby, which then began to make him sick. Once the cattle were loaded it was another eight days before he reached Westlock, because of a three-day delay at the Canadian border for customs inspection. All this time Jake grew sicker, and by the time Pete met him to take the cattle and goods to a farm Pete had rented in Mellowdale, Jake was too sick to help. They got a travelling doctor to see Jake, and he diagnosed Jake's illness as typhoid fever. There was no way of preventing the disease from taking its course because of their distance from the hospital and lack of medicine. Jake died August 22, 1917, and was one of the first adults buried in the Neerlandia cemetery.

Pete, 1907

Annie, 1907

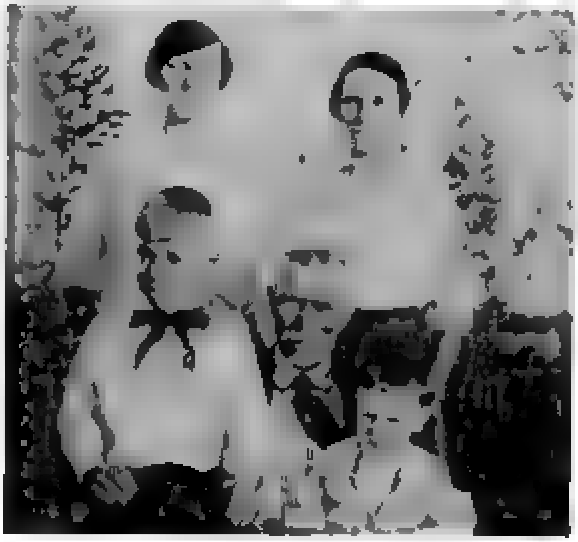
The rest of the family had arrived in Neerlandia in July 1917. Since Pete and Annie had only a small one-room shack they could not provide accommodation for the rest of the Kampnar family. Peter Sr. and the children set up a tent on Pete and Annie's yard.

That fall hail wiped out Pete's crop. One of the first things Ida did in Neerlandia was to mow what was left of this crop to try to get feed for the livestock. That first winter, life was very difficult. There had been no time to build living quarters, so in order to survive the cold the family lived in a smaller tent that had been erected inside a larger horse tent.

Bertha, Ida, 1917

Peter Sr. bought the NW 23-61-3-5 and farmed this land with the help of his daughters. He also set up the first general store in Neerlandia.

A son, also named **Peter**, was born to Pete and Annie on February 28, 1918. The Pete Kampnar family returned to Montana in 1920. Their son died shortly after their return. Pete died on February 10, 1976, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.



Ida, Bertha. Front: Jackie Campbell, Peter, Sadie, 1924

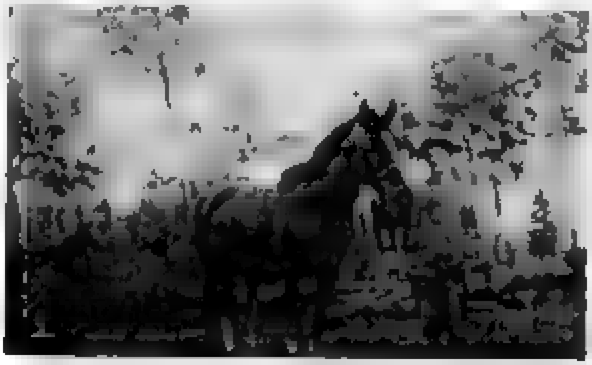
The elder Kampnar suffered from cancer, and the store was not a successful venture. He left for Great Falls, Montana, in 1926 and passed away there the following year. Bertha arranged for an auction sale and for someone to farm the land for her. By this time Ida had already married Ted Reitsma, and Bertha later married Charlie Reitsma.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skirrow

HENDRIK AND MINA (WINKELHORST) KANNEGIETER

Hendrik Jan Kannegieter was born January 4, 1886, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands. When he grew up, he worked in Aalten, Gelderland, in a windmill used for grinding grain. While there, he met Mina (Wilhelmina) Aleida Winkelhorst (April 14, 1893), who worked in the mill operator's house. On April 8, 1913, Hendrik left for Edmonton, Alberta, where he worked for the City Water Works.

Hendrik took up the SW 16-62-3-5 in Neerlandia on September 17, 1913. Later that year he returned to the Netherlands where he married Mina on January 29, 1914. That same day they left for Canada. After arriving in Edmonton, they found that work was scarce, so decided to move to the homestead as soon as possible. Hendrik built a 14 by 22-foot log house in March and he and Mina moved there in August 1914.



Hendrik on the homestead.

When Hendrik obtained the patent to his land in 1921 he was cropping thirteen-and-a-half acres and owned twenty-one cattle and three horses. He had obtained seven of the cattle in 1917 and the three horses in 1919

Hendrik and Mina going to church.

Hendrik had built a 12 by 14-foot cow stable and a 20 by 24-foot hip roof barn. There was a fourteen-foot well on the place as well as three miles of rail fencing.

The Kannegieters, especially Mina, enjoyed having young people and children over. They often had visitors and one time during the 1920s Henry Huinink stayed for a whole summer. Every Saturday, when Mina went to the store to get groceries, she would buy a Neilson's Jersey Milk chocolate bar. Everyday, Henry's treat was to get *one* square of that chocolate bar. Even though he was expected to work hard, Henry was always treated well by the Kannegieters.

Hendrik was an excitable person and could be loud, but laughed a lot. He could sing like a lark. Mina was gentle and soft-spoken. Hendrik was a good farmer and was also very frugal. He used to say that he could live on fifty cents a day.

Kannegieter house built c. 1935.

In 1930 the Kannegieters built a lumber house in which plaster-board was used on the inside. During the thirties, Hendrik obtained the NE 28-61-3-5 after paying the taxes on it. After Hendrik bought a tractor, he would get one of the Sturwold girls to drive it while he sat on whatever piece of machinery was hitched up behind. If he wanted the machinery to go in reverse he would yell, "Retreat!" Hendrik also bought a Ford car, but was never able to drive it properly, often driving into fences and so on, so he eventually sold it.

Hendrik and Mina. 1940. Note the Ford car in the background which Hendrik eventually sold.

Mina was a neat housekeeper. She would not let Hendrik chew his tobacco in the house, so before he came in from outside Hendrik would put his chew in a hollow next to the door jam. When he came outside, he would take it out of the hollow and begin chewing again.

Hendrik and Mina never had children. Fred Toebes would often walk over to Mina's and get cookies, and Mina always said that she wanted to adopt him. If children came over, Mina let them look at all the interesting things she had in the house. Fred was fascinated with the radio she had — imagine a box that could talk!

In 1944 Hendrik sold the farm. The deal was sealed with a handshake — no papers were signed. The Kannegieters retired and moved to Edmonton and in 1968 they moved back to the

Netherlands. Hendrik died there on January 28, 1970, and Mina on March 1, 1977

Joe Van Doesburg

RUDOLF AND GEESJE (SCHANS) KIENEKER

Rudolf George Kieneker (c 1877) was born in Assen, Drenthe, the Netherlands He later became a carpenter and owned a shop in Amsterdam, but after the shop burned down he decided to immigrate to the U S.A. in the early 1900s. His wife, Geesje, and the children followed later. The family was living in Grand Rapids, Michigan, when Rudolf decided to move again. In the spring of 1911 they went to Edmonton, where they lived in Fraser Flats Rudolf took up the NW 10-62-3-5 in Neerlandia as a homestead in August 1914. Rudolf and Geesje moved to Neerlandia with their children **Jenny** (Jantje, June 30, 1898), **Grace** (Grietje, April 26, 1900), **Ted** (Theodorus, September 7, 1901), **Lina** (Roelina Hilberdina, December 18, 1903), **Henry** (Kuenraad Hendrik, May 13 1909), **Hermina** (July 13, 1911), and **Hendrikje** (January 29, 1914)

The Kienekers were neighbours to the Kippers family and the boys often played together. They would sometimes play along the creek that ran through Kippers' land and one of their games was to see how far they dared to walk backwards toward the creek without looking. One time while playing this, one of the Kieneker boys fell in

It was difficult to make a living on the homestead In 1915 Rudolf obtained $115 in relief (to be paid back) from the federal government. In spite of this, the family left after a few years and moved to Edmonton Another son was born in 1917 The Kienekers moved to Monarch in 1918 Later they moved to Washington, U S.A After the Kienekers left Neerlandia, their house was burnt in a bush fire

Rudolf, Rev. Gelderloos in front of log church, c. 1916

HENRY AND JENNIGJE (BRUINS) KIPPERS

Henry (Hendrik) Kippers was born November 16, 1883, in Overijssel, the Netherlands. Being the only child in the family, he took over his father's barbershop business as well as the shoemaker and harness shop. In 1903 Henry married Jennigje Bruins (May 11, 1875) in Nijverdal, Overijssel.

In the winter of 1907, after reading an article in the *Twentsch Volkblad* by a teacher [Evert Aldus] who lived in Nijverdal, Alberta, Henry began thinking of farming in Canada The whole village was full of talk about immigration because letters came regularly from family and friends writing about the new settlement in southern Alberta. It appealed to Henry, especially because he did not want to say "thank you" the rest of his life for three-cent haircuts Jennigje, however, did not want to be a farmer's wife. She had always gotten sick when she had helped out with haying on her father's farm Even so, Henry invited a Canadian agent from Antwerpen, Belgium, to come to their home The agent gave information and showed pictures of the good life in Canada After his visit Henry answered an ad in *De Standaard* asking for a voyage companion for a Canadian immigrant's son. To Henry's great disappointment, though, they could not get enough money for their business to afford going. They decided to wait for a year or so

Finally on the morning of April 10, 1910, the Kippers family left on the train to Rotterdam With Henry and Jennigje were their four sons. **Henry** (Hendrik, January 25, 1905), Klaas (May 24, 1906), **John** (Johannes, December 31, 1907), and Harm (Jan, March 28, 1909). The oldest three travelled for half fare and the baby for free. They went by a Batavier Line boat across to Hull, England, and from England they sailed to Canada. The Kippers were accompanying Mrs C. M. Quist and her three children, who were travelling to Edmonton where C. M. Quist was already living.

Henry Kippers wrote memoirs of his immigration experience The following account from

In the Netherlands, 1909. Henry, Hendrik holding John, Klaas, Jennigje holding Harm

the memoirs begins with their arrival in Edmonton.

Henry was determined that he wanted to live where there was a *Gereformeerde Kerk* and Christian School, or at least a chance of establishing them. There was nothing of this in Edmonton, and he did not know anyone either. Yet the Lord chooses his own ways, even if they are difficult for man. After about a week in Edmonton, all the Kippers children got sick. "Scarlet fever", it was said, "Picked up in Calgary." They called a doctor, who told them, "This is serious. Your three oldest have to go immediately to the hospital and the youngest may stay with you for now." Henry and Jennigje understood only half of it, but they knew very well what was meant. Then the Lord dealt a hard blow. Only a few days later the feared news came — Klaas had died (May 13, 1910), and neither Henry or Jennigje were allowed to go there. Not even at the burial were they permitted to see their child. It did not go better with Herman at home; this little one the Lord took to Himself also (May 9, 1910). There they were, in a strange land, among a people whose language they could not speak. If only they could pour their hearts out to brothers and sisters. An officer of the Salvation Army came to visit, and . . . he indicated to Henry that he was willing, if they wished, to lead the funeral of the children. He read Psalm 23, which they knew very well. Here the Lord gave comfort, He took away, but also gave healing.

The evening after the funeral, both were deep in thought in the house. Suddenly Henry said, "There's an old man walking up and down the street. By all appearances he is looking for something. I'll see if I can help him." But the man was already knocking on the half-open door.

"Is this H. Kippers'?" he asked, in good understandable Dutch . . . "I just read about your experience in *The Edmonton Journal*, and something inside of me said, 'You have to go there.' Then I thought, 'I must go there, not only because I am a Dutchman, but because we also serve the same Lord' . . . My name is Fred Baron. I came from the U.S.A., but for the last five years I have lived in this city and worked in a coal mine." Henry wanted to know if there were more *Nederlanders* in the city, and they decided to try to find them.

The following evening Fred Baron was on time. "I believe we should first go to Fraser Flats," he said. "There must be some Dutchmen there." To their great happiness, after some asking, they found them. There were only a few families, but they knew of others. After those were looked up, Henry said "I invite you all this coming Sunday to our place. Bring your wives and children along, of course, and we will worship the Lord together." That Sunday the house was full and the togetherness was pleasant. They agreed to meet together every Sunday. So men found each other, and the most amazing thing was that nearly all had been in correspondence with the writer of the *De Standaard* advertisement.

The group formed an organization to establish a Christian Reformed Church. Fred Baron was made president, and Henry secretary. Henry received the same position when they formed a society for colonization, because no one considered staying in the city for long. They had come to Canada to farm, and that cannot be done in the city. They wanted a piece of land large enough for a decent-sized colony where they could have their own church and school so that they could continue their churchly life on their own.

Still, they were now in Edmonton for whatever length of time, so the secretary was asked to get in touch with the recently-organized Classis Pacific to see if Edmonton could become a congregation. In response to the writing addressed to the States clerk, the secretary received this answer, "Come yourself to the Classis and plead Edmonton's case there." In consultation with the brothers, Henry went, and received a good reception at Classis [held in Lynden, Washington]. After the meeting Rev. van der Mey went with Henry on his return journey. Like a spreading fire it was soon known that Rev. van der Mey would lead the Sunday services. In the morning he preached on "God is Love", and in the afternoon he dealt with "Our God is a consuming fire." That day was certainly a feast day for all the brothers and sisters, even though they were gathered in a tent. Appropriately, they sang wholeheartedly "Voices can be heard in the tents of the righteous, singing of help and salvation" (Ps. 118). The minister asked the brothers and sisters to gather there again on the evening of October 21, 1910, to organize a congregation. That evening no one stayed home. Rev. van der Mey spoke a short word, membership certificates were submitted, and after that an election for office bearers was held. The president and the secretary were chosen as elders, and Brother Gerrit Roozeboom as deacon. And so it was organized: The First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton.

"The Lord is good and great," said Henry that night. "Who would have thought it, that through the death of our children the way was opened to find each other and now we have our own congregation. Mysterious are the deeds of the Lord. After the bitter, he gives sweetness. We must learn to appreciate it. We have good reason to be thankful. The path the Lord has for us we do not understand completely, but that is not necessary; we need only to understand that his purpose is majestic."

In Edmonton the Kippers family first lived on Griesbach Street. There a daughter, **Gladys** (Klazina), was born November 27, 1910. Henry first operated a harness-making shop on Castino Avenue, then a small grocery store on Pine Street. But he wanted to begin farming, and he filed on a quarter in the Thorhild area on April 28, 1911. He abandoned that quarter and later that year, on December 26, he filed on the NE 10-62-3-5 in the future Neerlandia area.

Another son, **Gerrit**, was born in Edmonton on November 15, 1913. Early the following year Henry and the family moved to the homestead. Their 20 by 30-foot house was built of spruce logs and, for a roof, poles had been put across the top and covered with sods. The floor was lumber except for a little piece of dirt floor under the bed. They discovered that the sod roof leaked badly when it rained, so later a slab roof was put on. Once some friends came over and they asked, "Which is the house and which is the henhouse?" — one looked as bad as the other.

Henry had a good education and could write well. He wrote articles for the *Patrimonium* and *De Hollandsche Farmer*. In *De Hollandsche Farmer* the articles were on such topics as 'Grain Prices', 'Irrigation in Egypt', and 'Cattle in Argentina'. In appreciation for the work he had done, he received a gold watch from *De Hollandsche Farmer*.

On the homestead Henry began clearing the land. The first crops were very small — the children cut it with bread knives. Henry used straw to tie up the bundles. When the grain was dry, it was threshed by clubbing it out with sticks and used to feed the chickens during the winter. Henry cut the hay along the creek with a scythe. After it was dry it was stacked in piles, and Jennigje helped him carry it to the yard on a homemade carrier with two poles. The hay was used to feed the cattle during the winter.

One winter during those early years they had no money and did not know where the next bag of flour would come from, but they knew Whom to go to with their cares. They laid it before the Lord, and the next morning a Vega farmer who owed Henry some money for work he had done came and paid him, providing him money for flour. Two more daughters were born to Henry and Jennigje: **Alice** (Arendje, July 27, 1915) and **Jenny** (Jennigje, December 21, 1916).

Back: Hendrik, John, Henry. Middle: Gerrit, Jennigje. Front Gladys, Jennie, Alice, c. 1922

In 1917 Henry received the patent to the land. He was cropping seventeen acres and had seven cattle. As well as the house, he had built a 16 by 18-foot log stable, an 18 by 22-foot log and lumber stable, and a workshop. There had also been a well dug and one mile of rail and wire fence put up.

Each spring Jennigje put in a big garden. It yielded many potatoes, but the beans always froze because the growing season was so short. Other vegetables such as beets, turnips, carrots, and cabbage, though, did well. In the summer and fall the family picked many wild raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries.

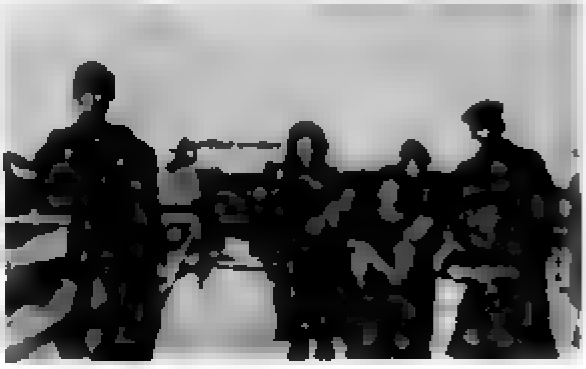
Jennigje did not know how to sew when she first came to the homestead. But Froukje Anema and Roelofje Sturwold taught her how, and from then on she did a lot of sewing. When the family could afford it, material was ordered out of *Eaton's* catalogue. But more often the clothes were made out of flour sacks. One time Gladys got a new outfit — a blouse made out of flour sacks dyed red and a black jumper that had come in a parcel of clothing sent by the Red Cross. Jennigje and Gladys wore straw hats to church or for special occasions, and when the hats became faded, Jennigje dyed them or covered them with cloth.

In the early years the family walked everywhere. Walking was at least as fast as using oxen. Henry walked to Davis' Store in Mellowdale to get groceries, and the family always walked to church. Gladys often stayed at the Anemas between services. Once Henry had such a bad toothache that he set off for Westlock to see a doctor. He had gone as far as Old Barrhead when his toothache disappeared, so he turned and went back home. After 1917 Henry bought a team of horses from Peter Kampnar. Later he bought four horses from Albert Ritsema who was leaving for the U.S.A. Once one of the horses fell through the root cellar which was beside the house. The wood covering the cellar had rotted. Henry butchered that horse in the cellar.

For many winters Henry worked in the Chisholm Lumber Camp to make money to keep the family through the winter. He would walk there and back, leaving on Sunday night and coming home the following Saturday night. He often took eggs and butter along to sell to the Camp. When Henry Jr. was old enough, he went to work at Chisholm too. Henry Jr. also went to the prairies to make money for the family. With part of his earnings one year, Gladys received her first new coat; it was green with a soft fur collar.

When it was too dark to do any work, the children would sit around the table together, and Jennigje would tell stories. She was good at it, and the children enjoyed listening to her. Henry was one of the first Sunday School teachers. He always taught the children in Dutch. At the Christmas program he would often tell the Christmas story to the children.

Gerrit, Gladys, John, Jennigje. Front: Gladys, Jennie, Alice, c. [illegible]



Hendrik, Gladys, Alice, Gerrit, John, Jennie, 1923.

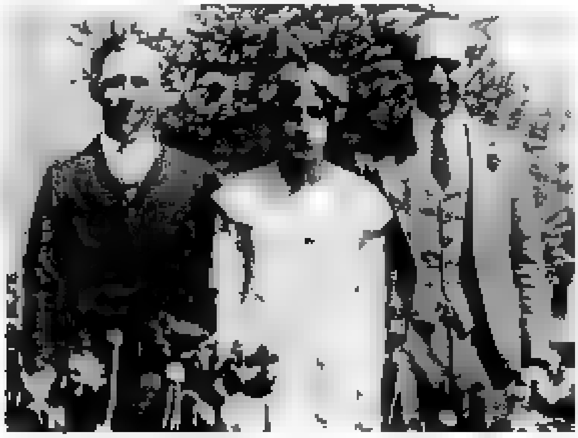
The Kippers children often played with their neighbours, the Schuring children, and also with the Wiscarson children who lived about two miles away. There were chores to do too, however. It was the children's job to get the

cows who grazed east in the meadows along the creek. Sometimes they would go on horseback to get them. Jennigje did the milking.

Around 1925, when Gladys was fifteen and Gerrit was fourteen, they quit school to help out at home. Even though Gladys preferred to work outside, she did a lot of household chores. She took over the sewing work and also did knitting. She began canning vegetables — Jennigje had either stored them in the cellar or salted them down in crocks. Gerrit did not work in the lumber camps during the winter but instead went hunting and trapping. He trapped mainly east of the homestead, getting coyote, squirrel, weasel and muskrat pelts. These he shipped by mail to the Hudson's Bay Company. The money he received went to the family.

In 1928 Gerhard Paas, a bachelor, moved in just north of the Kippers homestead and came over quite often. Twice a week he came to get milk and some of Jennigje's good home-baked bread. One New Year's Eve the family was sitting in the kitchen and around midnight was startled by two shotgun blasts near the house. After a few minutes Gerhard came in — he had fired right outside their window to announce the new year.

One day around 1929, Gerrit was working the land, walking beside the root harrows. Suddenly the horses went on a runaway, and Gerrit broke his leg. Rev. Van Der Woude took him to Barrhead with his car, but the doctor there could not set it, so Rev. Van Der Woude took him to the Misericordia in Edmonton. Gerrit stayed there for about a week.



John, Jenny, Gerrit, c. 1937

By the 1930s Henry had about thirty head of cattle. He was milking twenty-four cows and shipping the cream to Edmonton. In 1932 Henry took out a second homestead, the NE 10-62-3-5.

Gladys married Hendrik Strydhorst in 1932. Henry Jr. married Sophie Wierenga, daughter of Lammert and Hendertje, in 1936. In 1942 Alice married Eko Rowaan, and Gerrit married Clara Krikke. In 1943 Jennie and Klaas Rowaan were married and in 1948 John married Lucy Post.

Jennigje, Hendrik, c. 1940.

Henry and Jennigje had retired from farming in 1944 and moved to the Centre. Henry still kept active. He managed the Credit Union, sold license plates, and looked after the cemetery. He kept the books for the Credit Union until he was 80 years old. Jennigje was bedridden for about a year and went to be with her Lord on April 19, 1948. In May 1949 Henry remarried to **Ann Lanning**. In July 1973 Ann died of a heart attack. She was buried in the U.S.A. Later that year Gladys and Henry Strydhorst

Ann, Henry, 1960s.

moved into Henry's house with him as he was too old to live alone and would not move in with them. He was 89 years old then. Henry passed away October 6, 1977, at nearly 94 years of age.

Gladys Strydhorst

ROELOF AND BOUKJE (KEMPENAR) KOOY

Roelof (Ralph) Kooy wanted to move from the prairie where he and his family lived. Having read glowing reports about Neerlandia in an article written by Henry Kippers Sr. in *De Wachter*, Roelof and a friend went in 1913 or 1914 to look the north country over. But Roelof was not impressed He wrote to a friend of his, Jan Postman, who lived in Grande Prairie that "er is too much wood on the ground out there, so we didn't take up homesteads . . . a fine place for hunters and fishermen, but too hard work to clear a farm out there "[1] It was not that Roelof was afraid of hard work, but at middle age he was almost too old to begin a pioneer's life

Roelof had been born in 1866 in Groningen, the Netherlands. He married Boukje (Bertha) Kempenar (born in 1863, Surhuisterveen, Friesland,) in May 1891. Roelof was a shoemaker by trade and was operating a shoe shop in Surhuisterveen when he decided to immigrate to America. He, Boukje, and their seven children arrived in Chicago in 1905. There their youngest child died of measles. A year or two later the family moved to a farm in Vesper, Wisconsin, but there was too much heavy timber on it to suit Roelof. The next time the family moved (1910) it was to the Dutch settlement of Nijverdal (Nobleford) in Alberta But there the problem was hail and drought, which wiped out their crops in the following years. This made Roelof anxious to find another place to farm.

Roelof made a visit to Neerlandia but was considering a move to Grande Prairie. Finally he decided on Neerlandia — likely because of the Christian community. He took out a homestead (SW 5-62-3-5) on November 23, 1914. That first winter Roelof's son **Pete** (Pieter, December 20, 1894) and daughter **Alice** (October 24, 1896) came to the homestead with him. (Roelof's oldest son, John, continued farming in Nobleford but came to Neerlandia for visits, while his family lived here) Alice did the cooking but she left in the spring, and her sister **Helen** (Henke Martha, May 1, 1899) took over. Roelof and Pete were building a house with some help from Ben Lievers, Jacob Olthuis, and Henry Kippers, so Helen did the cooking for those men as well.

The house was built of logs, but was nicely finished off inside with lumber. It was big — 28

Kooy homestead.

by 24 feet — and had seven rooms, most of which had clothes closets. The Kooys built their house near the northeast corner of their quarter. To get there on the local roads and trails was a task in itself.

Earlier that winter the Neerlandia church had been built. The following story has often been told about Roelof's involvement with the building project. The church was built of logs, and most of the men of the community, including Roelof, came to help put it up. When the walls became too high to lift the logs on by hand, Roelof offered to walk home and get his block and tackle. After about half an hour he reached home, and soon was on his way again with the block and tackle. Since it was quite heavy, Roelof decided to take a shortcut to get back. He set out southeast, past high poplar trees and stands of willow, and around bogs. After an hour or so he still had not reached the church site, and he realized that he was lost. He dropped the block and tackle on the ground, and sat down on a nearby log to rest. Then he heard a dog barking. He picked up his load and hurried toward the sound. To his surprise it was his own dog barking — he was back home!

The youngest Kooy children, **Grace** (Grietje, May 1, 1901) and **Ida** (November 10, 1902) came with Boukje to the homestead in 1915. They travelled by train, first to Edmonton and then to Westlock where Pete picked them up with the horses and wagon.

Ida with dog, Grace, Pete

The Kooy homestead bordered on Baird Lake, which the Kooys nicknamed "The Hudson". They built a ramp into the lake and Roelof made a rowboat so that the girls could go boating in the summer.

Roelof brought cattle from Monarch, probably first shipping them by train to Westlock, then herding them to Neerlandia. He had twelve of them, including a big red Shorthorn bull. To shelter the livestock Roelof and Pete built a log hip roof barn. On top of the barn, the Kooys put a huge swinging bell which could be rung by pulling a rope. The girls used it when they had to call the men for meals.

On Baird Lake, Jennie Oldegbers, Helen, Dena Messelink, Peter, John Oldegbers.

Helen Kooy taught school in the log church for about two years. Though she sometimes rode the pony to school she usually walked. She taught about four grades.

In 1918 Roelof received the patent to his homestead. He was cropping twenty-four acres (twenty of those had been cleared in 1916) and he owned eight cattle and two horses. As well as the house and barn, a granary had been built. There were also two wells on the place.

John, Grace, Peter, Alice, Helen, Ida, Roelof, Boukje and one-and-three-quarter miles of wire and rail fencing. The total value of the improvements was $1425.

Roelof had some skills in tooth pulling and also some tools for that purpose, so the neighbourhood children would go to Roelof if they needed pulling done — the only lasting cure for a toothache. Henry Kippers Jr. and Willy Olthuis were among those who got a tooth pulled by Roelof.

Roelof was active in the community in other ways. He served as elder in the church from December 1916 until the family left Neerlandia. Boukje had never liked it on the homestead, so in June 1918 the Kooys returned to Monarch. In January 1919 Pete Kooy married Jennie Oldegbers, and they also moved to the Monarch area. Roelof and Boukje and their two youngest daughters moved again in 1925, this time to Lynden, Washington, U.S.A. Roelof died there in 1933 of a massive stroke. Boukje died in 1954.

Ida Hempel

John, Jennie Oldegbers, Ida, Peter, Grace, Helen, and Alice. 1918.

The following are some letters that Roelof Kooy wrote while he lived in Neerlandia. They are addressed to his friend Postman in Grande Prairie. In his "advertising" of the community to his friend, Roelof gives us an inside look at what was likely a common mind set.

> By far most of the people here are very poor. First of all it's quite a bit of work in the country, but each year it improves in all areas. I wish that you were here too. You could be useful here just as I am. I'll tell you what I think. The Englishmen are leaving here. Many are already gone — yet one or two and all is Dutch. Here there is still one, his name is Mr. Scot. He has three quarters but wants to leave. His land is available for very little. He can prove up now. I thought that was just something for a man like Postman.
>
> Many greetings.
> Your friend, R. Kooy

> Neerlandia August 16
> Friend Postman and family,
>
> I have already for some time neglected to write you again. We are very healthy and hope you are too. We are living on my homestead that is in Section 5, Township 62, Range 3, West of 5th Meridian. I don't have any open land except by the creek and the lake where we make hay. We have about thirty tons of hay already in stack. Until now we have done it with mower and rake but much has to be cut with the scythe yet between the brush and trees. It's a mess between the trees and bushes. That is also the reason that I did not write you earlier, because I know very well that where you are the country is much nicer than here and I cannot say that about this land. Here you would find it disappointing.
>
> I would gladly have you here, because many Hollanders are living here but they are all poor, and it's understandable that it is difficult to keep a church and school going. Even the teacher Mr. van den Burg is leaving today to Crammersburg to work, to make some money during the busy season, and our daughter Helen is taking over while he's gone. We would really like to keep the Christian school, otherwise a public school will come anyhow and that one will be more expensive. If we keep the school, there will never be a public one because there are only a few English living in between us and they cannot begin anything against forty or fifty Dutchmen. So there is no danger of having to pay for two. But, like I said, the people are mostly all poor. If some people like you come, it would be a gain. With each other we might be able to fix things up, in every way. But I may not lure you here. And you are also not a man that just lets himself be taken in.
>
> The wheat, barley, and oats that grow here are very good. We bought heavy oats for the horses for thirty cents a bushel. I am not going to say anymore about Scot's place except that he lives nicely along the main road right by the creek, a half mile from the post office, three miles from the church. The road will be graded up this fall. If you want to do something you have to see the country and that's all. You can easily stay with us, we have a big house decked with shingles and plenty of room upstairs. If you have to go to Monarch again, then come by and stop over at our place.
>
> What Scot's land looks like and how much is cleared, I know nothing about. How much open land he has I don't know either. I only heard that Scot

> wanted to leave and didn't hear anything more and then I thought of you
>
> Many greetings from us
> R. Kooy and wife and children

Most of quotes from Kooy's letters taken from *The Strength of Their Years* by Tymen E. Hofman. Used with permission of Knight Publishing Ltd. Any other quotes are from letters in the private collection of Tymen E. Hofman.

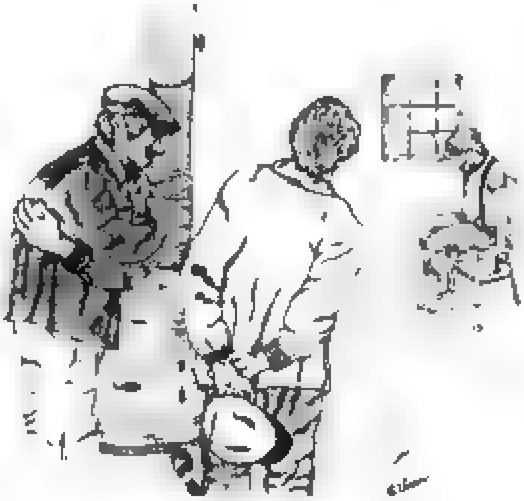
KLAAS AND JANNA (OLDEGBERS) KRIKKE

ALBERT KRIKKE

The Canadian federal government sponsored an overseas advertising campaign to attract settlers to the Canadian west. One such advertisement caught the interest of a young Dutchman working in a clothing factory in Germany. Born in Dedemsvaart, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on October 9, 1886, Klaas Krikke had lived there until both his parents died. Klaas, then fifteen years of age, had gone with Henry Kannegieter and Peter Schuurman to work in nearby Germany. Others in his family had gone to live with relatives. One brother, Bill, was brought up by the Messelink family, and another brother, Roelf, was raised by an older sister, Lammetje. Now Klaas and Bill Krikke and Peter Schuurman, all of Enschede, set out for Alberta. They arrived in Edmonton in 1912 and worked there before taking up homesteads in Neerlandia in 1913. Henry Kannegieter was already here.

Klaas filed on the SW 3-62-3-5 on September 24, 1913. Here he, his brother Bill, Bill Oldegbers, and John Gelderman built a cabin and lived together until other cabins could be constructed. A bunch of young, high-spirited men living together usually results in lots of fun, some of it accidental and some of it planned. These men were no exception. Their early attempts at cooking created some problems. One of them tackled bread-baking. Mixing and kneading the dough was no problem. The dough even started to rise. The problem was it kept rising and rising and rising, out of the pan and onto the table. The dough was put into tins with lids, the lids were tied down, and the tins put in the oven, but the lids soon popped off, the bread rose over the edge and baked lopsidedly. Estimating the right amount of rice to cook for one meal was also a challenge. The first guess resulted in enough rice to last the bachelors for a week.

When each of the men had his own cabin, they played pranks on one another. Bill Oldegbers was a trusting fellow, eager to please. One day Klaas Krikke and John Gelderman went to visit Bill for an evening. On the way, they planned the prank which they proceeded to put into practice when they got to Bill's shack. Soon after their arrival, they told their host that it was cold in his shack. Obligingly, Bill put some wood in the heater. It did not take long before they complained that it was still cold. Once again wood was added. This did not seem to satisfy the visitors, they put on their overcoats and buttoned them up. Even then they seemed unable to get warm and moved closer to the fire. Finally, complaining that since Bill was unable to get his cabin warm they would have to go home to get warmed up, the visitors left. Poor Bill got little sleep that night because his cabin was unbearably hot and took a long time to cool down.



Not all of Klaas' time, however, was spent playing practical tricks on his friends. He was also proving up his quarter and more importantly, courting a young lady. Janna Oldegbers had immigrated in 1911 and was now working in Edmonton. Klaas and Janna had known each other already in the Netherlands where they had attended the same school. This time, however, their interest in each other grew and on January 22, 1917, they became the first couple to get married in the log building of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev

Jongbloed of Edmonton officiated at the ceremony.

In many ways life was easier for Klaas Krikke after he married. He no longer needed to cook, wash, or do the cleaning. Janna was a loving and willing worker, helping out in every way she could. They struggled together to make a good home for their family. Their first home was the bachelor shack with the sod roof. As their family grew, Klaas built another log house measuring 14 by 22 feet, and later added a lean-to. That log house was cold in the winter and wet in summer when it rained. Many of Janna's possessions were spoiled by the water dripping through. The floor of the house was rough boards which had to be scrubbed with a brush, then wiped dry with a cloth. Big cracks developed between the boards as the lumber dried, but they served a useful purpose. They were conveniently located for Klaas Krikke and his friend, Bertus Bos, to use as spittoons when they were chewing tobacco. Janna naturally disliked this practice. Their aim was not as accurate as it might be, and she knew who would have to scrub the floor again when they were done spitting.

The Krikke home was often a stopping place for those who lived further north in Neerlandia and Vega. Here they could rest and be assured of some food. Helping was common in the pioneer days. Many of those who stopped were on their way to take up residence on their homesteads.

Ryer, the first son, was born January 7, 1918, after a difficult labour. Help was sought from a doctor in Westlock but the baby was born before he arrived. The next year, on January 20, 1919, **Johanna** was born. By March 22, 1920, Klaas Krikke was able to patent his land. He had built up his cattle herd to fifteen but had no horses. He had two log stables valued together at $300. In addition he had dug two wells. He had three acres broken, seven acres of land in crop, and five acres slashed. The balance of the land was covered with heavy timber. Three miles of fence had been built by this time.

Janna kept vegetables in a small garden. Wild fruit and meat of wild animals and birds were also part of their diet. As time went on they bought a few chickens and other animals. During the harvest season Klaas went to Nobleford to earn cash to purchase necessities for their farm and home.

Sometimes it was very rough, and "if we could've crawled back to Holland, we would've," Janna said. There were many good, happy, and prosperous times though, when they got pleasure and a sense of achievement from their hard work. Janna was an artistic woman. Before her marriage she had done oil painting as a hobby. She was also a capable seamstress. She and her sister Lily spent many hours hand-making a baptismal gown. The skirt was edged with dainty scallops and the bodice was covered with delicate embroidery, including an embroidered "K". Janna also did embroidery for others, creating designs of flowers or fruit, and at one time taught fancywork to the Messelink and Anema girls.

Stitchery in red by Janna

As a mother, Janna Krikke kept busy. She did much sewing and knitting to keep her family warm and well dressed. The family continued to grow in size and number. **Gladys** (Klazina) was born September 26, 1920; **Lily** (Leida) came on October 8, 1923; **Ralph** (Roelof) arrived October 10, 1925; and **Albert Jan** was born January 10, 1929. The Krikkes were good and loving parents, putting their children's needs before their own. The children all went to Sunday school which was taught by Rieka Lievers of the Brethren. Here they received Bible instruction, and learned many Bible verses and songs.

Klaas Krikke enjoyed his work and was particular about keeping the farm neat. He would walk through his fields picking weeds, making sure he pulled up the root as well. He seldom

Klaas and Janna, 1925.

Back: Janna, Klaas, Ralph. Middle: Jo, Ryer. Front: Lily, Gladys, 1926.

had spare time because draining puddles, fixing fences, and making other repairs kept him busy

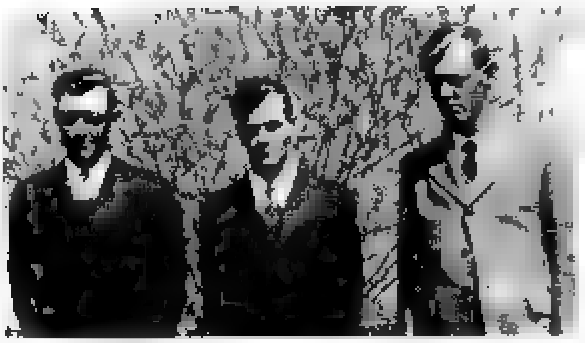
It was not all work with Klaas though. His sense of humour often surfaced. He knew he could always expect visitors on Halloween One year he decided that the best way to cope with the pranksters was to join them. To that end he hid in the hayloft, a favourite target. Sure enough, some young fellows soon climbed up there In the darkness Klaas blended in with the group as they discussed what to do. Now it so happened that Klaas had not had time to put his binder away for the winter so, disguising his voice, he subtly encouraged them to move the binder. This they did, and with their task accomplished the pranksters, laughing at their joke, left the farm. Klaas returned to his house laughing too, because he now had the binder exactly where he wanted it without any effort on his part.

The children too had fun as they grew up. Upstairs in the log house Johanna and Gladys would play tag when they should have been in bed One night, in their excitement, they almost set the house on fire. They knocked down the red-hot stove pipe and it lay smoking on the floor. Klaas came up, put on his mitts, and put the pipe back in place. Then he took the mitts off and directed a stern reprimand to Johanna

As the children grew up they were expected to help on the farm. One of the fall tasks was filling the mattresses with straw Each child had to shake out the old straw and take the empty cover to the straw stack, fill it with fresh straw, and drag it home. Once the mattresses were back on the beds the children had great fun jumping on them to get them into the desired shape

Klaas kept ten or fifteen sheep in the 1930s

Back: Johanna Kooy (a cousin), Klaas, Janna, Lily. Front: Ryer, Ralph, Albert.



Ryer, Ralph, Albert

Janna and her daughters carded, washed, and spun the wool. The Krikke girls also had to help their mother cooking, cleaning, and mending, but when their assigned tasks were finished they were free to choose their activities. Janna encouraged her girls to draw and paint, and gave them some instruction on how to do it. Johanna enjoyed painting but Gladys and Lily preferred being outdoors, finding birds' nests, picking berries, and studying the plants. In their free time Gladys, Lily, Ralph, and Albert often gathered around the organ and sang hymns while their father played. Ryer, the oldest child, was a serious boy who enjoyed doing marquetry

The boys followed their father by becoming farmers. The girls worked out for a time, all of them in the nursing field. All the Krikke children except Lily live in the district. Ryer married Jurina Elgersma, Johanna married Henry Bender of Mellowdale, and Gladys married Pete Mast. Lily, who became a registered nurse, married George Allen of Craigmyle, Alberta, on July 3, 1965. They have one son. Ralph married Rita Gelderman, and Albert, who stayed single, lives on the original homestead where he keeps dairy cattle.

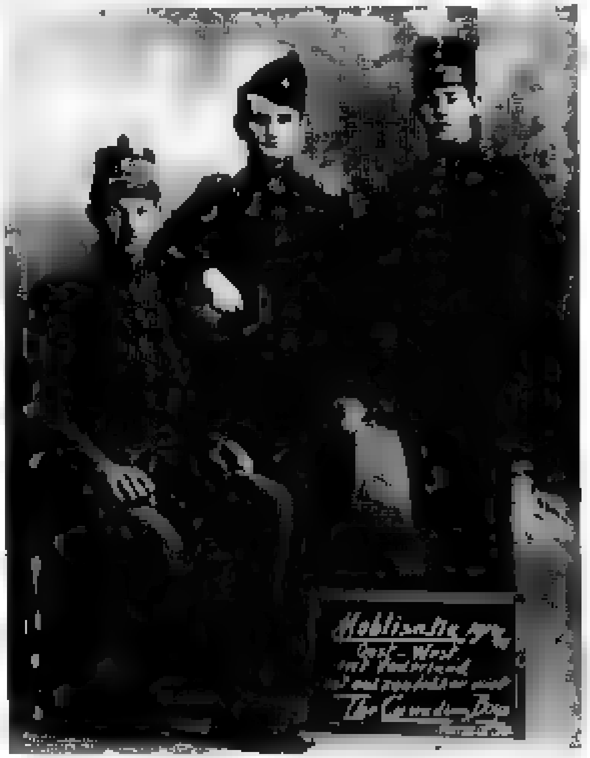
Klaas died April 1, 1964, at the age of 77 His wife, Janna, outlived him by several years. She was housebound for the last years of her life because of arthritis, but she remained cheerful. She died August 12, 1982, trusting in the Lord's promises

Krikke Family

WILLIAM AND CORNELIA (VAN DER VEER) KRIKKE

William Krikke was born in Avereest, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on October 15, 1891. Avereest was a factory town and his father was employed there At the age of twenty, William and his brother Klaas decided to join the migration to Canada. The only available boat was one that arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U S.A. From there it was a long train ride to Edmonton, so the Krikkes saw parts of America not seen by those immigrants that landed in Eastern Canada

Upon arrival in Edmonton, they immediately made contact with others whom they knew from the Netherlands. William and Klaas, too, caught the vision of a Dutch settlement in which to bring up their future families and to teach their beliefs in freedom. With these thoughts in mind, William filed on the NW 3-62-3-5 on September 25, 1913. His first home was a log shack



"East-West in the Fatherland is also not so nice." William seated.

When the First World War broke out, William received his call to serve in the Dutch army. He strongly felt it was his duty as a Dutch citizen to return to the Netherlands. This he did in August 1914 and was placed with the regiment known as the Queen's Guard. Since it was the duty of the regiment to protect and guard Queen Wilhelmina, they traveled throughout the Netherlands with the queen

After he was released from the army, William served as a policeman in Rotterdam. During a skating outing, a friend introduced him to Cornelia Martina Van Der Veer. She had been born in Leiden, Utrecht, on September 18, 1890. Cornelia had worked in different homes, mostly doing housework.

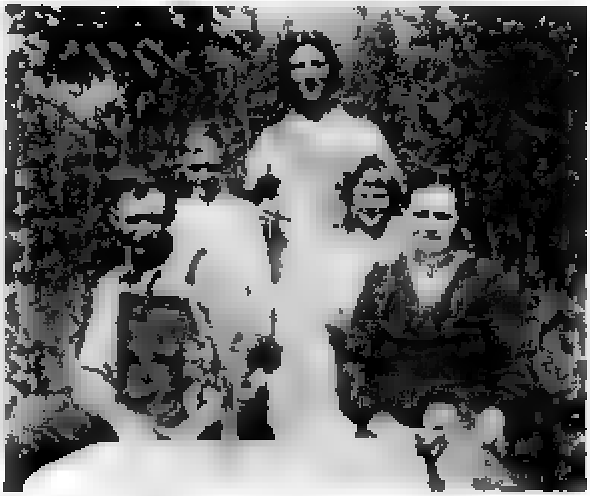
Wedding day. Cornelia, Willem, 1919.

William and Cornelia were married in Rotterdam on May 7, 1919. They immediately made plans to travel to Canada and left the Netherlands in November 1919. This time the route was via Montreal, and within two weeks they arrived in Neerlandia. Their first log house was soon constructed and Cornelia tried her best to make it cozy. From the Netherlands she had taken a German-made sewing machine that even had a reverse stitch on it. This was put to good use. (This machine is still being used by daughter Clara.) Because umbrellas were in frequent use in the old country, Cornelia brought several umbrellas with her. The only use they ever saw in the "new land" was inside the sod roof house where it rained just as hard inside as outside. They later ended up as toys for the children.

William worked away from home to make some extra money. One summer, he helped clear some of Tjeerd (George) Visser's land. In his absence, Cornelia had to milk the cow. The mosquitoes were so thick, she swathed her arms, legs, and neck in newspaper to keep from being bitten while doing the chores. She churned the cream into butter which was sold for cash to buy essentials

In the winter William also worked for the Chisholm Lumber Company. He froze his toes several times while walking home. During the summer, he managed to clear about five acres on his farm, and the following year he seeded it. When William obtained his title on November 26, 1923, it is recorded that he had nine acres cropped and another five broken. He also owned twelve cattle, two stables, a well, granary, two-and-a-half miles of rail fencing, and a half mile of wire fencing. All this plus the log house were valued at $900.

The Krikkes had three children **Clara** (Klaasje Raampje), born March 14, 1922; **Arie**, born November 12, 1927, and **Lula** (Lammigje), born June 17, 1930.



Willem, Arie, Clara, Lula, Cornelia, 1938.

In 1934 William contracted pneumonia and, though his life was in danger, he eventually recovered. Clara and Arie went to *Tante* Janna until the danger was over and Petertje Schoonekamp came to help nurse William. During his illness friends and neighbours helped by doing chores and other tasks. They delivered firewood, and Toney Sturwold came and sawed it. After this illness, William caught colds easily. He also had allergy attacks.

Cornelia suffered from phlebitis and often had open ulcers on her legs. Despite these problems, Cornelia felt very much at home in Neerlandia. Nevertheless, she wrote letters constantly to her friends and relatives in the old country in order to keep in contact with them. She enjoyed reading poems or other selections at community functions.

One day two travelling salesmen came into the farmyard. They had a great deal to show Cornelia, who was home alone. They wanted some chickens, and in exchange she could have a nice set of dishes. There was only one problem: they did not have the dishes with them. Cornelia trustingly made the deal and the salesmen picked out the ten best chickens, promising to send the dishes. Egg production went down because the best of the flock was gone. No dishes arrived either. William told his wife that she certainly had been "taken in" by those fast talkers. When the lost chickens were almost forgotten, a parcel arrived. Cornelia told the children it must be something from the Netherlands. But lo and behold, it was a set of beautiful, thin, lovely china dishes. They were almost too nice to use, but were used on special occasions and lasted a long time.

Chickens and eggs were essentials on the farm. In the winter, an old coal oil lamp was hung in the chicken house early in the morning to provide more daylight hours. The result was an earlier start and more eggs. Wheat was ground in a coffee grinder, cooked, and then a little pepper was added. It was believed that the spice made the chickens a bit more ambitious.

The children helped their parents whenever possible. Clara did many hours of work outside. Before one could begin field work, the horses had to be caught. This was difficult because they were never beside the barn, but always as far away as possible. Clara would entice them one at a time with a little bit of oats and then slip a halter over the horse's head.

Cornelia, Bill, Arie, and a bear who liked chicken, 1947

But there was time for playing too. One time Clara dressed Arie in a pretty dress and bonnet, because she had always wanted a sister to play with. Arie did not mind, and they played happily together. That is, until Father William came along. He had only one son, and he fully intended to keep him in overalls.

The Krikke children grew up and got married. Clara married Gerrit Kippers, Arie married Cecelia Tiemstra, and Lula married Herman Gelderman.

William left Neerlandia only twice since he came back in 1919. The first time he walked to Edmonton to obtain his Canadian citizenship and the second time he rode to Edmonton to visit friends. The rest of his life was spent almost entirely on the farm in Neerlandia.

William and Cornelia were never blessed with prosperity and found life in the adopted land full of hardships and poverty. One cow died from milk fever, another ate a poison plant, and yet another had trouble calving and had to be shot. Life was a constant struggle. Yet through all these hardships they felt the loving hand of the Lord in all they did. They were rich in His promises. William passed away February 19, 1960, and Cornelia soon after on May 27, 1960.

Clara Kippers

TOM LEWIS

Tom (Thomas) A. Lewis filed on the NE 27-61-3-5 on October 17, 1911, next to the quarters his friends George Wing and George Caughlin had filed on. Tom was forty-six years old at the time. He had been born in Huron County, Ontario. He was a tall man — nearly six feet tall, rather thin, and had brown hair. He was a carpenter by trade, but did a lot of hunting and trapping while living on the homestead, where he built a 12 by 14-foot log house.

Tom abandoned the homestead in 1913. By then he had cleared three acres of land and had also grubbed the roots out of the cleared acres. He moved to Ontario, but later returned to this area and took up the NE 34-60-3-5 in Mellowdale. He died September 5, 1920, after being gassed in a well.

BEN AND ALICE (WALVOORT) LIEVERS

Ben Lievers received the patent to his homestead (SE 5-62-3-5) in 1920. He had cleared fifteen acres, but the balance was heavy bush. He was cropping twelve of those acres and had twenty-four cattle and two horses. The horses and eighteen of the cattle had been obtained in 1919. On the farm he had built two log stables and put up 2½ miles of pole fence. He had also dug two wells — one twenty feet deep and the other twelve. Ben took out a second homestead, the NE 32-61-3-5, in 1929. He later bought the SW 4-62-3-5.

Some remembrances by the Lievers children include the following stories.

Their log house had no floor. The day they moved in (1914), the dry grass was so tall that Hanna and Minnie could not see each other in the house! But their running around and Mother Lievers' good housekeeping soon had the grass under control. When it rained the only dry place in the house was under the table. If the rain came from the west, they moved to the east side of the house and vice versa. They often had three-day rains then, too, prolonging the inconvenience. Rather than wake the girls up at night, Mother Lievers would put pans on the beds to catch the drips.

When they were little girls Hanna and Minnie were sent two china dolls from an aunt in the Netherlands. One day, when Mother Lievers was working outside, the sisters took the dolls down from their resting place high up on the cupboard, and were busy playing with them when their mother came back in. Mother Lievers thought they were being so good that she let them play on while she went about her duties. But then Hanna teased Minnie, who became so vexed that she got a hammer and smashed Hanna's doll to pieces. When Mother Lievers came back in and was told what had happened, she said, "Then Minnie shall give her doll to Hanna." That was the last doll that Minnie ever had.

Minnie recalls that their very first garden was dug by hand by her mother — no small task. Her mother had a good garden every year. She worked hard inside and out. She had much work to do since she was often alone for days with the children while Dad Lievers was carpentering in southern Alberta. At these times she was afraid of the Indians who used to tent across the lake. When the family moved into their second log house, built about a year after their first one, Hanna, Minnie, and Rieka were told that they had to sleep three in a bed. Then they argued about who would sleep in the middle. No one wanted to, so Minnie agreed to take that place. As she was a light sleeper, she planned to start in the middle and as soon as the others were asleep, she would push one of them into that position. It worked and no one was the wiser!

As well as school and play, there was always a lot of work to be done. Minnie would have to stay home while Mother Lievers cut the grass with a scythe and then raked it by hand to make hay for the cattle.

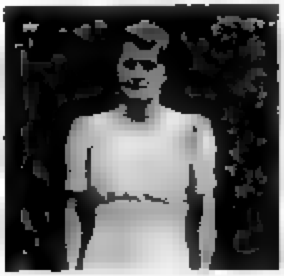
Life was not dull on the Lievers farm with five boys around. They did have to work hard and times were tough, but they also had their fun. Ben Jr., John, and Gerrit were often up to

Ben, Alice. 1939.

pranks. Once a neighbour boy was at their place. The Lievers had a Fordson tractor with four coils that could give quite a kick when induced to do so. The boys told their neighbour to put his hand to the coil. He said, "Do you think I'm crazy?" So the three suggested they catch a chicken and hold it to the coil. They tried to catch a chicken but really wanted the neighbour boy to do that, so edged him along to catch this chicken. He finally did and then held it to the coil. Guess who got the kick? He did!

Hanna married Ralph Krikke. After Minnie quit school, she got a job housekeeping for Mrs. Levy in Neerlandia, then worked for families in Westlock and Edmonton. Bill married Gwen Broadhead in 1946.

Ben Sr. had a farm sale in 1947 or 1948 but continued to live on the home place. His wife, Alice, passed away November 17, 1949, at the age of 66. Then Minnie came home to look after her dad. Ben Sr. took a trip to the Netherlands in 1950 and sponsored three immigrants from the Netherlands. **Ben and Bill Walraven** and Gerhard Beyers. They all stayed at the Lievers', and Minnie had the job of keeping food on the table for them as well as for her brothers and her dad. Those were busy years for her.


Minnie.

The Lievers taking a group of children to Lac La Nonne Bible Camp, 1930s.

Rieka taking Hilda Molodowich (right) and a friend to Sunday School, 1945.

After Minnie had helped at home for twelve years, Rieka took over and Minnie got work with the Housekeeping Department at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. She worked there for twelve years until her retirement. She is now living in the Muttart Homes in Edmonton. Henry Lievers married Jean Halbert of Calgary in 1943. They bought the SW 5-62-3-5, where they farmed, but sold it in 1960. Alice married Sam Kiffiak in 1948 and Ben Jr. married Maude Flint in 1952.

John Lievers bought the home place when his father had the farm sale. In 1952 Ben Jr. took over the working of John's quarter, and John got a job with Import Tool in Edmonton, where he still works. John married Helen Kipp of Westlock in 1954 and they have two sons. John bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Ben Jr. in 1956. He still owns two quarters of land in Neerlandia. Gerrit married Betty Wilson of Lethbridge in 1957 and they live in Abbotsford, B.C.

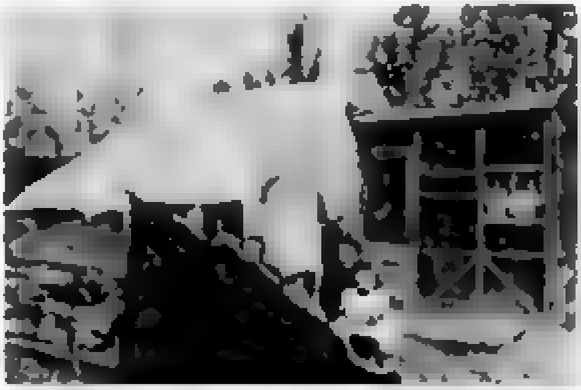
In his later years Ben Sr. would walk to the store every morning for the mail, sometimes stopping along the way to talk to another old-timer, Klaas Krikke. Ben Sr. passed away April 24, 1971.

Lievers Family

HENDRIK AND JENNY (LIEVERS) LIEVERS

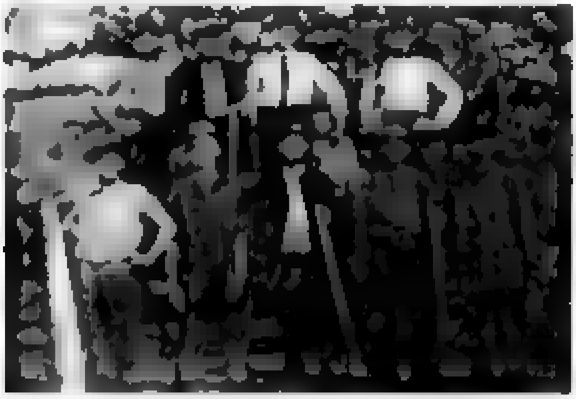
Hendrik was born July 18, 1888, in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands, and later married a distant relative Jenny (Jansjen) Lievers, born February 14, 1891. Times were poor in the

Netherlands, and Hendrik was persuaded to immigrate after hearing Canada advertised as a land of milk and honey. When they left in 1912, Hendrik and Jenny already had a family of three: **Bill** (Jan Willem, July 29, 1906), **Harda** (Gerhard) Johanna (October 10, 1909), and **John** (Gerrit Jan, April 29, 1912).



First home in Edmonton. Hendrik, Harda, Jenny, John, c 1912

The family came first to Edmonton, where Hendrik's brother Ben was already living. Another son **Harry** (Hendrik) was born there on July 19, 1914. During the Great War years Hendrik and his family joined a group of Dutchmen who moved to Engen, B.C., in order to begin a settlement there. Another daughter, **Annie** (Johanna) Elisabeth, was born there on February 21, 1918. In Engen it got so cold that the pump would freeze hard in July. The land was also very poor and sandy; only pine trees and rabbits thrived. The settlement was not a success, and the Lievers family moved from there to a number of different places in B.C. **George** (Gerrit) was born March 28, 1919, in Hutton, B.C.



In Edmonton. Back: ? Groothuis, ?, George Ebbers. Front: ?, George Toebes, John Gort, John Ebbers, Hendrik

In 1920 Hendrik and Jenny moved to Neerlandia because it was a Dutch settlement and Hendrik hoped to farm and be his own boss. On February 25 the Lievers family came from Edmonton to Westlock by train and from there by horse and sleigh to Neerlandia. They stopped at Old Barrhead to warm up, as it was a cold day and there was lots of snow. In Neerlandia they first lived on Ben Lievers' place. Hendrik found work with a farmer named Agnew near Rossington, and would leave Monday morning and come home Saturday night on horseback.

That first summer of 1920 Hendrik met with a terrible accident. One Monday morning, instead of going to Rossington, he stayed home to help his brother Ben with mowing. It was July and grass-cutting time. Ben always cut the man-high grass along Baird Lake and he needed Hendrik to walk ahead and see where the holes were, because if the horses stepped in a hole it could cause an accident. Hendrik put a stick in the ground wherever there was a hole, and Ben was behind him on the mower, guiding the horses. Hendrik had never farmed before and did not realize that the knife was coming under the grass, he only stepped out of the way of the wheels, and the mower cut off one of his legs above the ankle. After the awful shock and lots of commotion, cooler heads prevailed and Hendrik got Ben to use long grass and a hankie from his pocket as a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. Ben could not lift Hendrik to get him on the horse, but after awhile Ben's daughters Hanna and Minnie came with lunch, as it was their turn to bring tea that day. They were wearing white Dutch aprons, and the apron strings were used to tie up the wound. The girls helped Ben put Hendrik on the horse and so they brought him home. Hendrik lay at home all night with the cut continually bleeding. Ben contacted a doctor in Westlock, who wanted to know first of all if he would get paid. Ben promised him that he would get money on time and begged him to come and fix up the leg. But the doctor refused to come, so Ben made a little box to put around the leg for support. Then he went by horseback to Douwe Terpsma's to ask for the use of his democrat, since Douwe had one of the few democrats in the settlement. It was two o'clock in the morning when Ben got there. The horses were loose in the pasture, so Douwe went with a lantern to look for them and was fortunate enough to find them. After they were harnessed, John Terpsma took the democrat to Lievers' place. Hendrik was laid on the back of the democrat and John drove to Kampnar's place. By that time it was morning; on Church Road they passed the children on their way to school. Someone had come as far as Shoal Creek or Kampnar's with a car and they took Hendrik from there to Westlock, where he was given something to ease the pain. Hendrik remained conscious until they reached the hospital in Edmonton. There he passed out and did not regain consciousness until it was all over. The doctors there amputated his leg, and after he left the hospital Hendrik stayed with *Dominee* Ruys in Edmonton for a couple of weeks. The Neerlandia people probably never expected to see him again, but after six weeks Hendrik was back, wearing an artificial leg.

Hendrik learned to get around quite well with his artificial leg. He took out the SE 6-62-3-5 as a homestead that winter on December 15, 1920, and the next year began the slow and arduous work of clearing and breaking the land. During the first years on the homestead, two more children were born to Hendrik and Jenny: **James** (Jacob) on January 14, 1921, and **Edward** on September 19, 1922. During the winter of 1921-22, Hendrik bought a team of oxen and one day *Dominee* Ruys came to help him break the team in. John Oldegbers came by to help too. John had just put some hay on the hayrack to haul home. He had his father's team of horses (they were a runaway team) and tied them to the garden fence. The men went to work with the oxen and, meanwhile, John Lievers went to the creek to chop some ice. (The family had no well and so they used melted ice for water.) After chopping out a block of ice, John carried it on his head to the house. The horses shyed away when they saw the ice, then broke loose and went running past the house onto a trail that had been cut through the trees. Hendrik made a practice of hanging his scythe up in the willows out of the children's reach, but it was knocked down by the runaway horses as they ran through the trees and got caught in the lines of the harness. The horses started to kick, but the more they kicked the worse it got. They ran about a quarter of a mile, then stopped. The men went to see what had happened and they found one horse with a leg just about off and so cut up that they had to shoot it. The other horse was also badly cut, but Jan Oldegbers nursed it back to health, although it never regained its strength. The only good thing that came out of the episode was that the Lievers family got some delicious smoked horsemeat.

Hendrik did not own horses at first, so the oxen were used to pull the wagon. His oxen, like most, were strong, slow, and stubborn. One hot summer Bill and Harda had to go to the store. They hitched up the oxen and away they went, but not very fast since the oxen did not want to go. The road to the store was being built up at the time, so there was a long deep hole alongside the road where all the earth had been taken out. The hole was full of water, and when they came there, the oxen thought it was time for a rest and a drink. They walked into the big hole and drank some water, then went farther, into the middle of the hole where the water was deeper. Bill and Harda were sitting on a board laid across the top of the wagon box, and the water got so deep that they had to put their feet on top of the board to stay dry. No matter what the children tried, the oxen would not budge from the hole. After about half an hour the oxen climbed out. When they got to the top all the water ran out of the wagon box, so Bill and Harda could put their feet down again.

One day Jenny was cutting up some vegetables and Hendrik tried to snatch them (just like a man), so Jenny threatened to cut his fingers with the knife. Hendrik dared her to hit the thick leather part of his artificial leg as hard as she could with the knife. Jenny did, and the knife was so sharp it went right through the leather and drew blood.

The Lievers children were quite a lively bunch, with lots of good-natured rivalry. On one occasion, on their way home from school, the boys were throwing mud balls from the end of a long green stick when Joe Holwerda came along with a team of horses and wagon. The boys dared brother John, usually called Shortie, to hit one of the horses, thinking he would miss. He needed no coaxing. He swung, and bingo — he hit one of the horses right between the eyes. Off went the team of horses and wagon across the ditch. When Joe finally brought them to a standstill, he climbed off the wagon and gave Shortie "Lesson No. 1."

Hendrik enjoyed hunting, and the children spent many hours outdoors as well. The boys had many favourite pastimes such as chasing squirrels, climbing the tallest spruce tree and then sliding down on the branches to the ground, or climbing poplar saplings and swinging out from near the top. Annie went along on all these adventures and was part of the gang.

On long winter nights the family would sit around the fire and play various instruments. They had quite a band at one time, consisting of a piano accordion, a mandolin, guitars, and harmonicas. Jenny and Hendrik both had lovely voices and all the children loved to sing.

George, Harda.

Around 1922, Jenny became sick and was later bedridden for three years with asthma and pneumonia. She never regained her health and on February 8, 1927, she passed away as a result of a ruptured appendix. It was a terrible loss for the family; life for them became very difficult.

After Jenny's death Harda kept the house. She had quite a time of it, trying to keep things in order. The boys would play tricks on her like knocking on the door and then hiding on her. When she would come to the door no one would be there. After a few times of this she finally composed a little tune and, whenever the boys knocked, would sing, "If there is someone there, then let him come in." One day a neighbour, Jacob Olthuis, came to the house and knocked at the door. Harda started to sing her little tune but of course Jacob kept on knocking for a while. He finally gave up, accepted the invitation, and entered the kitchen, standing behind her for a while listening to her little tune. Then suddenly he spoke, and Harda — quite surprised — found it necessary to give him an explanation.

Harda also had quite a time with Shortie and Harry, who were supposed to keep the wood box filled with firewood. When she ran out of wood she would start to sing a little tune. Of course it was not long until Shortie and Harry had picked up the tune and were singing it just outside the door, which only added to her frustration. Then Harda would come storming through the door — one time only to find a dead skinned muskrat tied to the doorknob. Harda married John Terpsma of Neerlandia in 1928. After that Hendrik and the family did their own housekeeping.

Hendrik, Harda and John Terpsma, George.

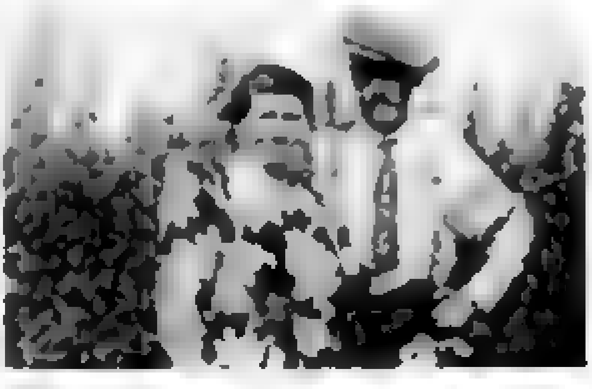
Shortie, known for his good nature, could sometimes be quite mischievous. The younger Lievers children were left to themselves quite a bit of the time and, having nothing better to do, they made a tunnel through the straw stack and reinforced it with poles (much the same way it was done in the coal mines). It was quite safe, and they used to spend a lot of time in the tunnel. Shortie, however, would come along and with the help of Harry drive a bunch of sows through the tunnel while the younger children were in it. They could not, however, figure out why no one was coming out the other end of the tunnel ahead of the sows. Knowing their good-natured brothers, George and the others had counted on them doing something like that and had made short tunnels off the main one with small doors they could close behind them. So they were never in any real danger of being trampled by the sows

Harry could run like a hare and squeal like a pig. There was one sow with a litter of piglets who was very temperamental. Harry got into the habit of teasing her by squealing like a little pig. The sow would get excited, of course, thinking he had one of her little ones, and come running with her mouth wide open Harry could run a lot faster than the younger children, so as soon as they heard Harry squeal they knew what was going to happen and off they would go as fast as they could. They would run to the log chicken coop, which had been banked all around with dirt, and make two leaps, one onto the bank and the other onto the low roof of the chicken coop. The angry sow was always only a few feet behind the last child to reach the coop; none of the children ever forgot to make that second leap. This went on for the most part of one summer until it backfired It happened that the Lievers' house had a very low window which had been removed One day Harry was again teasing the sow, but this time the children did not think they could make it to the hen house So one after the other they went through the window opening, the sow in angry pursuit. Luckily there was a one-hundred-pound bag of flour on the kitchen floor for the sow to vent her rage on. She grabbed the bag of flour and scattered it all over the kitchen floor (the children were up the stairs by that time). That may have been a blessing in disguise because it put an end to the whole episode; when Dad Lievers came home there was some explaining to do!

On another occasion, school had just been dismissed, and the Lievers children were on the road by the Co-op store when along came Slim (George) Olthuis with a four-horse outfit He was riding one of the horses, with the reins dragging behind. What a temptation for a young boy! Jim needed no encouragement; he stepped on one of the reins and the horses turned, with Slim completely out of control. Slim jumped off the horse and took after Jim, long legs after short legs, back and forth through the trees. What a sight to behold. Slim would get within a few feet, with long arms reaching, but Jim finally got away

The Lievers family did their own housekeeping until 1932 when Hendrik remarried to **Katherine Bozak**. Katherine (born 1909) came from Altacane, Saskatchewan, with two children, **Frank** (born July 12, 1925) and **Violet** (born 1928) Tillotson.

Hendrik, George, Harry, Annie, cousins Bill and Henry Lievers. Seated: Jim, Frank and Violet Tillotson, Edward



Kate and Hendrik.

In 1936 and '37, Bill, Harry, and George went to the Peace River country to work. During 1938-40, they did mill work and logging at mills owned respectively by Nap Garneau, Matt Lessard, and Harry Branden. Wages were poor, but they got board and room. Then the Second World War broke out. Bill and Harry volunteered for the Army, and George and James were drafted. Another brother, **Stanley**, was born April 23, 1948.

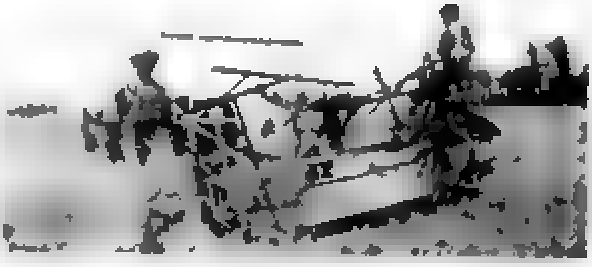
Bill had taken out the NE 6-62-3-5 as a homestead in 1926. He was a great outdoorsman. He loved to hunt and trap and was a crack shot with a rifle. He married Bertha Howey and they had three children, **Josephine, Jim**, and **John**. After World War II, Bill left Neerlandia. He later married Opal Desjarlais. In later years Bill and Opal divorced, and Bill remarried. He farmed in Flatbush for a number of years before moving first to Edmonton and then to Ponoka where he passed away

John homesteaded the NW 6-62-3-5 for a short time but never proved it up. In later years he bought the home place. After selling it in 1948 he farmed in Flatbush He is now retired and living with his sister Harda in New Westminster, B.C

Harry homesteaded the W½ 9-62-4-5. He married Hannah Thulien of Veteran, Alberta They have nine children, one passed away They moved to Flatbush in 1953 after selling their land. They are now retired and residing in Westlock.

Annie left home quite young and worked out housekeeping. While working in Granum she met and married Joe Rigel. They have three children and are residing on a farm near Fort Macleod, where they have lived since they were married

In 1946 George began homesteading the SW 14-62-4-5 and the NW 11-62-4-5, selling them in 1954. He married Eileen Munro of Condor They have four children and live on a farm in Flatbush



Hendrik, George on binder, 1941.

Jim homesteaded the SW 31-61-3-5 for a short time before the Second World War. In the army he attained to the rank of sergeant and spent time overseas, serving in England during the time of the Blitz. Jim married Joan Styles, whom he met in England during the war. They settled in Fort Macloed where they operate a bulk gas station. Jim and Joan have five children

Edward married **Emma Neumann** of Camp Creek. They first lived on the home place and then homesteaded the NW 14-62-4-5 After selling their land in the 1940s, they lived in Edmonton for some time and then farmed for many years in Flatbush. They have five children. Edward and Emma are now doing evangelism work near Hannah

Frank Tillotson homesteaded the SE 14-62-4-5 but never proved it up. He and his wife, Melitta Klatt of Edmonton, have four children. After leaving Neerlandia Frank worked

George and Hendrik checking the wheat, 1952

as a truck driver. Presently he is working as a bus driver in Edmonton.

After her schooling Violet Tillotson worked at various jobs in Neerlandia. She married Mel Barr of Wetaskiwan, and they had two children. She later married Nick Garuk of Edmonton.

Like the rest of the family, Stanley was educated in Neerlandia school. As a boy he spent a lot of time in a bush camp in Ft. Assiniboine with his parents. Stanley was always interested in cars. He worked in the Neerlandia garage for a while, then lived in Edmonton where he built and rebuilt motors. In recent years he has built his own racing cars. Stanley married Carmen Tamm of Vancouver, B.C. They have one child. Later they were divorced, and Stanley married Beverly Friesen of Coronation. They have two children and live in Cache Creek, B.C.

In 1974, Hendrik, age eighty-five, and Katherine, age sixty-five, passed away within a few months of each other.

George Lievers
Harda Terpsma

PETE LOUWS

Pete (Pieter) Louws (c. 1892) had lived in Conrad, Montana, but although the rest of his family moved to Lynden, Washington, he moved to Canada. Pete first took up the NW 10-61-3-5 in Neerlandia in 1913. He later took up the SW 23-61-3-5 on May 15, 1916. He was twenty-four years old at that time. On his homestead application, he listed his birthplace as Middelburg, Zeeland, the Netherlands, and his occupation as farmer.

Pete moved to the SW 23 in October 1916 and soon built a 10 by 12-foot log shack with a sod roof. It was a low house and he had to duck to get through the doorway. He also dug a twelve-foot well and built a log barn for his two horses, although he had no horses after 1920. He was cropping fourteen acres in 1920 but summerfallowed all of them in 1921. Besides the acres cropped, he had slashed ten acres and enclosed the cleared land with a fence 260 rods long. Peter received the patent to his land in 1922.

A brother of Pete's, **John**, also spent some time in Neerlandia around the early twenties, but soon returned to Lynden. When Pete was on the homestead — usually during the winter — he would do some trapping, but he kept no livestock. He was good at working with machinery and could fix almost anything. Besides his mechanical skills, it was said that he could remember sermons word for word. In his later years here, he listened to sermons on the radio rather than come to church to hear them — he had always been somewhat of a loner.

John, Peter, c. 1918.

Pete was often gone from the homestead for over six months or more at a time. While away, he worked on farms in southern Alberta or in the mines in Edmonton. As far as is known, Pete left Neerlandia around 1935. He first went south and worked on a ranch, then moved to Edmonton in the 1950s. He sold newspapers there and died around 1977.

ALBERT AND EVERDINA (OLDEGBERS) MAST

Albert Mast came to Edmonton with his parents in 1911. As his father did, he filed first in the Thorhild area and later in what was to become Neerlandia. He chose the SE 21-61-3-5 and filed on it on December 18, 1911. While in Edmonton he met Everdina Oldegbers and married her April 8, 1912. He had gone back to the homestead with the rest of the men in January 1912 to build cabins so he had a home for his wife.

A son, **Carl (Koop) Pieter**, was born March 1, 1913, to Everdina and Albert, and just three weeks later the Masts packed up their belong-

Everdina, 1907

ings and went to their homestead. On the way the oxen grew tired and, upon reaching a slough, lay down to take a rest. The Masts were worried that something was wrong with the animals but, on checking, discovered the oxen were contentedly chewing their cud. The log house they lived in had a sod roof which leaked so badly that when it rained the only dry place Everdina could find to put baby Carl was under the table

At first water was hauled from the muskeg or the nearby creek. In winter it was necessary to chop a hole in the ice The water was then pailed into a barrel on a stoneboat pulled by one horse Later, Albert built a two-storey log house. The main floor was partitioned into two rooms. Upon entering the first room one would see a corner partitioned off to form a little room for the post office. Albert became postmaster in 1913. The Masts kept a general store from 1914-1922, so another corner of the room served as storage room for the containers of staple foods brought in from Edmonton by whatever means possible At this time Albert was also a registrar and recorded births and deaths in the community. Life was difficult for the pioneers. Many times Albert walked from Manola, Dusseldorf, or even Edmonton carrying heavy loads on his back. Once while carrying the mail he was treed by a bear for a night

Infant mortality was high. Albert and Everdina lost an infant son, **Klaas**, in 1914 The baby, who had been sickly since his birth on May 3, died May 20 at about two weeks of age. Albert made the tiny coffin himself, and the baby was buried on the northeast corner of Koop's land When land was designated for a cemetery in 1915 the child was reburied there, since this was required by law

In order to make extra money to provide for his growing family, Albert worked at a variety of jobs which kept him away from home for weeks at a time. In the meantime, Everdina worked just as hard at home looking after the family and livestock. In those days the livestock still roamed free (the only fences were around the gardens), so Everdina had to tramp about looking for the cattle. Carl, then about seven years old, would stay at home to watch the younger children:**Carrie** (Gentye) born October 9, 1915, **Clarence** (Klaas) born September 18, 1917, and **Pete** (Pieter Koop) born November 13, 1919 Carl would give Pete the can of syrup to keep him quiet. At times, when it seemed to little Carl that his mother must be lost because she had been gone a long time, he would stand on a fence post and ring a cowbell. She could hear this bell for a long way and would follow the sound home

Albert was able to patent his land by July 21, 1917. At this time, according to the government records, he had built two log stables and a hen house, constructed one-and-one-half miles of wire and rail fences, and dug a well. These improvements were valued at two hundred and eighty-nine dollars. He had cleared and cropped ten acres of land and had six head of cattle and three horses

The Masts moved back to Edmonton in 1923 to make money which would enable them to continue to live on the homestead. They kept a few cows and peddled milk. While in Edmonton a son, whom they named **William**, was born (December 11, 1924).

In 1926 the family returned to the homestead and the back-breaking work continued On laundry day Everdina would go to the well and haul pail after pail of water, two pails at time, for the wash.

On an extremely cold night in December, **Kobie** (Coba) was born. It was December 22, 1926, and so cold that everything cracked from the frost That night a cat family froze to death under the porch. In the house, however, a chimney fire set the roof ablaze and **Albert** was kept busy hauling water to save the family home. In the midst of all the excitement, Kobie entered the world. Two years later on July 3, 1928, **Albert** was born in the quietness of the Barrhead hospital.

Alice (Aaltje, March 4, 1930) and **John** (Jan, October 3, 1932) were born in the log house, but not **Joe** (Johannes). A new chicken house was under construction and when it was finished it was such a nice building that the family decided to move into it themselves. Here Joe was born March 2, 1935. A granary was put against the chicken house and used as a bedroom for the children. The chickens got the old house. They did eventually get the house which had been built for them, after Albert and Everdina built a frame house for themselves in 1939.

Back: Clarence, Peter. Front: John, Joe. c. 1938.

Everdina loved all animals and was especially fond of sheep. Her boys inherited her fondness for animals and could easily train them. This trait was put to good use when Clarence and Pete sought an easier way than walking to get to school. They trained their dog, Towser, to pull a sled. That got them to school in a hurry. Towser was followed by Jip and Sport who pulled Albert, John, and Joe to school.

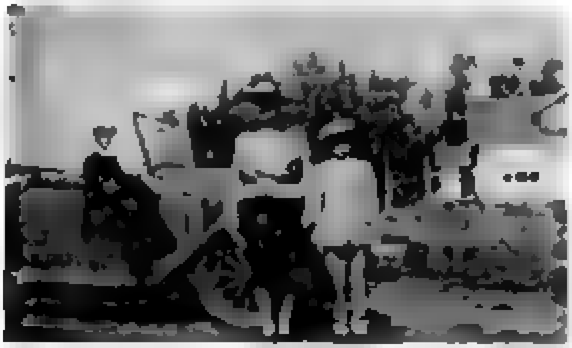
Back: Bill Oldegbers, Peter, Carrie, Minnie, Clarence. Middle: Bill, Albert Sr., Everdina. Front: Albert, Alice, John, Joe, c. 1938.

Albert Sr. became the first janitor of the Christian Reformed Church built in 1928. He held this position until 1948. In winter he would have to start the fire on Saturday to make sure the church would be comfortable for the Sunday services. Often he would walk with a lantern to the church late Saturday evening to check the fires.

As time went on, Albert cleared more land. The clearing was done by hand and, as they grew up, the older boys also helped. The oxen and horses did a lot of work and certainly earned their keep. Blackflies and bull flies were a constant nuisance. Plowing a straight furrow was sometimes an impossible task. Everything would be going fine when along would come a swarm of flies and the oxen would run to the nearest clump of trees. Soon the field would look like a piece of abstract art.

The Masts were members of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. As the years went by, the children (one after the other) found their life partners and left home. Carrie was the first to go when she married Gerrit Nanninga in 1942. Next, Minnie married Tymen Berger of Edmonton in 1943. When Clarence was in Europe during World War II, he met and married Grace Dop (1946). In 1949, Pete married Gladys Krikke in the store hall.

Sjerp de Vries, John, Albert Sr. 1940



Bill, Everdina, Joe, 1944

Albert Jr. married Ann Hamoen in 1951 in Barrhead. For two years there was a little peace, and then the marriage wheel started turning again. Four of the Mast children married in 1953. In March Bill married Joan Talen in Edmonton. In May, Kobie married William Vander Leest in Neerlandia. In August, John married Hennie Vander Meulen in the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church. At the end of 1953 Carl married Agnes Muir in the Mast home. Albert Sr. was very ill with cancer at that time, and in this way he was able to witness his oldest son getting married.

On January 28, 1954, Albert Sr. passed away after a lengthy illness. He was laid to rest in the Neerlandia cemetery a few days later.

Nine years after Carl and Agnes got married, wedding bells rang for Joe. He married Marion Postma in Neerlandia in 1962. The last of the Masts to marry was Alice, who married Terrence Saville in Edmonton.

Everdina Mast is living in the Emmanuel Christian Senior Citizens Home in Edmonton. Even though the family suffered many hardships, Everdina is thankful to the Lord for His constant care and guidance, for sustaining her and her family through both the bad and the good years. She is thankful that she has been given many years to watch her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren grow up.

Joe Mast

KOOP AND MINKE (DE RUITER) MAST

Koop P. (1852) and Minke A. (1857) Mast lived on a freight boat in St. Anna Parochie, Friesland, the Netherlands, and moved freight from place to place along the canals. But living on the freight boat was not ideal for a young growing family, and it did not pay enough to support the family. The children were able to attend school only in the winter when the canals were frozen. The family finally sold their ship and moved to Almelo, Overijssel. There some of the family worked in cotton factories, and Minke did some custom sewing — but there was not enough work for all of them. Their oldest son, Peter, went to Germany to look for work. The family did not hear from him for a while, so their second son, Albert, went to look for Peter in order to bring him back — for by then they had heard about America, the land of opportunity, through a local newspaper.

Since the Netherlands was overcrowded, jobs were hard to come by, and the wages poor, the Masts decided to immigrate to America — the country where it was possible to own some land and be your own boss. Albert needed new footwear before they left, so he went to the store to buy some *klompen*. He came home with the biggest pair he could find. His mother said, *"In frede's namme wat dochsto mei die grutte dingen?* (What on earth are you doing with those big things?)" Albert answered, *"Se wiene foar itselde jild.* (They were for the same price.)"

The Masts travelled to the U.S.A. at the turn of the century (1901 or 1902) with four boys and one girl: Peter (1882), **Albert** Minne (November 8, 1884), **Alice** (Aaltje, May 29, 1886), **Carl K.** (Koop, 1895), and **Henry** (Hendrikus, March 11, 1898). They had two other boys named Koop and Cornelius, who died in infancy. On arrival in New York the family settled in Utica, New York, and found work in the cotton factories.

Albert, Henry, Carl K., Aaltje, c 1902.

Aaltje, Henry, Minke, Carl K. c. 1905.

Albert could not work there because he was allergic to cotton (it made him break out into boils) so he sold milk from door-to-door with a horse and wagon.

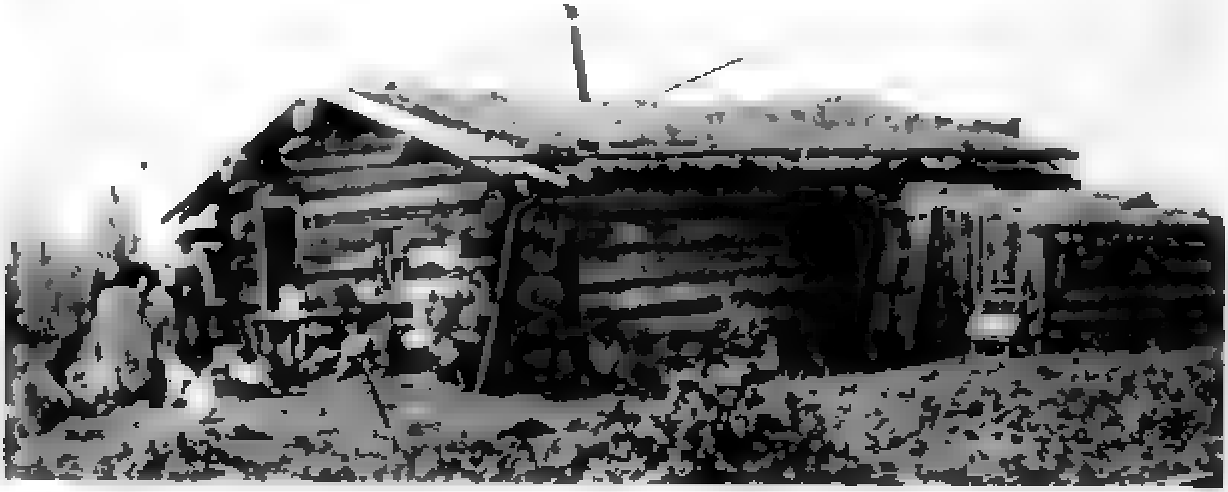
Peter became very ill, contracted diphtheria, and died in 1904 at the age of 22 years After living in Utica for about seven years the family moved to Whitinsville, Massachusetts, again for better job opportunities. There they worked in the cotton factories, and Albert worked on a farm. While working in the factory, a belt of the machine at which Koop was working hit him and damaged his eyes, leaving him with poor eyesight

The Masts met the Baker family in the U S. A., and Alice married their son Joe. Then, in a Dutch newspaper, they read about Canada, where you could buy land for ten dollars a quarter. This was too good an opportunity to pass up so the Masts and the Bakers came by train from Whitinsville and arrived in Edmonton on April 8, 1911. There they first lived in a tent. They took up land near Thorhild, but abandoned this land to go northwest of Edmonton with other Dutchmen. Koop filed on the NE 15-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911.

In the spring of 1912, the Mast family moved to their homestead. The Albert Jan Oldegbers and Koop Mast families travelled together to Neerlandia. John Oldegbers reported that they came to Neerlandia over the Klondike Trail. At first John Anema and Siebren Tiemstra accompanied them with horse teams but they had to return to their jobs and, since it was impossible to use the horses — they sank into the mud up to their bellies, they left the two families. Albert Jan then purchased an ox and a bull, the Masts also had oxen. When Anema and Tiemstra left them the others left some of their belongings behind.

Even with the oxen it was necessary to double up the teams to get the wagons through some parts of the trail Sometimes the men would unhitch the teams, drive them around a mucky spot, stretch chain across and pull the wagon through in that way It was necessary to walk for much of the way, because both the oxen and the horses had enough to pull without the added weight of people Finally after about two weeks they reached the Big Timber — it took them two days to get through that. The trip was long and hard. Just south of the homestead was another slough. Here the wagons got quite stuck. This last struggle overwhelmed Koop. "Just roll me over into the creek," he said.

At first the Mast family lived in a log shack. This was later replaced by a sturdily-built log house



Mast homestead, c. 1913. Minke, Koop.

Minke Mast was also sturdily built. She was only about five feet and four inches tall, but weighed over two hundred pounds. Her practice of wearing aprons with big ruffles around the waist emphasized her size. Because she had worked right along with the men on the houseboat, many of those pounds were muscle. She had no trouble bending over and hefting a washtub full of water. Minke's husband was a slightly-built man whom she could lift — chair and all — when she was sweeping the floor. While still in Edmonton, the Mast sons had rescued a little dog that was floating down the river in a box. Minke, who promptly named him Moses, took him along to the homestead where he fathered many little black dogs. There were always dogs and cats around the Mast household because Minke loved animals.

Koop walked to Edmonton many times. It took about three days one way. He made one trip to see his daughter Alice's new baby. Another time Koop grew tired, lay down, and fell asleep. When he awoke he continued walking but lost his way. After walking for some time he came to a clearing where he saw a shack. He knocked on the door and was surprised when his own wife opened the door.

Koop and Minke worked hard in their pioneer days though they had come to Neerlandia in their late fifties. Koop was not in the best of health but his sons, Carl and Henry, helped to develop the homestead. They took turns working out to make extra money. Albert had married Everdina Oldegbers and had his own homestead. Minke worked as a midwife for a number of years. Koop and Minke were a couple with big hearts, ready to help others in need. Koop Mast died March 30, 1915, at sixty-three years of age. He was the first person buried in the Neerlandia Cemetery. Minke died August 8, 1925, at sixty-eight years of age.

Marion Mast

JOHN AND EVERDINA (OLDEGBERS) MESSELINK

John (Johan Albert) Messelink, born August 16, 1886, in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, grew up to be a farmhand and occasionally worked in a factory. He married Dina (Everdina) Oldegbers on October 13, 1910. Life in the Netherlands was difficult for the young couple, so when Everdina's parents immigrated to Canada, John and Everdina went along. They arrived in Edmonton in 1911. The Messelinks stayed in Edmonton for two years. During this time two children, **Margaret** (Gerharda, October 11, 1911) and **Johanna** (April 7, 1913) were born.

John had applied for a homestead (NE 34-61-3-5) on December 18, 1911, and after the birth of Johanna, John and Everdina moved to Neerlandia. Here, in a 14 by 20-foot log house,

Lily (Aleida) was born on October 25, 1914, and **Albert** Jan on May 11, 1916. Albert wrote, "Many fond memories linger with us of the old log house and the years that were spent there. When it rained hard the only dry place seemed to be under the table. We also had a free loader at all our meals, a big one-eyed cat that sat at the end of the bench."

On the homestead there was a 16 by 22-foot log barn and a chicken coop. There were two wells, one twenty-four and the other thirty feet deep. A few acres of land were broken and put in crop and harvested. John also put up 1½ miles of a three-strand wire fence

John on the homestead.

John had heart trouble for several years, and on November 21, 1916, he passed away. At the request of Dina, Case Ingwersen, clerk of the church, wrote a letter to John's father in the Netherlands. Here are a few excerpts:

> Dear Brother,
>
> during the last days, his illness was such that. humanly speaking there was no hope for recovery Happily, he had been spiritually ready for a long time to leave this vale of tears.
>
> Still, his dying was unexpected to everyone. He left this morning at eight o'clock, quietly and peacefully to his eternal home Knowing that his life was in Christ, we may assume that also his dying was profit for him.
>
> His widow requested on behalf of the family to advise you and yours of this sad news. I hereby fulfill my painful task
>
> Also on behalf of the consistory, of which our brother was a faithful member, I offer you our sympathy and condolences. We bid you the comfort of the Holy Spirit in this painful loss.
>
> With sincere condolences
> C. Ingwersen

The death of John changed the life of the family and the subsequent development of the homestead in a dramatic way. No doubt Dina had some misgivings about what was to become of her family, but because of her faith in God and his Providential care, the children felt secure and happy as they grew up.

Albert, Johanna, Lillian, Margaret, early 1920s.

Trying to live on a small widow's pension, doing the wash for one of the "better off" families, and being janitor of the school to help pay for the school taxes became part of Dina's life. As school janitor she had to light the stove each morning. Carrying a bag of kindling one mile in twenty-below-zero F. weather was hard, cold work. When spring arrived the roads became quagmire, and a lot of mud was carried into the school in large lumps. Many Saturdays were

spent scraping the mud off the floor to get it looking respectable for the coming week

Many neighbours helped Dina with farming and the care of her family Some neighbours cleared land and cropped it, increasing the cropped land to six acres by 1920. In order to keep warm in winter it was necessary to have an adequate supply of fuel Large trees were cut down and Toney Sturwold would arrive with his engine-powered saw and cut the logs into stove-length blocks. Sometimes the Messelinks ran out of firewood and then the children would get out the big crosscut saw, cut their own wood, and chop it into manageable pieces.

Repairing roof of Messelink's house: John and Bill Oldegbers.

Part of the Messelinks' food supply was the produce from the large garden that Dina planted each year. When some meat was needed, Margaret would catch a chicken. Lil and Jo would hold it while Margaret wielded the axe and cut off its head. When the axe fell Lil and Jo fled in panic, since the chicken would run in circles until dead

Besides chickens, the Messelinks had two milk cows. After the morning milking, the cows were turned loose to forage since there was no herd law. When the girls had to get the cows in the evening they sometimes had to walk a long way to find them.

In 1921 there was excitement and activity on the Messelink homestead. A log store was set up, with Mr. Ingwersen as storekeeper. The store was situated there for one year.

Weeks of excitement preceded the first of July picnic. It was the only day one could buy ice-cream and pop. After all the practising they had done for the three-legged race, stick race, and straight race, it was quite exciting to see how much money they could make Quarters and dimes were handed out to the winners of the races and the children really thought they were fortunate to have so much money for a few days. Being good athletes made a difference!

One time the girls contracted whooping cough and scarlet fever and were confined to their home. At that time it was considered very contagious, so they were not allowed to see or talk to anyone Lil wrote, "Notes were written to friends at school and put on a fence post some yards from the house. In exchange, the friends would write notes to us and the Anema girls (close neighbours) would pick up ours and leave the others. Watching from the window, we would wait until our friends had left and run and get the letters."

The years went by and after Margaret reached the age of sixteen, Dina's pension was reduced. Realizing that when the rest of the children reached this age there would be no pension, Dina decided to sell the homestead to her cousin Bill Oldegbers in exchange for a home in Edmonton. Thus in 1928 the Messelink family left Neerlandia. On March 16, 1983, at the age of ninety-five, Everdina Messelink passed away.

Albert and Lil Messelink

HENRY AND ANNA (MICHAEL) MICHAEL

Henry J. Michael was born February 9, 1873, in Geldrop, North Brabant, the Netherlands. Since he was the youngest in a family of eleven children, he learned the upholstery trade instead of farming as his father and grandfather had done In 1906 he married his cousin Anna Elisabeth Michael (born in 1875). Employment was difficult to find in the Netherlands, so Henry worked in Belgium for awhile.

Henry and Anna had already moved to Breda, South Holland, when they read an advertisement in a Dutch newspaper encouraging people to come to Canada. In 1911, after some indecision, they set sail. They went to Edmonton, where they lived for two years, first in a tent. Henry worked for Blowey-Henry Upholstery for awhile, but their hearts were set on farming.

On December 18, 1911, after Henry had gone to Townships 61 and 62 with a group of other Dutchmen, he paid the required ten-dollar filing fee and took out a homestead (NE 4-62-3-5). Some time later, he walked to the area with Menne Nanninga and Cornelius Ingwersen. They took along some tools to help each other build log houses. To build, they used the trees that they had cleared off the site. Since Anna had poor eyesight, Henry made large windows in his log house. After their mission was accomplished, the men walked back to Edmonton.

Walking through the bush was very difficult, and in seeking an easy trail one of the men walked on a frozen creek. Suddenly he went through the ice and had to stay at a stopping place until the next day to dry out and warm up. It was a Saturday evening when the other two, tired and with swollen feet, arrived home in Edmonton. The next day they went to church anyway.

Michael's log house

Anna, Henry, on the homestead, c. 1915.

In 1913 Henry and Anna bought a beautiful heavy yoke of oxen and a wagon, and moved to the homestead. Henry and Anna hoped for a child but Anna hemorrhaged easily and always miscarried. A friend in the Netherlands wrote to Anna with some advice — Queen Wilhelmina, who had the same difficulty, had been told by her doctor to stay in bed during the time she was expecting . . . in due time Princess Juliana had been born — maybe Anna should try the same. Anna took the advice, although she found it quite trying to stay in bed for so long. The neighbour women helped with the work. What a happy day it was when on November 25, 1916, a son was born to Henry and Anna! They named him **Bert** (Lambertus) Johannes.

In 1918 Henry sold the oxen and replaced them with two horses. Not being experienced in buying horses, he ended up with broncos he could not handle. He often wished he had kept the oxen — they were slow, but at least they were sure.

Henry had to work hard to make a living on the land, but joy and satisfaction came with each additional acre cleared. One fall (1918) he went with Menne Nanninga and Ben Lievers to southern Alberta during the harvest to earn money to enable him to continue on the homestead.

When the government of Alberta intro-

Henry, Bert, Anna, 1918.

duced the Cow Bill, Henry, along with others from the settlement, applied for the grant. The cattle were bought at the Edmonton stockyards and herded home from there. During the trip three of Henry's herd went astray. It took him several days and much prayer to find them.

In those years cream had to be taken to Westlock for shipping. Henry was one of the farmers who took turns taking it there. Often much-needed groceries were bought with the money received for the cream.

The youngest hunter, Bert, 1920

By 1921, when he patented the land, Henry was cropping seven acres with two more broken. Besides the 14×18-foot house, Henry had built a 26×40-foot log stable, an 18×22-foot hen house, a cow stable, and a 2¼ mile rail fence. These improvements were valued at $800. He also owned twenty-five cattle and two horses. For these animals, there was plenty of grass available in the nearby meadows around Baird Lake. The quarter on which the Michaels lived had a heavy stand of poplar trees. After a family with the same surname moved into the Neerlandia area in 1923, Henry became known as Poplar Michael to keep him straight from the other one, who was then called Muskeg Michael.

Anna was not a strong woman. She had a weak heart, and helping with the livestock or doing outside chores was too strenuous for her. Once Henry hid the garden hoe on her, but Anna said, "If you want to make life miserable for me . . . " and did the hoeing anyhow. Henry fixed up the well, which was sixteen feet deep, so that the pail was attached to a weight equal to that of a full pail of water. The weight acted as a counterbalance thus making it easier for Anna to draw water when she needed it.

During the winter months Henry would take up his upholstery tools and make furniture. For lumber he used birch logs which he sawed by hand. He used hay and burlap to pad the furniture. Rev. Van Der Woude needed a chair for his study, Henry Kippers ordered a love seat, and Oene Piers wanted a bench to put behind the table for his boys to sit on. Henry built Oene a lovely bench. The back and seat were padded and covered with leather. The whole thing was glued — not a nail to be found.

Both Henry and Anna were musical and could sing well. Henry also directed Choral Society for awhile.

Anna had a serious thyroid condition as well as a weak heart. It became necessary for her to go to Edmonton for an operation — to be done in two stages. The first stage left her so weak that the second stage was postponed for some time. During this waiting period she said, "Do not pray that I will live, but pray that I will be willing to abide by God's will." That was hard for Henry to do. The second stage was undertaken in 1926 and Anna died shortly afterward. She was 51 years old. A great tragedy for a husband and a nine-year-old son! The

Henry, Bert, Anna, c. 1923.

neighbours were very helpful during that time Henry considered going back to the Netherlands, but decided to carry on the best that he could. Henry's sister-in-law Deana Michael, a nurse from Michigan, U.S.A., came for three months to help them adjust. After that Henry did the housekeeping. He learned to cook, make butter, and even bake bread. The neighbour women helped out by washing the clothes and bringing produce from their gardens

Henry and his son Bert built a lumber chicken coop in 1929 Later that same year their log house burnt down due to a brush fire which caught the grass along the fence. Nothing in the house was saved. Many people, however, donated things such as a bed, pots, pans' and linen, enabling Henry and Bert to set up house in the chicken coop. The following year they built a 16 × 20-foot lumber house. It had three rooms downstairs and one bedroom upstairs. Windows, nails, shingles, and tar paper for the building were bought at the store. The bill came to fifty dollars, a lot of cream cheques!

Henry, Bert, 1927

Bert had a trap line on the way to school which he checked each day before and after school. In it, he caught squirrels and weasels as well as the occasional skunk He also trapped many muskrats in Baird Lake. The money from the furs went into a cocoa tin in the cupboard for school supplies, mitts, or whatever Bert needed. Anna had always quoted a good rule in life: "Buy first what is necessary, then what is useful, and last what is desirable."

Henry had trouble with arthritis, so when Bert was fourteen he quit school to help his father with the farm work. During the Depression, Henry and Bert lived from the land as much as possible. One time, when their hog return was over $100, Bert got a new .22 rifle from Eaton's catalogue for $4.95. He considered himself the happiest boy in Canada But Henry said, "You may only shoot for fur or food." Bert hunted deer and moose for meat. When the first snow came, the season was open and he and the neighbourhood boys, usually Ryer Krikke and Albert Schoonekamp, would go hunting in the bush west of Baird Lake. Bert tried his hand at mink ranching during the '30s but had to give it up for lack of fresh meat and fish

During World War II, Bert was exempted from enlistment in the army because he was needed on the farm and had to take care of his father By that time, Henry, due to his age and arthritic condition, had difficulty keeping up with the household duties. Both he and Bert were praying for a helpmeet for Bert. Their prayers were answered and Bert married Jenny Bouwman in 1945

Henry lived with Bert and Jenny until he became ill in 1960 and went to the Barrhead hospital. On July 15, 1960, after a brief illness of one month, Henry went to be with the Lord he loved

Jenny Michael

MENNE AND AALTJE (VAN TIL) NANNINGA

Menne Nanninga was born March 18, 1879, in Niekerk, Groningen, the Netherlands. Aaltje Van Til was born April 13, 1881, also in Groningen, to a family of *boeren*. The couple was married in 1906. Both Menne's father and his grandfather were carpenters and Menne followed in their footsteps. He also went to night school to learn more about his trade. While in the Netherlands three sons were born to Menne and Aaltje: **Andy** (Anne) on July 29, 1907, **Ike** (Ite) on August 14, 1908; and **Louis** (Louwe) on February 7, 1910.

The year after Louis was born, in April, Menne and Aaltje left their families behind and sailed for Canada. They became sea-sick the first day, but somehow managed to feed and care for their three hungry and active boys during the trip. From Quebec they rode the train to Alberta. The train was dusty and dirty, and there were many Polish immigrants on board with them. The Nanningas came to Edmonton via Calgary and were surprised to see green grass there after the snowy prairie.

Menne soon obtained a job as a carpenter, to enable him to provide for his family. A fourth son, **Gerrit** (Gerard), was born July 26, soon after they arrived in 1911. On December 18, 1911, while living in Edmonton, Menne filed on the NE 9-62-3-5 in what later became Neerlandia. He failed to do the required work on it and it went back to the government. Menne soon built a house in Edmonton for his family. The Nanningas milked cows and had a small milk route there. Another son was born in 1912, but lived only ten months. A daughter was born in 1914, but she died six-and-a-half months later. Both children died from summer complaint. Another son, **Andrew** (Enne) was born November 7, 1915.

In Edmonton about 1912. Standing: Andy, Ike, Louis. Sitting Menne holding Gerrit, Aaltje holding Andrew.

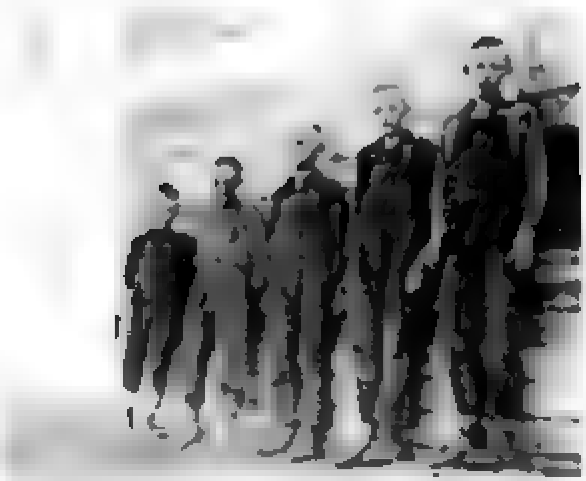
Menne built two houses in what is now the Norwood district of Edmonton. The first he sold with no difficulty, but the second was completed during World War I and practically had to be given away, because no one had any money.

The year of the move to Neerlandia was 1916. Menne had filed on the SE 32-61-3-5 in 1915. He chose that quarter because he could get water from the creek and there was plenty of grass for cattle. Menne went to the homestead first and built a log house with the help of Jim and Klaas Tuininga. The family came by train to Clyde, by Marshall's Stage to Old Barrhead, and from there by bobsleigh to the homestead (there was still snow on the ground in the Neerlandia area). Menne had purchased a couple of horses in Edmonton, and took them, along with the wagon packed with the family's possessions, to Neerlandia. Most likely one or two of the oldest sons went with him. Once at the homestead, the Nanningas erected a log barn and began clearing the land using axe and horses.

A daughter, **Grace** (Geeske), was a welcome addition on March 7, 1917. Another son, **Cor** (Corneus), was born April 11, 1919. That was the year of the deep snow. Government loans had been used to buy cows, but four of the cattle died that winter. The snow was so deep that the horses had to take a big jump in order to get going. Andy and Ike, however, did not seem to mind the snow. They made skis and went over the drifts with ease.

Menne and Aaltje's eighth son, whom they named **Bert** (Albertus), was born July 15, 1920. Sons were important in this land, for many hands made much work lighter. Also around 1920, the Nanningas built one of the first lumber houses in Neerlandia. The house was 16 by 28-feet, had two storeys, and was considered a palace. Another girl, **Hilda**, was born in this house on December 16, 1923.

Menne received the patent to his homestead in 1920. At that time, he had already broken twenty acres and was cropping thirteen. Records indicate that in 1918 he had nine



On the homestead about 1921. Andrew, Gerrit, Louis, Ike, Andy.

cattle, in 1919 obtained eleven more, but by 1920 had only sixteen cattle. He also owned four horses, had dug a 16-foot well, and built two log stables and 1½ miles of fence. All the improvements, including the frame house, were valued at $1280.

At about this time Louis, then thirteen or fourteen, fell down the stairs in the barn and cracked his ankle. Dave Tuininga, trucker at the time, took him to Westlock where his foot was looked at and packed in ice. The next day someone took him to Edmonton where he received X-Rays. Louis came home a celebrity because he needed a cast for that ankle. Minor medical problems and some not-so-minor were handled at home. Andy got up one morning to discover red streaks going up his arm — blood poisoning, no doubt. Menne cut Andy's infected arm with a razor blade and drained the poison out. Everything healed nicely.

Walking was a necessary part of pioneering. Menne walked to Edmonton and back at least once, and one time walked home from Dusseldorf with a pig's head that Aaltje used for making headcheese.

Aaltje worked hard on the homestead. She baked bread three times a week, nine long loaves each time to provide enough for her large family. Each of the children had two sets of clothes: one for Sunday and the other for the rest of the week. Aaltje did the wash twice a week, using a scrub board. She usually washed the clothes in the nearby creek. One time she was on a board that had been put across the creek, rinsing out some clothes. She was on her knees and before she knew it she had fallen in headfirst. She got to her feet quickly in the waist-deep water and started shouting for help. Louis pulled her out of the creek easily, but according to her she *ontrent verzopen* (almost drowned). Besides the household chores and caring for the children, Aaltje did much of the outside work when necessary. With the help of the older children, she would pitch hay, milk cows, feed animals and tend a huge garden.

Making a living for such a large family did not come easily, so around 1922 or 1923 Menne went to work in Portland, Oregon, as a carpenter. Meanwhile Aaltje and the children looked after the farm. In Oregon Menne worked on buildings for the World Fair. In later years, he and his older sons also worked in southern Alberta near Granum during the summer and fall. They helped with the harvest there and brought their wages home to help make ends meet on the farm. Menne also worked at Lacombe Research Station during one harvest.

For the children, growing up poor was no hardship. In the summer the boys swam in the creek and in winter they fashioned their own sleigh and went up and down the hills with glee. Chasing rabbits or riding steers was fun too. Quiet entertainment (if there is such a thing with nine children) was reading or playing games with each other. In those years the children walked to school through the bush on a trail along the creek.

In the pioneer days it was said that the people of Fort Assiniboine lived on wild meat and berries; but those in Neerlandia lived on old cows and fat sows. The cows that were not marketable were eaten. One of Nanninga's cows, Old Blue, was a Cow Bill cow and she finally got put on the table after twenty years of giving milk. The fat sows were needed for lard that was used in cooking, baking, and frying. A special treat at Easter time was as many hard-boiled eggs as one could eat.

Before 1929, breaking the land was done with seven or eight horses, but that year the family purchased a brand-new McCormick tractor and a threshing machine. The tractor was used to do some custom breaking as well as the Nanningas' own farm work. The older sons, Andy and Ike, helped to purchase the tractor with wages earned at Fluet's Sawmill and at Chisholm Lumber.

In 1932 Menne decided to set up his own sawmill. There was an abundance of trees and a possible demand for lumber. Besides, Menne had his own home-grown crew — seven sons. The idea worked well. With this mill he also did quite a bit of custom sawing.

Menne was skilled at drafting and architectural work. He drafted many blueprints for the homes of his children as they married. He enjoyed this more than farming.

Menne Nanninga built the first lumber school in 1918 with the help of Ben Lievers and Jacob Olthuis and he also worked on the second school. He drafted the plans for the two Christian Reformed Church buildings and the first parsonage. Menne worked with other carpenters in the second Co-op store. In 1938 he also had a hand in designing and building the present Co-op building. Menne Nanninga, as well as Ben Lievers, was often called upon to construct coffins for community members who had passed away. After making the coffin, Menne usually delivered it and stayed to help prepare the body for burial.

Menne, Aaltje, 1948.

Both Menne and Aaltje had great faith that their heavenly Father had led them to this country for a purpose and they trusted in Him for all things. Menne was active in church and community. He served on the consistory and was a charter member of the Neerlandia Cooperative Association.

In 1947, when Menne was 68 and Aaltje 66, they sold their farm to Bert and moved to the Centre. All the children were married by then. They bought a house from Henry Bouwman (probably the first house they ever bought instead of built) and enjoyed retirement. A chicken house, however, had to be built there and Menne also spent many happy hours drafting blueprints for houses in his little room upstairs. Aaltje passed away October 12, 1962, and Menne nine months later on July 12, 1963.

Nanninga Family

BILL OLDEGBERS

Bill (Willem) Oldegbers (born March 15, 1890) and his sister Dena (Everdina, born May 29, 1891) had been taken in by their uncle and aunt Jan and Johanna Oldgebers in 1893 because their mother, Gerritje (Witpaard) Oldegbers, had died and their father, Klaas, was unable to cope with his loss. When the Oldegbers immigrated to Canada in 1911, Bill and Dena decided to go along, though their father begged them with tears to stay in the Netherlands.

Bill, before 1911.

When Bill came to this area, he filed on the SE 4-62-3-5, on September 24, 1913. Here he lived alone, eating many a meal of rabbit — fried, roasted, or stewed. Though he stayed only a few years, he worked hard to clear his land, and became known as a helpful friend, more than ready to help anyone in need.

As time went on, Bill went to Edmonton to

work for the City Water Works. He first rented his quarter to Klaas Krikke and later sold it to Chris Leder. His interest in Neerlandia remained very strong, however, and Uncle Bill, as he was affectionately called, came back often to help and visit.

When Dena Messelink moved to Edmonton in 1926, Bill bought her land (NE 34-61-3-5). Still, he continued living in Edmonton, renting the land to John Visser for many years and later selling it to him. For as many years as possible, until old age prevented him from doing so, Uncle Bill made Neerlandia his second home. He had many good friends among the adults, teenagers, and children. He was a great reader of Christian books, and when visiting his friends and family he would tell the story he had just read. This telling would be a long evening's entertainment, which even the children enjoyed. And Bill enjoyed the children. He always had his pockets filled with candy or gum, and was known to the children as the "Candy Man". He had a good sense of humour and his visits always included jokes and riddles for his friends to figure out. The children could never figure out how he got that needle all the way through his head — pushing it in through his forehead and pulling it out the back! Or, how come he could make his nose crack when he pushed it on the table, when they could not? More amazing, it never hurt him when he did these things!

Bill was a very honest man, completely trustworthy in business dealings. He believed other people were too, especially those whom he considered fellow Christians. Because of this, his word was his bond. Unfortunately, some people took advantage of his trusting nature, and Bill was badly cheated a few times. These occasions pained him deeply.

In his good-heartedness, Bill hid a man for approximately one year. This man was from southern Alberta and was hiding so that he would not be returned to the Netherlands to fight in World War I. At first no one knew that the fugitive was there, but people became suspicious when Bill began buying more groceries than was his custom. Klaas and Janna Krikke became privy to the secret one day when Bill had a chimney fire. Klaas, whose house was across the road from Bill's and who knew that Bill was gone for the day, was going over to put the fire out when he suddenly noticed someone on the roof. More curious than ever, he went over and discovered that the man on the roof was someone he had previously met in Granum. The fugitive had married shortly before coming to Neerlandia, and after about six months his wife joined him to live in a cabin they built in the woods to the northwest of Bill's quarter. Bill was relieved when the war was over. He said he would never do such a thing again because he thought it was not right.

Bill continued to work for the City Water Works until his retirement. He was also the janitor for the First Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton for many years, a task he did free of charge. Bill died at 91 years of age, in March of 1981. He is remembered by his friends as Uncle Bill.

Johanna Bender
Rita Krikke

JAN AND JOHANNA (WITPAARD) OLDEGBERS

At the age of sixty most people start thinking of taking it a bit easier. Not so with Albert Jan and Albertje Johanna Oldegbers, born in Ommen, Overijssel, who at the ages of 64 and 55 set sail for Canada and the extreme hardships of homesteading. Jan had a friend in Canada, Hendrik ter Horst, who by writing about how good it was in Canada had persuaded him to come. There were twelve members in the family group that left Enschede, Overijssel: Albert Jan (March 5, 1847) and Johanna (September 16, 1856) Oldegbers, two married daughters and their husbands, Henry and **Petertje** (January 18, 1883) Schoonekamp, and Albert and **Dena** (December 26, 1887) Messelink; three unmarried daughters, **Janna** (September 22, 1889), **Lily** (February 18, 1894), and **Jennie** (1896), their son **John** (Gerrit Jan, December 23, 1898); and a nephew and niece, **Willem** and **Dena** Oldegbers, who had been part of the family since an early age.

The boat the Oldegbers family had originally planned on taking needed repairs so they booked passage on another which took them to New York and which, incidentally, meant arriving earlier than they anticipated in the new country. Upon docking they were conducted to an immigration hall where all immigrants stayed while awaiting the proper train. The immigration hall in which the Oldegbers family stayed was so infested with mice that the men

fastened their pants tightly around their ankles to prevent the mice from crawling up their legs. The women experienced greater difficulty yet, trying to tighten their skirts around their ankles. Sleeping was a nightmare since the mice ran around and over the people. The Oldegbers were delighted that their stay was just a short one. A ten-day trip by train took them from New York to Edmonton. They spent another ten days at the Immigration Hall in Edmonton while looking for their own accommodations. They received food and shelter there and, best of all, there were no mice

In Edmonton they rented a house, and as many family members as possible went out working to earn money to enable them to start homesteading. Because John was still young, he had to attend school. Jan Oldegbers soon left with eleven other men to find land where they could all farm close together. About ninety-five miles northwest in Townships 61 and 62 they found the area they liked. The first thing they did was build a shack where they could live while they looked the land over. The quarters were all numbered with government stakes and the men made a list of the ones which interested them. Then they put the numbers in a pile and began to draw. Each went back to Edmonton with the land number he had picked. Jan drew the SE 34-61-3-5, the quarter on which the shack had been built. Since the family could live in this cabin they moved to the homestead in 1912.

After hiring two teams of horses, two wagons, and two drivers (John Anema and Siebren Tiemstra), the Oldegbers and their son John and the Koop Masts and their son Henry left for their homesteads. They were the first of the twelve to bring their families to the wilderness and the first Dutch people to settle the area.

Jan, Johanna, 1910.

The trip was a nightmare — only a winding trail through the bush, criss-crossed with sloughs, creeks, and rivers. There were hordes of black flies, mosquitoes, and other insects for company. The men and often women too would walk to make it easier for the horses. When they came to sloughs they had to decide whether to find a way around or to struggle through it. If they were to go around a slough it meant extra miles and time. If they went through the slough, the men would use logging chains and both teams to get the wagons across, one at a time. At one place the Oldegbers had to leave some of their furniture behind in a shack and when they returned later most of it was gone

The Oldegbers spent many days travelling, sleeping in the bush along the way. When they

finally came to what is now Neerlandia, they could settle in their new home and start farming. Jan had taken some chickens on the wagon, but most of them died on the trip. He bought a cow and heifer along the way. The single girls had remained in Edmonton earning money to help the parents on the farm. For the next few years they sent groceries and other needed supplies. The Oldegbers family had their own eggs and milk. There were also many wild animals and birds to be had, John became a good hunter and kept the family supplied with meat, which they salted down so it would keep. Wild fruit was plentiful. They soon had a small garden plot where they could grow vegetables and potatoes. Because it was so difficult to get supplies into the area these pioneers had to make many of their own tools and furniture. Jan Oldegbers made a chair frame from intertwined willows and covered it with moosehide.

Johanna, John, Jan, 1913

Farming was difficult. On occasion Jan Oldegbers and Douwe Ierpsma would put up hay together. They would look for open spots where grass grew. Then working by hand with scythe, rake, and fork, they would make hay. The rake was made out of twigs and branches and a bit of lumber, and included a cradle to catch the hay. One time they had made two stacks and decided that because of the dryness and the fire hazard they should put a fireguard around them. They had just completed one fireguard when a whirlwind came and deposited sparks on the other stack. Before the men could act and because no water was available, the entire stack was consumed before their eyes — a winter's supply of hay gone in minutes.

Jan was good at farming and worked hard. He was especially good with sick animals. He often walked many miles to help those with sick livestock. On a number of occasions, sometimes at night, he went all the way to Vega. Wherever he was needed, he responded. He continued to do this although he himself was not healthy, suffering from diabetes.

Jan liked to discuss religious matters and appeared to be a stern man, but he could also be humorous. He would show visiting youngsters a variety of rope tricks and amuse them with jokes and riddles. One time he asked a little boy, "What do you do with poor firewood?" The little fellow confessed that he did not know so Jan said, "We burn ours."

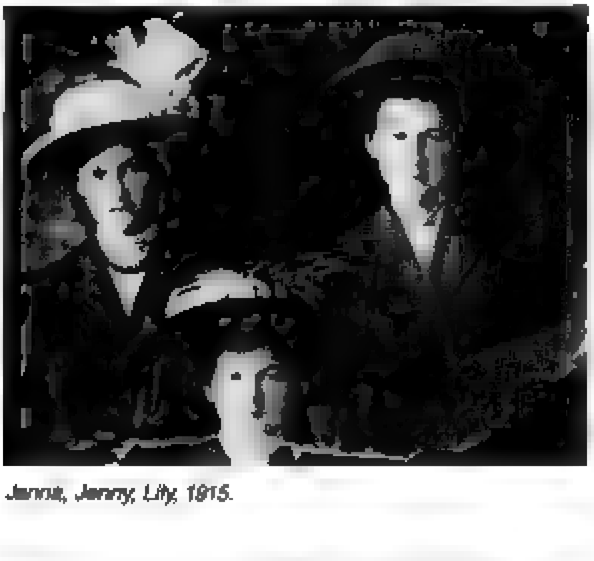
Johanna loved pretty things and tried to make her pioneer home attractive by planting flowers. One of her favourite was Sweet William. Near the house she planted hops, which grew quickly and soon covered the walls and roof. She also had another use for plants. From the flower of the pineapple weed, she made an herbal tea which was good for colds. Johanna was a quiet person who liked to putter in her garden, but she was also helpful, and good with sick people. While her husband walked miles for animals, Johanna went for people, often serving as a midwife, helping in childbirth.

The two oldest Oldegbers daughters remained in Edmonton with their families a few years, but came to Neerlandia in 1915. The three girls, Janna, Lily, and Jennie, who worked in Edmonton, occasionally came to visit their parents and brother. These trips were no pleasure as the roads were terrible and the travel slow. They would come by freight train to Clyde, then by stage coach or with the mailman to the Dusseldorf area. The trip from Edmonton took two days.

One regular stopping place was Southworth's. Many travellers stayed the night there. The girls would be afraid because the men would begin drinking, become rowdy, and make improper advances to the girls. The man of the house, however, was a wonderful host. He would tell the girls not to worry, and he himself would sleep right outside their door.

which was simply a curtain, so no one would bother them. From Southworth's place to Neerlandia the girls had to walk. Brother John would come to meet them and help carry their luggage.

Janna married Klaas Krikke, and became a farmer's wife. Lily married John Ebbers, mov-



Janna, Jenny, Lily, 1915.

Johanna, John, Jan, c. 1918

ing to a dairy farm near Edmonton. Jennie married Pete Kooy; they went to Nobleford, taking up dairy farming there. John married Jennie Tuininga, and Bill stayed single. Dena had married Albert Mast in 1912.

Oldegbers' log house

Jan passed away in 1926 at the age of 79. Johanna Oldegbers then sold the farm to Jacob Olthuis and moved into a house built for her on the Schoonekamp yard. She had a little dog, Topsy, who was her constant companion. She lived for another thirteen years. Her later years were spent in the Schoonekamp home. She passed away in 1939 at 83 years of age.

Rita Krikke
Rulie Nanninga

JACOB AND AALTJE (EILANDER) OLTHUIS

The Olthuis' Neerlandia account covers a time space of roughly 20 years, beginning in 1914 and extending to 1934, a relatively short period in their entire life span. Jacob Olthuis was born in Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on October 23, 1880. Aaltje Eilander was born in Hattem, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on February 10, 1885. They were married May 27, 1905.

Jacob was a tradesman, carpenter, and bricklayer, and he operated a small hardware store. Jacob and Aaltje were relatively well-to-do. They had three young sons: **John** (Jan, December 25, 1905), **William** (Willem, April 23, 1908), and **Fred** (Frederick, July 25, 1910). They were happy.

Olthuis was bothered, however, by the fact that the Netherlands had conscription, making it mandatory for him and others to take military training for three months each year. He felt that the whole matter was an unnecessary intrusion on him and his family life. He resented taking orders and the stringent, domineering rules. Jacob hated barrack life with its lice, profanity, and vulgarities.

The pondering on these matters along with careful reading of literature on economic conditions and possibilities in Canada brought a dream to Jacob. It became ever clearer to him that Canada was the land of freedom and opportunity, so immigration presented itself as an answer to his quest for liberty.

On April 5, 1911, Jacob booked steerage-class passage on the *Montezuma* and sailed from Antwerp for Canada leaving Aaltje and the children with relatives in Gelderland. He arrived in Edmonton and met other Hollanders there and worked as a tradesman on the High Level Bridge project.

Jacob returned to the Netherlands some time later and built a new home for his family. However, the same discontent arose and the desire to immigrate surfaced anew.

Jacob and Aaltje sold most of their possessions, purchased passage for the family, and bade farewell to friends and relatives. They sailed on the *Corsican* from Liverpool across the Atlantic on May 3, 1913, with their young family. There were now four children since a baby girl, whom they named Eerlandje, had been born on January 12, 1913. As Jacob had done on the earlier trip, they too came steerage class. Little Bill ran about the ship and peered out of the portholes, through which he could hear the rush of the water. The ship lay at anchor for a few days because of icebergs. After a fourteen-day boat ride and a tedious train ride across Canada they arrived safely in Edmonton. Jacob and Aaltje never saw their parents or brothers or sisters after leaving the Netherlands.

Jacob built a small shack on city land (a common practice among the immigrants in those days) approximately at the north-east corner of where the Commonwealth Stadium now stands.

Father Olthuis obtained a job laying concrete sewer pipes in the Norwood-Parkdale area for the City of Edmonton. Circumstances were favourable for the family. John attended Parkdale school and the family soon made new friends as the Hollanders found each other through church attendance or through casual events. Learning a new language was difficult.

During the first summer in Edmonton, both Fred and the baby were ill with summer complaint. Medication was given but little Eerlandje grew weaker and died. She was buried in August — a sad experience for the family.

On June 4, 1914, a second daughter, Eva (Eerlandje), was born. Dr. Johnston attended the birth as he was their family doctor. During that same year, World War I broke out creating massive unemployment in the city and Jacob was laid off. Without a steady income to provide for the family of four children, Jacob decided to settle in Neerlandia. This meant another move in order to pioneer on a homestead.

On January 20, 1914, Jacob Olthuis made application for entry for a homestead (SW 4-62-3-5). The family moved to Neerlandia in April 1915.

Jacob had purchased two horses, two cows, and a few chickens. He received a fifty-dollar government grocery grant with which he bought supplies. The family's belongings were packed on a wagon and drawn by a team of horses to the homestead — a ten-day trip. Aaltje and the children travelled by train and stage. Their so-called homestead was 160 acres of bushland — no house, no barn, no well.

Though the early pioneering days with its hardships and setbacks were not kind to the Olthuis family, neither were they disastrous.

Through Jacob's inexperience as a farmer and lack of a good understanding regarding the terms and conditions of their new land, the family encountered some disappointments and adversities. However, as the Olthuis sons and daughters reminisce they most often recall the humorous and positive factors.

The early pioneers, through dependence on each other for food and other basic needs, did eke out an existence. Neighbours and friends helped as houses needed to be erected. Jacob and Aaltje, with four children, lived in with the Ben Lievers family for a short time before moving into their own house. The Lievers family was hospitable and most helpful.

The first Olthuis house was of log construction with a too-steep sod roof. The poplar trees, chosen for their easy access to the building site, were a poor choice. The logs were not straight and uniform enough, resulting in uneven spaces left to be chinked up with moss or mud — a tedious task. Besides this the logs were not heavy enough, they were too thin and the cold could readily penetrate. The heavy rains soaked through the sod roof, showering muddy water on most everything within their home. On at least one occasion Mother Olthuis sat up in bed, holding up an umbrella, in order to keep the baby in her arms dry.

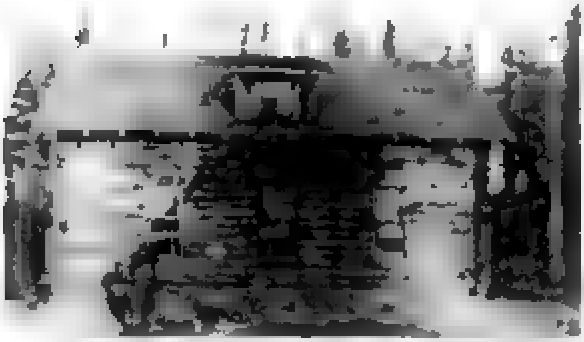
The first tilling of the land was by spade and shovel. Later Jacob hitched a horse and an ox together to the plow — naturally the horse was faster and pulled ahead of the slow-moving ox. Neighbours reminded him that in the Bible that was forbidden — nor was the method efficient, so it was discontinued.

Jacob made a large airtight heater which served as the heating unit for the living room. In the middle of the lid he cut an opening just large enough to hold the bottom half of a five-pound lard pail. That way the fuel used to heat the room could also be used to boil water and do other bits of cooking. It worked extremely well, except that the opening gradually got larger as the metal eroded away through constant use. One morning Jacob cooked some wheat porridge and just before it was done the entire pail of food slid into the fire. "Oh, dear, no hot breakfast that morning!" However, another ring-lid was quickly made because the method worked so well.

Jacob would also cook eggs for the family's breakfast. His clever idea was to put the eggs in an empty salt bag, lower them into the water and at the appointed minute lift bag and eggs out in one easy motion. One morning there were two salt bags on the counter one with salt and the other with the unboiled eggs. Jacob inadvertently picked up the bag with salt and deftly lowered it into the bubbling water without a splash. Four-and-one-half minutes later he went to lift out the eggs. An empty limp bag met his surprised stare.

One day Jacob had a rather serious accident. He had been riding a snappy little grey horse when the accident occured. Klaas Krikke and Henry Schoonekamp found him and walked him home, supporting him between the two of them. Whether he had fallen off and then been kicked by the horse or had been struck by an overhanging branch the family never learned with certainty because Jacob himself could not explain exactly what had happened to him. He was not a pretty sight. His face was bleeding badly and his nose was split open. Joe Holwerda heard about the accident and came to see if he could be of assistance. When he arrived Jacob was sitting outside in a rocking chair. The sight of Jacob's face was too much for Joe. He took one look and hastily turned away, passed out cold, and fell headlong on the grass. After sometime Jacob was taken to Westlock where the doctor diagnosed a broken nose but the time lapse which had taken place made stitching useless. The resulting scar remained with him for life.

The Olthuis family stayed in Neerlandia only three years the first time before returning to Edmonton. During their stay in Neerlandia a fourth son, **George** (Jan Gerard), was born May 7, 1917. By this time the farm had nine acres under cultivation, as well as some buildings and fences erected on it. Upon their return to Edmonton in 1918 Jacob took a job at McGavins Bakery. **Carrie** (Gerritje) was born in Edmonton on February 5, 1919, and soon thereafter the family of eight moved back to Neerlandia. It was September 1, 1919, when they took on anew the task of homesteading on the same quarter. This time Jacob built a house near the middle of the quarter and close to Baird Lake. Later he moved the house to the southeast corner of the same quarter.



One of the Olthuis houses. Jacob and Alice. c. 1923

Conditions and times were not as austere for the Olthuis family on their return as those which they had experienced on arrival in 1915. The winter of 1919, however, proved to be one of the worst ever experienced in Neerlandia. In 1921 Jacob made application for the homestead patent and that was issued. The farm had fifteen-and-one-half acres under cultivation at that time. Besides the house there were four other buildings, and both barbed wire and pole fences had been put up. There were sixteen head of cattle, four horses, five sheep, and some hogs and chickens. Jacob also applied for the privilege of taking up a second homestead (SW 7-62-3-5) and that was also granted.

Assembling a binder. John studying the instructions, early 1920s

The log house they lived in was better than the first one since Jacob had learned from the experience of building the earlier one. The family always managed to find enough food to eat as meat could be supplied by trapping or hunting. The farm yielded milk, eggs, butter, cheese, and vegetables. Other goods which were needed could at times be exchanged for surplus farm products.

It seems that each move the Olthuis family made resulted in an addition to the family; this last move was no exception. On May 17, 1922, the Olthuis family had their last child, **Alice** (Aaltje). She was born at home with the assistance of the same midwife who had attended George's birth. When Alice was a few months old her parents noticed that she was tongue-tied. The doctor came to the house, snipped the offending tissue while Jacob and Aaltje held their daughter on a pillow on the kitchen table. Eva and Carrie cringed at the baby's loud cry; they wanted to watch but yet they were afraid to look.

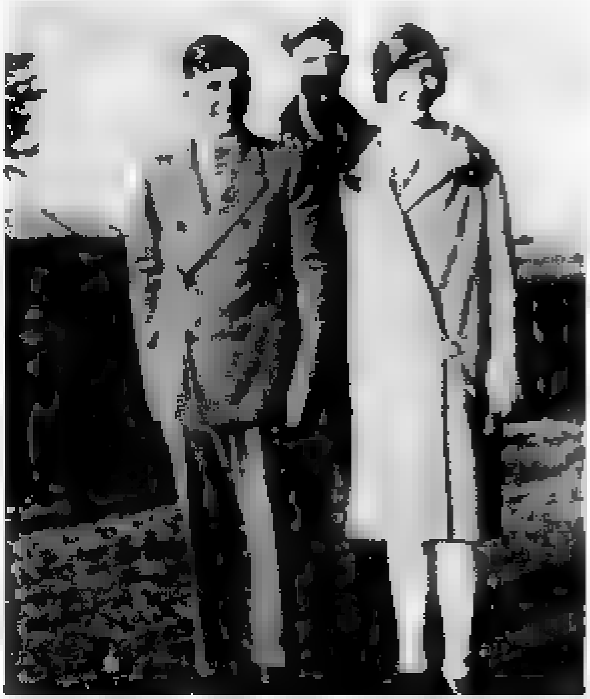
Farming was not Jacob's thing — he was a tradesman at heart. Early in the twenties he sold his farm to Ike Tiemstra, with the intention of moving to Grand Rapids, Michigan. This did not materialize. After the homestead was sold

Jacob bought a Ford truck, hoping to launch a freight-hauling business between Neerlandia and Edmonton. This venture was not a success, mainly due to the unusual weather and the resulting road conditions. In 1925 the hauling business was discontinued.

From 1924 to 1926 the family lived in a two-storey lumber constructed house on John's homestead (NW 33-61-3-5). Then they moved into Bill van Ark's house and lived there until Jacob bought the Oldegbers farm in 1927. Bill and Fred also made applications for homesteads, as John had done earlier and these were granted. Bill filed on the NE 13-61-3-5 and Fred on the SE 7-62-3-5. For a time John, Bill, and Fred bached together in a shack on Fred's homestead. Then one Sunday disaster struck. The Olthuis brothers had gone to stay at their parents' home for the weekend and when they returned the place was burned to the ground. The cause of the fire is still a mystery. R. J. De Vries had checked the cabin on his way to church and found nothing amiss. Though it was just a one-room cabin it was a great loss because all their worldly possessions were in it. Bill still regrets the loss of "the best rifle I ever had". In spite of this setback all three brothers eventually patented their homesteads — John in 1929, Bill in 1934, and Fred in 1937.

A furrow laid bare. John at left.

When the Olthuis family first lived in Neerlandia many services were non-existent. The nearest doctor and medical aid was available at Westlock and in later years also from Barrhead. When in 1924 many cases of whooping cough were evident, the doctor did come to check on the patients in various homes. Eva suffered greatly from the disease. In 1930 an epidemic of chicken pox hit the community and



Fred, Bill, Eva, 1930.

Eva, Carrie, Alice, c. 1931.

Carrie was very ill, so the doctor was called in. Generally, though, the Olthuis family seldom needed care in the area of health.

Aaltje, who experienced somewhat frail health, often required extra help within the home. Hannah Lievers came on many occasions to help out. Rikie Sturwold did the wash for the family during one period of Aaltje's illness and Froukje Anema baked bread for them during another. Others offered help too. When Fred was in his early teens he proved to be very helpful as he could perform many household tasks ably.

Jacob served as member of the church consistory. While he was deacon, among other things, it was his task to count and record the offerings. On one such occasion, the entire collection of pennies, nickels, dimes, and the odd quarter was spread out on the kitchen table. Just then the Watkins man came by with his wares. Mother Olthuis did not wish to buy anything and she dismissed him with the standard reply, "No money!" With a degree of skepticism, his eyes took in the little piles of coins arranged for an easy counting.

In any rural area, people are bound to come into contact with a variety of creatures for bane or blessing. The Olthuis family found this to be true in Neerlandia. Jacob and John went out one February day to cut firewood. John walked to a bluff about one hundred yards away from where his father was working.

"Oh, there's a bear hole here!" he called.

"Anything in it?" asked Jacob.

"Nah," John replied, but on taking a closer look he saw the gleaming white teeth of a bear. Losing no time Jacob and John went to get help and soon returned with Klaas Krikke, Ben Lievers, and Henry Michael. Dusk was falling as the four men lined up in front of the hole. On command they let go a salvo into the den. After such a barrage of gunfire they expected the bear to be dead, so they were greatly surprised to hear sounds issuing from the den. Someone made a torch and they fearfully peered into the dark hole. There they saw a she-bear and one cub lying dead and still, but another tiny cub still alive. Jacob carried the cub home inside his shirt in hopes of raising it but, being so young that its eyes were not yet open, it did not survive. The adult bear was divided among the men. It was in prime shape with a thick layer of fat still covering its body which made good eating. The Olthuis family says that bear meat can best be compared to pork for flavour and texture.

Deer, rabbit, partridge, fish, ducks, and a variety of animals were hunted down and caught for food. Coyotes were considered pests and were trapped for their pelts. Bill was the family hunter and trapper. The pelts and skins of weasel, muskrat, and squirrel obtained by him were shipped and sold. Big brother Bill was George's hero and he copied Bill in many ways. As Bill did, he also enjoyed the outdoors for exploring and hunting.

The Olthuis family captured two coyote pups and raised one to adulthood. It chewed and gnawed until eventually a space large enough for escape from its slab-board kennel was made.

The year of the caterpillars, 1924, descended on the community, leaving destruction on tree and shrub. The creatures followed the sun's rays and crawled into open doorways, they seemed to be everywhere. Alice was a toddler and she enjoyed playing with the creepy things.

Three animals were remembered by the Olthuis family — a dog named Bob, a mare named Vos, and a ram with no name at all (though he was probably called lots of names). Bob was protective of everything around him — he would guard the house, watch over the chickens, or stand as a guard when meat hung at the yard butchering site. He could bring in the cows from the pasture and sort out any intruder — and he was most protective of the three youngest Olthuis children. Vos was a faithful, good-natured, steady workhorse willing to perform for her master — when she was too old to work she was retired and pensioned-off to live her remaining years on Bill's farm. The ram was a general nuisance. He butted Willem de Groot down, he would not let Fred Ritsema off the woodpile, and once he got into Ben Lievers' house and chased the occupants out.

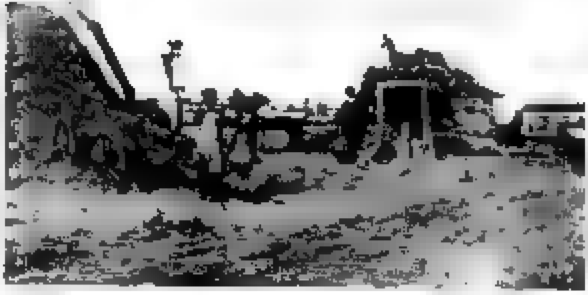
Mother Olthuis had long black hair which she twisted or braided and then rolled into a bun. It was held in place with large hair pins and two curved combs, one on each side of the chignon. Her hair was a bit curly and waved easily about her face. Aaltje's eyes were

Carrie feeding an orphaned colt, 1929.

greyish-blue. Her skin was fair and soft. Through the heavy work of a pioneer her shoulders became slightly stooped. Though Mother Olthuis was not robust physically, she was strong in spirit with a lucid mind and a steadfast will to carry on without complaint or lament. Her feelings and responses were often kept guarded. Problems were for solving, obstacles were for licking, shortages were for filling, jobs were for doing. Aaltje was inventive, ingenious, and resourceful. When the supply of soap, store-bought or the homemade kind, was in short supply she supplemented it with water in which ashes had been stirred, left to settle, and strained; that "softened water" worked well. Aaltje never threw anything away; everything was saved for possible future use. As she went about her daily work, Aaltje wore a print dress protected by a bibstyle apron — both made of a dark cotton fabric of a small geometric or floral pattern. Because Aaltje was often sick, the patching and mending were not always done on time. Bill remembers using a nail to replace a missing button on his bib overalls.

Mother Olthuis roasted wheat and ground it up for coffee — during better times a substance called "coffee essence" was added for truer coffee flavour. Ground wheat was boiled to make porridge for breakfast and served with milk and sugar. It was used to bake nutritious dark brown bread. These loaves were often baked in lard or syrup pails. The Olthuis children would at times cut the first slice from a loaf and with a spoon dig out the centre of the loaf letting the bits fall crumbled into a bowl. Milk (or cream if available) and sugar were added for a delicious breakfast.

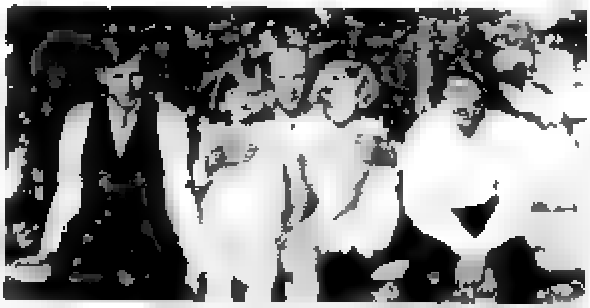
When her health permitted Aaltje would make large meals, especially on Sundays. Unless they lived nearby, morning church worshippers did not have enough time to go home to eat between services so people were always welcomed to the Olthuis home, which was central. Aaltje was a good cook and served tasty dinners. Excellent use was made of every berry that could be picked locally for a good variety of tastes.



Threshing from a stack. Eva, Alice, Jacob, 1925

Threshing time called for special meals served up in enormous quantities. Aaltje learned to take the entire contents of a sealer of home-canned pork and to grind it up; spiced and seasoned to taste, it made an appetizing sandwich filling.

In 1928, three nephews came from the Netherlands to stay at the Olthuis home. It



Fred, Annie Anema, John, Alice, Henry Kippers.

meant that Aaltje had a family of nine adults and three children to cook, bake, wash, and care for. Eva, at age fourteen, was taken out of school for an entire year to help with the mountain of work involved.

One feat that Jacob enjoyed was making pancakes. With blue eyes sparkling, he would flip a nine-inch pancake ceiling-high and catch it perfectly turned, to the tune of a little Dutch ditty, "O Canada, *wat heb je mij bedrogen!*" (O Canada, how I've been deceived) — all this with tongue-in-cheek and a smile on his face.

The floor in an early Olthuis home was made of split rails laid close together. Once John stepped on one end of a rail and it tilted the other end up just where the churn filled with cream stood. The churn tipped over and spilled the cream, which rapidly disappeared between the rails. Mother Olthuis was annoyed and asked how it happened. John said that he had been at the other side of the room and explained what had happened. Mother said that that was impossible. She stepped hard down on the rail to prove her point but, sure enough, over went the churn spilling out whatever cream was left in it after the first incident.

The Olthuis family enjoyed reading and storytelling. The Bible held a prominent place in the Olthuis home; there were both Dutch and English versions. There were also a few other books, newspapers, and magazines. Father Olthuis was a great storyteller and the children would gather around him to hear the fabulous tales he related with great animation and lots of expression. He would also recite poetry, and often the poems and stories were filled with lessons which the children had to apply to their own lives. Delightful memories!

Aaltje was generally occupied with some darning, knitting, mending, or sewing during those special times of stories or games. Entire quilts were made during these hours. She also taught the children many songs and verses. Hours were spent around the organ singing for enjoyment and pleasure. Both Eve and Fred took organ lessons from John Gelderman. Jacob and Aaltje advocated good education for all of their children. They were very pleased when Fred was the first of their children to bring home a grade eight diploma.

Jacob was of medium height and rather stocky build. Bright blue eyes looked out from under bushy eyebrows. He had brown hair and a large mustache which he would sometimes twist into handlebar points. (In winter the mustache would freeze fast to his scarf or at times to the bedding.) At an early age, his hair began to thin out and for many years he had only a halo-like rim of hair around his head. On Sundays Jacob wore a dark suit and a light shirt. He never wore a belt — his pants were held up by wide, brightly-coloured suspenders.

Jacob and Aaltje left Neerlandia in 1934 to live in Edmonton; only Bill remained as a farmer in Neerlandia. They enjoyed a much more relaxed life-style in the city. Jacob took up his carpentry trade. He built several houses for rental purposes; this proved to be a profitable undertaking. Building was to his liking and it gave him a good measure of satisfaction.

John married Jennie Wierenga in 1937, and they lived in Edmonton. He was manager at McGavins Bakeries. John and Jennie reside in Edmonton.

Bill married Carrie Tuininga in 1934. Fred married Winnie Prins in 1940. He was a radio and T.V. technician and worked for Wade and Richards Radio Ltd. He is now retired and lives in Edmonton.

Jacob c. 1934

Eva, homemaker, married Simon Jacob Groot in 1939. They live in Edmonton. George married Alice Martin in 1970. He was partner and manager of Edwards Hatcheries. He was also employed at Dow Chemicals. He is retired and lives in Edmonton. Carrie married Simon Groot in 1940. They lived in Neerlandia for three years. Alice, homemaker, married Peter Visser in 1946. They live in Edmonton

Jacob and Aaltje were richly blessed and lived comfortably into and during their retirement years. Jacob was strong and agile, he could still ride his bicycle at eighty years of age After fifty-five years of marriage, Aaltje died June 14, 1960, at age seventy-five. Father Jacob lived to be eighty-six, and he died March 16, 1967

Olthuis Family

TED AND IDA (KAMPNAR) REITSMA

Ted (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born April 15, 1894, in Garmerwoide, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was the oldest of a family of seven and the only one to emigrate, which he did in the summer of 1913. He sailed from Rotterdam as a steerage passenger on a German ship, for a fare of forty dollars. He landed in Halifax and then travelled to Quebec with another young man he had met aboard ship. He found it difficult to get started in a country where he could not understand the language, but he did find work helping to build a bridge over the St Lawrence River. He was delightfully surprised one day, in the spring of 1914, when he came home from work to find an uncle, **Lubbe Bouma**, waiting for him. Lubbe (who was Ted's age) and Ted formed a team and decided to "go west". Ted had the address of a friend, George Dykema of Granum, and Lubbe had the name of Roelf Kooy in Monarch, so southern Alberta was their target. During the summer of 1914, they worked their way across Canada, arriving in Granum in August. With the help of Mr. Dykema they got work for the fall harvest and then just worked for room and board over the winter.

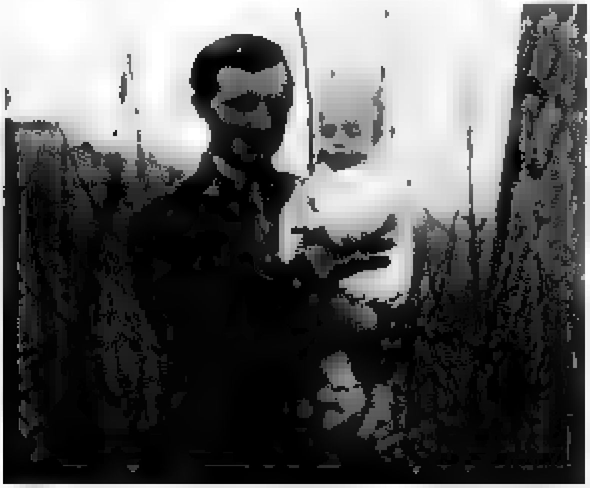
During the 1915 harvest they met two homesteaders from Neerlandia: John Anema and Popko Schuring. These gentlemen were very persuasive, telling in glowing terms the good things Neerlandia had to offer, so after the harvest they accompanied John Anema north. The trip from Edmonton to Neerlandia was memorable — four hours on the train to arrive in Clyde, then a drive on a six-seat democrat pulled by a mule team to Dusseldorf (Freedom), and then a long walk in the dark carrying full packs, to arrive at Anema's home at 3:00 A.M.

After looking over the land with Simon Tiemstra, they headed back to Westlock to file on their homesteads. Ted filed on the SE 21-61-3-5. Because this quarter had a one-room lumber shack, a well, a barn, and many other improvements on it, Ted had to pay forty dollars rather than the normal ten-dollar filing fee Ted and Lubbe lived together for the first winter, sharing cooking and other chores. The first time Ted made pancakes, he attempted to imitate his mother by taking the handle of the pan and flipping the hotcakes over. Unfortunately, he lacked her expertise and the pancake stuck to the ceiling, where it still was stuck when Lubbe came in for supper.

Ted and Lubbe left each spring to work on the prairies and came home after the harvest to try clear more land On one occasion in 1917, Ted was dismissed from his job for refusing to work on Sundays In the year of the worldwide flu epidemic, Ted arrived in Neerlandia to find the Pete Kampnar Jr family sick He nursed them back to health and then, realizing that he was coming down with the flu himself, filled his shack with food, water, and fuel, and crawled into bed

Lubbe who died in the 1918 flu epidemic in Edmonton, 1915

The following winter Ted went to work in a logging camp, but spent his weekends at home. His visits home paid off when he married Ida Kampnar on January 3, 1921, at Mellowdale, Alberta. That summer both Ida and Ted worked in Killam, returning to Neelandia before the birth of their oldest daughter, **Sadie**, on November 2, 1921. This set Ted to doing something to improve the shack, finishing it off and adding a fourteen-by-twenty-foot log lean-to which served as a bedroom and kitchen. Each year more land was cleared and more livestock added. Yet ends would not meet and Ted went to Edmonton for two winters, working in the mines in Beverly. Ida took care of the stock by herself for those months.



Ted, Sadie, 1921

Ted became a Canadian citizen in 1922. He took an active part in the community by serving as chairman of the board of directors of Neerlandia Co-operative Association. Ted also took a course at The University of Alberta to qualify as Weed Inspector. For two years he travelled on horseback to do the job. Then he purchased a Model A Ford, which made it easier for him to get around.

Soon it was time to build a new house. Two more children had been born: **Helen** on November 15, 1925, and **Harry** on November 14, 1927. For the first time, Ted and Ida went into debt to build a lumber house, only to have the Depression bring them near to bankruptcy. The Reitsmas' last child, **Anna**, was born on May 3, 1933.

Ted, Helen, Harry, Sadie, Ida. Front: Anna, 1943.

As time went on Ted became involved in the co-operative movement which formed implement co-ops, stores, and credit unions. He became a director of Alberta Wholesale and Implement Co-op and travelled to such places as Winnipeg, Toronto, Calgary, and Toledo. In the meantime, the children were growing up and getting jobs of their own. From the time she was fifteen until she left Neerlandia in 1942, Sadie worked as a clerk in Neerlandia Co-op. Then she worked in Edmonton Post Office before her marriage to Peter Prins in 1946. They have two daughters.

Sadie beside Reitsma's first lumber house, 1925.

Helen completed high school at Barrhead and then joined Sadie in Edmonton in 1944. She left for the U.S.A. in 1947 to study at Calvin College. After teaching in Denver, Colorado, for two years, she returned to Edmonton and married Stan Skirrow. They have three children.

Ted and Ida sold the farm to Jerry Reitsma in 1946 and, with the rest of their children, moved to Edmonton. Harry finished high school in Edmonton and then joined the RCMP. After his stint of duty he left the force and purchased a butcher shop. He married Thelma Sturwold in 1954, and they have four children. Anna became a nurse, and married Ed Smith in 1960. They have one son.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skirrow

ALBERT AND SUSANNA (JANSEN) RITSEMA

Albert Ritsema was born in Groningen, the Netherlands, on November 3, 1875. In 1891 he and his family immigrated to Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. The Jansen family had already immigrated to the same place in 1878 from Overijssel, where Susie (Susanna) was born November 17, 1875.

Albert and Susie met, and married in the spring of 1900. They set up their home in Grand Rapids were five children were born to them. **Fred** (Fridus), May 31, 1901; **Sadie** (Sara), September 19, 1903; **John** (Jan) Peter, September 24, 1904; **Tena** (Trijntje), May 8, 1906, and **Clara** (Klaaske), December 5, 1907.

Because of Susie's health, she and Albert decided to move to Canada. Susie had tuberculosis and the doctors advised a warmer, drier climate for her. Their destination was Granum, Alberta, where they had relatives. The Ritsemas arrived in 1908 and farmed there until 1918. Here seven more children were added to the family: **Jim** (Jacobus) on February 4, 1909; **Gertie** (Gerhardina) on June 16, 1911, **Pete** (Pieter) on December 16, 1912; **Henry** (Hendrik) on March 4, 1914, **George** (Geert) on October 14, 1915; **Lena** (Magdalena) on February 26, 1917; and **Garret** (Gerard) on May 4, 1918.

Tena, Clara, Peter, Susie holding Garret. Fred holding Lena, Henry, Albert holding George, Jim, Gertie. John.

Albert filed for a homestead (SW 23-61-3-5) in Neerlandia in 1914, then in 1918 he and Susie moved here with eleven of their children. Fred stayed in Granum for another year to harvest the crop.

Upon arriving in Neerlandia the Ritsemas first lived in Roelof Kooy's house. That same year, on December 16, the house burned down. Clara recalls, "Ma and Pa had hitched the horses to the sleigh and went for a visit to Pete Kampnar's, eight miles away, for the day. Sadie was home with us and as she was getting supper ready, the baby (Garret) was on the bed and some of the kids were trying to entertain him. Somehow Tena knocked the lamp over, and since the log house had heavy brown paper for wall paper, it didn't take long (before) the wall was in flames . We had to draw water from the well by pail so you see it was a losing battle. When Ma and Pa came home it was all ashes. There was another house empty that belonged to [Elke] Jorritsma. The neighbours all pitched in and got that fixed up, making four beds with boards and filling big sacks with straw. Ma and Pa and a couple younger kids had a bedroom downstairs. That same winter we had a chimney fire, and of course we kids panicked and started carrying things out . . . I wrapped the baby, Garret, in [a] blanket and laid him in a snowbank. When Pa had the fire out we all went in the house again. Ma asked where the baby was, so I went outdoors and brought him in. He was sleeping."

Albert and Susie's last child **Minno** (Menno) was born in Neerlandia on January 27, 1919.

Albert never lived or worked on the first quarter he filed on but later filed on the SW 9-62-3-5. He paid the filing fee of ten dollars, plus twenty-five dollars for the improvements that Van den Burg had made, which consisted of some cleared land and a cabin. In the spring neighbours such as Lievers, Michael, Sturwold, and Olthuis helped Albert build a new log house. Fred arrived in Neerlandia in 1919 with horses, a wagon, and farm machinery. The following is Fred's account of his trip.

"The moving I am about to describe is different from ordinary moving. This is a moving from the southern part of the province of Alberta to the northern part, some 380 miles distance. We had to move by train or boxcar. My folks with their eleven children had already moved to Neerlandia a year earlier.

I remained behind to continue farming in southern Alberta one year. The year my folks moved the crops were fairly good. The following year was a very dry year and no crop. My father wanted me to move all the farm machinery with the horses to the new homestead. These were all loaded in a boxcar. My Uncle Henry Oosterheert helped take apart all the machinery including two binders, a seed drill, and other things, leaving enough room so the horses could be taken out at different times for watering and feeding. It took us a whole day to get loaded.

People told me I would be able to sleep in the caboose on a bed. This I found not to be true; I had to sleep in my seat or on the floor. I arrived about three days later in Westlock, which was as far as the train went. I arrived in the morning and started to unload the boxcar. Since all the parts of the wagon were near the door, I assembled the wagon. I hitched up a team of horses and very gently had the horses pull out the box of the wagon. With some lifting and manoeuvring I managed to get the box on the wagon. Then I pulled out the larger pieces with the horses. At noon I bought a loaf of bread, I made two meals of it. I did not want to take the time to eat in a restaurant nor did I want to spend the money. One binder I had to store under the loading dock because I did not have room on the wagon. I really had a big load and it was late in the day when I pulled out. I had thirty miles to go at a speed of less than three miles per hour. I must have been a spectacle, driving four horses with one in tow. Everyone else was using bobsleds which are much easier to pull when the ground is covered with snow — there must have been a foot of snow.

Why did I start out late in the day on such a long trip in the wintertime? Wouldn't it have been wiser to have taken the horses to the livery stable, bed them down, buy them feed, go to a restaurant and then to a room in a hotel for a good night's sleep, and then strike out early in the morning? I did not entertain this thought very long for the simple reason I did not have that much money. After paying for the boxcar I had less than ten dollars. I had not gone so very far down the road when I met my father with the bobsled. We were both happy to see each other. He had come all this distance since morning. He had gotten my letter telling him approximately when I would arrive. He suggested that he go to get something to eat and food for the horses He would come back and join me and we would then travel together to Neerlandia. Since he could travel faster, he could catch up to me quite easily So I kept going steadily. Then I came to an intersection and I did not know which road to take. I later found out I was supposed to turn left but I went straight. I don't know why I did not stop and wait for my father. The road I took got to be narrower and finally I asked someone for the right directions. I got turned around which was not easy and finally got on the right road but I had lost a lot of time. That was not the worst of it, in the meantime my father had gone by. He was on the right road and I was way behind, but he did not know it. He tried hard to catch up to me when I was really far behind him. He thought that I was driving my horses very fast when, in fact, I was driving them very slow because they were very tired. When my father got home and I was not there, he didn't know what to do. He realized that I had gotten lost, but where? He could not begin to go back to look for me, he had driven his team of horses for about sixty miles. My parents stayed up waiting for me. My horses got more and more tired and they finally stopped. They could not pull the loaded wagon any more, so I pulled the wagon to the edge of the road, unhitched the horses, and walked them home. But while walking the horses I got sleepy, tired, and hungry, so I stopped the horses for a while and lay down on the road, but soon got up again and finished the walk home The lights were on when I finally walked in the yard early in the morning." Fred also filed for a homestead in Neerlandia but did not prove it up.

In the summer Fred, John, Sadie, and Tena went to Granum to work and would come home for the winter months. Fred and John also worked at a lumber camp north of Neerlandia

The Ritsemas were an easygoing, happy family Whenever the kids wanted a drink of milk they would run to the cow with a cup, fill it up, and drink it down. With such a big family, Susie wasn't too fussy about her floor being clean Even when the floor had just been scrubbed no one was scolded for walking on the wet floor.

Once Clara had an especially scary experience. She writes, "One day as I was coming home from school, instead of taking the graded road, I took a shortcut through Michael's place I came to a patch of raspberries and stopped to eat a few, but soon found out I wasn't alone· a mother bear and her three cubs were there too I left the patch quietly and as fast as I could, running all the way home, which was a half mile I sure did run!"

The whole family looked forward to the winter holidays, especially the *Kerstfeest* held at church. They spent the whole day there, had chocolate milk, coffee, cakes, cookies, and a nice program. There were also snowball fights, and around four or five o'clock they got in the sleigh to go home again. Another great holiday was July 1st — the only time the children got ice cream

There was a time that Albert would take the farmers' eggs and cream to Westlock and then bring back groceries. Clara remembers that, "One time Pauline Sturwold and I went along. We would ride a while and then walk, as it was a thirty mile trip one way. Then we stayed at a hotel for the night. While Pa did his business, Pauline and I did a little shopping too. I remember we bought some apples, oranges, and bananas to eat on the way home We did enjoy the trip."

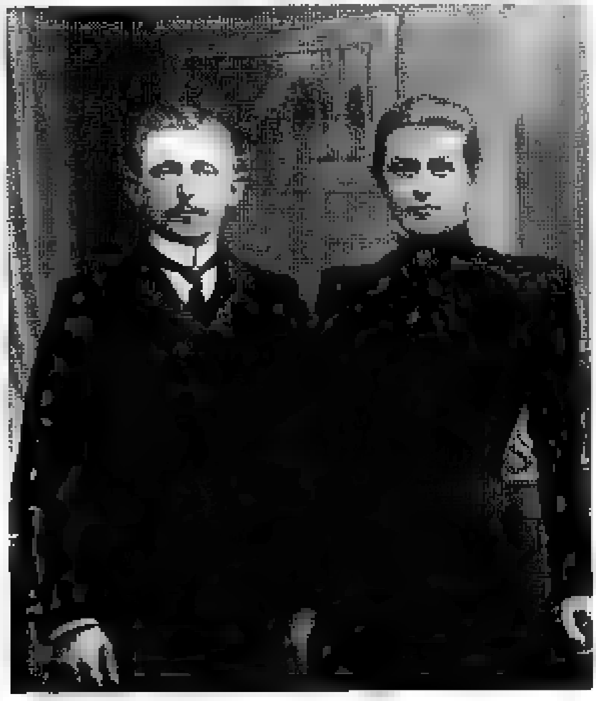
By 1923 Albert got the patent to his homestead. He had the house, two barns, a hen house, a well, and a rail fence of two-and-a-half miles. He was cropping twenty acres of land and had thirty-two head of cattle, four horses, and a few hogs. Even with the improvements made, however, things were not so good financially with the Ritsemas. That is why when relatives in the U.S.A. offered Fred and John jobs, and Albert and Susie money to move back, they decided to go. On April 1, 1924, they loaded everything into Dave Tuininga's truck and said good-bye to Canada

Sadness came to the family in 1936 when an accident on the job claimed Albert's life; a bag of plaster fell from high up and landed on his head. Susie lived to be seventy-five. Clara writes, "We lived in an interesting age, from 'rags to riches.' We were rich in good health, long life, and friends, and we are very thankful for all the blessings God has given us. God is good."

Ritsema Family

HENDRIK AND PETERTJE (OLDEGBERS) SCHOONEKAMP

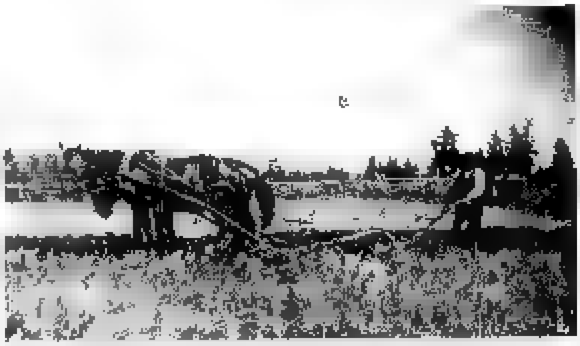
Hendrik Schoonekamp was born July 21, 1881, in Heemse, Overijssel, the Netherlands. In 1907 he married Petertje Oldegbers. Three-and-a-half years later they immigrated to Canada with the Oldegbers family. Hendrik and Petertje did not really want to leave the Netherlands, but Petertje's mother did not want to leave any of her children behind, and so they agreed to go along.



Hendrik, Petertje, 1909.

In Edmonton the Schoonekamp's first residence was a shack in Fraser Flats near Little's Brick Yard. This little dwelling was often shared with others who had no family. They also had boarders. Hendrik worked at construction. While in Edmonton two children were born to them: **Jennie** (Janna, June 28, 1913) and **Annie** (Albertje Johanna, March 22, 1915).

Hendrik came to Neerlandia and filed on the NW 10-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911, but he did not move to Neerlandia at that time. On March 28, 1913, he abandoned that homestead and refiled on NW 34-61-3-5 because it was closer to the rest of Petertje's family. He built a cabin there in April of the same year. On April 27, 1915, when Annie was only six weeks old, the Schoonekamps moved to Neerlandia. It is unknown how they came. They had no oxen and it was several years before they got any. They lived in a little sod-roofed shack.



Hendrik plowing.

The first years, Hendrik went to southern Alberta each fall to work in the harvest. He did this to make enough money to buy supplies and clothes for the family. When he came home he would bring apples, and that was one time the children could each have a whole apple.

While her husband was gone Petertje would carry on alone. One chore that always had to be done was to look for the cows who roamed at large. Sometimes Petertje would be gone so long that the children would be afraid she was lost, but eventually she would return with the cows.

The Schoonekamps were hospitable folk and made everyone feel welcome. Because they lived close to church and school, their home was often a place for people to come. On Sun-

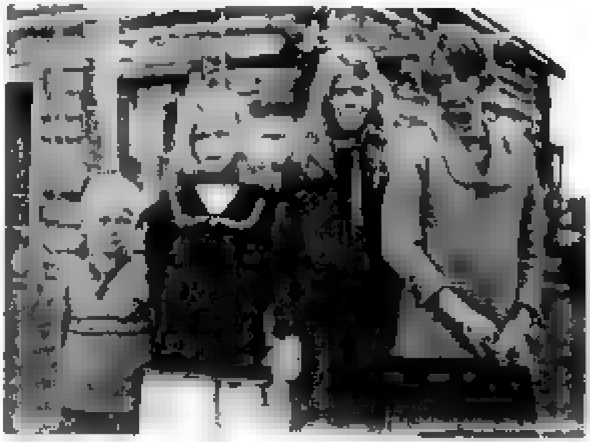
The team is yoked and ready to go. Hendrik beside his oxen.

days between services there were often extra people for dinner. In addition the Schoonekamps went out of their way to visit where there was need — those neglected by the community

Life in the sod house was not easy. Not only was it difficult to keep clean, but when it rained the sod roof would get soaked. Precious items were often damaged and the blankets would get wet from the drips. When it stopped raining all the blankets and bedding would be taken outside to dry — a procedure to be repeated every time it rained. One dreary rainy day the Schoonekamp family sat down to supper. On the table stood their treasured oil lamp casting a cheerful glow. As the family sat around the table the roof began to leak. Plunk, plunk, came the drops of muddy water. Then, ping, one cold drop of water hit the hot, glass lamp chimney and cracked it, extinguishing the flame. Everyone sat in silence except for Petertje who sighed, "That was my last chimney."

Schoonekamp's log house.

On July 26, 1917, **Rulie** (Roelfje) was born, and on April 17, 1921, **Albert** Jan, the Schoonekamp's only son, arrived. Just before Albert was born the family moved into a new log house with a shingled roof. Ben Lievers built the house and little Rulie watched carefully as he built. Why, she wondered, did he take so much trouble to put the floor boards so close together — they would just fill up with dirt anyway! The new house had two bedrooms upstairs. There were no doors to separate the rooms — just curtains. In the front room was a Winnipeg couch that could be pulled out and made into a bed. Often people who stayed slept on it.



Albert, Rulie, Annie, Jennie, c. 1925.

Billy Quick, the truck driver, also stayed at Schoonekamp's place. This made for a lot of extra people coming and going because the truck also functioned as a bus. Several teachers boarded at Schoonekamp's: Alice Brown, Jean Rae, Grace Boer, Clara Visser, and a little old English lady. The English lady had a very strong accent and Hendrik had a hard time understanding her and one time embarrassed her by accusing her of not speaking proper English.

Johanna Oldegbers, Petertje, Hendrik, Grace Boer, Annie. Cecil Tuininga, Rev. Van Der Woude, Rulie. Seated: Albert, 1937

Hendrik was a small man, about 5'8", and not very heavy. This often made farm labour difficult for him, but he was very energetic and did everything quickly.

"Dat ben ik zeg de gek." Hendrik plowing with his horses.

Petertje was about as tall as her husband. She was quieter and a good organizer. Even though there were often a lot of people at her place she never seemed flustered or excited. She was often away helping as a midwife, a trade she had learned from her mother. Sometimes when the children got up in the morning she would be gone and they would know that someone had come during the night for help. Mina Kannegieter taught knitting class at the Schoonekamp home at one time.

The midwife, c. 1930

Petertje used flour and salt bags for the girls' bloomers. Since the printing was hard to remove, this often meant free advertising for the products. One time when the chimney caught fire Rulie went up on the roof to put it out. Annie, always ready to tease, looked up and seeing the free advertising hollered, "Salt?"

In wintertime, Hendrik often worked in the Chisholm lumber camp. He would walk home on weekends. In the early years Petertje was often afraid during his absence and would go to bed with a big butcher knife beside her.

Hendrik was janitor of the church from 1915 to 1923. He would often go back to church late Saturday evenings to fill up the heaters with wood so it would be warm for Sunday morning. One time, in 1918, a couple was going to be married in the little log church. For the occasion a kneeling bench was needed. There was none, however, and so at the last minute the janitor was called upon to make one. The day of the wedding arrived, and the ceremony began. The minister helped the bride kneel on the bench, and that was fine. Then he helped the groom down. That was not so fine. Creaking and swaying, the kneeling bench gave way, taking the couple with it.

The church was made of logs, and the door, made of boards, had no lock. It was kept shut with a slat propped against it. One warm summer day when the cows were tormented by bull flies and the hot sun, one cow knocked the slat down, and the herd entered the church. When school was over for the day the students noticed that the church door was standing wide open and they went to investigate. What a sight met their eyes! Benches had been moved, the minister's water glass had been broken, and the floor — the floor was a mess! Hendrik was quickly called to the scene, but what could he say — they were his cows.

In 1921 Hendrik obtained the patent to his land. At that time he had eleven head of cattle and five-and-a-half acres in crop. In 1947 he sold the farm to Albert. By that time all the children were married: Jenny to Ike Nanninga, Annie to Cecil Tuininga, Rulie to Andrew Nanninga, and Albert to Clara Visser. Before they married, both Jennie and Annie worked for Rev. Van Der Woude. Rulie worked for six years in the Neerlandia Co-op and Post Office.

After their retirement in 1947 Hendrik and Petertje lived in a house they had built in the

Back: Annie, Albert, Jennie. Front: Petertje, Rufie, Hendrik, 1947

Hendrik, Petertje

hamlet on part of their homestead. Alvin, son of Ike and Jenny, remembers going to visit Grandpa there, and sometimes found him outside reading his Bible. After Hendrik died on January 12, 1960, Petertje stayed there for a couple of years. Then she moved to Hillcrest Lodge in Barrhead where she lived for another four years, passing away September 9, 1969. Hendrik and Petertje are remembered for their hospitality and service in church and community.

Schoonekamp family

POPKO AND JANTJE (VAN DALEN) SCHURING

Popko Dirk (born November 27, 1878) and Jantje Schuring immigrated to Canada from Stadskanaal, Groningen, the Netherlands, in the spring of 1913. Jantje's parents were already living in Edmonton, so she and Popko went there too, finding a shack in Fraser Flats to live in. Their first child, **Jennie** (Jantje Hillechiena), was born there September 5, 1913.

Popko took up a homestead, the SE 10-62-3-5, in Neerlandia on November 26, 1914. He built two log houses on the homestead, one for his family and the other for Jantje's parents. Both families moved there in January 1915.

Popko and Jantje's second daughter, **Helen**, was born May 20, 1915. She was the first baby baptized in the log church. Another daughter, **Cora**, was born April 29, 1916, and a son, **Peter**, on October 25, 1918. A second son, **Johannes** (May 14, 1920), was sickly from birth and died July 29, 1920. Another daughter, **Johanna**, was born July 7, 1921.

Popko was a carpenter by trade and helped many others build their houses. His own house was built from squared logs and had a shingled hip roof on it. He also built Toney Sturwold's house, making it out of squared dovetailed logs.

Popko had been a choirmaster in the Netherlands and had directed choir in Edmonton as well. While in Neerlandia he also directed choir; it had about twenty members. All the songs that were sung were Dutch. Before the Christmas concert, Popko would practice four or five times with the children and then lead them at the concert. Besides directing choir, Popko also served on the consistory of the church and one year was a delegate to a meeting of Classis Pacific in Montana.

Back: Jantje Popko, Joe Holwerda (driving oxen), John Kooy (sitting on ox). Front: Marinus Geleynse, Alice Kooy, Helen Kooy, Jennie, Hillgien van Dalen, Pieter van Dalen, 1915.

Helen, Cora, Jennie, 1916.

To make enough money to stay on the homestead, Popko went away to work on the prairies — sometimes helping with the harvest and other times doing carpentry. Jantje stayed on the homestead to care for the children and the homestead. She once told another settler, "Even if we have to eat rabbits and potato peels, we're going to stay here."

From the homestead, it was nearly a four-mile walk to Kampnar's store. *Opa* van Dalen would watch the little children while Jantje walked to the store for groceries. At one time she came home with a pack of groceries on her back, a gallon of coal oil in each hand, and a length of stove pipe under one arm. Jan Oldegbers saw her and commented that if she were to come back in another life, she would come as a *werk ezel* (pack animal).

Popko had proved up his homestead by 1921. Records indicate that he had built two log houses, one fourteen by twenty-feet and the other sixteen by twenty eight-feet; a sixteen by forty-three-foot stable, and two henhouses. There were two wells on the place — a cribbed thirty-foot well and also a forty-foot well. He had broken eight acres, was cropping eleven, and had seven more cleared. In 1917 he had four cattle, but in 1918 he had obtained twelve more. Besides the cattle, he also had three horses.

In 1923, Popko went with Menne Nanninga to Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., to find work as a carpenter. In November of that same year, Jantje followed with the children. Another daughter was born in 1928. Popko passed away in 1951 and Jantje in 1972.

Schuring Family

TONEY AND RULIE (SMIT) STURWOLD

Toney Sturwold was born June 4, 1885, in Groningen, the Netherlands. When he was fourteen his family immigrated to Michigan, U.S.A. Toney married Rulie (Roelofje) Smit in July 1906. Rulie had been born June 20, 1888, in Drenthe, the Netherlands, and her family had immigrated to the U.S.A. when she was five. Toney operated a general store in Michigan, but he decided to move to Iowa for health reasons, the doctor had advised him to find a job where he could work outside.

Toney and Rulie and their three children **Pauline** (March 8, 1907), **Lukas** (November 8, 1908), and **Lula** (Lammigje, March 30, 1913) lived in Iowa for two years, then moved to Lark, North Dakota. In both places Toney did farming and also worked at blacksmithing, a skill he had learned in the Netherlands. But the Sturwolds experienced poor weather conditions in both states, being frozen out one year and hailed out another, so they decided to move to Canada, where one could get free land. This time they moved with four children. another daughter, **Margaret** (Maritje, October 4, 1915), had been born in North Dakota.

Toney filed on the SW 10-62-3-5 on July 13, 1916. Since there were improvements on the quarter, he paid an additional fifteen dollars besides the ten-dollar filing fee. There was already a house on the land so the Sturwolds moved into it. That first summer Toney went south to work on the prairies.

Toney became well known in the Neerlandia community. Case Ingwersen wrote the following about him:

"Toney was a man with foresight, who saw a good future for Neerlandia. He was soon involved in business that brought grist to the mill and he was received with gladness into the settlement. He bought a one-horsepower motor, put it on a sled in winter and on a low wagon in the summer, put a circular saw opposite the motor, and went on the road that way, a pair of oxen in front — later horses — from farm to farm sawing wood at each. To keep this up day after day, through all hours, was no small thing. To protect himself somewhat against the intense cold, he began growing a beard each fall so that in the winter months he was decked with a handsome full red beard. In later years he also mounted a grain crusher on his wagon, so that he was busy the whole year through. [When Toney came to saw wood,] the farmer had to make sure that he had a stack of logs ready, enough for the whole year. Then the neighbours came and they helped cut up the mountain of logs into short pieces."

In 1921 Toney received the patent to his land. He was cropping fifteen acres and owned twenty-four cattle. He also had a 16 by 24-foot log stable worth $75, a 10 by 16-foot workshop worth $50, a 16-foot well worth $32, and a 2½-mile fence valued at $200. The 16 by 24-foot log house was listed at $100. That same year, Popko Schuring helped Toney build a new log house

It was bigger — 18 by 28 feet — and well-built. All the logs were dovetailed.

By 1921 two more children had been born into the family: **Jake** (Jacob, June 14, 1919) and **Ralph** (Roelof, November 1920). When Ralph was two years old he became ill with pneumonia and died about nine days later (May 1923). In November of that year another boy, **Toney**, was born, but he lived for only ten days.

In the workshop he had on the farm Toney did blacksmithing and also shoed horses. He would straighten and sharpen plowshares, first making them hot in coals and then working them on an anvil. When someone had a broken piece of machinery, he would bring it to Toney to be fixed.

Rulie was an excellent seamstress and also a good cook. She knew how to make good bread and apple pies, something she had learned as a girl. Many times she would have extra people at mealtimes — farmers who had brought something to be fixed were invited in to stay for the meal.

Back: Jake, Ruby, Thelma, Janet. Front: Margaret, Lula, Lukas, Pauline, 1958.

Three more daughters were born to the Sturwolds: **Ruby** (Roelofje, October 13, 1924), **Thelma** (May 20, 1928), and **Janet** Magdalene (April 18, 1930).

Through the years, the Sturwold children all married. Pauline married Jim Tuininga of Edmonton on January 5, 1929. They had four children, one passed away. Lukas married Annie Emmerzael in 1943, Lula married Art Fisher in 1938, Margaret married Jack Tuininga in 1935, and Jake married Tena (Koning) Seinen in 1950.

Rulie, Ruby, Jacob, Lula, Margaret, Lukas, c. 1926

Ruby (later called Rulie) married Angelo Cavallero in 1945. They lived first in Edmonton, then moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. They had two children. Ruby died in 1978. Thelma married Harry Reitsma in 1954. In

Rulie, Toney, c. 1941

1955 Janet married Jack Stulp, a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. They have six children and live in Hudsonville, Michigan, U.S.A.

Toney served as a councillor for many years. He later took up custom painting, which he continued until shortly before he died. After Jake married, Toney and Rulie moved into a small house that had been built for them on the farm. Rulie died June 30, 1956, and Toney died May 31, 1966.

WILLIAM AND EMMA (HENNING) SWAFFIELD

William (born in 1859, Goderich, Ontario) and Emma Swaffield (1864) married in 1881 and first lived in Cleveland, Ohio, where William worked as a general contractor. They had two daughters, **Edna** (1888) who was married to John Beaumont and **Hattie** (1890) who had married John's brother Henry, and three sons. In 1913 they decided to move from the polluted city of Cleveland because their son Harry had a lung (or heart) condition. Edna and Hattie and their husbands were already living in Alberta, and Edna filed by proxy on the NE 33-61-3-5 for her father.

So the Swaffields planned the move to Canada, but a few days before they were to leave Harry died. They decided to stick with their plans and arrived in Neerlandia on June 17, 1913, with their sons **Robert** William (September 5, 1902) and **Norman** (January 27, 1906).

The family stayed in Neerlandia only two years. William cleared thirteen acres during those two years and also built a 16 by 20-foot log house and a stable. He dug a well and put up one mile of fencing.

Even though the Swaffields were an English-speaking family in a Dutch community, they had contact with the rest of the community. They lived near Schoonekamps, and the mail was brought alternately to the two homes to be sorted. When the log church was built in early 1915, William did some finishing work on it. Young Norman Swaffield and Willie Olthuis sometimes played "war" together; they made wooden guns and covered them with tin foil paper.

William, 1936

The Swaffields left Neerlandia in December 1915 and moved to Eston, Saskatchewan. Emma died in 1921, and William remarried. He died May 9, 1941.

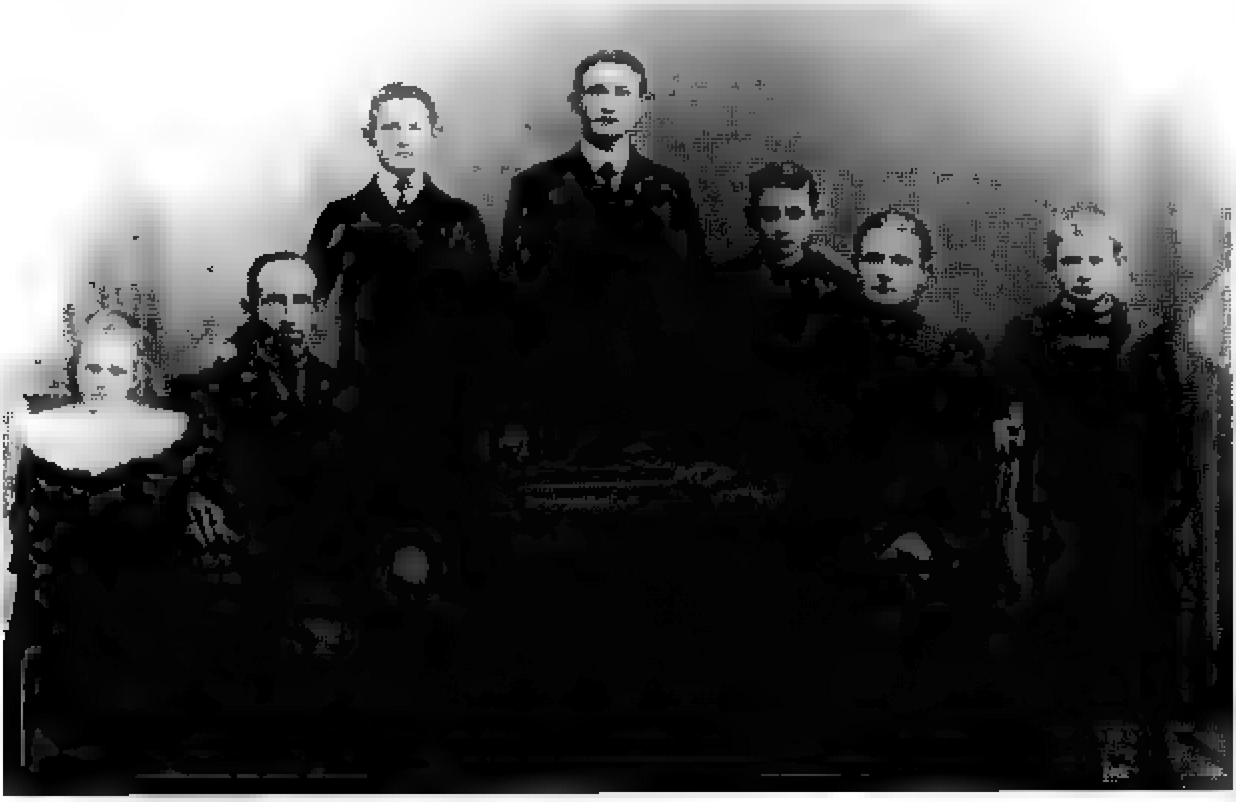
Olive Swaffield

HENDRIK AND WILLEMINA (BOSCH) TER HORST

Hendrik (born August 25, 1862, in Lonneker) and Willemina (born February 9, 1867, in Hellendoorn) ter Horst lived in Enschede, Overijssel, the Netherlands, with their family of six children. Hendrik worked in a textile factory. Their youngest son died at the age of three, and after this sad event the ter Horsts wanted to move. Hendrik and his oldest son, **John** (Johan) Hendrik (December 30, 1891), travelled with Hendrik's friends Herman Hulshof, Gerrit Hoogers, and Gerrit Nyland to Edmonton in March 1909. Meanwhile Hendrik's second son, **Gerrit** (November 16, 1893), worked in a shoe factory to support the family still in the Netherlands.

Within a year Hendrik and John had saved enough money to pay the fares for the rest of the family. Willemina and the other four children, Gerrit, **Bill** (Jan Willem, December 24, 1895), **Henry** (Hendrik Johan, January 17, 1899), and **Rika** (Hendrika Johanna, March 15, 1903), sailed first to Liverpool, then on to Canada in April 1910. With them travelled Mina Nyland and her five month-old daughter Hermiena, Anna Hulshof, and Sina Hoogers.

After the boat voyage the women and children travelled by train to Edmonton. Gerrit was in charge of baby Hermiena, who was securely covered up in a basket. The conductor tried to put the basket into the baggage car. Gerrit, who could not speak English, quickly uncovered the baby. The conductor simply shook his head and beckoned them on. Gerrit was embar-



Hendrika, Hendrik Jan, Gerrit, Johan, Willem, Willemina, Hendrik, 1909.

rassed because he thought the conductor assumed it was his child.

Hendrik and John took out homesteads in Eastburg (south of Hazel Bluff), but the ter Horst family joined the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church when it was formed in 1910. Hendrik was actively involved in the Immigration Society that had been formed in Edmonton and wrote letters to prospective immigrants in the Netherlands, encouraging them to come. The ter Horsts became members of the Neerlandia church in 1916, although Hendrik and Willemina continued to live in Eastburg. As members of the church they received *huis bezoek* once a year and also contributed to the church. The ter Horsts also visited the Neerlandia community where Willemina's relatives, Wouter and Johanna Groothuis, lived.

In 1915 Gerrit and Bill took out homesteads in Neerlandia, Gerrit the NE 8-62-3-5 and Bill the NW 9-62-3-5. While they lived here they would sometimes visit the Kooy family, who lived across Baird Lake. The ter Horsts would paddle across in a makeshift boat which leaked so badly that one of them had to bail almost continuously while the other paddled. If they wanted to visit friends or family, Gerrit and Bill usually had to walk. They often saw wild animals when walking through the woods. Once Gerrit saw a brown and a black bear along the path and another time a wolf crossed the path in front of him.

Gerrit went to the U.S.A. for a trip in 1919. He visited Floris Visser in Everett, Washington, during the trip. While in Everett he met Carrie Klein, whom he married in 1920. Gerrit did not return to Neerlandia to live because he found the winters much warmer in Washington. Bill also went to Everett for a visit and met his future wife, Rena Colyn, there. After their marriage in August 1920 they came to Eastburg for three months. But Rena was unhappy, so they returned to Everett. John ter Horst and his wife, Eva de Groot of Edmonton, moved to Everett in the fall of 1920, and Hendrik and Willemina soon followed their three sons. Henry and Rika remained in Canada.

Shortly after they moved to Everett,

Hendrik broke his neck in a fall from a scaffold. He and Wilemina were caretakers of the Christian Reformed Church in Everett for some years. Hendrik died in July 1930 and Willemina on June 9, 1952, both of cancer.

Carrie Bennett
Viola Vander Wall

BEREND TE RONDE

Berend te Ronde filed on the NW 10-62 3-5 on December 18, 1911. He was single and came with the group of Hollanders that travelled to Townships 61 and 62 in January 1912 to build houses. On Berend's quarter a 16 by 24-foot log shack was built. After leaving in the spring Berend returned to Neerlandia in March 1913, but left two months later. He is reported to have said that living in Neerlandia was like living in a *doodskist* (coffin), and on his declaration of abandonment he stated that there was "too heavy timber."

DOUWE AND BETJE (DIJKSTRA) TERPSMA

It all began overseas in Friesland, the Netherlands, on July 23, 1874, when Douwe Terpsma was born. A year earlier on July 18, also in Friesland, a little girl, Betje (Brechtje) Dijkstra, had been born. These two met some years later and were joined in wedlock in 1893 in their native country.

Around 1910 it was becoming increasingly popular to immigrate to the new and prosperous country of Canada. A Dutch immigrant in Edmonton, Henry Kippers Sr., realized that in Canada there were good prospects for future generations. He was an excellent story writer and story teller. By his stories "that the land was ready for the plow" and the pictures he sent to the Netherlands of the wheat fields of southern Alberta and the prairies blowing in the wind, he managed to persuade many a young man's heart, including Douwe's. Douwe was a dairy farmer, and the pictures of the vast wheatfields of the Canadian West attracted him. Besides, the Netherlands was a densely populated country and the future did not look as prosperous there for his six children as it did in western Canada. So the difficult decision to leave was reached. Their relatives and friends would be left behind, as well as their home and many of their possessions. This was especially hard for Betje, but she promised to stand behind her husband. Correspondence took place with Henry Kippers. Douwe sent a ten-dollar fee and was told there would be a house waiting for them. Henry Kippers promised that he would meet them at the train station in Edmonton. He would wear an orange ribbon (the colour of their King) on his chest for easy recognition.

Thus, in the spring of 1911, Douwe and Betje and their six children (the oldest 18 years of age) left Franeker, Friesland. They took trunks containing the most necessary items, as well as some of their best clothing with them. A friend of the family, Elke Jorritsma, accompanied them. They had booked passage on a second-class boat, but as preparations were made and the boarding was done, a mix-up occurred and the Terpsmas as well as others were placed on a third-class freight boat that transported livestock. This was by no means an easy or pleasant way to travel across the ocean. The voyage lasted ten days. During that time, Douwe was extremely seasick and could not eat any food. The food provided was cooked in one huge pot. One member of each group would go to get the food and, after indicating to the cook how many were in the group, would get that many scoops dished out to him. Elke got the food for the Terpsmas. He would hold up nine fingers and, after coming back with the food, would try to get Douwe to eat, but to no avail.

After what seemed like forever, the boat landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia. There the Terpsma family and Elke boarded a train which took them on a four-day trip across Canada to their desired destination. They arrived in Strathcona on a Sunday morning. Though they were wearing their orange ribbons, there was no one wearing an orange ribbon to meet them at the station. With their boxes of belongings and $300 (all that was left after the journey), the Terpsmas were brought by a cart to the Immigration Hall. Douwe and his oldest son, **John** (Jan, October 5, 1893), immediately set out to find Henry Kippers. They had been told that he was attending a church service at Fred Baron's home on Greisbach Street, not too far away.

Meanwhile, after some inspection, Betje found cockroaches in the room they were to stay in at the Hall and declared that the family was not staying there. So she and the rest of the children stood outside on the steps, their luggage beside them, waiting for Douwe and John to return. Later, Douwe and John returned

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Immigration Hall. While Betje and the children were standing on the steps of Immigration Hall, two men walked by and Betje heard one say, "Dat lijkt net zo'n Hollandse boerinnetje. (That looks just like a Dutch farm girl)." Acquaintance was quickly made with Thomas Bakker and Gerrit Gotzen, who had left the church service early.

Henry Kippers came that evening and said they would have to stay at the Immigration Hall, but that if they would be ready at five the next morning, he would take them to work at Swift's. Douwe soon moved the family into a tent in Parkdale, next to Gaele Baker's house. That fall after John got work constructing the High Level Bridge, the famiy moved into a shack that Douwe had purchased. It was located in the area of 109 Street and the river bottom near the bridge.

Terpsmas' first shack near High Level Bridge, 1911. Betje, Douwe, Ada.

That winter of 1911, Douwe, John, and twelve other Dutchmen decided to search for homesteads northwest of the city. They wanted to find a reasonably-sized area where no quarters of land had been filed on in order that a Dutch community, with its own church and school, could be established. Most of the prairie land of southern Alberta was taken, so the land that was left was not 'ready for the plow', but instead 'ready for the ax'. The Dutchmen followed the Klondike Trail to get to Townships 61 and 62, an area they found suitably large enough, although it was approximately one-hundred miles northwest of Edmonton.

Once they picked their area, they found the numbers of the quarters they thought suitable for homesteading. The numbers were on the steel surveyor's pins, which had been pounded into the ground on the corners of each quarter. They wrote each number on a piece of paper and tossed them into a hat. Whatever number each drew, that would be his quarter. The Dutchmen decided that if a man had a son eighteen years of age or older, the son could file on the quarter beside that of his father. Thus when Douwe got the SW 35-61-3-5, John received the quarter just south of his, the NW 26-61-3-5. After returning to Edmonton to officially file on the land, Douwe, John, and others came out again to build cabins.

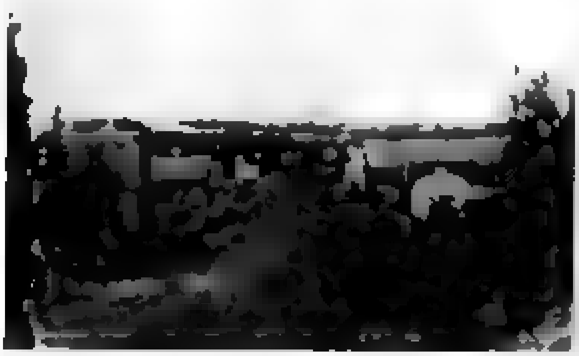
The men all worked together and also stayed together in a log house that had been built on one of the quarters. Some of the younger fellows would occasionally get a bit rambunctious. One night, when all were retired, each side by side on the floor, John and Willem van Ark got somewhat boisterous. One of the older members of the group, thinking to quiet them down, got up and, by the light of the coal oil lamp, read a portion from the Bible that encouraged them to be *matig* (sober). But his manner of ending each verse with a high-pitched upswing only made it more difficult for the young fellows to quiet down.

There was not much time for relaxation, though, as the cabins had to be built. When the cabins were completed, the men returned to their waiting families.

That spring of 1912, three families decided to go homesteading immediately. Douwe made preparations to take his family to the homestead. Koop and Minke Mast and their son, Henry, and Jan and Johanna Oldegbers and their son, John, were the other two families that went to their homesteads. They soon found that to travel in the spring was a mistake; they should have travelled by sleigh when the ground was still frozen.

Douwe had purchased a team of oxen in anticipation of homesteading, as well as a wagon for the journey. John went to the prairies to work, but the rest of the family went to the homestead. They packed their belongings on the wagon the trunks brought from the Netherlands (some of which had never been opened as Betje had unpacked only the absolute necessities), a heater, a cookstove, some furniture, groceries, a cross-cut saw, axes, and some other household items and tools. Also on the wagon were a bag of beans and five gallons of coal oil, both provided by the government. On top of the whole load was a crate of chickens. Tied behind was a milk cow. **Florence** (Froukje, November 21, 1895) had to sit on top of the wagon load to drive the oxen while Douwe walked, leading them. The two youngest children, **Tena** (Tetje, March 12, 1908) and **Norman** (Nanning, September 21, 1909), were allowed to ride on the wagon. Betje, **Ada** (Aafkje, May 23, 1899), and **Art** (Otto, October 16, 1902) had to walk alongside.

The family set off along Jasper Avenue, but problems soon arose. To go north to St. Albert, they had to cross the streetcar tracks, which were raised about eight to ten inches above the ground. After crossing the tracks themselves, the oxen tried to pull the heavy wagon over, but soon gave up and lay down. Douwe had no experience with oxen and, no matter what he did, he could not persuade them to move. When the streetcar came along, the conductor had to stop. He was quite upset because he had a schedule to meet. He took sticks out of the bush nearby and gave Betje and Ada each one to use, then instructed Douwe to pull the oxen up by their nose rings. When Ada saw him use his stick on the oxen she exclaimed, "Oh mussus, please don't hurt the oxes!" But she and Betje were told to help by hitting the oxen. The wagon was soon on its way again.



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St Albert

When they reached the first hill near St Albert, the oxen had a difficult time pulling the heavily-loaded wagon. So Douwe unloaded nearly half the load, mostly trunks, at a farmer's place along the road, promising to retrieve the goods when he could. At Morinville they had to leave a few more items behind. Even though the load was lighter, progress was agonizingly slow. During much of the trip, the weather was rainy. North of Morinville, there was a lot of muskeg, the trails were poor and had large mud holes. The Terpsmas often had to cross creeks with no bridges. The wagon would usually get stuck up to its axles in the deep mud holes or the creeks. Then it would have to be unloaded before the oxen could pull it out of the hole and loaded again before continuing. Trees blown down across the trail also slowed the journey. Douwe put the saw and axes to good use in clearing the way so the oxen could move on.

Betje had taken along enough food to last three or four days, but the food was finished before they reached Clyde. When they came to a farm, Betje would sometimes ask Art or Ada to go to the farmhouse and ask if a loaf of bread or some butter could be purchased. Usually Art went, since he was a friendly sort and got along with everyone. But during the journey one of the oxen stepped on Art's foot, so for awhile Ada, who was much shyer, had to go.

After Morinville, the settlements were smaller. The Terpsmas travelled past Legal and Vimy, where most of the homesteaders were French. At night, they usually stayed at a halfway house. At one such stopping place, they had bedded down for the night when they noticed, to their dismay, that there were bedbugs. The rest of the night Betje sat up with a lantern to keep the bugs off the sleeping children. By four o'clock the next morning, Douwe had had enough of the bedbugs and the family packed up and set off again.

The Terpsmas continued on, through Clyde, Edison, and on to Rossington. At the Pembina River, they took a few more trunks off the wagon before they crossed on the ferry, again promising to return for them later. At Dusseldorf, they exchanged their cook stove

for a smaller one to lighten the load still more since the trail was becoming worse and the oxen were becoming weaker as a result of the arduous journey.

Finally, after having travelled for fifteen days, the Terpsmas came to the Shoal Creek, where the Scott family lived. The children had to get off the wagon since the oxen had a difficult job bracing themselves going down the steep bank into the creek. The creek was high from spring run-off, and the logs that had been laid across to make a footbridge were covered with a few inches of water. Betje crossed over the logs holding Tena with one arm and Norman with the other. She was halfway across when she slid off the logs into the waist-deep water; somehow she managed to keep Tena and Norman from getting wet. Once on the other side, Abe Scott advised them not to go farther with the wagon because there was a deep mud hole on the trail between Wing and Caughlin's quarters and he felt the oxen would never make it through, especially in their exhausted condition. He offered to take them the rest of the way with his oxen and stoneboat. Therefore the borrowed cook stove, the bedding, and a few necessities were loaded onto Abe's stoneboat and he took the family the last one-and-a-half miles of their journey. Douwe walked the distance with the oxen and the cow and went back soon afterward for the wagon and the rest of the load. Sometime later in the summer, he picked up the bigger cook stove he had left at Dusseldorf.

Once the Terpsmas got to the homestead, they found that the cellar was filled with water from the spring thaw. The cabin itself had not been completely finished — the four walls were up and the roof logs were on, but they still had to be covered. As soon as the family was settled in, Douwe and the children found small branches to put on the roof, then dug up sod (which was soaking wet like everything else) to put over the branches. The sods were placed beside each other and stayed on the roof quite well because the roof was built nearly flat. As the sods dried later that summer, great cracks appeared between them.

Terpsmas' log house built in 1912. Douwe at the well, Norman and Tena on the fence.

On the homestead, the Terpsmas lived on a diet of rabbits and pancakes. It was Florence's task to set the rabbit snares everyday. Each morning, she would check the snares and skin and clean the rabbits that had been caught. Betje would cook the meat for supper.

The milk cow Douwe had taken along provided milk for the young children and the rest of the family. Even though most of the area was heavily covered with trees and bush, the cow found some meadows to the west of the Oldegbers homestead to graze on. She had soon worn a path through the bush to her favourite spots and came home on her own each night. One night, though, when she failed to show up at the usual milking time, Florence and Ada were sent to find her. They followed the cowpath but could not find her anywhere — although they did see a bear. After seaching and wandering around for some time, they became hopelessly lost. Which way to go? If they went in the wrong direction they might not find a dwelling for miles. Suddenly they heard a gunshot. Florence was sure it had come from one direction while Ada was certain it had come from another. Then they noticed smoke above the trees and headed in that direction. They soon came to a clearing by the Oldegbers' log house. Jan was there with his gun, which he had fired in hope of helping the girls find their way. Douwe and Betje were there also; they had come to the Oldegbers' to see what could be done to find the girls. The cow had come home long before.

Soon after they came to the homestead, Douwe began the necessary part of homesteading: clearing the land. Towards the north, he found a few acres of land that had a lot of brush on it but not too much heavy timber. That summer he, Florence, and Ada spent most of their time clearing the piece so it would be ready for plowing. It proved to be much harder work than Douwe had anticipated. There was heavy, wet deadfall under all the brush as a result of a forest fire that had gone through the country some years earlier. In spite of everything, Douwe remained cheerful, often singing while he was clearing, "*O Canada, wat heb je mij bedrogen!* (Oh Canada, how you have deceived me!)" The song delighted Florence and Ada, who could not help but laugh at the words.

Living on the homestead meant there was work to be done from morning until late at night, and the Terpsmas had little time to visit with the Mast or Oldegbers families. About once a week though, Florence and Ada walked with Henry Mast or John Oldegbers to Mellowdale to see if there was any mail and to buy groceries. They would leave, barefoot, at six o'clock in the morning, and follow the narrow muddy trail through the bush. They would take food along to eat on the way. By the time they got to the post office, the girls' skirts would be soaking wet from the dew on the leaves and the grass along the trail. After checking for mail, the girls would buy whatever groceries Betje might need — usually flour, sugar, or lard. They bought very little, because they were unable to carry anything heavy for such a long distance. By the time they got back to the settlement, it would be late in the day. Minke Mast would often call the girls in before they walked the last two miles home and give them some *koek* or a bottle of *karnemelkse pap* to take home.

After carrying the groceries home quite a few times, Florence and Ada decided to take one of the oxen along to carry the groceries instead. At the store, they put the groceries into two bags, attached the bags with a rope and slung them over the ox's back, one on each side. All went well until they came to the creek and the ox thought it was time for a drink. Standing on the bank, it reached way down to quench its thirst, not taking any notice of the groceries which slid forward behind its horns and dangled over its neck in the water. Florence and Ada, both short and slightly-built, tried with all their might to heave up its head but, no matter what they did, the ox stopped drinking only when it had had its fill. The bottom half of the bags of groceries had become wet but Betje managed to salvage them.

Once that summer, the Terpsmas had visitors. Gaele and Raymond Baker had come from Edmonton to look for suitable homesteads. They had stayed with the Masts, but came to talk to Douwe for a short while. How Florence and Ada wished they could go back to the city with them and get away from the homestead and all the mud!

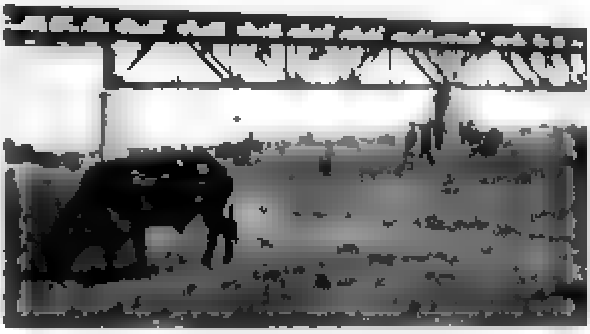
Douwe made good use of his two oxen in pulling trees down while clearing or in pulling logs out of the bush. The Masts had no oxen, so the girls spent three days helping Henry Mast pull logs out of the bush with their oxen. Henry needed the logs for building a barn, and his father, Koop, was not well enough to help him with such heavy work. After the girls had helped, Minke gave Florence a pair of her son Carl's leather shoes. They were a boon to Florence; the only other pair of shoes she owned was a rather sloppy pair that had been made from a leather football.

The summer was soon over and by fall, Douwe had four acres cleared. Sometime later, he discovered that those acres were part of the next quarter to the north. What a discouragement! When this quarter was taken up, Douwe was promised that two acres would be cleared on his land in return, but it was never done.

The Terpsmas did not have enough supplies to keep them over the winter; most of the winter clothing was in the trunks that had been left along the way, and the heater had also been left. They had no seed to plant in the spring either. So in November, Douwe took his family and animals back to Edmonton.

Douwe stopped at the farms near Morinville and St. Albert to pick up the trunks that had been left, but he found the owners had moved and the trunks were gone. This was a big disappointment — Betje had been depending on using the clothes for the children, now she had to make do with what they had. At one time she was so short of material that she sewed sixteen little pieces of cloth together to make a pair of pants for Art.

The family moved again to the area near the High Level Bridge. This time Douwe erected a wood and canvas tent-type dwelling. The oxen and the cow, each tied to an iron peg, were pastured on the grass near the tent. Every night, Betje moved the cow close to the tent. But one time, after the cow had just been moved to a new location, Douwe decided to leave her there for the night. The next morning, the cow was gone — only the rope and peg were left.



Jimmy the bull, the milk cow, Mike the ox near the High Level Bridge, 1912

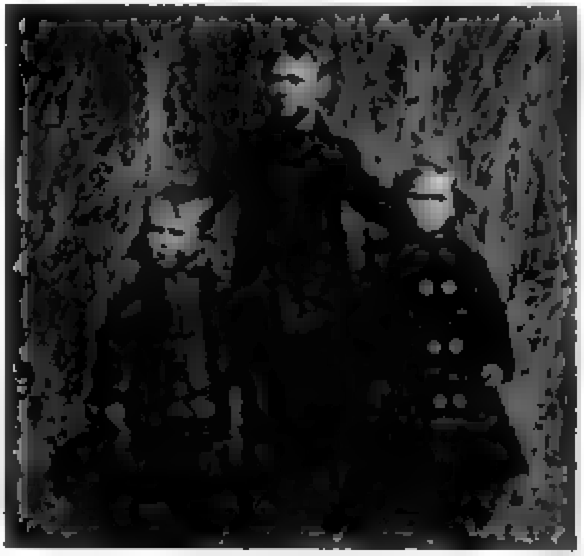
Along the river bank, not far from the Terpsma's tent, there were half-breeds living. Though Betje was afraid of them, when she saw a half-breed trying to take one of the oxen away

Terpsma's second shack near High Level Bridge, 1912. Indians encamped on hill in background.

she yelled, and the man quickly left. After that, she was quite sure that the half-breeds had taken their milk cow

Florence, Ada in front of shack, 1913.

Florence and Ada soon got jobs at Burns, wrapping butter and candling eggs, and Douwe found a job working for the city on road construction. John had returned from the prairies and was working on the High Level Bridge By the spring of 1913, enough money had been saved that the Terpsmas could return to the homestead



Near High Level Bridge, 1913. Norman, Art, Tena.

Douwe went twice to the homestead that year — from March 5 to June 4 and from August 6 to October 25 During one stay he took the whole family to the homestead and during the other only John and Florence went along. Fred Baron went along on one trip to look for a homestead. Another milk cow and a pony were also part of the entourage They had no mishaps on that trip until they reached the Big Timber. The overhead branches of a tree got caught on the crate of chickens that was on top of the wagon load. A slat broke off the crate and it fell to the ground. The squawking chickens escaped into the bush Art ran after them and retrieved as many as he could. Once they got to the homestead, the pony often tried to escape and always headed south if it got loose Finally, it got away and Douwe never saw it again.

In the spring, John went with a sleigh to pick up the trunks that had been left at Rossington. Among the items in the trunks were a long *Fries* wall clock and Betje's good clothing from the Netherlands. John loaded up the sleigh, but when he went onto the river ice, the sleigh began to sink. John returned quickly to shore, but the bottom few inches of the trunks had gotten wet. He left the trunks in the shed and returned later that year to pick them up. When Douwe and Betje finally unpacked the trunks, the clothing had rotted and the clockwork was water-damaged, it appeared that when the trunks had been put back in the shed, they had been turned upside down and the water had soaked everything

In the fall of 1913, Douwe got some crop off the land, but he did not have enough money or food to stay at the homestead for the winter The next year, though, the family came to the homestead to stay. Florence and Ada remained working in Edmonton and sent any extra money they made to their parents. John built a cabin on his homestead, but continued to live with his parents.

All the quarters in the area were heavily populated with poplar, spruce, willow, tamarack, and underbrush, and clearing these trees was also hard work. Douwe and the children would clear approximately five acres at a time. Douwe marked off a square by skinning bark off the trees. Most of the trees that had been cleared were used for firewood. Douwe and the boys bucked up their firewood for the first four years by using a crosscut saw

Each year Douwe raised a calf from the milk cow. If it was a heifer she was kept, for in this way Douwe built up the herd. If it was a bull calf he was kept for butchering. Butter was made from the cream and the milk was used for many things.

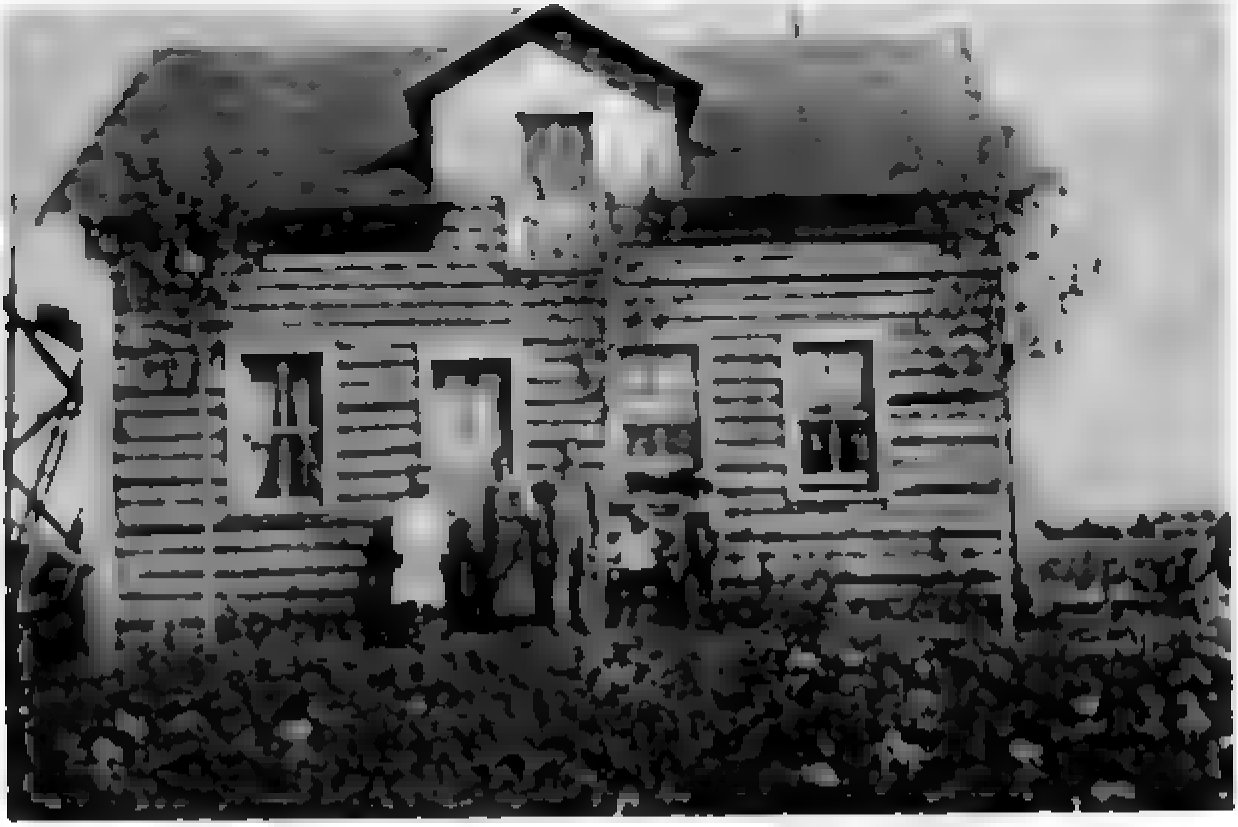
On October 23, 1915, Betje gave birth to another son, **George** (Gerlof), in their home. It was a difficult birth. Art, Tena, Norman, and Florence, who was out from the city, stayed at the Oldegbers' place while Johanna Oldegbers, the midwife, stayed with Betje.

Douwe patented his homestead in 1917. Records indicate that he was cropping nineteen acres and had eleven more brushed. He owned eleven head of cattle, but no horses. On the farm, he had built a 16 by 24-foot log house, a 20 by 30-foot log stable, and two other log buildings. Other improvements were 1¾ mile of pole and wire fences and two wells, one twenty feet and the other thirty feet deep.

The sod roof on the log shack leaked whenever it rained. Betje was careful to keep the feather beds dry by putting pots and pans out to catch every drip. Things changed considerably when Douwe seeded the sods with grass seed. Once the grass grew, the roots held the water and kept it from leaking through the roof. Even with this improvement, the shack was not ideal — it was built low and the windows in it were very small.

Douwe built a new house in 1917. George Caughlin squared it up north and south for Douwe and put up stakes where it should stand. Menne Nanninga and Popko Schuring were among those who helped Douwe build it. The new house was two stories high, with four bedrooms upstairs. It had big windows too, but the greatest improvement was the shingled roof.

Betje never had bedbugs in the house, but in the 1920s that changed. The man who brought a stallion around to the local farmers would stay in the area for two or three days every time he came. One time he stayed with the Terpsmas, and slept in one of the upstairs bedrooms. On the second night the visitor was there, Douwe's legs itched so terribly that he went outside to the barrel by the well and jumped in to soothe the itching. When Betje



Log house built in 1917. Tena, Betje, Douwe, George, Norman, John looking through window, c. 1920 mentioned the incident the following day, their visitor suggested bedbugs might be the cause. After he left, Betje checked the bed he had slept in and did find bedbugs! She suspected they had probably been carried in on the heavy thick overcoat the man wore. When Norman and Tena came home after school, they found Betje quite distressed. She was bustling about in the infested bedroom, putting a pan under each bed leg and pouring boiling water down each corner to try to kill the bugs. They continued to be plagued by bedbugs, though — no matter what remedy she tried, Betje could not get rid of them.

While living in Edmonton, Florence had met and become engaged to Dick Baker, son of Gaele and Catharina. They came to Neerlandia to be married in the church here. Florence was at her parents' homestead awaiting her big day, which was to be on her birthday, November 21. But Rev. Jongbloed, after taking the train from Edmonton, became stranded in Westlock because everything was drifted in after a bad snowstorm. So the wedding was postponed till Sunday. A wedding is a very special day in a woman's life and everything has to be just so, especially the wedding attire. Since Florence lived in the city, she saw stylish clothing in the shops. For her wedding, Florence purchased a beautiful dress, a hat, gloves, and shoes with high heels. On Saturday evening there was a knock on the back door. It was Ralph Kooy, elder of the church, who came to talk to Florence about the marriage ceremony. He soon noticed the high-heeled shoes standing in the kitchen and the silk dress hanging there too. After eyeing them, he turned to Florence and stated, "You can't wear those shoes with heels like that; they look far too worldly. A piece of those heels will definitely have to be cut off!" To show that he was serious, he took out his jackknife. He also told her that the dress was much too gaudy. But Florence firmly replied, "Mr. Kooy, those boots will be left untouched since I bought and paid for them myself. I plan to wear them — and the dress too." The marriage ceremony was held during the following afternoon service and Florence wore the dress and the shoes. The wedding party was held the next day in John's shack which was decorated with spruce boughs taken from the bush. Everyone came dressed in their Sunday best; the minister spoke; and baked goods and chocolate milk were served. Florence and Dick Baker took up residence in Edmonton. They had two sons. Florence still lives (1984) in Edmonton.

The silk wedding dress. Dick and Florence's wedding photo, 1917

Douwe rented the homestead to Peter Kampnar, and moved back to Edmonton in the spring of 1918 in order to work and save some money. On the homestead he had five head of cattle and a few calves, but the Neerlandia farmers were too poor to buy them so Douwe took them along and advertised them in *The Edmonton Journal*. The Terpsmas rented a house in north Edmonton and went to work at the Swift's and Burns plants and in construction. Norman and Tena continued their schooling in Edmonton.

By the winter of 1919 they had saved enough money to buy new cows and return to the homestead. Art and John went first to bring the livestock. The eight head of cattle plus calves were put on the train to Westlock. From there Art and John herded them to the homestead. Then John came back for the family. They travelled in a canvas-covered bundle rack on a sleigh drawn by a team of grey ponies, Queen and Nellie. The cook stove inside was kept burning and the smoke went out a pipe at the top. It was warm inside and the family slept in it at night. The Terpsmas called it a caboose. John had bought a team of Clydesdales from McFadden's. He hitched them to another sleigh with a heavy load of the family's belongings that included a democrat and some furniture. The horses made good time with the sleighs gliding over the snow. A saddle pony named Kate was hitched behind the caboose and on nice days Tena and Norman took turns riding her; indeed, the children had fun during the trip. Along the way, they would stop to buy bread or maybe milk and butter. In Mellowdale they bought a whopper of a loaf of bread, but when they ate it, they found it had a sour taste — it was sourdough bread, which the Terpsmas had never eaten before.

Once again the Terpsma family arrived at their homestead. They milked quite a number of the cows and shipped cream. They fed their animals from the grain they raised, but shipped some grain as well. It was usually a poor grade since frost always damaged the crops. Douwe had not brought any chickens, because he had hoped to buy a small flock when he came to the homestead. But once here, he found no one had enough chickens to sell him a flock. So Tena and Norman were assigned to go through the settlement and try to buy enough chickens to get started. Since Queen and Nellie were not to be trusted with the children, old Kate was hitched up to the stoneboat. It had no shafts so Kate had to hurry when going down a slope to keep the stoneboat from hitting her heels. The two children spent a couple of afternoons visiting homesteads in the settlement, buying one or two chickens at each place. By that time, they had a respectably-sized flock of hens with one rooster. The chickens sported every colour under the sun and did they fight!

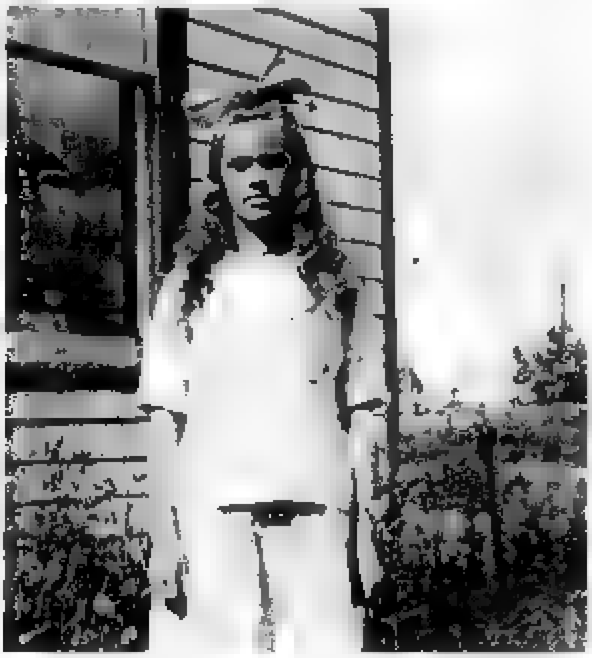
It was the wild and free west in Alberta for many years and not too many farmers had fenced off their quarters. The Terpsma's cattle and horses, like others, roamed and grazed at their leisure; sometimes one to two miles away. The one or two leading cows wore cowbells so they could be heard when the children were looking for them, although a cowbell did not help much when the cows were resting. One time it was Norman's turn to get the cows. So after school, he saddled Kate, only to return two hours later with no cows. Tena said that she would go and look for them and off she went. Just before 10:00 p.m., when she was getting very anxious about Tena's welfare, Betje stood outside and heard faintly in the distance what sounded like a cowbell. A short time later a herd of cows appeared and a weary Tena. It was after ten o'clock and all the cows had to be milked yet. Fortunately this did not happen often.

In the cold winter, doing morning chores, hauling firewood, and doing evening chores was about the extent of work the daylight would allow. The wells did not produce enough water for the cows so they were led away to muskeg holes. That was Norman's job. He would carry a deep watering barrel and make a trail through the deep snow, with the cows nicely walking single file behind him. This was very tiresome because it was quite a walk to these holes.

Ada married Ernie Schelly, an Irishman from Edmonton, in 1922. They are living in Enderby, B.C., at present. Arthur married Rose Violette of Naples in October 1923. They resided mostly in New Westminster, B.C. Rose died in 1966. Arthur passed away in 1980 of pneumonia.

The pioneers of the community shared many happy times, but also sad times. Weddings were always happy occasions. In January 1927, Tena became bride-elect of Peter Tuininga. They were married and resided on the SW 26-61-25, which Douwe had purchased from Tina Caughlin. A few months after Peter and Tena were married they found themselves expecting a baby, which made them excited and happy. This happiness was short-lived when

Tena suddenly took very ill on a Friday. Peter brought her home, where Betje helped nurse her. A doctor came out from Westlock and diagnosed her sickness to be infantile paralysis (polio). There was no medication to be given and the health authorities did not know much about the disease. A week later (September 30, 1927) Tena was called home to her Heavenly Father. A health inspector came from the city and quarantined the Terpsma farm. No one could come and no one could leave. The family prepared the body for burial and the casket was brought to the road where C. K. Mast picked it up with his truck. Ada and Florence came from the city and accompanied C. K. to the funeral services which were held in the graveyard. Neither Peter nor the others of Tena's family were permitted to attend the funeral service. Quarantine was not necessary, but at that time little was known about the sickness.

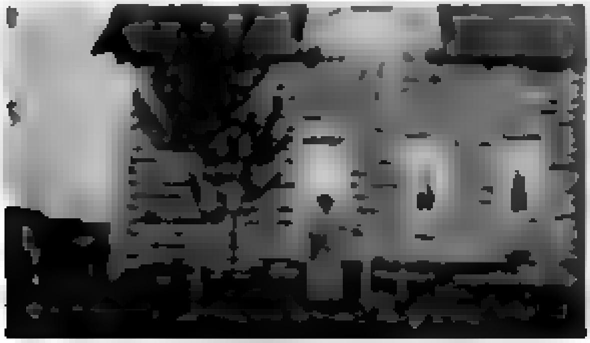

Tena, c. 1922

Douwe enjoyed gardening, each year raising many vegetables and potatoes. During the winter he sold carrots, beets, turnips, or potatoes to the Chisholm lumbering camp run by Tom Wilson. Douwe delivered them to the camp, but had to wait for mild days so the vegetables would not freeze. One winter day in 1923, John had to bring a load of potatoes to the camp. Muskeg Michael rode along since he had a job at the Chisholm camp. John and some others were planning to log in another berth on the Athabasca River, so John needed his team

Terpsma farmyard. George, Harry Schelly, c. 1923.

of Clydesdales and a cook stove along. The potatoes were put in the bundle rack on the sleigh and the cook stove was put in the cutter, which was hitched up behind the sleigh. Both the Clydesdales and the light team were needed to pull, so Norman came along to take the light team home. When they started off north along the trail, all went well. But north of the settlement the trail became quite narrow. The sides of the rack got stuck against trees alongside the trail. At first John would stop and chop the trees down before continuing, but the weather turned cold and it began blowing and snowing, making John anxious to reach the camp. He did not bother to stop anymore whenever he saw a narrow place ahead on the trail, he simply gathered up speed and went right through the narrow spots. Soon all the sides of the rack were gone and only the flat rack was left! When they got to the Horseshoe Bend hill just above the lumber camp, John took the heavy team and what was left of the bundle rack down the steep hill. Muskeg Michael followed with the light team and the cutter. After getting something to eat at the camp Norman took the cutter and the light team home, but it was dark long before he got there.

Betje did a lot of sewing for the family. She did most of it in the evening after the daily chores were done, working by the light of a coal oil lamp. Whether it was the poor lighting or something else, her eyesight was ruined by the time she was fifty. During the 1920s, a fellow came around selling glasses and Betje bought a pair that suited her. Florence and Ada told her to get her eyes tested by an eye doctor and not to use those glasses. But Betje insisted she could see just fine with them and never did go to the eye doctor.



Betje, 1923

A tragic incident struck the Terpsma family in April 1928. Wood on which coal oil had been spilled was being burned in the cook stove when an explosion took place in the stove, throwing the doors open. Fire shot out over the kitchen floor. Betje had to run through the fire to reach the water pail and her clothes caught fire. She ran outside, broke the ice off the puddles and rolled in them. By that time she was severely burned in many places, especially around her waist, where all the material from her skirt and blouse was gathered tightly against her body. Betje did not want to go to the hospital and, not knowing any better, had Douwe put cotton batting on the burns. Dr. Verreau came later from Barrhead and painstakingly plucked the cotton strands out of the wounds with tweezers. Betje was laid up for three months before she recovered enough to be up and around again. Florence came and took care of the family for the first six weeks. Others helped out as well, Dina Messelink did the wash for the family. The only good thing that resulted from the fire was that there were no bedbugs in the house anymore. During the fire, the smoke had oozed out between the logs and killed all the bugs.

In the spring of 1929, Douwe and Betje decided to return to Edmonton. They had a farm sale and rented out their land — two quarters with about one hundred acres cultivated — to the Elzinga family. John had married Harda Lievers in 1928 so only the two boys, Norman and George, went along to Edmonton. There Douwe bought a seven-acre plot with a house on it and raised potatoes and vegetables. But it was the years of the hungry thirties and the produce did not sell, even though at one time they were selling ninety pounds of potatoes for only fifteen cents. One winter the Terpsmas had 1700 bushels of potatoes stored in the root cellar, unable to sell them. They kept them until June, when they started to rot and had to be dumped. Norman and George went back to Neerlandia to take up farming. In 1937 Norman took over the original homestead and George took over Douwe's second quarter, the Caughlin homestead.

Douwe and Betje lived on their acreage for ten years. On May 16, 1939, Betje passed away from gallbladder and liver trouble. After she died, Douwe sold the acreage and lived with a brother in Lynden, Washington, for a time. He visited his children and spent the summers with Norman and his family. Later he married a widow, Etje Westra, from Randolph, Wisconsin. They were married three years, and then he became a widower once again. He moved to New Westminster and resided there till his passing on April 7, 1954, from stomach cancer. Both Douwe and Betje are buried in the Neerlandia cemetery.

Florence Baker
Norman Terpsma

SIEBREN AND WILLEMKE (DE BOER) TIEMSTRA

Siebren (Simon) Tiemstra (Tiymstra) was born May 3, 1886, in Bolsward, Friesland, the Netherlands. When he grew up Siebren wanted to join the army but was refused because he was too short. Willemke de Boer, a cousin to Siebren, was born April 25, 1889, also in Bolsward. She was born into a farming family. When she was five years old she had to deliver bread every morning before school, a job for which she was paid three *stuivers* a week. But Willemke soon had to quit school and work for *boeren*. Through school she knew Froukje Eerdmans, who lived in a splendid house in the same town. Sometimes, when Willemke passed by the Eerdmans house, there would be sounds of people singing and an organ being played, and she would stand close to the house and listen to the beautiful sounds. Froukje was of a different social class, and that meant the girls would not have much to do with each other.

Siebren began courting Willemke, but in 1906 he and his stepbrother Jan Anema went to America. Willemke's brother Johannes farmed in Harrison, South Dakota, so Harrison was Siebren's destination. He found work with a farmer there and later rented land from him. Willemke came to Harrison in 1907, and she and Siebren were married January 16, 1908. Froukje Eerdmans also came to America, and she married Jan Anema. Away from the Netherlands, where social class divides people, Willemke and Froukje became close friends. Siebren enjoyed farming there and had an opportunity to buy the land he was renting, but was attracted by an article placed in *De Wachter* by H. Kippers. It stated that in Alberta, Canada, 160 acres could be bought for ten dollars, although it did not say that the 160 acres were nearly all bush. Siebren could not resist the lure, and in 1911, he, Willemke, and their two sons, **Albert** (Ulbe) George (May 30, 1908) and **Gerben** (April 3, 1910), travelled north with the Anemas by train to Edmonton.

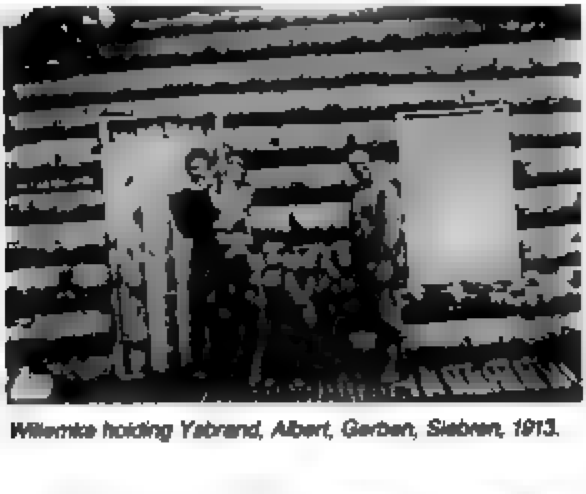
Albert, Gerben, Ysbrand, c. 1912

Once in Edmonton the Tiemstras lived in a tent in Fraser Flats. The tent had a floor of boards, and during the winter Siebren put a fly over the tent. Beside them lived the Tjeerd Visser family, and Gerben and Tena Visser often played together. One day both of them fell into an abandoned outhouse pit, much to the disgust of Siebren, who cleaned them up.

Siebren was anxious to begin farming. One or two men had searched for land in the Thorhild area and found open land that had few trees. Siebren filed on a quarter in that area in April 1911. But later he discovered that most of the land was under water, and he abandoned it. On December 18, 1911, Siebren took up the NW 14-61-3-5 in what was later called Neerlandia as a homestead. He built a cabin on it in January 1912 and stayed there until April 1, when he returned to Edmonton to work. A third son, **Ysbrand**, was born to the Tiemstras on July 1, 1912. The Tiemstra family moved to the homestead in January 1913. Siebren had bought a team of oxen and packed all their household goods on a sleigh for the trip.

During their first years on the homestead the Tiemstras were supplied with wild meat by the trappers who lived north of them. One of the trappers, George Wing, would often come to tell Siebren where he could find a moose, deer, or bear that had been shot, and Siebren would go into the bush with his oxen to drag the meat out. Siebren also snared rabbits and shot prairie chickens and partridges. To catch rabbits in the winter, he would put a fence around the haystack beside the stable, make a little hole in the fence, and put a snare in it. Willemke cooked the choice pieces of the rabbits and Siebren hung the carcasses in the chicken coop for the chickens to eat.

Siebren's homestead was at the southernmost part of the settlement. Many men who came to look for homesteads would stop at the Tiemstras' place first, often spending the night there. Other times whole families stayed until they had some place of their own. In some instances the stay stretched to weeks instead of days. Tiemstra's log house was twenty-five by sixteen-feet and had one large living area and two bedrooms. When there was company the kitchen floor was often covered with blankets at night; sometimes there were as many as fourteen people sleeping on the floor. When men came looking for homesteads Siebren was willing to take them through the settlement to select a suitable quarter. He would sometimes go to Edmonton to pick up new settlers with his ox team and wagon. It took about two weeks to make the round trip.



Willemke holding Ytbrand, Albert, Gerben, Siebren, 1913.

Siebren was the mail carrier from Mellowdale to Neerlandia for four or five years. Once a week he would go early in the morning to Albert Mast's place to pick up any outgoing mail, and bring it to the post office in Mellowdale. By the time he got back to Mast's with the Neerlandia mail, it would be late in the day. When Siebren got a horse in 1916 he hitched it up to a two-wheeled cart to use for getting mail. Usually there was a fairly heavy bag of mail to take back, especially when there were parcels from Eaton's in it. The winters that Siebren was gone working, Willemke hauled the mail. Albert and Gerben went along to drive the horse for her, but they were not allowed to handle the mail themselves because they were underage.

Siebren, Albert, Ytbrand, Della Anema, Gerben, 1916.

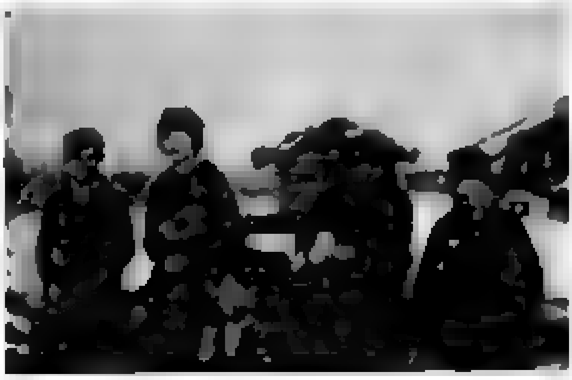
Siebren worked elsewhere during the winter to make some money. He usually worked at Fluet's Sawmill, leaving early Monday morning and returning Saturday night. Many Saturday nights Willemke sat up until the midnight hours patching Siebren's clothes, then washing them so they would be dry and ready for Monday morning. While Siebren was gone, Willemke did the chores.

While clearing, Siebren found that much of the land on his quarter had burnt timber underneath and was very heavy clearing. The dead logs underneath had been big trees, much thicker than the ones that were standing. Siebren applied for the patent to his homestead in December 1916. He was cropping eighteen acres and six more were brushed, with the balance being heavy brush. The other improvements were two log stables, a twenty-eight-foot well, and two miles of pole fence. Siebren had come with four cattle in 1913, by 1916 he had eight cattle and a horse. Siebren made hay for the animals from the meadows east along the Shoal Creek. He and Jan Anema usually worked together, making the hay in summer and bringing it home in winter.

One time while Siebren was breaking land, the coulter on his breaking plow broke. Siebren quickly decided that he could walk just as fast as his team of oxen would and carried the twenty-five-pound coulter all the way to Rossington, where the blacksmith Fletcher Johnson lived. The blacksmith fixed it for Siebren, then said, "If a man has that much ambition, to walk all that way with such a heavy thing, then I can't charge him." Siebren walked back the same day with the coulter.

Ysbrand became sick with the measles in 1917 and, just when he seemed to be recuperating, took a turn for the worse. Within a few days he died.

During the flu epidemic of 1918 Siebren and his neighbours helped each other out. When Lambertus Janssen and his family, who lived just south of Siebren's, came down with the flu, Siebren did their chores. Later Lambartus returned the favour when Siebren became sick. Pete Louws, a bachelor who lived just north of Tiemstras, came over when he felt the flu coming on — he was afraid that if he became desperately ill, no one would find him. After several days, though, he recovered and returned to his shack.



Albert, Margaret Messelink, Gerben, Jo Messelink, 1918.

A daughter, Emma (Ymkje), was born July 12, 1919. The following winter was a long one. Siebren did not have enough feed for his cattle and had to go to Mellowdale to get straw from the Metzgers. The snow was so deep that he had to go over drifts to get there and could not follow the trail. When spring finally came, all the cattle were still alive, but very weak. Siebren let them out to forage, but three or four of them died after walking too far in their weakened condition.

Siebren was a nimble and active man. He could do headstands, walk on his hands, and jump higher than most anyone in the settlement — quite a feat for someone of his short stature. He was usually willing to try anything and was always cheerful.

Willemke was tall and much quieter than Siebren. She and Froukje Anema were still close friends and visited each other often. Froukje did a lot of sewing for Willemke, who did not sew at all except for patching and mending on her hand sewing machine. Willemke spent many evenings knitting socks, mittens, or sweaters for the family.

Besides doing the family's wash, Willemke washed clothes for others. This included patching and mending them. George Heileman, a widower from Mellowdale, would come to the Tiemstras once a week and change into his freshly-cleaned clothes there, leaving his dirty ones for Willemke to take care of the next week. He often gave Willemke a piece of tallow in return for the washing. Pete Louws also brought his clothes to Willemke to be washed.

Each summer mosquitoes were a plague. Towards bedtime, when the mosquitoes became unbearable, Willemke would make a smudge in the cook stove by covering the wood with green grass. She would leave the metal plate off the stove to let the smoke spread through the house. Soon the mosquitoes would be crowded against the windows, trying to escape. Then Willemke and the children would kill the mosquitoes with wet rags. The family could then go to bed and sleep peacefully until four or five o'clock in the morning, when the mosquito population inside had again risen to an uncomfortable level. When Willemke had gardening to do she made four or five smudges in five-gallon pails and spaced them in the garden so she could work without too much distraction.

Before the Neerlandia church had its own minister, Siebren often went to pick up the minister (usually Rev. Jongbloed of Edmonton) who was to preach in church the coming Sunday. The minister would have to be met at Dusseldorf, which was as far as the stage went Sometimes the minister would stay overnight at the Tiemstra's as well

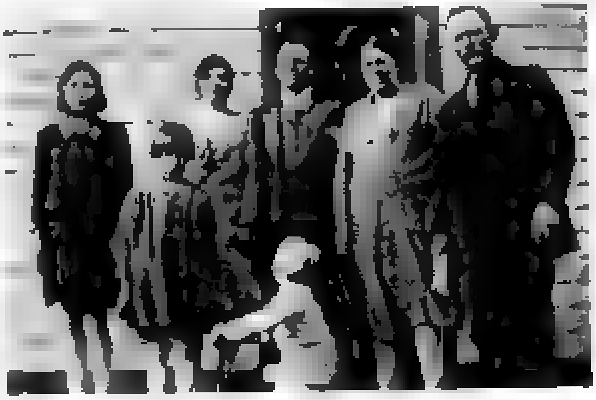
The four-mile trip to church on Sundays took up to one-and-a-half hours with the horses and wagon The trail was so poor that Siebren had to drive slowly just to stay on the wagon. He would often walk to church instead, sometimes with Emma on his shoulders. In the winter the sleigh could be used and that went much faster. If it was too cold, though, Willemke stayed home with the children and read them Bible stories. In between services the Tiemstras would sometime stay at the Anemas for lunch. Siebren served in consistory for many years. He kept up on church matters by reading Dutch church papers and other books Siebren taught Sunday school for some years and would often tell the Christmas story to the children at the annual Christmas concert in church

Siebren bought a team of mules, Jack and Jerry, during the 1920s. Siebren found them to be clever animals If he took them to a field and plowed three rounds with them the first day, the following time he went there they would plow three rounds, then stubbornly refuse to do any more Siebren would use one of the mules, hitched up to the buggy, to take the family to church. He kept the mules for five or six years

The original Tiemstra house was built of big unpeeled spruce logs It had a sod roof which dripped whenever it rained. Willemke would often have to move the beds to spots where there were no drips. Siebren later built an addition of peeled logs which was used as a kitchen. In 1926, with the help of his son Gerben and Jim Johnman, he built a two-storey lumber house

Albert and Gerben had already quit school by the time Emma was old enough to go. She began school in 1926, when she was seven years old. She was the only one going to school from that corner of the settlement, so at first she boarded with the Ingwersens. Ingwersen's daughter Annie would braid Emma's long hair each morning. But, even though she went home weekends, Emma became homesick and was soon moved to the Anemas. Her hair, though, was cut short to make less bother Siebren would pick Emma up every Friday night, then bring her to school again Monday morning. Later, after the Albert Mast family moved back from Edmonton, Emma walked to school with the Mast children. Doris Wilson also lived along the way, and the children looked out for her, but she usually had work to do before and after school and rarely had time to walk with them Emma never wore shoes to school because they would get ruined if it should happen to rain. Depending on the weather, therefore, she either wore rubbers or went barefoot.

Tractor and seed drill in transport. Siebren holding Joe, Gerben and Albert on tractor, 1930.



Emma, Tena, Albert, Willemke, Siebren. Front: Rose, Joe, 1931

Siebren and Willemke had two more children: Rose (Rooske) was born October 20, 1923, and Joe (Johannes) on March 1, 1929 In 1931 Albert married Tena Wierenga and Gerben married Tena's cousin, Trientje, daughter of Andries and Rika Wierenga

Emma married John Schuman of Bruderheim on April 28, 1939. They farmed in Naples and raised a family of three children. In 1941 Rose married John Ingwersen of Neerlandia

Siebren and Willemke retired in 1944. Their sons took over the farm, with Albert taking the

north half of 14-61-3-5 and Gerben the south half. Siebren bought five acres at the Corner from John Ingwersen. He resold it in 1946, and he, Willemke, and Joe went for a trip to the states, first to South Dakota where Willemke's brother lived, and then to California where a sister lived. In 1947 Siebren and Willemke moved to Lynden, Washington. Joe stayed in California and married Charlene Kuiphof in 1949.

Willemke, Siebren, 1959.

Around 1955 Siebren and Willemke returned to Neerlandia to live. They bought Henry Bouwman's house and moved there. Siebren remained an active person. A week before he died he was still doing handstands. He passed away May 25, 1960. Willemke then moved to Barrhead, living in her own home until 1974 when she went to Barrhead Nursing Home. She passed away February 3, 1979.

Tiemstra Family

ULBE TIEMSTRA
IKE TIEMSTRA

Ulbe Tiemstra (Tiymstra) was born August 3, 1854, in Wommels, Friesland, the Netherlands. He later owned a farm in the area. His first wife, Roosye de Boer, died, leaving Ulbe and four children, one of whom was **Siebren**. Ulbe remarried to a widow, Sietske de Haas, who had two children. One of those two children, **Jan Anema**, immigrated with Siebren to the U.S.A., and later both of them homesteaded in Neerlandia.

Two more children were born into Ulbe and Sietske's family: **Ike** (Ysbrand) on September 1, 1898, and **Charles** (Tjeerd) on January 30, 1903. Sietske died in a flu epidemic in 1919. Ulbe had sold his farm in 1916 because he was dissatisfied with the government intervention in farming. Then Charles decided to immigrate to Canada and he persuaded Ike to come with him. Ulbe decided to go along and visit Siebren. He planned to stay for about six months.

Siebren, Willemke with Emma, Ulbe, 1920.

Coal miners. Ted Reitsma, Charles, Ike. c. 1921

After the three arrived in Neerlandia in June 1920, Ulbe and Ike stayed with Siebren. Ike worked for him that first summer. Ulbe liked the country so much that he decided to remain in Canada. Wherever he went, he was never seen without his *klompen*. He had a plain pair that he wore during the week and another handsomely-painted pair that he wore Sundays. Ulbe died in 1922 or 1923 at the age of 68

In the fall of 1920 Ike and his brother, Charles, worked on a roadcrew. During the following years he worked for other farmers and, during the winter, in an Edmonton coal mine. He bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from Jacob Olthuis in 1924. On it he kept a few milking cows, some horses, and some sheep. Ike remained a bachelor. The difficulties of pioneering took its toll, and in the late twenties he developed mental problems. He was hospitalized in Oliver Mental Institute in 1929 and remained there until his death on October 25, 1952

Tiemstra Family

JELLE AND ANKE (WIJNIA) TUININGA
CLARENCE AND TRIENTJE (WIERENGA) TUININGA

In the early 1900's, a Dutch newspaper ran an article written by Mr. Henry Kippers of Edmonton. The article stated that the Alberta government was selling 160-acre parcels of land for ten dollars. As the prospects for a farm labourer in the Netherlands did not look promising, this offer was irresistible to many Dutchmen, including Jelle Tuininga (Tuinenga). Therefore, in 1911, Jelle (born on September 12, 1868) and Anke Tuininga (born on January 6, 1866) took the big step; they left Wommels, Friesland, the Netherlands,.and sailed across the ocean.

The Tuiningas had two sons — **Klaas**, born on March 26, 1893, and Jim (Jacobus), born on July 19, 1896. Jim sailed with them but Klaas, then 18 years of age, stayed behind because of lack of funds. Upon arrival in Canada, Jelle, Anke, and Jim boarded a train and travelled to Edmonton, where they stayed for three years Jelle worked for the city digging sewer line ditches with a shovel. To help improve their financial situation, Anke took in boarders

By 1912 son Klaas had earned enough money to pay his passage and boarded an English ship of the Allan Line, bound for Canada It was early spring when the ship arrived in Canada The St Lawrence river was still frozen, and the ship was forced to dock at Halifax rather than at Montreal. From Halifax, Klaas took the train to Edmonton where he joined his family. For three years he worked at Swift's Packing Plant along with his brother. They worked ten hours a day at 20¢ per hour — a good wage for those days.

Jelle's aim was to be a farmer. Therefore, in 1913, he set out for Neerlandia with his friend **Anne Rintjema.** They travelled with a team of horses and a wagon loaded with supplies, among which were a sulky plow and a tent On January 3, 1914, they filed on adjoining quarters —Jelle on the SE 19-61-3-5 and Anne on the SW 20-61-3-5. They lived in a tent the first winter. One night, they were so cold that they took the team of horses into the tent with them in an attempt to get warm. It was a costly move because the horses ate the year's supply of tobacco. Anne did not stay in Neerlandia and never did prove up his land

Jelle had no idea how to judge what was good land in Alberta, but he did select a pleasant location. A small knoll overlooking a little lake was his choice of a site. There were no fish in the lake, but a variety of birds — including red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds — frequented the area. The lake was to be the water supply for man and beast for many years. Trees were chopped down to clear the building site, and the logs were piled up to be used in constructing a cabin. The roof was made from tarpaper and rough boards. Lumber for the roof was bought from a sawmill in the area for $10 per thousand board feet. Then, when the cabin was ready (the summer of 1914), Anke came to the farm to live

Life was not easy in those years The cookstove and a square drum heater were all Jelle and Anke had to keep their living quarters warm. Sleeping upstairs in their log cabin, the Tuiningas often had frost, formed by their breath, on the blankets. Clothes had to be washed by hand and ironed with flat irons. Jelle and Anke grew their own vegetables. *Grauwe erwten* were raised and eaten regularly

In the spring of 1915, Klaas came to join his parents. He and his father cleared and plowed the land using horses, rather than oxen as many farmers did. Then during the late summer or fall, Klaas would go to southern Alberta to work for other farmers, and during the winter he would work in sawmills and lumber camps in the Neerlandia area.

For many, life on the frontier was a challenge, an adventure — but not for Anke. She loved to have people around her. In the Netherlands she had peddled bread and stopped to have a little chat at each house. In Edmonton, she had had boarders. Now, stuck on a homestead where she saw few people, she was starved for company. Sometimes when she saw friends on their way to visit her husband's brother, Klaas, and family, she would run out to the road to stop them for a little talk. As often as not, she would persuade them to visit her instead — much to her sister-in-law's dismay. No, life in Neerlandia in the pioneer years was not for her. She often said that she would have crawled back to the Netherlands if it had been possible.

Anke, Jelle.

Jelle and Anke were both of medium height. Jelle had fine black hair which he parted in the middle, and a beard which Anke kept neatly trimmed for him. He had crinkly eyes which sparkled when he was amused. Anke's hair, quite different from Jelle's, was sparse and wiry. In those days women seldom washed their hair, and whether because of that or because of its wiriness, Anke's hair stood straight out when she combed it. Anke combed her hair energetically, as she did everything else, getting red in the face as she wound it into a little bun. She was always bustling around to get her work done. She liked to maintain a schedule: breakfast, dinner, and supper were served exactly at 8:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m. respectively.

Jelle was a more quiet person than his wife, although he could be sharp-spoken when the occasion demanded it. Both he and his brother, Klaas, were well versed in Biblical knowledge, but when it came to presenting their views publicly, Jelle tended to stay in the background.

During those years, ministers came from Edmonton and the U.S.A. to preach. The ministers usually stayed at Jelle and Anke's place, because they had more room than others did. Both Jelle and Anke enjoyed this — Anke because it meant company, and Jelle because he enjoyed discussing matters of Christian living with them.

The Tuiningas travelled to church by sled in winter, but in summer they often walked. When they walked, Anke would take extra socks along so they could change when they reached church; the heavy dew in the long grass soaked the socks they were wearing.

In 1920 Klaas made profession of faith.

In 1929, Klaas built a house for himself and his parents. The materials for it cost him $450. It was one of the few frame houses in Neerlandia at that time. The kitchen was finished off inside, but the two-by-fours were visible in the rest of the house. An unusual feature of the house, for that time, were the "store-bought" doorknobs. Everyone said, "Such a big house! — and for only three people."

Klaas Tuininga Jr. house built in 1929.

But perhaps Klaas had plans no one knew about. There had been a recent influx of immigrants to Neerlandia. Among them were three Wierenga families, each with several girls. Sure enough, Klaas decided to court Trientje Wierenga, daughter of Lammert and Hendertje. They saw each other, at most, twice a week, but being 39 and 30 years of age respectively, Klaas and Trientje thought there was no time to engage in a lengthy courtship. After three months, on Sunday, May 8, 1932, they were married Klaas had become a Canadian citizen in June 1920. Now, through marrying him, Trientje automatically became one too After the regular church service, Klaas and Trientje went to the Wierengas for supper, and later that evening Klaas brought Trientje to her new home by horse and buggy — a distance of 10 miles. That night bells rang; someone had tied cow-bells under their bed. That was the extent of their honeymoon

At six o'clock the next morning Klaas went to work in the field. That was the first day it was possible that year because it had been a wet spring Klaas' parents lived in the house with the newly-married couple. Three months later in July 1932, Mother Anke died from cancer, at the age of 66 Menne Nanninga made the coffin, there were no other expenses involved

On August 13, 1933, Klaas and Trientje's first daughter, **Henrietta**, was born. The mid-wife, Aaltje Baker, had to be picked up early that Sunday morning to help with the delivery. Trientje spent over two weeks in bed and vowed never to have another baby, but the following August, on the 24th, a son, **Jelle**, was born. Then on April 8, 1936, along came a second son, **Lambert**, and on December 5, 1937, a third, **James** For every delivery, Aaltje Baker received five dollars

Doing the wash for a family of four children was quite an undertaking. *Pake* Jelle would haul water up from the lake with a yoke on his shoulders, from which a pail hung on each side. The water had to be heated in large boilers on an old, woodburning cookstove It was put on the stove the night before washday and the woodbox was filled (a task which required many trips to the woodpile). In this way, Trientje could get an early start on Monday morning. She would be up at 4.30 a.m. so that she could get the wash on the line before the children left for school in the morning. Once the water was heated, it was taken in small pails from the stove to a hand-operated washing machine. All the clothes were washed in one tub of water and then rinsed in a second tub of clean water. In winter, the clothes were then hung on lines upstairs, where they often stayed until they were needed again.

Clarence, Jelle.

Jelle, 1939.

During the first years of their marriage, Klaas and Trientje were plagued by bedbugs. Trientje would search the mattress creases for the little creatures, but the problem remained. Finally, one summer, a granary was pulled beside the house. The family lived in it during the day, while the heaters and stoves were stoked to full capacity in an attempt to kill the bedbugs. It is a wonder that the house did not burn down. But the heat did control the bedbugs, and when the house had cooled off, Trientje would sweep up the dead bugs. Two years later, when the house was finished off, the bedbug problem disappeared.

Klaas and a friend, Tjibbe Reitsma, went regularly to the weekly Men's Society meetings. Coming home on horseback, they would discuss items of interest to both of them. Because they both had loud voices, they could be heard coming a mile away.

Although the Tuiningas had no radio, they learned of a memorable event which occurred in 1939. One August morning their neighbour, Anne Elgersma, came over to tell them that he heard on the radio that another *oorlog* had started. That year, on August 28, a second daughter, **Edith** was born to Klaas and Trientje, and the next year, on December 2, a third, **Anke**, was born.

Clarence, Jim

Going to church in the winter required determination and preparation. The Tuiningas had to rise earlier on Sundays than on a weekday morning in order to reach the church on time. They travelled in a closed sleigh drawn by two horses. At their feet were preheated stones wrapped in towels. For a few years they went to Grace and Oene Piers' for Sunday lunch. Once the Piers family started growing, the Tuininga family prepared a wooden apple box full of sandwiches each Sunday, and between services stayed in a small heated shack located one-quarter mile south of the hamlet that belonged to Anne Elgersma. When they returned home at the end of the day, their house was stone-cold, and everyone shivered till the fires were started and had warmed the house.

During the summer months, Trientje and the children would sometimes go by horse and democrat to visit her family for the day. Along the way she would pick up "hitch-hikers". One time she picked up Bill Oldegbers, a great storyteller. He told the kids that he could jump higher than the trees growing beside the road. When he stood up to show them, their eyes grew big and their mouths popped open. Was he going to take off? No, he only jumped a couple of inches! What a surprise.

In 1941 an old Hudson car was purchased. Everyone looked forward to the luxury of riding in a car. Mastering the art of driving, though, proved to be difficult for Klaas, who was nearly 50 years old at the time. One Sunday morning Klaas rode right over an old well on the churchyard and got a flat tire. Changing a tire on that car was a real pain in the neck; Klaas could be heard fixing the tire during the church service. Many hammer blows were needed to make the outer rim fit over the inner. Klaas' explanation for the accident was that the steering had locked, but the hunch of others was that the driver was responsible. Another incident happened when Klaas was coming home from Barrhead. Because there was a car behind him, as he approached Baker's corner, he did not slow down in time to turn properly. He went back and forth over the ditches on either side of the road a few times, but eventually ended up back on the road again. It is amazing how the Hudson took all that abuse — to say nothing of the passengers, who had expected to ride in comfort.

During the summer of 1941, Bill Olthuis and Jack Tuininga, who owned a well-drilling outfit together, came to drill a well for the Tuiningas. That put an end to hauling water from the lake. The children still had enough chores to do, however. The woodbox still had to be filled, and before leaving for school in the morning, the boys each had to milk one or two cows; the girls, not to be let off free, had to make beds and

Back: Henny, Clarence, Trientje, Jelle. Front: Jim, Anke, Gordon, Edith, Lambert, 1950.

dust the house before breakfast. To get ready on time, they had to get up at six o'clock in the morning

As the Tuininga children walked to school they were joined by others, so that the group numbered about a dozen by the time they reached their destination. It usually took the Tuiningas about an hour and a half to walk the four miles to school.

To keep life interesting, another boy, **Gordon**, was born on November 6, 1944. This baby was born in St. Joseph's Hospital with Dr. Verreau and the nuns there to help. During the final weeks of each pregnancy, and for a few weeks thereafter, Trientje always had one of her sisters come to help her. This time was no exception.

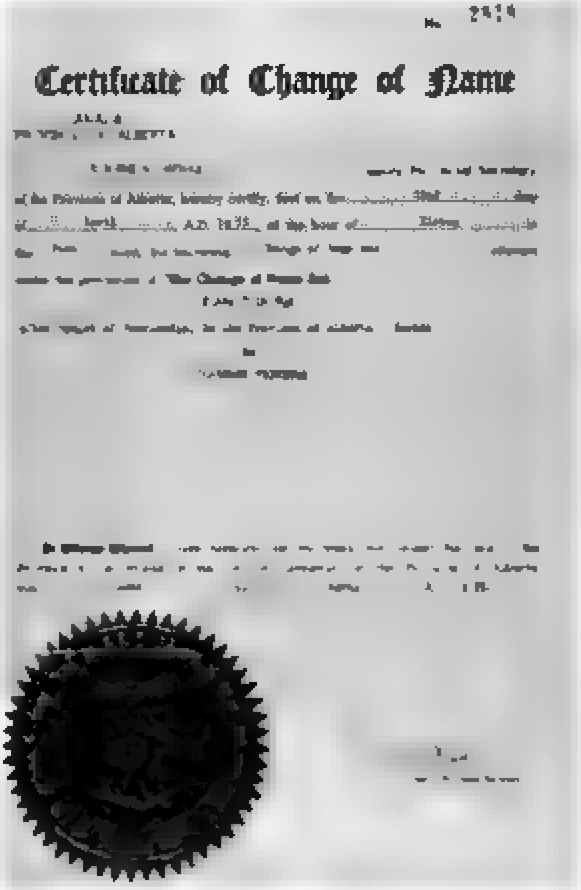
During all this time, *Pake* Jelle was living with the family. Trientje found him to be an uncomplaining person who was easy to get along with. On November 6, 1946, after a few weeks in St. Joseph's Hospital, he passed away at the age of 78.

Harvesting days were a busy but exciting and enjoyable time, because of the many neighbours getting together to help. An embarrassing moment for Trientje was when Jacob Hiemstra was about to eat some lettuce with his noon meal. *"Ik dacht al dat mijn eten beweegde,"* he said, as he pulled a big green worm out of his salad. (I thought already that my food was moving.)

Clarence holding Henny, Trientje holding Jelle, 1935.

Through the years there was a lot of confusion in the post office concerning which mail was meant for Klaas and which was meant for his uncle, also Klaas Tuininga. Therefore, on April 22, 1955, "Klaas, the younger" had his name officially changed to Clarence. To do this cost him $15 and a trip to the courthouse in Edmonton.

Clarence and Trientje, both strong-willed, dynamic people, have left their mark on family and community. As a young man, Clarence conducted Boys and Girls' Society for many years, teaching Bible study and church history. Later he diligently taught catechism. He also served in the consistory. Ministers heard from him in no uncertain terms, as to whether the sermon was good or bad. There was never any



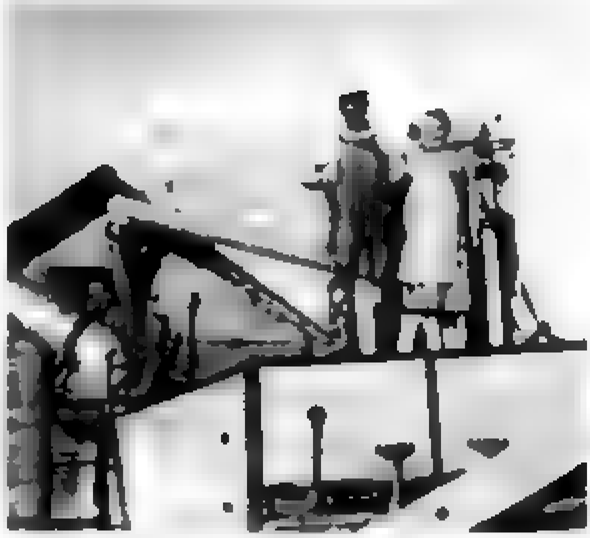
Certificate of Change of Name

question of where he stood on any issue. Trientje, too, was knowledgeable and forceful. Loud discussion on a variety of topics could be heard in the Tuininga household. The daughters, who were expected to help Trientje with the housework, did not always appreciate their mother's vocal strength. Henny wrote

"Often during the summer holidays, while Mom took her nap, we'd sneak out and hide behind the garage hoping not be found and put back to work. But Mom's voice carried loud and clear; it could not be ignored."

Even the farm animals were expected to know who was boss and obey. If they went the wrong way, Clarence addressed them in strong language

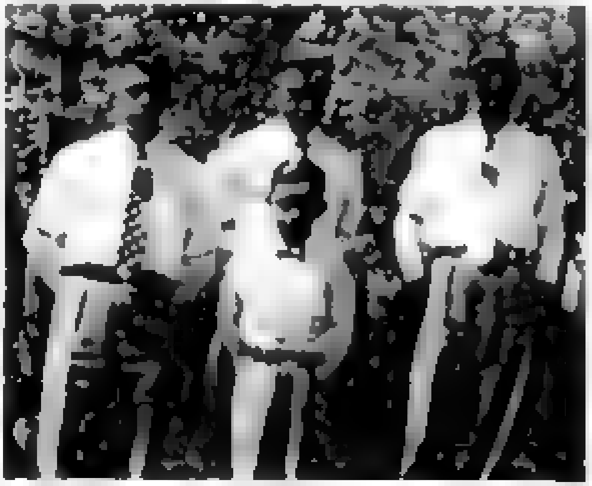
It was not all work and no play, though. After supper Clarence and Trientje relaxed and spent time with the children doing such things as playing games with them or helping them with their homework. When the children were small, they would stand on their father's feet and he would walk them around the kitchen.



Clarence, Trientje, 1954

Sometimes he would take one of the children on his knees and bounce them up and down to the rhythm of *Hop, Hop, Hinke,* a Frisian rhyme In spite of a congenital hip defect which caused Trientje to cripple, she would chase the children around the table, and join in the laughter and joking when they all fell in a heap. She accepted her handicap gracefully, only once saying to her children, "If I could only run like you."

Going to the outhouse was something to be dreaded in the winter months. As Trientje walked with difficulty at the best of times, struggling against wind and snow made these



The Happy Gang! Jim, Jelle, Lambert. Front: Gordon, 1952 treks hazardous for her. Sometimes Clarence or one of the children would go with her to prevent her from falling

As time passed and the boys grew up, Clarence began to leave most of the farm work to them. The last year that he was actively involved with the farm was 1970, when he helped haul bales He did not seem to age appreciably though. He had been bald since he was 19 years of age, when he had lost his hair because of typhoid fever. He became a bit more rotund as the years went by, but until the age of 85 he could be seen planting and hoeing the garden, picking berries, or walking down the road. He averaged five miles a day, swinging his arms vigorously as he went.

Trientje kept busy crocheting and knitting, first for her children, then for her grandchildren and finally for her great-grandchildren. She always took an avid interest in the farm

Life has not always been easy for Clarence and Trientje. There have been difficulties and differences of opinion, but throughout the years of work and play a strong sense of commitment and love for the Lord has flowed. Presently (1984), at the ages of 90 and 81 respectively, Clarence and Trientje are able, with the help of their children, to remain in the house Clarence built 51 years ago. Though their early years were hard, they did not consider themselves poor as they never lacked food, clothing, or shelter. They are thankful to the Lord who has blessed them richly

Four of their children are living in other parts of Canada. Jelle married Henrietta Visscher of Edmonton in 1963. He was ordained as a minister of the Christian Reformed Church in the same year. They are living in Lethbridge, Alberta, where he is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church. They have four children. James married Irene Westerhof of Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1962. They are residing with their four children in Jarvis, Ontario, where James is serving as the minister of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church. Edith married William Sinnema from Granum, Alberta, in 1961. With their five children, they live in Edmonton where Bil is an electrical engineering instructor at NAIT Anke lives in Toronto, Ontario, where she worked for the Curriculum Development Centre for several years. She is now doing family counselling in that city

Henrietta De Groot

KLAAS AND SJOERDJE (WYMA) TUININGA

Klaas and Sjoerdje Tuininga left Oosterend, Friesland, the Netherlands, in the spring of 1912, with nine children ranging in age from six months to thirteen years. Klaas had been a machinist in a butter factory, but did not see a future for his children in the Netherlands and had heard many good stories about all the land to be had, practically free, in Canada. But how was he to get there? His family used up every *stuiver* he earned, so one would think that emigration would have remained a dream. Some acquaintances, however, agreed to lend him the fare and the Tuiningas set sail on the *Volendam*.

What a journey — and with so many small children! Everyone except the baby was so seasick that they could not take care of themselves Two bachelors on board looked after them. For part of the time Klaas was well enough to help care for the baby. (This was the only time in his life that he changed diapers.) The baby Carrie (Gerritje, September 27, 1911) probably escaped seasickness because she was used to a lot of rocking

After the lengthy sea voyage the Tuiningas arrived in Montreal, but still had a long way to travel by train before they reached their destination. On arrival in Edmonton they found that housing was so scarce that many people lived in tents. The Tuiningas managed to do a bit better; they got a shack

How lonesome Sjoerdje was, and how hard it was for her to cope in this little shack in a strange land! Her husband had a Dutch-English dictionary which he had studied before coming to Canada, and this was of some help to them. Once again they were befriended. Kees Van Geest lived alone in a large house and invited them to share it with him. The move was made eagerly, but living there was not as easy as they had hoped. Kees believed that a human soul was in his large collie dog and expected the Tuininga family to treat it like a person. When Sjoerdje, who already had so many children to look after and so much to do, discovered that this included allowing the dog to shake his wet coat all over the house, she decided it was too much for her to bear. Soon they found another house, where they lived for a number of years.

Back: Klaas, Sjoerdje holding Joe. Middle: Bertha, Claus, Jennie. Front: Sadie, Pete, Gertie, Jack with Carrie, Dave. 1914

During their three years in Edmonton, three more children, **Joe** (Jelle, September 2, 1913), **Cecil** (Sietze Willem, February 23, 1915) and **Annie** (Anke, December 7, 1916) were born to Klaas and Sjoerdje. Then, after five years in the city, they decided to move to the bush country. With twelve children to care for, one might consider such a move reckless and irresponsible, but the Tuiningas were trusting in God and His control of the future.

Klaas' brother Jelle and his family were already in Neerlandia and, with their encouragement and help, the move was made in the spring of 1917. Klaas bought one team of horses and a sleigh and his nephew Clarence (Klaas) came from Neerlandia with another. All their belongings were loaded on these two sleighs. The family clambered aboard, and off they went to Neerlandia, with a red cow and calf completing the entourage.

A ninety-mile trek, it took many a day
Over muskeg and creeks — no pavement or
  gravel,
With so many children it was hard to travel.
One sleigh tipped over, what a worry to Dad:
Was his organ all right? — nothing else
  mattered.

(adapted from a poem by Annie)

Before they left Edmonton, Klaas had purchased $80 worth of groceries (no luxuries, these) on time at the corner grocery store. The tallow, flour, sugar, tea, coffee, and salt which he bought were expected to last all year. When the tallow box was empty it was used as a bed for Annie.

When the Tuiningas arrived in Neerlandia, they moved into a house owned by Martin van der Heide. The van der Heides were working in Edmonton at the time.

Klaas had filed on the NE 19-61-3-5 on April 23, 1915. Now he and his sons set about making a log house with a barn attached, to serve as a temporary dwelling. Since lumber was scarce, the building was given a sod roof and only half of the house floor could be covered with lumber; the beds stood on a mud floor. The only heat was provided by a very small heater and a cook stove, but there were never any serious ailments because of the cold.

The eldest children, Bertha (Boukje, March 16, 1889) and Claus (Klaas, June 15, 1900), stayed in Edmonton to augment the family's income. Bertha sent many welcome parcels of both new and used clothing. At Christmas there was usually a garment for each, plus a small toy. The arrival of a parcel was always a happy occasion. Two of the most welcome items were a huge drum heater which Claus supplied, and a beautiful, large range which Bertha sent. Even then, with the bitterly cold winters, things froze in the house and no one was able to keep houseplants. One winter, the potatoes got chilled so badly that the Tuiningas ate sweet-tasting potatoes for the rest of the year.

Water was obtained from a well by means of a bucket. In the winter, as each pail was pulled up, the water would splash against the cribbing and freeze to it. After water had been hauled day after day for the family and livestock, the ice got so thick that the pail could not go through. Klaas had a good idea: put some burning wood in the pail and let it down onto the ice. It worked very well — the ice melted and once again water could be hauled up — but the Tuiningas drank smoke-flavoured water for quite a while.

A year or two after they moved to their

homestead, Klaas built a larger log house, with a large kitchen and bedroom downstairs and an upstairs for additional bedrooms. They had lumber now for the floors and the roof, but there were no shingles, only tar paper, which was far from leak-proof. Many a night Mother Tuininga went upstairs with tins to catch the drips.

The "old" house was converted to a barn and gradually more buildings were constructed, among them a larger log barn and a granary. With the help of the sons, land was cleared and a large garden planted. **Jenny** (Janke, January 26, 1904), **Pete** (Pieter, May 20, 1905), and their mother all liked gardening.

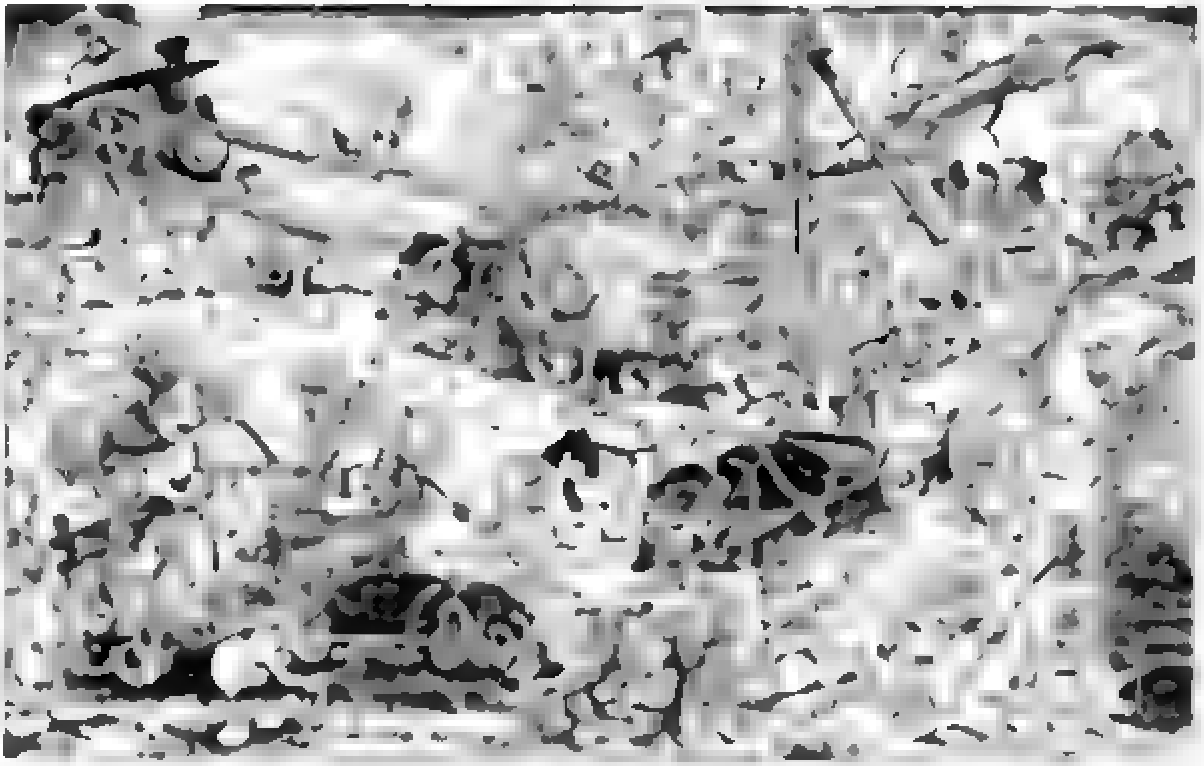
Although the Tuiningas were very poor, the children accepted their lot. They had a happy home and never went to bed hungry. On a rainy day, Pete would go outside to the garden and bring in some nice, clean white turnips and bright carrots for the family to enjoy. Mother Tuininga would show the younger children how to make a wagon out of the carrots, holding on the carrot-slice wheels with matchsticks (matchsticks were longer in those days). In the fall, potatoes, beets, turnips, and carrots were put in the cellar. Sjoerdje made sauerkraut, and salted down beans in crocks.

Back: Klaas, Sjoerdje with baby Simon, Claus, Pete. Middle Sadie, Gertie, Jennie, Jack. Front: Carrie, Annie, Joe, Cecil, 1920.

Two more children, **Simon** (July 11, 1919) and **Grace** (Grietje, February 17, 1922), were born, with Aaltje Baker serving as midwife. There were now so many children all over the house that they named the place "Dooville", after a comic strip in the *Grain Grower's Guide*. Klaas and Sjoerdje firmly believed that if God had entrusted them with these children, He would help them take care of them, they never suffered any serious consequences of all their poverty or hardships.

Klaas, Sjoerdje, Simon, 1924.

The Tuiningas did go through many hard times. The 1918-19 influenza struck all of them. Their neighbours, the van der Heides and Jelle and Anke Tuininga, were very helpful during this and other hard times. One especially bad time was the winter of 1919-20. When Klaas patented his land on January 7, 1920, records indicate that he had a 30 by 20-foot log house, a 30 by 30-foot log stable, a 22-foot well, two miles of pole fences, and twenty acres of cleared land. These improvements were valued at $1050. He owned seventeen head of cattle and five horses. During that hard winter, most of the cattle and horses died because of the cold and lack of food. Klaas managed to save four or five cows, hoping that they would supply cream and milk for the family and cream to sell. When spring came, he turned them out to graze. One Sunday evening, Pete went on horseback to look for the cows. There they all lay, dead, near the slough in which they had looked for a green blade of grass — but had found only poison hemlock. Pete came home crying. No doubt his parents felt like crying



"Douville," the Tuininga farm. Used with the permission of The Country Guide

too, with their hopes of milk for the family and extra income gone in one day. But Father Tuininga continued to have faith that "the Lord will provide."

There were other hardships as well. In 1926, while building a hip roof barn, Pete injured his foot rather badly. He was sitting on the roof, chopping at a piece of slab, when he missed and chopped right through his boot, severely cutting his ankle. Antje Baker wrapped it up and Joe Baker took him to Westlock with his car. On the way, they stopped at the home of the district nurse, who applied a tourniquet. The wound healed perfectly.

Father Klaas was an idealist and an optimist who was very rarely depressed. He usually looked at the bright side and made light of calamities. Mother Sjoerdje tended to worry more. She was often hard-pressed to provide enough food for her large family. As the milk production decreased she would be obliged to add water to the *brij* in order to have enough to serve everyone. Then Klaas would tease her saying, "I see you've been milking the black cow (a poor milker they had previously owned)." Sjoerdje, unable to see the humour would reply, "Ach, I would gladly give you better food, if only I could."

Mother Sjoerdje was very thrifty and tried her hand at many things, such as making soap from tallow and syrup from sugar beets. The Salvation Army and Red Cross used to send large amounts of used clothing for distribution among the families of the settlements. From these Sjoerdje made the children look quite presentable.

The children all walked barefoot until the frost. Then the mail-order catalogues did a booming business, as everyone needed fleece-lined underwear, woolen stockings, felt shoes, moccasins, rubbers, or shoepacs. But these all cost money, and the Tuiningas could not always afford new shoes when they were needed. One year, the Tuininga girls helped at Tjibbe Rentsma's place while Tjibbe was working in the coal mine in Edmonton. They stayed a week at a time to babysit little Sadie while her mother did the chores. One beautiful, crisp Saturday afternoon, Carrie, her week completed, began the walk home. At first her feet were cold, but

Sjoerdje, Jack, Bertha, Grace, 1926.

soon the cold did not seem so bad and she enjoyed the walk. After she was home for a while, her mother noticed bloodstains on the freshly-scrubbed wooden floor and wondered where they came from. On investigation, it was found that Carrie's toe was bleeding. Her old shoe had worn out. Her mother had sewn thick soles onto her socks, but these too had worn through, exposing her toe to the freezing cold. Because of her frozen toe, Carrie, then about ten, was unable to go out for six weeks. This was still a happy time for her because the school library had just acquired some books, which Carrie could read without interruption. Best of all, she still passed her grade.

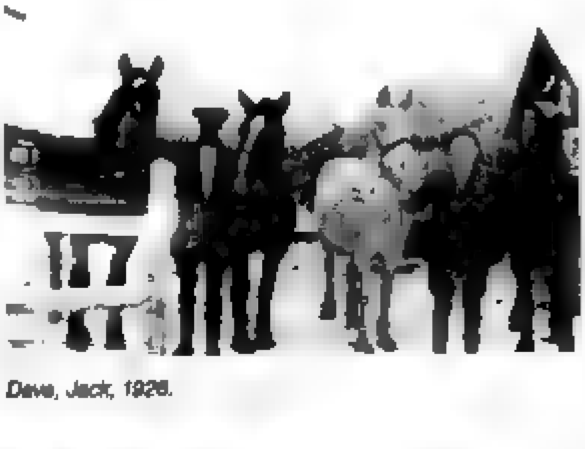
Gertie (Geertje, June 28, 1908) loved dolls, but with fourteen children to provide food and clothing for, the Tuiningas could not afford dolls. Aaltje Baker felt sorry for Gertie and set to work. One day when Gertie came home from school, there in the window sat a cute little rag doll with nose and all, a handmade gift from Aaltje.

At one time, to supplement their income Klaas Tuininga and Siebren Tiemstra bought a small thresher nicknamed the Coffee Mill. In the winter, Klaas and Siebren would go from farm to farm threshing. They would charge by the bag. The acreages were small, so they could thresh for many farmers.

Because Neerlandia was far from sources of supply it was not always possible to get even the necessities. Sometimes the Tuiningas would be unable to light the lamps because they had run out of coal oil. Then they would sit in the dark while Father Klaas would teach the children hymns, holding the hymnbook so the light of the open cook stove door would fall on the page. Klaas and Sjoerdje both enjoyed singing, and in their old age sang many songs, which they had marked in their hymnbook as favourites. Just the same, Sjoerdje was often homesick. She would stand outside at night gazing at the stars and say, "These same stars are shining on *Mem* in Friesland," and that made her feel somehow closer to her mother.

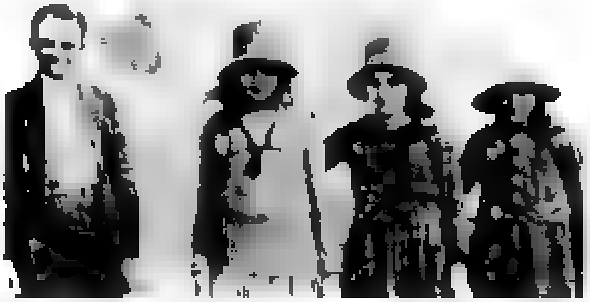
As in most families of Christian Reformed persuasion, it was customary after each meal in the Tuininga household to read one chapter from the Bible, regardless of the length of the chapter. If the chapter was a lengthy one, the children would become increasingly restless. **Dave** (Douwe, 1901) sat opposite the mirror and, as he lost interest in what his father was reading, he would begin making faces at himself in the mirror, much to the amusement of everyone except his parents.

In those early years, there were many



Dave, Jack, 1926.

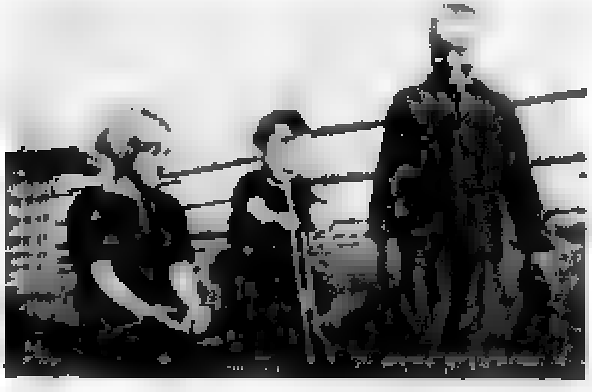
muskrats and weasels, so **Jack** (Jacobus, March 28, 1907) and Pete did a lot of trapping. From the proceeds of the sale of the pelts in 1923, both bought new suits.



Jack, Sadie, Gertie, Carrie.

For a time, things went well, prices went up, and in 1924 Klaas could afford a small Fordson tractor. He also had a second-hand Model T Ford. Later, a larger tractor was obtained and used for breaking land. In 1925, the Tuiningas moved from their homestead to the NW 27-61-3-5, which Klaas bought from Willem de Groot in order to be closer to the church and school.

Then came the Depression, and it was back to the good old flour, sugar, and oatmeal bags for pillowcases, sheets, dish towels, aprons, and so forth. Sjoerdje was back at soap-making. In addition, she made coffee from roasted barley and starch from raw potatoes. She would grate the potatoes and pour the water off. The residue was left to dry. It was then used to thicken puddings and to starch clothes. She even tried making yeast.



Grace, James (Buddy) Levy, Simon, 1929.

The entertainment, too, was self-made. Flinch was often played with homemade cards. The children had sleigh rides, visited other families to sing and play the harmonica, and played such games as Wink and Spin the Bottle. Pete and **Sadie** (Sijke, February 23, 1910) often played their mouth organs together. Beginning in 1927, the girls went to a girls' society on Wednesday afternoons where their older sister Bertha taught hand sewing. Part of the afternoon was spent in Bible study. During the winter season, Young People's Society was held every week. Bible discussions and reading essays on Bible passages were the main activities. The Tuininga youngsters faithfully attended these societies.

Ready for chores. Carrie holding Joyce Muller, 1930.

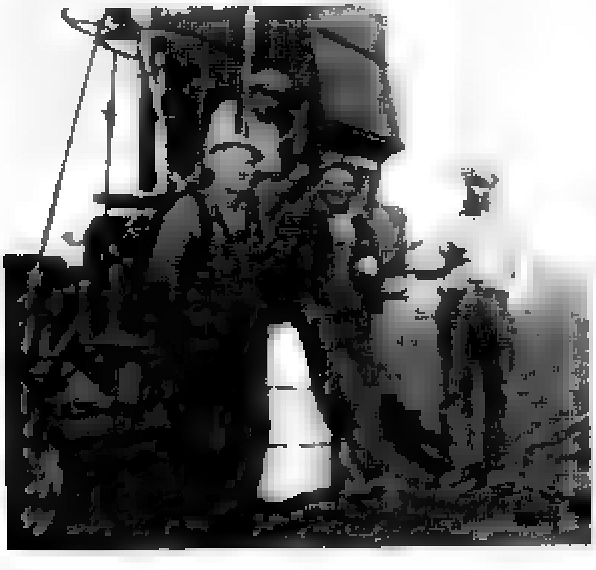
Life in the new country brought about many changes. The Tuininga family became trilingual: they spoke *Fries*, their mother tongue, at home; Dutch in church and at catechism classes, and English in school.

All of the children married and spent part of their married life in Neerlandia, except the following three. Claus married Beatrice Ritz, and from this union four children were born. At the age of 69, Claus died from a heart attack. Dave married Catherine Ballah and lived in Bowness, Alberta. He and his wife had one daugh-

Grace, Simon, Annie, Cecil, Joe, Carrie, Sadie, Gertie, Jack. Seated: Pete, Sjoerdje, Klaas, Claus.

ter, Ruth. In 1949, Dave, Kate, and Ruth moved to Mellowdale, where he died of cancer at the age of 49. Gertie married Herman Muller. They have eight children and live in Richmond, B.C.

Klaas and Sjoerdje both lived to a ripe old age. Sjoerdje had waist-length black hair which she wore in a bun at the back of her head. When she was in her eighties her hair was just as dark as it had been when she was eighteen. Klaas suggested (tongue-in-cheek) that this unusual phenomenon was a result of her having a life with no worries.



First combine in Neerlandia. Klaas, Joe, Jack, Pete.

The Tuiningas were eventually able to repay their fare to their benefactors, although it was not till all the children were married and the land was sold to their son Simon. They finally were able to enjoy some of the material benefits of their years of hard work: a comfortable, warm house; electricity; a car. In 1937, Klaas and his sons Pete, Jack, and Joe bought one of the first combines in the Neerlandia area. Both Klaas and Sjoerdje enjoyed good health until 1959, when they died within a few weeks of each other. Klaas died in May, at the age of 86. His wife followed about six weeks later, at 83 years of age.

Carrie Olthuis

WILLEM AND MANNA (DE GROOT) VAN ARK

Willem van Ark (c. 1889) had been born in South Holland, the Netherlands, and emigrated from there in 1910. He travelled first to England, then left from Liverpool on May 7 aboard a ship which had been renamed *Canada*. After arriving in Canada, Willem first lived in Ontario for a while, then headed west.

In a letter to J. Maurer, Director of the Information Bureau of the Dutch Immigration Society (February 17, 1915), Willem wrote,

"In 1911, I met a number of Hollanders in Edmonton, Alberta, who wanted to take up homesteads. But they did not want to live amongst people of another nationality . . . I went to Canada with the idea of taking up a homestead and so I found a group of people I could join

The number of people at that time who wanted to take up land was seventeen. In December 1911 we set out to look for land This was not easy since we needed to find a district where a colony could be established and which was capable of expansion in the future, therefore we needed good land and room in the surrounding area also. We found what we were looking for . . . when we had examined the land properly, we returned and each took up a homestead. In the beginning of January, we left for our homesteads to build the first houses, dig wells, make roads; in short, to prepare to live there."

Willem had filed on the SW 15-61-3-5, but on March 6, 1912, he refiled on the SE 33-61-3-5. During the next years he spent some months of the year on the homestead and the rest of the time he worked as a shipping clerk in Edmonton While there he met Manna de Groot, whom he later married From July 1914 to September 1916 Willem was in the Netherlands, serving in the Dutch army as a sergeant.

Willem de Groot, Hendrika de Groot holding Wim, Bill, Manna.

After returning to Canada, Willem moved to the homestead with Manna During the following years, they had two children. **Wim** (Willem) and **Zus** (Hendrika). Willem filed on the NW 21-61-3-5 on August 24, 1916, for his stepbrother **Herbert Vander Helm** who was seventeen at the time Herbert moved from Amsterdam and lived with the van Arks for a short time before returning to the Netherlands

Manna was an excellent seamstress and she could make do with very little. The family always looked neat and well dressed. Manna held classes in her home for the schoolgirls to teach them how to embroider. When the congregation bought an organ, Manna served as the church organist. She also started a singing group, and the young people often went to the van Arks in the evening to sing together.

In 1921 Willem received the patent to his land. According to the records he was cropping nine acres of land and owned ten cattle and two horses. The other improvements consisted of a 16 by 20-foot log house, a log barn, 2 log stables, a 14-foot cribbed well, 1½ miles of two-rail fence, 3½ cleared acres, and 2 brushed acres These were valued at $845

Around 1921-22 Willem went to Normal School for a year, then taught in Neerlandia School from 1922-25. He was a strict teacher but he tried to teach the children manners and how to conduct themselves properly. He also tried to beautify the schoolyard by planting flowers and trees

After Willem quit teaching, the van Arks moved to the Netherlands. By then another daughter, **Mona**, had been born. Willem worked as a C.P.R. agent for many years in the Netherlands. Two more daughters were born to the van Arks there. Later the family moved to Ontario and then to the U.S.A

PIETER AND HILIGIEN (HEUKERS) VAN DALEN

Pieter van Dalen, born January 29, 1845, lived in Leerdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. He made a living by transporting freight along the waterways of the southern part of the province. His cargo was usually sugar beets and turf, which was used for fuel. By 1912 Pieter and Hiligien's son Sikko had already immigrated to Canada, where he lived in Edmonton. He thought Canada was a good place to live, and sent tickets for his parents to join him. In

June 1912 Pieter, aged 67, Hiligien (February 7, 1857), and their children **Martha** (August 16, 1883), **Nellie** (Niesje, March 14, 1895), and Bob (Bartel) made the move. Daughter **Jennie** (Jantje, August 21, 1888) stayed behind since she was engaged to be married

The van Dalens first lived on Fraser Flats in Edmonton. A year later Jennie and her husband, Popko Schuring, also immigrated. In 1914 Pieter and Hiligien moved to Neerlandia with Popko and Jennie Martha, Nellie, and Bob stayed in Edmonton to work, although they often came to Neerlandia to visit The van Dalens moved into a one-room log shack close to Popko and Jennie's house, because Hiligien was an invalid and needed Jennie to cook meals for her and Pieter. Later, in fact, van Dalen's shack was moved right against Popko and Jennie's house. Popko made an opening between the two houses, but put in a door so that each family still had its own quarters

Pieter loved music and singing, and passed these talents on to his children Jennie, Martha, and Nellie often sang together at the annual Christmas concert and if Bob was visiting on weekends, he would play his mouth organ for the young people's coffee party on Sunday evenings. He was considered one of the best players and his playing was enjoyed by all.

In 1918 Martha married Arie Emmerzael of Neerlandia In September 1921 Nellie married Simon Keyzer, a teacher in Neerlandia at the time. Simon and Nellie later went to the U.S.A., where Simon continued teaching

Pete Schuring, Jo Schuring, Pieter, Helen and Annie Emmerzael, Hiligien, Pete Emmerzael, 1923

In the first years on the homestead, Pieter helped Popko in any way he could. He even cleared three acres on the homestead by himself while Popko was working on the prairie. By about 1920 Hiligien was not able to walk at all Fortunately she was a tiny woman, making it possible for Jennie or one of the other children to carry her when necessary

When Popko and Jennie left Neerlandia in 1923, the Emmerzaels moved into the Schuring house and Pieter and Hiligien were provided for by Martha. The Emmerzael children, Annie, Peter, and Helen, loved to sit and visit with their grandparents. Pieter chewed tobacco and bought one-half pound of leaf tobacco at a time Annie would take the sticks out of the tobacco for him and put the rest in a container Then Pieter could take the tobacco as he needed it for his *pruimpje*

Hiligien died February 3, 1929 Later that year Pieter moved with the Emmerzaels to van Ark's house. Though he was eighty-four, he still took his grandchildren for walks occasionally or kept an eye on them when Martha was away. He never lost his love of music and while walking or sitting in his chair would often sing one of the *Psalmen* or other Dutch songs that he knew by heart. Pieter died January 3, 1932

Annie Sturwold

HENRY VAN DEN BURG

Henry (Hendrik) van den Burg was thirty-three years old when he took up the SW 9-62-3-5 in Neerlandia on December 2, 1914. He had been born in Soest, Utrecht, the Netherlands, but had recently lived in Edmonton. On his homestead application he listed his previous occupation as farmer

Henry built a log house on his homestead. He agreed to teach the school children of the settlement and began teaching in 1915. The settlers were too poor to pay him a salary, but in exchange the schoolboys were to help him clear land and make fence posts after school and on Saturdays. One time two young fellows came to work after school. They were supposed to cut willow pickets, but instead they spent their time eating a big panful of prunes that Henry had supplied — one of the boys ate the prune pits and all

The teaching arrangement did not provide Henry with enough money to stay on the homestead and in 1916 he went to the U S A to work. Since he had been unable to find a wife here, he did not return to Neerlandia and later moved to Chicago, Illinois

MARTIN AND ANNA (JANSMA) VAN DER HEIDE

Martin van der Heide, born March 10, 1890, in Ferwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, was the oldest in a family of seven children. When Martin was ten years old, he saw a picture entitled *The Prairies of America*. It showed wild animals galloping through the prairie grass. From that time Martin dreamed of going to America and in 1914 he convinced the girl he was courting, Anna (Antje) M. Jansma (January 6, 1890), to go with him. On March 20 they sailed from Rotterdam on the *Noordam*

Upon landing in New York City, they were told that unmarried couples could not enter the country. It did not take Martin and Anna long to decide what to do — they were married the next morning at City Hall with the aid of an interpreter. Later that day they boarded a train for South Dakota. But South Dakota was not the Promised Land they had expected. The country was hilly, bare of trees, and rocky, their sponsor had a poorly-kept farm and their meals were their wages.

When Martin and Anna heard from Anna's brother and sister, who were living in Edmonton, how well things were going there, they decided to move to Alberta. After working at odd jobs in Edmonton, they were hired to work for a year for a Wetaskiwin farmer

The following account of the van der Heides' experiences in Neerlandia is taken from Martin van der Heide's unpublished Dutch autobiography, *Fifty years in Canada and the United States,* written in 1964.

In the spring of 1916 we went to Edmonton where we stayed with friends for a week. We decided that I should go to Neerlandia and, if it appealed to me, to take up a homestead there. To get there I went by train to Clyde where I had to wait for the stage to Dusseldorf. Was it ever cold, the wind was blowing and the snow was drifting. It seemed to me like Siberia. After an hour Marshall's stage, an open sleigh, arrived and all the passengers piled in. I wrapped myself in some old horse blankets that I found in the bottom of the sleigh, but I could not keep warm. At Dusseldorf, where I stayed overnight, I bought a pair of overshoes

The following morning I started off for Neerlandia, a thirteen-mile trip over very poor roads. Sometimes I had to wade through water and muck but finally I arrived. After spending the night with one of the settlers I started looking for a suitable homestead. After considerable walking I decided on a place at the southwest of the settlement. It had a house and a small barn, both made of logs, about two acres of cleared and broken land, and a dug hole for a well. Also, some fencing had been done. I believe that for this we paid fifty dollars. This seemed cheap enough but the house was built of poplar logs which were so crooked that in places you could see between them to the outside. However we now had a homestead

Once I was back in Edmonton, my wife and I busied ourselves gathering supplies: household furniture, a few tools, some groceries, and a team of horses and a wagon. We loaded our belongings and pulled out for Neerlandia. The first night we lodged with a farmer near Morinville and the following two nights we stayed in vacant farm houses. On the fourth day we reached Gaele Baker's place where we had difficulty crossing a small creek. At the Bakers' suggestion we spent the night with them. The next morning they helped us cross the creek, which we did by driving right through it since the bridge was unsafe. We were only two miles from home but it took us another hour or so to get there over the poor trail, mud holes, and bumps.

We went to work immediately. There was a good-sized garden plot that we prepared and seeded. Most of the work had to be done with axe and shovel. Although we had a team of horses and a small plow, we had no money to buy more machinery. To make the house a bit warmer and to keep out the mosquitoes, we filled the cracks with a mixture of moss, clay, and cow manure

On warm days the mosquitoes would attack by the thousands. One absolutely had to have one hand free to keep them away. We usually swished a willow branch around — otherwise we would be eaten alive

We could not buy fresh meat; we had to kill our own or go without. Anna would watch for prairie chickens and shoot them with a .22 rifle. In the evenings I often went to a small lake nearby and shot a duck or two. To attract the ducks to land, I would scatter a handful of wheat on an open patch of high ground. I also went hunting for rabbits, partridges, and moose. But I never had much luck with moose — you need experience to get a moose.

There was a creek running through the settlement and a lot of fish came upstream in the spring. Anna and I caught them with a stick with a copper wire loop at the end. We sat on opposite banks of the creek, each with a stick, and hauled them out one after the other. One time we caught so many that we could hardly carry them all home. We cleaned and salted them and hung them up until they were dry enough to store.

That first winter we had to store up enough firewood by the house to last us for the next year. The house was very cold in winter. Everything froze — the water in the pail, in the teapot, in the coffeepot, and in the slop pail. The only place where it did not freeze was in the cellar — a little hole under the house where we stored our vegetables. The logs of the house cracked with the intense cold; it sounded just like a rifle shot. Each night before going to bed I loaded the wood stove to the top with blocks of wood, but in the morning there was not so much as a spark left. Often when I woke in the morning there would be frost on my mustache. We slept in the loft and when it snowed the snowflakes came through holes in the roofing paper. (A hailstorm the year before our arrival had damaged the roof). We remedied that by stringing up a blanket above our heads.

Flora Terpsma, Katie Hiemstra, Ada Terpsma, Anna van der Heide, Arie Tuininga, Jelle Tuininga, c. 1914

But we did not mind it; we were young and strong and always healthy. We were happy in spite of the poverty and hardships. Money was scarce, everybody was poor in material things, and a lot of people were in debt. We too ran out of money; since we had no children we decided to go out working. When spring came (1917) we put some of our household goods in the wagon, hitched up the horses, and rode to Edmonton. There we sold the team and went to work in southern Alberta. After harvest we went back to Neerlandia for a while to rest up, then found jobs in Edmonton.

When spring of 1919 came we decided to go back to our homestead. How foolish we were — we both had good jobs which we enjoyed, and then to go homesteading! We purchased some groceries, a few pieces of machinery, a wagon, and a team of horses.

The horses were supposedly harness-broke. When I tried to hitch them, however, they acted a bit nervous. After hitching them I jumped on the wagon and off we went. I tried to hold them back but I could not. Soon they were galloping full-speed down Alberta (118th) Avenue. No cars, trucks, or streetcars dared to pass. We went flying all the way along the avenue until we came to the Hudson's Bay Reserve where I managed to steer the horses into a thick cluster of willow bushes. There we came to a stop. The horses were trembling and the sweat was running off their hides. One of the reins had come loose from the bridle. Without it I had no control over the team. I was hoping that they would stand still long enough for me to fasten it, but one of them saw me coming and they were off again — this time without me. They went back the way they had come. After running for about one block they ran into an electric light pole, one on each side, snapping the neck yoke in two. One horse fell on his back into the ditch beside the road and the other stood there shaking. I unhitched them and took them back to where I had bought them. There I traded them in for a gentler team.

We then loaded our belongings and started for the homestead once more, camping along the way as before. One night there was a lot of thunder and lightning so it was a good thing we had a roof over our heads. When we were nearly at Neerlandia, we came to a large and deep mud hole which we would be unable to cross with our full load. We unloaded twelve rolls of barbed wire, a plow, and a *duk*[2] and left them in the bush beside the road. With the lighter load we made it through the mud hole and got home.

A day later I returned to pick up the stuff, but to my surprise it was gone. Somebody had stolen it. I reported the theft to the police but they would not do anything about it unless I pointed out a suspect. This I was unable to do. After a year or so they found the culprit. He was Dutch and as far as I know a member of the church. He had stolen a large quantity of items from many people. For his crime he was sentenced to two weeks in jail. In my opinion he should have served at least two years, because he had stolen from other poor homesteaders who could ill afford to lose their tools and equipment. He later moved to the U.S.A.

On our homestead we immediately went to work clearing and breaking the land. Anna helped by burning brush and so on. That summer we made a lot of hay with our friend and neighbour [Joseph Baker]. We each had two horses, a mower, and a hayrake. We camped near the lake in a tent — we enjoyed it. In the evenings we would play the harmonica and sing together. At the end of the week we would go home. When fall came our neighbour went to Edmonton. He was a machinist by trade and could earn good money there. I hauled his hay home and cut and hauled firewood for him.

The winter of 1919-1920 was a long, severe one. The snow was very high. I used four horses to haul the hay through the deep snow. Often I had to guess where the road was, because the wind had blown everything in. More than once I upset the load and then I had to reload again. While hauling hay, I noticed some trappers on the lake. I talked to them and found out some things about trapping. They told me that muskrat skins brought a good price. This looked interesting to me, and even though I had never trapped before I decided to give it a try.

I bought two traps which I put out while I was hauling the hay. To my surprise, the next morning I had two muskrats. Although I had never done this job before, I skinned them and tacked the skins to a stretcher. After a few days I sold them to a fur dealer for three-and-a-half dollars per skin. This was the easiest money I had ever made! For some time after that I caught two muskrats per day except, of course, on Sunday. That meant seven dollars a day. That was better than hauling hay or any other line of farming; I had never made so much money before. In all I caught between $150 and $200 worth. Unfortunately it did not last long, since the lake was rapidly becoming trapped out.

Things looked promising. Cattle were high-priced that fall. We had some cows and young stock, and plenty of hay to feed them. Quite a few farmers from across the lake wanted to buy hay, and I could have asked almost any price, but because I was in partnership with my neighbour and we needed the hay for our own cattle I could not sell it. Then followed the hard winter. One or two of our cows died and the few skinny ones that remained were not worth much. Besides this the price of cattle had dropped considerably. We had worked for practically nothing, making the hay in the summer, hauling it home, and feeding it to some cows which were not worth much anymore. The little trapping I did brought more money than all the hay and cows.

In March a neighbour asked if I would go to Westlock with his son, who wanted to file on a homestead at the Land Titles Office there. (He didn't want his son, who was eighteen years old, to go by himself.) He suggested that we go on horseback using his horses. I was never keen on horseback riding, but I liked to do him favours because he was a nice old man; he in turn, would do anything for me. Early one morning we started off riding bareback and carrying sandwiches to save on meals. Sometimes we would get off and walk a mile or two. We arrived in Westlock a little stiff in the legs, but in time for my companion to file on the homestead. The same evening we started out for home again. A few miles out of Westlock we stopped, tied our horses to a fence, fed and watered them, ate a lunch, and afterwards crawled into a haystack. We did not sleep very well because it was a bit chilly; we should have taken blankets along. However we saved ourselves a hotel bill and that compensated somewhat for our hardships. Next day we arrived home stiff and sore. Never again, I promised myself.

The following summer we worked hard putting in a garden, fencing the whole quarter, and breaking some land. In the fall our oldest son, **Henry**, was born (September 18, 1920) with only a neighbour lady attending and she stayed for only a few days. However, everything went fine and we were all healthy and happy

One might get the impression that we had nothing but hard work, hardships, and poverty This is not the case. We worked hard, but then we had done that in Friesland too. A lot of the work we enjoyed immensely, it was very interesting, always something new, something we had never done before We always did our work with pleasure and we always had plenty to eat. Homesteading had an attraction. a person lived close to nature Making improvements every day gave us satisfaction

That fall I went to the harvest fields in southern Alberta with two other men. We left at five o'clock in the morning because we had to walk the forty-five miles to Clyde that day in order to catch the train the next morning. If it had not been for a farmer who gave us a lift for eight miles we would not have made it. One of my companions developed blisters on his feet and was limping when we reached Clyde late that evening. The next morning we boarded the train for Edmonton using cheap-rate tickets provided by the Government to encourage people to go to the harvest fields.

We went to Nobleford where I worked at various jobs — stooking for thirty or forty cents an acre, depending on the weight of the crop, threshing, and also digging potatoes for three dollars a day I came home with three hundred dollars The cost of living was low so that money would keep us well all winter on our homestead.

On the homestead we now (1920) had about twenty acres of land broken, a quarter section fenced in, a house, a barn, and a hole in the ground for water (it could be called a well), so I applied for title to the land. The Homestead Inspector came out, looked over the land and improvements, and gave his approval. Before this I had applied to become a Canadian citizen. After about three months I was requested to come to the Court House in Edmonton There I was asked a few questions — mostly to see if I could understand enough English to get around in this country. (Soon after that I received my citizenship papers and, on April 14, 1921, the title to the land.)

In 1920 I trapped on a larger scale. That winter I bought twenty-four traps and expanded my territory to include some small lakes nearby and one about three miles west of our place. With a pair of skis that I made out of a log I could slide over the snow I caught quite a few muskrats and some weasels that winter. I skinned the muskrats right where I caught them to relieve me of the carcasses and to make my load lighter to carry through the bush. To catch a weasel I would hang a carcass or part of it on a willow branch about a foot above the ground and place a small trap directly beneath it. I had thought that I would do much better than the winter before but the prices had dropped considerably. Muskrats were worth only sixty cents each and weasels were only about twenty-five cents so although I had more skins I did not make any more money than the year before — maybe even less.

That winter I shot a young moose, which boosted our winter's meat supply I think I earned that one, counting the many miles I had hunted for it; it was not easy work

One day after a heavy snowfall, I was walking on a lake near the shore when suddenly I shot through the ice, down to my neck in icy water and muck. As quickly as I went down I shot up and out again. The temperature was around zero and in no time my clothes were frozen stiff. I was three miles from home with no roads or trails through the muskeg, bush, and windfalls, but I wasted no time and began running home as fast as I could. As I ran I worried about what could happen to me in the wilderness — I could freeze to death and probably no one would ever find me But the Lord saw fit to bring me back home again and without any ill effects. When I got home I was chilled to the bone and was glad to be near the warm stove that night with my loved ones

In the spring of 1921 we decided to move to Edmonton Since we had title to the land we could sell it. We loaded our personal belongings on the wagon and I drove to Edmonton with two men, who rode with me Anna and Henry followed later. In Edmonton I sold the wagon and one horse. The other horse was of no value so I had to shoot it. We built a house in Edmonton and I found work in a brickyard

The van der Heides operated a dairy farm in Edmonton for about eighteen years. They and their two sons then moved to Prince Rupert and later to Chemainus, B C. Anna died there in 1962 and Martin in 1974.

Maynard Vander Heide

Some excerpts were also taken from the English version of van der Heide's biography, which was kindly provided by Albert van der Heide of Vanderheide Publishing Company

[2] It is unclear what implement this is

FRANK VIOLETTE

Frank Violette (May 15, 1894) moved to Neerlandia from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan, with his sister **Hazel** (March 28, 1900) about 1919 Frank took out the NE 23-61 3-5 as a homestead and built a log cabin to live in while they were building a larger house While living in the cabin Hazel tamed a skunk. Thinking to prevent an accident, she sewed a pair of pants for it. It is not known if the experiment was a success

Frank's father had died in 1919, and Frank's mother, **Annie Scott**, soon came to the homestead with the rest of the family **Ruby** (December 17, 1896), **Robert** (January 13, 1898), **Roy** and **Rosemond** (November 7, 1906), and **Glen** (May 1, 1912). About a year later the log house burned to the ground, and the Violette family moved to the Caughlin place, where they lived for two years

One day Roy and Rosemond were playing on a nearby bridge Rosemond picked up a rock and dropped it into the water. It fell several feet and landed on the head of a pike They had fresh fish for supper that night Social events consisted of activities held at the Christian Reformed Church At one of these Rosemond met Arthur Terpsma, whom she later married

After a disagreement with Robert, Frank left and moved to California. Rosemond and Arthur stayed with the family for a short time, and then moved to Edmonton. Hazel married Charlie Wiscarson. The rest of the family left Neerlandia by the mid-twenties, most of them moving to the U.S.A

Ada Kindlein

JACOB AND WILLEMINA (WONINK) VISSER

Jacob Visser (born in 1884, Wapenveld, Gelderland, the Netherlands) immigrated with his cousin Jan Gelderman in 1911. Jacob took up a homestead in the Darwell area in September 1911 and lived there from November 1911 to May 1912. He had built a log shack on the homestead, but abandoned it later in 1912.

Willemina (Wip) Wonink had been born September 16, 1887, in Oldebroek, Gelderland

Bob Violette's farmyard.

Willemina immigrated to Canada with her mother, stepfather (Willem de Groot), and half sister (Marina de Groot), in 1912. Willemina and Jacob had known each other in the Netherlands and they were married June 30, 1912, in Edmonton by Rev. Jongbloed. Their oldest daughter, **Gertrude** (Geertje), was born there on November 14, 1913.

Jacob took up the SE 28-61-3-5 as a homestead in Neerlandia on June 8, 1914, and the family moved there in September. Jacob was a carpenter by trade and he soon had a log house built. It was sixteen by twenty-four feet and one of the nicest houses in the settlement. Jacob had peeled all the logs for the house before using them. He later built a ten by fourteen-foot addition to the house.

Edmonton, 1914. Jacob, Willemina holding Gertrude

Two more daughters, **Reika** (Hendrika) Hermanna (February 26, 1916) and **Anna** (January 10, 1917) were born in Neerlandia. Willemina had a good sense of humour which stood her in good stead through the difficulties of homesteading. She suffered from hay fever and her health was not good at times, but both she and Jacob were hard workers.

In March 1917, the Visser family left Neerlandia and moved to Burdett, where they again tried farming. Anna died there and three more children were born to Jacob and Willemina. They moved to Portland, Michigan, U.S.A., in 1923. There Jacob again took up his trade of carpenter. The family grew to include three more children. Jacob died in 1941 at the age of fifty-seven of stomach cancer. Willemina died in 1956.

After he had left Neerlandia, Jacob applied for the patent to his homestead (1921). He had broken ten acres and had cropped six. A well had been dug and a log barn and one-and-a-half miles of rail fence had also been put up. Siebren Tiemstra later bought the homestead.

Reika Raglin

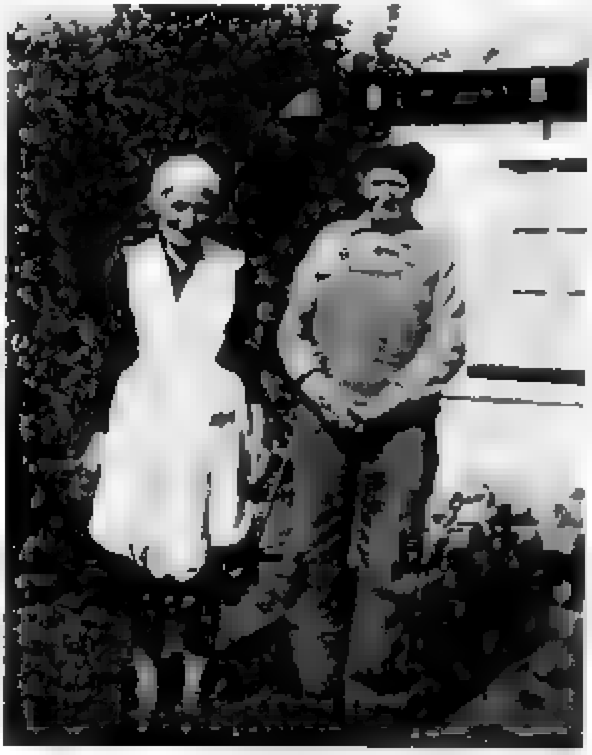
LOUIS AND IDA (KAMPNAR) WESTERBAAN

In the winter of 1920 Louis (Lieuwe) and Ida (Itje) Westerbaan, both close to fifty years of age, came to Canada from Kollum, Friesland, the Netherlands. With them came their only child, **Hiltje** Maartje, then thirteen years of age. They first stopped at a farm close to Brandon, Manitoba, where a friend of Louis' lived. From there they went to Monarch-Nobleford, to the Ralph Kooy family (Bertha Kooy was Ida's sister). The bald prairie did not appeal to them at that time, so they went to Neerlandia, where Ida's brother Peter Kampnar and his two daughters were living. They travelled as far as Westlock by train, then to Mellowdale by truck. It was a dark, cold, early winter night in November 1920 when Ted Reitsma met them with a team and sleigh to take them the rest of the way to Uncle Kampnar's place. His two-storey log house was big and warm and cozy, with lots of wood to keep the fire going.

In the spring, the Westerbaans went to live on the SE 27-61-3-5, homestead of Elke Jorritsma, from whom they got an option to buy. Elke was a bachelor then and working in Edmonton. The land was mostly bush, with just a little piece broken. Arthur Terpsma broke a few more acres for them that summer. That was a dreadful job, as it was impossible to use the horses in the heat of the day because of the big, black bull flies. So early morning and late evening were the times to do it.

Hilda Westerbaan went to the one-room school in Neerlandia. She would walk with the Terpsmas (Tena, Norman, and maybe little George) through the bush and then across Mr. and Mrs. Jan Oldegbers' yard, as this shortened the way. As they walked, they carried their lunchpails — three-pound lard pails — which contained bread or, if the bread had not turned out, pancakes for lunch. When Hilda started school, Mr. Keyzer placed her in grade one because she could speak no English. But, even though there was no school during the winter, she was in grade six when she left Neerlandia in August 1921.

Hilda remembers going raspberry picking in Neerlandia with a whole wagonload of youngsters to a low, rather swampy bush near Simon Tiemstra's place That summer, Mr Tiemstra's father and two brothers, Charley and Ike, had come from Friesland. They came over for coffee sometimes, and *Pake* Tiemstra told the Westerbaans that Simon was building a piece onto the house and it was beginning to look like *Salamo's voorhof* (Solomon's courts).



Ida and Louis, about 1918

The change from life in the Netherlands to the isolation of life in pioneer times was too much for Ida, so the Westerbaans' stay in Neerlandia was short. In August 1921 they left for Edmonton, where they bought an acreage close to town. The ties with Neerlandia never broke. Hilda visited Neerlandia from time to time, staying with the Anema family who, although there were nine in the family, always had room for one more When the new church was dedicated, Hilda was there. She was also there when the Edmonton young people came to Neerlandia by truck for the first time to celebrate the first of July in 1927. That was a memorable occasion because it was the last time she saw her old school chum, Tena Terpsma (then Mrs. Pete Tuininga), a happy wife and mother-to-be. In September her friend died the one and only victim of the dreaded polio in Neerlandia

Another thing that cemented the ties with Neerlandia was Hilda's marriage on January 1, 1932, to John Elzinga of Neerlandia. They settled on an acreage in north Edmonton, where they raised five children.

Louis Westerbaan died in Gibbons at the age of 82 in 1951. His wife died in 1966 at the age of 92.

Hilda Elzinga

THOMAS AND ELIZABETH (SCOTT) WILSON
ALBERT SCOTT

In 1882 a baby girl, Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie), was born to the Scotts, an English family living in Ontario. Tragedy was to touch her life many times before she found happiness. First, when she was six years of age, both of her parents died. Lizzie then went to live with her grandmother while her younger brother was adopted, and her four older brothers went to stay at other homes. Only six years later Lizzie's grandmother died, leaving Lizzie homeless again. For a few years after that she worked in various homes

Then, in the early 1900s, three of her brothers, Albert, George, and Jim Scott, heard the call, "Go west, young man, go west!" Taking Lizzie with them, they headed west. They spent several years on the way, stopping for awhile at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, to try ranching. Somewhere along the way, Lizzie married Percy Melsome. Brief happiness was hers in those years as three sons were born to her. Soon though, tragedy struck again: both Percy and the youngest son, still a baby, died of pneumonia. After that Lizzie again travelled west with her brothers

In 1910, the family group arrived in Edmonton. Lizzie and her two remaining children, Harry and Jimmie, stayed in Edmonton that winter while the brothers trapped and looked for land. When they reached the area now known as Neerlandia, the Scotts were impressed with the lush growth, the abundance of game, and the fish leaping out of the waters of Shoal Creek. On May 15, 1911, Lizzie filed on the N½ 22-61-3-5 and the NW 23-61-3-5 She received the two north quarters of section 22 as homesteads through Ernest E. Nicholson, a Boer War veteran. He was entitled to 320 acres of land, but transferred the script from his name to Lizzie's. Jim and George did not settle in Neerlandia, but stayed to help Lizzie and Albert get settled and then left for the U.S.A. Although Albert stayed to farm with Lizzie, he did not file on any land.

Being amongst the very first settlers in the district, Lizzie had the pick of the land and she chose one of the most beautiful locations in the whole area. The Shoal Creek, good for fishing and swimming in the summer, ran through most of the land and sported wild strawberries, raspberries, and chokecherries in abundance along its banks. On warm summer evenings one could take lovely walks along the creek, finding berries also on the hillsides.

Lizzie was a crack shot, and shot rabbits, ducks, and partridges for the table. She also caught fish and prepared them for meals.

Only necessities and a few prized possessions could be brought to the wilderness. Lizzie chose to bring a lovely piano which she protected with canvas because of her leaking roof. Although she had never had a piano lesson in her life, Lizzie loved music and played by ear. The piano remained a part of her home as long as she lived. Even the box the piano had been packed in had a special place in the house. It was a huge, sturdy, wooden box, and fit into the end of the pantry. After having shelves built in and doors put on, and receiving a coat of paint, the box became quite an effective cupboard and was the only kitchen cabinet Lizzie had for many years.

Every Monday morning, Jimmie would leave home for school in Freedom, the closest school. He would spend the week with a family in the district and return home on Friday evenings. Because Harry was deaf, he spent three years in Montreal at a school for deaf children. Lizzie grieved at being separated from her handicapped son, and when she heard the stories he told of life at the school, she could bear it no longer. Though she had only three or four years of formal education, she brought Harry home and set about teaching him herself. She did, in fact, teach him to read and write. More-

Threshing from a stack on the Malcome farm, late fall, 1918. ? Raymond Baker, Frank Violette, Ida and Bertha Kampner, ? Carl Mast.

over, she learned sign language in order to communicate with him more easily. In later years, however, she wished she had been more resolute and had realized the importance of a good education for Harry.

When Jimmie was 12 years old (1917 or 1918), he got appendicitis. The closest doctor and hospital were in Edmonton and the closest railway began in Westlock. Albert and Lizzie rushed him, as quickly as they could by team, to catch the train to the city hospital, but it was too late. The appendix had ruptured, and in a few days he was gone. He was buried in an Edmonton cemetery.

Lizzie and her brother were hard working and ambitious: all three quarters were proved up by 1917. Then Albert and Jim, who had returned to Neerlandia for a short time, built a fairly large frame house and barn on the NE 22-61-3-5. Being on the route taken by the men working for Chisholm Lumber Company, the home served as a stopping place for men and horses on their trips to and from the camp.

Around 1918 Tom (Thomas) Alex Wilson, the camp superintendent, began stopping in, and a romance began. Tom and Lizzie were married in 1920.

Tom loved his work and continued with it until he retired in 1936. Born in Minnesota, U.S.A., in 1872, he had learned the logging trade while working in Oregon. Logging was winter work except for two or three weeks in the summer when Tom cruised timber for the next winter's logging. More than knowing the trade, however, he knew how to manage men. Though easy-going in his personal relationships, he had high expectations of the men on the job, and was able to get their co-operation. With these skills he was a valuable employee at the Chisholm camp, and is often credited with its success. Tom was always ready to help others. Through the years he lent small sums of money to many people. If they did not pay him back, he made no attempt to collect it.

In the early years, Tom drove a matched team of black driving horses, Dan and Charley. It was a sight to behold when Tom came by in his cutter, with his slim, long-legged beauties kicking up the snow as they trotted along. Later Tom gave up the horses for the more modern conveyance, the car. One day, so the story goes, Tom went to Barrhead and bought a brand new car. On the way home, he rolled the car at the two-mile corner. He picked himself up, went back to Barrhead, and bought another.

The outdoors had more appeal for Lizzie

Melsome house built c. 1917

than the tasks in the house did, so she often had help in the kitchen. Among those who helped her were Mrs John Howey, Carrie Mast, and the Andries Wierenga girls. At the best of times, the English-speaking Wilsons and their Dutch neighbours had a hard time understanding each other, but when the Wierengas spoke their dialect, *Gronings*, it was almost impossible. Somehow Lizzie got them to understand that she would hire the girls, and so Trientje came to work. Lizzie never could twist her tongue around that name; the closest she could get was "Treata", and Treata she remained to Lizzie

Lizzie was a resourceful woman and learned to nurse both men and beast. On the Wilson farm, it was Lizzie who doctored the sick animals. Or when the neighbouring bachelors were sick, Lizzie would bring over a pot of soup, a mustard plaster, and any other remedies she considered necessary. When one of these men was too sick to look after himself, Lizzie took him home to stay with her family She also helped Everdina Mast, whom she thought was too frail to bear all the children she did.

Albert Scott, Doris, 1920.

When after two years of marriage Tom and Lizzie had no children, they wondered if Lizzie might be too old to have a baby Therefore, in 1922 they adopted a little two-year old girl, whom they named **Doris** (April 6, 1920). Surprisingly, in 1925, at the age of 43, Lizzie gave birth to a son, **Thomas**, and in 1927 to a daughter, **Mary** Then, in 1929, Tom took the NE 23-61-3-5 as a homestead. It was proved up in 1938

For years the Wilsons had the only telephone in the district. The phone, which was installed in 1918, was called Shoal Creek, after the creek on which they lived. Doris recalls the event of a change in the name

"After a time a man came from the telephone company informing us of the phone being put in the Shoal Creek store east of us, and that they would be claiming our name for theirs. He asked Uncle Albert if he had a choice of a name for our phone Jokingly Uncle Albert said, 'Call it Tipperary.' The man seemed to think that was fine. Uncle Albert laughed and said, 'I was just joking. You wouldn't want that for a name.'

'Sure, why not?' said the man. That's the name our phone went by till my folks left Neerlandia in 1942."

Albert married Tena Cole, a widow from Westlock, in 1932 In 1934 they moved to Breton, Alberta, where they farmed for several years.

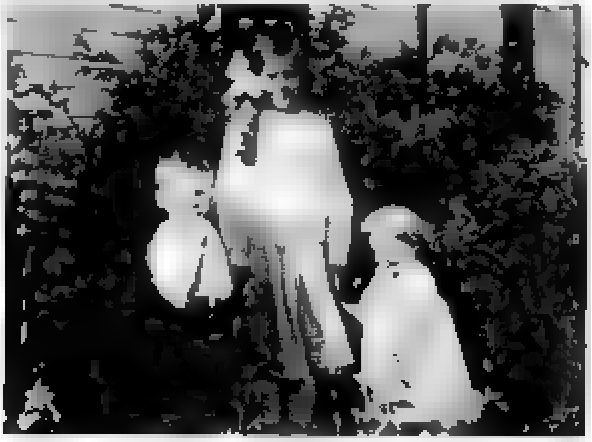
Since the Wilsons lived three miles from school, Lizzie did not let Doris start attending school until she was seven years old. She walked with the Tiemstras and the Masts, who lived along the same road. Doris loved school and most of her teachers. She reminisces about her school life in this way

"I remember how some of us grade threes cried when Miss Rae announced that she was leaving to get married . . ."

". . . seeing there was only one other English-speaking family in the district at that time (the Howeys), I did feel a bit in the minority. I was elated when some of the girls said they would teach me to speak Dutch. My joy lasted only a few days when Mr. Ashley announced there would be no language spoken in the schoolyard except English I never did learn to speak or understand much Dutch."

Doris quit school in grade nine and helped her folks at home until she was twenty-one. Lizzie, an outspoken woman, was strict with her children, and she carefully screened Doris' suitors. Finally Archie Lindquist of Mellowdale

John Howey. Tom holding Thomas, Lizzie (turned sideways) holding Mary, Bob Howey. Mrs. Cole. ? Albert Scott, Ethel Howey, Archie Lindquist. Mr. Cole. Neil Lindquist, Harry. Children: Fred Cole. Doris, Bertha and Ethel Howey. Carl Cole standing, Archie Howey sitting, 1927



Thomas, Doris, Mary, 1929.

passed the test and Doris married him in 1941. They farmed with Archie's brother Neil for three years, before moving to Hythe, Alberta, in 1944. Archie and Doris have six children. Archie died in 1959, but Doris and the children continued living on the farm. She remarried in 1967. Her second husband, Harold James, died in 1978.

Because Tom was in poor health, he and Lizzie, with their children Harry, Thomas, and Mary, moved to Penticton, British Columbia, in 1942. Tom died in 1943, at 71 years of age. Harry died in 1965, at 62 years of age. Lizzie then came back to Edmonton to be near Thomas. She died in 1971 at 89 years of age. Mary lived with her family in Hope, British Columbia, till she died in 1981. She had four children. Thomas and his wife and family of three children live in Edmonton.

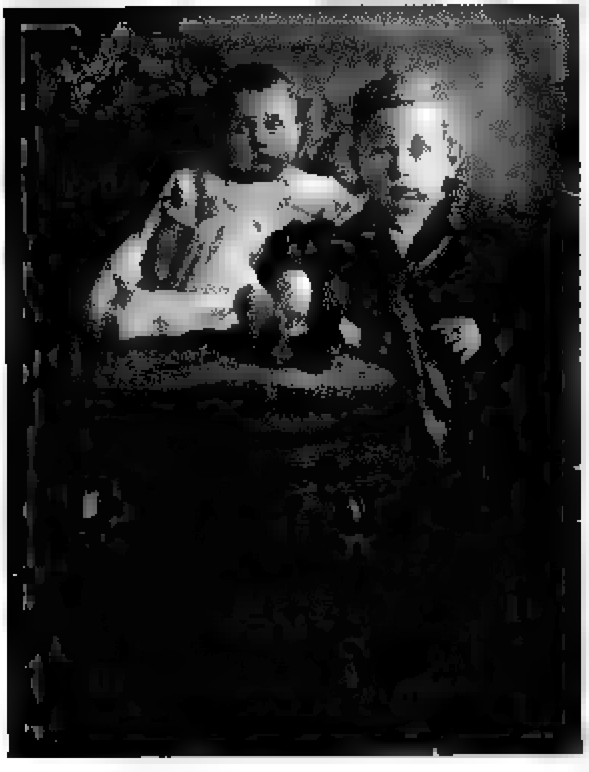
Doris James

GEORGE WING

George Wing (c. 1878) was born in Elgin County, Ontario. On May 13, 1911, he filed on the SE 27-61-3-5 in what was later called Neerlandia. On his homestead application he listed his occupation as carpenter and his last place of residence as Vancouver. George built a log house on his land in October 1911 and began living there around the same time.

On the quarter next to George's lived his friend George Caughlin. They did a lot of trapping and hunting in the area. George also spent some time working on his land so that by the time he received his patent in 1915 he was cropping fifteen acres, had built a log barn, dug a well, and put up one-and-a-half miles of fencing. The only animal he kept was a horse

George often visited Siebren Tiemstra and sold his quarter to him during the 1920s. He eventually moved back to Ontario.



Living conditions changed for pioneer youngsters who came to Neerlandia. A studio photo of Minnie and George Baker, taken in Massachusetts, U.S.A.

1921-1945

1921-1945

From 1921 to 1945 the immigration to Neerlandia slowed. There were several young single men who came, stayed, and married Neerlandia girls. There were a few families who came, notable among them a clan from Uithuizen, Groningen — the Peters and the three Wierenga families — with a grand total of thirty-five children.

But this time was mainly one of the pioneer children attaining adulthood and marrying those they had known all their lives or, of course, the Wierengas. Their stories comprise this section.

THE HISTORY AND MEMOIRS OF GEORGE ANEMA

I was born on the 20th day of January 1919 in the log house built by my father on the NW 35-61-3-5. My father acquired this homestead in 1913, when he also built the first log house with a sod roof with little slope on it. If it rained for one day the water seeped through the sods for three days. After the second house was built, the first one was made into a cow barn. The homestead was one mile east of Neerlandia and was known for a long time as Anema's Corner.

I have been told that the winter of 1919 was a long, cold, hard winter with a lot of snow. If the saying is true that only the fittest survive, I must have been quite fit because I am still here today. However, I had a lot of help to survive that first cold winter. I had a very loving mother and three loving older sisters, Della, Susie, and Catherine. Dad had hoped for a son but, every time my mother had a baby, it was a girl until I came along, so all the attention I got from the family made survival easy for me.

My dad often thought if he could get a few sons they would soon be able to help him with a lot of all this work. His stepbrother, Simon Tiemstra, had two strong boys, Menne Nanninga already had five boys, and Henry Kippers had three boys, he himself had three daughters, but he kept trying, and then I came along. After me, my parents had three more girls, Annie, Frances, and Sophie. That put me smack in the middle of a family of six sisters. I was the luckiest kid in the world, even though I have often wished I had a brother.

The old cast-iron stove in the living room had to be kept going steady because those log houses were far from energy-efficient. In the fall the cracks between the logs had to be chinked with either moss, clay, or cow manure, but this stuff dried out and shrank some in the cold dry air, and the cold would seep in through the cracks. The ceiling, or rather the upstairs floor, was of a single layer of shiplap boards and, since heat rises, it was often warmer upstairs than downstairs. There was no insulation under the roof, so a lot of heat escaped through the roof. The heat escaping through the roof would melt the snow on it and that would freeze again as it ran off the eaves, forming icicles three or four feet long.

Those long, cold winters were hard on man and beast, and, I am sure, even more hard on a woman. Imagine trying to haul a load of hay or firewood on a sleigh with a team of horses through four feet of loose snow. The horses could hardly walk through that much snow, let alone pull a sleigh through it.

There was a good supply of dry tamarack trees for firewood in those days, but they had to be cut into blocks by hand with a crosscut saw, and split before they could be put in the stove. Many evenings after supper my dad and mother would go out and saw another day's supply of firewood.

I have only happy recollections of my childhood and youth. I can't remember ever being hungry or cold or miserable. There was no competition with peers for toys, clothes, or money to spend because none of my friends had any more or less than I did. And there wasn't much time to get bored because there was always wood to bring in and feeding to be done, cows to bring home for milking in the summer, and some time for play in the evenings

Before the railway was brought into Barrhead, the grain and produce the farmers sold had to be brought to Westlock. The return trip to Westlock took two days by horse and wagon or sleigh, if it was in the winter There was a stage passenger service, but that only went as far as Dusseldorf

In 1925, when I was six years old my father had a pretty good crop. He had a load of wheat to sell at the elevator in Westlock My Uncle Simon Tiemstra also had grain to sell, and they agreed to both go on the same day so they could travel together I asked my dad if I could go along He first thought I was too small to make that long trip in the cold weather. After a lot of coaxing, he finally agreed to take me After all, I was the boy of the family and the experience would be good for me, he thought in a few years I would be big enough to do those sorts of things on my own, and he thought my sisters could take care of the farm without my help. The big day for me soon came and we started off at five o'clock in the morning. We took along enough sandwiches to last for two days, feed for the horses, and blankets for the night We could not afford a hotel room, so we were going to sleep on the floor in the office of the livery barn in Westlock It was a cold day, and in order to keep warm and to keep circulation going, I think we walked more than half the way behind the sleigh At Marshall's in Dusseldorf, we stopped to feed and water the horses and we went inside to get warmed up, thaw out some frozen sandwiches, and get a hot cup of coffee We got to Westlock in time to sell and unload the grain before the elevator closed for the day Then we put the horses in the livery barn and got our blankets into the office to warm up before we crawled under them for the night

Then Uncle Simon took me on a sight-seeing tour of Westlock. I heard a rumbling noise followed by a loud whistle, and asked what that was. Uncle Simon said, "That was the train I'll show you what it looks like." He took me to the station where the train had stopped, and took me inside to show me the rows of beautiful seats in the passenger car. What an experience for a six-year-old from Neerlandia! I had crossed the big Pembina River on a bridge, I had seen the big grain elevators that reached way up into the sky, the big stores in Westlock where you could buy anything your heart desired (if you had the money), and I had seen a train with a giant steam engine pulling all those cars I really had a story to tell, when I got home the next day.

My first teacher in school was Bill van Ark. I can also remember Miss Thelma Hare (who later became Mrs Levy). My grade five teacher was Mr McKitrick. He was a bachelor about fifty years old, and he boarded with our minister, Rev H Van Der Woude We had a two-room school at that time The Junior room had grades one to four, and the Senior had grades five to nine

Mr McKitrick was not the best for keeping his classes disciplined, and we soon learned that we could get away with a lot of mischief without his noticing and we could break a lot of rules without getting punished If he thought we needed punishment he didn't have the heart to carry it out, so he just got more and more frustrated with us - but we didn't worry about that

It really is amazing how a group of kids, even Christian Reformed kids who have been taught to be responsible for their actions at home, in church, and at school, and had always lived in a very strict and conservative way like we did in Neerlandia, could find so many ways to totally frustrate a teacher who could not keep discipline It starts quite innocently, and once kids know they can get away with small things, they will soon try it with bigger or worse things, it snowballs, and in a matter of five or six months a classroom becomes chaos.

We had a pencil sharpener tied to the wall of the school, and were taught by former teachers to raise our hand, and ask, "Please, may I sharpen my pencil?" Old Mac, as we had nicknamed him, said, "You may sharpen your pencils without asking as long as you go one at a time " It didn't take long until some kids brought pockets full of sticks along to grind up in that pencil sharpener, and it was going steady all day long. He applied the same rule to going out to the toilet; we could go without asking, but one at a time It didn't take long until someone went out and didn't come back, so another would go to see what became of him, and sometimes five or six would go out and stay out until recess or noon hour and Old Mac would never miss them.

Old Mac used a series of cards with arithmetic problems for us to do. We had to take a card from his desk, and work out the problems in our scribbler. When we were finished, we had to exchange workbooks with our desk mate (we had double desks in those days). Then we would pick up another card that had the correct answers and we had to correct each other's work. A few days later my desk mate had his work for the day all done in no time and I was still working on my second problem I asked him how he got finished so soon, and he said, "Simple I have the answer card here and I am all finished and a hundred percent correct." After that my hardest subject, arithmetic, was very easy to do, and it was a long time before Mr. McKitrick realized what we were doing.

For history we had to read from our textbooks and then Mr. McKitrick would have us tell him in story form what we had read, for example "Marco Polo walked across Europe, and from Asia to China . . . " Then one day he said, "I am going to do something new. I will take two classes at the same time I will teach grade nine literature, and grade five will line up against the opposite wall and tell me your history stories " He seemed quite absorbed in the grade nine literature, and the opposite wall was about forty feet away John Ingwersen started off, "Mr. McKitrick walked across Europe and Asia to China " and down the line all six of us had a story about Old Mac. When we told him we were finished he said, "See! I told you I could take two classes at the same time."

In those days, the quarter section on which the school is built had not been cleared yet except for a few acres on the south side One beautiful fall day Old Mac took us into the woods for a nature hike He was going to show us how things were getting ready for the winter. The grass was now brown and dead-looking, the leaves were changing colour and some had already fallen, and the rabbits were starting to turn white A group of us boys had had enough of his lectures by then, so we started running deeper into the woods. He told us to come back but we kept going, and he could not keep up with us So a frustrated Mr McKitrick went back to school with about half of his pupils, who felt sorry for him. When we came back to school much later we had thought out a nice story to tell him which he accepted as truth, and we were also forgiven.

About a week later the weather was still beautiful, and our group of boys were ready for another nature hike, but without the teacher. At noon hour we took off into the woods. We returned shortly before 3 30 p.m. and were confronted by a very angry Mr. McKitrick We had to stay in after school and were asked where we had been and what we had done As I was one of the first to be asked I said that we were on a nature hike finding things getting ready for winter. This seemed to make sense to him, so the rest of the boys all gave him the same line He made us write an essay on what we had seen and, after reading them, he said he would keep them as long as he lived to remember us by and we could go.

In those days Rev. Van Der Woude came to school every Tuesday after the last recess to teach us catechism The weather was still beautiful and school was dull, and the woods were calling us again We decided to go one more time before the weather changed, so off we went again but we forgot that it was Tuesday When we returned late that afternoon the Rev Van Der Woude was waiting for us, and there were no explanations to be made or essays to write. After he got finished blasting us (and he knew how to do that) our parents were notified, and we got another blast from them Result? No more nature hikes

Still, confrontations with the teacher continued. If he made a rule one day, we would break it the next, and he became so frustrated, he would break down and cry, poor guy, and even that did not impress us very much. Finally our parents and the school board decided enough was enough Obviously we were not learning much and for the best of all, Old Mac better go.

One morning a man came riding onto the school yard on a big motorcycle. He went into school and took his place behind the teacher's desk. His name was John M. Dickson. He made quite an impression on us boys Then he made his inaugural speech He said that he had been told we were not very well-behaved kids, but he said, "I think we will get along fine Just in case we have problems I have brought this persuader" He reached into his drawer and out came a rubber belt strap about two inches wide and eighteen inches long "But," he said, "I don't think I will have to use it very often " It is amazing how fast a bunch of bad guys can change into a bunch of good guys again just by the presence of a new teacher who said, "You may try, but you won't get away with it " His prediction came true: a few were punished once, but they made sure it didn't happen again. He started us back at the beginning of the course, and at the end of June almost everyone passed the exams. Mr Dickson did not feel at home in the social environment of Neerlandia, so he did not stay long.

Then we got Mr. J. R Levy, and his wife who had taught here before They stayed a few years, and then we got Mr A. C Ashley, who stayed around for a long time, although not all the time as a teacher. Mr. Ashley loved sports, and he loved to be on the winning side

One day a man came up our driveway just as we were going to have our noon meal. In those days anyone who came along at mealtime was invited to the table — that was the law of the frontier There was no place where anyone could buy food and a person had to eat, so a meal was always shared with a wayfaring stranger, and there always seemed to be enough to go around. This man said he was a Syrian. I don't know where he came from or where he was going, but it did have me puzzled I had heard my dad read from the Old Testament that the Syrians had made war with Israel, and some of them were very brutal With my eight-year-old mind I just couldn't figure out how a Syrian could stray all the way from his homeland, walk into the middle of the promised land, and sit down at our table for a meal

Mr Oldegbers lived on the homestead across the corner from our place He was one of the oldest pioneers When he died, Jacob Olthuis bought the homestead Mr. Olthuis had four sons, John, Bill, Fred, and George, and three daughters, Eva, Carrie, and Alice

George was a bit older than I was, and we used to walk to and from school together He was nicknamed Slim He was tall, thin, and tough as rawhide On the way home from school we would sometimes go through the woods to shoot rabbits with our slingshots Slingshots were quite a fad in those days, and some kids, including Slim and myself, sometimes used them to shoot insulators off the telephone poles This went on for some time until it affected the telephone service, and one day a Mountie walked into school He said that he didn't know who had been doing this, but he was quite sure the guilty parties were in that room He told us that this was breaking the law, and then told us what would be done to lawbreakers if this continued That was the first time most of us had ever seen a policeman and we had no desire to see him again, so after that the insulators stayed on the poles.

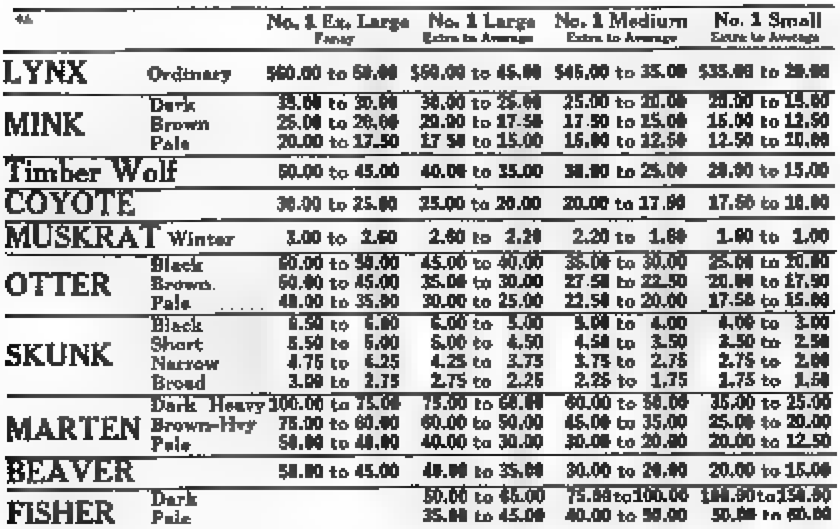
In those days rabbits multiplied and declined in cycles of about seven years For a few years you would hardly see a rabbit. Then every year there would be more until at the height of the cycle they almost became a plague They ate the bark off of most young poplar saplings and if anything was left in the garden by the first snowfall, it was eaten in no time They ate big holes into the sides of feed stacks in the barnyard On moonlit evenings we would go out to the feed stacks and kill them with clubs Toward the end of the cycle, they seemed to get a disease of some sort and they would die off, and the rebuilding cycle would start again

Killing rabbits with slingshots wasn't too satisfactory and I wished I had a 22 rifle There was one problem, though A rifle cost money, and we didn't have any money Still, if I had one I could shoot rabbits, grouse, and prairie chickens, which were all quite plentiful, and I could even shoot squirrels and sell the pelts. I talked this over with Slim, and one day on the way home from school we concocted a plan We could trap weasels and squirrels that winter, sell the pelts in the spring, and have enough money to buy a new

rifle and enough shells to last for a year. Slim said squirrel pelts were worth about thirty-five cents and weasels were worth about a dollar-fifty, maybe even two dollars for an extra good one. Slim would teach me how to skin these animals, and how to make a stretcher board to dry the pelts on.

Slim had learned all these tricks from his brother Bill. I thought if Slim had been taught by Bill, he should be able to write a book about it. Bill was one of the best hunters in the country. I had heard he kept the family supplied with moose meat. I had seen a live young coyote chained to a kennel on their yard that Bill had taken live out of a trap and had taken home without getting himself all chewed up by the animal. And Bill made scads of money every spring trapping muskrats.

I was confident that with Slim as a trapping partner, my money problems would soon be solved. When I told my dad about my new venture he was not too enthusiastic about it. If I would go trapping every day after school, I wouldn't have time to help him with the feeding, and he wasn't about to give that up. I finally came up with a solution: on Saturdays I had to take the cows to the muskeg for water anyway — if I would do this on horseback, I could quickly go along my traps and be back about the same time the cows were back. He consented to this and even bought me six new traps.



46		No. 1 Ex. Large Fancy	No. 1 Large Extra to Average	No. 1 Medium Extra to Average	No. 1 Small Extra to Average
LYNX	Ordinary	$60.00 to 50.00	$50.00 to 45.00	$45.00 to 35.00	$35.00 to 20.00
MINK	Dark	35.00 to 30.00	30.00 to 25.00	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 15.00
	Brown	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 17.50	17.50 to 15.00	15.00 to 12.50
	Pale	20.00 to 17.50	17 50 to 15.00	15.00 to 12.50	12.50 to 10.00
Timber Wolf		50.00 to 45.00	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 25.00	20.00 to 15.00
COYOTE		30.00 to 25.00	25.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 17.50	17.50 to 10.00
MUSKRAT	Winter	3.00 to 2.60	2.60 to 2.20	2.20 to 1.80	1.80 to 1.00
OTTER	Black	60.00 to 50.00	45.00 to 40.00	35.00 to 30.00	25.00 to 20.00
	Brown.	50.00 to 45.00	35.00 to 30.00	27.50 to 22.50	20.00 to 17.50
	Pale	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 25.00	22.50 to 20.00	17.50 to 15.00
SKUNK	Black	6.50 to 6.00	6.00 to 5.00	5.00 to 4.00	4.00 to 3.00
	Short	5.50 to 5.00	5.00 to 4.50	4.50 to 3.50	2.50 to 2.50
	Narrow	4.75 to 4.25	4.25 to 3.75	3.75 to 2.75	2.75 to 2.00
	Broad	3.00 to 2.75	2.75 to 2.25	2.25 to 1.75	1.75 to 1.50
MARTEN	Dark Heavy	100.00 to 75.00	75.00 to 60.00	60.00 to 50.00	35.00 to 25.00
	Brown-Hvy	75.00 to 60.00	60.00 to 50.00	45.00 to 35.00	25.00 to 20.00
	Pale	50.00 to 40.00	40.00 to 30.00	30.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 12.50
BEAVER		50.00 to 45.00	40.00 to 35.00	30.00 to 20.00	20.00 to 15.00
FISHER	Dark		50.00 to 65.00	75.00 to 100.00	100.00 to 150.00
	Pale		35.00 to 45.00	40.00 to 50.00	50.00 to 60.00

The fur buyers in Edmonton sent out price lists during the winter, and every time a new one came out Slim told me prices were going up, and we should make pretty good. When spring came the first year, our fur parcel wasn't that big, and after splitting 50-50 with Slim I didn't have enough saved to buy my new rifle. So I had to save my money and try again next year. When I was ten I had enough saved to buy my rifle and I was the proudest ten-year-old in Neerlandia.

When the fur price lists came by mail, they also listed black cat pelts for about eighty cents. In March the tomcats would come to visit the neighbours' barnyards to see if they could get a love affair

going for a few days with the neighbours' pussycats. If a nice black tom came around, he didn't always live to go back home, but went to Edmonton in my fur parcel

My dad and our neighbour Mr. John Gelderman used to help each other castrate pigs. In those days nobody was paid for helping a neighbour They just helped each other for anything that help was needed for, and never kept track of a few hours more or less. When I was eleven or twelve years old, my dad thought I was big enough to help him with the castrating, and then he would not have to go to help John Gelderman any more When we had finished castrating our pigs. he said, "Now you better go to Gelderman and help him do his." So off I went to the neighbour's. I told him my dad had said I should help him castrate his pigs He looked at me as if he was thinking, "You snot kid, do you really think you can do that?" I told him I had just finished helping my dad do ours so I guess he thought, "It has to be done, and John Anema isn t coming, so we better give it a try." He must have been satisfied with my assistance, because when we were finished with the pigs he said, "Now we better do the cats They have a habit of running away at this time of the year and sometimes they don't come back." I noticed he had two nice black tomcats and I thought "Too bad, there won't be any black cat pelts in my fur bundle this year." He must have been satisfied with my assistance with the cats too, because then he said, "Now we better do the dog " When the dog was done, I thought, "I wonder who is going to be next?" but he said, "That's all for today."

Toward the end of September 1930 a man came walking up to our driveway. When he was asked to come in he told my parents that his name was Joe Slagboom. He had worked in the harvest in Nobleford and as harvest was finished there, he said he would like to work at our place that winter for his board. My father had built a new barn that summer which was not yet completed, and Slagboom said he was a handyman, so he could help with that My father also wanted to cut some tamarack logs that winter to have sawn into boards at Menne Nanninga's place, who had a sawmill at that time He needed these boards for the floor in the new barn My parents discussed this situation. They thought there was enough food in the larder to feed an extra man, and it would be very handy to have a handyman around for the winter, so he stayed until the next spring

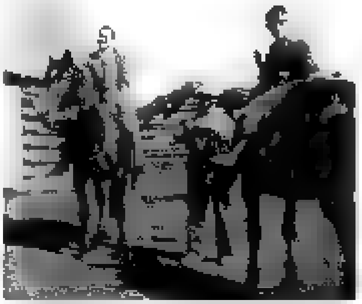
Joe Slagboom wasn t rolling in wealth either, so he tried different ways to make a few dollars He tried growing mushrooms. John and Raymond Visser had a root house on their farm and he got permission from them to use that for his mushroom project I guess the temperature and humidity were not right in that root house because I never saw a mushroom.

Joe also did a little trapping on the side, and I'm not sure he didn't rob my traps once in a while He also talked me into selling him my furs for about half their value On one of the first warm days in February, he came onto a skunk track I guess hunger drove it out of its den in search of some food Well, he caught that skunk, and managed to kill it without getting himself sprayed, so he took it home and started skinning. He had not had skinning lessons from Slim, and he severed the tube that goes from the scent sac to the outlet He had the skunk lying on his lap when he did this and the terrible stuff ran over his clothes, thighs, and knees, and the poor guy had tears in his eyes, but he kept on skinning Can you imagine having to sit beside him to eat for the next two weeks?

The Rawleigh man also played a big part in the early days. He made his rounds in summer with a team of horses and a covered spring wagon and in winter with a covered box on a sleigh He often stayed at our place overnight when he was in the neighbourhood At that time the Rawleigh man was like a travelling store His ointment was good for chaps, burns, colds, dry skin, and everything else Man and Beast Salve was the best for sores on animals, wounds, and sore teats on cows, and Rawleigh's Liniment was a cure-all for colds, congestion, stomach ache, and even depression It was forty-eight percent alcohol, and was used only as directed on the label one teaspoonful in a cup of hot water. We were told that people in a nearby community made and drank moonshine, and some peddled their rot-gut moonshine at their local dances. In Neerlandia no one would think of making or drinking that stuff, but I don't think there was a house that didn't have Rawleigh's Liniment.

During the first years, the homesteaders didn't have enough money to buy barb wire to put a fence around all their holdings, so they fenced the land they had seeded to crops to keep the cattle out All the rest of the land was open range, and cattle roamed to wherever the pastures were greenest and best-tasting. The farmers put bells around the necks of their cows and horses so they could hear the bells when they went to bring them home, and thus be able to find them. We had a saddle horse or cow pony named Maggie Maggie was a wonderful pony She was kept at home in a small pasture and was used every day in the summer to bring home the cows or horses. By the time I was old enough to get the cows, my father had leased the quarter section north of the homestead as a grazing lease for two cents an acre This had been fenced at that time, so I never went farther than a mile to get the cows I hardly had to drive Maggie She would hear the bells before I would and round the cows up. If one strayed off to the side, all I had to do was to touch the rein and she would get after the straggler, giving it a good nip on the rump.

I never owned a bicycle, but I sure made many, many miles on Maggie. I am sure she could go from zero to thirty miles per hour in five seconds. I never lost a race on Maggie. She had only one fault. She would shy away from some imaginary object and jump sideways so fast that the rider would be on the ground beside her in an instant. She jumped from underneath my sister Della once. Della got her foot caught in the saddle stirrup, and was dragged along for some distance before Maggie stopped. As a result, Della's arm was dislocated. She had to be brought to a doctor in Westlock to get her arm-joint put back into its socket.



Jan Anema, George, c. 1929

Some of the early pioneers came to the homestead by ox team, but I can hardly recollect seeing a team of oxen pulling a wagon. R. J. and J. R. de Vries picked up the cream and other produce along their road every Monday morning for Fisher's truck. They did this with a team of horses and a wagon. One of the horses died so they were in big trouble. They had planned not to buy a pickup for a few years yet, and horses were on the decline at that time and not cheap to buy, so what to do now? After considering the matter for some time, they came up with an idea. Why not hitch the bull to the wagon beside the horse? They broke the bull to pull and believe it or not, next Monday morning, R. J. de Vries drove into Neerlandia with a horse and bull pulling the wagon! And that's no bull.

One day when I was twelve years old, I saw a car go past our place. Cars didn't come by very often in those days, people who came by in cars were usually inspectors from the Department of Lands in Edmonton to check on someone who had applied to prove up his homestead. A short time after the car went by, I saw a man walking down the road toward our place, and I knew it was the inspector. His car was stuck in a mud hole and could we pull it out? We had a team of horses harnessed in the barn, and I took them out, hitched them up, got the chain, and went to the mud hole. After I had pulled his car out he gave me $1.25 and I was the richest kid in the world. I watched him drive off and hoped with all my heart that he would come back this way and get stuck again on the way back but, too bad, I didn't see him again.

There was always too much work to be done on the homestead. The only way to get ahead was to clear more land, grow more grain, keep more cows and pigs, and so increase the income, while at the same time keeping down the expenses. It seemed every dollar earned had to go back into the farm, and there was never enough for my mother to get something she needed in the house. When my sisters got older they went to the city and worked for a few dollars a month, saved every cent, and brought this home to buy a few desperately-needed extras. They also helped my father with the fieldwork, weeded and tended the big garden, and helped can hundreds of quarts of vegetables for the winter. As well, they picked many wild strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries to be used for dessert.

I can't remember ever being hungry or cold through the Depression of the 1930s. We always had enough moisture to grow crops and gardens and enough feed for the animals. Every fall, sacks of potatoes, carrots, beets, turnips, and cabbages would go into the cellar under the house. This was a hole dug under the middle of the house, and dirt was banked up under the floor all around to keep out the frost. The entry was through a trapdoor in the floor of the kitchen.

In the fall my dad would butcher a cow and a fat sow of about five hundred pounds. The fat of the sow was rendered into lard and this was stored in big stone crocks in the cellar and was used for baking, frying, and deep frying. In those days it didn't have cholesterol in it either. Some of the meat was kept in a box in the "deep freeze" outside, to be used through the winter. Some was smoked to be used for sandwich meat and the rest was canned to be eaten the next summer. The chickens kept us in fresh eggs and, if we had more than we could eat, we took them to the Co-op and from there they went by truck to market.

My dad always milked some cows. This milk was put through a cream separator. The skim milk was fed to the calves and pigs, and the cream went to market. The cream cheque was the lifeline. It came in steadily every week, and even though it wasn't big, it kept the family supplied with coffee, tea, sugar, and baking ingredients, etc. My mother also churned butter. Soon after the railway came to Barrhead, someone built a flour mill and my dad took a load of wheat there and we would get about fifteen hundred pounds of flour plus all the bran, shorts, and cream of wheat. My mother had enough flour for baking for a year. I can still taste my mother's fresh home-baked bread. It was delicious.

It seems every fall there was enough money to buy new warm underwear and jackets to keep us through the winter. Mother would knit socks, mittens, and sweaters for all of us, and could she make those needles fly! If she would settle down knitting she could finish a pair of socks in a day. I believe if a child gets enough to eat and can keep warm and has enough chores to keep him occupied, together with a loving family environment, he just has to be happy!

However, the Depression was tough for the farmers in Neerlandia. Eggs brought six cents a dozen or there was no market for them at all. I can remember putting eggs, shell and all, in the skim milk that we fed the calves. My dad had shipped pigs to the packers in Edmonton with the trucker Billy Quick and they brought five dollars apiece. The trucker and my dad each got half. I have been told that my Uncle Simon Tiemstra bought cows on sale for eight dollars each.

At that time, most of the calves born on our farm had their throats slit because they just were not worth raising. I remember skinning some of them and sending the hides along with the trucker. They brought fifty cents each, twenty-five cents each for Mr. Quick and me.

The first threshing I can remember was done by Oscar

Bonstrom and Charlie Anderson of Vega. The grainfields were small yet The first patches were cut out with a sickle, and bundles were tied by hand. When the fields got a little bigger, several farmers got together to buy a binder. The grain was stooked to dry, and then my father and Mr Gelderman helped each other haul this to the barnyard and it was put into stacks to wait for Bonstrom and Anderson to come with their threshing machine They pulled the threshing machine from place to place with horses. It was powered by a large stationary engine mounted on a heavy wagon also drawn by horses This engine had two big flywheels about five feet in diameter. I wasn't going to school yet at that time, so I eagerly watched all this action going on This engine was too big to turn with a crank, so Charlie Anderson would stand on the spokes of the flywheel to start it For some reason it backfired and Charlie went sailing though the air, landing about twenty feet away. He must have had a soft landing, because he got right up and seemed none the worse for it.

One man had to cut the twines on the bundles of grain and feed them into the threshing machine a little at a time. There was a bag attachment where the grain came out and the bags of grain were carried away to our first little granary The machine didn't have a blower, so a few men had to stand behind it to take away the straw and stack it

By the time more land was opening up, Pete and Julius Boman had moved to Vega They had a Rumely tractor and a new threshing machine that didn't have to be fed by hand and had a straw blower on it. Simon Tiemstra, Henry Kippers, and Menne Nanninga also bought threshing machines The grain was not stacked on the barnyard anymore but was brought directly from the fields to the threshing machine Menne Nanninga did our threshing for many years. The farmers he threshed for helped each other bring in the grain from the fields.

Boman's steam driven Rumely tractor.

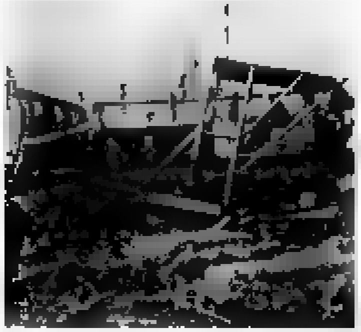
As more land was opened up, the threshing run became longer every year I was allowed to stay home from school on the days the threshing crew was at our place It seemed like a lot of fun to me and I couldn't wait until I was old enough to be a part of it. I graduated from grade eight when I was fourteen-and-a-half. (By law a kid had to go to school until he was fifteen, but my dad could use me on the farm, and, since he didn't think I would ever become a professor anyway, he thought the eight grades I had achieved were quite adequate) That fall I joined the threshing crew It was hard work for me, and for the first few weeks I was quite stiff and sore We started at seven in the morning and it was often eight in the evening before we finished The last several loads were done by the light of a coal oil lantern. Even working long days, it still took thirty days of threshing to complete the run that year There was never a dull moment We had a crew of more than ten men and everyone tried to outdo each other in telling stories and jokes And you wouldn't believe the amount of food that was consumed by all those hard-working young men Stacks of sandwiches, cake, and cookies for lunch, and at mealtimes we were ready for plates heaping full of vegetables and meat, and still had room for pie for dessert I think what I ate in a day in those days would last me a week now.

From that time on I was a full-time helper on the farm and was responsible for most of the fieldwork and anything that was done with the horses. We had six fine, well-bred, good-tempered horses. Most of these had been raised and trained on our farm My dad would have a few of his mares bred and each year for several years we raised one or two colts. At three years of age, these were ready for work As our horses were trustworthy and would not go on a runaway, I started doing some of the fieldwork on Saturdays, long before I finished school I remember on a Saturday having to harrow a field my dad had plowed and plodding along through the loose soil I also remember how I envied the colts that lay in the sun all day long, stretched out to full length without a worry in the world.

A few years before the Second World War, times started getting better for the farmers. Crops were good, and the prices of pork and beef went up and we had a few more dollars passing through our hands.

In the spring of 1940, we made an arrangement with our neighbour Bill Olthuis to buy a tractor together We used the tractor, an Oliver 80, to do the heavy work, but horses were still used for seeding. Two years later Bill bought our share of the Oliver 80 and we bought a John Deere D.

More land had been cleared again and put into cultivation, and the M. Nanninga threshing machine could not handle it all anymore Six of our neighbours got together and bought a threshing machine Some years later we added a combine and each of the shareholders swathed part of their grain and combined it Then we bought a bigger self propelled combine The trend at that time was to have combines to get away from the drudgery of stooking and threshing, and farms were getting bigger Sam Howey had come in with a D8 Caterpillar tractor and was clearing and breaking land, and in 1952 our harvesting partnership was dissolved, and we were on our own for getting the harvesting done


Sam Howey's Caterpillar.

In my teenage years, I can also remember good times. In winter we had Young Men's Society led by Mr Melle Elzinga Our Choral Society was directed by Mr. Gelderman. For a while the

Choral Society had about fifty members, so a Junior Choral Society was organized under the direction of Cecil Tuininga Every spring the Choral Society gave a concert which was attended by the whole community. In summer we had our ball games

Mr. Dickson, the teacher, started us off on baseball, but as he didn't stay long and the next teacher, Mr Levy, was not a sportsman, we were left pretty well on our own When Mr. Ashley came to be our teacher, he also taught us a lot about playing ball He loved sports and had played on teams before he came to Neerlandia We had a tournament with Vega school several times and had no trouble beating them, but Vega had a much smaller school, and not nearly as many players to pick a team from.

The first of July picnic has always been a major event in Neerlandia I remember on some of the picnics we would play married men against single men As the married men did not come out to practise much, we had no trouble winning those games For some years the young people of the Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton would come to our first of July picnic They came one year and we would go there the next year, on an Edmonton civic holiday On those days we would compete in races and other sports, and also in a ball game Sometimes Lacombe would also come to Edmonton, and compete in a ball game It was usually Neerlandia against Lacombe, and the winner against Edmonton. Well, we could win against Lacombe, but was against Edmonton a different story. They practised more than we did, and had some pretty nimble boys. There were two Winkelaar boys nicknamed Checks and Haas. I guess they called him that because a *haas* is a jackrabbit in Dutch, and he could run like a rabbit In all competitions against Edmonton, Neerlandia boys didn't do very well We couldn't beat them at a ball game either

One spring a group of us boys got together to discuss our ball games. The Edmonton boys thought we were just a bunch of clodhoppers, and we thought we could be as good or better than they were if we got to work and practised So we got together and practised twice a week. We thought we were getting pretty good and when you think you are pretty good you like to play against another team sometimes to see how good you are.

One day one of the boys was in Barrhead and got talking to someone from Bloomsbury He asked if we had a ball team, and would we come for a game, so we got a team together and went to Bloomsbury for a ball game, and we won. That gave us courage, but not for long The Rev Van Der Woude heard about it and the next Sunday we heard from the pulpit that if young people of the covenant played ball with young people of the world, even though they won the game, they were bound to be losers in the end Well, we were allowed to play against Edmonton, so we kept on practising and before long it was the first of July, the big day We had another meeting about strategy Somebody suggested that we should dress in old, torn working clothes and look like real clodhoppers. A vote was taken and the majority were in favour of the "uniforms" So there were no two ways to go, we had to win that game

Our pitcher was going to be Bert Nanninga Charlie Baker was the backup pitcher, but Bert had practised a lot, and we thought he was good. Cecil Tuininga was catcher, and he was good. He could throw that ball to second base so fast, not even a rabbit had a chance to steal second base. Jake Sturwold, the second base man, still has crooked fingers to prove the speed of Cecil's throws. John Ingwersen was first base, Corney Hiemstra played third, Corny Nanninga shortstop. I was in right field, Albert Elgersma left field, and George Baker centre field.

The game was close; sometimes they were a few runs ahead and we would catch up to them again. We made some good hits but their fielders were able to catch all our fly balls. Bert lost control in the sixth or seventh inning, so Charlie took over as pitcher.

Crowd watching the game.

It was the beginning of the ninth inning and our turn to bat. The score was 7-7, and this was our last chance. We had one man on second and one on third base, and John Ingwersen was up to bat. He hit a line drive between centre and left field and we got two runs in, and that was it. Now we had to hang on to our lead. Edmonton had a man on first and a man on second. The batter hit a line drive right toward me in right field, but it was coming high. The runners on the bases thought I could never reach that one so they all ran and didn't look back. As the ball came over me, I leaped as high as I could and reached up as far as I could for the catch. I fell as I came back to earth, but had the ball in my hands. We got the ball to second base before the runners could get back, and we had three away. We won the game, and a great cheer went up for the clodhoppers. We were rewarded for all the practising we had done.

The first time I went to Edmonton for a sport-meet picnic, we made the trip in Billy Quick's truck. There may have been a few Model T Fords in Neerlandia at that time, but not enough cars to take the whole gang. Mr Quick had put a plank along the outside of his old International truck for seats. A tarp was put over the top in case of rain. There was no pavement north of Edmonton yet. He managed to get through or around Morinville. There one wheel sank deep into a hole, and one of the truck's axles broke right in the mud hole. Mr. Quick got to a phone in Morinville, and as soon as

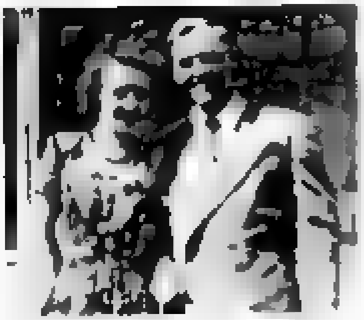
After the game. *Back. Charlie Baker, Albert Elgersma, Corny Nanninga, George Anema, Corney Hiemstra, Bert Nanninga. Front: John Ingwersen, George Baker, Jacob Sturwold, Cecil Tuininga.*

possible a mechanic came out from Edmonton with a new axle The whole load of passengers came out and stood along the side and back of the truck box. We lifted it up high enough to replace the axle. Then we all gave a push and the truck came out and we continued our journey We got to Edmonton a bit late, but still enjoyed our sports day.

Around the 1940s a lot of cars started coming into the settlement, and you could see people were beginning to enjoy prosperity from then on The Co-op store was doing more business every year, and started branching out its services, including the building of a garage and service station to serve the community About 1950, Al Munneke was hired as a clerk in the Co-op store Mr. R. Stel and Mr. H. Dieterman were running the garage They had all emigrated from the Netherlands shortly after the end of the war. Mrs Munneke had a sister named **Tina (Trijntje) Velema**. She was a nurse, and had also immigrated to Canada. She had a nursing job at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. In the spring of 1951, she became employed with the Victorian Order of Nurses as a public health nurse. This meant she had to drive a car and, as she had never driven a car, she had to have lessons She would come to visit her sister in Neerlandia on weekends.

My parents had retired from the farm and had built a house in the village, so I was on the farm by myself and that didn't go too well. I was not cut out to be a good bachelor. The Munnekes and Stels came up with a solution to the problem of the driving lessons. I was given the honour of teaching them. Early that spring the lessons began The moon was full at that time, and after a few lessons Cupid even came along and it started getting quite romantic. In fact, it became so romantic that it grew into a love affair that still hasn't stopped growing to this day.

That summer Tina's parents came from the Netherlands for a visit, and we thought it would be nice if we could have our wedding while they were in Neerlandia so they could take part in it I asked her father if I could have her for my wife, and on the 18th of July, Rev. Hanenburg asked, "Who gives this woman to this man?" and



Tina, George, 1951

Tina, Lou Anne, George, Harlan, c. 1957

he replied, "I do." Farming went a lot better with her help. She cooked the meals, kept the house, gathered the eggs, and much more. In 1954, the Lord blessed our home with **Harlan** Phillip Rodney (October 19, 1954).

The Munnekes had moved to Abbotsford, B.C., by that time, and we paid them a visit at Christmas, 1955. I got a big surprise when we arrived there: the grass was green, only a touch of frost at night, and beautiful sunny days. Al drove us out to Harrison and Cultus lakes, and I couldn't believe my eyes — there was no ice on the water. When we got back, people asked me how I liked British Columbia, and I told them I was quite impressed with it. Someone said, "Then I guess your farm is for sale." We had no idea of selling, but people kept coming and making offers on the farm, and in March 1956 we sold our farm to Louis Nanninga, my brother-in-law, and we were on our way to B.C.

The first four years we lived in New Westminster, and I worked first in a plywood mill and then in construction, building houses. In 1957 the Lord blessed us with a baby girl, Lou **Anna** Joy (February 6, 1957). In 1960 we bought a dairy farm in Matsqui. We sold this in 1971, when we built a home in Abbotsford and I worked in construction again.

We are now both retired, and enjoy our children and five grandchildren, who also live in Abbotsford. That dear lady, Monique Begin, has put both of us on her payroll.

George Anema

KEES ANDRIESSEN

Kees (Cornelis) Johan Hendrik Andriessen (November 19, 1894) had immigrated to Edmonton from Winterswijk, Gelderland, the Netherlands, during the 1920s. He knew George Toebes and Anna Bouwman and that appears to be the reason he came to Edmonton. But he soon took up the SW 16-62-3-5 in Neerlandia as a homestead (November 1925). He put up a small log shack and cleared two acres of land on it. However, he did not get along with his neighbour, Hendrik Kannegieter, and in June 1926 he took up the NW 26-61-3-5, built a 14 by 16-foot log shack on it, and moved there.

Kees was a finely-built man. In the Netherlands he had played pipe organ and he served as church organist while he was in Neerlandia. He had taken a lot of sheet music along from the old country and directed the singing society. He would also organize small groups to sing on special occasions. Once he, Loe Reyse, and Hendrik Strydhorst were going to sing and Kees announced, "There will now be a quartet to sing a song." When Hendrik whispered to him that they weren't a quartet, Kees said, "Shh, they won't know the difference anyways."

Kees and another young fellow from the settlement were rivals for the attention of one of the local girls. One fall, after Kees went to Granum to work, his rival and two other fellows went into his shack and made a mess. When Kees returned from the prairies he called the RCMP out, but nothing came of the matter. After this Kees, who never had liked farming, left for Edmonton (1928-29).

On his homestead Kees had put up the walls for a stable, dug a well, made three hundred fence posts, and slashed twelve acres of land. After living in Edmonton for a short while, he moved back to the Netherlands.

AUBREY AND ELSIE (JONES) ASHLEY

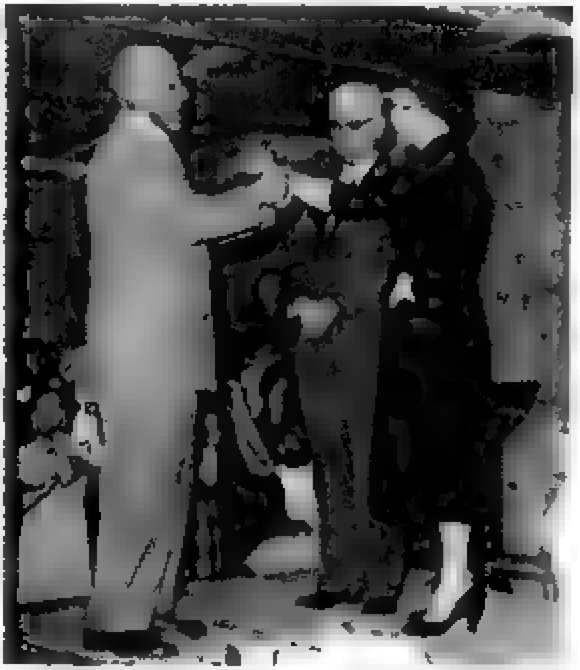
The Ashleys arrived in Neerlandia early one wet summer morning in 1931. What should have been a routine trip turned into an endurance test. The truck carrying their belongings had to plough through mud from Westlock to Neerlandia. Aubrey had been to Neerlandia once before, to be interviewed for the teaching position by the Neerlandia school board. An agreement had been struck, and Aubrey was appointed principal of the two-room schoolhouse. Grades one to four were taught by female teachers, and Aubrey took grades five to twelve. What started as another teaching assignment carried on to become a long and pleasant association with the settlers of Neerlandia. But we are getting ahead of the story.

Aubrey C. Ashley was born December 1, 1900, in Oldham, Nova Scotia. It was not until 1920 that he came west to Lashburn, Saskatchewan, to help with the harvest. The West must have cast a spell on Aubrey because he was to return to Nova Scotia only for brief visits thereafter. After harvesting, he entered Normal School in Saskatoon and then moved further west to Alberta and took more education courses to earn a teaching certificate. This was followed by teaching assignments at Brighten, Sprucefield, and Radway before arriving in Neerlandia. Teaching was Aubrey's life and for twelve years, as the community grew and prospered, he saw many students pass through this country school. Unfortunately, teaching was not a highly-paid profession in those years, and when the opportunity for work in the Neerlandia Co-op Store arose, Aubrey took a job as accountant and later became the manager. It would be yet another thirteen years before the decision to move to Edmonton would be made. The move came in 1956. After a brief stint with Kenworth Truck, Aubrey returned to teaching at West Edmonton Christian School, where he remained until his retirement in 1971.

Elsie Isabella (Jones) Ashley accompanied Aubrey to Neerlandia in 1931. She was born at Burnside, Manitoba, on September 16, 1905, and shortly afterward the family moved to Edmonton, Alberta. Elsie's formative years were spent in Edmonton, where her grandfather Jones worked as a carpenter on the Alberta Legislative Buildings. It was later, when the Joneses moved to a farm north of Radway, Alberta, that Elsie and Aubrey met. They were married October 22, 1927.

Harold Aubrey was born April 1, 1930, in Radway and was already a year old when the family arrived in Neerlandia. Later he met and married Tess Lazowski of Innisfree, Alberta. After a brief stay in Edmonton, they moved to Calgary to settle down and raise a family.

Kenneth Ira arrived October 12, 1934. He



Farewell to the Ashleys: Klaas Tuininga, Aubrey, and Elsie.

A dapper Aubrey behind Art Fisher and Harold, 1930s.

was born at the Barrhead hospital, which in those days provided the closest facilities. Ken later met and married Betty Vandervalk from Granum, where they currently reside.

Shirley Doreen was a redhead, born February 1, 1939, also at the Barrhead hospital. She later married Edward Piers from Neerlandia.

Elsie, Kenny, Harold, 1935

Harold writes, "As I think upon those years of growing up in Neerlandia there are interesting recollections of so many things. Many of those memories are about daily and yearly routines that we went through at home, at school, and in the community.

There were the noon hour sports activities that my father used to organize from which no one was exempt. These activities usually matched the seasons as well. For instance, in winter we would play soccer or, if there was fresh snow, probably fox and geese. In the wet spring we would play a game called anti-i-over. I remember my father as a teacher. He was a man who stood for honesty and fair play. He was a strong disciplinarian and loved to see his students achieve. Many long hours after school were spent in preparing lessons and correcting exams. I know, because I was one of his pupils as well as his son.

Then there were the yearly Christmas Concerts that we used to spend time preparing for in order to put on a one-night show for our proud parents. This was followed by a rare treat that consisted of a brown bag containing a mandarin orange and various assortments of Christmas candy. Mom and Dad used to make homemade candies to add to these bags.

And then there used to be the annual field trip where we all got loaded into one of Fisher Brothers' trucks. Art or Dick would haul us to a creek south of Neerlandia and all of us would hike to a spot where we would spend the day playing games, relaxing, and enjoying the outdoors complete with mosquitoes.

We used to spend a tremendous amount of time in our garden growing vegetables and flowers. Even more time was spent in the harvesting of peas, beans, corn, and beets which were prepared and canned for the long winter.

Then in the winter there were the many loads of logs that were brought to our home and sawed into blocks. In turn Dad, Ken, and I would split the blocks and pile the wood to dry for the coming year to burn in the cookstove and heater. It was a yearly ritual to have the chimney catch on fire with a roar. We would scurry around to find enough salt to throw on

Harold, Aubrey. Seated: Shirley, Elsie, Ken.

the fire to kill the flames. It was a wonder that our house never burned down. I remember having to go each evening to Schoonekamps' farm and pick up the milk. Some nights were so black that you could hardly see a hand in front of your face. On winter nights, with the full moon, the reflection on the snow made it so bright that you could almost read a book

There are so many recollections that one could go on and on. the fun of harvest time in the fall with the binders, the stooked fields, the hayracks, and threshing machines, the skating parties on the frozen lake at Lievers, and the many years I walked to Lievers for Sunday School lessons before the church held services in English. I remember the catechism classes, first in school and then in the church basement on Friday evenings. I remember the summers I worked for John Ingwersen and Louis Nanninga on their farms. Many of the things that were treats for us in those days do not exist today or would be taken for granted now. Much of what we did was inexpensive and took only our effort and imagination to entertain us, for times were hard and everyone worked hard."

Harold Ashley

CHARLES AND BETTY (DE JONG) BAKER

Charles was born in Neerlandia in 1920. In 1922 the family moved to Edmonton and in 1925 Charles started school there at H. A. Gray. In the spring of 1926 the family moved back to Neerlandia to stay, so Charles started school in Neerlandia and continued until 1934

School for Charles was something that had to be endured, since his only goal in life was to finish school and start farming. Often his nature study was done swimming or hunting rabbits or just walking through the woods. His class had a different teacher every year and sometimes even more than one teacher in one year. All his school days he walked to and from school, which was not all bad since there were usually fish in the creek that could be caught! For the most part there were no roads, just a path, and through the muskeg areas his parents had laid logs end to end to walk on. One of Charles' tasks after school was to carry home groceries — sugar, blocks of tallow, and the like. Those logs in the muskeg got very slippery when wet, so more than once Charles came home with a slippery, slimy bag of sugar or some other wet item

Lunches were carried in a five-pound syrup pail, so during the winter they would freeze hard on the walk to school. At school the pails were placed on the big pot-bellied stove, which was surrounded by dozens of wet mitts and boots giving off a very undesirable smell. In summer lunch would be soggy and not taste all that good. That little pail, however, was very handy after school to drown out gophers or catch pollywogs or butterflies. The lunch that went into that pail consisted mostly of brown bread (made from home-grown wheat crushed very fine) spread with lard, and a carrot for dessert. One can be sure those pails were filled with love and often a few tears. At one time Charles had been very sick and when he was somewhat better he asked for a piece of white bread This request brought tears, but no bread.

During those times, things were pretty tough, as there was no money to be had. Charles and his sisters were sent to the First of July picnic with a nickel wrapped in their hankies and were told, "If you want more, you run for it," because the prizes were given in coins. Their summer holidays were spent weeding the garden, helping clear land and picking roots, and doing chores.

After his school days, Charles worked on the farm doing whatever was required as well as always opening up more land. In 1940 Charles acquired one-half section of school land (S½ 29-61 3-5) as a cultivation lease and bought a tractor and breaker plow. He made a brush cutter and piler, so that meant more clearing and breaking.

In August 1941 Charles was drafted into the army and stationed in several locations in western Canada, the last of which was Vancouver There was a Christian Reformed congregation there of about twenty-six families, and that is where Charles went to church on Sundays. He did a little scouting and then some strategic maneuvering until he captured the attention of Betty de Jong

Betty had been born November 16, 1922, in Echten, Friesland, the Netherlands, and came to Canada twice with her parents first for four years when she was one, and then again when she was nine After her schooling, she first worked as a housekeeper. She was working in a store when she met Charles. After she assured him she would face the hardships and rigour of farm life with him, he applied for farm leave and headed to Neerlandia to prepare a home and grow crops and raise hogs. On July 22, 1942, Charles made confession of faith in Neerlandia, and by coincidence Betty made confession of faith the same day in Vancouver.

Charles and Betty were married January 12, 1944, in Vancouver and after a few days headed for Neerlandia, first by train and then by bus to the Barrhead depot, where Dad Baker met them with his car. The roads were very icy and Dad Baker hit the ditch so hard that he blew a front tire. Since it was war time, tires were rationed and hard to get, so there was no spare. They rode home on the rim. Dad Baker let Charles drive this time.

"Before we were married." Charles and Betty, 1943.

Charles and Betty lived with Charles' parents for four months, then moved into their own little house. It was built on skids, ready to be moved to another location. They had pigs all around them, even under the house. An electric fence surrounded their lot, and Betty had to step over this to get water or wood. In August 1944 they moved the little house to the hamlet, where Charles' folks moved to retire, and Charles and Betty moved into the farmhouse.

"Our first home, 1944."

After the war Charles received his discharge from the army and took title to the school land he had previously leased. That was possible through the Veterans Land Act and a veterans grant. First Charles hired an Indian family to clear brush. Sometimes there would be one family, sometimes four or five families, and much of the time none. The clearing went much more quickly when John Molodowich and Sam Howey came in with their Caterpillar tractors, although the root picking was still left for Charles.

"Our sons David and Joe, 1954."

In 1949 Charles and Betty welcomed **David** (born June 17, 1949) to their family. After his schooling in Neerlandia, David first tried hospital work as an orderly and later truck driving, but finally set himself to farming, especially raising hogs. He has now taken a share in the farm. On January 11, 1974, David married **Irene Reitsma** from Blackfalds. Irene was born March 6, 1953, in Lacombe. She worked on the family farm and as a secretary before her marriage. David and Irene have three children. **Randy,** born March 30, 1976; **Scott,** born January 13, 1978, and **Suzanne,** born April 18, 1980.

On January 19, 1952, **Joe** (Joseph) was born to Charles and Betty. After high school Joe studied at Dordt College. He married Heather Wierenga on May 12, 1973. After Joe's graduation they lived in Neerlandia with their children **Becky** (Rebecca) Jo, (April 15, 1974), **Jennifer** Marie (February 24, 1976), and **Reuben** Todd Donovan (July 2, 1980). In 1981 Joe and Heather and their family moved to Rocky Mountain House, where Joe has a teaching position in the local Christian School. Another son was born there in 1984.

Irene, Scott, Randy, David, Betty, Charles, Joe, Becky, Heather, Jennifer. Front: Susanne, Reuben, 1983.

In 1984, Charles and Betty celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. They have had a happy life together. They experienced ups and downs, but through it all they must confess that God is good, and with His blessing they hope to retire.

Charles Baker

RAYMOND AND DELLA (ANEMA) BAKER

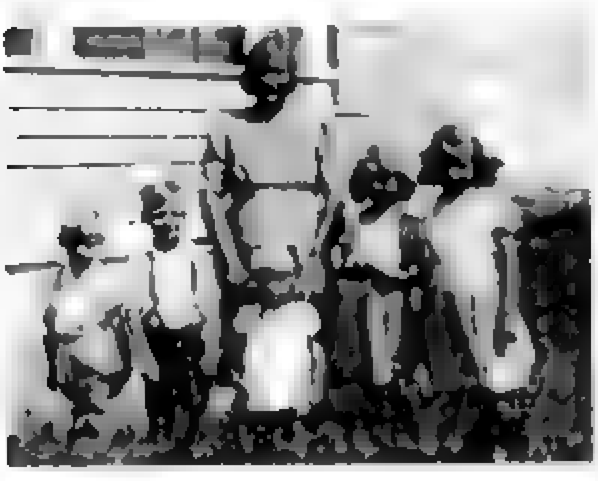
Raymond Baker was working in a cotton mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, in 1911, but he disliked both the work and standing in one spot all day to do it. At this time an article appeared in *De Wachter* extolling the virtues of Alberta as a place to start farming. This idea appealed to Raymond and he decided to go to Canada. When his parents saw that he was determined to go, they made the decision to go along with him. By July 19, 1912, Raymond had filed on the SW 22-61-3-5, but lived and farmed with his parents until his marriage to Della Anema on September 23, 1934.

Wedding picture. Raymond, Della, 1934.

When Raymond married, his parents went to live near their daughter Katie, and the newlyweds moved into the house. They enjoyed furnishing their home. They had purchased a stove and a large kitchen cabinet at a farm auction. In the cabinet Della put a set of china that she had received as a wedding gift, a set of silverware she had bought, and other kitchenware. A table made by Gaele Baker and a set of chairs which were a gift from Joe Baker were also in the kitchen. A Winnipeg couch graced the front room, and braided rugs were scattered about. Before her marriage, Della had stocked a hope chest with handmade items, and now her handiwork made the room cozy. On Sundays, Della and Raymond would sit here and listen to hymns broadcasted over the radio.

Della had little time to sit though, because she soon had two little girls to care for: **Florence** born August 8, 1935, and **Catherine**, born November 3, 1936. The girls were followed by two boys: **John**, born May 27, 1938, and **Gilbert**, born February 9, 1940. The family was completed on September 4, 1941, when **Dorothy** was born.

The Bakers were a happy family. Raymond was a successful farmer. He had both a tractor and a Model T Ford by the time he married. Later he traded the car off for a newer model. Then in January 1944, a sad event took place when Raymond died suddenly of heart failure. This left Della with the responsibility of looking after five children, the oldest of whom was eight. Not being able to drive a car or look after the farm by herself, Della decided a move to the hamlet of Neerlandia would be the best thing to do. There she would be close to the church, store, and school. She bought a small plot of land from Siebren Tiemstra and moved the house on skids to the location just northwest of the store. There the family lived for eleven years. During this time the farm land was rented to various farmers.



Della with her children Gilbert, John, Dorothy, Kay, Florence, 1944

While living in the hamlet Della had to haul water from the store. The store had provided a tap from which people who did not have their own wells could get water. The charge for this service was about two dollars per month. If there was no rainwater available, Della also had to haul all the water necessary for her laundry. On laundry days Della spent many an agonizing hour trying to get the old gas motor on the washing machine started. Since there was no man around the house, help was often sought from the local garage.

Because Della received no government aid, she was often short of cash. "It didn't seem so bad," she said, "because kids didn't demand as much in those days. I always had a big garden and did a lot of sewing." To supplement her income Della provided room and board for Bill Vanderleest and Gerrit van Dijken.

The family decided to move back to the farm in 1955, since John and Gilbert were now old enough to try farming themselves. The house was jacked up again, with much jerking, swaying, and creaking. This was just at the time that Della and most of the rest of the family were suffering from a bout of the mumps. Gilbert, who had a bedroom upstairs, was told to come down, but he refused. Suddenly one of the panels of plasterboard, which had rock wool insulation behind it, broke loose from the ceiling and everything tumbled down on Gilbert. A loud holler for Mom was heard, and Gilbert emerged choking and coughing, but uninjured by the accident.

Eventually the house was put on skids and pulled, behind Uncle Louis Nanninga's Caterpillar tractor, down the gravel road to the farm. By this time the house had taken its share of wear and tear, and a fair bit of repair work needed to be done. Jerry Reitsma did a fine job of repairing the floors and putting down new linoleum. Soon the house was again fit for living in. A small barn was moved to the farm, and the Bakers bought a few cows, pigs, and chickens. The land was rented out for two more years, but then John and Gilbert began buying machinery and doing their own farm work. During the winter they took turns working off the farm to earn some extra money.

Della's family soon grew up and began to leave home. Florence married George Visser in July 1956; Catherine married John Peters in November 1956, Dorothy married Simon

Tiemstra in March 1957, and Gilbert married Jeanette Wegner in October 1970. John remained single. He and Della bought a mobile home, sold the farm, and moved to the hamlet. John works in a sawmill in the winter and operates a manure-hauling business in the summer.

Kay, John, Gilbert, Florence, Della, Dorothy.

Although life was not easy for Della, she made the best of every situation and never complained. To others she always presented a calm demeanor. One day as the family was walking home, a thunderstorm began to rage. The children were afraid but their mother walked on calmly and resolutely. To them that exemplified her approach to life. She always seemed strong and brave.

Della is a big-hearted, out-going woman. In her younger days she shared her garden produce and baked goodies with anyone who could use it. Her favourite pastimes were knitting and crocheting. When the children were small, she would often get up early to stoke the fire and then sit and crochet until it was time to wake the children. Many people have her handiwork in their homes, as she always contributed more than her share to the annual bazaar. Della retired several years ago, but can still enjoy her family. She is thankful to God for keeping them all well and for sustaining her through the hard and lonely times.

Florence Visser

MEINDERT AND ANTJE (DE KROON) BOORSMA

Meindert Boorsma was born September 6, 1902, in Burgwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje De Kroon was born March 20, 1904, in Bakhuizen, Friesland. They were married in May 1928 and soon after embarked on their journey to Canada. They had heard much about Canada from friends and relatives who had left their homeland to make a new life in Canada, where it was said there was plenty for all — the land of milk and honey. On June 6, 1928, they boarded the *Montclare* at Liverpool, England. The journey across the ocean took ten days. It was ten days too many for Meindert, as he was ill a great deal of the time. He decided if he were ever to return to the Netherlands, he would find some method other than by water.

Meindert and Antje's wedding photo.

After arriving in Quebec, Meindert and Antje went by train to Edmonton, arriving there on June 20. The Immigration Department there placed them with a farmer in Red Willow who had requested Dutch farm workers. Since

they were both experienced (having been raised on dairy farms), Meindert and Antje were sent there. While working there they learned to speak some English. They also met other Dutch immigrants, one being John Elzinga, who told them they should take up a homestead as other immigrants were doing. He took them to visit Chris Leder in Edmonton. Chris got in touch with Siebren Tiemstra and Klaas Tuininga of Neerlandia, who helped the Boorsmas procure a piece of land (SW 17-62-3-5) in Neerlandia.

The Boorsmas went to Neerlandia with Siebren and Klaas on Billy Quick's truck, the only means of travel between Edmonton and Neerlandia at that time. They arrived here on a cold December day in 1928. A cabin and barn were soon built with the help of Henry Kippers Jr. and Henry Strydhorst. The logs were purchased from Hendrik Kannegeiter. So Meindert and Antje began their pioneering life.

A great deal of the Boorsma homestead, it soon became apparent, was muskeg and quite useless. There were many thunderstorms at that time, and lightning set the muskeg on fire, so it smoldered and glowed eerily at night. Coyotes howled nearby at night, and bears and other wild animals were also plentiful. It was a totally new experience for Meindert and Antje, since they had been accustomed to a more civilized way of life.

In 1931 their first child, **Joseph**, was born. He was born with spinal bifida and had convulsions since birth. He died in the Barrhead hospital when he was three weeks old. On February 19, 1933, a daughter, **Katie** (Cornelia), was born, followed by two more daughters: **Alice** on December 10, 1934, and **Sophia** on October 3, 1936. A son, **Julius**, was born July 4, 1938, and another daughter, **Patricia**, on August 5, 1941. The first four children were born at home with Petertje Schoonekamp as midwife. The last two children were born in the Barrhead hospital.

During these years Meindert and Antje were busy clearing land, cutting wood, and raising cows, chickens, and pigs. The work was hard, money scarce, and the winters long and cold, but somehow they got by.

Hendrik and Mina Kannegieter became good friends of the Boorsmas, who visited them often. Mina was always happy to have the children over and they spent many happy hours with her. She had many magazines which she let the children cut pictures out of (the Boorsmas had no money for magazines). Mina also had handsome china cabinets in which she kept all sorts of beautiful china and jewelry. These items she would let the awed children examine piece by piece, much to their delight.

Julius, Meindert, Patricia.

Meindert used horses for transportation to and from the store and church. He had a big black stallion named Tony and a small brown mare named Shorty. They were not very compatable when hitched to the buggy on Sunday mornings and Miendert had a couple of bad experiences when they decided not to cooperate. He had bought Tony in exchange for some farm animals from a horse trader who came around yearly. Tony may have had some racing background because he would not follow anyone. He had to get ahead of everything on the road. That was not too bad in the summer, when there was some passing room, but during the winter, snow was piled high on both sides of the road and the road was scarcely wide enough for two sleds to pass each other. One Sunday afternoon, when the Boorsmas were coming home from church, they came up behind a sled just as they were nearing Kannegeiters' farm. Tony attempted to pass the sled, but he had to go into the snowbank to do so and the sleigh tipped over. The horses were going at a very fast pace and the sled was completely wrecked. The people in the other sled picked the family out of the snowbank and took them to Kannegeiters' where they all had hot chocolate and cookies. They were all a little upset for awhile, but after no serious injuries were found, they were taken home.

Kate and Julius on Shorty. Front: Alice and Sophie.

Katie, Alice, and Sophie made the four-mile trek to school daily with the Bouwman and Strydhorst children who lived nearby. The children usually walked home too, arriving after dark during the winter. On several occasions, they encountered a mother bear with her cub. Rabbits, squirrels, and other small creatures were very intriguing to the children and slowed the journey home during the summer many times.

Finally in 1943 "living off the land" lost its appeal and Meindert and Antje with their five children moved into the hamlet. The Boorsmas lived on the northeast corner of the church lot, with a wooded area between their house and the parsonage.

Meindert took a job as janitor of the two-room school. Later on a three-room school was built and two one-room schools were moved in from elsewhere. As part of the job, Meindert swept and cleaned the floors, carried water in from the Co-op store nearby, washed windows, and tended the wood-burning furnaces during winter months. During the harvest season, Meindert sometimes took jobs on nearby farms. Then Antje and the older children would clean the school. Since the work was being done by a woman, the wages were reduced.

The homestead was sold to Lambertus Janssen in 1945. All the animals had been sold before the move into town, but shortly after, they bought a milk cow and a couple of small pigs to fatten as there was plenty of room where they lived and no other homes in the immediate area. During the spring and summer Bessy the cow grazed on the open field, where there was lots of grass. Meindert served as the town's milkman for two years. Bessy delivered two full pails of milk every day. The milk was put into quart jars and delivered daily to the minister, the teachers, and a few other people living in town. Later on, when more people came to town and built homes nearby, Bessy was moved to the church barn and the Boorsmas no longer kept pigs. Bessy was eventually sold.

The Boorsmas kept an enormous garden, close to an acre in size, behind the house. In it they raised raspberries and grew many vegetables and flowers. Antje had a green thumb when it came to flowers. In the fall, she always

Back: Julius, Katie, Meindert. Front: Sophie, Antje, Patricia, c. 1954.

knew when it was going to freeze and the children were sent to pick the flowers and give all the neighbours a bouquet. Their little house, as well, would then be filled with bouquets.

Soon after their arrival in town, Antje became quite ill and was bedridden with rheumatic fever for some years. Due to her poor health and also to the fact that their wages had increased very little during the twelve years of janitor work while the cost of living had gone up drastically, they were forced to look for work elsewhere as they could not possibly live on the small amount they got paid. The Boorsmas chose B.C. because the climate was warmer and Antje had relatives there. In July 1955 Meindert and Antje and the three youngest children moved to Ladner. Their two eldest daughters had already left home to go into nursing and lived in Edmonton.

Meindert worked on farms in the Fraser Valley for a few years and finally settled in Ladner, where he worked for the municipality for a number of years. Wages in B.C. were very good in comparison to what the Boorsmas were accustomed to. Antje's health also improved vastly due to the milder climate. Meindert and Antje are residents of Ebenezer Senior Citizens Home in Abbotsford (1984) and are both in good health and enjoying life.

Boorsma Family

BERTUS AND HILDA (VAN DER HOEK) BOS

Bertus Bos was born February 9, 1899, in Oude Pekela, Groningen, the Netherlands. He served in the army during the Great War of 1914-18. After the war, he married Hilda (Hilligje) van der Hoek on December 12, 1919. Hilda had been born December 13, 1897, in Avereest, Overijssel. Bertus worked as a farmer and also did much hunting, which he enjoyed. But the Netherlands was not big enough for Bertus' dreams of hunting and trapping. He desired more freedom, so he and Hilda considered immigrating, either to New Zealand or Canada. After reading some articles praising Canada, they decided to immigrate there. Through an immigration agency, they were told about the Dutch settlement of Neerlandia, therefore they planned to go there.

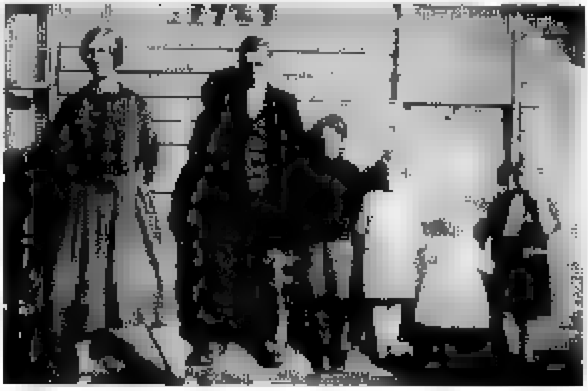
Bertus and Hilda and their three children, **John** (Jan, April 19, 1920), **Lulla** (Lammigje, April 30, 1922), and **Elisabeth** (June 27, 1924), left Dedemsvaart, Overijssel, in April 1927. They sailed from Liverpool on the *Montrose*. On board, they met Rienk de Jager of Neerlandia, who was returning from a visit to the Netherlands.

Elizabeth, Hilda, Bertus, Lulla, John, c. 1927

From Edmonton the Bos family travelled by truck with Billy Quick. When they arrived in Neerlandia, they stayed with the Siebren Tiemstra family until they found a house to rent. After a few weeks they moved into van Ark's house and lived there for a year. During that year a daughter, **Grace** (Grietje, August 4, 1927), was born to Bertus and Hilda. Bertus did hunting and trapping on van Ark's quarter. At night, he would check the traps using a lantern. One night he got lost and slept in a tree, awaking the next morning to find himself near Menne Nanninga's place.

Bertus wanted a place of his own, so he filed on the NW 22-62-3-5 quarter in the Vega district on March 5, 1928. On the homestead, Ben Lievers built a 14 by 22-foot house, one of the first lumber houses in Vega. The Bos family moved there in November 1928, soon after the house was finished. During the fifteen years they lived in Vega, three more children were born: **Ralph** (Roelof, February 8, 1932), **Betty** (Bertha Gerda, July 26, 1935), and **Bill** (William John, November 20, 1942). Bill was the only one of the children born in the hospital.

Bertus was the first mail carrier between Vega and Neerlandia. He began the job in August 1930. Every Friday he left Vega at 1:00 p.m.,



The new home, 1926. Hilda, Bertus, John, Liz, Grace, Lulle.

picked up the mail in Neerlandia, and arrived back in Vega about 3:45 p.m. He carried the mail on horseback in the summer and with horse and cutter in the winter. A few times when Bertus was not able to get the mail, Hilda filled in for him.

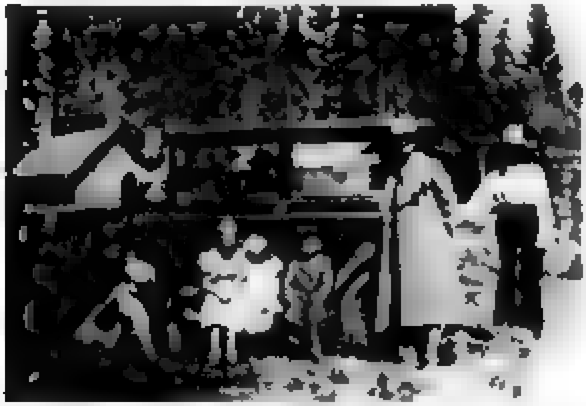
Bertus cleared many acres of land for himself and for others. It was all done by hand with an axe and grub hoe and sometimes with the help of horses to pull out the heavier stumps. Hilda often helped Bertus with the clearing. When he cleared for Hendrik Kannegieter, the children were left with Mina Kannegieter because the clearing was heavy and Hilda was needed to help. Bertus had a two-horse breaking plow, but reset it so it could be pulled by three horses. At first he borrowed horses from Bill Krikke and worked for him in return. Later, in 1933, he obtained three horses of his own.

One year, Bertus made a stoneboat. He was using it while clearing for Bil Oldegbers, when a thunderstorm came up. Bertus was on his way home when lightning struck very near. The horses scared and went on a runaway. Bertus was thrown off the stoneboat, but got tangled in the reins so he was dragged for some distance before he could stop the horses. He was not hurt seriously but was very muddy.

Another time Bertus was clearing with a double-bitted axe when it hooked on a limb above him and came down heavily, gashing his head. The wound bled quite badly and he came home with blood running down his face. Hilda was worried, but Bertus had no ill-effects except a scar and a bald spot for the rest of his life.

Since there was not much crop to harvest on his homestead in the early years, Bertus and others went to the prairies to help with the harvest. That was a good source of income. During the fall and winter, Bertus did what he enjoyed most -- hunting and trapping. He hunted moose and deer and trapped through the Vega area. The whole family helped skin coyotes, foxes, weasels, squirrels, and other small animals. Hilda also learned to shoot with a double-barreled shotgun. She became a good shot and killed the hawks and owls that bothered the chickens. Once there was a weasel in the chicken coop, so Hilda loaded both barrels in the shotgun and took aim. She accidentally pulled both triggers at once, shooting the weasel clean in half.

The Bos family obtained groceries at Boman's store in Vega. Bertus often sold furs to the storekeeper there and received groceries in exchange. The Bos children attended school in Vega and usually had to walk there. The children attended Sunday school in Vega too, but the family belonged to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Since they lived four miles from the church, it was not easy to attend regularly, especially in winter. They took turns going, because they had to share clothes. They used various modes of transportation: walking, horseback, cutter, wagon, and dog sleigh. They still managed to learn their catechism and do some socializing. When Bertus bought a 1924 Chevrolet coach in 1937 on one of his harvesting trips to the prairie, it provided easier means to get to church. It proved to be a good purchase because years later his son John made it into a truck and used it to haul firewood and the moose and deer which he had hunted.


Everybody is proud of the car, 1937. Pa in the car, Liz, Grace, Betty, Ralph, Hilda, John.

In 1935 Bertus became a naturalized citizen and the three oldest children automatically became citizens as well. Hilda received her Canadian citizenship in 1937.

Bertus was always active. He was a short man, but powerfully built. (In the Netherlands, he had worked on canal boats, sometimes unloading one-hundred-kilo bags of fertilizer.) His legs were muscular; partly a result of all the walking he did.

Hilda enjoyed visiting. She was good friends with Janna Krikke, but there was never much time to visit. With a family, there was always work to be done at home. Besides her regular chores, Hilda knitted and sewed clothes for the family.

Bertus Bos began trapping in Swan Hills around 1935. He had a trapline there with George Baker. Bertus and George built a barn and a cabin in the area. The cabin was about fifty miles away from the homestead and Bertus usually walked to get there. The trip took him about two days, with an overnight stop halfway. He would be gone for weeks at a time, then come home for a week or two. Before Bertus left, Hilda would cook potatoes, then mash and freeze them. Bertus would take them along to the bush and chop off chunks to fry up as he needed. Flour, rice, beans, peas, and dried fruit were also packed along. Bertus made sourdough bread himself and meat, of course, was available in the bush.

While Bertus was gone, the children helped Hilda with the chores. One time, when it was extremely cold, the wood pile was completely used up. Hilda put a log through a window into the house so John and Lulla could cut it inside.

Bertus hunted and trapped in Swan Hills for five or six winters. The last three or four years, he used a dog team on the trapline. Bertus had trained the four dogs, a mixture of Airedale, collie, and hound, to pull a sleigh. When Bertus went to the cabin, he put all provisions on the dog sleigh. He would walk behind the sleigh, guiding the team. Going uphill, he had to help by pushing the sleigh. Going downhill, though, he was able to ride. On the way home from the trapline, the load would be light and the trip would take only one day with the dog team. Besides hunting, Bertus also worked as a guide for other Neerlandia hunters.

John Bos moved to B.C. in 1939, then was drafted during World War II. He and his wife, Dorothy, have two children. They are retired and live in Vernon, B.C.

Lulla Bos married Pete Fisher of Neerlandia in 1943. That same year, Bertus sold the farm to them and the Bos family moved to East Pine, B.C. While there, Hilda became ill with stomach cancer and passed away in 1945 at 47 years of age. She was buried in B.C., but in 1970 her body was transferred to the Neerlandia cemetery. The Bos family returned to Neerlandia in 1946 and Bertus bought back his former farm.

After returning, the rest of the children left

Bertus, John, Lulla, Liz, Grace, Ralph, Betty, Bill, 1956.

home and eventually married. Elizabeth married Lambert A. Wierenga of Neerlandia. Grace married John Dielman in 1956. They have two children and live near Morinville. Ralph married Joan Olthuis of Neerlandia in 1957. Two years later Betty married John Fernhout of Fort William, Ontario. They live near St. Albert with their three children. Bill served in the navy for three years, then married Barbara Pudsy in 1964. Bill and Barbara and their two children live in Victoria, B.C., where Bill works as an electrician.

Bertus lived on the Bos homestead until he became ill in 1978. He entered the hospital and passed away December 12, 1980, at the age of 81.

John Bos
Elizabeth Wierenga

HENRY AND ALBERTA (CORTÉ) BOUWMAN

Henry Bouwman (January 12, 1899) came to Canada from Ootmarsum, Overijssel, the Netherlands, in 1924. His brother Bill was already living in Edmonton. Henry was a carpenter, but there were no jobs, except as farm labourer, in the Netherlands. After two years in Canada, he returned to the Netherlands on a cattle boat to make Alberta Corté his bride. Alberta (March 20, 1898) was of Huguenot descent and was also from Ootmarsum, where she worked in a factory. Henry and she had begun their courtship through corresponding with each other while he was in Canada. They were married July 26, 1926. Three or four days later they sailed to Canada and went to Edmonton where Henry worked at various jobs, among them digging ditches with George Ioebes for Edmonton Water Works and milking in a dairy. During that time two daughters were born to the Bouwmans: **Jenny** Hilgonda on April 27, 1927, and **Margaret** Winny on August 17, 1931. Those were the Depression years and jobs were hard to come by, so Henry and Alberta decided to try farming.

Henry took out a homestead (SE 22-62-3-5) in the Vega area on May 25, 1933. The quarter was mostly muskeg and not good for farming, so their attempt at farming was unsuccessful. They returned to Edmonton in 1936, but there was no work available there either. Imagine their relief and thanksgiving when they learned of janitorial work available in Neerlandia School. They could rent a little house on the Schoonekamp yard for three dollars a month. So in 1939 they loaded their goods on Dick Fisher's transport truck and made the move north again. They arrived late in the evening, and Annie and Rulie Schoonekamp invited them in for tea and a snack, which was greatly appreciated.

Henry, Jenny, Alberta.

Having attended Sunday school and Bible classes in Edmonton, Jenny and Margaret were glad to find Sunday school in Neerlandia. It was taught by Rieke Lievers in her home.

Little did the Bouwman family realize that a janitorial job in a country school required being at school by 7:30 a.m. to start the fires in the potbellied stoves on cold wintry mornings. The stoves devoured countless blocks of wood, which the Bouwmans would pile to the ceiling of the cloakroom each evening. Henry would split the wood while Jenny and Margaret did other work inside the school. For all the janitorial work they did, the Bouwmans received nine dollars a month. Later this was increased to thirteen dollars.

Besides working as janitor, Henry took on many occasional jobs. Jenny often helped him, whether it was digging basements, clearing, logging, or root picking. Sometimes she did the heavy work by herself if Henry was busy elsewhere. At home Jenny and Margaret helped do chores, haul firewood, or cut and pile logs for lumber.

It was a great day for the Bouwmans when they moved into their own house. Henry had built it in the hamlet, east of the garage on a two-acre plot of land that had been bought from Rev. Van Der Woude. Now they could have pigs and chickens and their own pet cow. Walter Wargacki, the blacksmith, was their neighbour

While sawing wood at home one day in 1944, Henry had a serious accident He put his right hand too close to the saw. As he jerked it back he nearly severed it at the wrist. With his left hand he grabbed it to stop the blood from spurting. Then a towel was used to help stop the bleeding He remained conscious while Oene Piers, who had been helping him, took him to the Westlock hospital The doctors did not remove his hand, but sewed everything together as well as they could Henry was thankful that his hand, though partially disabled, was still usable for carpentry work.

In 1945, Jenny married Bert Michael, who had had an eye on her all along. Margaret was a serious student and, with the encouragement of Alberta, took grades ten through twelve in the Barrhead high school. Then she entered the Faculty of Education at the U of A and received her temporary teaching certificate in 1951

Alberta, Margaret, Jenny

During his years in Neerlandia, Henry built or helped to build several houses and farm buildings in the community. In 1947 he built a small house for Alberta and himself on the little lot where the blacksmith shop had been Since the girls had left home the Bouwmans saw no need to keep animals anymore, so they sold the property to Menne Nanninga.

For many years Henry had no motorized vehicle; he would walk or, if weather permitted, ride his bicycle. Then in 1949 he bought a green Ford truck. In his first attempt at driving. Henry turned into Bert Michael's driveway But instead of straightening out, he kept turning and drove right through the pig fence before the truck came to a stop. Henry was not hurt but the pigs sure were squealing!

In November 1950 Alberta discovered that she had neck cancer and needed to have an operation done in Edmonton She endured its horrors and pain without murmur or complaint, looking forward to her heavenly home She died August 7, 1951, at the age of fifty-three

Margaret taught in Barrhead and Neerlandia from 1951 to 1954 Her classroom in Neerlandia was a one-room school where an outhouse had to be used, and drinking water had to be hauled in. In 1954 Margaret left Neerlandia to attend Calvin College where she obtained a B.A. degree. Later she taught in Taiwan, in the U S.A., and in Edmonton.

Henry sold his house and went to Edmonton in 1955. There he found work making windows and doors for Edmonton Sash and Door Later he bought a lot in Edmonton and built a house on it. When Margaret taught in Edmonton she lived there with her father. In 1974 she married Peter Younghans. Henry passed peacefully into the presence of His Lord on November 23, 1979

Jenny Michael

WILLEM AND ANNA (TOEBES) BOUWMAN

Willem Fredrick Bouwman was born in Tubbergen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on December 17, 1893. After serving in the First World War, Willem worked for an electrical company He did not like carrying a lunch bucket to work every day, so he decided to take up farming as his father had. Canada held the future for him

On April 25, 1899, Anna Christina Toebes was born in Winterswijk, Gelderland Later her path crossed Willem's, and so on June 1, 1923, they were married. The Bouwmans set sail for Canada two days later.

After a short stay in Winterburn, the family moved to Edmonton. Here two sons arrived **Henry** (1924) and **Ben** (1926). Willem worked for Edmonton Water Works.

In 1929, after the purchase of two horses,

Bill, Henry, Anna, Ben in Edmonton (Riverdale), 1927

the Bouwmans moved to Neerlandia, eager to start farming. Upon their arrival, John Schuring helped them build a one-room shack that was just high enough to stand in. They spent one winter in it with their two small sons. The next year they built a house on their land, the NE 8-62-3-5. The living conditions were poor and wretched.

Two more children were born to the Bouwmans in Neerlandia. **Grace** on January 28, 1932, and **John** Henry on June 29, 1938.

Bill with the horses which took the family to Neerlandia, 1929.

After many years of hard work and saving money, Willem was able to put a down payment on a Case binder. He later put down another deposit, but it was not enough to satisfy the company and the binder was repossessed.

Henry worked in the local Co-op store from 1939 to 1942. In January 1943 he joined the RCAF as air crew. In 1945, he was transferred overseas on Anti-Submarine Patrol and later to Transport Command. He was discharged in March 1946 with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Henry attended the U of A from 1947 to 1953 when he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine. He now resides in Edmonton with his wife, Terry, and their five children.

Henry, Anna, Ben. Front: Grace. 1938.

In 1950, the Bouwmans sold their farm to Raymond Visser and moved to Rocky Mountain House. Willem died September 18, 1982. Ben with his wife, Seenie, and their five children continues to farm there. Anna resides in Rocky Mountain House, in the Senior Citizens Lodge.

Henry Bouwman

PETER DEN HARTOG

Peter Aart den Hartog (c. 1878) had been born in Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. He and his wife (c. 1882) had lived in India before coming to Canada. Peter filed on the SW 16-62-3-5 in October 1926. There were three sons and one daughter in the family, but none came to the Neerlandia area to live except **Peter** Jr., who took up the SE 20-62-3-5 in 1933.

The quarter Peter filed on had a 12 by 16-foot shack on it and five acres of light clearing. For these improvements he paid twenty-seven dollars besides the ten-dollar filing fee. He had proved up the quarter by 1930, by which time he had 38½ acres cleared. He did not spend all his time on the homestead, but also spent some months each year farming in the Edmonton district. Peter sold the farm around 1940

REITZE AND AGNES (JANSSEN) DeVRIES JAN DeVRIES

Reitze Jan DeVries was born in Oldekerk, Groningen, the Netherlands, on February 17, 1903. Because of the crowded conditions that existed in his homeland, he left, coming to Canada to seek the space that he could not find at home. He left the Netherlands in March 1927 and, after a long boat and train trip, arrived in Lloydminster, Alberta. After working on five different farms in that area over a span of two years, he left there and came to Neerlandia. He had heard about Neerlandia when still in the Netherlands and yearned for a place to settle down and be close to a church. He filed on the NW 12-62-4-5 in 1929.

On May 1, 1930, Jan DeVries (born April 20, 1910) arrived in Edmonton on his way to join his brother Reitze. He came to Neerlandia and homesteaded the SE 12-62-4-5. Together, Reitze and Jan started making a home for themselves in this new wilderness land.

The first years proved to be difficult. In the fall of 1930, both Reitze and Jan headed for the prairies (Nobleford area) to work on a threshing crew. They went because wages had been good the previous fall, and they hoped to earn some money to help them get started on the farm. But upon arrival, they found that wages had dropped to three dollars a day; their trip cost them almost what they earned in wages. They do, however, have very fond memories of many of the people they met at that time.

The first pigs that the brothers sold in the early 1930's had to be chased to Neerlandia (nearly five miles), where they were loaded on Billy Quick's truck for the long trip to Edmonton. One group of three pigs that was sold in 1932 netted a total return of $7.75

Sometimes the mosquitoes were so bad, that it was impossible for Reitze and Jan to sleep in their shack. At those times, they would "smoke up" a granary in the evening and go to sleep there.

The mosquito and fly problem led to another interesting arrangement. In the mid 1930's, many horses in the area died from diseases spread by the mosquitoes and flies. Reitze and Jan had two horses that they used for, among other things, hauling cream to Neerlandia, where it was picked up by Fisher Bros. Trucking and taken to Edmonton. One of these horses died, so they decided to team the remaining horse with a Holstein bull they also had on the farm. This worked fairly well, until the other horse also died. Then the bull had to pull the wagon by himself. Sometimes, a neighbour had a cow that needed servicing. When Jan came by with the bull and wagon, the bull would be unhitched and brought to the cow, soon to be hitched up to the wagon again to continue the trip to Neerlandia. In June 1937 they got two horses from Klaas Krikke, so the bull could retire from the harness

On January 26, 1941, Reitze married Agnes Janssen, who had moved to Neerlandia in May 1938 with her parents Lambartus and Botje Janssen. Agnes had been born on June 14, 1914, and raised in Edmonton. Reitze and Agnes had built a new house on the SW 7-62-3-5 and now settled there

Reitze, Agnes holding Terrance, Jerry, 1946.

Reitze and Agnes' marriage was blessed with the birth of four children. **Jerry** Richard was born on December 11, 1942. Lambertus **Terrence** arrived on the scene the day Japan surrendered during World War II — August 14, 1945. Reitze remembers walking along the streets of Barrhead that day — all ears were tuned to the radios. **Richard** David was born on December 19, 1950, and **Brenda** Janet on September 24, 1954.

Brenda, Dick, 1959

Life on the farm slowly became easier as mechanization occurred, and the farm produce increased in value after the Depression. Beginning in 1940, Reitze was able to devote some of his time to community work by serving on the board of directors of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. He spent many years on the board between 1940 and 1970.

The DeVries family had an eventful year in 1967. Jerry married Ann Elgersma in June. In August, Terrence married Janny Vaartstra of Edmonton and settled on the home place, in the house that was built in 1940. Reitze, Agnes, Jan and the two younger children moved to a house in Neerlandia, that had been purchased from Gerrit Beyers. Reitze and Jan slowly retired from the farm, but kept busy, as Reitze was janitor of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, a position he held from 1967 to 1983.

In November 1972 Brenda married Kenneth Strydhorst. They settled in the Neerlandia area and took up farming.

Richard continued his education at the University of Alberta, graduating with a Bachelor of Education degree in 1972. He taught in Lacombe Christian School for five years. In July 1975 he married **Johanne Boskers** (Joanne). Joanne was born on February 13, 1953, in Rocky Mountain House; her parents were also Dutch immigrants. She graduated from Red Deer College in 1974, and worked as a nurse in Red Deer Hospital. Joanne now works part-time in Barrhead General Hospital.

Richard and Joanne's oldest child, **Steven** Glen, was born on April 4, 1977, in Red Deer. That summer, they moved back to the Neerlandia area to begin farming, and in 1978 bought the N½ 2-63-3-5 in the Vega area. **Christine** Joanne was born on February 8, 1979, and **Andrea** Denise on February 3, 1982. On Christmas day, 1983, **David** Michael Noel was born.

Joanne holding Andrea, Christine, Richard holding David, Steven, 1984.

In 1979, Jan moved to Hillcrest Home in Barrhead. Later, in 1982, he went to Barrhead Nursing Home, where he continues to reside (1984).

Reitze and Agnes still live in Neerlandia, where they enjoy their extended family. The Lord has truly blessed them and their family, and they are thankful for all the Lord has guided them through.

Richard DeVries

SJERP DE VRIES

Sjerp De Vries was born in Friesland, the Netherlands, on December 15, 1903. In his early

twenties he worked for farmer in Tzummarum, Friesland. When, however, a couple that he worked with, Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, decided to immigrate to Canada, Sjerp resolved to go with them. They all arrived in Neerlandia in April 1926.

On June 14, 1926, Sjerp filed on the NE 16-61-3-5. For several years he lived there in a shack, but later bought a small house that had belonged to Gaele Baker. On this quarter he made a meagre living. It was proved up in 1935.

Sjerp

Sjerp never married and spent the last years of his life almost as a recluse, going out only for supplies. Jacob and Janke Hiemstra would visit him occasionally, and Janke and others would do small favours for him, such as making curtains or giving him baked goods. Moreover, the neighbourhood boys often visited him and were always welcome. But Sjerp returned none of these visits.

In spite of his solitary habits, Sjerp always knew what was happening. He had a radio to which he listened with regularity. Jelte Fisher, who walked to and from church services, invariably stopped to converse with Sjerp and to give him the weekly church bulletin on his way home. In addition, when anyone came to visit, the visitor would be asked about various members of the community. Sjerp could converse on a variety of topics and enjoyed debating the merits of different makes of tractors.

In his later years, the only visitors he had were men — except for one. One day Lily Krikke had car trouble on her way to Barrhead, she stopped and knocked on Sjerp's door. In stunned surprise Sjerp said, "A voman for gootnessakes!" When he overcame his surprise he helped her on her way.

Sjerp in front of binder. Sitting on ground: Albert Mast, Clarence Mast, 1939.

In January 1968 Sjerp died of a heart attack, and was found about three days later by some neighbours. He was buried in Barrhead Cemetery on January 22, 1968. Because he left no will, his land was sold by the Public Trustee and the proceeds were sent to relatives in the Netherlands.

Jennie Fisher
Clarence Mast
Jennie Reitsma

ALBERT AND MABEL (ELZINGA) ELGERSMA

Albert Elgersma and Mabel Elzinga were married June 23, 1940, in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church with the Rev. H. Van Der Woude officiating. They took up farming on the SW 16-62-3-5 with two cows, one heifer, and two sows. The former owner, Peter den Hartog, had built a lumber house on it, but the east side of the house had no outside siding on it. That first winter, therefore, the water in the kettle on the cook stove would be frozen in the morning many a time. Firewood, however, was plentiful and so were the ashes.

The following spring, on Saturday, April 26, 1941, the heavy spruce bush on their neighbour Lucas Sturwold's land caught fire and the south wind blew the burning needles across the road into the straw stack just west of Albert's farmyard. It lit up like a volcano and so did the granary beside it, which contained all the cleaned seed grain. The rail fence of the pig yard, a few little sow coops, and two more granaries filled with grain also burned. Burning needles from the spruce trees kept coming and were all over the yard. Many men and women came and worked hard to prevent more burning and towards evening the wind died down. Everyone was happy and thankful the house had not burned. On Sunday a watch was kept on the smoldering fire as the wind came up, but the fire did not start up again.

A few days later, on April 30, Albert and Mabel's first child, **Sandra** Anna, was born. Albert bought his first machinery that spring. An International Farmall A tractor ($804), a two-bottom plow, a disc, and harrows were bought from the McCormick International dealer, Frank Thompson of Barrhead, with no down payment. Albert greatly appreciated Frank's trust in him and made every effort to pay off the machinery as soon as possible.

It was always an eventful day on the farm when little piglets had to be hauled out of the straw stack to be weaned. The mother sows would dig long tunnels into the straw stack and make a comfortable nest there. But to crawl in and dig the little pigs out was not very safe, as the mother sow would not be cooperative. Using a tub, washboiler, or bags to keep the piglets in, Albert and Mabel would work at removing them. With feed in hand Albert would call and lure the sow away from the straw stack, while Mabel would crawl into the tunnels to grab the little pigs. Often the battle would be desperate as Albert would struggle to keep a mother sow away from the straw stack. On one occasion forty little pigs were hauled out and five mother sows were robbed of their offsprings.

Mabel holding Ann, Albert. Front: Andrew, Winson, Sandra, 1947

Andrew Simon was born May 23, 1942, and **Winson** Melvin on September 4, 1943. In 1943 Albert built a barn and later more buildings were added. In the spring of 1944 Albert and Mabel bought their first car, a 1936 Plymouth. The little Farmall A tractor had to pull that car through mud holes in the road many times.

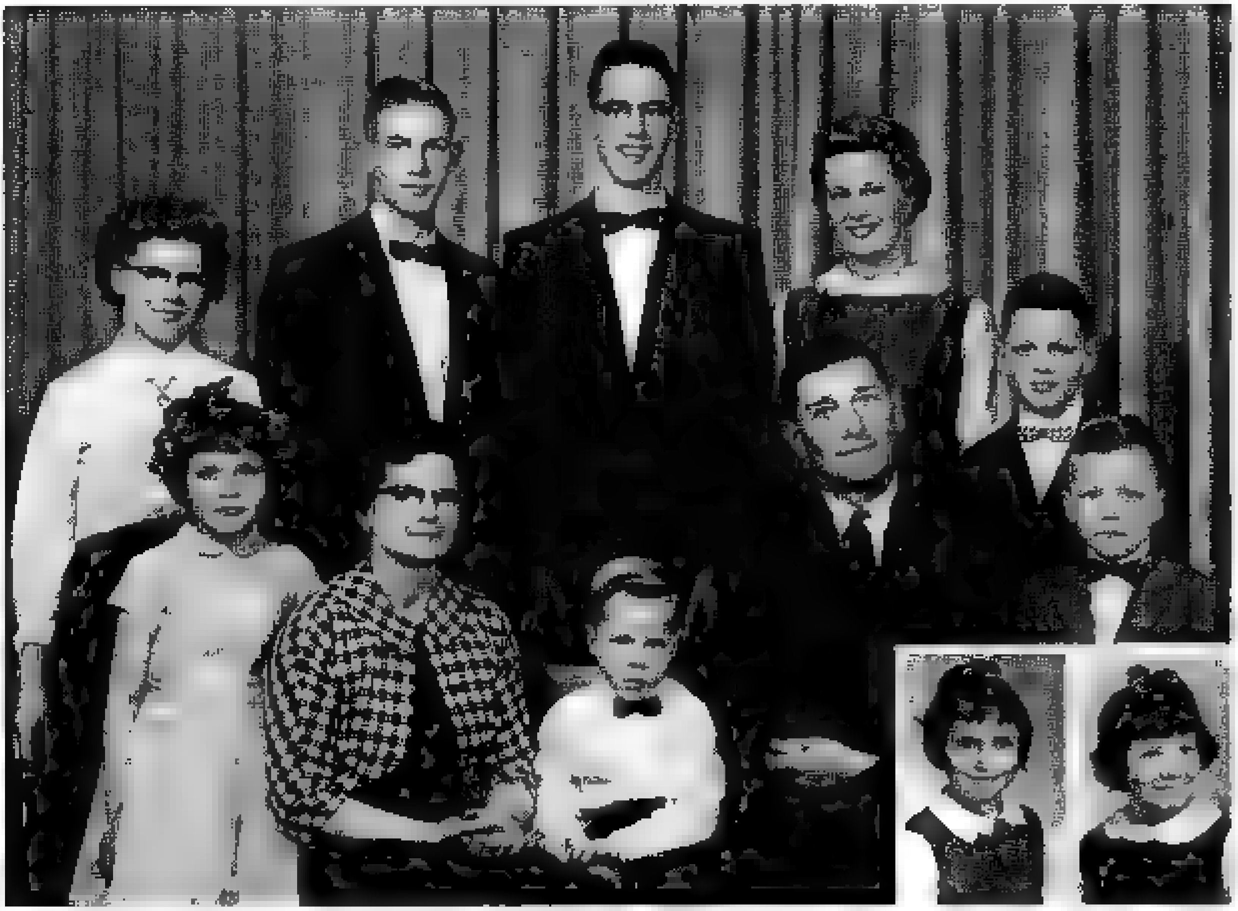
More children were born to Albert and Mabel. **Ann** (Anna) Agnes (January 4, 1946) and **Simon** Albert (October 10, 1949). On December 17, 1952, twins were born: **Annette** Alice and **Melvin** Peter. The little son lived for three days before the Lord took him Home. The funeral was held December 23 and Rev. Mulder spoke on the theme, "Let the children come unto Me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Two more sons, **Melvin** Peter (February 20, 1954) and **Bertram** John (June 8, 1956) were born in the following years.

In February 1954 Albert had bought the NW 16-62-3-5 from Henry Kippers and in 1959 he bought the SW 21-62-3-5 from Melle Elzinga. During the summer of 1966, two sisters, **Gloria** Dawn (August 1, 1960) and **Susan** Elaine (November 29, 1961), were adopted into the family.

Albert and Mabel Elgersma farmed for thirty-one years. Once a severe hailstorm ruined the crop and the fields looked as if they had been disced. Two other years hail damage was experienced but not to the same extent.

Sandra married Henry Strydhorst of Neerlandia. Andrew married Henry's sister Alice in September 1962 and they lived in Neerlandia for three years. They now (1984) live in Edson with their six children. Andrew runs a trucking firm. Winson married Joyce Uiterdyk of Montana in August 1966. They and their four children live in Edmonton, where Winson is attending law school. Ann married Jerry De Vries, Simon married Eva Mast, and Annette married Bill Nanninga.

On November 12, 1976, Melvin married **Carol Cupido** (August 24, 1957) of Edmonton. They have two children, **Leanne** Dawn (January 23, 1981) and **Melissa** Laurelle (June 30,



Back: Ann, Andrew, Winson, Sandra. Front: Annette, Mabel, Bertram, Albert, Simon, Melvin, c. 1960. Insets: Susan, Gloria, c. 1967

Carol holding Melissa, Melvin holding Leanne, 1983.

1983). Melvin and Carol farm on the SE 27-62-3-5.

Bertram married Debra Bouwer of Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. They and their daughter live in Grand Rapids. Bertram is district manager of an insurance firm. Gloria and David Lenz are living in Barrhead with their son. Susan and her husband, Wesley Hiemstra, live in Neerlandia with their daughter.

Albert and Mabel moved from their farm to the hamlet in October 1971, into the house vacated by Anne Mast. Albert became councillor of District 7 of the County of Barrhead in 1980.

Mabel Elgersma

ANNE AND HAITENA (SCHMIDT) ELGERSMA

Anne Elgersma (July 23, 1893) of Schraard, Friesland, the Netherlands, and Antje Reinsma

(July 29, 1893) owned a large dairy farm in Friesland. They had two sons, **Simon** (Siebren, February 23, 1919) and **Albert** (March 13, 1920). In 1922 Antje died. Sometime later, Anne hired Haitena Schmidt (born October 6, 1895 in Holtrop, Oost Friesland, Germany) as a housekeeper. She had been working for a doctor in the Netherlands before she came to the Elgersmas. Then, about 1928, Anne decided to immigrate to Canada, but Haitena was not allowed to immigrate to Canada as a housekeeper. So, on March 11, 1928, Anne and Haitena were married. That same month they went to Germany to say farewell to Haitena's family and then the Elgersma family left for Canada aboard the *Rijndam*. They landed in Halifax.

Anne, Haitena, 1928.

After arriving in Edmonton the Elgersmas lived a short while in Tofield. From there they moved to Bluffton where Simon and Albert attended school for about six months. Haitena became sick with rheumatic fever which damaged her heart. Next the family moved to Edmonton. They lived in the basement of the Christian Reformed church building.

The Elgersmas made yet another move in 1929. On a fine spring day they set out for Neerlandia. Anne filed on the NE 18-61-3-5 on April 11, 1929, and bought the SW 17-61-3-5 from Jim Tuininga of Edmonton for $500.00. He had also bought a small herd of Holstein cattle, four horses, a wagon, household articles, and whatever else he thought was needed. This was all loaded on the train in Edmonton, and the family was full of optimism and anticipation as they boarded the train. It took much longer to get to Barrhead than they had expected, but they enjoyed the country scenery. After unloading at the Barrhead station, Anne and Haitena drove away with the horses and the wagon loaded to capacity.

Anne had instructed the two boys to herd the cattle home. Simon and Albert had no idea where they were and how far it would be to get to the homestead, but they encouraged each other as they followed the road they had been instructed to take. One cow, however, proved to be nasty and after about two hours of herding them along, the boys realized the nasty cow was in the process of calving. They tried to keep the cows together and let them rest while the cow calved. But some cows kept going and others lagged behind. It was too much for the boys, so they sat down on the road and cried. Several hours later their father returned with the wagon and team of horses, looking for the boys and the cattle. It was dark by then, but the boys did not mind walking and herding the cattle along since their father was there. The calf was put on the wagon and the cows followed. Eventually they reached their destination.

That first winter was a difficult one for the cattle. Because the Elgersmas had arrived during the summer they had been unable to make provisions for proper shelter and proper feeding for the cattle, so several cows and heifers died during the early spring of 1930. Anne became very discouraged and considered going back to the old country. He feared this to be a "God-forsaken country." But Haitena would not hear of it and after debating the pros and cons, they came to the conclusion to give it a try for five years.

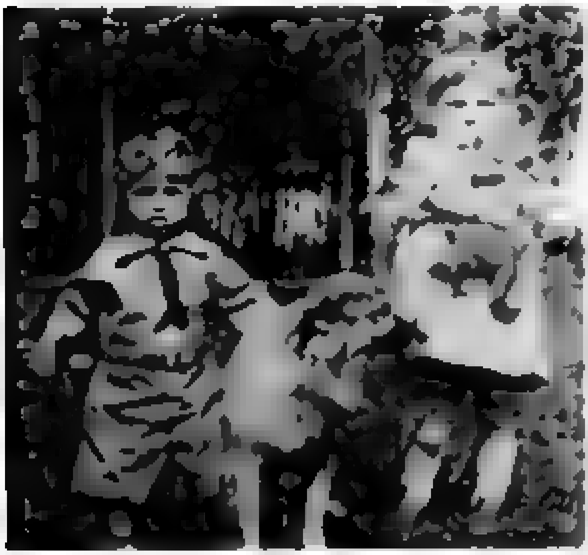
For a while the family lived in a house on the

SW 20-61 3-5, then moved into the house that had been built in the meantime on their quarter. The boys started subfreighting for Billy Quick. Every Monday and Thursday morning, Simon and Albert would leave early with a team of horses and wagon or sleigh to stop in at all the farmers along their way (and some out-of-their-way) to school. They would pick up cream and deliver it to the truck waiting at the Neerlandia store. After school, they would deliver all the empty cream cans to the farmers as well as the groceries that the farmers' wives had listed for them to buy at the store. This added three dollars a week to the family income.

Simon and Albert quit school at ages fifteen and fourteen and went working at a lumber mill in the wintertime. They would skid logs out of the bush and get paid two cents per log. Their aim was to skid from ninety to one hundred logs a day with a horse. Considering those were the Depression years, the two boys made good wages and since they worked as one unit the family did well.

In 1936 Simon had an operation and spent one month at the General Hospital in Edmonton. He had a cyst removed from his liver and came home again in apparent good health.

During those years, five children were born to Anne and Haitena: **Jurina** Akke (August 16, 1929), **Bert** (Bouke, July 18, 1931), **Hilda** (Hinke, June 9, 1933), **Tillie** (Mathilda, June 15, 1934), and **Agnes** (Akke, July 12, 1935).



Bert, Jurina, 1933

Then some sad times came to the Elgersma family. In April 1937, after suffering from pneumonia, little Agnes passed away in the hospital. Haitena brought her to the grave alone, since Anne was in the hospital with pneumonia. That same fall, on October 16, 1937, Haitena gave birth to another daughter, **Haitina** Katrina. But just twenty minutes later Mother Haitena died of a heart attack. Gezina Toebes wrote a letter to Haitena's family in Germany to let them know of the loss. At first Rieka Lievers stayed with the Elgersmas, caring for the children and doing the housework. Baby Haitina was brought to Catherine Holwerda, who was willing to take care of her. For the next two years, during the winter months, Jurina and Bert boarded at Emmerzaels' since it was too far for Bert to walk from school to his dad's farm. Jurina spent one night a week with Rieka, who taught her to sew.

During the fall of 1939, Simon remarked to Albert that he believed his previous illness was returning. In January 1940 he was admitted to the General Hospital in Edmonton. He was still there on his twenty-first birthday and, after weeks of suffering, he passed away April 26, 1940. It was a very wet spring and had rained for several days, so his body was taken by train to Barrhead and hauled on a wagon box by a team of horses to Neerlandia, since the roads were impassable for vehicles. The funeral was held May 1, 1940, a sunny day. That week Rev. Van Der Woude had received new dental plates, but they apparently did not fit very well. During the funeral service he had difficulty speaking and abruptly said, "Excuse me." He turned his back to the gathering, removed his dentures, and then went on with less difficulty. The service was very impressive, in spite of this little incident. The Lord spoke and comforted the family and the congregation.

Anne's house, c. 1940

In 1940 the Elgersma family moved to the SE 33-61 3-5, which Anne bought in 1943 from William van Ark. Rieka Lievers helped the family out by washing, ironing, and baking. She taught Jurina homemaking skills and in 1943 Jurina quit school to stay home and take care of the family. Haitina, who was nearly six, also came back to live with the family. Catherine Holwerda was a good mother and had taken good care of her, but the family wanted her back, though it must have been difficult for Catherine to give her up.

Back: Bert, Anne, Jurina. Middle: Matilde, Hilda. Front: Haitina, c. 1945.

Albert married Mabel Elzinga. During the fifties, Jurina married Ryer Krikke, and Bert married Tjamke Moes. After Bert married, Anne lived with him and Tjamke for about one-and-a-half years, then bought a house from Gerrit Beyers. It was moved to the Elgersma yard and Anne lived there until 1969.

Hilda married Sam Aardema. They have five children and live in Edmonton. Tillie married Karl Hestermann. Haitina worked at Trudeau Cleaners in Edmonton after she quit school. After a year-and-a-half, she returned to Neerlandia and worked in the Neerlandia store. She married John Van Zalen on October 28, 1958. They live in Westlock, where John is a painter. They have three daughters. Anne Elgersma died of a heart attack on December 20, 1969.

Albert Elgersma

ANDREW AND JENNIE (WIERENGA) ELZINGA

Andy and Jennie were married in Neerlandia on July 4, 1943, and settled on the SW 22-62-3-5 in a two-room house. They owned only five dollars and a couple of milk cows, but soon acquired a few pigs.

Their oldest son, **Winston** Melvin, was born June 15, 1944. Pete Fisher drove them to Barrhead and the roads were terrible! Often during the ride he would say, "Hang on, Jennie!" **Henrietta** Elaine (August 12, 1945) was born in a car on a Sunday morning. This time Melle Elzinga was the driver. He said, "That's alright, *stil maar, net als een klein pigje – lekker warm houden* (Just like a little piglet — keep her warm)." Melle took his coat off and put that over them. **Lewis** Henry was born January 3, 1947. Jenny remembers "We had had a heavy snowstorm, one track to follow, so Andy stayed right in the centre *en ja* there came a car and hit the ditch, but we nicely kept going. When Andy went back the car and the driver were still there. The driver said, 'Some drunk so-and-so drove me in the ditch.' So Andy pulled him out and [the grateful driver] handed him five dollars too yet." **Melvin** David was born January 9, 1949.

With so many little children, Jennie needed help. It came in the form of a washing machine with a small motor bought in the Vega store. After washing on Monday, ironing on Tuesday, mending Wednesday and Thursday, cleaning house on Friday and Saturday, Sunday should have been a day of rest, especially in church. But not for Andy and Jennie; they took all the children along to church.

Back: Jennie holding Sandra, Andy. Front: Henrietta, Lewis, Melvin, Winston, 1951.

Sandra Ann was born March 13, 1950. Shortly afterwards the Elzingas sold their farm to Ralph Knikke. They moved to Peers in 1951. Three more children were born there. In 1981, Andy and Jenny moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton. Both are enjoying life in the Home.

Jennie Elzinga

MELLE ELZINGA

Melle Elzinga was born March 3, 1901, in Lioessens, Friesland, the Netherlands. He quit school when he was twelve, although he would have liked to continue and become a school teacher. There was not enough money for that though, and besides it was too far to travel to the city, where he would have had to take the training.

In 1924 Melle went with a group of twenty young men to Argentina. Melle's father wanted him to see what the prospects were for moving the family there. But since there was no established church and it seemed impossible to become landowners (a few large landlords owned most of the land), Melle decided to go to Canada. The Dutch Consul advised him to return to the Netherlands first, then go to Canada from there. The Dutch government paid the trip to Argentina and back. Melle immigrated to Canada in 1926.

Melle's first employment was on a farm at Fort Qu Appelle, Saskatchewan. The farmer's wife, having been a school teacher in England, instructed him every night, and Melle mastered the English language very well. He also kept an English accent all his life. Although these people invited him to stay, Melle wanted to go to a place where there was a Christian Reformed Church. He went to Edmonton and then to Neerlandia in 1927. He first lived in John and Reka Gelderman's house while they went to Nobleford for several months. Melle looked after the livestock on the farm, and his pay was the weekly cream cheque. He did not accept this for himself, however, and to their surprise he had a little money to give to them on their return.

In the spring of 1927 Melle sent money for his brother John to come to Neerlandia. Melle took out the SW 21-62-3-5 as a homestead on May 20, 1927. John also took out a homestead, but it was later cancelled.

In the spring of 1928 Melle wrote to Calvin College, requesting admittance. But when his father came unexpectedly that year, he abandoned the idea as he felt duty-bound to help his family.

Melle did a lot of clearing on his quarter and his father's. It was usually done during the summer and done by hand, only one acre at a time, but every acre cleared meant they were a bit bigger farmers. Since they worked with horses, the days were not that long. Quitting time was 7:00 p.m. because the horses could not work any longer. In the evenings there was time to do gardening and read books.

Melle was always interested in church affairs and concerned about the welfare of the church. In 1928 he became leader of the *Knapen Vereniging*. Every Saturday afternoon he would meet with the twelve to thirteen-year-old boys and girls and give them Bible instruction. A few years later he became leader of the Young Men's Society and later president of the Northern Alberta Young People's League. Melle remained leader of the Young Men's Society until he was forty years old, then joined the Men's Society. He also served as an elder and taught catechism classes.

After his parents died, Melle remained on the family farm, although in 1962 he sold the NW 21-62-3-5 to Henry Strydhorst, Jr. He had sold the SW 21-62-3-5 in 1959 to Albert Elgersma. Melle had a lively interest in art, history, and literature, and enjoyed reading. He had a library of about 1700 books, but in 1971 his house and the contents burned down. A bungalow house was soon built on the farm for Melle to live in.

Melle, 1983

Even though he had always been somewhat handy with the pen, it was at the tender age of 74 that Melle began attending art classes and took up the paintbrush. He learned to paint in oils and sketch in pen and ink. Melle died suddenly on Sunday, October 9, 1983, in a car accident. He lived to be 82 years old.

Mabel Elgersma

WIJNZEN AND SAAKJE (HANJA) ELZINGA

After their marriage on May 10, 1900, Wijnzen (February 10, 1877) and Saakje (June 14, 1880) Elzinga rented a dairy farm in Anjum, Friesland, the Netherlands. There they raised their large family. Four children died in childhood, two of drowning, one of whooping cough, and one of diptheria. Wijnzen knew it would be difficult to establish his five sons on farms and he did not want them to be labourers or store clerks, so in 1926 the eldest son, **Melle**, immigrated to Canada to see what possibilities there were for farming there. In 1927 the second son, **John** (Jan, September 26, 1904), went to Canada as well. Wijnzen went in April 1928 to see the country for himself. In June he took up a quarter section (NW 21-62-3-5) in the Vega area, next to the one Melle had taken up.

Later that year Saakje and six of the children (Sandra, the oldest daughter, stayed behind) went by Batavier Line to England. From Liverpool they sailed on a CPR boat to Canada, landing in Quebec City. They arrived at the CPR Station in Edmonton at 7:00 a.m. on Monday, September 17, 1928. They were met by Melle, who had arranged for Billy Quick, the Neerlandia truck driver, to pick up the trunks from the station so that all could be transported to Neerlandia that same day. The family all looked on in awe as Melle conversed with the truck driver; no one understood a word of what was being said. That evening they arrived in Neerlandia at the Schoonekamp home, where Billy Quick always lodged for the night. Wijnzen had been waiting for hours for his family to arrive at Schoonekamps', whose hospitality was great and warm and never to be forgotten.

The Elzinga family moved into a little house close to the Schoonekamp home that had been vacated by Johanna Oldegbers. It was harvest-time, and Melle had arranged employment for all except the youngest. He also promptly changed their names to English ones. There was no delay — on Tuesday noon, September 18, Melle took his youngest sister, **Mabel** (Maaike, August 13, 1918), to school and made sure she understood her name was to be Mabel, not Maaike, explaining that otherwise everyone at school would call her Mike. He also elaborated on the beauty of Canada and on the grain that was being harvested. This was all beyond Mabel's comprehension, and she looked at her oldest brother, who seemed like a father to her, and said in *Fries*, *"Binne wy yn Kanaän bilanne?* (Did we land in Canaan?)"

Mrs. Levy was teaching grades one to four and taught Mabel her first English. The first few days were difficult ones. Mabel had long curly hair which was braided into two braids with a ribbon at the end of each. The braids were a source of much pulling and teasing. One day a larger boy was pulling the braids and saying, "What's the matter, Mabel?" repeatedly. Then Rulie Schoonekamp came to the rescue and explained the phrase meant "*Wat scheelt er aan?*" Rulie added a comforting word by saying "*Hij is nog dommer dan wat jij bent.* (He is even dumber than you are.)" Rulie was a great friend. Many times Mabel's braids and ribbons were put into the inkwell located in the centre of the two-seater desk behind her, and ink got splattered all over. Mrs. Levy soon put a stop to that, but still Mabel began to remove the ribbons from her hair as she went to school and put them back on neatly as she returned home.

Mabel, Rose Tiemstra, Anne, Emma Tiemstra, 1928

After the harvest **Andy** (Anne, December 25, 1914) also came to school. Mrs. Levy was thorough and did not allow the *th* sound to be replaced by a *t* or an *s*. The English language has some inconsistencies that were a problem.

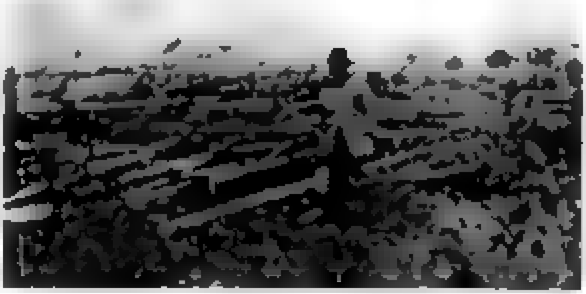
Mabel provided many a laugh for the class as she did some work on the blackboard. When the plural of mouse is mice, then how come a couple of houses are not hice? If the past tense of think is thought, then the past tense of blink should be blought. Eventually Mabel became fluent in English and enjoyed her school days.

Meanwhile **Peter** (Pieter, July 14, 1903) and **Anna** (Antje, July 24, 1912) were employed by Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra to help with the harvest. One day Peter said, "I believe I heard a train today," at which Willemke promptly replied, "You must really be homesick, if you think you heard a train." After the harvest the older Elzinga children, Peter, Anna, and **David** (Douwe, September 6, 1905), went to the city of Edmonton, while **Alice** (Aaltje, August 7, 1913) stayed at the home of Jelle and Anke Tuininga for some time, doing housekeeping. Peter worked at a dairy and later owned his own dairy farm in Edmonton. David died September 17, 1930, when he was gassed in a well while working for Martin van der Heide on his dairy farm. Anna worked in the city and later married John Schuring.

John Elzinga got a job driving truck for Billy Quick. His wages were two dollars a day with room and board (The room was often the cab or even the back of the truck). The roads were poor; from Edmonton to Clyde they were gravel and the rest of the way they were dirt or mud, depending on the weather. John married Hilda Westerbaan in 1933.

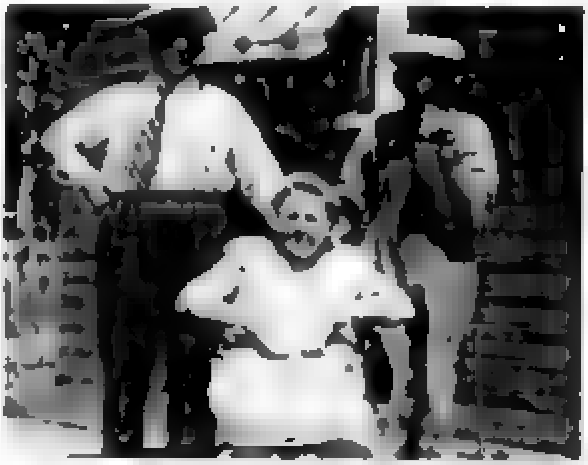
Petertje Schoonekamp became a dear friend of Saakje's and taught her how to bake. Saakje enjoyed baking bread and became very good at it, even though after the first attempt Wijnzen remarked, "*It is wol hwat taai* (It is a bit tough)." Every Saturday was bake day, and Saakje would make bread, buns, and cake.

In the spring of 1929 the family moved to Douwe Terpsma's farm, which they rented for one year, and then to their homestead in 1930. Melle and Wijnzen had begun building a good-sized house on the homestead. Saakje had been accustomed to a big house in the Netherlands, and thus one was 32 by 26 feet. The Elzingas got a permit allowing them to take 10,000 board feet of lumber without having to pay a stumpage fee. They used the lumber for the house. It took four or five years to complete, but meanwhile the family lived in it.



Wijnzen about to burn brush piles, 1929

The first years the heating facilities in the house were not very adequate. At first Saakje was not appreciative of having fires in the stoves during the night because she thought there was danger of fire and besides, they had never done it in the "old country". Although Saakje had a green thumb and her houseplants flourished during the summer, it usually proved to be a calamity in the winter months as the plants would freeze. One time she had a beautiful hanging plant, a Bethlehem star, in full bloom. To protect this during the night from the frost, she covered it with a coat, securely fastening it all around the plant. One night Andy came home late from the city where he was employed and saw a silhouetted shape in the kitchen. Not knowing about the procedure, he woke up everybody as he screamed out, "There is a man hanging here!" In the latter part of February, however, when the precautions were eased off, the plant did freeze.



John, Saakje, Wijnzen, c. 1930

Saakje later became used to keeping a fire in the stove overnight

Soon after they moved to the homestead, Wijnzen and Melle bought six cows at sixty dollars apiece. Since Wijnzen was a dairy man, he was interested in building up a herd of good milk cows. To this end he bought Holstein calves from John Ebbers in Edmonton By 1937, when he proved up his land, he had a herd of fourteen cattle He also had five horses on the farm and was cropping twenty-nine acres.

It was five miles to church in Neerlandia, and in the wintertime stones would be heated in the oven, put in the sleigh, and tucked in with blankets so it would be fairly warm going to church. Going home was different! On very cold days Melle and Mabel would walk to church in the morning, and Wijnzen and Saakje would come with the team of horses and sleigh for the afternoon service. In the summertime lunch was taken along, since they would then stay at church for both services and eat their lunch at noon in the church basement

Mabel walked to Girls' Society, which was every Wednesday afternoon from two to four o'clock. The Rev. Harm Van Der Woude would lead the girls the first hour in Bible discussion, and the second hour was needlework. During the summer months, on Thursday evenings, the young people would play baseball and after harvest, during the winter months, the *Zang Vereniging* would meet on Monday evenings When Albert Elgersma started dating Mabel, he would sometimes walk home with her after *Zang Vereniging* the five miles north and then home again. Albert and Mabel were married in 1940

Andy married Jenny Wierenga in 1943 Alice studied at RBI and became a missionary. She served in Surinam and after about twelve years went to Patterson, New Jersey, U S A., where she worked with Hungarian refugees. She later went to Japan, working on the mission field there for eighteen years. She is now retired and lives in Florida, U S A.

Wijnzen and Saakje remained on their farm until their deaths. Saakje passed away January 30, 1966, at the age of 85 years, and Wijnzen passed away February 18, 1969, at the age of 92 years. They had been very happy in Canada, seeing their children doing well in this free country The fact that the quarter section of land was their own property was so rewarding to them that they enjoyed every moment of working and living on this farm

Mabel Elgersma

ART AND LULA (STURWOLD) FISHER

Arthur Fisher was born in the Netherlands in 1908 and came to Canada when he was five or six. After being educated in Edmonton, Art joined his family on the homestead in Neerlandia

Lula was born in Michigan in 1913 and came to Canada with her family after spending short periods in Iowa and North Dakota On December 20, 1938, Art and Lula got married. They lived in a house they had built on the SW 10-61-3-5, Art's father's quarter

Lu liked to recount the story of their marriage. The story as retold by their son follows.

At the age of twenty-five, Lula was a clerk in the Neerlandia store where she frequently saw Art. Early one winter she went to Edmonton for a short holiday and caught a ride with Art, who was hauling a load of hogs to town.

Lula (on right) during her clerking days.

On the trip to town Art was unusually talkative and he made a date to see Lula that evening That night Art proposed and wanted to get married immediately. Lu accepted the proposal but said that their respective parents should be informed

So Lula stayed in Edmonton with her sister Pauline while Art returned to Neerlandia with

the truck. Art informed his mother and Lu's father but didn't have the pluck to talk to Lu's mother.

Art and Lu were married four days after his proposal by a Presbyterian minister in Edmonton at 7:30 in the evening. Jim and Pauline Tuininga were witnesses and the four had supper at Johnson's Cafe following the ceremony.

Having no time for a honeymoon, Art changed his clothes after supper and together with his new bride headed back to Neerlandia in the truck, delivering cream cans on the return trip until 2:00 a.m. the next morning.

When they returned to Sturwold's farm Lu found that her father Toney had not told his wife about the marriage saying only, "Ruhe, it won't surprise me if Art and Lu are married when they come home."

Art and Lu lived with their respective families until their house was ready the following fall. During this period only their parents knew they were married and when Art had a date with Lu he would say he was going to see his wife but was not believed. By the time they moved into their new home people knew they were married.

Five children were born to the Fishers: **Judy** (Judith) Lucille (March 4, 1940), **Tony** (Anthony) Arthur (July 11, 1941), **Rosalie** Thelma (March 22, 1944), **Marlene** Eunice (September 18, 1948), and **Dennis** (August 4, 1951). During this period Art was the local truck driver, first in partnership with his brother Dick and later on his own. Art also did the accounting for many of the local farmers and helped to install the local telephone system.

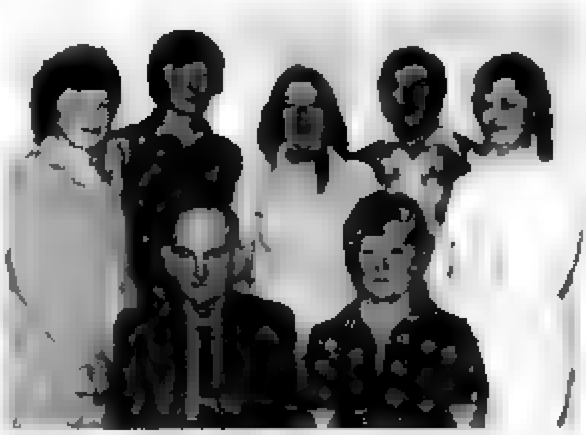
The family moved to Edmonton in 1958 and Lula still lives (1984) in their original house in Edmonton. Arthur died in 1973.

Tony Fisher

CORNELIUS AND ELIZABETH (PETERS) [redacted]

Cor (Cornelius) Fisher, born in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia with his parents in 1927. He attended school first in Edmonton and later in Neerlandia. After he left school he worked for various farmers. In the winter of 1931-32 he worked at Chileen's lumber mill — a six mile walk across Shoal Lake. After this he stayed on the homestead to farm.

On June 12, 1941, Cor married Elizabeth Peters. They set up housekeeping on the NW 10-61-3-5, which Cor had purchased from his father. Cor's parents lived in a little house on the yard, and Cor and Elizabeth cared for them till their deaths. Five children were born to the Fishers: **Betty** (Elizabeth), November 29, 1941, **Janet**, January 28, 1944, **Joe** (Jonathan) Wayne, March 7, 1946; **Wayne** Cornelius, July 4, 1949; and **Bernice** Tena, December 18, 1953.



Betty, Joe, Bernice, Wayne, Janet. Seated: Cor, Elizabeth, 1977

Cor farmed all those years raising grain, pigs, and cattle. Ducks were a pest in the fall, hundreds and hundreds of them would get in the stooks or swathes. They would eat about five percent and destroy about seventy percent of the grain. Sometimes as much as 25-40 acres of grain would be destroyed in two or three days. Cor recalled, "In a few days, if they were left alone, they would gather by the thousands — mostly early in the morning before the sun was up. If we noticed this in time we would get hunters in from Barrhead who were only too glad to come. One hunter had the gall to charge me for the shotgun shells, so I charged him the same amount for the recreation and pleasure provided him. Some of these hunters had shells by the case. Next day they would complain of sore shoulders. Just never satisfied!"

When Wayne finished school he helped his father on the farm. During that time Cor was an Alberta Wheat Pool committee member and served on the seed-cleaning-plant board. He also belonged to the fish and game association. Due to ill health Cor retired in 1979 leaving Wayne to continue with the farming. Cor and

Elizabeth moved to the SW 10-61-3-5 where they had built a new house

In the meantime the children grew up and went on with their own lives. Betty married Henry Gelderman. Janet married Richard Kalmbach. They had two sons. Janet and lives in Fort Nelson, B C. Joe married Hilda Wierenga, and Wayne married Hilda's sister Hendrene. Bernice works at Craig Insurance in Barrhead

Cor and Elizabeth Fisher

PETE AND LULLA (BOS) FISHER

Pete Fisher, born in the Netherlands and educated in Edmonton, came to Neerlandia in 1927. He farmed with his brothers and parents until 1943. Then he bought Bertus Bos' farm (NW 22-62-3-5) in Vega and married his daughter Lulla on September 22, 1943

Pete discing, 1930s.

Lulla had also come to Neerlandia in 1927. After she finished grade ten and part of grade eleven in Neerlandia school, she would have liked to become a nurse, but for further education she would have had to go to either Barrhead or Westlock and board there. Her parents could not afford this, so she quit school and went out working She did housework for a neighbour for ten dollars a month. Three years later wages for housework went up to twenty-five dollars a month

After their marriage, Pete and Lulla lived in Vega for three years. Pete cleared a lot of land with an axe and a team of horses. Their first son, **Edward** Simon, was born September 10, 1944. In 1946 Pete and Lulla sold the land back to Lulla's father and bought Chris Leder's quarter (SE 4-62-3-5). While living there, they had four more children: **Hazel** Beatrice (November 6, 1947); **Geraldine** Elizabeth (September 21, 1952); **Bertrand** Peter (November 2, 1957), **Daylene** Joy (October 6, 1964).

Pete and Lulla's wedding photo.

Lulla always liked carpentering. Before her marriage, she and her sister Liz had made cupboards from v-joint boards for their father's house. Later, Lulla built herself some kitchen cupboards from spruce veneer and finished them with varnish. Pete enjoyed farming and fixing machinery, but Lulla did simple repair jobs around the house. Pete enjoys singing and, from the time he was a teenager, has always belonged to some choir

In 1966 Pete and Lulla sold their land to Ryer Krikke and moved to the Mellowdale district, where they had bought the SW 18-60-3-5. All of the children except Bert are married.

Lulla Fisher

RICHARD AND KATHARINA (WIERENGA) FISHER

Dick Fisher came to Neerlandia in 1927. He first worked on the farm, and in the lumber

camps in the winter. In 1932, he went to work as a truck driver for Billy Quick. He was able to buy a truck and start his own business in 1934.

On June 2, 1935, Dick married Kay Wierenga. They were married on Sunday afternoon, and early Monday morning Dick left on his trucking route for Edmonton. It was a wet spring and the roads were very bad. Late Saturday night he returned home to his bride — not exactly the most romantic way to spend a honeymoon!

Dick, Kay.

In 1936 Dick's brother Art became a partner in the trucking business, and Fisher Brothers Trucking Co. had its beginning. That same year, on March 18, a son, Wilbur **Richard**, was born to Dick and Kay. He was soon joined by two little sisters, **Hilaria** Katherine on May 8, 1937, and **Jeanne** Shirley on October 5, 1938. Seven years later, on September 17, 1946, another little sister, **Dianna** Karen, was born.

For the first five years of their married life Dick and Kay lived in a four-room house on the original Fisher homestead. In 1941 they moved to a new home on SW 10-61-3-5. About this time Kay became the proud owner of a new hand-powered washing machine. After fifteen minutes of frantic cranking back and forth, the load of clothes came out nice and clean. What a luxury, and it sure did save on knuckles!

Bill, Hilaria, and Jeanne began their school years at Shoal Creek Heights School. They walked one-and-a-half miles across the fields in all types of weather. In 1945 and 1946 they were bussed to Neerlandia school in Uncle Albert Tiemstra's school bus. In 1947 they again attended Shoal Creek Heights for one year, then were transferred back to Neerlandia School, which they attended from 1948 to 1953.

In 1955 Dick dissolved his partnership with Art and purchased Vega Mercantile. On July 15, 1955, the family moved to Vega and Bill began trucking full-time. About this time Dick started a Massey-Ferguson dealership and built a shop in Vega.

On July 20, 1956, Hilaria married Philip Bryan of Vega. That same year, on August 17, Jeanne married Jack Bozak. On March 17, 1961, Bill married Faye Srigley.

With land being rapidly cleared and farming becoming more prosperous, business thrived, and soon many farms were decorated

Dianna, Dick, Bill, Jean, Kay, Hilaria, 1961 with red Massey-Ferguson machinery, a testimony to Dick's industrious salesmanship. In 1962 he was honoured as the second highest Massey-Ferguson Dealer in North America.

In 1965 the contract with Massey-Ferguson was terminated, but Dick, Kay, and Bill continued to be busy with the store and the trucking business.

In October 1972 Dick was diagnosed as having cancer. He underwent surgery in an Edmonton hospital and was able to return to his home in January 1973. Two weeks later he sat and watched helplessly as his store burned to the ground. Dick had two years remission from his disease and was able to enjoy a bit of gardening until his health failed again. He died January 23, 1975, at the age of sixty-five.

Kay sold her house in Vega in 1977 and moved with Dianna into the Avord Arms Apartments in Edmonton, where they still reside. Dianna has worked at the Edmonton Public Library for the past seven years, and Kay does volunteer work in various hospitals. She continues to enjoy good health.

Hilaria and Philip Bryan reside in Vega where they farm and have a gravel trucking business. They have four children. Jeanne and Jack Bozak also farm in the Vega area and are co-owner-operators of W.B. Logging Products. They have four children. Bill and Faye Fisher reside and farm in the Vega area also.

Richard Fisher

SIMON AND JENNIE (HIEMSTRA) FISHER

Simon Fisher was born in Edmonton and spent his first twelve years there. In 1927 he moved with his family to the Neerlandia district. As he grew older Simon farmed with his brothers Pete and Cor and was spare driver for Fisher Brothers Trucking.

In 1942 Simon joined the Royal Edmonton Regiment of the Canadian Army. After training in the British Isles, his unit was sent to Sicily and took part in the invasion of Italy. He was taken prisoner of war and kept in Stalag 7A, Bavaria, Germany, for nine months. He was suffering from malaria and starvation when he was rescued by the American Forces. When he arrived in England he, a man of 6'2", weighed 88 pounds. After recuperating a short while in England, he returned to Neerlandia in June 1945.

On December 28, 1945, Simon married Jennie Hiemstra and they began farming on the NW 16-61-3-5. They have five children. **Peggy** June was born November 24, 1946. Now Peggy Kearns, she lives in Barrhead with her three sons and works as secretary at the Barrhead elementary school.

Jennie, Peggy, Simon, Crystal, Barry, Russel, Simon, 1969.

Butch (Simon) William Jr. was born April 25, 1948. He married Brenda Matthews in 1971 and they live in Barrhead with their two children. Butch owns his own Kenworth and does various trucking jobs. Brenda is a Certified Nursing Aide, presently employed at the Barrhead Clinic.

Russel, Ryan, Debbie holding Shelly, Tracy, 1984.

Russel James was born December 1, 1951. He married **Debbie Morrow** on July 20, 1974. Debbie (born April 13, 1955) grew up in the Glenreagh district and worked as a typist before her marriage. She enjoys music and gives music lessons. Russel and Debbie live on the original farm where they do mixed farming. They have three children. **Ryan** Dean, born September 22, 1977; **Tracy** Lynn, born February 1, 1980; and **Shelley** Dawn, born May 9, 1984.

Barry Lewis was born October 8, 1954. He is also involved in the farming operation, but does road construction during the summer months. **Crystal** Ann was born May 11, 1960. She is presently living in Edmonton and is employed at the Edmonton Bus Depot as a junior clerk.

While living in the Neerlandia district, Simon and Jennie were involved in various community activities. Simon and his sons are all avid hunters and fishermen. Though they travelled to Fort Assiniboine or Timeu to hunt, big game could also be hunted locally because there was more bush in those days. In fact, Jennie tells a story of Simon shooting a moose from the back stoop of the house during the 1960s. Word got around and the next time Simon visited the doctor he was called a lazy hunter. One bear that was shot got cooked for supper, but a diet of berries had made the meat sweet, and the family judged it not edible.

In 1978 Simon and Jennie retired due to Simon's poor health, and sold the farm, which by then consisted of one section of land, to Russel and Barry. They are now enjoying life in Barrhead.

Jennie Fisher

WIEBE AND JISKE (WIERSMA) FISHER (VISSER)

Wiebe (Wybe) Visser was born May 13, 1874, in Tzummarum, Friesland, the Netherlands. His parents later owned a bakery in Parrega, where he grew up.

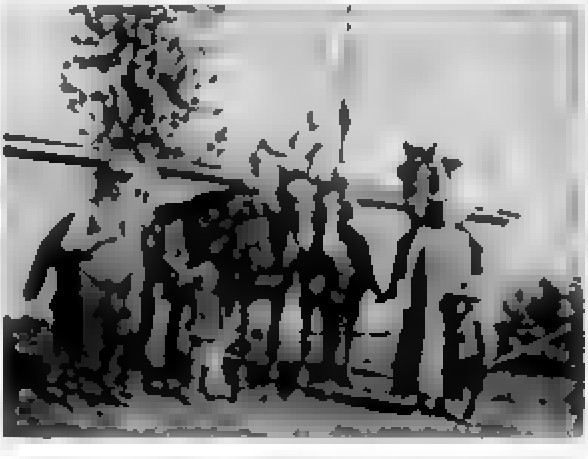
Jiske (Jiskje) Wiersma was born July 26, 1879, in Gaastmeer, Friesland, and lived there until she got married to Wiebe. Upon their marriage on May 22, 1902 they moved to Oude Bildtdijk where they had bought a bakery. Six of their children were born there. **Jelle** (Yelter) was born February 22, 1904, **Ed** (Edward) Ane on April 30, 1905; **Jennie** (Sjoukje) Anne September 27, 1906, **Art** (Ephe) on May 14, 1908, **Dick** (Dirk) on August 10, 1909; and **Peter** (Pieter) on February 17, 1911. Life was very busy those days.

Early in 1913 a brother of Wiebe came back to the Netherlands after he had immigrated to North America a couple of years earlier. He came back with high praises of Edmonton, a boom town, and persuaded his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Yelter Visser, who were then in their sixties, to move to Edmonton with the four children who still lived at home. So on April 20, 1913, the move to Edmonton was made, along with another brother and his family and two married sisters with their families. Vissers — twenty-eight of them — arrived in Edmonton on May 13, 1913.

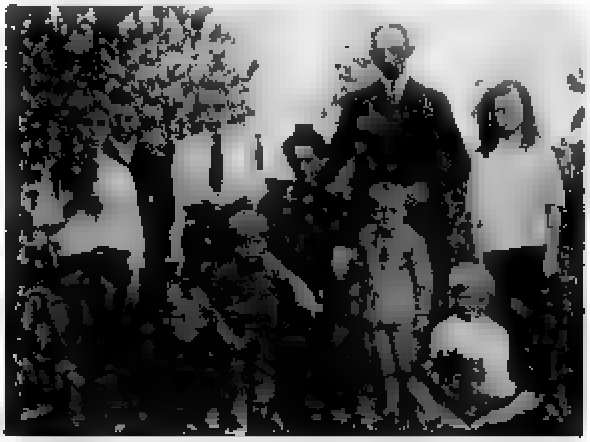
When he came to Canada, Wiebe changed his last name from Visser to Fisher. It is thought that perhaps he did it because when he first came to Edmonton there was another man, George Visser Sr., with the same last name as his and with only one post office in Edmonton, there was potential for confusion. Whether this is the reason or not, the name was changed, though not officially. Ed was in the U.S.A. at the time and his name remained Visser.

The First World War started a year after Fishers came, and the big boom in Edmonton ended. By that time the family was living on a farm in Jasper Place and milking cows. Three more children were born to Wiebe and Jiske in Edmonton. **Cornelius** Ana was born June 12, 1914, **Simon** on September 8, 1915; and **Annie** (Antje) Emma on December 12, 1918.

It was also in Edmonton that a serious acci-



In Edmonton. On horses: Yelter, Art, Dick, Ed. Standing Wiebe, Simon, Jiske, Cor.



Back: Art, Yelter, Ed, Jiske, Wiebe, Jennie. Front: Peter, Simon, Cor, Dick, 1918.

dent happened to Yelter, then a young boy. He was working on a mower while his younger brother Pete was holding the retarding spring lever. But unable to hold onto it any longer, Pete let go. It hit Yelter on the head and he suffered a broken skull. Through the work of many doctors, his life was spared, though he suffered epileptic seizures after that.

In the spring of 1925 Wiebe came to Neerlandia with his sons Dick and Pete, and bought NW 10-61-3-5. They had come with a team of horses, a hayrack, canvas, and supplies for the summer. They began to clear land and also spent time patching up an old log house. Wiebe, Dick, and Pete moved into the house, and the mice followed shortly after. Dick was a good shot and, as a form of recreation, would sit in one corner of the house with his .22 rifle and shoot the mice.

In the winter, Yelter came. He homesteaded the quarter just south of his dad's, the SW 10-61-3-5. Wiebe and the boys cleared and broke 120 acres by 1926. A few years later Dick took out a quarter by Shoal Lake, the NW 9-61-3-5.

In 1926 Wiebe sold the dairy business in Edmonton, and in the winter of 1926 Jiske and the rest of the children came to Neerlandia. Edward had gone to Washington State, U.S.A., and Art stayed in Edmonton.

In the fall of 1929 the Fishers had a fire. The chicken coop, the cow barn, some granaries, and even some stooks burned. All that was left was the old log house and a small log barn for horses. The first thing they did was make a

Back: Peter, Arthur, Edward, Yelter, Dick, Cornelius. Front: Annie, Jennie, Jiske, Wiebe, Simon, 1925.

lumber barn for the ten milk cows. The pigs and other livestock wintered in the straw stacks

Almost every year Jiske would take a trip to Edmonton to visit old friends, leaving the family to bach. Simon and Cor were elected to do the housework and cooking. One day they decided to make a treat. They filled a pot half full with rice and raisins and put it on to cook. The meal began to swell, and they soon had to get another pot and then another until they had used up almost every pot in the house. They had rice with raisins for days and still can taste it after fifty-five years. During Mom's absence the Rawleigh dealer came by and wanted to know if they needed anything. They did not, and he continued on two miles north to Jennie's place (Jennie had married Jerry Reitsma in 1929). Jennie asked whether Mom was home yet, and the dealer said that she wasn't but he figured she soon would be because the boys were mopping the floors.

Although there were hunting regulations, each man tended to make his own rules when it came to hunting. One law, for example, was that muskrats were to be trapped rather than shot. Shooting was quicker, however, and very tempting when a skin would fetch $2.50 (five times what one could earn working a day in the mill). Many people did it. Once Simon and his friend Andrew Heberling were caught by the Justice of Peace, C. K. Mast, and told to report at the egg grading station at 9:00 Monday morning. Well, they showed up — along with about thirteen other guys who were also guilty of shooting muskrats. When Carl saw the crowd, he told them he would let it go for this time

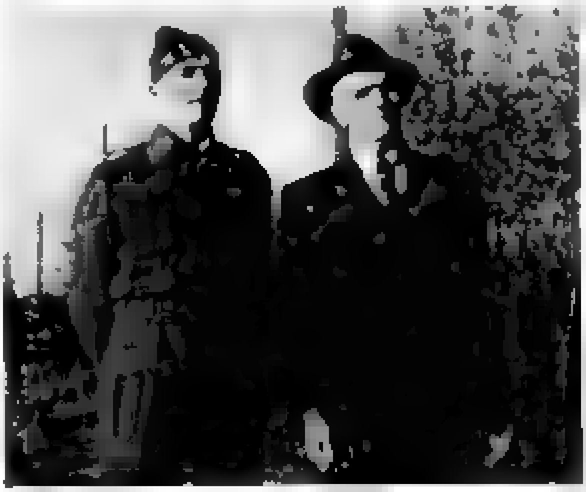
Dick married Kay Wierenga in 1935. Three years later, Art married Lula Sturwold. In 1941 Cor married Liz Peters, and Annie married George Terpsma. Two years later, Pete married Lulla Bos. Simon and Jennie Hiemstra were married in 1945 and Edward married Tena Peters in 1946.

Wiebe remained on the farm until he passed away in May 1950. Jiske stayed for some years after that, living with her oldest son, Yelter, until he died in April 1958. Shortly after Yelter died, Jiske went to live with Annie. She died in 1960

Fisher Family

WILLIAM AND MARY FOX

William Arthur Fox was of Irish descent. He was born in 1876 in Dosair, Manitoba. His wife, Mary, was also Irish. She immigrated to Manitoba with her parents when she was two. After their marriage Bill and Mary moved to various places because Bill was a wanderer by nature and loved trying new ventures. One such venture brought the family to Neerlandia to try homesteading on the NW 24-61-3-5 in 1932. They stayed for about four years.



Tom, Bill, 1944.

Jerry, 1938.

Minetta (August 30, 1911, Winnipeg) married James Johnman of Neerlandia. **Ellen** (November 21, 1913, Redcliff, Manitoba) married Frank Ciochetto of Naples. **Mary** (February 27, 1915, Winnipeg) married Pete Johnman, and they farmed in the Vega area until the war

Tom (January 24, 1917, Winnipeg) and **Jerry** (December 14, 1920, Foxwaren, Manitoba) attended school in Neerlandia. Both served in the army during World War II. Jerry was killed in action in 1944 while serving with the Royal Edmonton Regiment. Tom served with the Military Police. William and Mary's last child was born in Lethbridge in 1922.

Mary passed away December 13, 1939, in Edmonton. William lived to be 94 years old; he passed away in 1970.

Ellen Ciochetto

SIMON AND CARRIE (OLTHUIS) GROOT

It was a cold February day in 1940 when the Groots arrived in Neerlandia. Si and Carrie were newlyweds and it was here they began their first home. They rented a house on the northeast corner of Neerlandia's Centre. This had been the home of the store manager and his family. Immediately west of the house stood the old Co-op store building. Both buildings had been vacant since the new store and manager's living quarters had been built just across the road.

During the autumn of 1939 Si had made inquiries regarding the feasibility of setting up a mechanic's business in Neerlandia. The two buildings were ideally situated and could readily be converted to suit the Groot's needs. An agreement was reached and Si was given freedom to renovate and equip the store as a machine shop. He rented both buildings for ten dollars a month and set about making the necessary changes. Tools, equipment, and supplies were purchased and, by the end of February, the shop was ready to open for business.

Si, born March 1, 1913, was fourteen when he came to Edmonton from Andijk, North Holland, the Netherlands. First he farmed with his father. He had, however, also taken courses throughout the winter months for several years — along with on-the-job training at an Edmonton garage. By the time he came to Neerlandia he had his mechanic's license, a welding certificate, and a trained blacksmith apprenticeship card.

The move to Neerlandia was a new venture for both of them. Si began as manager and proprietor of the garage and blacksmith shop. (The Groots never did get around to giving it a proper name. It was, however, dubbed, "The Shop.") Carrie took on her role as housewife. She had lived in Neerlandia before, from 1919 to 1934, and received her formal education there. Moving to Neerlandia and establishing a home of her own proved to be somewhat different.

The Groot's first tasks were to set up a home and to get things in place for shop work to begin. The house required cleaning, painting, and some repairs. Routines were quickly established for daily living activities. Water had to be hauled from the store as there was no well near the house. Shopping was simply done at the general store.

Money was soon coming in as a variety of work — ranging from soldering small items to complete car and tractor engine overhauls — was handled at the shop. Many entries in the shop ledger listed ten, twenty-five, fifty cent and one dollar items. Si supplied free air by means of a hose outside the shop. That was often a busy area as customers filled soft tires on their vehicles. Things went smoothly from the start and the Groots were in business.

Both Si and Carrie enjoyed living at the Centre in Neerlandia. For one thing, it was never lonely. People frequently dropped in to see them. On mail night, if the driver was late arriving, one or two people invariably stopped by to wait — or after shopping was completed the ladies came by for morning coffee or afternoon tea while waiting for a ride home. Children on their way home from school knocked on the door to ask for a drink of water and then stayed on to chat and visit a while. From their living room window the Groots could watch the traffic as it converged at the Corner — whether for church, school, store or shop. They appreciated the fellowship. All very cozy!

Living at the Corner had other implications as well. It was standard for travelling salesmen to stop there, and generally they needed a place to spend the night. The storekeeper had often supplied that need but he was growing weary of the whole thing. He suggested, at least on one occasion, that the Fuller Brush man try the Groot's door. Being naive and innocent, they agreed to let him stay. It meant not only getting his bed ready but also supplying supper that night and breakfast the next morning. Word must have spread because there were several requests after that first one. As a result, Carrie got many Fuller Brush, Watkins, and

Raleigh products that way generally things she could well have done without

While in Neerlandia, Si and Carrie learned interesting things about human nature When in business, one has opportunity to see an otherwise hidden side of people Occasionally a quibble occurred over job prices before agreement could be reached. At times, requests were made to borrow shop tools, so that the person could do the job himself at home. Those requests put Si in an awkward position. On the other hand, most transactions were amiable

The Groots found most customers to be charitable and considerate. One man who frequently had difficulty in getting an engine for the water-pumping system started during cold weather months often asked Si to come over to start it for him. When a bill was presented the man would say, "Now you can't do the job for that," and he would double the amount shown

There were many who expressed appreciation for the work done in the shop in a variety of tangible ways. The Groots were invited to help themselves to garden produce. Gifts of farm produce from spinach to eggs, from cream to oven-ready chickens, were also brought

After the Groots had closed shop in Neerlandia they sent out twenty statements for payment due, amounting in total to about $250 00. Only one of these was ever acknowledged — a definite sign of the economy at that time, no doubt. Carrie has in her possession the letter sent in answer — they received it almost twenty years later It is postmarked Vega, stamped December 12, 1962, and bears a five-cent stamp. It reads as follows.

"Vega, Alberta
Dec 11, 1962

Dear Mr. Groot

I still owe you about $23.00 since 1942 when you were in Neerlandia. Sorry for letting you wait so long, with 5 percent interest it will make about $65.00 which I'm sending you a money order for. Will you please let me know if you received this."

It was duly signed. "People are great!" wrote Carrie

In 1941, the Groot's first son, **Edward**, was born. It was New Year's Day when they made their way to the Barrhead hospital Carrie recounts the trip.

"The recent snow had laid a clean and bright covering over all. Hoarfrost had wrapped every shrub, tree, bush, post, and wire overnight with a thick coating lending a majestic beauty to the outdoors. The sun arose as we drove along and it cast a marvelous pink tinge and sparkle to the entire panorama before us. The magnificent splendor observed on that quiet country morn has seldom been equalled anywhere for us since."

The Groot's son was the first baby to be born in that hospital after the new year. Carrie stayed thirteen days before she was allowed to go home

Carrie with Ed, 1941

One morning, after a rainstorm, the Groots woke up to find a puddle of water on their kitchen floor. The roof was leaking! It needed repairing before another shower came and they were asked to make their needs known at the next store board meeting. As Si was busy in the shop, Carrie was elected to attend that meeting. The men welcomed her and listened to her short request. They readily agreed to repair the roof. One board member remarked that this was the first and only time which he could recall that a woman had attended their meet-

Carrie holding Ed, Simon. Front: Elsie, Shirley Olthuis, 1942

ing. Incidently, after the roof was fixed, the rent went up to twelve dollars a month.

In April 1943 the Groots decided to move back to Edmonton. They left by car but, since a road ban was in effect due to the spring thaw, their furniture and other belongings were left behind until the trucks could travel the highways again. They spent just over three years in Neerlandia and those times remain special and are indeed memorable.

Brief Epilogue

Three months after the Groots left Neerlandia, their daughter Sherryn was born. Soon they learned that she was blind. This altered their lives considerably. In 1951 they moved to Vancouver because of the special education available for her there. They were blessed with two more children.

In August 1965 Si suffered a massive stroke and passed away. After Carrie had attended the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, she and the children moved back to Edmonton in 1968 where Carrie taught grade one for seventeen consecutive years at the Christian School.

Carrie Groot

ANDREW AND KATHERINA (KOHLER) HEBERLING SR.

Andrew Heberling was born in Battaapati, Polnanegye, Hungary, on November 9, 1886. In 1910 he married Katherina Kohler, who had been born on November 20, 1891. A daughter, **Katherina** (Katie), was born to them in 1910.

The Heberlings immigrated to Racine, Wisconsin, U.S.A., in 1912, leaving their daughter with her grandparents. In 1915 a son, **Andrew**, was born. About 1920 they went back to Hungary to get their daughter, but stayed for five years. They had thought that, after World War I, the small states in Hungary would unite and life would be better. When they found that the borders remained, they began to long for the greater freedom they had known in the U.S.A.

Soon the call of America became too strong and they decided to come to Canada. Here they bet the government ten dollars that they could make a home on 160 acres of wilderness. Andrew filed on the NE 9-61 3-5 in 1926. On this homestead Andrew and Katherina's last child, **Louise**, was born in 1930.

Back: Katie, Andrew Jr. Louise. Front: Andrew Sr., Katherina, c. 1957

In 1940 they sold the homestead to their son Andrew and bought the Peter Wagner homestead in Mellowdale, which they farmed till 1952, when they retired to Barrhead. Daughter Katie married Lewis Bentz. They have one child. Louise married Helmut (Elmer) Bielert.

They have three children. Andrew Heberling Sr. died in October 1959. His wife Katherina died on August 22, 1981. Both are buried in the Pentecostal Cemetery in Bloomsbury

Andrew Heberling, Jr.

ANDREW AND OLGA (BRUK) HEBERLING

Andrew Heberling Jr. was born in Racine, Wisconsin, U.S.A., on May 1, 1915. The first ten years of his life were quite unsettled. At the age of five years, his parents took him to Hungary. At about age 11, he came with his parents and older sister to the Neerlandia district

As the homestead was situated half-way between Neerlandia and Mellowdale, Andrew Jr. was never quite sure where he belonged, but enjoyed both districts. He got his education in Neerlandia. He has many memories of walking to school with his pal, Simon Fisher. The first two miles were a bush trail, and they had to cross Shoal Creek on a log. With the creek full of fish and the bush full of furbearing animals, it was sometimes hard to get to school on time

In 1940 Andrew married Olga Bruk of Camp Creek. Olga had been born on May 7, 1923, in Rude, Poland, and immigrated to Saskatchewan in 1929. Her father had come in 1928, then returned to get his family. After a couple of moves Olga ended up in Camp Creek, where she met Andrew

Andrew and Olga bought his parents' homestead in 1940. Two children were born to them there. A son, **Edwin** Joseph, was born in 1941. A daughter, **Shirley** Louise, was born in 1945.

Shirley, Andrew, Edwin, Olga, Barry, c. 1960

In 1948 Andrew Jr. sold the homestead to Joe A. Wierenga and bought the Jim Dunn farm in the Leighton district. Barry Andrew, the Heberlings' third child, was born in 1954

Andrew and Olga are now retired (1984) and live in Barrhead

Andrew Heberling, Jr

JACOB AND JANKE (BOONSTRA) HIEMSTRA

Jacob Hiemstra was born in Tzummarum, Friesland, the Netherlands, on July 30, 1899. Janke Boonstra was born September 20, 1901, in Noord Bergum, Friesland. They were married May 3, 1923, and worked for a wealthy landowner for several years. On the advice of an older brother Henry, who was already in Neerlandia, and after a great deal of planning, the decision was made to immigrate to Canada. Jacob had come to the conclusion there was not much of a future for them in the Netherlands. They decided to come to Neerlandia because they wanted to be near the church and because it was a Dutch settlement.

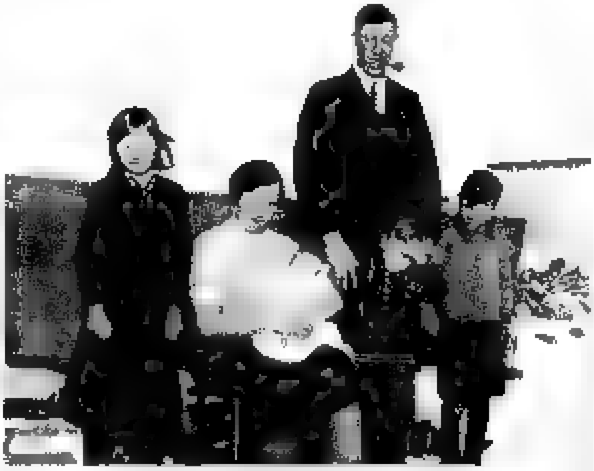
Jacob and Janke arrived in Edmonton in April 1926 and were met by Raymond Baker. Two days after their arrival, Jacob took up his homestead (SW 21-61-3-5). Jacob and Janke lived with Gaele Baker for the summer, and then moved to their own place. They started their new home with ten quarts of raspberries and ten dollars. Living conditions were harsh, and the Hiemstras withstood a great deal of loneliness because at first they had no means of transportation. When Jacob was gone working it was impossible for Janke to leave home with the children

Jacob bought a cow from Klaas Tuininga for thirty-five dollars. In exchange he cleared ten acres of land for Klaas. Jacob built a log barn and a chicken coop in the second year of homesteading. The chickens were the sturdy gray birds called Barred Rocks and were raised for eggs and meat. After working in the harvest in Provost and in the Fluet's Sawmill in 1928, Jacob was able to buy two horses and a sleigh. They could then ride to church and the store and do some visiting

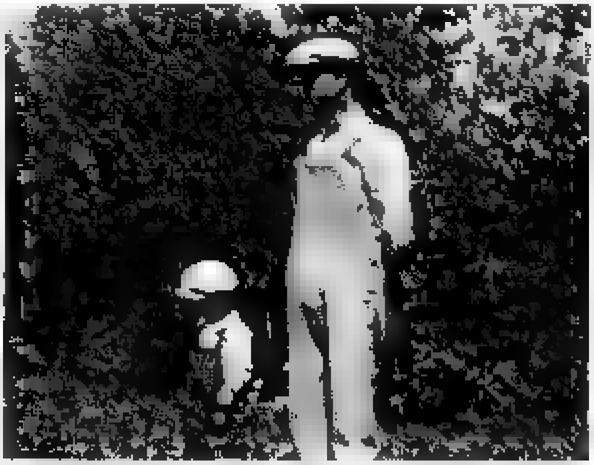
The July 1st picnic was a special highlight and much enjoyed. Blueberry picking in August was also a great adventure. Sometimes the family started off at four or five in the morning, went across the Athabasca River to James Fowler's place, and returned for afternoon chores.

All the berries and meat were canned in sealers. Strawberry jam was a real treat. Low bush cranberries were stored in crocks in the cellar and used as needed. In the fall Jacob took his grain to Manola and exchanged it for flour and cream of wheat.

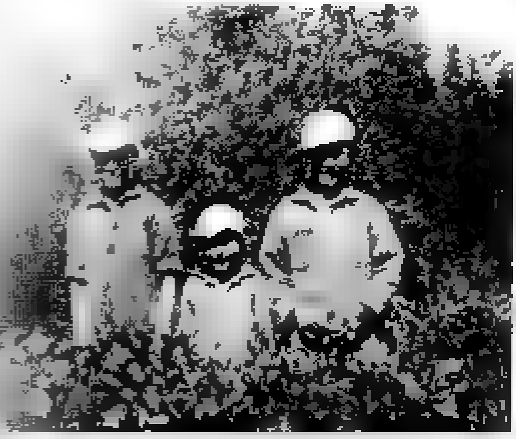
All socks and mitts were knit at home, and most of the clothes were homemade. Overalls had to be bought and a pair of rubbers cost one dollar.



Jake (standing), Jennie, Janke, Henry, Arnold, Corry, 1935.



Father and son, Henry and Jake, c. 1938.



Arnold, Henry, Corry, c. 1938.

Butchering time. Jake, Arnold, 1938.

Jacob and Janke raised four children, who eventually married and raised families of their own. **Jennie** (Jantje) (February 24, 1924) married Simon Fisher. **Cornelius** (November 14, 1926) married Grace Tuininga. **Arnold** (Aage) (December 19, 1929) married Gerri Clements

Henry (Hendrik) (November 29, 1933) married Jessie McCullough

Janke passed away in 1979 She had left all of her family in the Netherlands and never saw them again. Jacob now lives in the Barrhead Nursing Home He says that it is only by the grace of God they could have survived such an existence. In 1980 he took a three-week trip to the Netherlands with his daughter Jennie, his first trip home after 56 years of living in Canada

Jennie Hiemstra

JOHN AND ETHEL (INGLIS) HOWEY

John Young Howey left Owen Sound, Ontario, and went to Abbey, Saskatchewan, in 1914 to live with his brother, Edward Howey. He then sent for his wife, Ethel Goldie, and four children, **Samuel, Margaret, Mary,** and **Robert** Another daughter. **Bertha,** was born in Saskatchewan on January 4, 1918. That spring, John and Ethel Howey decided to move to Westlock, Alberta, where John's younger brother Archie lived on a farm. John got a job with Frank Edison, and the children went to school east of Westlock. Later they moved to a farm west of Westlock, where a son, **Archie,** was born on September 5, 1921

In the meantime, Sam obtained work at Chisholm Lumber Camp, where Tom Wilson of Neerlandia was foreman This led to a decision on the part of the Howeys to move to Neerlandia In October 1921 they set out. First there was a team pulling a hayrack with the family's belongings on it driven by Margaret Robert drove a second team with a wagon box containing more belongings. Then came John and Ethel, walking and chasing the cattle. They walked all the way, stopping one mile north of Highway 18, on the Naples road, to camp for the night.

At noon the next day, they arrived in Neerlandia, where they settled in George Caughlin's house on the SE 27-61-3-5. George Caughlin had been killed by gas in a well several years before, so his house stood empty They lived there till John Howey got a house built on the homestead (NE 21-61-3-5), which he had taken up for his son, Sam, and held for him till he reached 18 years of age

On January 28, 1928, just as Charley Reitsma was going to bed, he happened to see from his bedroom window that the Howeys' house was on fire Had he not warned them, the results could have been serious. As it was, no one was severely injured. The quick thinking of Robert who said, "Where is Ethel?" resulted in John and Mary rushing in to save the three year old girl. The house was burned, but the only injuries were burns to John's neck and forehead and to Mary's and Ethel's hands, and frostbite to Archie's feet

Ethel. John, 1927

Margaret, Mary, Robert, Archie, and **Ethel** (who was born in Neerlandia on August 12, 1924) all went to school in Neerlandia. During this time, John and Ethel worked for the Wilsons on their farm, Ethel helped Elizabeth (Lizzy) Wilson in the house Sam worked hard to help the family make ends meet He worked in Chisholm Lumber Camp for several winters and later had a Caterpillar tractor. Margaret says, "I am very thankful that he was willing to help his parents the way he did." In 1950, Sam married, and he and his wife Vivian had one daughter, Wanda

Margaret left home on May 4, 1924, to work for Martin Anderson of Barrhead, whom she married on August 4, 1927 Margaret and Mar-

Archie, Bertha, Ethel Sr., Ethel holding son Ernest. Front: Bertha's daughter, Josephine

tin had two daughters and one son. Her youngest daughter, Ethel, was killed in an accident while riding a pony when she was 13 years old (August 12, 1949).

Mary married Harlan Cox, and had three sons and two daughters. Both Mary and Harlan have passed on.

Robert never married and lives in Meadowview Apartments at Mitchener Centre in Red Deer, Alberta.

Bertha married Bill Lievers of Neerlandia. For a time, Mrs. Howey looked after Bill and Bertha's three children. Bertha is now (1983) in Hardisty Nursing Home in Edmonton.

Archie leased land in the Churchill district. He worked at different jobs and met his death on January 20, 1970, when a tree fell on him while he was working in the bush at Dapp, Alberta. He had never married.

Ethel was severely burned when a stove she was attempting to light with kerosene exploded. She died from these burns on July 23, 1953.

John Howey died in May 1943. Ethel, his wife, had a stroke in June 1955 and also passed away.

Margaret Anderson

GERRIT AND GRACE (NANNINGA) INGWERSEN

Gerrit Ingwersen and Grace Nanninga were married October 31, 1937, during the Sunday afternoon service. Rev. H. Van Der Woude united them in marriage using as text, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." After the service it was snowing and the families got together at Nanningas' place for a little celebration. After this Gerrit and Grace went to their new home on the homestead (SW 36-61-3-5) — no honeymoon trip in those days. The weather had cleared and the moon was out, but it was cold.

The house which Gerrit had built was of lumber and had two bedrooms. Gerrit had earned the lumber working with several other young men logging for Bill Williams, who had a sawmill south of Neerlandia. Gerrit and Grace bought all their furnishings — beds, pots and pans, and whatever was needed — at an auction sale for the total cost of eighty dollars. That included a rifle. For a while Gerrit used his dad's machinery, but later he got himself a little John Deere H tractor, a two-bottom plow, a disk, and harrows. They also kept a few chickens, some hogs, a couple of cows, and a horse. Boy, they thought they were rich!

The first load of wheat that Gerrit brought to Barrhead had been frozen. The elevator man took one look and said, "I don't want it," so Gerrit took it back and used it for feed. He had borrowed money to get married so he asked the man he had borrowed it from, "Can you wait a year?" "Okay," he said. Wheat was selling at eighteen cents a bushel. The next year things were better and Gerrit met his obligations.

On October 18, 1938, the Ingwersens' first child, **Elsie**, was born at home. Petertje Schoonekamp was the midwife. Things were starting to pick up a bit and they were milking a few cows and raising some chickens and pigs to provide some income. Gerrit also did a little trapping on the side. This he had started when still at home with his folks. With his seven-dollar 30-30 rifle he would get the occasional coyote, whose fur could bring five dollars if prime. For meat they relied mostly on moose and deer, which they usually smoked. Moose in particular was delicious when smoked and dried. Deer meat was canned or, in winter, hung. It froze and you would "saw a piece off as you needed it." Then there were the prairie chickens, which were plentiful. Gerrit remembers the morning after they were married: "It was really cold and clear and crispy. We could hear these birds as they were sitting in the poplar trees talking to each other. I got the .22 rifle, opened the window, and dropped seven or eight of those lovely big birds. Boy were they good eating. We ate some and the rest Grace canned for future use." Occasionally they would kill a pig to supplement the wild meat.

About this time Gerrit and Grace got their first car. It was a 1927 Chevy Sedan, used, of course, but it ran well. It was a bit tricky to handle, however, and would sometimes take off without warning, either to the right or left. If Gerrit could not stop it in time he would end up across the ditch, sometimes part way up a bunch of willows or against some other obstacle. (Usually the family was not with Gerrit when this happened, as he drove quite a bit faster by himself.) Then he would fix it with wire and get it back on the road. It would be good until the next time the wire wore out.

Gerrit and Grace's second child, **Marjorie** Helen, was born April 13, 1940. As Petertje Schoonekamp was not available, Aaltje Baker had the honour of attending to the proceedings. The farming business was picking up slowly, they were raising more hogs, selling more eggs and cream, and clearing and breaking more land.

Then some farmers got the idea of forming a partnership and doing some logging and milling. Gerrit Ingwersen, George Anema, Corny Nanninga, and Gerrit Gelderman agreed to try it. They bought a timber berth, built a cook shack, put up a barn for horses, built a mill, and started business. Gerrit loved this work and helped saw many a log. At first the men hired cooks, but later their wives moved to the bush with them to do the cooking.

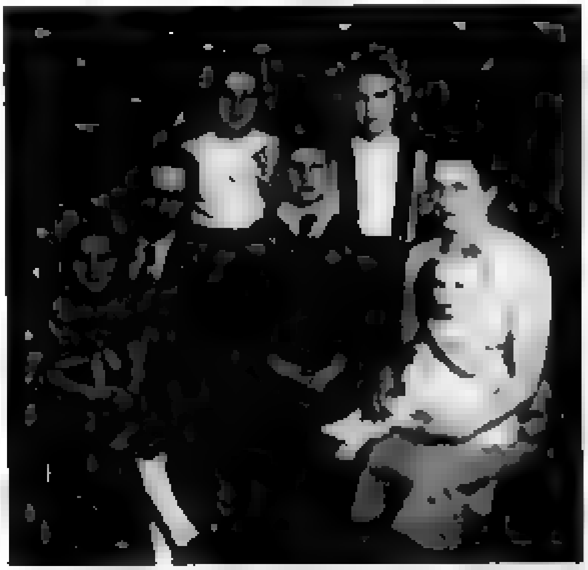
Gerrit stayed home for a while when **Ken** (Kenneth) was born December 18, 1942, in the Barrhead hospital. That same winter Ken developed double pneumonia and was very sick. They had a difficult time getting him to the hospital as the roads were badly drifted. But thanks to the Lord he pulled through.

The following year the whole family moved to the bush. Gerrit and Grace, three children, cows, horses, and everything. Corny and Sena Nanninga also moved lock, stock, and barrel to the bush. By this time the four men had quite a number of men working for them and their wives had the honour of cooking for the whole gang. They acquired a nice supply of lumber but overall what they earned at the mill they lost on the farm.

Gerrit and Grace's fourth child, **Anita**, was born January 24, 1946. That year also saw them back on the old homestead starting over again. But prices were rising and hogs did well. Gerrit even bought a 65-foot windcharger at Cecil Tuininga's sale. It was homemade (of four by fours) except for the last ten feet which carried the charger. They took it down in one piece, hauled it home on two wagons, and put it up again on Gerrit's place — still in one piece.

On July 27, 1949, **Angeline** Grace was born. Gerrit had served a few years as deacon, but when he was elected as elder, he thought this beyond his capacity. Rev. Rubingh, however, told Gerrit that the grace of God was also sufficient for him.

Cousin Reatta, Elsie, Marjorie, and Ken in front of cookshack, 1942



Anita, Gerrit, Marjorie, Ken, Elsie, Grace holding Angeline, c. 1951

The day arrived that Ingwersens were going to have their first holiday What excitement! Banff and Jasper were their goal, and they enjoyed the trip immensely. The mountains and wild animals were unforgettable What a creation! They headed home again and went back to work, but now they knew that there was more to the world than just Neerlandia and its immediate surroundings

By this time farming was getting quite profitable in Neerlandia Hogs were selling at a premium and grain prices were high as well New cars and trucks were becoming a common sight Gerrit's parents and his sister Annie and her husband had moved to B C. and Gerrit and Grace decided to visit them They took their two oldest daughters along because they wanted to pick berries there

Well, it was summer in B C. and the Ingwersens were charmed by what they saw Thoughts of moving started to tease them and they finally made up their minds. Gerrit went back that fall after the harvest and made a down payment on a farm of fifty acres. On October 25 or 26, 1952, they had their farm sale. The next day they loaded everything they wanted to take along on an old one-ton truck that Gerrit had bought and they took off

Another son was born in B C. In 1970 their sons took over the farm and Gerrit and Grace retired and moved to town. This was a difficult adjustment for them to make, but now they are settled in and Gerrit spends his time doing woodwork

Gerrit Ingwersen

JOHN AND ROSE (TIEMSTRA) INGWERSEN

I, John Ingwersen, was born in 1918 on the Ingwersen homestead. I remember when I was three or four years old, waking up early in the morning and my back was sore. I felt the bed which I was lying on and all the straw in the sack had gone to the sides. I was lying on poles with only the covering of the sack between my back and the poles. Another time, I came out of bed in the morning and there were pots and pans all over the floor of the kitchen, with water dripping in each one. Mother told me to go under the table, which was the only dry place After giving me something to eat she told me to go outside. I could not believe that my mother would send me out while it was raining, but when I got outside the sun was shining and it was nice and warm.

Not too long after that, our family moved into a house built next to the second Co-op store. After we moved to our new home, things started changing quite rapidly for me and not exactly to my liking In September I had to go to school, which was totally unexpected. My first teacher was Bill van Ark. He was a big man and able to mete out punishment very well. I can't remember all the teachers I had, most of them were quite dull. But one particularly stands out: McKitrick or Mac, as he was mostly called What a whale of a time we students had in those four short months When we found out that he was a real softie we really took advantage of it. Almost every day, especially when the weather was nice, we would take off for the bush. This always happened during noon hour. I was at a disadvantage because I lived close to school and I had to go home to eat I would tell mother that I had to hurry up because we had special games to play, so she would help me along. Then I would go around the church and into the bush so Mac would not see me. The problem then was finding the gang. Sometimes they were a half a mile away but I could usually find them, not only because of the noise they made, but also because of the smoke, which one could smell a long way off. We used to take the long, green hair of tamarac trees, roll it in newspaper, and smoke it. We even thought it tasted good! The last teacher I had was Mr. A C. Ashley. He was a good disciplinarian and a real sportsman. When it was recess or noon hour he was always out there with us to play ball or whatever. With him there was only one way to play and that was to win. Many a time the noon hour was extended when the wrong team was winning and I must say it was not too often when we came in that he, or rather his team, had not won

When I was about eight or nine, we had a birthday party at George Anema's. It was in January and we were playing wild horse. I had a rope tied to my leg and was standing on slippery ice when someone yanked the rope and I fell on the back of my head. For just a minute I was unconscious but then came to. I felt sick so I went home, which was a mile of walking. After going a quarter mile, blood started coming out of both my ears. I made it home and they put me to bed. For two weeks I was in a sort of coma — never went to a doctor, but survived. Later a doctor told me "You are lucky you are alive; your skull was cracked on both sides and if you hadn't walked home the blood would have gone on your brain and you would have died."

In the early days there were no fences around the farms so the horses and cattle could roam far and wide. They usually followed a creek or went to large meadows where there was a lot of grass. When I was not very old, it became my job to get the cattle or horses. We had a tame old horse called Pat that we used to get the cows. Pat, the dog, and I could usually find them because they had bells on. But when the horses were loose, Pat was with them and it was a different story. One time my brother Gerrit told me to get the horses. I went west about a mile, then south to the creek which went over Beaumont's place. Quite often they would be there, but not today. What to do? If I went further southeast along the creek, the bush became thick and there could be bears, and I was only ten years old. But, on the other hand, if I came home without the horses, Gerrit would call me a baby. Well, I certainly did not want to be called a baby! So on I went. After about another half mile I came to another large meadow and there were some buildings there too, a log shack and a small log barn, but no one was living there. I thought, "No one probably knows about this, boy have I got a story to tell when I get home." I found the horses there also, feeding in the large meadow. I jumped on Pat and chased the others home. When I came home, I was all excited. I first told Gerrit, because he wanted to know what took me so long. He listened to my story and decided I was imagining things. At the supper table I told my story again and Dad said that it must be Beaumont's as well, which it was, where Oene Piers later lived.

About 1940 brush cutters came into the district, first for use on an ordinary tractor. John used one with their John Deere tractor (This steel-wheeled tractor was bought new in 1937 for $1405). Even though the tractor had a lot of weight, it often got stuck. So they had to have another tractor available just for pulling the other one out. Cor Hiemstra wanted some brush cutting done, so George Anema and John decided to try it. It did not work out well as John lost an eye from flying wood.

John using his tractor to clear some land

On October 24, 1941, John married Rose Tiemstra. They lived on John's dad's farm (NE 33-61 3-5). John started out working for his dad at twenty dollars per month. They got meat and milk and so on, but even so it was a pretty poor existence. In the summer of '42, Bill Olthuis asked John to help him with well drilling. This John did, and their financial situation improved considerably. John would do the field work and the harvesting in the fall for his dad, and when that was finished he would go well drilling.

In 1945 Bill Olthuis and John Ingwersen bought a sawmill, setting it up on John's place. They logged on Jake Schuurman's farm. Bill, John, and Jake hauled the logs out and, at the mill, sawed them into square timber, which was used for barns and other farm buildings. They also began custom-sawing logs, which they did for several years. Whenever the weather was suitable, they would saw lumber, the customer would come with two or more men to bring the logs to the mill and to take the lumber away. These people would all eat their noon meal at the Ingwersens so, along with their own gang, they would often have six or seven men eating at their place. (Lunches would also be brought out to the mill at 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.) Since their children were still small, Rose used to have a hired girl. Most of the time this was Cobie Mast, who would work both in the house and also in the barn, especially when sows were farrowing. One night, after slabs had been burned close to the mill, a wind came up and the mill burned down. John and Bill, with some help and advice, rebuilt a better and faster mill. After three or four years, they sold the mill.

Sawing logs

In the fall of 1946, John and some others bought a D8 Caterpillar tractor with John Molodowich, although he sold them his share by springtime. They bought a brush cutter and piler for the Caterpillar and went to work clearing land. After a year-and-a-half of trying to farm and driving Cat, John sold his share and tried to stick to farming.

After 1947, John and Rose had several bad years in which they were hailed out, so John went back to what he knew best and enjoyed. He bought another mill, which was more portable than the previous ones, and went back to the bush. In 1959 John sold the mill and stuck to farming.

John skidding logs.

John and Rose have five children: **Winnifred** Rose, born May 29, 1942, **Marion** Evelyn, born June 14, 1944, **Neil** (Cornelius) John, born March 2, 1950; **Myrna** Maxine, born June 11, 1955, and **Dale** Stanley, born August 6, 1958.

Back: Winnifred, Myrna, Neil, Marion. Front: Rose, Dale, John.

In 1959 Winnifred married Henry Piers. Henry and Winnifred later went to California, but in 1965, when they came back to Canada, John and Rose decided to go into partnership with them. John and Rose sold their farm and with Henry and Winnifred, bought a dairy farm in Abbotsford, B.C. Their daughter Marion had married Ken Piers in 1963, so the move to B.C. was made with the three youngest children. Four years later, they sold the dairy farm. John later worked for Cargill, an American company that raises hogs. John and Rose are retired and live in Abbotsford, B.C.

John Ingwersen

HARRY AND CATHERINE (HIEMSTRA) JANSSEN

Harry (Henry) Martin Janssen was born in Edmonton on September 27, 1917. Once, before Harry was born, his father, Bart Janssen, had attempted to make a living in Neerlandia, and he had tried again shortly after Harry arrived. Thus Harry recalls that when he was three years old, they left for Edmonton with all of the furniture loaded on the hayrack and the cows tied behind. The third time Harry's family came to Neerlandia it was 1938 and Harry was twenty years old. He was quite able to carry his load of

the work, and came to put in the crop before his parents arrived.

A few years later Harry met Tenie Hiemstra and they were married December 22 1942, when the new house which they were building on the NE 21-62-3-5 was ready. Harry was a farmer from the ground up and a great help to his father. But Harry owned only the south half of the quarter, and eighty acres was not enough to make a living on, so one and a half years later Harry and Tenie moved to B.C. That was to be a short stay, however, determined by Harry's mother passing away in 1948. Bart Janssen wanted his son to come back to Neerlandia, so while Bart went to the Netherlands for one year Harry took care of the land. This could not remain a permanent situation because there simply was not enough land for Harry, his father, and his brother Jack. In 1950 Harry and Tenie moved onto the Henry Hiemstra homestead (SE 20-61 3-5). They stayed there for five years. Then, because Tenie became ill, they followed her parents to Abbotsford, B C

Harry, Tenie, 1963.

Tenie kept herself busy with handicrafts of all sorts and loved teaching Calvinettes. She died of cancer on November 12, 1978. Although Harry never stayed long in Neerlandia, he loved farming and the community life, and still calls it "back home". He appreciates the scenic country and continues to come for visits in the summer.

Harry Janssen

LAMBERTUS AND LILLIAN (TAYLOR) JANSSEN

Albert (Lambertus) Janssen (November 3, 1912) married Lily (Lilian) Taylor, who was a farmer's daughter, born April 26, 1917, in Namao. After she married Albert, they moved to Edmonton where they stayed for seven years. During this time their two oldest sons were born: **Bert** (Lambertus, September 7, 1937) and **Bob** (Robert) David (December 30, 1939). Albert was working for a dairy farmer for two hundred dollars a year.

Lambertus, Lillian, 1937

Neerlandia proved to be irresistible when it offered Albert the possibility of having a farm of his own. Albert and his brother Harry bought Fred Morin's homestead, the NE 21-62-3-5, in March 1944. Harry had the south eighty acres and Albert had the north. On May 1, Albert came out with his oldest son, Bert, and Bob joined him in June. Since the house was not finished yet, that wet summer they lived in two granaries — one for sleeping and one for eat-

Bob, Bert, 1941

ing. Soon after Lillian arrived, the third son, **Jack** (Jacob) Wallace was born (August 24, 1944).

That summer a well was being drilled, but in the meantime the young family had to get water from an old shallow well. The goats slept on the shallow well, and Bert had to chase them off before he could draw water.

The granaries had been less than ideal for the summer, but by the time the end of October rolled around, they were unbearable because of the freezing cold. On Sunday, November 1, the Janssens moved into their unfinished 18 by 24-foot house. Heat was available from an airtight stove.

Albert began clearing the land by hand, grubbing the large trees and chopping down the little ones for the first seven acres. The next eleven were cut with a brush cutter and piled by hand, and the rest were cleared off with a Caterpillar by Bill Olthuis and Louis Nanninga. In all ninety acres were cleared.

Bert and Bob had begun school already when **Betty** (Elizabeth) Joan was born on May 14, 1946. Bert, Bob, and Jack began school in a small schoolhouse one-half mile north of their home. When Bert was in grade six, a new Vega school was built in the community. But in 1951 school buses started running and the Janssen children were able to attend Neerlandia school.

In March 1948 the Janssens bought their first tractor. A few months later, on July 12, **Martin** Harry was born. Then in 1949 Albert bought Harry's land and moved the barn to his own yard. He built an 18 by 24-foot garage as well. In December Albert bought his first car, a Meteor. During the next years Albert bought two more quarters and built larger barns.

Albert loved animals and had worked as an assistant to an old veterinarian in Edmonton when he was young. In 1950 the closest veterinarian was forty miles away in Westlock. Because Albert had had experience in this area, neighbours within a twenty-mile radius began calling him to help them with their sick or hurt animals. Albert and Lillian also built a three-bedroom home, landscaping it with trees and flowers, which they both loved.

Besides additions to their property and livestock, there were some additions to the Janssen family in these years. On January 31, 1952, **Viola** Wilhelmina was born. Close on her heels came **Ivan** Ross on September 6, 1953, and then **Nora** Agnes on June 5, 1955. Almost two years later to the day, on June 6, 1957, **June** Eunice was born, and she was followed in two years again by **Sylvia** Ruth on June 13, 1959. Finally on May 1, 1964, **Paul** Frances was born.

Back: Betty, Bob, Ivan, Jack, Bert, Martin, June. Front: Lillian, Paul, Nora, Vi, Sylvia, Lambertus, c. 1971

It was around 1950 that Albert hurt his back while root picking. This bothered him for the rest of his life. Only toward the end of his life

Back: Betty, Martin. Front: Ivan, Viola, 1954.

did tests in Edmonton show that he had a severe rupture.

Albert received training and certification as artificial insemination technician and was soon busy. In 1958, Kit Robinson, the district agriculturist, and Albert began the Vega Artificial Insemination unit. From five hundred to one thousand cattle were inseminated each year. As the amount of work increased, Bob joined his father in the work. Albert was involved in it until he died in 1973.

Shortly after her husband's death, Lillian moved to the Neerlandia hamlet where she lives today. By then most of the children were married.

Bert married Bertha Strydhorst. Bob married Jean Utas from Fort Assiniboine. Jack married Gladys Kippers. Betty married Lambert Tuininga. Martin, his wife, and their three sons make their home in Spruce Grove where Marty is employed as an Equipment Operator for the Stanley Company.

Vi is married to Ed Fillion. Ivan and his wife, Janet, have two sons. Ivan owns a tractor and low boy trailer unit and now lives with his family in Millet, Alberta. Nora married Maynard Mast. June married Claus Langeveld. Sylvia lives with her son, **Skyler** Allen (November 28, 1977), in Edmonton. Paul also lives in Edmonton and is working in a sheltered workshop.

Janssen family

JIM AND MINNIE (FOX) JOHNMAN

Jim Johnman was born in Killearn, Scotland, on March 16, 1904. He and his brother, **Bill** were the first of the Johnman family to come to Canada in 1921. In 1927 their father, **James**, left his sheep farm in Fifeshire, Scotland, and came to Canada with his wife, **Joan**, their son **Pete**, 17 years old, and Joan's father, **William Petrie**. They all came to Neerlandia at that time.

Minnie Fox was born in Winnipeg on August 30, 1911. She came to Alberta with her family and married Jim on July 21, 1934.

Jim, Minnetta, c. 1934.

Jim and Minnie farmed the S-½ 14-61-3-5 in Neerlandia. Jim also worked as a carpenter and helped build many homes and other buildings. He worked on the Neerlandia Church and Store, and also on the old Barrhead hospital.

All three brothers, Jim, Pete and Bill, enlisted in the army, their reasons being poverty and patriotism. Pete enlisted in 1940 and remained in the army for 4½ years. He trained in Grande Prairie and became instructor in the Ordnance Corps in Kingston, Ontario. Jim was Corporal of the Infantry in the Royal Edmonton

Regiment. Bill was a jeep driver for the Infantry in the Royal Edmonton Regiment, and fought in Africa and Sicily. While in action his jeep was blown up. He was hospitalized, but recovered.

After the army, Pete worked in the Neerlandia Co-op with Jan Koning. He helped to insulate the store and some homes in the area. Later he worked in a sawmill in Moose Wallow, and after that went to Edmonton to start carpentry work. Pete married twice, and had three daughters and three sons. He lived in the Wigetak Senior Citizens Home in Gunn until his death in March 1984.

Jim and Minnie returned to the family farm in 1944 and continued to reside in Neerlandia until 1957. At that time, they sold their farm to Gerrit van Dijken and moved to Edmonton.

The family consisted of five boys. The oldest son, **Bob**, was born January 26, 1936. He and his family live in Chilliwack, B.C. **Dan** (October 13, 1939) resides with his family in Germany. He is stationed there with the Armed Forces. **Dave** (April 3, 1938), **Bill** (October 7, 1946), and **John** (August 14, 1949) live with their families in Edmonton.

Jim's brother, Bill, passed away in 1959 and is buried in Mellowdale, along with his parents James and Joan, and William Petrie. Jim Johnman passed away October 31, 1974. Minnie still lives in their Edmonton home.

Willie Johnman

GERRIT AND CLARA (KRIKKE) KIPPERS

At six weeks of age Gerrit Kippers came with his parents to Neerlandia. There was never a dull moment for pioneer kids because there was much work to do! Chores, hauling firewood, trapping, and cutting wood all filled the short days. One winter Gerrit and his father sawed the winter's wood all by hand with a cross-cut saw. Gerrit was trapping squirrels, weasels, and skunks already when he was thirteen years old. He also shot rabbits for eating.

In the spring of 1926, when Gerrit was only fourteen, he said to his teacher, "I'm quitting school — there is so much to do at home". The teacher replied, "I don't blame you", and from then on Gerrit worked on the farm. That summer he helped his father clear land with an axe and liked that far better than school.

Sometime in the early 1930s, Gerrit, along with Abe Plantinga, Klaas H. Wierenga, and Roy and Stanley Morin, took a contract to clear and pile brush for Arie Rylaarsdam. They each cleared ten acres. Gerrit filed on SE 13-62-4-5 and cleared about twenty acres, but never lived there. There was no proper road to the quarter, and in 1950 he sold the land to Jake Schuurman.

Clara Krikke was raised in Neerlandia. She was always active on the farm — a life she loved. When she was young, Clara was often absent from school in the fall because she was needed at home to keep the cows out of the grain. Her formal education ended in grade nine when she came down with whooping cough right after harvest. She had missed many lessons, and Mr. Ashley knew she was indispensable on the farm, so he allowed her to quit. Clara went on with what she had been already doing on the farm, only now it was full-time. She milked four or five cows, stooked bundles, drove three horses for summerfallowing, and helped with threshing in the fall. She was fond of horses and owned one which she rode around the countryside. Clara's parents were in poor health, and she became number one chore girl, until her marriage to Gerrit.

Gerrit had an old Ford one-ton truck, 1928 Vintage, nicknamed Noah's Ark. Once while still courting, Gerrit and Clara stopped on their way home from Barrhead, picked a beautiful bunch of roses on a hill in Mellowdale and decorated Noah's Ark with them. When they drove into Neerlandia one resident teased them saying, "So you got married and didn't get churched, hey?" They did get churched on February 8, 1942. They were the last couple to be married in Neerlandia by Rev. H. Van Der Woude before he moved back to the U.S.

About two weeks before the wedding Gerrit and Clara went to Edmonton, and for $210.00 they purchased everything essential for their wedding and home furnishing: a cook stove (less than $10.00), china cabinet, bed and table with chairs, groceries, wedding clothes, rings, cooking pots, and dishes. This all went into a little two-room house that they had moved to the yard of Gerrit's parents (NE 10-62-3-5). At a bridal shower held at Annie and Helen Emmerzael's home, Clara received a comforter, some dishes, and other useful items.

Gerrit farmed with his father and brothers and also continued to trap in the winter. He would get approximately $4.00 for a skunk pelt, 35 cents for squirrels, $2.00 for weasels, and $15-20.00 for coyotes. His best coyote pelt was

Clara, Gerrit, 1939.

sold for thirty-five dollars, but that was a rare price. Years after Gerrit sold a coyote pelt and could only buy a box of shells in return. He quit hunting coyotes after that.

Cornelia Martina was born to Gerrit and Clara on December 10, 1942, **Jennie** Rena on July 8, 1944, and **Louise** Gertrude on January 14, 1946.

In 1947 Gerrit and Clara decided to move to NE 9-62-3-5, which Gerrit purchased from his father. The little house was moved to the new place when Clara was in the hospital giving birth to **Arlene** Claire (July 9, 1947). Their first son, **Bill** (Gerrit William), was born January 27, 1949. The children were growing fast. When Cor and Jennie were little, they were real climbers and would even climb into the separator bowl.

Gerrit built a new house in 1950. When they moved in the kids ran from one room to another like wild Indians, loving the space.

Gerrit slowly began buying his own machinery. He raised chickens and sold the eggs, milked cows for the cream, raised pigs and grew grain. In 1952 he had seventy acres with a nice crop of wheat, but a big hailstorm came through and that nice crop yielded only ten bushels in total. There was hail for three years in a row, and money was not too plentiful. So in 1955 Gerrit bought hail insurance.

Gerrit and Clara were blessed with five more children. **Gladys** Josephine (February 23, 1952), **Annette** June (February 3, 1954), **Faye** Lorraine (April 15, 1959), **Harvey** Arthur (February 11, 1961), and **Alfred** Clarence (August 29, 1963). None of the children were ever seriously ill. Clara always had a huge garden and canned over 1200 quarts of food yearly. She had time to do only a few chores such as gathering eggs, slopping hogs, or milking. In the fall she still helped with the harvest. Sewing and patching were necessary too. She was always busy.

Back: Jennie, Louise, Cor holding Gladys, Arlene. Front: Annette, Bill, 1956.

Gerrit enjoyed farming and began to expand his land base. In 1961 he purchased NE 18-62-3-5 from the government at a public land sale held in Barrhead. The quarter had forty acres cleared and cost $800.00. He also purchased NW 32-61-3-5 in 1966. Gerrit grew registered oats on some new breaking, and his records indicate that in 1962 he sold 1016 bushels for $438.80. In 1962 a new John Deere combine, pull type with power takeoff, which could handle an eight-foot swath, cost $2951.00. He also bought a John Deere 420 Crawler in April 1962. He used it, among other things, to break land, clear snow, and push brush piles.

In 1974 Gerrit and Clara sold the farm to Bill and retired. Bill had already bought the NE 18-62-3-5 from his father in 1964. He enjoys grain farming and also works for Zeidler Forest Industries Ltd.

On November 16, 1974, Bill married **Bev**

Meunier. Bev was born in Barrhead on December 15, 1956. When she met Bill she was working at Barrhead General Hospital in the sanitation department, and continued working there until 1978.

Bill and Bev have a family of three girls: **Rae Jean** Amber (February 5, 1979), **Julaine** Marie (December 22, 1981), and **Ashley** Lynn (January 11, 1984).

Bill keeps very busy with his full-time job and the farm, but still finds enough time to play fastball with the Neerlandia Lakers. Bev enjoys plants, needlework, crafts and gardening. She will remember 1984 because that is the year she obtained her driver's license.

The children, except for one, live in Alberta. Cornelia married Leonard Hayes and lives in Mystery Lake. Jennie married Bob Nienhuis and lives in Edmonton. Louise is married to Robert Rietveld and resides in St. Albert. Arlene is married to Norman Vriend and lives at Houston, B.C. Gladys married a local boy, Jack Janssen, and they live in Vega. Annette married Eric Ronaasen from Mellowdale. Faye is single and lives at home. She attended Dordt College for two years and now works at Barrhead Pizza. Harvey also lives at home and is employed by Art Gibbs of Barrhead as an apprentice carpenter. Alfred married Shelley McKeever, and they reside in Mellowdale.

Gerrit and Clara Kippers

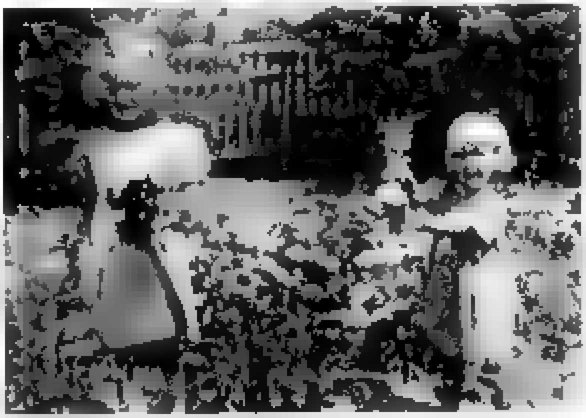
HENRY AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) KIPPERS

Henry and Sophie were married on August 18, 1935. That night it froze so hard that all the crops and gardens were gone. Their farmstead was located on NW 16-62-3-5. Their first daughter, **Hennie**, was born September 18, 1936. Their second child was stillborn (February 1938).

Both Henry and Sophie enjoyed visiting but because they had no horses they were quite limited in whom they could visit. Often Henry carried Hennie on his shoulders and they all walked to Henry's parents' place. The Kippers' also hauled their water because they had no well. Henry would haul water in two barrels. Once when Henry was pretty close to home, one barrel tipped and all the water was gone.

Henry, Sophie, 1934

Two more girls were added to the family: **Jean** on May 12, 1939, and **Tena** on May 30, 1940. The first three children were born at home. **Henry** (born June 3, 1941), as well as the rest of the children, was born in the Barrhead hospital. More girls were added to the family: **Grace** on September 17, 1943; **Gladys** Lillian on November 1, 1944, and **Linda** on August 18, 1946. By this time, things on the farm had improved. The Kippers' had their own water supply and a good barn with a hay loft.



Hennie Jean, 1941

A second son, **Lennert,** was born February 27, 1949. At this time a terrible snowstorm hit, so they had to travel by sleigh over the fields to get to Barrhead. That same year, on a windy spring day, the Kippers' barn burned down. Two miles west of their place a bush fire was burning. The wind carried a spark to their straw stack, which went up in flames, and then sparks got into the hay loft of the barn. Sophie and the children (Henry was away) tried their best to douse the fire with water, but to no avail. She did manage to get the livestock out of the barn in time, though. The Kippers family was very thankful for the community's help in rebuilding what was lost through the fire

On November 5, 1950, **Clarence** was born, followed by **Christine** on March 1, 1953. Henry and Sophie sold their farm in February 1954 to Albert Elgersma and moved west of Barrhead Their last child, **Andrew**, was born October 25, 1954. Now the children have all grown up, married, and are busy with their own families and occupations.

In 1973, Henry and Sophie made another move, this time to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton. They are enjoying life in the home.

Sophie Kippers

JAN AND JACOBA (NAAFS) KONING

Jan Koning was born March 3, 1898, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In 1926 he immigrated to Canada. He went to Lloydminster, Alberta, where he got a job on a farm. This was a big change from an office job in the old country and he was inexperienced. Nevertheless, he had a small house to live in and a job.

In the Netherlands, Jacoba Maria Naafs (November 4, 1897) was waiting to be Jan's bride. In January 1927 he let her know she could come to Canada. Since in those days it was greatly frowned upon for a single girl to go to a faraway land to a boyfriend, they had decided to get married by proxy. Before Jan sailed for Canada he signed the legal papers at Amsterdam's *Stadhuis*. On January 13, 1927, Jacoba, Jan's brother Wim, and the wedding party also went to the *Stadhuis*. Wim stood up in place of Jan and Jacoba signed the papers and went through the ceremony. Thus Jan and Jacoba were married. After the trip to the *Stadhuis*, the rest of the ceremony took place in Jacoba's parents' home in Amsterdam. It was quite a normal wedding; Jacoba wore a lovely wedding gown which she had made herself since she was a seamstress, and she carried a lovely bouquet of flowers. Many relatives were there and they had a party after the ceremony. Everything seemed quite normal — only Jan, the bridegroom, was far away in Canada and did not even know the exact date and time of the wedding While he was doing his farm chores he received a telegram from Jacoba informing him that they were now married. Jan told his boss and acquaintances that he now was a married man

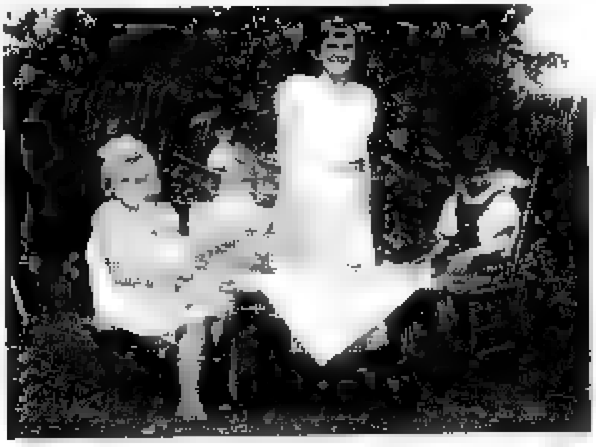
Soon after the 'wedding', Jacoba said goodbye to her parents, relatives, and friends and sailed for Canada She knew only half a dozen words of English, but arrived in Lloydminster safely. This was the beginning of a lonely life for Jacoba. She and Jan attended the Presbyterian Church there and, because Jan had missed the wedding vows, they went through the ceremony again so he would feel that he was actually married. On December 20, 1927, **Tena** (Albertina) was born and on June 5, 1929, **Betty** (Elizabeth) Christina was born to Jan and Jacoba

After three years the family moved to Freeman River, where they were told a Christian Reformed settlement was to be started. Here Jan bought a farm and built a house and barn He spent a lot of money, but all in vain. The fields had light soil and many rocks and would not produce crops. Jacoba made butter and cheese and sold it to neighbouring bachelors and to the local store at Fort Assiniboine, which was about twenty miles away. Jacoba stayed at home and often did not see another woman for six months at a time Once in a great while the family would go by horses and wagon to Barrhead Certain parts of the road were very sandy and sometimes almost impassable

Living conditions were very poor for the Konings. Jan and some other men went hunting regularly and brought home moose, deer, and bear for meat on the table. But the Christian Reformed settlement never did materialize

In 1933, Jan heard that the Neerlandia Co-op was looking for a new manager. He applied and got the job; that was a day of rejoicing. The move to Neerlandia was made just in time for Tena to begin school. Now finally they were living in a Dutch settlement with a Christian Reformed Church. On August 25, 1935, **Rita** (Maria) Jacoba was born in the hospital in Barrhead with Dr. Verreau in attendance

Jacoba spent many hours helping in the store while Sophie Wierenga and Minnie Lievers minded the children. After the Konings were established somewhat better, they bought a car. Loe Reyse was a very good helper in the



Betty, Tena, Alice and Gerrit Lievers. 1933.

store so the Konings were able to go on holidays to Sylvan Lake for a week one July Sophie Wierenga went with them.

Jan, Tena, Betty, Rita, Jacoba, c. 1937

The day when radios went for sale in the store was an exciting one. Soon many people were buying them. These were battery-operated radios and required a long aerial up on poles. Jan installed these as far as the Vega ferry to the north, Grandale to the east, and Mellowdale to the south. Betty and Tena often accompanied their dad on these trips.

Store business went well and a new Co-op store was completed in 1938. Konings lived upstairs in the new building and enjoyed battery-powered lights and running water for the first time in Canada. Jacoba spent many hours in the Post Office and also checking the McKaskey in the store each day.

Bertha Wierenga minded the children and helped in the house. She accompanied the Konings on one of their trips to Banff. Sadie Reitsma, one of the girls who worked in the store, also accompanied them on two of the trips. On their first trip to Banff they were surprised that the car could make the steep hills, but it was not uncommon to have to put their thermos of tea in the radiator.

Ready for vacation. Jan, 1930s.

Jan and Aubrey Ashley obtained films from the National Film Board and showed them in the Neerlandia Community Hall. This was a big event and many people appreciated these educational pictures. Jan and Aubrey also showed these films in surrounding communities. The Koning and Ashley children all got to go along even though it meant extreme overcrowding in one car.

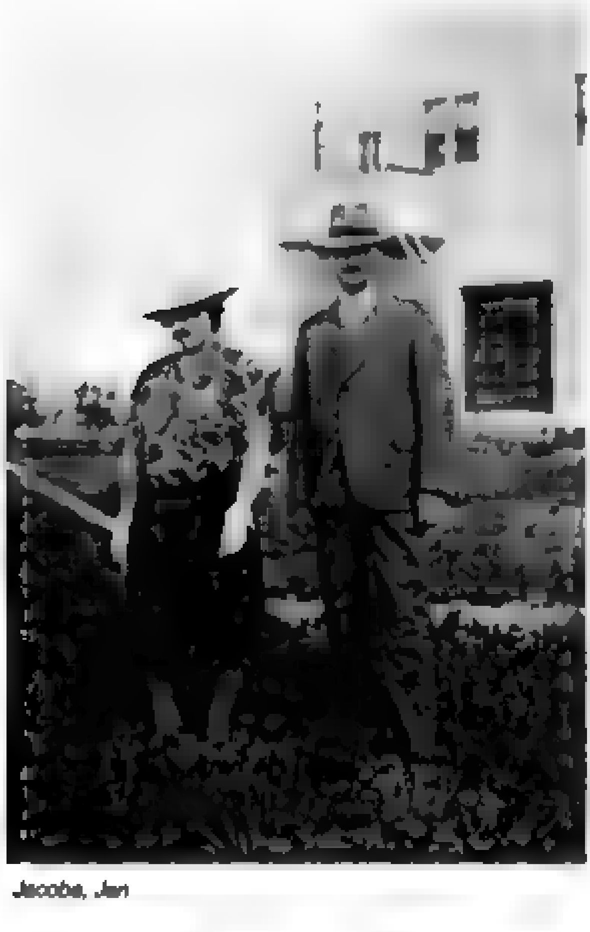
On May 30, 1940, an important event took place: little **Johnny** (Jan) was born. Jan was so overjoyed that he treated all the Neerlandia school children to a chocolate bar and an orange.

For the store board meetings, which were held regularly, Jacoba would always prepare a plate of sandwiches and cake. One evening one of the girls brought the sandwiches downstairs, knocked on the door, and dropped all the sandwiches on the floor. A rather embarrassed Jacoba quickly made a new batch. Jacoba also welcomed the store clerks into her kitchen each day for coffee and tea. She always provided a big plate of bread and a can of jam for them.

Jacoba gave sewing lessons to the schoolgirls twelve years and older after school. She did this once a week in her home and always provided a snack. She also organized an evening of entertainment by the girls which was put on for their parents. The highlight of the evening was a tableau entitled "Faith, Hope, and Charity." All the lights in the hall were turned off except the ones shining on the three girls who were holding the symbols representing Faith, Hope, and Charity, while the other girls sang a hymn offstage. Besides the tableau there were several skits, songs, and recitations.

During the war, many Neerlandia women joined the Red Cross Society, which met regularly in the community hall. At one of these meetings Jacoba was elected president. She was rather shocked and surprised as she was a quiet, shy person. She sought help from the Lord and He helped her to do a good job. The women knit many, many pairs of mitts and socks for the soldiers overseas.

The Koning family and the Pete Bootsma family of Barrhead had become acquainted when the Konings moved to Freeman River. Now they visited each other a lot and spent every Christmas and New Year's Day together. Jan and Pete spent hours playing checkers together.



Jacoba, Jan

In 1942, Jan sent Betty and Tena to Alberta College in Edmonton to take grade ten. They stayed in the dormitory and once they got over their homesickness they had a good year.

In the fall of 1944, Jan heard of a store for sale in Houston, B.C. He was very interested in a business of his own, but only in a settlement where there was a Christian Reformed Church. The Konings took the train to Houston to have a look and decided to move there. The Neerlandia people planned a surprise farewell party for them. The evening before the party, Elsie Ashley sent Kenneth over with a note for Jacoba saying, "Do up your hair tonight." The Konings enjoyed a lovely farewell and left for Houston in April 1945.

Jan became quite ill with heart trouble in 1952 and he died at the age of fifty-eight on April 10, 1956. Jacoba is eighty-six and still living in Houston, B.C. All four children are married and have their own families.

Betty Lieuwen
Tena Sturwold

FRANK AND SOPHIE (BOGACH) KOWALCHUK

Frank Kowalchuk (Kowalczyk) was born in 1902 in Kausuw, Poland, where his parents lived on a little farm. In 1930 Frank immigrated to Canada with his mother, four sisters, and a brother. They settled in the Shoal Creek area because there were many Polish and Ukrainian settlers already homesteading there. Frank chose the SE 36-61-3-5 as his homestead. He was 28 years old at the time, and many days he cleared land from 4:00 a.m. until dark.

Sophie Bogach was born in Poland in 1912. In 1937 she came to Glenevis, Alberta, with her family. The next year, 1938, she and Frank Kowalchuk were married. They had four children: **Mary** was born in 1939, **Joseph** in 1943, **Raymond** in 1947, and **Victoria** in 1951.

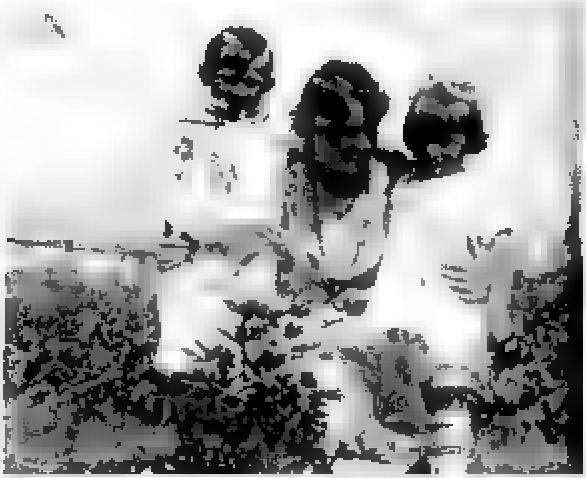
In 1956 Frank and Sophie purchased the NE 25-61-3-5, a quarter section of crown land adjoining their homestead. They farmed until their retirement in 1973, when they sold the farm to Victoria and her husband. Frank died in 1974. Sophie is now in Barrhead Nursing Home (1984).

Mary Kowalchuk married George Kostiniuk in 1958 and lives in Glendon, Alberta. Joseph worked part-time at Neerlandia Motors from 1960 until his death in a car accident near Vega in 1963. Raymond disliked the bus ride to Barrhead, so he attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1962. He married Judy Kenely in 1967 and they live in Burnaby, British Columbia. Victoria attended Neerlandia School from 1958 to 1965. She married Frank Brunner of Vega in 1968. They sold the Kowalchuk homestead in the 1970s and are now farming near Fawcett, Alberta.

Raymond Kowalchuk
Victoria Brunner

JAMES AND THELMA (HARE) LEVY

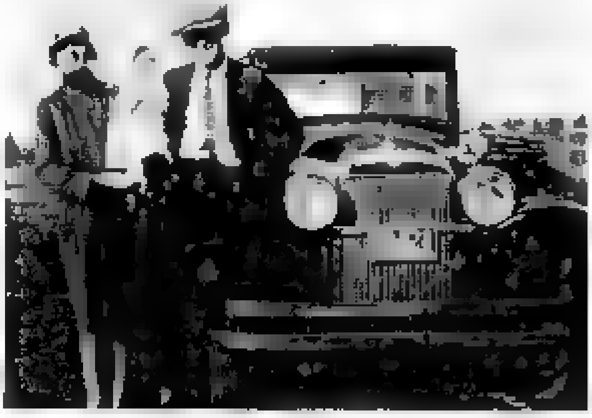
James and Thelma Levy both taught in Neerlandia on two separate occasions. Thelma came first, as a single woman in the spring of 1923. She had been born Lillie Thelma Hare at Fort Saskatchewan and attended Normal School in Edmonton. When school closed in the fall of 1923, she left the community.



Thelma with Wim and Zus van Ark. 1923.

In the spring of 1926 James R. Levy came to teach in Neerlandia. He boarded with the Toney Sturwold family. He, too, left at the end of the term. James Levy had been born April 2, 1899, at Waterville (now Vaughns), Nova Scotia, and was educated at Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

After teaching in Neerlandia, he met Thelma and they married July 23, 1927, in a Baptist church in Vancouver, Washington. While attending summer school at the U of A in 1928, they saw and answered an advertisement in the *Edmonton Bulletin* which indicated that Neerlandia was in need of two teachers.



Thelma, Buddy, Jim, 1928.

In August, James and Thelma left for Neerlandia with **Buddie** (James) Myron, their three-month-old son. He had been born May 28, 1928. The Levys stayed with the Schoonekamps until they were able to move into the vacant Willem de Groot house. Minnie Lievers and Tena Anema cared for Buddie while his mother taught. Thelma quit teaching in December 1929 because she was expecting her second child. **Hugh** Carroll was born March 29, 1930, in the Immaculata Hospital in Westlock. The Levys left Neerlandia in 1930 to take up teaching positions in Boyle, Alberta.

Thelma Levy

CARL K. AND ANNE (NUSL) MAST

Carl Mast came to Edmonton with his parents in 1911. He first found work in a meat packing plant, but after his father, Koop, died in 1915, he went to help his mother, Minke, and brother Henry on the homestead. On June 11, 1918, Carl enlisted in the Canadian army, but the army was demobilized later that year since World War I was over.

Carl filed on NW 21-61-3-5 on August 15, 1919. He never proved this land up, however, and in fact was more interested in studying. Thus in the twenties he left for Edmonton to attend Alberta College where he stayed in residence. He was working for his teacher's degree, but he did not obtain his permit as there was no need for teachers with men returning after World War I and re-entering the teaching force.

After attending college Carl worked as a

truck driver between Westlock and Edmonton While trucking Carl got arthritis very badly, and had to spend a long time in the Westlock hospital

In Westlock Carl met Anne Mary Nusl Anne had been born February 22, 1907, in Candace, Bohemia, Czechoslovakia. She came to live in Glenevis with her family when a young girl. When she met Carl, she was working as chief cook in the Westlock Hotel. On June 8, 1940, Carl and Anne were married

Carl and Anne first lived in a little shack at the Neerlandia Corner. Later they built a house in the place where their shack had stood. Here Carl built a machine shed and became a dealer for Oliver and, later, John Deere machinery. Since his physical condition did not allow him to do heavy work, he found employment in various places He worked for a time as a sub-agent with various insurance companies such as Mutual and Wawanesa, and later became an agent himself. He had a real estate business also. Besides this he was a Justice of the Peace He had beautiful handwriting, and also served the community by writing legal letters for people In the fall of 1939 Carl had become a trustee, representing the Neerlandia area in the Pembina school division. He served as trustee for many years

Soon after they were married Carl and Anne adopted a girl, **Marilyn** Ann (May 15, 1941). They later adopted a boy whom they called **Kenneth** Carl (July 27, 1948).

C.K., Anne, Marilyn, c. 1947

Carl was a kind man and a helpful neighbour Anne was also an asset to the community Anne will be remembered for her superb cooking since she catered for many weddings and other celebrations. Her flower and vegetable garden was a joy to behold and she shared the produce with her neighbours at the Neerlandia Corner

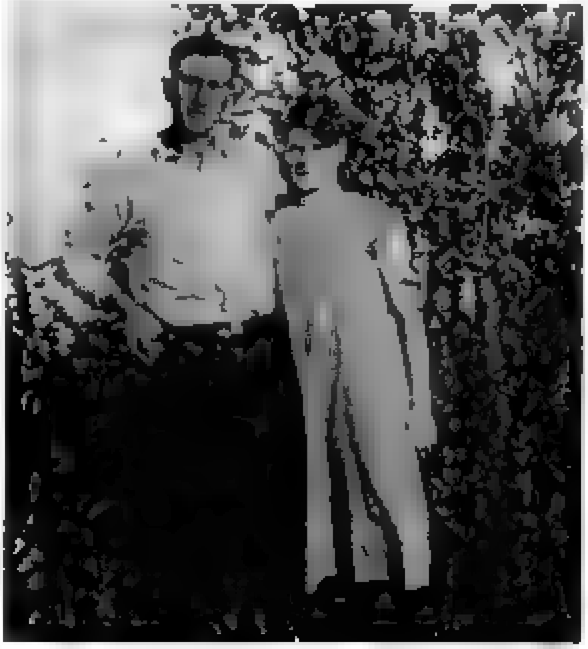
C.K., Ken, Anne, 1955.

At the age of sixty-one, on December 26, 1956, Carl died of a heart attack. Marilyn married Jim Nanninga of Neerlandia. Ken married Donna Ogden of Barrhead. Anne remained in Neerlandia, keeping boarders and continuing the insurance business. After a few years, she moved to Edmonton. She worked a short time for the Canadian Institute for the Blind. Anne developed cancer of the liver and passed away December 31, 1972

HENRY AND INA (HOLM) MAST

Henry Mast was born in Bergen, Friesland, the Netherlands, on March 11, 1898. His parents, Koop and Minke, homesteaded the NE 15-61-3-5. In 1926, while Henry was trucking freight from Edmonton to Freedom Store with his truck, he met his future bride, Ina Holm

In a tiny Swedish settlement, Rökiö Wörå, in Finland, Ina Holm entered the world on August 23, 1901. In May 1926, at age twenty-five, Ina immigrated to Canada. Freedom was her destination because she had acquaintances there and soon found employment at the Freedom store. Here their courtship began and on October 15, 1926, Henry and Ina were married by Rev. Van Der Woude. Henry took his new bride to the farm in Neerlandia which his father had homesteaded.



Henry, Ina, 1926.

During the first year of his marriage, Henry worked in the Chisholm logging camp. Ina stayed home and looked after their few pigs and cows as well as doing other chores. In 1926 Henry also purchased his first car, a Model T Ford. Henry and Ina were both quite proud of this purchase. Henry later worked in a few other sawmills.

The first years were lean ones. Henry and Ina lived off deer and moose meat. All they bought was flour to make their bread. Of course, Ina churned her own butter.

Once Ina made a housedress out of an old mattress cover and she made many clothes out of flour sacks, using the sewing machine left by Henry's mother.

Henry and Ina both worked very hard with axe and horses to continue the clearing of the land begun by Henry's dad. Slowly they got more land ready for farming.

In 1930 Jim Johnman helped Henry build a new house. A few years later Henry and Ina welcomed their only daughter, **Rose**, born June 5, 1937, who made their family complete.

When Rose was still quite small and wanting to help, she went out to the barn and milked a couple of cows completely dry on the floor. No milk for that day!

Ride 'em Rosie, 1942.

Henry's interest turned to registered Hereford cattle and hogs, which he raised during the 1940s. He was an active member of the Barrhead and District Agricultural Society for several years. He also showed cattle at the Edmonton Exhibition and won championships with them there. In 1958 Henry Nanninga married their daughter Rose.

Henry and Ina lived on the farm until 1959, when he sold his farm to Joe Mast and retired in Barrhead. Henry lived there until September 15, 1962, when he died of a heart attack in the Barrhead Hospital at the age of sixty-four.

Ina still lives in the same house in Barrhead. She manages on her own with some help from Henry, Rose, and her grandchildren.

Rose Nanninga

ARTHUR MICHAEL

At the age of thirty-two Arthur Michael, a farmer from Nebraska, U.S.A., came to Neerlandia in February 1923 with his twenty-three-year old wife and their one child. He took up the SW 14-61-3-5 as a homestead. After moving to Neerlandia, he became known as "Muskeg Michael" (the quarter Arthur had taken up had a lot of muskeg on it) to keep him apart from "Dutch Michael" who lived north of the settlement

Mrs. Michael would bring the cattle to a muskeg hole near their quarter to water them One time she and Harry Wilson both came to water their livestock at the same time and a dispute followed. As a result, a hearing was held in the log church The building was crowded for the occasion. Elizabeth Wilson spoke for her son, and Mrs. Michael also had her say, but the outcome is unknown

On the homestead, Arthur built a dwelling worth thirty dollars, put up the walls of a barn, cultivated five acres of land, and dug a thirty-two-foot well. He also made four hundred tamarack fence posts. But the family left the homestead in April 1924 and moved to Idaho, U S.A. Arthur wrote on the declaration of abandonment, "My reason for wanting to abandon the land, is that I was almost entirely surrounded by a Clan of Hollanders, which made it very undesirable from a Social standpoint, these people being of a very clanist nature."

JOHN AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) MOLODOWICH

John Molodowich and Sophie Wierenga, daughter of Hendrik and Hilje, met in Barrhead while Sophie was working in the hospital After they were married in February 1938, they lived in the Barrhead area. Their first child, **Hilda** Johanna, was born there on November 24, 1939

Then in 1942 the family moved to Neerlandia, onto the NE 31-61-3-5. Their second child, **John** Jr., was born October 10, 1942. John Sr. left to go trucking, so Sophie took care of the farm She shipped cream from their two milk cows and also sold eggs. Henry Lievers picked up the cream and eggs and brought them to the Neerlandia store. Sophie's father and brothers would come to help, especially with putting up the hay Sophie also raised some sheep and pigs.

John Sr. had bought the NW 5-62-3-5, but sold it to Sophie's father during the 40s. The family moved to Edmonton for a time, but returned to this area shortly after the war. John had bought a Caterpillar tractor with a brushpiler, and he used it to clear land in the district. He was one of the first in the area to use a Caterpillar tractor. He sold it to Sam Howey and later bought another one, which he sold to Bill Olthuis in 1947

During those years, John Sr. had bought Jerry Reitsma's house but, after the family had lived in it a short time, he sold it to Sophie's brother, Joe. John then bought a house in the Centre from Siebren Tiemstra but sold that one also, to Sophie's parents. A third child, **Percy**, was born in September 1947

Percy, Tena, Sophie, John Jr., c. 1954

The Molodowich family moved to Barrhead in the late 40s and, after many more moves, finally bought a farm in McBride, B.C., where they stayed. Another daughter was born in 1954. John Sr. has passed away, and Sophie lives in McBride

Sophie Molodowich

ANDREW AND RULIE (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Andrew Nanninga was born in Edmonton but the family moved to Neerlandia the same year. Except for two harvests during which he worked in the Morinville area, he worked on the farm with his father and brothers until his marriage In 1940 he purchased the SE 21-62-3-5 from Loe Reyse. It consisted of forty acres of broken land, leaving 120 to be broken by hand.

On November 26, 1941, Rulie Schoonekamp of Neerlandia became Andrew's bride and they took up residence in a two-storey house built by Andrew and his father and brothers

Andrew and Rulie's first car, a 1927 Whippet

Andrew and Rulie's first home

Sedan, is remembered for at least one embarrassing situation. Lies Bos and Rulie were at a shower in the church one winter evening. Since it was a cold night they had put blankets over the car hood to keep it from freezing. When they were ready to go home they discovered that the car's lights did not work. Rulie went to the Neerlandia garage for help, getting the garageman out of bed, only to be told quite emphatically, "Your blanket is covering up the lights!"

In 1943 Andrew and Rulie's marriage was blessed with the birth of **Mark** on May 20. But, besides being the year of their firstborn, it was the year they were partially hailed out. That winter, because of crop loss, Andrew, Rulie, baby Mark, and a cow went to work in the Dutch Mill camp. The cow's milk was enjoyed by everyone in the camp, but it is unknown whether Mark's crying and diapers were appreciated by anyone, including proud Mom and Dad.

Almost two years after Mark was born, **Rose** (Primrose) arrived on March 16. The year 1945 was also notable in that Rulie filed on a homestead quarter (NW 14-62-3-5). Shortly thereafter they purchased the N½ 15-62-3-5 from Andrew Wierenga.

Rose was followed by **Arnold**, born December 14, 1946, **Judith**, born December 17, 1949; and **Kenneth**, born January 13, 1954.

Andrew and Rulie were hardworking. Andrew, a man of few words, was an ambitious farmer who enjoyed his animals. Rulie, a patient, quiet woman, kept busy about the house. With Andrew expanding the farm, she was the chief disciplinarian, though her backup system was a firm word from Andrew.

The kids enjoyed endless games of tag in and out of the house. On winter evenings the kitchen became a place for acrobatics, and many a summer night was spent playing scrub with Dad.

Sunday between services was always a special time because Rulie read stories. The kids enjoyed the regular feature in *The Banner* and *Pilgrim's Progress* was always a favourite.

Once, the front room became a hospital ward when the kids had the measles and Rulie became a capable nurse. Another trying time

Back: Arnold, Mark, Rose, Judy. Front: Andrew holding Ken, Rulie, late 1950s.

was when Andrew was in a body cast for his frequent back problems Rulie took on the chores besides her regular work. When she had a few minutes she would play hymns on the pump organ.

Washing laundry was an exasperating chore, but with many interesting smells. The cranky gas engine on the washing machine took a lot of coaxing before it would perform and it would always leave a puddle of oil for revenge. Then hot steamy water and the acrid smell of lye soap irritated the nostrils. Yet the clothes came off the clothesline clean and smelling fresh. Soon the steam from the hot iron on the sprinkled clothes would permeate the kitchen and with it came a sense of accomplishment as the tea towels, hankies, and shirts were neatly stacked and ready for the cupboards

Canning meat and rendering fat were routine tasks. Another duty was filling the holding tank in the house with water. To this day water is precious and never tastes as cold or delicious as that straight from the well.

Christmas celebrations included the School Christmas Program and exchanging gifts in the family on Christmas Eve. There was a family gathering with the Schoonekamps for a turkey supper on Christmas Day and always a gift from Grandma. Christmas was a time for new clothes, and lots to eat and always a piece of fruitcake

Money was not plentiful but there was a congenial and secure home life At night, after the children had been tucked in bed, Andrew would read the weekly church paper or the *Free Press Weekly* aloud while Rulie would catch up with the mending or knitting.

During the 1960s the Nanningas once again extended their holdings by purchasing the NE 14-62-3-5 from Fred Tansowny.

Mark took his schooling in Neerlandia and continued to farm with his father. On January 10, 1976 he married **Jo Ann Bakker** (December 3, 1954) of Edmonton. They have three boys. **Matthew** Dean (March 18, 1977), **Jonathan** Andrew, (February 2, 1980), and **Nathan** Todd, (February 4, 1983). They farm and have a broiler-breeder operation.

Mark, Jonathan, Matthew, Jo holding Nathan. 1983.

Rose attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead after which she began nurse's training at the Alberta Hospital. She returned to Barrhead to work in the Barrhead Clinic. In 1965 she married Clarence Olthuis of Neerlandia.

Arnold attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead prior to attending NAIT and working in Edmonton. After living in Edmonton for a few years, he returned to Neerlandia where he married Elizabeth Tiemstra

Judy obtained her Registered Nursing Aide certificate after being educated in Neerlandia and Barrhead. On May 5, 1979, she married Allen Perry of Edmonton. They presently live in Drayton Valley with their two children

Ken attended school in Neerlandia before taking his welding trade at W P. Wagner school in Edmonton. On November 27, 1976, he married **Sylvia Ronaasen** (July 23, 1956) of Mellowdale, and they make their home in the Vega district (NW 5-63-3-5) with their two children **Ted Kameron**, (April 15, 1980) and **Lisa** Karen, (November 1, 1981). Ken and Sylvia farm and have a Caterpillar tractor service

Ken, Sylvia, Lisa, Ted, 1984.

During 1973 Andrew and Rulie moved onto an acreage in Mellowdale on the SE 33-60-3-5 Since 1941 they have come full circle from the two horses, three cows, and few pigs they started with to the two horses they have now

Allen Perry

ANDY AND ANNIE (INGWERSEN) NANNINGA

It was on Sunday afternoon, December 4, 1932, that Andy Nanninga and Annie Ingwersen were united in marriage by Rev. H Van Der Woude. After the service they had a family get-together and supper at Ingwersens' Late that night, in 35-below zero weather, Andy and Annie went "honeymooning" with horse and sleigh to their home on the NE 2-62-3-5

Andy and Annie's lumber home had only a cook stove, so it froze almost as hard inside the house as outside. The following day they went to the store to buy some groceries and a drum heater to heat their living room. The rest of the day was spent at Annie's parents' place where a wedding party was to be held that night for the young couple Though the temperature went down to about forty below, the whole congregation came to celebrate with the newlyweds. When Andy and Annie travelled home that night they had not only the drum heater on the sleigh, but also two of Andy's brothers, Louis and Ike, who were going to board with them until they too would get married.

Andy and his brothers had built the house and Andy's dad had made a table, a large buffet, and a kitchen cabinet with glass doors. In appreciation for playing the church organ for several years, the congregation gave Annie an organ as a wedding gift

Things were pretty rough in the early thirties, but together Andy and Annie struggled through thick and thin. Many a cold winter night they sat in the barn together watching a sow giving birth to her piglets One by one the piglets would be placed in a wash boiler with straw in it and covered with a gunny sack to keep them warm. After they had all arrived and had had a feeding, Andy would carry them into the house and set the boiler beside the kitchen stove. Andy and Annie would quickly go to bed and try to get some sleep, for in a couple of hours the piglets would be squealing for another meal and would have to be brought back to their mother.

Until the three Nanninga brothers could afford to buy a tractor, all the farm work was done with the help of horses. Often Annie would

Annie, Hemma, Alma, Andy, 1946.

milk the cows and feed the pigs and chickens while the men worked in the field until dark. In the forties things were getting a little better because the field work could be done with the help of tractors. But while his brothers had several sons to help on the farm, Andy and Annie had only two girls – **Hermina**, born June 13, 1934, and **Alma**, born March 13, 1939.

In 1946 Andy and Annie moved to Abbotsford, B.C., where they bought a twenty-five-acre farm. After finishing school, both of their daughters worked in a bank until they married. Like their mother, they married farmers. Andy passed away in 1963 after suffering from bone cancer for four years. Annie and both of her daughters and their families live in Agassiz, B.C.

Annie Nanninga

GERRIT AND CARRIE (MAST) NANNINGA

Carrie Mast was born in Neerlandia on October 8, 1915. Her father was often working elsewhere to make an extra dollar and so Carrie, as the oldest daughter, often had to stay home and help her mother. When her brothers and sisters were older, Carrie did some housework for the Wilsons, Bill Dieleman, Jim Fowler, and John Terpsma. She also did the wash and cleaning for Anne Elgersma on Mondays, not returning home until after dark. Later she did a lot of washing at home. In the wintertime there were many pairs of frozen combination underwear to struggle with, since she had so many brothers.

Gerrit Nanninga was born in Edmonton. The Nanninga family moved to Neerlandia and Gerrit farmed with his dad and brothers. Later he bought the NE 7-62-3-5, on which he built a shack. He lived alone there for a number of years until his marriage to Carrie on May 8, 1942.

Gerrit's dad and brothers helped them build a house. The fieldwork was done with horses and they had a wagon for transporation. Often they walked to the church and store, which was a distance of almost four miles. They bought their first tractor in 1945. One day, about two years after their marriage, Gerrit came with the tractor to take Carrie home from his mother's place. On their way home they met R. J. de Vries who asked, "Where are you going?" "Home of course," they replied. R. J. then said, "You don't have a home any more." It had burned to the ground except for the chimney, which was still standing. Gerrit and Carrie felt awful. All their wedding pictures and treasures were gone; and they never found out how the fire had started. Their brothers came with their wives and helped clean out the shack that Gerrit had bached in before. With their help Gerrit and Carrie began again. They built a house the next fall and converted the shack into a sow pen. They bought furniture and other necessities with money they received from the fire insurance.

On September 14, 1946, the Nanningas were blessed with a daughter, **Everdina**. She was, and remains, the joy of their lives. When Everdina was three years of age she wandered into a field of sweet clover across the road from their home. Carrie looked all over for her and finally found her playing with her dog in the sweet clover. Everdina was then tied to the car with a piece of rope to ensure her safety.

Carrie, Everdina, Gerrit, c. 1956.

Gerrit and Carrie worked in the field many times together and Everdina had a little place on the tractor to sleep. Once when Carrie was helping with the bindering, Everdina pushed the clutch of the tractor. Carrie had to jump in order to save her legs. The family left the farm in 1956 because Gerrit had a heart problem and was not allowed to operate the machinery.

Gerrit and Carrie first lived in the teacherage in the Centre and then bought the house of A. C. Ashley. Carrie worked as a clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op from 1956-63. Then they sold their house and property to Carrie's brother Carl and moved to Grande Prairie. Gerrit worked at CanFor Industries in a lumber mill and Carrie worked as caretaker for the Grande Prairie School District. They are both retired now. Everdina, who lives at home with her parents, has enjoyed working at Macleod's for the last eight years and is also the church organist.

Carrie Nanninga

IKE AND JENNY (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Ike Nanninga and Jenny Schoonekamp were married March 25, 1934, on a Sunday afternoon. Rev. Van Der Woude performed the ceremony in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed church. The next day they had a celebration in the church basement.

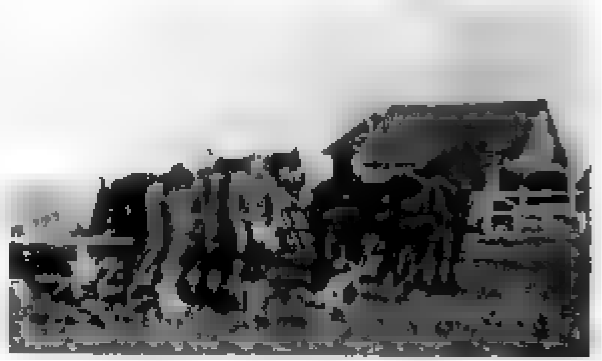
Menne Nanninga had reserved the NW 1-62-3-5 for Ike until he was old enough to file on it himself. On August 17, 1926, Ike filed on the land, he proved it up on May 22, 1931. Before his marriage, Ike had bached with his brothers Andy and Louis in a granary on his homestead. Then Andy got married, leaving Louis and Ike together. Now it was Ike's turn. When Ike and Jenny got married Louis moved in with them.

Grandpa Nanninga was a carpenter and he helped build a house for the young couple. The house was not completely finished off inside because Ike and Jenny could not afford to have that done. (The outside was unpainted and remained so for as long as they lived in it.) Ike's father also made some furniture for them. Ike bought a dresser with a big mirror on it for six dollars. It became one of Jenny's treasured possessions. At the bridal shower, which was held each time a young lady got married, Jenny received many useful items.

The first couple of winters that Ike and Jenny were married, Ike and his brothers went logging. They went by sleigh and returned home every evening. Jenny helped with the chores. She did not like the stinky pigs, but they were part of farming. Ike and Jenny did not have a good well when they were first married, so the cattle had to be driven to the end of the quarter where they could get water. In winter Jenny melted snow for household use. How happy they were when they finally got a good well.

Ike was a real go-getter. He worked hard and expected others to do the same. It was not all work though. In the evenings the Ike Nanningas visited with their neighbours, the Andy Nanningas, the Louis Nanningas, and others. Sunday dinners were taken at either the Nanninga or Schoonekamp parents because it was too far for Ike and Jenny to go home between services.

Ike and Jenny's first son, **Manny**, was born October 27, 1935. He was followed by **Henry** on March 26, 1938. At that time the Nanningas got their first car. Up to this time they had always ridden in a buggy or cutter, and were thankful for that. These vehicles were pulled by Rally, a speedy little horse. Ike liked to go fast, and Rally enabled him to keep ahead of most of the other vehicles on the road. Once he got the car, Ike could indulge his love of speed more than ever.



Ike with Manny.

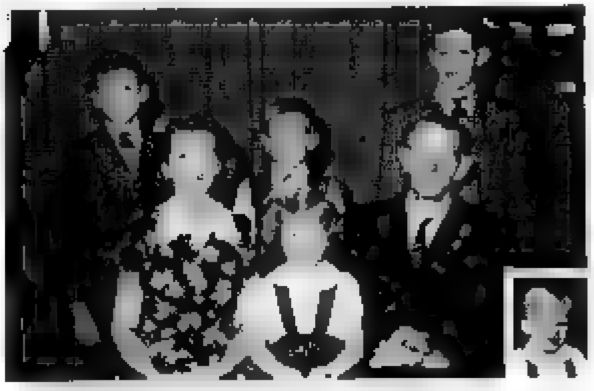
Ike suffered from ulcers and had an operation in which eighty percent of his stomach was removed. Then in 1939 he had an operation on his shoulder. A malignant growth the size of a loaf of bread was removed from his shoulder. Later several small growths were removed. As a result of the operations, Ike lost a lot of strength in his arm. Determined that he would not let this handicap him, Ike spent many hours in the garage trying to get his muscles back in shape. The cancer was not arrested though, and in 1948 the Nanningas drove to Rochester Clinic in New York to see if anything could be done to save Ike's arm. He was told that there was nothing to be done and that he had to have an operation as soon as possible Sadly they returned to Edmonton where Ike underwent a quarter amputation. (This meant that the arm, shoulder, and shoulder blade were all removed). The operation was a success and, although the repeated operations had weakened his heart, Ike returned home where he was soon back at work

Ike, 1958.

Louis had helped a lot whenever Ike had an operation. Now a young immigrant, Dan Vriend, was hired He worked for Ike for about one year. Ike would not give up and soon was able to do most of the farm tasks He showed great patience and perseverence in attempting to master a task but little things such as hard butter would make him angry because then he could not butter his bread without tearing it into pieces.

Alvin, their third son, was born May 27, 1940. The three boys were born at home with the help of Jenny's mother. **Patricia**, though, was born in an Edmonton hospital on August 11, 1944. The Nanningas' last son, **Ronald**, was born in the Barrhead hospital on February 24, 1950

In other ways too the family was making progress. To provide electricity, a wind charger was installed in 1945. It was a real pleasure to have electric lights and cold running water for the house and barn. The Nanningas built a new house in 1952 Although Grandpa Nanninga was retired by this time, he helped to build the house. To store their meat and other food, an icehouse was also constructed



Back, Henry, Alvin, Manny. Front: Jennie, Patricia, Ike, 1948. Inset: Ronald, 1953.

By this time Ike and Jenny had two quarter sections of land In 1958 they bought a third quarter. Henry, who married Rose Mast, lives on this quarter. Manny married Lois Van Dyke in 1960. Alvin married Joanne Gelderman in 1963 and moved onto the home quarter. At that time Ike and Jenny with their two youngest children moved to Edmonton.

Nine months later, on May 19, 1964, Ike passed away from a heart attack One year later Patricia married Peter Elzinga. Ron stayed with his mother until his marriage to Hazel Fisher in 1972

Jenny Nanninga

LOUIS AND TENA (ANEMA) NANNINGA

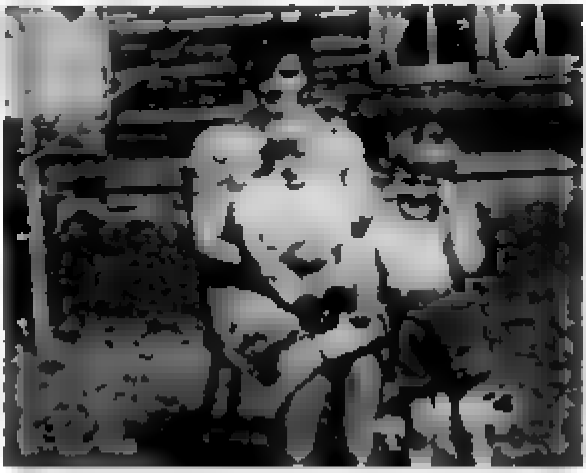
Louis Nanninga and Tena Anema were both raised in Neerlandia, and Louis courted Tena for about five years before their marriage on February 3, 1935, a beautiful winter Sunday. Their honeymoon was a two-and-a-half mile trip from the Anema farm to their new home Louis had filed on the SW 12-62-3-5 in 1928 when he was eighteen, and had worked there clearing the land. By 1935 he had about fifty acres of crop land ready, and had built a lumber house and a barn with the help of his brothers and his dad, Menne Nanninga.

Tena's parents had given them a couple of cows. They also had four horses. They bought some pigs and chickens, and were on their way together. Groceries were inexpensive Tena recalls keeping account of everything they bought for the first year of marriage: groceries, twine, and work clothes for Louis amounted to ninety-four dollars.

Their first car, a Model T Ford coupe, was purchased in 1936 for sixty-five dollars. But it did not last very long. Then they bought a Model A Ford for three hundred dollars That was a much better car.

Their first son, **Marvin** Louis, was born May 21, 1937 After about six weeks Marvin had a huge distended stomach. He gained no weight and was a sickly yellow colour. The doctor in Barrhead took one look at him and recommended a child specialist in Edmonton. Two specialists tapped and poked on his stomach and then just shook their heads. "Never saw anything like it," they said, "You may as well take him home He will probably live about ten days." Somehow Dr. Eardley Allen, fresh out of medical school in England and specializing in surgery, got to hear about this baby with the huge stomach He examined Marvin and decided, "We may as well try to operate and see what we can find. The baby is probably going to die anyway." So they operated and removed several large fluid-filled cysts that were attached to and feeding from the liver. The operation was successful and Marvin is a healthy man today. Dr. Allen called Marvin his "wonder baby."

Another son, **James** Andrew, was born January 7, 1939 Like his older brother, he was born at home There were no complications this time



Tine, Jim, Marvin, 1940

At first Louis shared machinery with his brothers Ike and Andy. In 1940 the brothers bought a tractor, which not only enabled them to open up the land faster but made Louis' life more pleasant. Farming with horses was not always fun for him, as the following episodes bear out:

"I was never a lover of horses and this may be the cause of the trouble I had with the old grey mares It could also be my poor horsemanship which instigated the mishaps that occurred while I was working with them. One spring day the garden was in the right condition to be harrowed. In those days we did not have any garden tools except a hoe The harrows were first dragged over the driveway, which was a bit noisy That always put the horses on the alert. The garden was not very big and a lot of turning had to be done Work horses usually had bridles with blinkers on so they could not see directly behind them, but in the turning process, one horse saw the harrows and me. He spooked and kicked over the traces. I tried to hold on to the lines, but one line broke and the other was pulled through my hand. Away the old nags went — through the road allowance with brush on it and through a wire fence The harrows stayed on the fence as the evener broke, but the horses went for a good run for about three quarters of a mile into my brother's field. They stopped on his yard, somewhat tangled up in what was left of their harness

"What this all meant (along with a temper tantrum) was repair. Repair eveners, repair harness with some other old harnesses and leather. Copper rivets were generally used to repair the broken parts. A lot of time was put into repair, because there was no money to buy new equipment. This was not the only time that horses ran away on me; there were many others We had a team of horses that were used to help with the threshing. They were fine in the field, but when they came by the separator they would get excited and try to get away. If the lines were put tight so they couldn't go forward, they would go in reverse. To keep the team in their place, we put a logging chain around one horse's neck, and then around the wheel of the thresher. This prevented the horse from rearing up and from going either forward or reverse. It was something like a prisoner chained to a wall. Horses are not always as docile as you see them on pictures, where they stand still when they are hooked to a plow, disc, or harrow. Some have a wild streak in them, even after a day's work. Fortunately no one got hurt in all the runaways I had. I was not sorry to see the horses laid off when in 1940, we saw our way clear to buy a tractor. That meant no more frisky broncs to put up with," said Louis.

Meanwhile, Louis and Tena were also involved in community life. During Louis' first term as deacon, it was noticed that the bottom of the collection plate was coming loose. Someone repaired it, and Rev. H. Van Der Woude tapped the bottom with his knuckles and said, "It sounds good — ready to be used again." It was Louis' turn to pass the plate around. At that time the offering consisted of large, heavy pennies and lots of nickels. Louis got about three or four benches down when the bottom fell out of the plate. Well, he calmly went to the back of the church and picked up a man's hat, which became the new offering plate. He remembers that he was neither thanked nor reprimanded. The new plate must have been acceptable.

Louis and Tena's first girl, **Eleanor** Kathleen, was born September 9, 1943. She was the first of their children to be born in the Barrhead hospital. Another son, **Gerald** Francis, was born two years later on November 17, 1945.

About 1945 Nanningas bought a neighbouring quarter (SE 12-62-3-5) from Klaas Wierenga. For this Louis paid about $5500. It was all good land, about three-quarters cleared. In 1948 Louis bought a share in a D8 caterpillar and worked with Bill Olthuis for about ten years. They did a variety of work such as brushing, making roadways, grading, and breaking. They worked in Neerlandia, Vega, Mellowdale, Churchill, and Naples.

In 1949 the Nanningas built a new house. It was quite large and had central heating. They also had a light plant for power which ran on gas and wind. The old house was sold to Steve Abday. Their second girl, **Sharon** Darlene, was born in 1949 on August 17. By this time the two quarters where they lived were almost all cleared for crop land. Other income came from grain, pigs, cows, cream, and eggs. The price of farm produce was good, and during this period farmers made considerable progress. In 1950 Louis constructed a fairly large hip roof barn. The main floor was for pigs and cows and the top two floors for chickens. For quite a few years they sold hatching eggs.

During this time Louis also helped to finance immigrants and others in their business endeavours. He was always ready to lend to those in need.

In the winters of 1954-55 and 1955-56, Marvin and his cousin Manny Nanninga attended the Vermilion School of Agriculture. They were the first boys from the area to go away to learn about some new farming practices. With two budding farmers, Marvin and Jim, coming up, Louis acquired another two quarters in 1956. This was the George Anema farm, Tena's former home.

Back: Jim, Marvin, Gerald. Middle: Sharon, Eleanor. Front: Louis, Tena, 1960

Louis continued to be active in community affairs. He served in several community boards and had an enjoyable time, though there were disagreements and Louis hated arguments.

Their last land acquisition was the NE 11-62-3-5 in 1962. In 1967 Louis and Tena sold their five quarters, machinery, and all farming paraphernalia to Marvin. Because Marvin was unmarried, they continued to live and work there. They also travelled a little — to the Netherlands, Hawaii, and Alaska.

Meanwhile the children were growing up and leaving home. Jim went to work in Edmonton as soon as he graduated from high school. On March 31, 1959, he married Marilyn Mast. They have seven children. Jim is a partner in a Budget Rent-a-Car business. Eleanor married Ray Merkus in 1961.

After high school, Gerald took an electrician's course at NAIT. For a short time he worked in the city, but soon returned to Neerlandia to farm with Marvin. Gerald married Dora Plantinga in 1971.

Sharon was an athletic girl. She excelled in sports, especially in running, and won several medals in this field. After high school, Sharon enrolled in a Certified Nursing Aide course and got a job in Edmonton. There she met and married Victor Schappy in 1971. Victor is an optician practising in Edmonton. They have three children.

Marvin continued farming and now lives on the home place (SW 12-62-3-5). In 1964, Ted Reitsma, Jack Janssen, and Marvin obtained their private pilot's licenses. The following year they bought Neerlandia's first small airplane. The runway and hangar were on the Nanninga farm.

In 1974 Marvin went to work on an oil rig for the winter. Always curious, he found out what camp life was all about. He decided, however, that that was not where his future lay, and on April 25, 1975, he married **June Hultquist** of Edmonton. June was born in Ottawa, Ontario, on June 23, 1937. In the 1960s she came to Edmonton where she worked at a variety of jobs before she married Marvin. They have one son, **Timothy** Louis.

Marvin has other interests along with farming. He bought a gravel truck in 1976 and still owns one. He enjoys being on the road, especially with a payload. He also does a bit of commercial fishing. June is an excellent cook and always has a huge garden along with her chickens, turkeys, and other animals that she loves.

In 1975, Louis and Tena bought a mobile home, which was moved to the hamlet one year later. They are happy to be retired in the community where they have spent their lives. Louis enjoys woodworking and doing crossword puzzles. Tenie is a charitable person who visits the sick and shut-ins.

Eleanor Merkus

JOHN AND JENNIE (TUININGA) OLDEGBERS

John Oldegbers and Jennie Tuininga were married December 7, 1923. They lived for a time in Elke Jorritsma's house. Then, with help from the family, a house and barn were built on the SW 20-61-3-5, land owned by John. Here two children, **Susie** (Sjoukje, June 23, 1924) and **Albert** Jan (January 28, 1926) were born.

John and Jennie moved to Edmonton in 1929. There three more children were born. Sorrow came to the family when Jennie died of pernicious anemia in April 1941. Her youngest child was two years old.

John worked at a variety of jobs before he was hired by the Canadian Pacific Railway. He worked there till his retirement. He remarried in 1979 and lives in Edmonton.

John, Susie Jennie, Albert, Clara.

WILLIAM AND CARRIE (TUININGA) OLTHUIS

William Olthuis, better known as Bill, or even Willie, spent most of his life in Neerlandia. There he learned the art of trapping, became known as one of Neerlandia's two best hunters (the other being Bill Lievers) and was at times the bane of a teacher's existence. Life on the frontier was a great adventure for him, but that was all to change

The hunter, 1925.

The lady or the horse?

One day a strange thing happened to Bill, instead of admiring the fine lines of a horse he found himself admiring the fine figure of a woman. Before long he realized that one woman, Carrie Tuininga, was nicer than all the rest and he began to court her. The Tuininga parents, Klaas and Sjoerdje, were not sure what to make of this young fellow coming around. It was not that long ago that Klaas had had to reprimand Bill for spitting tobacco juice between the cracks in the church floor. One of Carrie's rascally younger brothers once shot Bill in the nose with an arrow, but no harm was done to the nose and Bill's ardour was dampened not a bit. Little by little Carrie's parents were won over as Bill showed signs of settling down.

When Bill asked for Carrie's hand in marriage Klaas said that he saw the potential that Bill had and knew he would be able to provide for her. He hoped, though, that Bill would stay home more than he had done in the past. With the blessing of both sets of parents Bill and Carrie were married March 11, 1934, in the Sun-

Courting days. Carrie, Bill, 1933.

day afternoon church service in a double ceremony with Joe and Catharina Holwerda

Bill and Carrie settled on Jacob Olthuis' quarter (SE 34-61-3-5) which was more centrally located than Bill's homestead. Here, one half mile east of the store, Jim Johnman, a carpenter, had built a snug, warm house for them It was twenty by twenty-four feet and had four little rooms — a bedroom, front room, utility room, and kitchen — on the main floor. The kitchen boasted tiny kitchen cabinets in place of the usual pantry. The upstairs, though unfinished, provided room for storage and beds. A cellar under the house provided storage space for vegetables and fruit. Times being hard and money scarce (these were the Depression years) Bill and Carrie bought only bare essentials: a new cookstove for thirty-eight dollars, a new bed with a mattress, and six unpainted chairs. Bill's father was handy and made them two tables. Bill and Carrie bought some aqua paint and painted the tables, chairs, and cupboards to match.

When Bill's parents moved to the city, John and Fred planned to stay and bach in Neerlandia, but that did not last very long. Soon Fred decided to join the family in Edmonton and John moved in with Bill and Carrie. For the next year the two brothers farmed together and then John too went to the city.

That winter **Shirley** made her arrival on a very cold winter day (December 22, 1934). It was nice and cozy inside, and Bill and Carrie were very happy with their little family. They did not have much in the way of material things, but many other things in life made up for it Because "one couldn't up and go and do this and that" a closer family relationship developed The Olthuis family were usually home together except for an occasional visit to family and friends.

The following spring the Olthuis family again increased, but this addition was George, Bill's youngest brother, who came to stay with them and remained for four years — coming in spring and remaining until November. He helped Bill on the farm and made the half-hearted attempts of most seventeen-year-olds to weed the garden. He was good with horses and pleasant to have around. He was a good baby-sitter. Carrie said that the girls listened better to him than they did to her.

A severe frost damaged most of the grain in August 1935. That was also the year the Aberhart Government came into power, promising ever member of the family twenty-five dollars, and that looked pretty good at the time. **Elsie** also made her appearance that winter (December 23, 1935). When the new baby was about a week old, Carrie developed phlebitis in both legs. For four months she was not permitted to get out of bed Gradually she improved and began to walk on crutches, but her legs continued to trouble her so that she required hired help many times through the following years

Shirley, Carrie, Elsie. 1936.

"It was tough sledding the first years of our marriage" Carrie said, "but Bill was a person who tried his hand at many things " Bill took seriously the responsibility of providing for his family. He went to the bush to make lumber and traded or sold it. By supplying some of the lumber for the new Co-op store that was being built in 1938, he was able to provide Carrie with the luxury of a gas-powered washing machine

Then Bill heard that Pete Wijngaarden was selling his well-drilling outfit. Bill and his brother-in-law Jack Tuininga bought the outfit in 1940 and began drilling wells They drilled year round except during seedtime and harvest. Cold weather did not stop them. Among the eighty-five wells they drilled was a flowing well drilled for Alex Bain of Shoal Creek. The deepest well they drilled was 485 feet deep and drilled for Roelof Krikke.

In the meantime the family grew. **Joan** was born August 30, 1938. When Bill and Carrie got married they had a small buggy just right for the two of them, but now with three children it was too small, so when they went out, Shirley (four) and Elsie (three) had to stand behind the seat while Carrie held baby Joan on her lap. In this fashion one day they were returning from visiting *Pake* and *Beppe*. Carrie was no doubt telling Bill all the latest news when Shirley quietly said, "Elsie fell off." Sure enough, there was Elsie picking herself up without a howl or a scream. She was unhurt and soon the family continued on its way.

Ready for a buggy ride. Shirley, Elsie, 1936

While Bill provided well for his family, he did not heed his father-in-law's advice about staying home. This meant that Carrie frequently had the responsibility of doing chores. On one such occasion while stepping out of the chop bin with two pails of chop she twisted her ankle so severely that she was unable to walk. She sent the girls to get their little wagon. When she clambered into it they pulled her to the house. After a few days Carrie was getting around by pushing a chair on which she could rest her injured ankle. Another day when Carrie was milking, a cat kept scampering under the cow, frightening it and causing it to kick. Maybe Carrie was wishing that Bill was home or maybe her legs were bothering her again. At any rate she grabbed the cat and threw it with more strength than accuracy toward the barn door. The cat hit the wall and fell to the floor, knocked out cold.

After three girls, the boys began to arrive. **Jack** Clifford was born August 25, 1940, and **Clarence** William on March 18, 1944. By this time the little house was getting rather crowded so Bill decided to build a new one. It would be erected northwest of the present house — nearer the church and school. The basement was dug with a tractor and scraper. The cement was mixed in small cement mixers and poured by the wheelbarrow-full; it took two days to pour. Bill's dad, a carpenter, spent the summer with the Olthuis family and put up the frame. Henry Bouwman Sr. helped with the finishing. The house had hardwood floors throughout. Bill scraped them, and then Frances Anema and Carrie did the sanding and varnishing.

Elsie, Jack, Carrie, Bill, Joan, Shirley, c. 1942

Bill drilled his last well on the new place and then sold the outfit to Klaas Wierenga. If Father Tuininga thought that finally Bill was going to stay home, he was to be disappointed. Bill never was a farmer at heart and was always looking for new challenges. In partnership with Jack Tuininga and John Ingwersen, Bill bought a D8 Caterpillar tractor in 1947. With it they cleared and piled many acres in Neerlandia, Vega, and Naples. After a year Louis Nanninga and George Anema bought Jack and John's shares. For ten years Louis, George, and Bill worked together. They hired men to work for them and kept the "Cat" going twenty-four hours a day during the summer. Then Bill bought the other partners out and was sole owner until he sold it in 1964.

Bill often worked in partnership with others. His first tractor, an Oliver 80, was owned with John Anema. At times this machine too worked day and night. The threshing machine was owned with his brothers-in-law Charles Tiemstra and the Tuiningas.

In the meantime three more children were added to the family: **Frederick** David on January 7, 1948; **Stanley** Lorne on December 14, 1951; and **Linda Karen** on September 12, 1953.

Linda, 1956.

Both Carrie and Bill delighted in their children and eagerly anticipated and welcomed each new arrival. Although Bill always felt too awkward to handle them during their first year, once they were a little older he enjoyed giving them horseback rides and wrestling with them on the floor. Rainy days were especially cozy, for then the whole family would play games or put jigsaw puzzles together. Sunday evenings, when there was no company, the family would often sing hymns, and for some years once a week the family would gather in the front room for Bible study.

Twice each Sunday the family went to church. Often, though, someone had to babysit whoever was the youngest at the time. Between services Bill and Carrie generally lay down for a nap. When she thought it was time, Carrie would get up and, when everybody was nearly ready to go, she would wake Bill and he would come out of the bedroom stuffing his shirt in his pants, and grabbing his hat — no hair to comb — he was ready to go.

Bill and Carrie had different musical tastes. Bill, who enjoyed cowboy music, would demonstrate his appreciation for classical music by howling a few bars of the "Messiah" for Carrie — much to the children's amusement.

The Olthuis children were expected to do well. It was not just to be hoped for — it was expected. After a Christmas concert, for example, the children were praised for doing well, but if one had forgotten to stand up tall or had mumbled the words while speaking, he would hear about that too.

As the girls grew up they were a big help to Bill. He often remarked that they were as good as boys for doing chores and helping with the harvesting. Elsie drove the tractor and Shirley ran the binder while Bill did the stooking. They helped shingle and paint the house and garage roofs. Later the boys took over these kinds of tasks, much to Elsie's dismay, and the girls went on to high school and university.

Fred, Clarence, Joan, Jack, Elsie, Shirley. Front: Stan, Bill, Carrie, Linda, 1959.

Bill was courteous and soft-spoken. The strongest expletives his children ever heard him use were "Blasted!" and "Judas Priest!" This mannerliness stood him in good stead when he served as county councillor and had to deal with (sometimes unreasonable) people on a daily basis. In 1955 Bill was elected to represent the Neerlandia district in the newly-formed Municipality of Barrhead, and he continued to be re-elected as representative (of District 7) when the municipality became a county. For twenty-five years Bill held that position, serving on many council committees as well as on the Sturgeon Unit Health Board, the Barrhead-Westlock-Thorhild Auxiliary Hospital board, and several local boards. Who would have thought that young Willie Olthuis would become a community leader, respected for his levelheadedness and sense of justice. Father Tuininga was proud of him even though he still was not staying home with Carrie.

Carrie, for her part, was active in the home. Everyone was welcome there and treated to a cup of coffee accompanied by some home-baked goodies. In spite of sore legs and a large family she raised a big garden — of course the kids helped — and canned hundreds of quarts of fruit and vegetables each year. Carrie, who had grown up in poverty, wasted nothing — saltless porridge could be eaten, as she would demonstrate to her reluctant sons, black toast could be scraped and eaten too. And when anyone complained of the lack of variety of bread spreads she would say, "when we were kids, we could have butter or jam — not both — so don't be fussy!" She served practical, well-prepared meals, making good use of leftovers. Because Bill was so often away from home, the burden of bringing up the children was on Carrie's shoulders.

As the boys grew up, Jack was the hero of his younger brothers; they would eat only what Jack ate, and treasured the toys he made for them. Jack was handy and made a little wagon which he would attach to the tricycle to give Clarence a ride. He was the family's handyman.

After completing high school in Barrhead, Shirley became a teacher. She taught for one year in Vega before going to Calvin College, where she met Norman Matheis. They were married August 23, 1957, in a double ceremony with Shirley's sister Joan and Ralph Bos. Joan had quit school after completing grade nine and stayed home to help Carrie, who was busy with the three boys and Linda. Norm is now head of the art department at Dordt College and Shirley works in the drama department there.

Elsie followed in Shirley's footsteps and also became a teacher. She married Henk Navis. Jack graduated from Calvin College and taught for one year at Toronto Christian High School and one year at a girls' school in New Zealand. After his return to the U.S.A. he started an implement business: Olthuis Equipment. He and his wife, Gloryann, have one son. They live in Big Rapids, Michigan, where Gloryann does free-lance artwork in advertising.

After graduating from high school, Clarence stayed home to farm because Bill was always busy in his job as councillor. He married Rose Nanninga. Fred attended Trinity Christian College where he met Sandra Wichers. They were married in 1973. Stan followed Fred to Trinity but later went to Toronto where he graduated from the Ontario College of Art. He and his wife, Joanne, live in Toronto with their daughter. Stan and Joanne have their own business, where he works as an agent for commercial artists and photographers and she does graphic design for advertisements.

Linda remains a child. The hardest decision Bill and Carrie ever made was to take Linda to the Deer Home (Michener Center) in Red Deer, Alberta. It was a dark day in their lives, one they will never forget. It was March 16, 1967. Besides being such a sad day already, Bill's dad passed away that day, and there was a blizzard. Joe and Grace Wierenga went with them. "We will always be grateful to them for going with us to sustain us," wrote Bill and Carrie. Linda remains in the Deer Home where she continues to be well-cared for.

"We have had our ups and downs, our joys and our sorrows, but God has blessed us abundantly and our hope is still in him to help us" is their testimony.

The stiffness and slowness that come with old age were not welcomed by Bill. For many years he would say, half-humorously, "I could still stook circles around those young guys!" — but he couldn't and he knew it. Finally, in 1980 he took his father-in-law's advice and is staying home with Carrie, and they both are enjoying it immensely.

Olthuis Family

GERHARD PAAS
JAN AND EBELTJE (DALING) PAAS

In 1926, at the age of forty-one, Gerhard Paas immigrated to Canada. He first worked for a farmer in Nobleford and later moved to Coaldale, where he heard about Neerlandia. He took up a homestead (SE 15-62-3-5) there in December 1928.

Gerhard built a little 10 by 18-foot frame shack and started clearing some land. After seeding it and raising wheat, he sold the grain for two dollars a bushel. By the time he had more acres cleared, however, the market had dropped and grain was practically worthless. Gerhard cleared land in the winter and worked out in the south during the summer.

Gerhard standing in front of his shack, 1930s.

Gerhard had one brother in the "old country" and before World War II kept in contact with him by writing regularly, though not often. He hoped one of his nephews would take over the farm since his health was not good. He had a heart attack in the early forties. When the war was over he started writing again.

Meanwhile, Jan (February 23, 1919) and Ebeltje (July 1, 1918) Paas had been married in October 1945, and were farming with Jan's brother and his wife and also living in the same house. When the opportunity came to go to Canada, they were eager to go. Their uncle Gerhard sponsored them and their one-year-old daughter, **Darkina** (July 16, 1946). On June 20, 1947, they boarded the *Waterman* and sailed to Canada. They were six days on the ship and three days on the train, arriving in Edmonton on a Sunday night. Tjeerd Visser of Edmonton was at the station to pick them up, and they stayed at their home overnight. The next day the Vissers put them on the bus to Barrhead. Norm Toebes was on the bus with them, and the Toebes family was in Barrhead with a car to take them to Neerlandia. Jan and Ebeltje were the first immigrants to come to Neerlandia after the war except for some war brides.

The next day was the First of July picnic, and they had to go there, although Ebeltje and the baby were still sick from the trip. They were made very welcome at the picnic, and that day Mrs. Rubingh and some other ladies took Ebeltje to the store and bought some things for them that were needed in their household. A few days later they were given a surprise party at Albert and Mabel Elgersma's. Jan and Ebeltje were very impressed with the generosity of the people and the welcome they received.

Although Gerhard had rented Kippers' farmhouse for them to live in, he had also bought Cecil Tuininga's house, but it had to be moved yet. George Toebes and Albert Elgersma prepared it for moving. It was put on two good skid logs, and in the fall Sam Howey moved it with his Caterpillar tractor to the southwest corner of Gerhard's land. Gerhard had a small barn which they moved near Jan's house. The Paas family moved into their house before the winter. At the time they came to Canada they could take only one hundred dollars per person. So they had three hundred dollars — still one hundred more than Gerhard had. That first winter was very lean. They bought two milk cows and shipped some cream, and off and on Jan helped some neighbours getting firewood. On the average they had no more than five dollars a week for groceries, but they managed.

There was another baby on the way, and of this Jan writes: "My wife expected the baby in late May 1948 and our neighbours, the Janssens, were going to take her along sometime to see the doctor in Barrhead. But somehow it never happened. That year was a very late spring, the first day of May there was still snow in banks on the roadsides. Sunday morning, May the second, the baby started knocking. It was about four o'clock in the morning (at that time my uncle was living with us in the house, so he could look after our little girl). Our road was flooded so no car could get there. We hitched up old Queenie on the buggy and went to Janssen's place and got them out of bed, and they decided that Jack should take us to Barrhead. Jack was twenty at that time. The roads were bad but we got to about four miles south of Neerlandia and there a culvert was washed out. There was a big gap in the road. So Jack got to the nearest house and borrowed a ladder to get across and get help from the Fisher boys When they came back the hole had got a lot bigger already, and it was not safe to get across anymore, so they put a rope on Jack for safety to come back over, but then we had to decide what to do. Then Jack said, 'Old Mrs. Schoonekamp used to be midwife, maybe we should see her.' So when we came back to Neerlandia, I got Schoonekamps out of bed. When I talked to Mrs. Schoonekamp, she was very reluctant to come with us. But when she realized that my wife was in the car, she said, 'Why don't you bring her in here, we got a spare bedroom,' and that was done My wife was very cold and getting real close It did not take long before the baby was born — a healthy boy, **Tjabel** But then there was some complications. At the time the Ingwersens had a nurse visiting, Ina Ingwersen, and we got her to help, but she could not manage it. Then the doctor was called Dr Keir came but he got stuck with his car The Fishers took him to the creek in a truck and they rafted him across, then took him in another car to the Schoonekamp s place By that time my wife had lost a lot of blood already But the doctor got things straightened out. My wife stayed at Schoonekamps' for nine days, I think. She was very weak from loss of blood, but the Schoonekamps were very good and generous When I wanted to pay them, they did not want anything, but I could bring them a load of firewood the next winter We are still thankful when we think about them. That was the most memorable thing that happened to us."

That tall Gerhard Paas died of a heart attack Jan found him on a Monday morning (September 15, 1948) in his shack He had been to church yet on Sunday

A second son, **Steven**, was born to Jan and Ebeltje on November 27, 1950. There was about a foot of snow that day, and since they still did not have a car Pete Emmerzael took them to Barrhead

The summer of 1951 was cool but with enough moisture so the crop did well, although it ripened late. On the twentieth of September Pete Emmerzael and Jan were cutting barley at Pete's place. It was very cold and the next morning there was six inches of snow on the ground The next couple of nights the temperature was down to twenty degrees Fahrenheit and a lot of crops were not ripe yet and froze badly.

Jan plowing, Ina in furrow, c 1949

Ina, Ebeltje holding Steven, Tjabel, 1951

That summer Jan and Ebeltje had made the decision to sell the place and move to Ontario The winters were too cold and long in Neerlandia and if they stayed they would have to get some land cleared and build a new barn, and that was an investment they were not prepared to make. They sold the place to Evert Wever in December 1951. Jan wrote, "We have many fond memories of Neerlandia, especially the people, it was just like we had a lot of family there."

Jan Paas

JOHN SR. AND ELIZABETH (RIJZINGA) PETERS

John (Johannes, August 15, 1891) and Elizabeth (January 10, 1888) Peters lived in

Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, with their five children: **Tena** (Trientje, July 24, 1917), **Della** (Dieuwerke, May 13, 1920), **John** Jr. (Jan, October 14, 1921), **Elizabeth** (November 9, 1923), and **Hilda** (Hilje, November 21, 1925). John worked as a farmhand. Some families of Uithuizen, one of them John's brother-in-law Hendrik Wierenga, were planning to immigrate to Canada. John was eventually persuaded to go too. The families left Uithuizen together, but the John Peters family left Rotterdam about a week later. On April 3, 1928, they left on the *Nieuwe Amsterdam*. The voyage took ten days.

Elizabeth, John, 1916.

After arriving in Edmonton the family went to Tofield, where John worked for farmers again. They lived out of town, but every Sunday would take the horse and buggy to attend church services in Tofield.

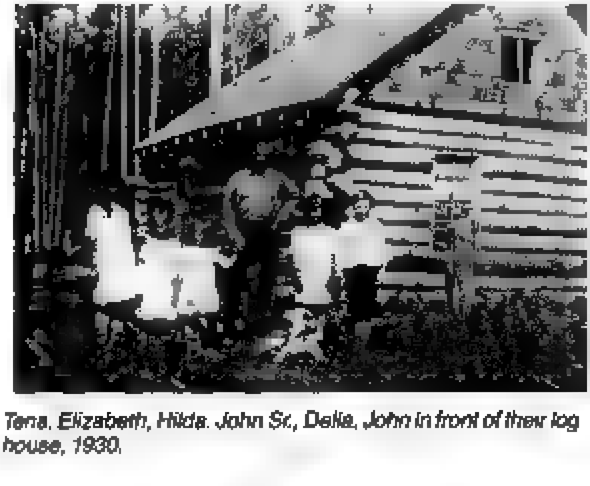
John wanted land of his own, so he came to Neerlandia in the fall of 1928. The family moved into an old log house on the Kampnar place. The old saying goes, "Don't let the bedbugs bite", but the Peters family had no choice — the place was full of them. Elizabeth was at this time nearing the end of her pregnancy with another child.

Siebren Tiemstra and Menne Nanninga helped John and Hendrik Wierenga look for suitable homesteads. There were some available northeast of Neerlandia, but the men wanted land that was closer to where they were living, so when Menne mentioned there were two homesteads open near his quarter, they went to have a look. They looked suitable, but the one quarter had heavy bush on it while the other had more brush and some of the timber burnt off. John and Hendrik pulled sticks, and John got the quarter with the lighter brush. He filed on it (SE 31-61-3-5) in November 1928. After clearing a little land John, with the help of Andy Nanninga, started building a log house. He walked back and forth every day from the Kampnar place to the homestead.

It was in the Kampnar log house that the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, but unfortunately it was not meant to go well with her. The child was stillborn, and Elizabeth was brought to the Edmonton hospital with complications. She died there six days later (December 1928). The Peters children stayed with the Ingwersens during that time, but John soon took them home again.

It was a very difficult time for John. Being in a new country and not having much money, he had to work out to make ends meet and now he also had to take care of the children. He became very frustrated at times and felt like giving up. But Andy Nanninga encouraged him not to, and John did carry on and made it through those hard times. In the spring of 1929, after their log house was finished (it had cost him seventy-five dollars to build), John moved his family to the homestead.

John got his first milk cow from Hendrik Schoonekamp and did clearing for Hendrik to



Tena, Elizabeth, Hilda, John Sr., Della, John in front of their log house, 1930.

pay for it. He made the same arrangement with John Anema for his first horse. He also did clearing for other farmers, among them were John Gelderman and Charlie Reitsma. In those days there were no fences to keep cattle in, so in the morning John would often have trouble finding his cows. Some days he would start out at 4:00 a.m. to look for them. Sometimes he would come home in between to wake the children up to go to school and then start looking again. Then he would put in a long day clearing his own land or working for other people clearing land or building roads.

At first Minnie Lievers had come to help out with housework, doing the washing and baking. But when the children got a little older, they started helping. Tena was about twelve years old when she took over the household chores before and after school. She would have to rush through the housework, then run the two miles to school to get there on time. John would bring Elizabeth and Hilda to Menne Nanninga's on horseback in the morning before he started his day. The other children had to walk all the way. When Tena was fourteen she quit school and had to work at home helping care for the family. John Sr. would do the garden work, though. In 1934 Tena left home to work in Edmonton, Pibroch, and Westlock, and Della took over at home.

In 1936, when John Jr. was 15, he quit school to work out clearing land, making 'big' wages of one dollar a day. John thought that the bigger the axe, the quicker the job would get done, but found it hard and tiring to lift that big axe all day. John Sr. could now spend more time at home, which made it easier for him. In the 1940s, when the first Caterpillars came into the district, the clearing of the land became easier and faster. It was also in the mid-forties that John Sr. and his son bought their first tractor, a 35 h.p. Allis-Chalmers, for $1200.00. That was a big improvement over walking behind the plow and harrows all day.

In the 1950s John Jr. first worked for Sam Howey and later for Bill Olthuis and Louis Nanninga, clearing land with a Caterpillar tractor. John Sr. had purchased the NW 31-61-3-5, which was right next to the homestead, so they now had a half section of land. In 1956 John Jr. married Kay Baker and they moved onto the family farm.

John Sr. continued living on the farm the rest of his life, taking an active interest in it and helping out wherever he could. He started raising varieties of pheasants and different kinds of chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys as well as peacocks. For the ringed-neck pheasants he had to renew his permit every year and pay a ten-dollar fee. This always annoyed him because he either had to pay it or let the pheasants fend for themselves and he did not think they could make it on their own. He later sold all the pheasants and raised mostly peacocks.

John Sr. Hilda, c. 1942

Hije Wierenga, John Sr. 1963.

John Sr., 1967

John Sr. was taken to his Lord on September 28, 1979, at 88 years of age, after a short illness. Della was also taken Home on July 8, 1983, after a lengthy illness. She had one son, **Phil Novikoff** (June 25, 1953). The other three daughters also married. Tena to Ed Visser, Elizabeth to Cor Fisher, and Hilda to Joe Wierenga, son of Andries and Rika

John Peters Jr

OENE AND GRACE (WIERENGA) PIERS

The town of Marum in the province of Groningen, the Netherlands, was the birthplace of Oene Piers. There he lived from March 27, 1900, until 1927 when he immigrated to Canada. Here he lived first in Saskatchewan, and then he and Reitze De Vries each took up a homestead in Topland, Alberta. Together they cleared twelve acres on one of the quarters, but soon realized that there was no future for church life there. They were aware of the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia and visited there from time to time. On these occasions they stayed at the Tiemstras. These must have been more than just social visits, because soon Oene Piers bought the SE 28-61-3-5 from Siebren Tiemstra. Reitze and Oene bached together, living in the log house that was on the property. Wilemke Tiemstra did their wash

Then two things happened First, the quarter directly to the west of Oene's quarter became available as a homestead lease, and second, Oene met Grace (Grietje) Wierenga Reitze and Oene discussed which one of them should apply for the homestead, but it appears that Reitze saw the handwriting on the wall, and decided to take a homestead farther north Oene took up the SW 28-61-3-5 in August 1929 On December 25, 1931, Grace and Oene were married, and she replaced Reitze as Oene's companion in the little log house

Before marrying Oene, Grace had worked as a housemaid in Tofield, Granum, and Edmonton. She had always given her wages to her parents, and had only twenty dollars when she got married. This, however, did not bother Oene who said that he wanted her, not her money

During their years in the log house, three sons were born to Oene and Grace The first, **Peter**, was born October 16, 1932. He was followed by **Bert** (Lambert) on November 8, 1933, and **Henry** (Sid) on January 31, 1935.

Life was difficult in the early years of Grace and Oene's married life. Only a few acres of land could be cleared each year. Trees were chopped down by axe The ground was then broken with a breaker pulled by six horses When Oene was busy clearing, Grace would bring him lunch. Sometimes she would have to cross small sloughs. Then she would tuck little Peter under one arm and tramp through water up to her knees. For part of the second year of their marriage, Oene worked out during the week, clearing land with Joe Holwerda. Grace stayed at home to look after the farm, doing chores in addition to her housework. A couple of cows and a few pigs were the only livestock housed in the little log barn, but since Grace had not been used to farm work, she gained satisfaction from successfully milking the cows and caring for farrowing sows.

Those first years the Piers family did not have money to buy the necessary clothing for the boys, so Grace made new clothes from old, an old coat of hers was turned into a new jacket for Peter. In spite of the difficult times, God's blessing was evident in their lives. Though poverty was the order of the day, there was always plenty of food to eat. Though the winter nights were so cold that ice formed on the water containers, the evenings were cozy. With Grace knitting, the little boys sleeping snugly in their beds, and Oene resting after a hard day's work, there was contentment in the log house

In 1936 a new house was built with the help of Jerry Reitsma. On October 17, 1936, a new baby was born in the new house — another boy

whom they named **John**. In 1938, Grace and Oene expectantly awaited the birth of their fifth child. On December 23, **Edward** was born. Three years later, friends and relatives eagerly awaited news on the arrival of a sixth child. They thought that this one would surely be a girl, but on June 13, 1941, **Kenneth** made his appearance in the household. Each of the boys was born with the assistance of midwife Aaltje Baker.

John, Edward, c. 1948.

Ed feeding the chickens.

Six boys kept Grace Piers busy, but in 1943 the time drew near for yet another baby to join the family. It was decided that Grace should go to the Barrhead hospital for this birth. There, on February 1, **Hilda** arrived. What joy there was in the family when God finally blessed them with a girl!

In order to keep up with the work in the house, Grace established a schedule: wash clothes on Monday, iron on Tuesday and patch on Wednesday. There was always lots of patching to do. The rest of the week was as carefully structured. The two oldest boys helped their father on the farm, but Henry was often pressed into service in the house to help his mother who suffered from backache. There was lots of work to be done and as the other boys grew up they, too, had to help their mother. Every morning sandwiches had to be made for school lunches. Then when the boys returned from school another loaf of bread would be sliced, spread, and devoured. To keep up with her sons' healthy appetites Grace had to bake bread every day.

Hard work, but also a lot of playing, characterized life on the farm. The boys had great fun playing together in the evenings. On crisp, winter evenings, they could be heard from afar, not only playing hockey, but keeping a running commentary in true Foster Hewitt fashion. The Piers brothers played so vigorously that cut lips and chipped teeth were a common occurrence. On one occasion Bert had a whole tooth knocked out.

"The Mafia." Back: Bert, Peter, Henry. Middle: Ed, John. Front: Hilda, Ken, c. 1950.

The farm slowly expanded into three quarter sections of land. An Oliver 70 tractor purchased in the early 1940s was a great help. Later, in 1948, a John Deere D was bought. Oene's brother, John, who had just emigrated from the Netherlands, was impressed with this tractor. He said, *"Dat is een heel handig ding."* (That is a real handy thing.) Of course, anyone who knows the John Deere D realizes that it was

"Our first tractor and our boys." Oliver 70. Ed, Peter, Ken, John.

Grace, Oene, 1958

anything but handy Nevertheless it served the farm well

As the boys grew up and were able to do more of the farm work, Oene was able to devote more time to community life He served numerous terms on the church council, the school board, and the store board, as well as on municipal boards

In 1959, Oene and Grace Piers retired from farm life They purchased a house from Klaas Tuininga Sr., and settled in the hamlet During their retirement years together, they spent some time visiting and travelling. Suddenly on February 22, 1972, Oene suffered a fatal heart attack, and went home to be with the Lord Grace continues to live in the house, and enjoys visiting her children and grandchildren

Though Grace and Oene worked successfully to provide a good life on the farm, only one of their children, Peter, followed in their footsteps. Bert, who married Joanne Van Dyken, is driving truck in Ripon, California Henry and his wife, Winnifred, live in Abbotsford, where he works for Ritchie-Smith The next three sons are all educators. John is principal of Neerlandia Public School. Dr Edward Piers, who has a Ph.D in chemistry, teaches at The University of British Columbia. He married Shirley Ashley in 1959, and they live with their two sons in Richmond. B C

Dr. Ken Piers also has a Ph D in chemistry He is chairman of the chemistry department at Calvin College He married Marion Ingwersen Since their three children are grown, Marion has become a registered nurse Hilda married Robert Daughty on December 28, 1962. They live in Calgary with their two children

John Piers

AEBE AND MINNIE (BAKER) PLANTINGA

Aebe Plantinga (born November 22, 1910) came to Neerlandia from Franeker, Friesland, the Netherlands, in April 1929 at the age of 18. He had been driving truck between Haarlem, Franeker, and Leeuwarden for some years, but as he saw no future for himself in the Netherlands, he began thinking of emigration Since his cousin Jake Hiemstra had immigrated to Neerlandia three years earlier, that also became Aebe's destination. After arriving in Neerlandia, Aebe boarded and worked at Jake's for about a year, then hired himself out to Raymond Baker. He worked there for about two years, and at the same time began dating Raymond's niece, Minnie. The two had met some years earlier when Aebe had gone with Jake Hiemstra over to Minnie's parents' farm to borrow a sack of flour. Aebe soon stole Minnie's heart

It was in May 1932 that Aebe and Minnie heard that a dairy farmer in north Edmonton had work for a young couple. They were interested, and Aebe went to take a look The job looked promising, so Aebe and Minnie decided to get married and move to north Edmonton. They were married in Neerlandia on June 19, 1932, and, despite the Depression, were full of hope and ambition.

Two days after their wedding, Aebe and Minnie started work. They had to be up at 4:00 a.m. to milk the 28 cows by hand. "Only one of us was a good milker, the other was fair", wrote Minnie. The milk had to be carried to the milkhouse, cooled, and ready at 7:00 for the truck. Then water for all the animals had to be pumped by hand (a two-person job) from a deep well. When this was all done, the day began. Aebe usually worked in the fields and Minnie scrubbed down the dairy utensils and helped the boss' wife in the house or tended the vegetable garden. They could quit only when it was too dark to see. The boss proved to be a hard taskmaster.

At harvest time, when the boss insisted that Minnie get into the field and do the stooking, things came to a head. Aebe demanded a $10 a month raise (they made only $35 a month between the two of them), and the boss refused. He said he couldn't afford the raise, and if Aebe did not like it, he and his wife could leave "right now". That night Aebe found another job at a cattle buyer's farm a few miles east, and never even missed a day's work.

The new job had shorter hours, but less pay. In compensation milk, vegetables, meat, and potatoes were free, and all Minnie had to do was help with milking five to twenty cows each day. All went well at their new job until Aebe slipped and fell on the ice while trying to start a pump engine. The fall put a few bones out of place in his lower back, and he was confined to his home. But Aebe's boss took him to a chiropractor who put the bones back in place. Although Minnie kept milking, the boss had to find another man to replace Aebe. Later, Aebe tried to find other work, but without success. A decision was soon made to return to Neerlandia, where they had a quarter section (NW 32-61-3-5) with a twelve-foot square shack on it. Aebe kept busy for the rest of the winter doing odd jobs. He and Minnie also kept a cow, a few chickens, and some lambs on the homestead.

On July 31, 1933, a son arrived. He was born in the shack Aebe and Minnie called home. They named him **Stewart** (Sjoerd). He proved to be good company for Minnie, who was home alone most of the time while Aebe worked for local farmers clearing, haying, and harvesting. In exchange for his work, the farmers would do Aebe's field work (what little there was), or give him groceries or farm animals. Cash was almost non-existent during those times. After a few years, Aebe and Minnie had built up their homestead so that they had more livestock and buildings than before, and also some small machinery. It was quite a struggle for several years, though. It was a challenge to make bread from the flour ground at the grist mill. All would go well, the dough rising as expected, until it got hot in the oven: down it would go and come out looking like two-by-fours. But they ate it! Three other children were born to Aebe and Minnie during the Depression — **Joe** (Jouke) on December 7, 1934, **Annette** Ruth on May 3, 1937, and **Gilles** on November 2, 1939.

Aebe, Joe, Stewart, c. 1935

In the fall of 1938, Plantingas' homestead was burned out by a bush fire and they lost almost everything, including buildings, grain and a cellar full of berries and vegetables. Everything went so fast! All Minnie could drag to the road in the short time before the fire burned the house was the family's best clothes, a few pans, and a chair with their 1½-year old daughter tied to it. Aebe and Minnie found refuge for a few days with Minnie's parents, and then rented a house owned by Neerlandia Co-op that stood where the Service Centre now stands (1984). That winter proved to be one of the coldest winters Aebe and Minnie can remember; so cold that water from a boiling tea kettle quickly froze when it spilled on the floor.

The next year, towards spring, the Plantingas bought a small house and with the help of others had it moved on skids to their homestead. Soon, an addition to the house and a small barn were built and the Plantingas were able to start over. They worked hard to develop the homestead. The children were a lot of help as they grew up, even if they did pull up the tomatoes instead of the stinkweed in the garden. On February 17, 1942, **Ella Catherine**, Aebe and Minnie's second daughter, was born.

Annette, Minnie holding Gilles, Stewart, Joe, c. 1941

After the Second World War, the Plantingas sponsored Aebe's sister, **Richtje**, her husband, **Harm Elsinga**, and their two children, **Anne** and **John**. Harm had owned a trucking firm in the Netherlands, which had been confiscated by the Germans during World War Two, now he wanted to make a new start in Canada. The Elsingas arrived in Neerlandia in 1946 and lived with the Plantingas for several months. Later that same year, Aebe's brother **Henry**, sponsored by Charlie Baker, also arrived in Neerlandia. Henry was a registered nurse, a rarity in Canada at the time, and soon found work at Oliver Hospital outside of Edmonton. Harm Elsinga found a job at the same hospital as grounds keeper and handyman.

One year later, the call came from the Netherlands to sponsor yet another of Aebe's family, brother **Jacob**. Upon coming to Neerlandia, Jacob Plantinga worked for Neil Lindquist of Mellowdale and John Gelderman. Then, a few months later, Aebe's aged parents, **Sjoerd** and **Anna**, responded to the lure of their children in the promised land and arrived in Neerlandia. Aebe had bought a small house from John Visser Sr. and had it moved to the hamlet for his parents to live in. The old folks, however, never did adjust to living in this new land. Aebe's father was a city person, used to going for strolls in the lovely parks of Franeker and visiting his many friends and acquaintances. In comparison, life in Neerlandia was quite lonely. Moreover, Aebe's parents thought it was primitive with no phones, no electricity, and no running water. Unhappy here, they decided to move to Edmonton. In 1949, Aebe's father suffered a stroke, and upon a doctor's suggestion, the old people moved back to the Netherlands. Immigration had just been too much for them.

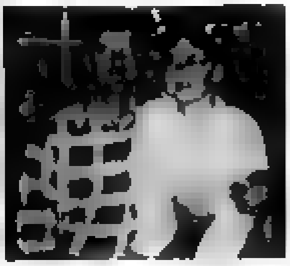
As time went on, Aebe and Minnie acquired another half-section of raw land (E½ 35-61-4-5), and by now they had a tractor and some larger machinery. About forty acres of their original quarter had been cleared, and crops were fairly good. Moreover, they had well over 100 sheep — until the coyotes began killing them. Then they went out of the sheep business altogether. The two oldest boys, Stewart and Joe, spent a lot of time working out. The farm's crop and increased and they built up a nice herd of milk

Back: Joe, Stewart, Albert, Richard, Gilles. Middle: Annette, Aebe, Minnie. Front: Duane, Dora, Donald, c. 1961 cows. The cream cheques that came in weekly as a result sure were welcome

Also welcomed by the Plantingas during those years were new arrivals to the family: **Richard** Henry (September 19, 1947), **Albert** Charles (December 5, 1948), **Dora** Kathleen (April 12, 1952), and twins, **Duane** Philip and **Donald** John (November 22, 1953). Aebe had been concerned for some years that Neerlandia did not have enough land available for his sons to start up on their own. So in 1953, after reading an advertisement about available land, Aebe, Stewart (21), and Joe (19) went north to have a look. In the Blueberry Mountain area, there were acres of land for the taking, and by the time they returned to Neerlandia, Stewart and Joe each had chosen a half section in Forest Creek. Aebe helped them get started and they have been farming there ever since. Joe was the first of the Plantingas to get married. He married Cathy Solomons in 1964 and they have five children. Two years later, Stewart married Doris Ebens; they have two children. Gilles was also attracted by the good land at Blueberry Mountain and soon followed his brothers. He married Margaret Jensen in 1977. They have three children.

Aebe and Minnie continued to live on their old homestead with their children until 1960, when they purchased the Ralph Kooy homestead (W½ 5-62-3-5). This farm had good running water and electricity, something the Plantingas had not had in their previous home. Then in May 1966, Aebe bought Paul Kalmbach's farm in Mellowdale (E½ 35-60-3-5, NE 26-60-3-5) and sold his other land. Because the Mellowdale farm had better land, it was here that Aebe harvested good crops for the first time. Aebe and Minnie continued to live there until all of their children had moved out or married. In 1976, they retired to the hamlet of Neerlandia, leaving the home place to their son **Albert**. Albert had married **Grace Duursma** the previous year. Grace, who had been born on September 17, 1952, was raised in Telkwa, British Columbia. After high school she had gone to Dordt College and, following graduation, taught in Lacombe Christian School for two years.

Malinda, Daniel, Brian, 1983.



Albert, Grace

Albert and Grace's daughter, **Malinda** Grace, was born on August 11, 1976. Their first son, **Brian** Ashley, was born on August 20, 1978, and their second, **Daniel** John, on September 6, 1981.

Aebe and Minnie's son Donald also farms in the Neerlandia area on the NE 11-62-4-5. He married Marilyn Elgersma on November 29, 1974. They have two daughters — **Trina** Marie, born on April 24, 1978, and **Tanis** Lynn, born on March 16, 1983. Their son, **Laval** Don, born on April 5, 1980, died of cancer on March 21, 1982, after a lengthy illness.

Laval, 1981

Marilyn holding Tanis, Don, Trina, 1983.

Aebe and Minnie's other children also married and have gone on to start families of their own. Annette lives in Burnaby, British Columbia, with her husband, Frank Vink, and their three children. Frank works for Woodwards. Ella married Walter Land in 1964, and they reside in Lacombe with their three children. Walter owns Land's Wash and Lube and Ella is vice-principal in Lacombe Christian School.

In 1970, Richard married Genevieve Bergstrom, and they presently (1984) reside in Terrace, B.C., with their two children. Richard is a corporal in the RCMP. Dora married Gerald Nanninga of Neerlandia. Duane attended Dordt College, where he met Sheryl Schrotenboer, whom he married in 1974. They live in Red Deer, Alberta, with their three children, Duane is principal of Red Deer Christian School.

Minnie Plantinga

CHARLIE AND BERTHA (KAMPNAR) REITSMA

Charlie (Tjibbe) Reitsma was born in Oostermeer, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 9, 1901, the oldest in a family of ten children. By 1926, two members of the Reitsma family had immigrated to Canada. One of Charlie's younger brothers, Jerry, and a cousin, Ted, were both in Neerlandia. Now Charlie decided to join them. He sailed on the *Volendam*, sharing a cabin with three strangers. The "meat and potatoes meals" served on board met with his approval. Charlie also discovered a bar where alcoholic beverages could be purchased, and as Charlie said, "I had a few dollars in my pocket." On his arrival in Neerlandia, Charlie made his home with his cousin, Ted, and his family until the cabin on his homestead was ready. He had filed on the NW 16-61-3-5 on April 21, 1927, and patented it in 1937. This quarter was later sold to Art and Dick Fisher. To make ends meet, Charlie worked in logging camps in the winter, and later contracted to farm the Kampnar land for Bertha Kampnar, who was left in charge when her father died in 1926.

Bertha, who was now living and working in the U.S.A., returned to Neerlandia several times to see how things were going. Charlie began courting her, and on March 8, 1933, Charlie and Bertha were married and moved into her house (the old Kampnar store) on the farm. They also purchased the Pete Louws farm.

Charlie and Bertha worked together to build up the farm. Bertha enjoyed the outside work and often looked after the stock when Charlie was busy elsewhere. One fine August day Charlie was in the field one-half mile from home, trying out a tractor he had just purchased. Bertha was attending to a sow that was farrowing. Then tragedy struck. Charlie happened to glance toward the yard and saw smoke billowing up. Bertha too looked up from her task and was horrified to see the house ablaze. By the time they reached the yard the fire was so far advanced that nothing could be saved. All the Kampnar records and keepsakes were destroyed in the fire. The Reitsmas lost both their home and their possessions, but the community rallied around them. Tom Wilson supplied a shack for them to live in and others gave them enough supplies for them to manage on their own until Charlie and his brother, Jerry, built a new house.

Shortly after the completion of the house, Charlie and Bertha, who had no children, adopted a little girl, Margaret Patricia Mae (born March 13, 1942). Although Bertha had agreed to the adoption, she became apprehensive when the time came to go to Edmonton. Therefore, on April 13, Charlie made the trip alone. Once in Edmonton, his sister Grace accompanied him to the adoption agency. He was immediately charmed by the first baby he was shown and soon headed home with the month-old little girl. A neighbour lady, Mrs. Marinus Hoogers, came in every morning for about a week to help Bertha care for the baby. Mae was an attractive, curly-haired baby. She was a special source of pleasure to her father and, as she grew up, often accompanied him on errands. She is now married and lives with her husband in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Charlie, Mae, Bertha, 1945.

The banks of the Shoal Creek, which ran through the Reitsma farm, provided an ideal hill for winter sliding. Many of the young people of that time remember sliding down the hill (on sleighs, cardboard, and makeshift toboggans) with what seemed like lightning speed, sailing down onto the frozen creek and up the bank on the far side. When they were tired they relaxed over hot cocoa and goodies provided by Bertha.

In 1945 the Reitsmas sold their farm to Andries Wierenga and moved to Edmonton. Bertha died on August 5, 1975. Charlie continues to live in Edmonton.

Sadie Prins
Helen Skirrow

JERRY AND JENNIE (FISHER) REITSMA

Jerry (Jurgen) Reitsma was born in Oostermeer, Friesland, the Netherlands, on February 26, 1903. There he spent his childhood. As a youth, Jerry picked up carpentry knowledge while watching and helping his father who was a carpenter. At one time his father owned some freight boats that transported freight within the Netherlands. When he sold, Jerry decided to immigrate to Canada.

In April 1924 Jerry borrowed money from his father and sailed on the *Veendam*. His destination was Viking, Alberta, on the advice of someone at the immigration office in the Netherlands. Arriving in Viking the same month, Jerry went to work for a farmer for a year and was able to earn enough to repay his father the fare to Alberta — $185.00.

Jerry wrote his cousin Ted Reitsma, who subsequently encouraged him to come to Neerlandia. Jerry made the move in 1925 and immediately went to work clearing bush for Raymond Baker. He also took up a homestead (NW 21-61-3-5). That fall he went to Edmonton with Charlie Tiemstra to work in the Black Diamond Coal Mine. In Edmonton Jerry met his future wife, Jennie Fisher.

At the time Jennie met Jerry, she was working in a biscuit factory taking the hot biscuits off the trays. She also ran the machines for making chocolate eclairs and for icing the cookies. In 1927 the Fisher family moved to Neerlandia.

In the meantime Jerry had done some clearing on the homestead and built a small 20 by 20-foot lumber house. In the fall of 1928 Jerry started to help as a volunteer on the building of the church and parsonage. Later Menne Nanninga hired him for two dollars for a ten-hour day. So, as Jennie says, "Then we could afford to get married." They were married February 22, 1929.

Jerry and Jennie settled happily in their little house, which in due time had a little piece built on. Their first son, **Arthur**, was born November 16, 1929. Life on the homestead continued with Jerry often away, building for six days of the week. Ben Lievers, Menne Nanninga, and Jerry often worked as a team. Two more sons joined the family: **Bill** (William, December 23, 1932) and **Ted** (May 1, 1934). The only daughter, **Joyce**, arrived August 1, 1937.

Jerry, Jennie, 1929

While Jerry worked part-time as a carpenter, Jennie kept the home fires going — doing the chores and mowing sow thistles down with a scythe. It seemed to Jennie that the weed inspector was always coming around! By 1938 Jerry had an old car and was able to be home in time to help with the chores.

Once in a while Jennie would announce to the children that they were going for tea that day to Alice Baker's. Eagerly they would get ready for the walk across the field. When they came to Baker's, their dog was always already there. There were no telephones, but the dog forewarned Alice that visitors were coming!

Jerry built a new home, but they lived in it only until June 1946 when they purchased SE 21-61-3-5, and the family moved there. Joe H. Wierenga bought their former house and moved it to his home quarter.

By this time Jerry was not working out much anymore. After the church burned down on November 11, 1948, however, Menne Nanninga came to ask Jerry if he would help him supervise the building and work on a new church.

This he agreed to do. Due to his age and health, Menne was not able to do much. He usually came about every ten days to see how things were going and would say, "You're doing fine, keep it up." The church was completed in 1950.

In the meantime, Jennie became active with the Red Cross group which was formed in 1942 in Neerlandia. She was also Neerlandia's correspondent for the *Barrhead Leader* until 1978. Jerry served as a member of the executive of the Rural Electrification Association and later Jennie did.

Back: Jennie, Ted, Jerry. Front: Art, Joyce, Bill, 1946.

The children were married in the years 1955-1959. Art married Helen Boonstra, Joyce married Gerrit van Dijken, Ted married Carol Howie, and Bill married Elsie Dotzlaf. Bill remained on the home place and Jerry and Jennie lived in a small house on the yard.

The farm was sold to Bill in April 1964, and Jerry and Jennie moved to Barrhead in August 1964. Jerry still went to his workshop on the farm and did an occasional building job until his death in July 1968. Jennie still lives in her own home in Barrhead.

Jennie Reitsma

LOE REYSE

Lodewijk Fransiscus Reÿse was born in Amsterdam, North Holland, the Netherlands, on August 1, 1905. He was an office worker when he decided to immigrate to Canada with his cousin Kees Stoové in 1926. They came to Neerlandia, where their maternal uncle Case Ingwersen lived.

Loe took up the NE 9-62-3-5 as a homestead on July 15, 1926. With the help of the Ingwersen boys he built a 16 by 20-foot shack on the place. Later that year Loe's brother **Willem** (September 19, 1901) immigrated to Neerlandia, as did another brother **Conrad** some years later. The brothers lived together for awhile, but Conrad and William soon went their separate ways. Loe lived on his homestead for about two years. During that time he broke seven acres and cropped thirteen, dug two wells, one twelve feet and the other sixteen feet deep; and put up 1½ miles of two-wire fence. These improvements were valued at $342.

Loe could sing and whistle beautifully. He sang in the choir and at many wedding receptions. He could imitate almost any bird with his whistling. Loe tried his hand at hunting, but one fall day around 1930 he got lost while hunting and fell through the ice of a creek. His legs were soaked, and he stopped by the first homestead he came to, that of Ben Lievers. Loe's legs were badly frozen, and he stayed at Ben and Alice Lievers' all winter while he recuperated.

Loe worked for Billy Quick from 1927 to 1931. In 1929 he managed the store for six weeks while his Uncle Case made a trip to the Netherlands. Loe worked for the Neerlandia Co-op from 1932 to 1938. During this time he lived in a shack close to the store. He also boarded at Ingwersens' for a while.

Loe married Emma Boman of Vega in 1937. He bought the Vega store from his father-in-law, Julius Boman, in May 1938 and sold it again in 1940. Loe and Julius and Pete Boman built the first telephone line from the Neerlandia store to the Vega store in 1939.

Loe and Emma had two daughters born to them while they lived in Vega. After leaving there in 1941 the family moved to many places in Alberta and B.C., either operating a dairy farm or a general store. Two more daughters were born during those years. In 1963 they moved to Kelowna, B.C. Loe bought a truck-mounted vacuum system and travelled around

Loe Emma, 1938.

cleaning out furnaces and duct systems. He also came to Neerlandia and cleaned out the Christian Reformed Church's duct system

In his later years Loe changed his name to Lewis Reese so people would not have as much difficulty pronouncing it. Loe had great concern for his fellowmen regarding their spiritual welfare and was especially concerned about young people He died June 10, 1980

John Bos
Emma Shunter

JOHN AND EMMA (ROSSIN) ROTH

Just before the turn of the century, on November 6, 1899, John (Johann) Roth was born and registered in Besedak, Hungary Almost 26 years later, on July 20, 1925, he immigrated to Canada, going with friends to Bruderheim, Alberta.

Later, John worked in the Leduc area for Daniel Wetter, but his friends from Hungary, the Heberlings, encouraged him to come to the Neerlandia district where they had settled. On May 26, 1928, he took up as his homestead the S.W 15-61-3-5. During that summer, he cleared enough land for a house and garden, and also built a one-room house. At harvest time, he returned to Leduc to work. There he met Emma Rossin.

Emma, the youngest daughter of Gustav and Louise Rossin, was born on December 24, 1897 in Russia. She came to Canada in June 1928 to join her parents, who were homesteading in Bruderheim.

John and Emma were married on March 12, 1930, in Bruderheim Lutheran Church. After their wedding, they came to their homestead in Neerlandia In the fall, John once again returned to Leduc, where he helped with the harvest. This way he raised enough money to buy two cows and two horses. In the meantime, Emma was busy on the homestead When the harvest was completed, John and Emma worked together to clear the land. These were the depression years and times were tough. The Roths experienced many years of hard work and hardships.

Three children were born to John and Emma Roth. **Henry** was born on April 19, 1933 Two years later, **Paul** made his arrival on September 10, 1935. Finally, on April 27, 1937, a daughter, **Katie**, was born. With three children, the one-room house was too small, so in the early forties an addition, including a porch, was built onto the original structure

Back: Emma, John. Front: Paul, Katie, Henry, c. 1944.

In the 1950's, times became a little easier John bought the S.E. 4-61-3-5 from Joe Bruks. The electric power also came in the 50's, so

there was no longer any need for lanterns or lamps.

In 1964, John and Emma retired and moved to Barrhead, and Henry took over the family farm. Paul married Grace Crowle of Hanna. They live in Wetaskiwan, where Paul is manager of Blue Flame Propane. Paul and Grace have two daughters and one son. Katie married Otto Kakoschke, an evangelist. They live in Kelowna, British Columbia, with their son and daughter.

John and Emma lived in their home in Barrhead for 15 years. In 1979, John had his leg amputated because of sugar diabetes. Since his wife was unable to care for him, he entered Barrhead Nursing Home, where he remained till his death on August 16, 1982. On December 13, 1982, Emma entered Barrhead Nursing Home, where she still resides (1984).

Erna Roth

CLARENCE AND JENNY (KIPPERS) ROWAAN

Clarence Rowaan came to Neerlandia in 1937 and worked for several farmers. In 1938 he made profession of faith. That same year his brother Ko joined him in Neerlandia. They each leased a quarter of the school section (11-62-3-5). Clarence leased the southeast quarter. The two brothers lived and worked together, clearing a little land each year.

In 1943 Clarence married Jennie Kippers. Clarence writes, "I met a very nice girl, the youngest daughter of Henry Kippers. We fell in love with each other. At the same time I had a home to go to. Home, sweet home!" Their first son, **Henry**, was born June 8, 1947, and baptized by Rev. Rubingh. **Jeanette** Ann was born September 29, 1949, and was baptized in the store hall by a minister from the U.S.A. Five more children followed. **Jim** (James) Edward, July 29, 1951, **Nancy**, March 11, 1954, **Gertrude** Alice, January 24, 1956; **Arie** Clarence, August 20, 1957; and **George** John, January 28, 1959.

The Rowaan brothers did a lot of work with Andy, Ike, and Louis Nanninga — "three very fine neighbours". They helped each other with sawing firewood, cutting logs for lumber, building, and land clearing.

On his farm Clarence milked cows and shipped cream, and raised and shipped pigs. He also grew grain, most of which was fed to the livestock.

Leaving for Ontario, July 1963. Back: Clarence, Jeanette, Jennie, Henry. Front: Gertrude, James, George, Arie, and Nancy.

Later the Rowaans moved to the SE 14-62-3-5. They left Neerlandia for Ontario in July 1963.

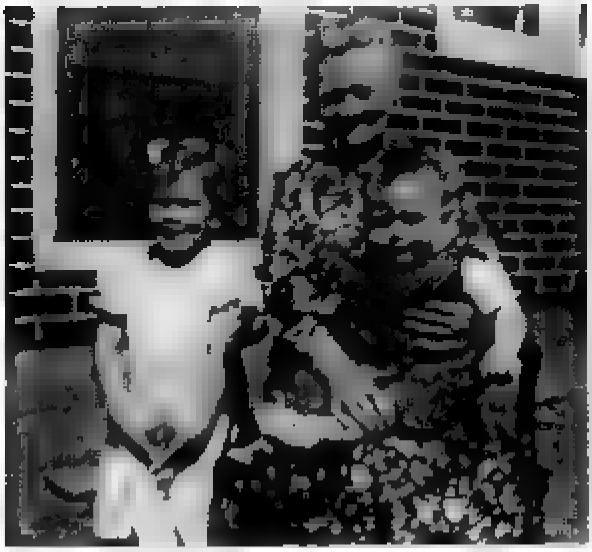
Clarence Rowaan

HENDRIK AND NIESKE (APOL) ROWAAN

Hendrik (April 16, 1878) and Nieske (August 28, 1878) Rowaan left Oldenzijl, Groningen, the Netherlands, aboard the *Volendam* on April 4, 1927. With them were their three sons, **Joe** (Jozua, August 26, 1909), **Ko** (Eiko, May 9, 1911), and **Clarence** (Klaas, February 22, 1915). After a nine-day trip they docked in Halifax where they boarded a train for a five-day trip to Winnipeg, Manitoba. There Hendrik had a market garden. After two years they moved, first to Shackleton, Saskatchewan, where there was a Christian Reformed congregation, and then to Beechy, Saskatchewan.

Rowaans farmed in Saskatchewan for ten years, but did not make much progress because it was at the beginning of the Depression (1930). To make matters worse, those were the years called the Dirty Thirties or the Dustbowl years. The first dust storm they experienced was in spring and they will never forget it. It got so dark in the house that they had to put the light on. They thought the world was coming to an end. The last year in Saskatchewan they had a fair crop and were able to save some money to get out of that country.

Ko and Clarence were in Neerlandia by that



Nieske with her grandchildren Norma, Edward.

time, so in the spring of 1940 Hendrik, Nieske, and Joe moved there too. They rented a half section of land (E½ 18-61-3-5) from Anne Elgersma. Hendrick died in June 1941. Joe had married Johanna Wierenga, a daughter of Lammert. After her husband's death, Nieske went to live with them, while Ko and Clarence bached together. When Ko got married in 1943, Clarence bought a house and Nieske came to live with him. Although Clarence married in 1943, his mother remained living with them for many years. When there were too many little Rowaans for the house, Nieske went to live with Ko and Alice. She died in March 1963.

Ko Rowaan

KO AND ALICE (KIPPERS) ROWAAN

Ko Rowaan and his brother Clarence left Saskatchewan for Lacombe in the mid-thirties, but while Clarence moved to Neerlandia in 1937, Ko did not come until the following year. At first the two brothers bached together, but in 1940 their parents and brother, Joe, moved to Neerlandia also. Of this time in their lives Ko wrote

"Our parents and brother Joe, the oldest of the three, worked the farm. That left Klaas and myself to roam. And roam we did. We worked then here, then there. We did any kind of work we could lay our hands on, but mostly farmwork. We stayed as much as possible close to the centrum, because our feet were the only transportation we own. As good boys we wanted to keep up the good tradition of our fathers, so we went to the Christian Reformed Church faithfully every Sunday. As we were both single, we were looking for excitement. We (tried) our luck with girls. Two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kippers fell for our charms. After three years, I married Alice."

In 1939 or 1940, Ko obtained lease to the NE 11-62-3-5, part of a school section. He worked hard for two years and, with the help of his neighbours, cleared thirty-two acres and built a house with the lumber from the land he cleared.

Ko and Alice married January 18, 1942. After they had been married for nine years they got their first child, **Norma** (December 7, 1949). "She was the sweetest baby ever," wrote Ko. "Our second baby, a boy (we named him **Edward**) didn't wait that long in coming — about three years. He was two weeks old when we met up with him." Ed was born August 7, 1952.

Norma, Ko, Alice, 1950.

Ko and Alice made progress on the farm. They did mixed farming. After they had cleared all of the original quarter they bought the NW 11-62-3-5 from Pete Emmerzael. In 1962 they sold their farm and Ko went out working. After two years he got tired of that and decided to move to B.C. where he bought a twenty-five acre farm. The Rowaans are thankful to Louis, Ike, and Andy Nanninga for helping "with anything you can think of"

Ko Rowaan

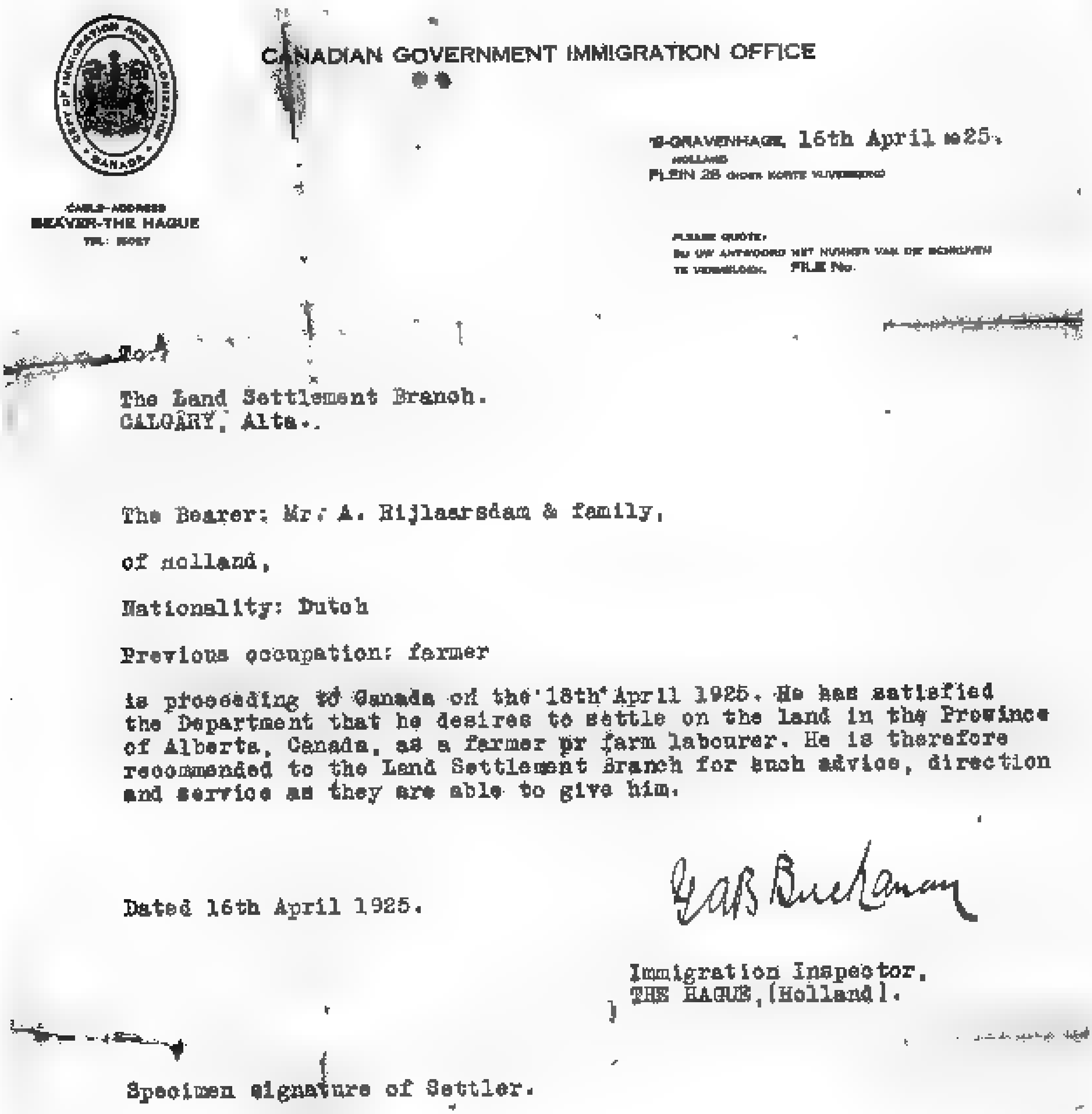
ARIE AND JAAN (KOK) RYLAARSDAM

A big house in Holten, South Holland, the Netherlands, was the home of Arie and Jaan (Bastiaantje) Rylaarsdam and their five children. Arie had graduated from an agricultural college and now had a dairy farm. Jaan was an accomplished cheesemaker. Arie played pipe organ in the local *Gereformeerde Kerk,* and Jaan, who had a beautiful soprano voice, sang in the choir. Since Arie had an inheritance from his father, there were few financial worries. A hired man and woman were permanent members of the household.

Then the cattle contracted hoof-and-mouth disease and had to be destroyed. This disaster so discouraged Arie that he decided to take his family to Canada. Jaan did not want to go, but in those days a wife had little voice in making such decisions. Arie applied for immigration as a farmer. Because he wanted to produce sugar, his desired destination was southern Alberta

Back: Servant and maid. Front: Arie, Adriana, Gerry, Pieun, Jaan, Eva, Anna standing at her mother's knee, 1925.

The Rylaarsdam home in Holten. Arie, Eva, the maid, Gerry, Jaan holding Pieun.



CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IMMIGRATION OFFICE

CABLE-ADDRESS
BEAVER-THE HAGUE
TEL.: [illegible]

'S-GRAVENHAGE, 16th April 1925.
HOLLAND
PLEIN 28 (HOEK KORTE VIJVERBERG)

PLEASE QUOTE:
BIJ UW ANTWOORD HET NUMMER VAN DE SCHRIJVEN
TE VERMELDEN. FILE No.

To:

The Land Settlement Branch.
CALGARY, Alta..

The Bearer: Mr. A. Hijlaarsdam & family,

of Holland,

Nationality: Dutch

Previous occupation: farmer

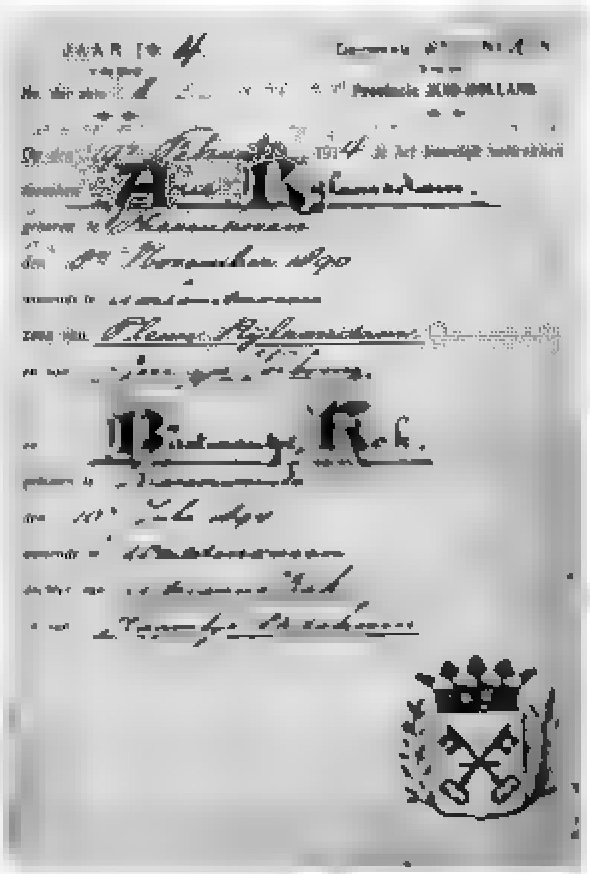
is proceeding to Canada on the 18th April 1925. He has satisfied the Department that he desires to settle on the land in the Province of Alberta, Canada, as a farmer or farm labourer. He is therefore recommended to the Land Settlement Branch for such advice, direction and service as they are able to give him.

Dated 16th April 1925.

GAB Buchanan

Immigration Inspector.
THE HAGUE, (Holland).

Specimen signature of Settler.



On April 16, 1925, the Rylaarsdam family boarded the *Montcalm* and set out for Canada. The family consisted of Father Arie, born November 8, 1890, at Zevenhoven, South Holland, and Mother Jaan Kok, born July 10, 1894, at Hazerswoude, South Holland, and their five children: **Eva**, born July 2, 1915; **Gerry** (Gerrigje), born October 4, 1916; **Pleun** Adriaan, born March 29, 1918; **Adriana**, born November 3, 1919; and **Anna**, born January 18, 1922. Gerry tells the rest of the story as excerpts from a diary.

April 16, 1925

We are leaving our homeland to come to Canada — to come up in the world, so Father said.

May 10, 1925

It has taken us about two weeks to reach our destination — Lethbridge. (Lots of Hollanders there, Father had said.) Father found employment quite readily with a large rancher at Coaldale, Alberta. Mother is quite ill. Father moved us into a three-room shack. The heat, dust, and mosquitoes are unbearable and the water is almost unfit to drink.

July 11, 1925

Our brother **Arie** was born today, but Mother is still very ill so Dad is taking her to the Lethbridge hospital. Our infant brother is left in the care of my sister Eva, who is nine years old, as Father has to leave early every morning to work on the ranch.

September 10, 1925

Eva's growing up real quick. The rest of us aren't being much help to her either in this terrible situation. They had to take Mother's gallbladder out and it took Mother a long time to come home. She is still very weak.

April 19, 1926

This first winter has been terribly cold. Father's job ran out so we moved to some land at Lethbridge, but living conditions are worse. There is no relief from the wind and dust. Mother is failing in health. Today Father came home and told Mother that in the spring we are moving again.

March 13, 1927

We are preparing to travel by train to Edmonton, then to Westlock, Alberta, which is as close as the train can get us to our destination — Neerlandia — where the grass and the trees are green, and there is lots of good water. Mother is filled with new hope. Father told Mother that there is a store, a school, and a church there, and that most of the people are Dutch. How Mother longs to be among Dutch people again. Everyone is anxious to get there.

March 21, 1927

Father is making a few trips to Freedom with some of our belongings while we wait at Westlock. Mr. and Mrs. Pete Hoofdakker and two children, Peter and Josephine, are travelling with us.

March 24, 1927

Father and Mr. Hoofdakker found what looked to them to be an abandoned house. They moved us into that vacant house without asking who owns it. We are staying at Freedom for a few months because Father and Mr. Hoofdakker have found some work picking roots for a family named Poirier. On Saturdays we chil-

dren also help in order to earn much-needed cash.

We have been told that all children over age six have to attend school at Freedom, or we could be in real trouble, so Eva, Pleun, Adriana, and I trot off to school every day, and we really enjoy that! Mother is getting worried, wondering if we will ever get to Neerlandia where we are going to make a new start.

June 4, 1927

Yesterday we started out for Neerlandia with a cow behind the wagon. Dad said it would only take a day; it must have been a long day. We got stuck — horses, wagon, cow, and all — in a mud hole, by Henry Mast's place. We have met some Dutch people, such as Tiemstras and Anemas, along the way. That gave Mother a little chance to speak to someone that she could talk to, and so her spirits are lifting a little.

And now we have finally arrived at the hamlet and sure enough, there is the store, school, and church. Father tells us that we will be going to that school there in September.

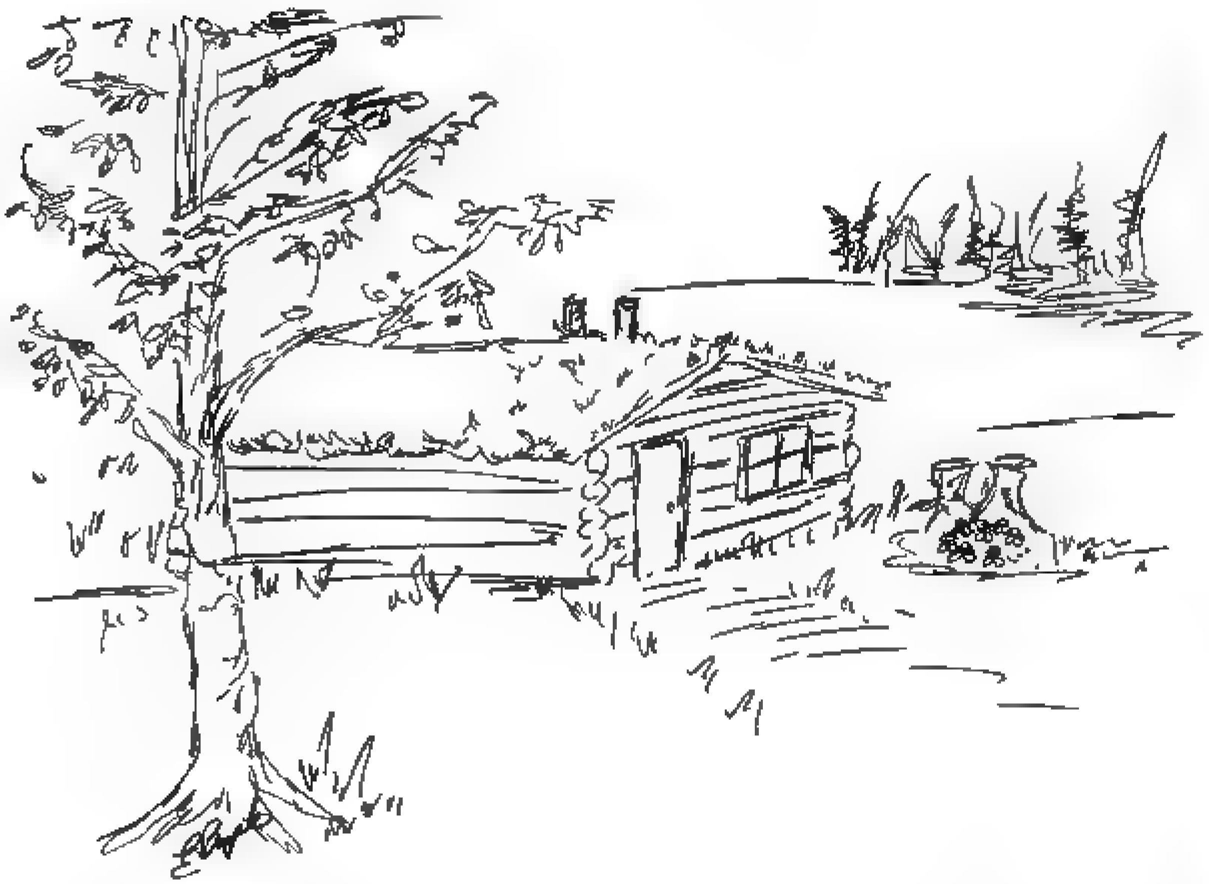
July, 1927

We are finally settled on our quarter, two miles further north from the store. We live on the SW 15-62-3-5. The Hoofdakker family moved to the quarter one-half mile north of us. We are suffering untold hardships. Fortunately we met Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter, who are helping us out a lot. They are very kind, I will never forget them.

Dad is planting a garden. He already built a make-shift log cabin. My father is many things that are good, but a carpenter he is not! He built that cabin with the biggest green poplars he could see right close by. Well! We could only lift them five logs high, all of us helping all we could. At that point Mother said that she wished she was dead. Dad said, "We are on the frontier and things will soon get better." He put a sod roof on that cabin as we didn't have money to buy tar paper. Well, we moved in, and he has gone away to work around Freedom. Mr. Hoofdakker went with him.

July 27, 1927

Dad and Mr. Hoofdakker are still gone, and



more troubles are here. The monsoon season hit us; the rains kept coming down for days without stopping. The sod roof is not waterproof and the rain soon started dripping through. Mother tried to keep us dry, even put up an umbrella in the house. We were getting soaking wet and so was everything we owned. Mr. and Mrs. Kannegieter worried about us, they came to look and see if we were okay. They moved a lot of our belongings into some of their empty granaries.

The Hootdakkers have a real neat log cabin with a decent roof that doesn't leak. Mother moved us into their cabin, and I don't know how that was possible as there are seven of us, Mother with us six children, but she did it. It is really crowded in the cabin, but Mrs. Hoofdakker never complains. As for Mother too, it just makes me wonder about the patience she has and, not being in the greatest health, she really must have some great strength inside to carry her and us on.

August 6, 1927

The rain keeps on. Father and Mr. Hootdakker are back. He says they came walking home in the mud and rain. When Father popped his head into our cabin, he got a surprise to find it empty, with wife, children, and all the household goods gone. He knew we couldn't have gone very far. After a time he found us at the Hoofdakkers.

August 14, 1927

Today we moved back to our dugout cabin. The rain stopped and everywhere outside it's drying up, but not inside. We had to bail all the water out by hand first.

August 20, 1927

We all have colds because of the rain. I'm surprised none of us are dying of pneumonia or something worse. Mother cries at night, and sometimes during the days too. Father's spirits haven't faltered, his strength is really amazing, because, like Mother, he was born in a middle-class family and is used to lots of comforts that we don't have anymore. But Mother is just having a hard time getting used to living out here. She was an only child, raised and taught under church laws in Holland, and was held in high esteem there. The difference between their attitudes confuses us at times, and sister Eva really has a big load to bear, still caring a lot for little brother Arie, packing him around like she is his mother. Mother can't take care of him, her heart is breaking

September, 1927

Father told us when we first came we would be going to Neerlandia school, but now we can't. Father didn't know then that our land is in a different school district. We aren't allowed to attend in Neerlandia, and the Vega district where we are supposed to go doesn't even have a school. So we don't go to school at all

We have met a lot of nice Dutch people who have been helping to make things more pleasant for us. Otherwise life is hard. We have learned to pick wild strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries. We sometimes can sell some, earning an extra twenty-five cents here and there Every little bit helps out

September 15, 1927

We're in big trouble again, bad trouble. We just found out that that house in Freedom we stayed in belonged to somebody and now he's come and he tells us that we owe him a whole pile of money for back rent. So Father quick went to Freedom this morning to try to earn some money to pay the debt

September 18, 1927

Some man came to the farm today to seize some of our possessions to pay for the debt He wanted to take Mother's sewing machine, one of the horses, and some other things. Mother started crying and the man finally left without taking anything. Now Mother and Eva are on their way to Freedom to get Father and what money he has. I hope that man doesn't come back before Father gets here.

October 6, 1927

Well, our bad situation turned out all right, at least we don't owe the money any more Mother and Eva got Father, but he didn't have nearly enough money to pay the man, and what he had we needed desperately for ourselves. Someone told the people in Neerlandia Church about our troubles and the church people got together and paid the debt for us. I'm really grateful to them all, but I hardly dare to be, because Mother and Eva are so very upset about it all It's like their pride is hurt, having to depend on others for charity after once having plenty.

July 12, 1929

Today I had to walk to the grocery store for a few things. It was a really hot day and I was tired when I got there Mr. Ingwersen is the manager. He saw I was hot and gave me a big juicy orange! I ate it slowly under a tree, it was so good! I almost never get to eat an orange so it was a real treat

September, 1929

We are finally going to school in a real schoolhouse! We haven't gone to real school since we went in Freedom This summer in July and August we began having classes, but they were held in a little log house owned by Pete Boman. Then they finished building our Vega school and twenty-two other children come too. Our teacher is Miss Muriel Willis

August 2, 1930

I have a job of my own now! Yesterday I left home to come to a farm here in Ardrossen, Alberta. I milk cows and do other chores for twenty dollars a month. It seems like a miracle to be able to earn that much money in one month. Father found work too, with a gravel-crushing crew at Didsbury, Alberta, and Eva is working in Edmonton. Things are really looking up now

September 14, 1930

A terrible tragedy struck our family today My littlest sister, Anna, is only eight years old, but today she died. She was accidentally shot in the chest while everyone was on the way to go blueberry picking. Oscar Bonstrom rushed her by car to the hospital and Dr Verreau came to meet them, but they were too late. Anna died in Mother's arms.

September 18, 1930

Anna was buried today. We had the funeral service in the Christian Reformed Church, and buried her in the Neerlandia cemetery. There was no place we could buy a casket from, so Ben Lievers made one for us, and our teacher, Muriel Willis, padded it with cotton batting and white satin. The funeral cost twenty dollars

November 1, 1930

The family are all grief-strucken, but Anna's death is especially hard on Mother. Mother loved to sing, but no one is allowed to sing in the house now. Because of the effect of the tragedy on her, life is becoming more difficult for all of us

March, 1932

Our family continues to suffer hardships, but we keep learning to get by. Sometimes all we have to eat is *pannekoeken*. Only flour, salt, and water does the trick, but when mother can, she adds milk and eggs which make them taste better. When she does that I can eat thirteen of them! We also eat wild game, including deer and bear. Father brings fish from the Athabasca river. Pleun and I sometimes go with him. We walk all the way from our homestead, across Bill Bouwman's land, and through the bush to the river on the corner of the NW 22-62-4-5 There we sleep on the sand and rocks and wake at daybreak to start fishing. Father is an expert fisherman

August 24, 1935

We live in the Balm Hill area of Vega now, having moved here a month ago. Father said there were too many sow thistles on the other place. Besides here he is closer to the river for fishing.

August 30, 1945

Father is experimenting with fruit trees. He is a successful gardener and sells a lot of apple trees to other people in Neerlandia for their gardens.

August 1, 1984

My sister Eva, my brother Arie, and myself are all that is left of our family, and we are very close. We often talk about all the things that happened to us. Life in Canada was not kind to Mother. She died a little every day, one tear at a time. She passed away August 1, 1964, at 70 years of age Our sister Adriana was 38 when she died June 12, 1958. Pleun died of cancer on July 28, 1971, at the age of 53.

I never look back. I am glad we came to Canada, and Father always said that if you were poor and poor-looking, you had better be worth something else, like putting on the elbow grease and getting to work. Life wasn't easy for Father either. He was quite deaf and it was difficult for him to carry on conversations with other people. His best friend was Melle Elzinga, who would come and talk with him over the many years.

Father loved life in Alberta — the adventure, the hunting and fishing He didn't care about material things, and was happy with what he had. He almost never missed a Sunday fishing trip. He liked to be by himself and of his weekly fishing trips he said that then he was with his God. He liked to go fishing to be alone with his thoughts. Father passed away February 19, 1972, at 81 years of age

Gerry Bozak

JOHN AND ANNA (ELZINGA) SCHURING

John (Jan) Schuring was born January 28, 1901, in Westerbork, Drenthe, the Netherlands His parents were farmers. John liked it on the farm but had a great desire to immigrate. His father had gone to the U.S.A in 1889 to make a permanent home there, but his family had called him back. He must have passed his dreams on to his son, because in 1926 John applied for immigration to the U S.A. There was a waiting list, however, so instead John chose to go to Canada

John travelled on the *Rijndam* and arrived in May 1926. He took a train to Toronto where a friend had secured a job for him on a farm. He milked cows and fed pigs. After three months, John decided to go with his cousin, Steve Bergman, to see other parts of Canada. They travelled with other eager young men on the annual "harvest train" to the West The fare was twenty-five dollars for a return ticket. John and Steve went to Gadsby, Alberta, where they were hired to stook grain for four dollars a day They worked ten days and then a snowstorm struck. They thought this meant the end of stooking and quit, not realizing that it was not yet winter. They went to Edmonton and got a job on the railroad for thirty cents an hour They were sent to Entrance, Alberta, where they had to clean up rocks after blasting was done. That job lasted only one month, and after that John and Steve decided to head further west. They caught a train to Vancouver, where it rained the entire five days of their stay. They decided it was too wet in that part of the country and headed back to Edmonton. They sent their suitcases on to Edmonton while they caught the freight train. A railroad employee found them hitching a free ride and asked where they were going. On discovering their destination, he advised them to jump off the train at New Westminster, because they were on the freight train to the States. So they jumped off and hopped on the next freight train heading east. On that train a kindly caboose man let them ride in an empty car instead of on top. At the employment office in Edmonton they got a job on the "B&B Extra Gang", another railroad, where they installed culverts under the rails until freeze up.

Until now John had carried his church papers in his pocket, but in Edmonton he met Rev. Van Der Woude and Bill Bouwman. They told Steve and John about the new Dutch settlement, Neerlandia, so they went there to have a look. Christmas 1926 found John and Steve getting to know other Dutch people at the Schoonekamps'. They left their church papers in Neerlandia, because John liked the community atmosphere immediately.

John's first job in Neerlandia was a contract to clear fifty acres of land for George Toebes at ten dollars an acre. After this he and Steve Bergman cleared for John Gelderman, George Anema, Henry Michael, Henry Kannegieter, and Bill Bouwman. They boarded at Bill Krikke's.

The fall of 1927 came, and again John and Steve wanted to make extra money on a harvest crew. Here they parted company, with Steve going to Saskatoon and John going to Weyburn, Saskatchewan. After harvest John worked in a sawmill near Entwistle for three dollars a day. Late that winter John was back in Neerlandia and the next spring he cleared land for Simon Tiemstra. It was Simon who went with him to file on a homestead (NE 1-62-3-5) in 1928. The price was thirty dollars because there was a log cabin already on the quarter. John started clearing his own land right away.

In 1930 John was busy clearing trees when something snapped in his back. His backache was so severe that he could not look after himself, and he crawled on his hands and knees to Schoonekamp's. After staying there overnight he walked to Winson Elzinga's place, where he rested and recuperated for several days. The reason he walked to the Elzingas' was that he was courting Anna Elzinga.

Anna Elzinga had moved to Neerlandia with her family in 1928. She was working in Edmonton doing housework, first for fifteen dollars and later for almost thirty dollars a month.

Cooling off with ice cream, July 1, 1929. John Schuring, Anna Elzinga, Hilda Westerbaan, John Elzinga

John and Anna were married November 29, 1931, by Rev. Van Der Woude. They lived in a twelve by fourteen-foot shack with a lean-to for a bedroom. John fashioned a table from spruce lumber. In addition they had two chairs, a couch, a bed, a stove, and a box heater. If visitors came, blocks of firewood were used for extra chairs. By this time John had about seventy acres cleared and he owned four horses, a wagon, sleigh, and some farming machinery.

Soon two boys came to fill John and Anna's little house: **Cornelius**, born September 22, 1932, and **Wilbert**, born August 6, 1934. Farm prices were poor then. When Cor was born John's grain sold for seventeen cents a bushel. In the spring of 1932 the Schurings bought eggs for three cents a dozen, borrowed some broody hens to set on them, and raised twenty-three chicks. Two fat pigs were sold for $2.50 each. Their first tractor, an Oliver 70, was purchased for $1,215.00 in 1940 from C. K. Mast. It was brand new, complete with rubber tires and headlights. John was glad to have a rubber-tired tractor because it was much easier on him physically and he could work longer hours because of the headlights. Of course there was one disadvantage. John was plowing with the

Oliver and when he came to the fence he cried "Whoa!", but the tractor kept going, right through the fence

Anna holding Cor, John, 1932.

By 1940 the Schurings had a mixed farm which included pigs, cattle, chickens, one hundred ewes, and grain. Anna also liked to work outside with the animals. Their first car, a 1941 Chevrolet, was purchased in 1942 for nine hundred dollars. In 1945 the SW 7-62-3-5 was purchased from Grandale, and Anna also took up the SW 1-62-3-5, first as a grazing lease and later as a homestead. In 1944-45 they also built a new house and barn.

John and Anna's chosen daughter, **Jentien**, arrived June 14, 1945. John was a trustee on the school board at Grandale School and the boys attended there until grade eight.

The whole family worked hard and in 1954 they purchased SE 1-62-3-5 from Sneider. In 1957 the SE 11-62-3-5 was acquired.

In 1959 John, Anna, and Jentien moved to Barrhead, and Corny and Wilbert each farmed

Cornelius, Wilbert, John, Jentien, 1948.

some of the land. Cor had married Lena Vander Zouwen, and soon thereafter, Wilbert married her sister, Willie. John and Anna were, however, not quite ready to retire. John first worked on construction and later at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Anna worked at Barrhead General Hospital for five years and at Barrhead Nursing Home for eleven years. Both John and Anna remain very active

JAKOB AND GRACE (BULTSMA) SCHUURMAN

Jakob Schuurman was born on November 8, 1908, in Bierum, Groningen, the Netherlands. In 1927, Jakob immigrated to the Granum, Alberta district. As a young man of 18 he wanted to see Canada and planned to stay just one year. He came as a farm labourer and later rented a farm. On September 27, 1937, he married Grace (Grietje Jacoba) Bultsma. She had been born on September 15, 1911, in Wolvega, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1916, at the age of four, she had immigrated with her parents and two brothers to the Foremost, Alberta area.

Jakob did not particularly like irrigation farming and hence Jakob and Grace sought land in northern Alberta. In 1944, they purchased the S.E. 13-62-4-5 from Gerrit Kippers.

Jakob and Grace, with their two children **Henry** (Hendrick Teake) and **Bessie** (Beeuwkje Jantje), moved to Neerlandia in the fall of 1944. The first winter was spent in George Baker's

house across the road from where Bert Elgersma now lives (1984). In the spring, they moved out to the farm. The roads were still very muddy, so they used their John Deere D and hayrack to move their possessions. They had a milk cow tied behind. It was quite exhausted by the time they reached Pete Mast's corner (four miles down the road). There it became bogged down in the mud. The cow decided that was as far as it was going, so it was left there till morning.

Later that summer, a bush fire was burning near the Schuurman's house. They spent one very anxious night in fear that the house would burn up, but the fire bypassed it.

That first fall, Jakob used his combine, which he had brought from Granum. He had trouble getting the grain in, due to many roots. The fact that it was a wet fall did not help. He was advised that a combine would never work in this northern climate. He decided to sell it and used a threshing machine the following years.

About 1950, Bill Olthuis, Louis Nanninga, and Jakob attempted to excavate a coal mine in the southwest corner of Schuurman's quarter. The project was abandoned because they could not cope with the water coming in. The project was not a complete failure, though, because the kids spent many happy hours swimming in the "coal mine."

Over the years they purchased two more quarters and cleared most of the land. In 1961 they built a new house on the home place. On this farm, four more children were born — **Tom** (Teake Albertus), **Jennie** (Jantje Jacoba), **Edna** Joan and **John**. Jakob and Grace continued to farm until the spring of 1977, when they retired and moved onto an acreage in the Vega district. On this acreage they pursued their farming interest on a smaller scale. Since his parents' retirement, John farms the home place. Jakob enjoyed helping John and Tom farming, even in his retirement. On February 11, 1982, Jakob passed away as a result of a heart attack. Grace still resides on the acreage and enjoys good health (1984).

Henry was born on May 22, 1942. On April 10, 1970, he married Judy Schultz of Fawcett. At present they reside on their farm in the Frisco district of Rocky Mountain House. Henry is involved with his logging company, Schuurman Enterprises. They have two children.

Bessie was born on July 9, 1944. After High School graduation Bessie trained as a registered nurse at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. She is noted in her family for her wanderlust; she has worked and travelled over much of the globe. Bessie now lives in Nelson, British Columbia, where she nurses.

Tom was born on May 4, 1946. On September 6, 1975, he married **Nancy Pozniak** of Mellowdale. They own a farm (S.E. 18-62-3-5) in the Neerlandia area. Tom is involved with his draglining and logging truck business. They have two children: **Randall** Bryan, born on April 9, 1979, and **Tamara** Dawn, born on May 19, 1981.

Jennie was born on February 10, 1948. She resides on her acreage in the Vega district with her two daughters, **Cherie** Lynn, born on June 5, 1970, and **Kristine** Renee, born on January 8, 1983.

Edna was born on May 2, 1951, and married Lenard Jennings. They reside on an acreage in the Linaria district. Edna and Lenard have three daughters.

John was born on January 31, 1955. On October 2, 1976, he married **Josephine Pozniak** of Mellowdale. They live on the home farm. John manages a hog operation. They have three children: **Jason** Dale, born August 27, 1979; **Laura** Laine, born on October 9, 1980; and **Amy** Jo, born on December 25, 1983. Josephine is a registered lab technician and works in Barrhead General Hospital.

Grace Schuurman

KEES AND BERTHA (TUININGA) STOOVÉ

Kees (Cornelis) Stoové, born March 15, 1905, spent his childhood and youth in Hilversum, North Holland, the Netherlands. He worked in a bakery there for several years, but soon Canada beckoned. Kees immigrated to Canada with his cousin Lodewijk Reyse. They arrived in Neerlandia at their uncle and aunt's place (Case and Hermina Ingwersen) in 1926.

Because there was no work for Kees in Neerlandia, he soon left for Edmonton. Then he had the opportunity to buy the trucking business from Pete Tuininga, which he did. He got the contract from the Co-op to haul cream to Edmonton and take groceries back. The road conditions, along with the economic situation, did not make trucking a very pleasant or prof-

Kees, Bertha, 1927

itable business, so a year later Kees sold the truck to Billy Quick.

Kees met Bertha Tuininga and married her on May 14, 1927, in Neerlandia. They set up their home in the Centre, in Jennie Oldegbers' little house. Here their first child, Susie, was born March 6, 1928. After Kees sold his truck, the family returned to Edmonton where he started a bakery. After the birth of their fourth child, Bertha was discovered to have a brain tumor. They subsequently moved back to the Netherlands in 1935, in the hope that she could be helped there. This was not to be, and she died August 4, 1936, leaving Kees with a family of children ranging from four to eight years of age. Kees later remarried and now lives in Australia.

Carrie Olthuis

HENRY SR. AND GLADYS (KIPPERS) STRYDHORST

Henry (Hendrik) Jacob Strydhorst was born September 8, 1902, in the city of Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. When he was thirteen years old he quit school and began to work with his dad making furniture. He knew, however, that he did not want to make furniture for the rest of his life, and after three years he left home to work on various farms in the Netherlands. But he actually wanted the chance to have a farm of his own, and so in 1923 he decided to go to Canada.

At this time CPR and the Department of Colonization and Immigration in Canada had a program whereby farmers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan could ask for workers from the Netherlands. Sponsored by a farmer from Ceylon, Saskatchewan, Henry rode on a CPR boat to Quebec City and then took the train to Ceylon. He stayed with the Saskatchewan farmer for eighteen months. Since the farmer was an English-speaking Canadian, Henry had an excellent opportunity to learn the new language.

In December 1924 Henry went to Calgary, Alberta, where he was out of work for six weeks. The hotel in which he stayed charged $3.50 a week, and offered both hot and cold running water. Finally he got a job baling hay from a stack in Airdrie. At that time hay was cut in the summer and baled in the winter. The next summer he worked for another farmer, and the following winter he again baled hay.

While still in the Netherlands, Henry had heard about Neerlandia from an acquaintance who had a cousin, H. J. Michael, there. The farmer Henry worked for in Airdrie had a big map of Alberta on the wall, and sometimes Henry would look at it and try to locate Neerlandia. The trouble was that Henry forgot the exact name of the town, and was looking for Hollandia. A few weeks later he suddenly remembered the correct name was Neerlandia, and then he spotted it on the map.

When Henry contacted Mr. Michael he was told that homesteads were available. Such information was welcomed by Henry and he moved to Neerlandia in June 1926. Ben Lievers and Hendrik Kannegieter walked with him to help choose a place. All the homesteads were numbered on iron pegs so they could tell which quarter they were walking. Henry saw one piece of land that looked as if it was already cleared, but he was told that it was muskeg. Soon he made up his mind and on June 24, 1926, he filed on the SE 17-62-3-5.

Henry started cutting down trees right away. With the help of his neighbours Peter den Hartog and his son Pete, and Hendrik Kannegieter, he built a shack. Then the clearing began. Five years later Henry raised his first crop on thirty acres. The land was proved up on July 3, 1933.

Henry did not consider bachelorhood to be all that great. Although he usually got bread, milk, and butter from Mina Kannegieter, Hendrik's wife, he still had rough times. One time he baked bread himself. It was so hard that when he threw it against the wall of the shack, it did not even crumble. The next time he went to his friend Joe Holwerda's place, he took the bread along and fed it to the pigs. It was not fit for human consumption.

Often Henry would go to the Henry Kippers' farm to visit the boys, but of special interest was their sister Gladys. Henry and Gladys became engaged in 1927, and five years later they were married. For a wedding present Mr. Kippers gave Henry and Gladys four heifers. Henry kept these cows and their offspring, and they formed the basis of the milking herd that he later sold with the farm to his son Jake.

Ain't love grand! Gladys, Henry, c. 1931

The newly-married couple moved into a fourteen by twenty-foot log shack, and lived there for five years. In the summer when the shack was too hot they slept in a granary. During these five years Henry and Gladys had three children: **Jenny**, born August 5, 1933, **Anna**, November 6, 1934, and **Henry**, March 19, 1936. They were born at home with Petertje Schoonekamp as midwife. Ben Lievers built the Strydhorsts a lumber house in 1937.

Anna, Henry, Jenny, Gladys holding baby Henry, 1936.

When Henry and Gladys were first married they did not have a cream separator. Instead, they had a big can with a little tap near the bottom. They would let the milk sit until the cream had all come ot the top, about twelve hours. Then they would drain the skim milk out of the bottom and hang the cream in the well to stay cool. Once a week it was brought down the road to Toebes' place where the mailman would pick it up.

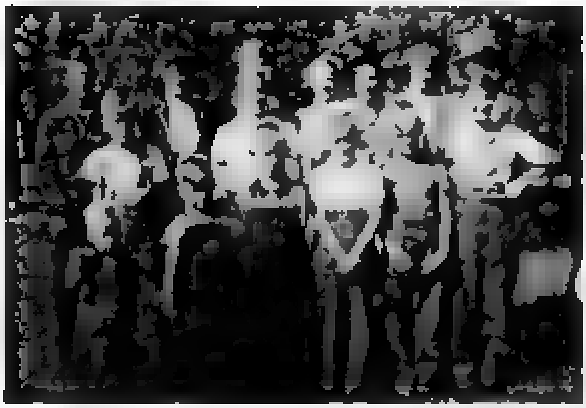
By marrying Gladys, Henry had certainly secured for himself a supply of good, soft bread. Mind you, he had to sell his double-barrelled shotgun for it once. He had bought the gun from Henry Michael for five dollars before he was married, but when the flour ran out and there was no money to buy more, the gun had to go. He sold it at Koop Mast's trading post for the same amount. Henry spent $3.50 to buy a hundred pounds of flour, and had $1.50 left over.

Henry and Gladys had a large family. After Henry was born, **James** followed on July 2, 1937. Then **Alice** was born October 13, 1938, and **Bertha** December 17, 1939. The two girls were followed by three boys: **John**, born June 5, 1941, **George**, June 20, 1942; and **Jake** (Jacob), November 20, 1943. Along came one more girl, **Gladys**, born February 10, 1945, and then again three boys to fill the quiver: **Cor** (Cornelius), born September 16, 1946; **Andy** (Andrew), January 11, 1948; and **Ken** (Kenneth), September

Back: Gladys, Alice Bertha. Front: George, John, Jake, 1945.

21, 1950. All but the last three boys were born at home

With so many children, a hundred pounds of flour did not go very far. As the children were growing up Gladys would bake six loaves of bread every day (except Sunday) in her wood stove. Henry and Gladys recall that at times they bought a thousand pounds of flour at a time. Henry would load the hundred-pound cotton bags on the wagon and then store them upstairs in the house. The family used about a hundred pounds of flour every two weeks



Back: Henry, Anna, James, Jennie, Alice. Middle: George. Bertha, Gladys, Henry. Front: Ken, Andy, Cor. Gladys, Jake. John, 1954

Farming was a hard existence for the Strydhorsts. They were the last in the community to get electricity (1960). A couple years later, in 1962, they got running water in the house They bought their first tractor in 1953 Henry Jr. and James worked in a lumber camp to earn extra money for the family In 1954 their earnings were spent on a truck, the first motorized vehicle the family owned Before this they had relied on horses with a wagon or sleigh for transportation.

Gladys was a thrifty, hard-working woman. Providing for her family took most of her time She sewed most of the children's clothes She even made caps for the boys. Every year she had a huge garden and canned hundreds of quarts of vegetables When the wild fruit was ripe the children would pick strawberries, raspberries, high-bush cranberries, saskatoons, and blueberries to be canned for winter use. The Strydhorsts never bought fruit

There was little time for relaxation. Gladys would have loved to do embroidery or crocheting but there was never any time She had to stay up late at night to knit the needed garments for her family

It was 1968 when Henry sold the farm to Jake. Henry and Gladys continued to live on the farm, however, until 1973, when Gladys' stepmother died. Then they went to live in the Centre with Henry Kippers, who died in 1977 Always a determined woman, at fifty-eight years of age Gladys decided to learn to drive a car. She got her license and soon was seen driving her white car along the roads going to visit friends and relatives or to shop in Barrhead

Jake holding Heather, Sye, Jared, Sarah-Anne, 1984

Nine of the Strydhorst children live and farm in Neerlandia. In 1977 Jake married **Sya Spronk**. Sya was born in Her-en-Boecop, South Holland, the Netherlands, on July 11, 1950. Her family came to Edmonton in April 1951. Sya was introduced to Neerlandia and Jake by friends Jake and Sya have three children: **Jared** Henry, born October 31, 1978; **Sarah** Anne Klazina, born January 18, 1980; and **Heather** Nicole, born February 26, 1984.

John married Margaret Peters of Clairmont in 1964. They live in La Glace and farm with their four children. George married Pat Zilenski of Edmonton in 1966. He is a carpenter and has a hobby farm in Whitecourt. They have four children. Gladys married Art Reitsma of Lacombe in 1965. They farm in Lacombe and have five children, one of whom died in 1983, at age 17, of the Bangkok flu, complicated by a rare blood disease.

Henry and Gladys still live in the hamlet where Henry grows several rows of brown beans every summer and Gladys now has time to read and crochet

Ken Strydhorst

LUCAS AND ANNIE (EMMERZAEL) STURWOLD

Lucas Sturwold, son of Toney and Roelofje, came with his family to Neerlandia in 1916 Lucas attended school till he was fourteen years old, then stayed home to help his father with the farm and blacksmithing work. Toney used to go to the neighbours with the crusher to crush grain. He also had a wood sawing outfit and would go around the community sawing firewood In 1932 Lucas obtained the NW 9-62-3-5 as a homestead. He continued living with his parents until his marriage to Annie Emmerzael on June 27, 1943. Before he got married, Lucas had built a house on his father's farm He and Annie lived there for two years, and then the house was moved to Lucas' farm with a Caterpillar tractor driven by Johnny Molodowich and a tractor driven by Bert Michael for extra traction

Lucas and Annie had six children: **Reta** (May 5, 1944), **Martha** (September 6, 1945), **Tom** (January 17, 1948), **Arlyn** Percy (September 18, 1950), **Rodney** Wayne (August 4, 1953), and **Sherri** Lee Anne (October 10, 1958).

Lucas, Annie.

Like most Neerlandia farmers, Lucas raised grain. The grain was cut in the fall with a binder and tractor When they were old enough, the children took turns driving the tractor. Sometimes the cutting would go quite well, but often there would be a breakdown with the binder. The pitman broke a number of times. As the family grew up, the children helped to stook the grain

Threshing time was a special event. If the weather was nice and the threshing went well, it was an exciting time for all. The men worked hard but so did the women At noon the crew would come into the house, where a large dinner had been prepared for them. Annie and the girls always ate their dinner after the men had left the house. Soon a large lunch would be prepared and sent out to the field for the men's afternoon tea. Special baking was always done for the men, and the children enjoyed the different foods. Many hot and cold drinks were also sent to the field for the thirsty men.

When Lucas first started farming, he was in a threshing crew with Bert Michael, Arie Krikke, and Jake Sturwold. Then for quite a few years he was with Gerrit Kippers and the Strydhorst men. When Tom, Arlyn, and Rod were old enough they joined too

Lucas, with the help of his family, milked cows for many years. The milk was separated.

and the cream was stored in the well pit, where there was always cold water. Henry Strydhorst Sr. would come with his horses and wagon every Monday morning to pick up the full cans of cream.

When they were first married, Annie used a scrub board for washing clothes. A year later, she got a wooden handwashing machine which she used for five years.

For many years after they were first married, Annie used a wood cook stove in the kitchen. Attached to the side of it was a reservoir which could be filled with water. Since the stove was almost always in use, the water would stay hot and Annie could use it for washing dishes. The kitchen used to get quite hot when Annie was heating water, canning vegetables, or baking bread. The children enjoyed lying behind the stove, and found it so comfortable that they often fell asleep.

As well as the wood stove, there was a wood heater in the living room that could be used to warm up the house. In the winter, though, the upstairs would get pretty cold. Things improved when the Sturwolds got a coal furnace. It provided more central heating, but it could cause problems too. When the coal was damp it was hard to get a fire going. Also, before the coal started burning properly it could emit some strong-smelling fumes which hurt one's eyes. The coal smoke made the walls of the house a dirty grey. The oil furnace that replaced the coal furnace gave more reliable heating. Sometimes in the winter, though, the oil, which was kept outside, would stiffen and had to be heated up before it could be used. And there was no less work for Annie in cleaning the walls, they got dirty just as quickly as with the coal furnace.

On the farm, things slowly improved. Sturwolds' first tractor, a little red Farmall A, was bought in 1949. It did not have much power and would spin very easily in the field. Since the Sturwolds did not have a car at this time, they even used the tractor for transportation on occasion. Around 1955, Lucas bought a John Deere B, which was a big improvement over the Farmall, and was used until he quit farming in the late 1960s.

For many years, Lucas and Annie used their horses with a buggy in summer and a sleigh in winter for travel. In 1951 the family got its first car, a small green Morris-Oxford. But in the 1950s the roads were in such poor condition in the spring that the car often got stuck. Occasionally the Sturwolds would leave the car on the main road, as the road to their place was impassable.

By the time Reta began school, the school buses had been in operation for about two years. The Sturwold children rode on the Vega bus, it began its run in Vega, picked up children north of Neerlandia School and then went on to Barrhead. The children had to walk a half mile to and from the main road every day. They used to walk with the Albert Eigersma, Raymond Visser, and Henry Strydhorst children. For some years this was such a large group that the bus filled up quickly when it stopped at that corner. There was no rule about only three students to a seat, in fact, one was lucky if one could find a seat at all. Children would often have to stand in the aisle all the way to school. Due to the poor road conditions, the bus did not always arrive at the stop at the same time every morning. The Sturwold children often had a long wait in rainy or cold weather. One winter Lucas pulled a little building to the main road and set it east of the road so that the children could have a little protection from the elements in case they had to wait. In springtime, when the roads were breaking up, the bus did not run at all. The children would then have to walk the three miles to and from school. Often by the time they got home, they would have red rings around their legs where the top of the rubber boots rubbed them.

Lucas' homestead originally had many trees on it. The first two years he and his brother Jake did some logging on it and later sawed the logs into lumber on Lucas' yard. One stand of trees remained in the middle of the quarter for many years, and fire went through them a couple of times. In the late sixties, the land was cleared by a Caterpillar tractor. The Strydhorst brothers were renting the land so they picked the roots. By the time Lucas sold the land, it was all under cultivation.

Electricity came to the Sturwold farm in 1956. After that Lucas and Annie bought electrical appliances for the house and motors to run the pump.

The Sturwolds got a phone in 1969. Both Annie and Reta worked on the phone exchange in Carl Mast's house. When Reta worked there

Rodney, Martha, Tom, Reta, Arlyn. Seated: Annie, Sherri, Lucas, c. 1963

the pay was $.25 an hour. Annie worked there from May 1967 through December 1969.

Reta Sturwold married James Strydhorst in 1968. Martha studied nursing at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton, where she is now head nurse in the emergency department. She married Chris Birrell in 1968. Tom attended Dordt College for a year after completing high school. He married Gerda Versteeg in 1970. They live in St. Albert with their two daughters. Tom works in construction. Arlyn lives in Edmonton, where he is a salesman for Kirkland and Rose. He has two children. Rod married Cathy Wallace in 1982. They live near Campsie, and Rod drives for Barrhead Truck. Sherri and her husband, Gordon Kuschminder, live in Barrhead. They were married in 1981. Gord works in construction.

Lucas and Annie sold their farm to James and Reta Strydhorst in 1972 and moved to Barrhead. Annie worked in the Barrhead Nursing Home for twelve years and still lives in Barrhead.

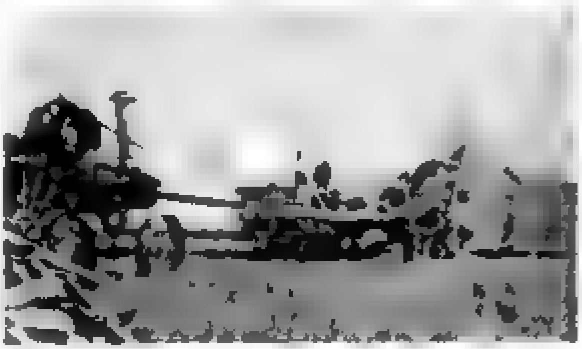
Annie Sturwold

JOHN AND ANNA (CONSTANTYNOVICH) TANSOWNY
FRED AND JOAN (LOBLEY) TANSOWNY

John Tansowny was born October 18, 1902, near Devon, Alberta, to Polish immigrants. Anna Constantynovich was born September 14, 1897, in Poland and later immigrated to Canada. John and Anna were married November 23, 1925. They first farmed near Devon, then moved to Westlock in 1928 and two years later started up a sawmill in Linaria. During those years four children were born to John and Anna: **Fred** on August 26, 1926; **Walter** on February 10, 1928; **Hazel** on September 16, 1929; and **Andrew** on March 30, 1931.

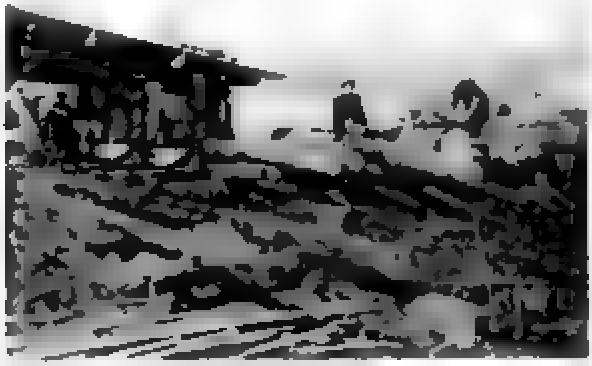
On July 8, 1931, John took out the SW 13-62-3-5 as a homestead, and Anna took out the SE 13-62-3-5. The area was heavily timbered, but John cleared enough land for buildings, moved his sawmill there, and squared up enough logs to build a house and a barn. The family moved onto the homestead in the fall of 1932. John did more logging that winter so that he could make lumber. Settlers from Neerlandia and Vega also brought logs to be sawed.

By 1935 there were so many logs that his 18-36 H.P. Hart-Parr tractor was too small for the job, so John bought a 50 H.P. Case steam engine. It had enough power to run both the mill and a homemade shingle mill, which cut many thousands of shingles from jack pine and white poplar. John also used the engine to run his threshing machine. There were several runaway teams of horses when the steam valve blew from too much pressure or when the steam engineer would blow the whistle for lunch.



Threshing with the steam engine, 1938.

In 1935, John had a setting west of the de Vries homestead and between there and his home. John sawed over one million feet of lumber. When Fred was twelve years old he helped his father at the mill and learned how to scale lumber. Andrew Wierenga was the tail sawyer at the mill at that time and was paid $1.25 a day. He would write down the size of each log in a scribbler, and in the evening Fred would calcu-late the total number of board feet sawed that day for for each customer. Fred helped with all kinds of outside chores and many times would help Anna with housework, setting the table and washing the dishes. John always had hired men, and at times some of the customers would eat there also. Henrietta Wierenga and later her sister Jenny worked for Anna. As years went by, timber got scarce, so John sold the mill and the steamer in 1941.


John's sawmill, 1939

When Fred was old enough to go to school, John and Anna made arrangements that he board with Mr. and Mrs. McKinty, who lived close to the Shoal Creek school. But when John took Fred there, he would not stay. He says that maybe he was scared of their girls. So Fred did not start school till he was ten years old. Then he went to Neerlandia school which was nearly six miles away. In the summer John would take Fred, Walter, and Hazel to school each morning, and they would walk home after school. Sometimes they could catch a ride with one of the Nanninga or Wierenga families. In the winter they used a closed-in sled and horse. Anna would put a good-sized rock in the oven overnight, then put it in the sleigh in the morning to keep the children warm. The children would leave the horse at Walter Wargacki's blacksmith shop, which was close to school. Walter took care of it most of the time. Then John purchased a buggy so the children could use it in the summer. In 1939 the Grandale School was built on the NW 6-62-2-5, so Fred finished his last year of school there. After moving to the Neerlandia area John and Anna had two more children, **Billy** (William), born May 7, 1936, and **Cecilia**, born February 17, 1939.

After Fred quit school he worked with John on a threshing crew. In the winter of 1941 he worked at Boman's sawmill in Vega for five dollars a month with room and board. The following winter he drove truck for an Edmonton trucker for seventy-five dollars a month, hauling rails from Shoal Creek. It was hard work with long hours. On return trips they would bring a load of coal back to one of the many schools in the Westlock-Barrhead area. The trucker had the school contract for supplying the coal for heating. There would be times when Fred would not get home till midnight, after unloading that dirty stuff into sometimes-crowded quarters.

Fred on tractor, John on binder, 1943.

John bought a trucking route in 1943. Since the boys were grown up, they helped operate the trucking business, hauling livestock and merchandise for the Shoal Creek, Linaria, Woodmore, and Freedom districts. They also operated a gravel and sand pit business from their farm for many years.

In the summer of 1943 Joan Lobley of Sundre came to teach at Grandale School. The first year she boarded at Bill Tansowny's. The next year she stayed at John Tansowny's. Fred and Joan got to like each other and were married July 26, 1945. They lived with Fred's parents for the first three years, then moved to Shoal Creek. Fred and Joan have four children. Joan taught at Neerlandia in 1968-69. Fred is presently (1984) working for Merit Stores in Barrhead and Joan worked at the Government Liquor Store there from 1974-84.

Walter worked for the Department of Transportation since his early twenties and lived on a farm near Westlock. He married **Mary Millar** on December 29, 1949. She taught in Neerlandia from 1955 to 1957. Hazel married Kizik Wichinski, and they are presently semi-retired on their farm acreage northwest of Neerlandia. Andrew had a hardware and furniture business in Stettler but is now retired. Billy has a trucking business and lives in Edmonton. Cecilia married Irvin Lorentz and they live in Edmonton. Cecilia is confined to a wheelchair with multiple sclerosis.

In 1944 John built a new house, which was one of the first in the district to have running water and electricity. All the material was bought from the Neerlandia Co-op store.

Tansowny house built in 1944

As time went by, the family grew up, and in 1952 John rented the farm out to Walter. He and Anna moved to Barrhead so the two youngest children could easily walk to school, the Grandale School having closed for lack of a teacher. John wrote, "Later on that fall they put in a school bus in that district. Carl Mast was on the school board and got me to drive that bus to Barrhead. I drove for nine years and many of those children are now fathers and mothers and still remember me as their strict old bus driver."

John and Anna sold their homesteads to Klaas Piers in 1962. They moved into Hillcrest Home in Barrhead in May 1980. Anne was confined in the hospital for three months after suffering a stroke, and passed away August 18, 1983, at the age of eighty-five. John is still living in the Home.

Fred and John Tansowny

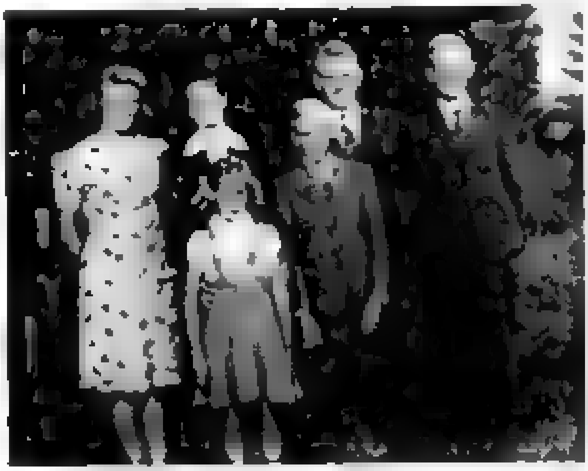
HARM AND GELSKE (TALSTRA) TEN HOVE

H. J. (Harm Jan) Ten Hove and his bride came from the Netherlands in 1929 and settled on a farm in the Lacombe area. They were involved in establishing the First Christian Reformed Church of Lacombe and the local Christian school. There they had their family of two boys and two girls: **Jean** (1930), **Eb** (1931), **Dick** (1932), and **Betty** (1936).

One of the highlights of each summer was a visit from Henry and Jennie Kippers of Neerlandia. It was, no doubt, on one of these visits that H. J. heard about the managerial position that was open in the Neerlandia Co-op store. Was it possible that merchandising was a better occupation for him than farming? H. J. and his wife pondered that question. Perhaps it was because H. J. loved meeting people that he decided to apply for the position. After some weeks of eagerly waiting for the Board to choose the right applicant, the Ten Hove family received word that H. J. was to be the new manager.

On March 24, 1945, there was a farm sale in Lacombe. Ten Hove's land was rented to the Brouwers, and a few days later Art Fisher came from Neerlandia with his three-ton truck to move the family's belongings. There was a one-night stopover at the King Edward Hotel in Edmonton, where the Ten Hove children were impressed by city life — especially the noise of traffic that drowned out Papa's evening prayer.

While H. J. went through a two-week training period with the Konings, who were still living above the store, the Ten Hoves were warmly received by various families who provided places for the family members to stay.


Back: Jean, Gelske, Harm, Eb. Front: Betty, Dick, 1945

When the Konings left, the Ten Hove family took up residence in the apartment above the store. What excitement it was for the children to peek into the town assembly room! This room, where meetings and community social events were held, was also above the store and could be seen through a doorway in the hall of the apartment. And what a novelty to have a flush toilet! Nevertheless, when one of the younger members heard that a former occupant had flushed that toilet, and it plugged and overflowed into the warehouse below, she preferred the outhouse.

Jean remembers that in Neerlandia she was considered old enough to go to Young People's Society, while in Lacombe she was not. She was thrilled to be suddenly considered grown-up.

One day a certain gentleman stopped at the gas pump at the store to fill his car. Dick and Betty said their folks had closed the store for a few hours while they went away on business. The gentleman, however, being a Co-op member, felt entitled to get his tank filled and, persuading the children to do it for him, left content. It was not long before he discovered that the cap to his gas tank had been misplaced and was gone forever. That little cap certainly caused a stir; the gentleman was so provoked about the lost cap that it was even brought up at the next Board meeting, and the children were rebuked for pumping gas.

Mail came to the Post Office in the store on Tuesday and Saturday evenings, so these were special times when most of the community people gathered, the older people shopped and visited while the young people played softball. Another exciting event for the Ten Hoves was the arrival of the freight. That was just like Christmas, with boxes of many sizes waiting to be unpacked.

Each day H. J. had to check the McKaskey cash register to keep all the accounts straight. Each night someone had to go downstairs and shut the power plant off. It was an easy task that even Betty could do, but the trip back upstairs in the dark was a bit unnerving with large, dark, unrecognizable objects to pass by on the way.

One Sunday evening three district young people joined the Ten Hove young people in the store to engage in a strictly forbidden act. They sliced a little bit of bologna from the long roll and ate it.

Despite all the happy times, the family left Neerlandia to return to their farm at Lacombe after just four months. They had discovered that Co-op stores have too many bosses and that merchandising was not better for them than farming.

H. J. Ten Hove passed away in December 1977. His wife, at 86 years of age, is in Red Deer Nursing Home and still remembers happy times in Neerlandia. The four children are all farming in the vicinity of Lacombe.

Jean Buit

GEORGE AND ANNIE (FISHER) TERPSMA

George Terpsma was born in Neerlandia, but his parents moved to Edmonton just before the Depression. In 1935, at age nineteen, George decided to move back to his parents' farm (SW 35-61-3-5). He set out in April with a team of horses and a sleigh, and a hayrack loaded with machinery. The bridge at Manola was bare and wet, and a farmer there had suggested he stay overnight and leave early in the morning when the bridge would be icy. George did this and, as the horses were shod, had no problem with them or the sleigh.

George first lived in the old house, but after some time he bought a house from Loe Reyse, dug a cellar, and moved it onto the place. For a couple of years George worked in a sawmill in the winter and for Henry and Ina Mast in the summer. In 1936 his brother Norman came to the farm to assist him. Later Norman bought that quarter and George moved onto his father's second quarter (SW 26-61-3-5).

On the land some buildings built by the former owner, George Caughlin, were situated on the edge of a bush. One Sunday afternoon a bush fire burned all the buildings on the place. George managed to save his sow and her little pigs. A neighbour, Tom Wilson, gave George a large granary to live in and a shed for his pigs. In the meantime George summerfallowed the fifteen acres that were broken on the quarter. He later built a small house, a log barn, and other buildings on the south end of the quarter.

In 1939 George began dating Annie Fisher. They were married April 6, 1941, by Rev. Van Der Woude. Five children were born to George and Annie while they lived in Neerlandia. **Joan** Bernice (January 9, 1943); **Douglas** (August 22, 1945); **Wayne** Richard (January 4, 1947), **Arthur**

Back: Annie holding Roy, Joan, George. Front: Wayne, Jim, Douglas, 1957

John (December 17, 1949), and **James** Lewis (February 11, 1952).

Annie was often bedridden because of varicose veins, ulcers, and phlebitis. Doctors advised George to move to a warmer climate because of what they thought was arthritis in his spine. So in 1955, the Terpsmas sold their farm and moved to the Okanagan Valley, B.C. There doctors found the real cause of George's problem, and he had spine surgery in 1957. Another son was born there in 1956. In 1959 the Terpsmas moved back to Alberta, to the Rocky Mountain House area, where their sixth son was born in 1962. He lived for only two days.

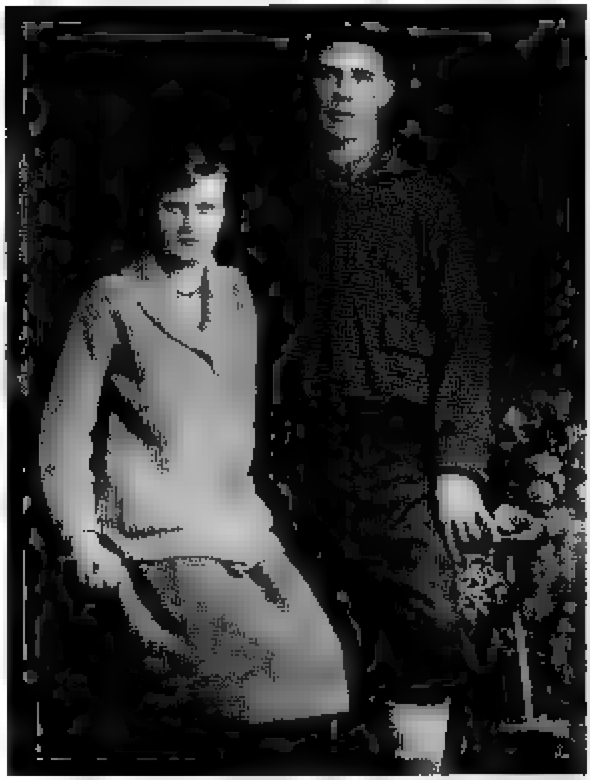
Their oldest son, Doug, was murdered August 24, 1983, by a shotgun blast to his chest. He and his family were living near Vernon, B.C. George and Annie live on a farm in Rocky Mountain House, where they raise horses.

Annie Terpsma

JOHN AND HARDA (LIEVERS) TERPSMA

John Terpsma immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1911 and filed on the NW 26-61-3-5 on December 18, 1911. Although he continued living with his parents on their homestead, he built a 16 by 24-foot log shack on his homestead in 1914. He also built a log barn, dug a well, and put up 1¼ mile of wire and rail fencing. He received the patent to the land in 1921. In 1920, he had cropped twenty-two acres on the quarter and owned fifteen cattle, five horses, and six hogs.

John Terpsma married Harda Lievers in June 1928 in Edmonton, as Neerlandia had no minister at that time. John had sold his homestead to Andries Wierenga, so he and Harda lived in a tent on the Kooy homestead the first summer. That fall they moved to a log house on the SW 26-61-3-5. The next year, on July 20, 1929, John took up the NW 36-61-3-5 as a homestead. When he filed, he paid $125.00 for the improvements on it: a log shack, a well, an unfinished stable, three hundred fenceposts and twelve slashed acres. This homestead was the Terpsma home for the next twenty years.



John and Harda's wedding photo.

John and Harda had eight children. **Dewey** (Douwe), December 29, 1928, **Jennie** (Jansje), December 3, 1930; **Betty** (Betsje), November 1, 1934, **Tena**, January 19, 1936; **Harry** (Hendrik), July 9, 1937; **Katie** (Kaartje), January 25,1940; **John** (Jan), March 2, 1941, and **George**, February 18, 1942. All except George were born at home with the help of midwife Petertje Schoonekamp. George was born in the Barrhead hospital. For Harda, sitting in a tiny log house with little children winter in and winter out, when there was almost seven months of snow, was almost unbearable. She often wished they could leave and move somewhere where it was not so cold

Raising a family during the Depression years was difficult. Since they had cows and chickens, there was always enough food, but there was not much money for clothes and shoes or grocery items such as sugar and salt As long as they could sell some cream and eggs, the Terpsmas pulled through There was always a lot of wild fruit available Harda picked and canned raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, and cranberries until all the bottles were full. After their third child was born, John bought Harda a gas washer, which was a blessing.

Another good thing that happened was when they finally got a well drilled. Before that, during the winter, they would have to haul snow in the house and melt it all — enough for the family, the wash, and the livestock. One winter they melted snow each day for four cows and two horses as well as for the family. Later John built a brick furnace outside and they melted snow in the tub on the furnace; it was quite an invention. When they got a well drilled, though, it was a real luxury It was less than one hundred feet deep and nearly a running well. But it cost them one of their best milk cows. Jack Tuininga and Bill Olthuis drilled the well, and after everything was done Jack said to John, "You know, John, if you want to square up we could have one of your cows." John wanted to get straightened up too and said, "You pick which one you want." Well, didn't the best cow in the barn get picked, not only that, but she was the best milker too!

John worked to prove up the land and received the patent in 1939. He had thirty-nine acres in crop by then and all of it was fenced. A new lumber house had been built in 1937, but they still burned wood to heat the house and never had electric power. During the 40s, when conditions improved, John bought a Chevy car But he did not know much about cars and it ran out of oil — no more car after that! Much later, they finally bought another car

Harda wrote, "In all the years we lived there [Neerlandia] we did not have too much material things, but we lived together like one big happy family helping each other when it was needed The one thing that held us together was our faith in God." John and Harda sold the farm in 1949 and moved with their family to Burnaby, B C., where the climate was much warmer John has since passed away. Harda is living in New Westminster, B.C., with her brother John.

Harda Terpsma

Back: Jennie, Dewey, Tena, Harda, John, Betty. Front: Harry, John, Katie, George. c. 1948.

NORMAN AND EILEEN (WIERENGA) TERPSMA

Norman bached on his father's homestead (SW 35-61-3-5) from 1937-1943, when he married Eileen (Elie) Wierenga. They were blessed with five children. **David**, born June 7, 1944, **Betty** Anne, born June 7, 1946, **Lawrence** Lam-

Back: Norman, Elie. Front: David, Betty, Lawrence, Rosanne. 1956.

bert, born June 27, 1948, **Rosanne**, born June 14, 1954, and **Florence** Irene, born September 18, 1960. Florence was "called home" in her infancy; she died of crib death on January 28, 1961

Norman and Elie worked hard together at their mixed-farming operation: milking cows, raising and feeding hogs, and managing a small cow-calf operation. A second quarter, the NW 36-61-3-5, was purchased from Albert Mast Sr in 1967 The original log house on the homestead was taken down during the sixties and the logs were used in erecting a small cattle shelter, which is still being used The old log barn was taken down in the 1970s

Betty married Walter VanderZyl on February 9, 1968, and they live in Edmonton. They have two children. David married Gerrie Vanderhorst on August 15, 1969, and they live in Abbotsford, B C. They have five children. After Lawrence quit school, he stayed at home and worked on the farm with Norman. He married **Lucille Duker** (March 5, 1958) of Edmonton on June 18, 1976, and lives on the homestead. Rosanne lives at home with Norman and Elie and works as a teller in the Barrhead Toronto-Dominion bank

Norman, Lucille, Elie. Lawrence, Rosanne, 1984

In 1975, Norman and Elie built a new house on the homestead, where they still live. Norman retired in 1979, selling the farm to Lawrence Lawrence and Lucille continue to farm, managing a hog farrow-to-finish and a cow-calf operation.

Norman Terpsma

ALBERT AND TENA (WIERENGA) TIEMSTRA

Albert Tiemstra married Tena Wierenga, daughter of Hendrik and Hilje, on March 1, 1931. They had two sons: **Simon** Albert, born January 31, 1939, and **Harold** Albert, born June 11, 1946 Albert took out the NW 13-61-3-5 as a homestead on August 5, 1926

Courting Days. Albert and Tena at Anemas. 1930.

After the wedding. Albert, Tena, 1931

Albert and his brothers, Gerben and Joe, did a lot of road grading and snow plowing for the county in the 1940s and early 1950s. The county supplied the grader and the snowplow, but the Tiemstras had to supply the tractor. If there had been a bad snowstorm, the only way to get through was with two tractors pulling the snowplow and one pushing

Simon and Joe Tiemstra out for a buggy ride.

Albert was the first person to bus children to school in Neerlandia, starting in 1946. The bus was Albert's truck, with an open box on it in which the children stood Each morning, Albert would begin the route by picking up children in his own neighbourhood, then go west to Fishers', and from there north to school along the main road. The parents paid him, at first he received about six dollars a day In 1948 Albert bought a more modern bus: a new truck that had a box with a roof and three windows, one on the front and one on each side. Inside Albert put some homemade benches Now he was paid by the school division and, besides his old route, he also had a route to the west Albert used this bus until 1950 when he sold it to Frank Visser

From 1957 to 1967 Albert operated the county road grader During the winter he sometimes worked almost day and night to keep the roads snow plowed

The horseman: Albert Tiemstra.

Simon, Albert, Tena. Front: Harold, 1950

Simon married Dorothy Baker in 1957 and they started farming with Albert and Tena Harold married Wally Fehr on February 19, 1968, and moved to Edmonton where he is a partner in an insulation manufacturing firm He and Wally have three children

Albert and Tena retired in 1963 and moved to Barrhead, where they built a new house Albert passed away June 18, 1967, of a heart attack suffered during the church service Tena continued to live in their house until 1980 and now lives in Golden Crest Manor in Barrhead

Simon Tiemstra

CHARLES AND SADIE (TUININGA) TIEMSTRA

Charles (Tjeerd) Tiemstra was born in Bolsward, Friesland, the Netherlands. There he attended school until he completed the sixth grade. For a time he helped his father, Ulbe, on the farm. Then he worked for a dairy farmer until 1920, when he decided to go to Canada since he did not see any future for a farm labourer in the Netherlands His half brothers Siebren Tiemstra and Jan Anema were already in Neerlandia, so that was his destination When Charles made up his mind to go to Canada, his brother, Ike, and his father decided to go too. In June 1920 they sailed from Antwerp, Belgium, on an English steamship.

The Tiemstras travelled third class, but the beds and meals provided were good. Third-class passengers did not get tea and cookies in the afternoon, so at teatime Charles and another fellow in his cabin would go up to the second-class floor for tea and cookies. Charles enjoyed the excitement of sailing and would often stand on the deck during stormy weather, watching the ocean waves. After eleven days they landed in Montreal. From there they had a four-day train trip to Edmonton.

The first night, the Tiemstras stayed at the Immigration Hall. The next day they walked to the CPR station. Charles and Ike were each carrying a large, full suitcase. When they showed their tickets, the officials there tried to explain that the Westlock train did not leave from there. It was to no avail, because the Tiemstras knew no English. That night they slept at the Immigration Hall again, and returned to the CPR station the following day. Finally, one of the officials called a taxi and they were brought five miles away to the Dunvegan Line Station. Charles thought the taxi ride was much better than walking with that suitcase.

The language barrier caused more difficulties. When they got to Westlock that evening, Marshall picked them up by stage from the station, in accordance with arrangements made by Siebren Tiemstra. The arrangements included a stay at a Westlock hotel and a ride farther the next day. Marshall tried to explain this to the three totally bewildered Dutchmen. Finally, Ulbe suggested that they begin walking. After walking six miles, they slept overnight in a farmer's barn. They ate breakfast at the farmer's house the next morning, then started walking again. It was a hot day and the mosquitoes were bad, too. The farther they went, the heavier the suitcase seemed. At Freedom they bought some crackers, butter, and a piece of sausage. Once in a while, when they saw a log house, they would ask directions to Neerlandia. The last place they stopped was Chris Voight's of Mellowdale. He knew a little Dutch and also knew Siebren, so gave them further directions. After walking another seven miles, the three men, very tired and hungry, finally landed in Neerlandia at seven o'clock that evening.

Now the language was no problem. Among the adults, Dutch or *Fries* was always spoken. Charles stayed at Jan Anema's that summer and did learn some English from the Anema children. He worked for Jan, clearing land with an axe.

That fall, Charles and Ike worked with a road gang, regrading the road from Clyde to Barrhead. Their job was to pick the rocks and tree roots when the grader was working and throw them into a ditch across the low places in the road. Then they had to fix a wooden culvert in the low spot. The crew worked eight hours a day. They had to provide their own blankets and towels and slept on some hay in a big tent, about nine or ten men to a tent. Frank Thompson of Mellowdale was the foreman and his wife, Elsie, did the cooking. She made all kinds of pie for dessert, which Charles and Ike feasted on. In the Netherlands they had been used to having mainly potatoes and *brij*. Working with the crew, Charles learned English quickly.

After freeze up, the two brothers returned to Neerlandia. They helped Jan and Siebren haul firewood and bring home the hay that they had made that summer a few miles east along the Shoal Creek. The following spring Charles found work on a farm near Killam, earning forty dollars a month. There he learned to drive horses, since he had to use them for plowing and harrowing. Every other Sunday he went to visit his brother, Ike, and Ted and Ida Reitsma, who worked about eight miles away. After the fall work was done, Charles and Ike and Ted Reitsma went to Edmonton and found employment in a coal mine, where they worked during the winter of 1921-22. Shovelling coal was hard work, but the relatively warm temperature in a mine during the winter more than compensated. Charles was paid for each car loaded and could average five dollars a day, a very good wage.

However, when spring came Ted went home and Charles and Ike found a job in the B. J. Little Brickyard. They rented a shack on Fraser Flats for five dollars a month. In the fall they went on the move again, working along with Ted Reitsma for Saskatchewan farmers. In the winter they returned to Edmonton. During the summer of 1922, Charles had bought the George Wing homestead (SE 27-61-3-5) for $1400. It had twenty acres under cultivation, a log house, and a twenty-foot deep hand-dug well. Now that Charles had bought land, he had enough work on his farm clearing land. In the spring of 1923, he bought a bed, a cook stove, a few chairs, and a tin heater which he took to the homestead along with a homemade table. His meals were the bachelor's usual fare: raw, sliced potatoes fried up in fat, fried eggs, pancakes, or bread with jam. He also bought dried apples or peaches (in twenty-pound boxes), which he cooked up for dessert.

After spending the whole summer clearing, Charles went to work in the coal mine again for the winter of 1923-24. The next spring, with his savings, he bought two horses with harness and again went to the farm for the summer. With the help of Ben Lievers, he built a 20 by 30-foot barn. It had a hip roof which provided a loft in which hay could be stored. When winter came he left his horses with Siebren and went back to the coal mine for the fourth and last time. The following spring, just before he left Edmonton, he bought a high-wheeled wagon, three sections of harrows and two more horses with harness, all for eighty dollars. He loaded the harrows onto the wagon in preparation for the trip to Neerlandia but Dave Tuininga, who was running a truck from Neerlandia to Edmonton, warned him that the horses would break their legs unless they were shoed, since the roads were covered with ice. So for twelve dollars Charles had a blacksmith shoe all eight legs of his horses. The shoes had props that could be screwed in so that the animals would not fall. At eight the next morning, Charles set off. He was fortunate that his wagon had a spring seat on the grain box, since the entire ninety miles was dirt road with many deep ruts. Charles stopped overnight at a farmer's home along the way, and reached Neerlandia after a day and a half.

Charles now had forty acres under cultivation, so he bought a sixteen-inch sulky plow. With his neighbour, Eike Jorritsma, he bought a used seed drill with wooden wheels at a farm auction. It had levers that had to be pushed down by hand, so one had to stop everytime one came to the end of the field. Elke also owned a binder for cutting the crops. Since Elke was not mechanically inclined, an arrangement was made whereby Charles did all the cutting and Elke did the stooking. The next year though, Charles bought his own binder. He continued to clear and break land between seed time and harvest. In the summer of 1927, Bertus Bos helped him to clear and by the end of that summer he had eighty acres cleared.

Charles was a member of the local Christian Reformed Church, which he attended faithfully. He went regularly to Young People's Society meetings. Sadie Tuininga, one of the many girls of Klaas and Sjoertje, came to Society also. She came on horseback and Charles began accompanying her home after meetings. Soon though, he bought a one-horse buggy to make the ride home more cozy. After courting Sadie for about two years, Charles married her on a Friday afternoon (January 16, 1928) in the home of her parents. Rev. A. Selles of Edmonton officiated. For a married couple, childbearing was considered to be not only a privilege but a command of the Lord. Any method of contraception was strictly forbidden. For that reason most parents had many children. The Tiemstras were no exception; children were soon born:

Charlie, Sadie, 1928

Albert Ulbe, (May 31, 1929), **Clarence** (Klaas, December 31, 1930), **Cecelia** (September 29, 1932), and **David** (August 5, 1934) were born during the early years of the Depression. After Clarence was born, Sadie had Hilje Wierenga help for nine days. Hilje worked for one dollar a day, which the Tiemstras could hardly afford. Raising a family during those years was hard. After Charles and Sadie were first married, Charles had bought some cows so they could have their own milk and butter. The only money they got was a weekly cream cheque of seven dollars, which they used to buy groceries. Some sows were also bought in order to raise pigs for market. When the Depression hit, though, the markets for farm products were not good.

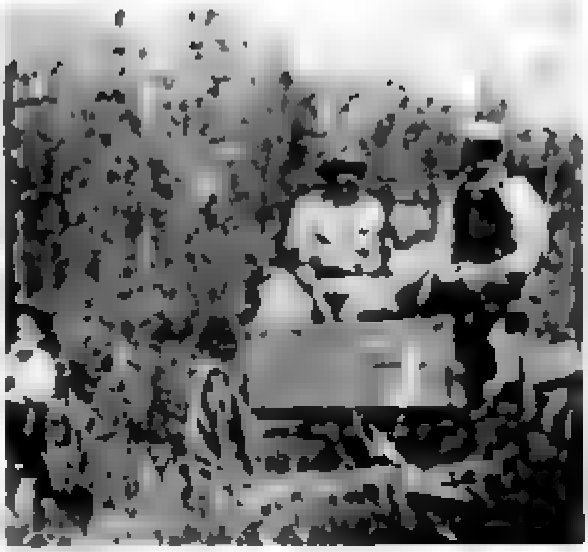
Even if Charles and Sadie did not have very much money, the family had enough to eat. Their food was mostly the same: potatoes, vegetables, and meat or eggs. They never saw oranges or apples. To make ends meet, Charles and Sadie made do. Wheat was crushed in the grinder and used in baking and cooking; barley was roasted in the oven and ground for coffee; peppermint leaves were picked and dried for tea. In the early spring, Sadie gathered pigweeds and cooked them up like spinach. Charles and Sadie also made their own sausage and liver sausage, smoked dried beef, and made head cheese and (regular) milk cheese.

Sadie was kept busy making clothes for the family. From flour sacks she would make underwear and many other things. Charles and the boys all wore bib overalls and the girls wore dresses. Sadie was never idle; besides sewing there was knitting of socks, mittens, and so on to be done. Charles kept some sheep so Sadie could make wool quilts, which helped the family keep warm in the old drafty log house.

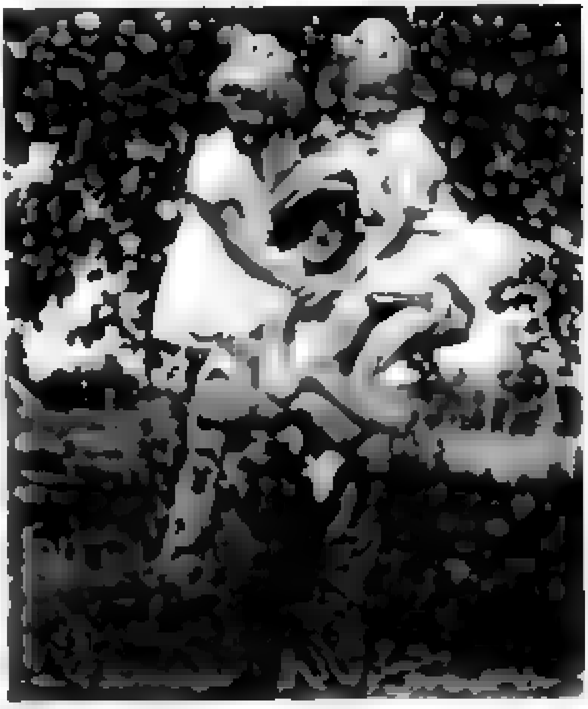
In May 1936, a daughter was stillborn to Charles and Sadie. Another daughter, **Evelyn**, was born November 5, 1937. She was the first of the children to be born in the hospital. Sadie still did the wash on a rubbing board, standing all day to wash. On a typical weekday morning, after breakfast, Sadie would take care of the babies first, then do the dishes, clean the separator and milk pails, and sweep the wooden floors, all before coffee time. **Susan** arrived October 19, 1939.

In all, Charles and Sadie had twelve children. **Ernest** (June 1, 1942), **Lillian** (February 7, 1945), **Edwin** Lloyd (September 5, 1946), **Caroline** (February 21, 1949), and **Peter** (July 23, 1951) also joined the family.

In August the Tiemstra family usually made a trip to the sand hills along the Athabasca River for blueberry picking. With many good berry pickers in the family, a short day of picking would yield as many as thirty quarts of blueberries. At the same time, it was a holiday for the family. In early September the high bush cranberries would ripen. Sadie made sauces and jellies from them.



July First Picnic, early 1940s. Sadie, Charles, on wagon



Susan, Albert, Evelyn, c. 1945

The Tiemstras purchased their first radio, a small battery-powered Marconi, in 1940. It needed a long outdoor aerial strung beween two high poles in order to pick up the radio waves. The radio gave access to news, weather, and prices of farm products, but was also a new means to entertainment. Some of the programs the family listened to were "The Lone Ranger" and "The Green Hornet". On Saturday nights there was usually a squabble between the boys who wanted to hear the hockey games and the girls who would rather listen to "Search for Talent".

Charles bought his first tractor in 1942. It was a two-cylinder John Deere H and immediately replaced the horses for pulling all farm machinery. The motor was started by rolling over the flywheel. After the motor had warmed up, a valve was turned so that it used distillate rather than gasoline. It proved to be a reliable machine and Charles used it for many years.

Back: Clarence, Albert, Sadie holding Lillian, Charles, Cecelia. Front: David, Evelyn, Susan, Ernest, c. 1946.

About this time also, Charles bought his first car, a used Hupmobile, for forty dollars. It was a four-door sedan and comfortably held the whole family, so they could all sit in it to go to church. A few years later he bought a 1938 Studebaker, which was more modern as it had an electric starter.

In 1944 Charles built a bigger house, of lumber this time, for his growing family. Since it had a basement it could be centrally heated by a furnace that burned wood and coal. That was a big improvement over the old wood heater.

The Tiemstra family went through many good times, but also through bad. When Dave was fifteen, he was diagnosed as having ankylosing spondylitis. When he was nineteen, he contracted meningitis. After a three-and-a-half month stay in the hospital, he came home but was very weak and could not do heavy work anymore. As a result of the high fevers, he now has leaky heart valves. Lillian contracted polio when she was in grade five, during a polio epidemic in the province. She spent about seven months in an Edmonton hospital. The disease paralyzed one of her legs, so she had to learn to walk with a brace. When Peter was 17, he too was found to have ankylosing spondylitis and was diagnosed as having Crohn's disease as well.

Evelyn, Susanne Visser, Cecelia, Lillian, c. 1946.

In the late 1940s Charles began poultry farming largely through the influence of Albert, who had gained considerable experience in the business. When Cecil Tuininga sold his farm, Charles bought his large two-storey chicken coop. Sam Howey moved it on skids with a Caterpillar tractor along the dirt roads about four miles to the Tiemstra farm. Charles bought registered poultry (New Hampshires) and shipped hatching eggs for a number of years. Although there was a lot of work involved to feed and water the birds, collect and mark the eggs with the band number of the bird that laid it, as well as clean the roosts regularly, it proved to be a good business. However, when his flock was found to have pollorum, Charles was no longer permitted to ship hatching eggs. Since commercial egg production did not pay well he decided eventually to quit farming and move to the city. After subdividing the farm, he sold the acreage with the buildings to his son Clarence and the rest of the quarter section to Joe H. Wierenga. A quarter that he owned east of Neerlandia was sold to his son-in-law, Arie Krikke.

In 1958, Charles and Sadie moved to Edmonton with their four youngest children. Albert had married Betsy Merkus in 1952 and Clarence had married Anne Strydhorst in 1955. Cecilia attended school until grade eight, then helped on the farm and later found work in Barrhead and Westlock. In 1953, she married Arie Krikke of Neerlandia.

David was the first in the family to attend high school in Barrhead, when the county began centralization. After graduation, he took up accounting. He married Bertha Weerink of Lacombe on December 18, 1959. They have three children. Dave works for the Federal Government while Bertha teaches at West Edmonton Christian School. Their home is in Edmonton.

Evelyn had also graduated from the Barrhead high school, then trained at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton and became a registered nurse. While working in Vancouver she met Fred Van Laare, whom she married August 21, 1964. They live in Coral Springs, Florida with their children. Fred works for the Shoppers Drug Mart firm.

Susan had attended school until grade nine and later took training and graduated as a certified nursing aide in 1959. She found work in Grande Prairie, where she met Gerald Prinsen, whom she married October 18, 1963. They have

Back: Cecelia, Dave, Clarence, Albert, Evelyn. Front: Ernie, Lillian, Sadie holding Peter, Carol, Charles, Susan, Edwin, 1952 three children The family lives in Edmonton where Gerald works for the Grocery People

Ernest had quit school in grade nine and then, after various jobs, learned the automotive mechanic trade at Schultz Motors in Barrhead In 1969 he married a widow, Irene Kool, who had three children. A girl was born from their marriage. The family lives near Stony Plain Ernie works for E & G Trenching

When the Tiemstras moved to Edmonton, Charles found employment in a machine shop, steam cleaning old motors. He stayed with the company, Taylor, Pearson and Carson, until retirement in 1971 Both Charles and Sadie had worked hard during their lives. Retirement allowed them the freedom to take a trip to the Netherlands and many shorter ones to visit friends and family But it did not mean retirement from work, because they had learned that there is much satisfaction to be gained from it

Charles and Sadie both learned basket weaving and made many woven items, including collection plates for Christian Reformed churches in Smithers and Edmonton Sadie continued to do a lot of baking, knitting, crocheting, and sewing, and also learned some new crafts Charles took a course in upholstering, at which he became very proficient. In spite of two heart attacks, he remained relatively healthy and continued upholstering until he was nearly eighty The belief that children are a blessing of the Lord has proved to be a reality in Charles and Sadie's lives Their children and grandchildren were and are a source of much comfort and enjoyment

In January 1983 the Tiemstras celebrated their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. Then Charles became ill. After about two weeks in the hospital and celebrating his eightieth birthday there, Charlies died peacefully on January 31 The life of another Alberta pioneer had come to an end

Dave Tiemstra
Sadie Tiemstra

GERBEN AND TENIE (WIERENGA) TIEMSTRA

Gerben Tiemstra came to Neerlandia with his family in 1913. When he grew up, farming became his main occupation, although his natural ability in carpentry was also an asset

Gerben married Tenie Wierenga, daughter of Andries and Hendrika, on December 25, 1931, with Rev H. Van Der Woude officiating As was the custom in those days, weddings were conducted during the afternoon church service and a reception was held during the week. That first winter they lived in den Hartog's shack, which was on a quarter close to the homestead Gerben had taken out in 1928 (NE 17-62-3-5). They had to haul water from their nearest neighbours, the Kannegieters The next year Gerben built a house on his father's yard, and they moved there Gerben farmed with his father and brother Albert until his father retired, then he and Albert each got half the farm. Gerben built another house in 1947

Tenie. Gerben, John, 1962

In 1949 a son, **John** (born November 20), was brought into the family at the age of two months Gerben and Tenie retired and moved to Barrhead in 1960 They sold the farm to Gerben's brother Albert In Barrhead they became active in the Meals on Wheels program. They are members of the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church, where Gerben has served as elder. With thankfulness to God for years of changes, trials, and progress, they observed their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1981

Wilma Wierenga

GEORGE AND GEZINA (HUISKAMP) TOEBES

BILL TOEBES

Gerrit Jan Toebes was born in Winterswijk, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on December 23 1891. He immigrated to Canada, the land of opportunity, in 1912 and spent his first three years in Edmonton working at odd jobs while living in a tent on Fraser Flats. He had always had plans to go farming, so in 1914 he moved to the Dutch settlement of Edam, Saskatchewan, and worked for a farmer. But after two years, the dry and dusty conditions there did not look like good farming to Gerrit and he returned to Edmonton.

Around that time the federal government and the C.P.R. were encouraging the colonization of the B.C. interior. Gerrit and a few friends from Edmonton went by train to Vanderhoof, B.C., hoping to start a Dutch community. But after digging a well and putting up a few log buildings, they soon gave up the idea of farming in that area and all of them returned to Edmonton. In 1917, Gerrit got a job with the Edmonton Water Works, where many other Dutch fellows worked as well.

In 1920, Gerrit wrote to his wife-to-be, Gezina Fredrica Huiskamp, (born February 24, 1888) from Borken, Germany, to come to Canada. They were married that same year. Also that year, on December 24, Gerrit became a naturalized Canadian citizen. At that time he changed his name to George John. Four sons were born to George and Gezina. Their first son, Henry, died in infancy. Next came **Bill** (William) Henry, born August 11, 1923, then Raymond **Norman**, born November 14, 1925, and lastly, **Frederick** George, born April 9, 1928.

In Fraser Flats. George, Gezina holding William.

George took up a homestead (NW 10-62-3-5) in Neerlandia on December 4, 1926. He continued to work in Edmonton for a couple of years, but then in March 1929 moved to the homestead with the family. They stayed with the Schoonekamps at first, and later that year moved into a new 14 by 30-foot frame house built for them by Ben Lievers and Menne Nanninga. The house had a kitchen and living room downstairs and two bedrooms upstairs.

A few acres were already cleared on the homestead when George took it up. With the help of his sons he eventually cleared most of the quarter section by axe and grub hoe. The last six acres were cleared by bulldozer. Like most Neerlandia farmers, George kept some cattle, chickens, and hogs, and depended on the cream cheques through the difficult years of the thirties.

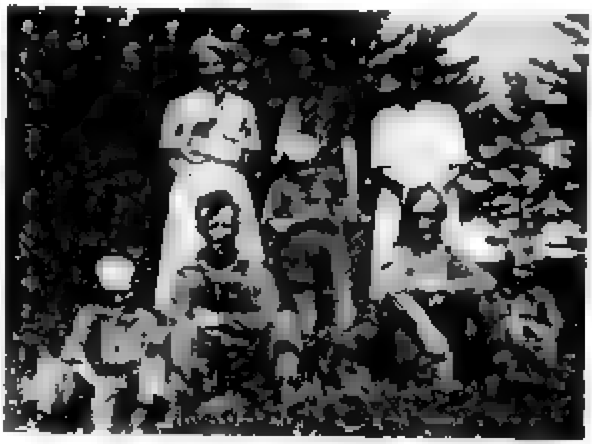
George also owned horses which were used for work and pulling the wagon or sleigh. One Sunday, after church, it was raining and Petertje Schoonekamp lent Gezina her umbrella for the ride home. The Toebes family had never owned an umbrella, and young Fred was fascinated with it. After the ride he got off the wagon and began to investigate how it worked. George had just helped Gezina off the wagon when Fred popped open the umbrella. This spooked the horses, and they took off towards the gate, turned, and proceeded to run along

the fence, one horse on each side. By the time they came to a stop at a granary along the fence line, the barbed wire was tangled up around the wagon wheels and all the fenceposts were broken. Fred does not remember if his father fixed the fence that Sunday, but he does remember that he got a licking!

The Toebes family lived just north of the Sturwolds, which was rather convenient since Toney Sturwold owned a grain crusher. Whenever Gezina was out of flour, she would ask one of the boys to walk over with a pail of wheat and trade it for a pail of wheat flour. This Gezina used to make bread and other things, including the wheat porridge the family ate for breakfast each day. (Sunday breakfasts were special to the children because then they could have sugar on their porridge.) Every fall Toney Sturwold would come and cut logs into blocks with his portable saw. Bill enjoyed chopping up the blocks and would work at it steadily, soon having the winter's supply of firewood for the house chopped up and piled along the fence.

Norman, Gezina, Fred, William, George, c. 1933.

Many people stopped at the Toebes home on their way north to Vega. Since it was about halfway, it was convenient to stop there to warm up and let the horses rest. Many of the Vega people were German and enjoyed talking to Gezina who, of course, also knew German. Gezina, being of Lutheran background, instilled in the children the importance of Reformation Day; no playing of pranks was allowed on Hallowe'en. George had many religious discussions with Pieter Hendricks, who was of a more evangelical persuasion, and who stopped by the Toebes place about once a week on his way home.



Back: Jennie and Alice Kippers, Gezina. Front: Bill, John Kippers, Norman, George, Fred, 1933.

Gezina suffered many years from arthritis. Norman and Fred helped her do the heavy housework since that was too difficult for her. Many mornings she would soak her hands in warm water to soften the stiff joints in her fingers. In 1942 George built three more rooms onto the house, and also put in plumbing, running water, and a 32-volt power light plant. These conveniences were a joy and great blessing for Gezina. George was a cheerful person. He often sang as he worked, so Gezina and the children could hear him coming from a long way off.

In 1949 Norman left to study at RBI. He married Beatrice Vandervelde in 1951. They have seven children and live in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., where Norman works as a machinist.

Gezina died of a stroke in 1950. After Fred married Sena Konynenbelt in 1952, George left the farm and built a house in the Centre, where he moved with his son Bill. George and Bill enjoyed gardening and had many beautiful flowers around the house. Bill sometimes

George, Gezina.

worked out stooking and root picking for farmers. He also sold Christian literature from Eerdmans and Zondervan's publishing houses, an enterprise he took over from Arie Emmerzael. Bill would walk all over the settlement carrying a flour sack containing the boxes of cards and the books he had for sale. Many people received birthday cards from Bill who, once he had been told, never forgot a birthdate. He loved to sing, and sang in the church choir for a number of years. George died in 1972, and after that Bill moved to Barrhead Nursing Home where he still lives.

Fred Toebes

CECIL AND ANNIE (SCHOONEKAMP) TUININGA

Although Cecil and Annie have lived away from Neerlandia since 1947, their roots are firmly embedded in its history. Both were born in Edmonton in 1915, and came to Neerlandia shortly after with their respective parents. Both were raised in log cabins to the tune of howling coyotes and cold winds.

They were married in 1940, and began farming on the NW 28-61-3-5, known then as the old Beaumont farm. Cecil's father, Klaas, had bought it for one thousand dollars in 1937 or 1938, Cecil and his brother Pete constructed all the farm buildings. The seven years spent on the farm were good ones. Prices were going up by leaps and bounds, and crops were good. Three children were born there: **Klaas**, November 7, 1943; **Henry**, November 13, 1944, and **Pearl**, November 6, 1945. Cecil directed choir and was church organist for eight years. The memories of these years are unforgettable. But suddenly, when Cecil was walking home one day, the Lord called him to the ministry.

In 1947, Cecil was the first Neerlandian to take up studies in the ministry. Convinced that this was the way the Lord wanted them to go, Cecil and Annie began the preparations which took one and a half years to complete. Finally the house was sold to Gerhard Paas, the garage to Joe Tuininga, and George Baker auctioned off the rest of the possessions. Then the family moved to Hospers, Iowa. Cecil attended school in nearby Hull for one year, taking grade ten. He was thirty-two years old at the time, and had been away from school for eighteen years. All the other students were fifteen or sixteen years old — all total strangers. After that Cecil studied in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for seven years. That part of their life was not easy, but God worked out the details. The family in Neerlandia was supportive of Cecil's efforts by words of encouragement and financial aid. After leaving Neerlandia, four more children were born to Cecil and Annie.

After Cecil graduated from Calvin College and Seminary, the family returned to Canada. Cecil ministered to congregations in

Standing: Klaas, Annie. Seated: Cecil holding Bill, Donald, Pearl, Henry. c. 1950

Williamsburg, Ontario, and Ladner and Telkwa, B.C. In each of these places, he was the first full-time minister. Then the Tuiningas moved to churches in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Grande Prairie, Alberta. Twenty-five years were spent in the ministry; all of them in Canada.

In a way, Cecil and Annie's life has come full circle. They are now retired and again live in Edmonton. Both enjoy it there, and have no desire to move again. From this perspective they see how wonderfully God has blessed and prospered them.

Cecil Tuininga

JACK AND MARGARET (STURWOLD) TUININGA

Jack Tuininga and Margaret Sturwold were married November 3, 1935, by Rev. Van Der Woude. Five children were born into their family: **Kenneth James** (December 16, 1936), **Ruth** Margaret (March 3, 1938), **Beatrice** Joan (May 19, 1940), Iris **Lorraine** (April 4, 1945), and **Marilyn** Lois (June 21, 1951).

Back: Kenneth, Margaret, Jack holding Marilyn, Ruth. Front: Beatrice, Lorraine, 1950

The Tuiningas farmed on the NW 20-61-3-5 until 1959, then moved to Edmonton. Kenneth married Loretta Torpy of Edmonton in 1961. They had two children. Loretta died in 1983 and Kenneth lives in Hamilton, Ontario. Ruth married George Frieser of Vega in 1960. They have three children and are living in Edmonton. Beatrice died October 29, 1953, and Lorraine died July 10, 1960.

Jack worked in real estate and mortgages until he retired. He and Margaret are living in Edmonton.

Margaret Tuininga

JOE AND SOPHIE (WIERENGA) TUININGA

Joe Tuininga was born in Edmonton in 1913 and moved to Neerlandia with his parents in 1916. When Joe was sixteen years old he had a ruptured appendix which gangrened, and he spent four months in the Barrhead hospital. When the doctor operated, he told Joe's dad that he had better get the undertaker because Joe would not live. Everyone in the family came to see him, and Joe asked his dad, "Why does everybody come to see me?" Joe's dad told him he might not live, but Joe said, "I won't die." After a long convalescence he recovered.

Joe married Sophie Wierenga on December 18, 1938. They received a wedding dowry of four cows and a pig from Joe's folks. When they got married, Joe went to thank the minister for performing the ceremony.

"You boys all get off so easy," Rev. Van Der Woude said. "At least you have the courtesy to come and thank me, but that'll cost you $2.50."

Joe and Sophie settled on the NE 28-61-3-5, which at that time had sixty acres open. This land was bought from Hendrik Kannegieter for $800.00, at payments of $100.00 a year at six percent interest. They built a house on it which cost about $250.00. To build a barn they used lumber from Joe's father's old house. Joe bought a thousand feet of rough lumber for the roof for ten dollars.

Joe can recall the first litter of pigs from the sow his parents gave them. She had seven piglets. He kept one back to increase the herd and shipped six, for which he received ninety dollars. "Boy," Joe thought, "That's a lot of money."

The first year Joe was married, he used his dad's machinery. In 1939 he bought his own tractor, a Farmall "A", for $850.00. He paid twenty percent down and got the balance from the bank in three installments at eight percent interest. He went custom crushing and sawing with this outfit at $1.25 per hour. Joe and Sophie bought their first car, a Hudson, in 1940 for $250.00.

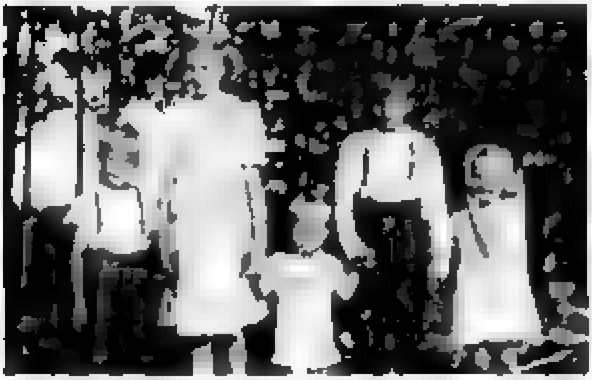
When Neerlandia built a new school, Joe and his brother Cecil bought the old two-room one and used it to build each of them a garage.

Funny thing — both of these garages later burned down. When Joe and Sophie's burned down, it was quite a financial loss since Joe had quite a few tools, a power plant, and an almost-new Fordson Major tractor in it. The Tuiningas carried no insurance. But they were thankful when the community came to their aid by replacing the garage and tractor.

Joe and Sophie were one of the first to have electric power. They first had a thirty-two volt windcharger with a set of sixteen batteries to hold the charge, but soon found out they had to have a thirty-two volt power plant to supplement the charge. They were also one of the first to have running water, made possible with a stock tank elevated up about six feet.

Joe was a jack-of-all-trades. He helped build the first garage in Neerlandia as well as the three-room school and the third church. One thing stands out in the building of the church: it had a high steeple and only a few dared to work up that high, among them Joe's brother Cecil, Tom De Groot, and Joe himself.

Joe and his brother Cecil used to sing as a duet. Joe remembers the first song they sang was, "God's Way is the Best Way". They were nervous and wondered how it went. They soon found out, as the applause was terrific. Later they formed a male quartet with the Wierenga brothers Ite and Ekke. They used to perform programs at the church, sing for shut-ins and old folks, and even had a recording made.



Andrew, Reta, Sidney, Clifford, Sharon, c. 1950.

Joe and Sophie had a family of seven children. **Reta** Bertha was born September 28, 1939. She became a school teacher. On July 15, 1960, she married Gary Haarsma, a farmer. They have five children and live in Winterburn. **Clifford** John followed Reta on July 11, 1941, and **Andrew** arrived March 18, 1944.

Andy worked for a building contractor in Edmonton for some years, then he moved back to Neerlandia to farm. On February 25, 1977, he married Rinie Froma. They have three children: **Derek** Andrew born April 8, 1978; **Charmaine** Dorinda born November 18, 1980; and **Lance** Joseph born June 10, 1983.

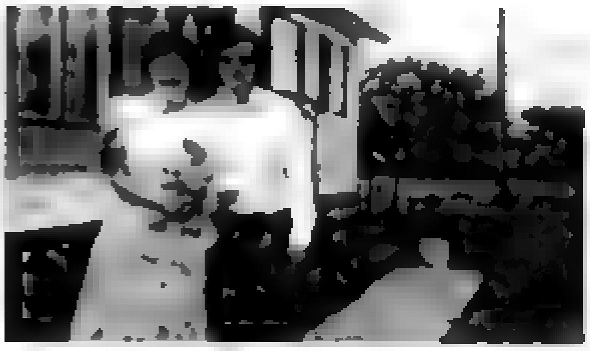
Sharon Gladys followed her brother Andrew on October 11, 1945. Sharon became a nurse and married Art Degner on July 10, 1967. They have three children and live in St. Albert. Art has a backhoe operation. Following Sharon, **Sidney** Joe was born July 17, 1948.

Four years later, on June 26, 1952, **Cecil** Herman arrived. Cecil worked as a welder for Wayward Steel. He married **Marilyn Duker** of Edmonton on November 26, 1983, and they now farm in Linaria.

Last of all, on August 28, 1955, came **Alfred** David. Alfred married Dora Froma on March 23, 1981. **Karen** Stacie was born to them on March 23, 1983. They farm in Neerlandia.

Back: Andrew, Sharon, Clifford, Reta, Sidney. Front: Cecil, Joe, Alfred, Sophie, 1963.

Whenever there was a fire in the country, people thought of Joe Tuininga. Joe was a "dangerous" neighbour to have in the fall because, as far as he was concerned, any little clump of dead grass had to be burned. One time he nearly burnt out their neighbours, Oene Piers, and had to work one whole Sunday to keep the fire from spreading. Another time Joe was burning brush piles with Cliff, using waste oil and gas to make the piles burn, when a new pile burst into flames, so did Cliff. Joe jerked his coat off and quickly wrapped Cliff with it and there was no harm done.



Dora holding Karen, Alfred, 1983

One fall Joe and Cliff were combining. Joe was standing on the back of the combine behind the grain hopper, observing. Clifford shifted gears and then, looking back, he saw his dad's shoes coming around with the levelling auger in the grain hopper. He had fallen forward into the grain tank with the jerk of the shifting. Clifford was almost too scared to go up the combine to look at what had happened to his dad. But he gathered his wits and ran up the ladder. There he found his father with his jacket, shirt, and T shirt all wrapped around his arm so tightly that the bicep muscle in his left arm was being pinched off. With a jackknife Cliff cut through the clothing to free Joe, and then took him to the Barrhead hospital where he stayed for some days. After a number of weeks Joe was able to use his arm for which the family was very thankful to God.

Joe and Sophie moved about a bit. After living on the NE 28-61-3-5, they bought the NE 26-61-3-5, which had a better house and better buildings. Next they bought the S½ 28-61-3-5 from Henry Piers. As times progressed, they bought more land until they acquired nine quarters of land, which they farmed in partnership with their sons. When they retired it was on an acreage on their original quarter.

On December 18, 1983, Joe and Sophie celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. Joe says the Lord has been good to them, for which they are thankful.

Joe Tuininga

PETE AND TENA (VISSER) TUININGA

Pete (Peter) Tuininga is a man who pursued a variety of interests throughout his life. It all began when he bought a truck and started hauling freight from Neerlandia to Edmonton. Because there was a lot of snow during the winter of 1926 the roads were often impassable. When the snow began to melt in spring it was no better, so after a few months he quit trying to truck to Neerlandia.

Pete married Tena Terpsma in 1927 but, after a marriage of only eight months, she contracted polio and the Lord took her home. Pete had left school when he came to Neerlandia at the age of twelve. Realizing that he should finish his schooling, Pete now went to Edmonton to attend Alberta College. When he finished his course he once again began trucking, but this time between Edmonton and Barrhead. While in Edmonton he met Tena Visser. Tena had been born in Anjum, North Holland, the Netherlands, on January 31, 1910. She had come to Edmonton with her family in 1911. After leaving school she did housework and worked in a factory.

Pete and Tena were married in Edmonton on March 23, 1930. Their first daughter, Grace, was born March 14, 1931. A couple of months later Pete quit trucking for good, this time to become a farmer. He moved his family to Neerlandia to live on the SW 20-61-3-5 which he had bought from his brother Jack. On this property there was a three-room house surrounded entirely by bush. Nevertheless, Tena, a city girl, was not lonely because, in addition to her husband and baby, there was a boarder — Pete's brother Jack, who stayed with them for five years. Furthermore *Omke* and *Mooike*, Pete's uncle and aunt, lived just a quarter mile away.

Tena happily set up housekeeping in the house, which had its walls lined with heavy blue paper. Rising on a winter morning to find ice in the water pail, she would soon have a fire crackling in the wood stove. Then she would thaw ice to get water for coffee and start a pan of crushed wheat porridge which she would serve with sugar and all the milk one wanted. She also served her home-baked bread. After breakfast Pete would set about the seemingly endless task of clearing the land.

Pete and Tena had married during the Depression when money was not easily obtained. Pete traded his car for cattle and horses, which were of more use to him on the farm. By 1933 things had improved enough that Pete could buy an old Buick for $150. A second daughter, Sylvia, was born on December 18, 1933.

The quarter on which the Tuiningas lived had very poor soil. An old Indian who lived on the narrows of Shoal Lake told Pete that the Indians had burned the timber on that land. Originally there had been a heavy stand of big timber separating Shoal Lake and Freeman Lake, a couple of miles to the north. The Indians got tired of going through this timber to hunt, so they set it on fire. The repeated burning of the land had damaged the topsoil.

The problem with the soil led indirectly to Pete beginning another venture — the hatchery business. It started like this: when Pete was still trucking, a man in another community did not pay a freight bill he owed Pete. After repeated visits to collect the debt Pete accepted two broody hens and two clutches of eggs in payment. These Barred Rock hens and the resulting chicks formed the basis of a flock of chickens which supplied the Tuiningas with eggs and an occasional meal of fried or roasted chicken. When the district agriculturist came from Westlock in response to Pete's request for advice about his soil, the D.A. asked, "Where did you get those purebred hens?"

"Those are just scrubs," Pete replied.

"Well," said the D.A., "if those are scrubs I'd like to see purebreds." He went on to advise Pete to contact the Provincial Hatchery and ask them to blood test his chickens so that he could sell hatching eggs. Pete took his advice, and that was the beginning of an involvement with chickens that lasted until his retirement. At first Pete produced hatching eggs, then he went on the road blood testing, then he bought an incubator and began hatching eggs on the farm. Later he began a hatchery in Barrhead. He sold the hatchery in 1955, but continued in the commercial egg business.

In the meantime other events were occurring on the Tuininga farm. A new frame house, which Tena soon made into a cozy home, was built in 1935. **Jean** (Georgine) was born May 8, 1937 and **Klaas** on September 18, 1938. Pete suffered an attack of appendicitis and had to have an operation. While in the hospital he also contracted pneumonia, possibly because of too much chloroform. He was in the hospital for ten days. When he was released Jack picked him up with the horses and sleigh. Because it was winter he was able to take a shortcut across Shoal Lake instead of going over the road. Tena's parents were concerned that Tena had too much work to do with Pete being sick, so they helped her to acquire a gas-powered washing machine.

Roads in the forties were low and easily drifted in. One year Clarence and Pete Tuininga shovelled out the road from their homes to Henry Hiemstra's place, a distance of one mile. They used big shovels which enabled them to cut four-foot-square blocks and tip them out of the way. The job took them a whole week to complete. A few days later another blizzard blew the road full of snow again. Often it was necessary to travel part of the way through fields because the roads were impassable. At other times the cars were left at Baker's Corner.

As the time for the 1940 Christmas concert drew near, Sylvia, who had been home from school for two weeks because of illness, begged her parents to take her, and they promised to do so. The roads were drifted so they set out earlier than usual in order to get there on time. Every once in a while Pete would have to stop and shovel but eventually they got to the church — only to discover that the concert was over. Sylvia did get the annual treat of a bag of candy and an orange, so the trip was not entirely useless.

Big blizzard in March. Corny Hiemstra and Klaas digging out a horse, 1950s.

When the war began in 1939, sugar was soon in short supply. That led to another endeavor for Pete — a love affair with bees. He raised bees to produce honey. Tena baked and canned with honey, and the family used honey on cereal and in beverages. Friends and family received jars of honey from Tena, who always gave generously of whatever she had. Even today Pete would like to keep bees, but he has Parkinson's disease and is too shaky to handle the bees without alarming them. He is knowledgeable and is more than willing to share his expertise.

About thirty years ago a salesman from the Alberta Nursery at Bowden came to Neerlandia and sold Pete his first apple trees. Pete, who inherited the Tuininga love for plants, was soon producing more apples than the family could use. Tena was once again giving the surplus to friends and relatives

Pete the apple man, 1965.

Two more children were born to the Tuiningas: **Lucille** on November 27, 1942, and **David** on September 21, 1946. With six children there is always some excitement. Once when Grace and Sylvia were small, Grace gave Sylvia a haircut. This made Sylvia look so much like a boy that her parents began to call her Don, a nickname that stuck throughout her childhood. Lucille, at four years of age, inquisitively reached up for a jar on the table, spilling thick honey all over her face. Sylvia quickly wiped her nose clean to keep her from suffocating, and Tena cleaned up the mess.

Time went on and all the children grew up and married. Grace married Corny Hiemstra. Sylvia married Henry Elzinga of Edmonton on June 29, 1955. They live on a farm near Sherwood Park. On August 26, 1959, Jean married James Olthuis, now of Toronto. Jim teaches at the Institute for Christian Studies. Jean is coordinator of church activities. Klaas married Esther Nanninga, Lucille married John Piers, and David married Alida Vandergrift.

Pete gradually retired as his sons were able to take over the work. Then he became interested in yet another activity: woodworking. He makes toys for his grandchildren, and carves delightful figures of people and animals.

Back: David, Grace, Pete, Sylvia, Klaas. Front: Jean, Tena, Lucille. 1972

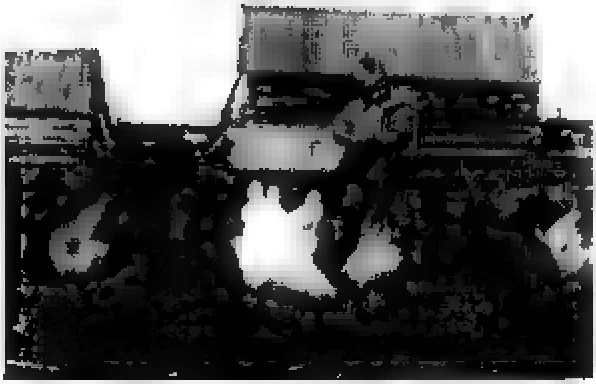
Pete and Tena are still living on the farm on which they started. The bush is gone now and things have changed tremendously since 1931. The Tuiningas are happy in Neerlandia where God has been so good to them. They say, "It's a great place to live!"

Lucille Piers

SIMON AND BERTHA (WIERENGA) TUININGA

In the summer of 1919 two seemingly unrelated events took place — one in the Netherlands, the other in Canada. On June 23 in Uithuizen, Groningen, a thirteenth child, a girl who they called Bertha, was born to the Lammert Wierenga family. In Neerlandia, on July 11, a boy, also thirteenth in the family, was born to the Klaas Tuininga family. They named him Simon. Both were born into very poor families. In the Netherlands the Wierengas were raising a family on the very low income of a farm labourer, augmented by the little that the older members of the family could contribute. In Neerlandia the Tuiningas waged the tough battle all immigrants faced to get started, made more severe by being a large family with many small children, having no farming experience, and living on a farm with poor soil.

However, neither of the children noticed the poverty. In 1929 the Wierenga family moved to Neerlandia and for the first time the two children were members of the same district and



Simon on the original homestead, c. 1923.

When Bertha was a girl. Bertha, Elle, Lammert, Jenny Wierenga, 1928.

attended the same church and school. In 1925, when he was six years old, Simon had to walk three-and-a-half miles to school along trails across country. On the way there he and his siblings usually joined the Joe Baker on Menne Nanninga children, depending on which trail they took. This situation improved for him when his parents moved to the NW 27-61-3-5, less than one mile from school. When the Wierengas arrived in Neerlandia, Bertha had to walk four miles to school, usually joining the Kippers children who lived one mile west of them. Later she had to walk this long distance back and forth to Young People's Society and to catechism. Matters improved for her when she started working for Mrs. Koning, the storekeeper's wife, and Jan Koning bought her a bike, the first new one in the district

Simon's most vivid memories, of when he was in the 7-10 age bracket, are of the annual pilgrimage of the Indians from up north to Lac Ste. Anne to collect their treaty money. They travelled with covered wagons, followed by men on horseback and many dogs. They often camped across the road from the Tuiningas. When they left, Simon used to race over to see if there were any arrowheads or spears lying around

During these years Simon had his first space flight. He and his nephew Albert Oldegbers climbed up a huge spruce tree and remained high in it while his brothers chopped it down. Fortunately neither of them was seriously injured, but the space flight program was halted immediately

Simon continued his studies at school and completed grade ten, which was unusual at that time. He then began what he considered the drudgery of farming: milking cows, clearing land by hand, and root picking. The only break was in the summer on hot Saturday afternoons or evenings when many boys and some married men would meet at the Shoal Creek by the Wilsons' for their weekly swim.

On January 8, 1942, Simon was called up by the Government to report to the basic training camp at Camrose. For a young man who had never been in a train or bus, and had never been to a barbershop, this was indeed a traumatic experience. From Camrose he was posted to the Queen's Own Rifles at Moose Jaw and later to the 14th Infantry Brigade Headquarters in Terrace, B.C., as a clerk. On January 4, 1944, he volunteered for training as air crew and was

Simon home on leave, 1945

accepted. He received his wings in 1945 but as the war was almost over, he was never posted overseas. On August 23, 1945, he was discharged from active service but remained in the RCAF Reserve.

In the meantime Simon had been courting Bertha and they were married in 1945. Simon took over the home place and his parents moved to the hamlet. The first years of their marriage were still the horse-and-buggy days, so it was a happy day when Simon and Bertha purchased their first car, a hard-to-start Edson.

To augment their meagre income Simon bought scrap iron, much to the chagrin of his mother who said that in the Netherlands that work was reserved for the lowliest of the Jews. Simon likes telling of the time at the Reitze de Vries place when Reitze was driving a hard bargain over some old scrap, and his little son Jerry said, "Dad, does he have to pay us to clean up our yard?"

Simon had always been keenly interested in trapping and became quite successful at it, even supporting his family by it for several years after the war. He spent his winters trapping and hunting. It was not an uncommon sight in the Tuininga house to find a string, hanging full of frozen animals, tied from one wall to another above the kitchen heater. They had to be thawed out before they could be skinned. No room for squeamish women in those days! One day when Simon was shooting squirrels north of Freemen Lake he was surprised to meet first Mr. and Mrs. Bert Nanninga and then Mr. and Mrs. Charles Baker, all hunting squirrels. He had thought this was a man's domain!

In 1954 Simon started his own trucking and livestock-buying business. He also built a large three-storey barn. On the lower floor he kept hogs and six milk cows. The rest of the barn was used to house three thousand laying hens. At first most of the work of gathering the eggs by hand and then brushing each egg to clean them for the hatcheries fell to Bertha for four or five days per week. She also milked the cows, separated the milk, and cleaned the separator and the milk pails. Fortunately, business soon picked up and some men could be hired to help with these tasks.

Also about this time, the farm was strip-farmed so it could accomodate three hundred breeding ewes. Plans were to gradually switch the entire farming operation to the raising of purebred sheep. When the Government sheep specialist purchased, at top price, all the Tuiningas' ram lambs for breeding purposes, it looked as though they had arrived. Then calamity struck — it was discovered that the prize-winning ram which Simon had purchased at the Calgary Stampede was related to a herd in England that had the dreaded disease scrapies. The Tuiningas had to dispose of all their sheep to the slaughter houses in Edmonton.

For several years Simon and Romke Stel ran the trucking business and the garage at Neerlandia in a successful partnership named Stel-Tuininga. They also had the John Deere dealership which they purchased from Ann Mast. Simon, however, did not like the machinery business so, after several years, the partnership was dissolved. Simon kept the trucking business, and Romke kept the garage end of it. Later Simon sold his trucking business to Case Van Beek and Clifford Tuininga.

In 1961 the Tuiningas expanded by purchasing land eight miles west, and in 1968 they incorporated under the name Lazy S. T. Farms Ltd., named after their brand. In the middle sixties, Lazy S. T. Farms purchased a farm in Bloomsbury and on it built a three-hundred-sow farrowing unit. But in 1971 when Simon learned that he had leukemia he sold it, since his son, Bruce, was too young to manage it. Also in 1971 Simon was nominated by the Social Credit party to run for a seat in the Provincial Government, but his endeavour was not successful.

Simon and Bertha have five children. The eldest, **Sheila Rose** (October 23, 1945), graduated from Dordt College and taught in Thunder Bay, Ontario, where she met Louis Ypma. They were married July 14, 1972, and farm in the Taber area with their five children. **Joanne Mae** (December 23, 1946) married Harry Boessenkool, a banker, on June 21, 1968. They live in Lethbridge with their five children. **Caroline** (October 10, 1949) married Peter Werkman. **Bruce** David (February 24, 1953) married Davida Kuik. **Bernice** Joy (January 1, 1968) married Martin Peters.

Members of the Christian Reformed Church since birth, Simon and Bertha joined the Canadian Reformed Church in 1965 and have both been active in church life, involved with com-

Back: Joanne, Sheila, Carol, Bruce. Front: Bertha, Bernice, Simon, c. 1965

mittees and societies. Simon has served as an elder and has been a delegate to Classis and Synod. Simon and Bertha love to travel and have visited several countries.

Simon Tuininga

HARM VAN DER WOUDE

Harm Van Der Woude was born February 16, 1876, in Niezyl, Groningen, the Netherlands, and went to the U.S.A. in April 1897 on the *Veendam*. He worked in market gardening in Chicago and later moved to Michigan, where he raised potatoes. He made confession of faith in 1910 and a year later he entered Calvin College and Seminary. When he graduated in 1921 he was forty-five years old. He served as a minister first in Cutlerville, Michigan, then accepted a call to be home missionary in Edmonton and Neerlandia and was installed in Edmonton in January 1924.

During the following years Harm became acquainted with the Neerlandia people. He sometimes stayed with the Ingwersens when he was here and Case Ingwersen wrote the following in his memoirs

"His Calvinist preaching was powerful and he stressed the sovereignty of God and free grace. He would fulminate against people that exalted themselves, such as sleepers in church. Then he was no respecter of persons. If it was an elder that was rather sleepy, he would turn toward the consistory's bench and say, 'If you don't stop that I will mention you by name.' His preaching was not methodical, his ingenious spirit would come to expression and he would wander over the platform as if in the clouds

Once he preached about Samson who killed a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. During his spirited speech he stepped off the platform and was suddenly standing among the people. Waving his arms he shouted, 'With a jawbone of an ass here a score (killed),' — then pointing to those on his right, 'There a score,' — and motioning left again, 'with a jawbone of an ass killed a thousand men.'

In the very first years, when he was home missionary for Edmonton and Neerlandia, he sometimes came to Neerlandia for three months at a time. He boarded with the storekeeper and was so enthusiastic about the Neerlandia settlement that he also, even though it was to help someone else out, bought a piece of land and, full of zeal, began to work the land. Carrying an axe on his arm, he would go in clean, white clothes to his property and clear the land. At night he would return, black and with a torn shirt, and [Hermina Ingwersen] would say, 'But *Dominee*, that shouldn't be, surely that isn't work for a *Dominee*?'

'Ach, missus, het gaat toch zoo mooi (Ah, missus, but it goes so nicely),' he would reply. He did not keep the property long but gave it away for a song to someone with less than he had. By nature he was very gentle, which he showed in many ways.

The farmer with whom he stayed had a haystack close to the house. To prevent the hay from becoming completely ruined by the numerous rabbits, the farmer had dug a pit beside the haystack and covered it with sticks and snow so that the rabbits would fall in. During the evening the *Dominee* heard the crying of these animals and said to the [farmer's] sons, 'Come on boys, let's have a look. Oh, how terrible, let's let the poor animals go free again.' and one, two, three all of them were let loose

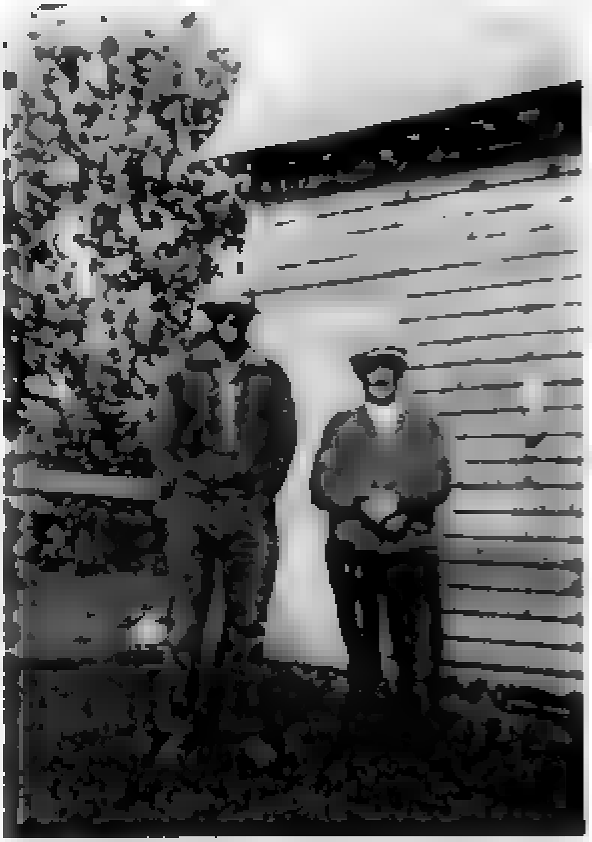
One time, during the winter, the *Dominee* and an elder went on *huisbezoek*. That was by sleigh, of course. Of the team of horses, one was very fast and the other very lazy. Without using the whip, it was impossible to get the lazy horse to trot. But using the whip was against the principles of the *Dominee*. So they went

Harm lived close to the church.

along at a footpace — 'That horse knows better than we [what is best],' said the *Dominee*."

Harm left Edmonton and Neerlandia in 1927 to serve in Hoboken, New Jersey. In 1929 he accepted the call to be full-time minister in Neerlandia. A new parsonage had just been built, so that became Harm's home. He enjoyed living in the country and bought some land across the road from the parsonage. On it he built a barn and a chicken coop. He kept chickens and sold the eggs to buy groceries. On his plot he had a patch of raspberries and he also raised a garden each year. Annie and Jennie Schoonekamp would sometimes help him pick raspberries. Harm would pick the green ones as well as the ripe ones and tell the girls, "I just keep pulling until they come off."

At that time the congregation was relatively small and, since Harm was a bachelor, the whole congregation became his family. He hired the Schoonekamp girls to do the housekeeping for him. First Jennie worked there for three or four years. She was paid fifteen dollars a month and would come every day at 7:30 a.m. She would first make pancakes for breakfast — Harm loved rich, sweet foods and also, being a typical Dutchman, loved potatoes. Besides cleaning house, Jennie would serve a warm meal at noon and also make supper ready for the *Dominee*. After Jennie, Annie did the housekeeping. When Annie married, Harm hired Mrs. Wagelaar of Edmonton. She was a widow with grown children and stayed at the parsonage while she worked there. Mr. McKitrick, a teacher, also boarded at the parsonage while he was teaching in Neerlandia.



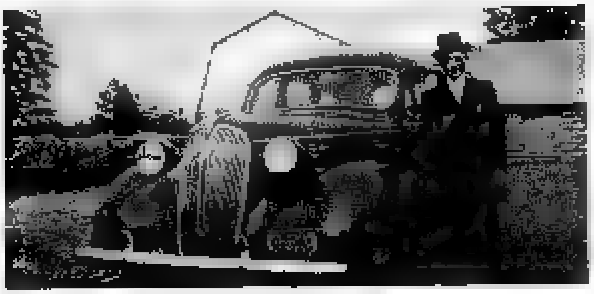
John Wierenga, Harm.

Harm enjoyed smoking sigaren. He would sometimes smoke one as he paced up and down the hallway and kitchen of the parsonage preparing his sermon. He said that he could prepare his sermons in his head. At night, he usually slept with a cap on because his head got cold.

Harm often visited the families living in the Centre. Even though he was known for his "isolationist" views, he was good friends with the Ashleys, who were not members of the church, and gave presents to them on special occasions. Harm also enjoyed visiting the Neerlandia farmers and understood their problems. As well, he often had company over at the parsonage — ministers such as the Revs. Bates and de Kroon would come to visit him.

Soon after coming to Neerlandia Harm bought a used car, an Essex. Many times he drove people of the community to the hospital in Barrhead or in Edmonton. For instance, he took Hingje Bos to Barrhead when she had to have her teeth pulled and also brought Janke

"My barn and chicken coop, Neerlandia."



Harm, 1937

Hiemstra to the hospital when she was sick with pleurisy (1934).

A friend of Rev. Van Der Woude's, Rev. E. Kooistra, who had known him since his student days wrote:

> He was a very ordinary person and deeply serious, with a sober and practical view of life. He was a man of prayer. He stayed away from all modern habits and he disliked it if we were too "city-fied." He appreciated good humour, but never have I heard him gossip or tell "shady stories."
>
> He felt much more at home in Neerlandia with the farmers than with the Amsterdammers, the "city-bred" and the Dutch-American members of Hoboken. He was not forward and had a humble character and easy-going nature. He was a Groninger with most of the good qualities of that people, among them a strong faith, honesty in dealing, uprightness in walk of life, knowledgeable in the Reformed doctrine. However, as a burden to himself and to others, he was too stiff and stubborn in his own chosen way.
>
> He preached what he believed and he believed what he preached. He walked with God, he was a man of prayer, he trusted with childlike simplicity in his Lord and Saviour. He was a good preacher, a faithful servant, and a warm friend. Loneliness, disappointments, and sufferings were his share too, especially the last years of his life.[1]

Harm suffered from diabetes and eventually he had problems with poor circulation in one foot. In February 1940 he informed the Neerlandia consistory that he was sick and would have to leave soon. He received honourable emeritus a year later and left Neerlandia in March 1942. He retired to Illinois, where he had relatives. It became necessary to amputate his leg and he died February 1, 1950, as a result of the operation.

[1] Excerpts taken from an article written in Dutch in the March 14, 1950, issue of *de Wachter*.

JOHN AND SUSAN (ANEMA) VANEE

John (Jan) Lubert Vanee was born April 14, 1903, in the province of Drenthe, the Netherlands. His parents were farmers. When he left school, John first worked on the farm for his father and then as a horse-and-buggy chauffeur for an uncle In 1927 he immigrated to Canada.

John chose Alberta because of an advertisement in the Netherlands offering free farmland in Alberta - and John wanted to farm. After arriving in Canada, John worked for a number of farmers in southern Alberta, learning the English language and familiarizing himself with the country

John Vanee knew only one person in Neerlandia, John Schuring. He came because of this and his dream of being a land owner. In 1931 he filed on NW 28-62-3-5 in the Vega area

With the three thousand dollars he had saved up on working in the oil fields, John purchased the necessary equipment and supplies for the farm and home he also built a barn for his livestock. His livestock — a couple cows, a few pigs, and some chickens came as a wedding gift from his in-laws, John and Froukje Anema. Prices for farm produce were very low at this time The cream check usually paid the grocery bill

In January 1933, John married Susan Anema. Susie had worked in Edmonton and also helped on the Anema farm prior to her marriage

John and Susie, 1932

Just one month after John and Susie were married, as they were heading home after church, they were overtaken by a runaway team of horses. The cutter was upset, and John was trampled by the horses. He was unconscious and taken to the Barrhead hospital. Dr. Verreau took John to Edmonton for examinations. John remained in a coma for a month During this time the livestock were brought to the Anema farm and Susie stayed in Barrhead with John, living with the Pete Bootsma family while John slowly recovered. They were back on the farm by spring. Friends and relatives helped with fencing and other chores while John was recovering. Susie did a lot of outside work too

On June 4, 1934, John and Susie's first child, **Frances**, was born. **Wilma** was born June 23, 1937

The family outing was on Sunday. John and Susie had two bikes. They would each take a child on their back and bike the seven miles one-way to church. They would arrive early enough to go to Susie's parents for coffee, stay for church and maybe even lunch, and then bike back home again

By the year 1939, prices for farm produce began to improve and the Vanees could afford a new house. They also bought a 1930 Model A car, which had a rumble seat in the back. The girls found it delightful in the summer, but very cold in winter

On April 25, 1941, a daughter, **Doreen** Catharina, was born. Three girls, but no boys, to help on the farm

In the fall of 1941, the Vanees nearly lost their new home to fire: the filling of the gas lamp was left until dusk — with a burning coal oil lamp standing nearby. The gas fumes ignited In an instant the back hall was in flames. The fire was extinguished with the evening's milk and water that was stored in a barrel Susie's clothes caught fire and she was badly burned, resulting in a month's stay in the Barrhead hospital. Frances stayed with the Bert Bos family so she could attend school in Vega. Burn treatment consisted of washing with salt water and recovery was slow. Susie's sister Annie stayed with the Vanees during this difficult time, helping inside and out. Susie could not walk unaided for a time

The next few years were more prosperous, but John did not relish farming with only

Wilma, Susie, Doreen, Frances, and John, c. 1944.

daughters He also disliked the cold Alberta winters and wished to seek a climate more like his native country.

In the spring of 1946, John and Susan sold the farm to Ewald Stoik. After selling all their belongings by local auction, they moved to New Westminster, B.C. It was here that their son was born in 1947. John and Susan have retired in North Vancouver; yet their roots are in Neerlandia

Frances Churchill Vanee

PETER AND VICTORIA VAN HOOFDAKKER

Peter van Hoofdakker (c. 1892) had been born in Ijzendoorn, Gelderland, the Netherlands. He took up the NW 15-62-3-5 in April 1927 and moved there with his wife, Victoria (c. 1895), and their two children **Peter** (c. 1923) and **Josephine** (c. 1921).

Peter Sr. had proved up his land by 1934. He had cleared thirty-seven acres, and owned three cattle and four horses. In May 1927 he had built a 14 by 16-foot log house. Later he built a 16 by 14-foot frame granary and a 14 by 26-foot log stable, had dug a 28-foot well, and put up two miles of fencing

The Hoofdakkers were Catholic and not well-accepted by the Neerlandia community. In 1947 they sold their farm and moved to Sylvan Lake. Later they moved to Saskatchewan.

JOHN AND JOHANNA (INGWERSEN) VISSER

John Visser and his younger brother Raymond came to Neerlandia in 1928. Their father had taken up land much earlier, but as he had a good job in Edmonton and Mother Visser was not too interested in farming, the two boys were sent to work the land. They were still quite young — John was 15 and Raymond was 14, but coming from a large family, work was quite natural to them. The location of their land was the SE 3-62-3-5. Their father had built a small shack on the place, so the boys took up baching. During the winter months they would return to Edmonton, until they got some cows and horses and had to stay to feed them

John and Raymond's main task was to clear the land and this kept them busy from morning till night, as there were many trees on their land. Young as they were, they were conscientious workers and those trees steadily came down. During the summer months, one of their sisters would come and keep house for them, sometimes even Mother would stay for a few months. Those were good times for John and Raymond, as they themselves were not very good cooks. When alone, they usually ate bread and rice or, for a change, barley. They soaked the barley in water and added some raisins for flavour. Froukje Anema, who was a close neighbor, baked their bread and did their laundry

By this time the pioneer days were pretty well over, and the Visser boys did not experience the hardships the earlier settlers went through. With the help of their father, they soon acquired some horses and the necessary machinery to work the land. After a few years, they also got some cows, chickens, and pigs. With the addition of animals, their work increased, and now they also had to milk the cows, separate the milk, and feed the pigs, among other chores.

It was not all work for them though. Many evenings were spent with the young people of the community, playing ball or doing some other activity. When John was 18, he became interested in a girl named Johanna Ingwersen, and after a four-year courtship, they were married The wedding was on a Sunday afternoon, October 28, 1934. Rev. Vander Woude tied the knot. The bride was beautifully dressed in a $4.98 dress ordered from Eaton's catalogue Those were the days of the Great Depression, and money was as scarce as hen's teeth Hogs were the only worth a few dollars on the market, and milk and eggs were hardly worth shipping. But on the farm no one went hungry;

there was always plenty of eggs, butter, and cream. Wheat was finely crushed and used for breakfast cereal, or Johanna made it into brown bread.

John, Johanna, July 1, 1933.

After the Depression was over, farming became more progressive Tractors began to replace horses. John kept up with the times, and soon bought a new Oliver 80 tractor. That was quite an improvement. He no longer needed to feed, water, and harness five or six horses. All he had to do was fill the tractor with gas and go to work.

When Raymond married Annie Tuininga in May 1937, he and John divided the land Raymond took the north half and John took the south After a few years, Raymond sold his half to John. In the meantime, John had rented Bill Oldegbers' quarter directly to the south, and a school quarter from the government.

In 1935, a year after John and Johanna were married, they were blessed with the birth of a son. They named him **George**, after Grandfather Visser. He was their only child, since a rare blood condition prevented them from having any more children In 1944, they decided to adopt a baby girl After writing to the adoption agency, they soon received word that a child was available. She was a tiny baby of only five pounds at two weeks of age They named her **Linda.** She brought a big change to their lives, and George, who had ruled the roost for eight years, was not too happy with the turn of events. But Linda soon became part of the family, and John and Johanna were happy they had taken that step.

John, George, Linda, Johanna, c. 1947

John was always active in community affairs, serving terms as a member of the consistory, the store board, and the school board. He always enjoyed these activities, and they added variety to his life on the farm. Johanna kept active at home, spending her days cooking, cleaning, and gardening. Her joy was flowers and Johanna put much time and energy into beautifying their home and farm. Sometimes she would even draft John into helping her transplant shrubs about the place

As George became older he helped with the chores, and when he was 16 he quit school to take a more active part in farming. In 1956, he married Florence Baker. They took up residence in the farmhouse, since John and Johanna had built a new house a few rods farther north. At that time John and George became equal partners and remained so for 20 years.

Meanwhile, Linda finished high school and went to Dordt College, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She married a fellow teacher, Henry Heinen, who is vice-principal in Lethbridge Christian School Henry and Linda live in Picture Butte, Alberta, with their three daughters

As George and Florence's family grew up and took an active part in farming, John decided it was time to leave the farm and did so in 1977. This did not necessarily mean he stopped working. He bought 12 acres of land in the hamlet of Neerlandia, built a house on one plot, and subdivided and sold the rest. He also worked for Plains Western Gas Company obtaining easements. He enjoyed this job as it enabled him to meet many people. Later he became a salesman for Faramor Hog Equipment. Since John's retirement, he and Johanna tend the shrubs and flowers which grace their yard.

Johanna Visser

Calvin, George, Frank, Susanne. Grace, 1949

RAYMOND AND ANNIE (TUININGA) VISSER

Raymond came to Neerlandia in 1928 when he was fourteen years old. He and his brother John made improvements on the SE 3-62-3-5, which had been filed on by their father. The quarter was split up with each brother getting eighty acres.

Summers were spent picking roots and grubbing stumps, sometimes for someone else for one dollar per day. For the first few winters the boys went back to Edmonton, but soon some livestock was purchased and that meant full-time baching in Neerlandia. A few dollars could be made in the winter by skidding logs with a team of horses in the bush. The pay for this was two dollars a day.

In the winter of 1926, Raymond worked at Bill Williams' lumber mill. He sawed lumber on permit and received some lumber in trade for wages. He had enough lumber to build a home for himself and his new bride at the cost of $380.00.

The lucky girl was Annie Tuininga. Her father, Klaas Tuininga, had given her thirty-five dollars to get ready for her marriage to Raymond. With this she purchased her dress for eleven dollars, her shoes for six dollars, and a pretty headband for seventy-five cents from the T. Eaton Company. A gold ring was five dollars and then there was money left for curtains for some of the windows. The rest of the windows had to have flour sack curtains.

Raymond and Annie were married May 2, 1937, in the afternoon church service. There were no frills and there was no honeymoon. It was time to think about spring planting, so the first week they fanned grain with a hand-driven fanning mill. They had no well but gathered rainwater from the roof for the wash. The first summer the rain water was yellowish from the new yellow shingles.

Raymond and Annie's first son, **George Raymond**, was born in the Barrhead hospital on June 10, 1938. Annie was brought there by Ike Nanninga, who had a car. Baby clothes and other laundry were washed on the scrub board. Two years later, June 18, 1940, **Calvin** was born. Many of the babies were still being delivered at home so Raymond and Annie decided Calvin could be too, but it was a breech birth, and Dr. Kickham from Westlock had to come out to the farm to deliver him.

Raymond and Annie had little money so in order to buy a gas-powered washing machine they borrowed from Raymond's sister Lucy. The washer was eighty dollars, but free carbon monoxide fumes came with it. Care had to be taken not to operate it in an enclosed area.

Raymond milked five or six cows, and the weekly cream cheque of $2.50 came very close to paying for the groceries. He also bought his first tractor, a John Deere H, in 1940 for eight hundred dollars. Raymond bought the tractor primarily for breaking land, but it did not have enough power so he traded it with Klaas Wierenga for a Cockshutt with more power.

On May 24, 1942, a third son, **Allen Frank**, was born. One year later Vissers purchased the S½ 20-62-3-5 from Pete den Hartog Jr. for twelve hundred dollars. The two quarters had only fifteen acres of cleared land, but several local men now owned a Caterpillar and dozer, making clearing much easier.

Susanne was born June 14, 1945. She had a birthmark shaped like a V and *Pake* Tuininga said it was V for victory in World War II. The next year Annie had a serious operation on her womb performed by Dr. G. L. Whistle in Immaculata Hospital, Westlock. God was with Annie and her life was spared.

Their second girl, **Grace**, was born August 4, 1948. In 1950 they bought the E½ 8-62-3-5 from Bill Bouwman, who moved to Rocky Mountain House. The purchase price was sixteen thousand dollars, and the land was almost all cleared. They moved in April (1950) to a house with a power plant, running water that did not run (the pipes were frozen), and a real bathtub. What luxury! The yard was landscaped, and there were trees and even raspberry bushes on it. The other place was sold to John Visser.

Raymond and Annie, 1936

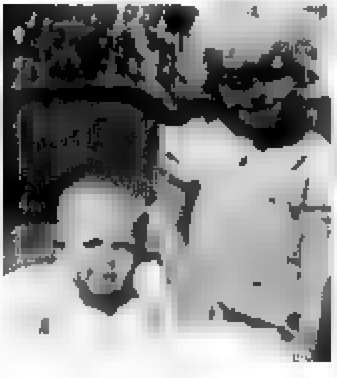
For the first years on the new place, the crop was almost completely dried out, and what was left was hit by hail. There was no hail insurance program either. Grain was bought to keep the animals for the winter, and the money from the pigs went to pay the feed bill. There was no getting ahead those years.

In the summer of 1950, on August 11, **Betty** Jean was born. It was too bad for the hired girl, Sophie de Groot, who was left to can two tubs of green beans when Annie left for the hospital. It turned cold and froze hard that week. Annie was knitting mitts in the hospital, and Dr. W. Kier said, "You'll need them." The year 1950 also brought the first family allowance cheques, so that helped a little to feed six hungry mouths.

Vissers canned hundreds of jars of food for the winter. All the vegetables were canned — green beans, peas, carrots, and sauerkraut being favourites — as well as beef and pork. Then Annie canned wild strawberries, saskatoons, blueberries, rhubarb, and about two hundred jars of raspberries. There was no shortage of work.

In 1955 Raymond bought another two quarters (N½ 17-62-3-5) from **Albert** Tiemstra Sr. Every fall he was expected to make a payment to Albert, and with the last payment Albert brought a bottle over to toast the new owners.

Two more children were born. **Ronald** on December 10, 1953, and **Valery** Anne on February 7, 1955. That made four of each kind — a well-rounded family. By this time (1955) the house had been rewired for Calgary Power, and timesaving appliances such as an electric stove and a refrigerator plus the self-cleaning separator made life much easier. None of the children experienced serious illness — just the minor scrapes and bruises of childhood. The children often played with the neighbouring Strydhorsts, with whom a favourite pastime was swimming in the nearby creek.


Ron and Betty, 1955.

Valerie and Ron, 1956.

One day in 1963 Raymond and Annie were driving near Barrhead when they saw a Beaver Lumber Company pre-fab house. Their old house was too small, and they sure could use a new one. That drive cost Raymond twelve thousand dollars, but he got a lovely new home out of the deal. Annie was very happy with the new house and all the room

Meanwhile the children were growing up and leaving home George went into radio telecommunications, working mostly in airports until his health forced him to quit Calvin bought land in Vega (W½ 9-63-3-5) in 1972 but left later for Victoria, B C. Here he became an apprentice carpenter and also met his future bride, **Rita Schalkwyk** Rita was born Hendrika Johanna on February 12, 1956, in Krimpen aan de Lek, the Netherlands. Her father is a minister and immigrated with his family in 1958 to Vancouver Island. Rita had attended Geneva College near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U S.A., and taught in Victoria for one year. Calvin swept her off her feet and they were married August 13, 1978

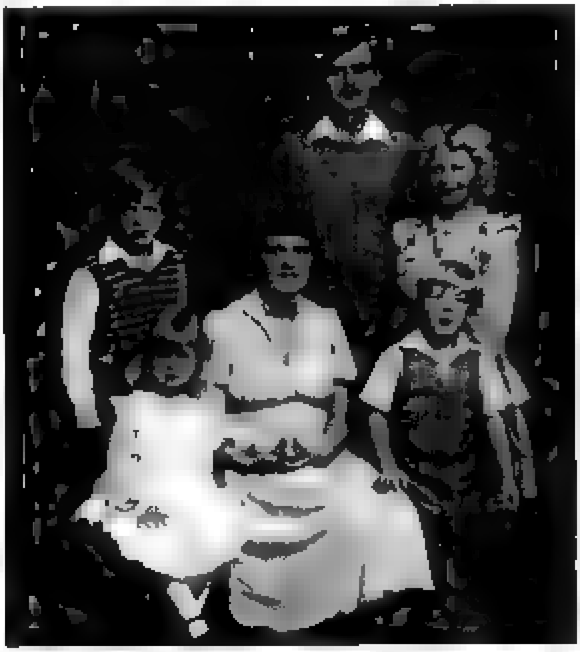
Calvin and Rita moved to Vega in April 1979 They have three children. **Matthias** Ryan (June 14, 1979), **Hannah** Joy (December 19, 1980) and **Hilary** Hope (January 9, 1983). Calvin operates Calvin R. Visser Construction as a contractor, rents his land out, and has some livestock. He loves hunting. Rita is involved with La Leche League in Barrhead and also loves to read and sew. On the side they raise Balinese purebred cats

Frank spent many winters working in lumber mills in the area and farming in the summer. He got the N½ 17-62-3-5 from his parents and put his money back into his land for brushing and breaking. He now farms full-time and lives in a trailer. Susanne took a RNA course and worked in Barrhead and later in Lethbridge. In Lethbridge she met Luke Hummel and married him in 1967. They live in Nobleford and have three daughters and a son.

Grace also went into nursing, working in Barrhead and Edmonton, and then in London, Ontario. She married Robert Docherty in 1975, and they live in Windsor, Ontario. They have three boys. Betty worked in Edmonton keeping records in a medical centre. She married Ed Reus in 1973. Betty and Ed live in Millwoods and have two girls.

Ron met **Sally Clark** while attending the Barrhead high school. Sally had been born in Rocky Mountain House on July 6, 1955. Her father was a game warden with Alberta Fish and Wildlife in Barrhead While Ron was working for Barr Construction, Sally was working as

Back. Calvin, Rita. Front. Hannah, Hilary, Matthias, 1983.



Back. Greg, Ron, Raye. Front. Pam, Sally, Neil, 1984.

waitress at Trail Esso (now Pelletier). They were married June 1, 1973, and moved to a trailer on the home farm. Ron began farming with his father, and together they built a farrowing barn for hogs. The chicken barn built six years earlier was converted into a hog barn. Ron and Sally continue to farm on NE 8-62-3-5. Their children are **Raya** Dawn (June 5, 1974), **Gregory** Dale (January 26, 1976), **Neil** Patrick (May 19, 1979) and **Pamela** Megan (February 5, 1982). Ron enjoys hockey and plays for the Neerlandia Homesteaders. Sally enjoys sewing, reading, and visiting.

Valery followed in her sisters' footsteps and went into nursing. She worked at Vegreville, Coaldale, and Westlock. She married Garry Message in 1980, and they live on a farm in Pickardville with their one son. Valery continues to work at Immaculata Hospital in Westlock.

In 1977 Raymond and Annie moved to Barrhead. Since then Raymond has worked as custodian for Barrhead United Church and at other odd jobs. He often drives to Neerlandia to assist his sons. Annie worked for Preventive Social Services for five years. She no longer works out but remains active in swimming and art classes, and sings in the Blue Heron Choir. The Vissers attend the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church and are happy to be healthy, useful citizens.

Annie Visser

ANDRIES AND HENDRIKA (WERKMAN) WIERENGA

Andries Wierenga (May 26, 1883) and Hendrika Werkman (April 4, 1882) were married May 12, 1906, in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, where they had both been born. Andries was a foreman of farm labourers. Besides working himself, he was paid for each worker he had. The family also operated a store in their house; Hendrika did the clerking. They were doing well financially, but for their twelve children the prospects for future advancement were dim.

Then some agents came from the U.S.A. and Canada. Alje Vanderlaan, a rich American businessman, first swayed Andries by showing him all his money and telling him that the U.S.A. was a good place to get it. Then in the winter of 1927 Bill van Ark came. He was a Canadian agent (and former Neerlandia resident), and Andries organized a meeting for those who were interested in hearing him. They were told that there would be jobs and houses ready upon arrival in Canada.

Andries decided to immigrate. Hendrika

Andries, Hendrik, and Lammert Wierenga families on the Rijndam, 1928.

preferred not to leave but did not have much say about it. Their oldest son, **Herman** (April 14, 1907), had immigrated to the U.S.A. in 1927, and that is where the family hoped to go. But immigration to the States was restricted, so they settled for Canada. Andries' brothers Lammert and Hendrik also decided to immigrate to Canada with their families.

In preparation for the trip Andries and his son **Klaas** (April 24, 1908) took English lessons, but Hendrika refused and never did learn to speak English. Andries paid cash for his family's fare — six thousand *gulden* for eleven children, Hendrika and himself, their clothing, and some furniture. On March 28, 1928, they left Uithuizen. When they were ready to board the *Ryndam* they were told that the boat was very full and the only places left were in first class. Everyone was astonished at the good food they received aboard, it was different than the Dutch "meat and potatoes" they were used to. But Hendrika and many of the children could not enjoy anything since they were terribly seasick. They arrived in Halifax on April 7. From there they took the train west, arriving in Edmonton on April 12. They had expected to go to Camrose, but were told they had to go to Tofield. Hendrika was disappointed and was sure that "we just threw our money into the sea." On April 15 they arrived in Tofield, a small settlement with only a few houses. Nothing had been arranged as was promised, so they had to live in the train for two weeks. After Andries found work with a farmer they were given a house to live in.

Just landed, 1928. Back: Albertje, Tenne, Hendrika, Andries, Klaas, John. Front: Ben, Lambert, Gladys, Henry, Joe, Sophie, Jenny.

During that time Rev. Selles was the travelling pastor for immigrants. He advised them to go to Neerlandia since a Dutch settlement had been established there. Acting on that advice Andries, his son Klaas, and his nephew Ite decided to have a look. In October 1928 they arrived at the Siebren Tiemstra home. They were somewhat shocked by the primitive conditions compared to their home in the Netherlands, but when Siebren showed them the cellar where provisions for the winter months were stored, new hope arose.

Siebren took them around and showed them which homesteads were still available. They decided to move to Neerlandia, although people in Tofield tried to discourage them by telling of the very wet land and poor conditions in Neerlandia.

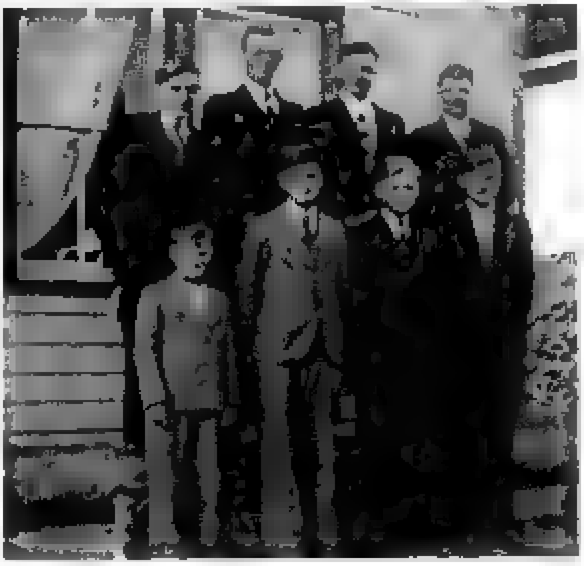
Besides taking up a homestead (SE 12-62-3-5) in 1928, Andries bought the NW 26-61-3-5 for six hundred dollars from John Terpsma. It had sixty acres cleared and a 24 by 30-foot log house on it. The remainder of the family arrived on December 6, 1928, except for two older daughters, Albertje (April 22, 1909) and **Trientje** (March 28, 1910), who had found employment in Edmonton.

One of the first times Andries and his brother Lammert were in the Neerlandia Co-op, they were mistaken for Italians. Melle Elzinga went home and told his family about the Italians he had seen, so two of his sisters promptly went to have a look at the strangers.

For Hendrika, the conditions in Neerlandia were quite different from what they were used to. They were plagued by bedbugs and when the warm weather came the mosquitoes were intolerable. Hendrika put newspapers around her legs under her stockings to keep from being bitten. Another son, **Martin**, was born May 28, 1929. A son, **John** (Jan, December 9, 1913), drowned in the Athabasca River on August 11, 1937, while on an outing with a Young People's group. His body was found a number of weeks later in a log jam at Chisholm. One day in April 1939 **Gladys** (Klazina, October 24, 1918) was cooking when the stove exploded. She was severely burned and the house was destroyed. Gladys died in the hospital six months later (October 26, 1939).

Ben (Berend, July 2, 1912) had taken out the NE 26-61-3-5 as a homestead in 1931. In 1941 Andries bought the N½ 22-61-3-5 for his son

Back: Albertje, Hendrika, Tenie. Front: Jenny holding Rita Sonnema, Sophie, Gladys, 1938.



Back: Ben, Klaas, Herman, Andries. Front: Martin, Joe, Henry, Lambert, 1938.

Herman, who was planning to move to Neerlandia. He later obtained the N½ and SW 23-61-3-5 to help his sons begin farming.

Andries served in consistory and also on the school and store boards. In 1950 Andries and Hendrika retired to Edmonton. The brothers, except Ben who also moved to Edmonton, farmed seven quarters cooperatively. Andries passed away April 29, 1952, due to cancer. Hendrika passed away August 26, 1955.

Klaas farmed for a number of years in Neerlandia, then moved to Lacombe to farm. He married Grace Swaaneteld, and they have a family of ten children. Albertje married George Sonnema of Edmonton, and Trientje married Gerben Tiemstra. Ben is living in Neerlandia with his sister, **Sophie** (Siepke, November 19, 1916), and her husband, Joe Tuininga. **Jennie** (Jantje, February 2, 1915) lives in Edmonton with her husband, John Olthuis. **Lambert** (May 1, 1920) married Elizabeth Bos and moved onto the homeplace. **Henry** (Hendrik, November 24, 1921) married Rubie Wiegers. **Joe** (Johannes, October 23, 1922) married Hilda Peters, daughter of John and Elizabeth. Martin and his wife, Wilma Visser of Edmonton, moved onto the NW 23-61-3-5.

Wilma Wierenga

CLARENCE AND HELEN (EMMERZAEL) WIERENGA

Clarence (Klaas) Wierenga came to Tofield with his parents in 1928, but when they moved to Neerlandia Clarence went to Edmonton. The Tofield butcher for whom he had been working helped him get a job in Burns packing plant. After two years there, Clarence went to Neerlandia where he filed on the NE 7-62-3-5 in July 1931.

On June 11, 1942, Clarence married Helen Emmerzael. They lived in the one-room shack

Clarence breaking in the late 1930s.

that had been Clarence's home, but pulled a granary close to it to serve as a bedroom. At that time the road ended at Clarence's farm — only a path trailed through to the farms west of them. Although Clarence had a Model A coupe, the Wierengas had to make their honeymoon trip to the farm with horse and wagon because rain had made the road, which was full of holes, impassable for a car. That summer the Wierenga's housing was improved when they bought the William Dieleman house and moved it to the farm. To this two-room house Clarence added a lean-to kitchen and pantry.

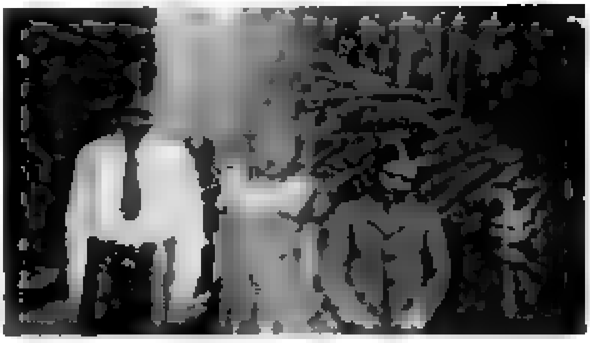
During the 1940s Clarence bought a six-volt generator to provide electricity. Later he upgraded the system by buying bigger generators and a wind-charger.

Clarence began well-drilling to supplement his farm income. He bought a rig from William Olthuis in 1943. For the next twenty-five years he drilled many wells. The two wells that meant the most to Clarence were the ones he drilled for Home Oil and Clarence Mast. In 1958 Carl Mast, who operated the telephone switchboard, came with a message that Home Oil wanted Clarence to drill a water well in Swan Hills. Clarence took the job and drilled the well for them. It always amused him that a company that was in the drilling business was unable to drill a simple water well. Turning the tables on them, Clarence drilled a well that produced gas. He was drilling for Clarence Mast and was down about four hundred feet but had not struck water. Thinking it was a dry well he let it sit for a couple of months. Finally he decided that he might as well pull up the rods. When he got about a hundred feet of rods out, the well blew. Water and natural gas spouted sixty feet in the air. Sad to say, after about six weeks the well stopped flowing. Clarence put in a cylinder and rods as in other wells.

Clarence did custom breaking with a steel-wheeled tractor. Helen helped on the farm and, on June 1, 1949, she also took up a homestead, the NW 2-62-4-5.

Six children were born to the Wierengas: **Henry** William, February 14, 1943; **Marjorie** Johanna, January 16, 1944, **Arthur** John, January 22, 1945, **Frankie**, December 22, 1945, **Leonard** Joseph, August 20, 1948; and **Carolyn** Hilda, April 3, 1952. Frankie was born one month premature; he had an open spine and lived only forty-four hours. Carolyn was also

Marjorie, Clarence, Henry, c. 1947



Henry, Marjorie, Art, Leo, 1954

Helen (seated) visiting Carolyn in Calgary hospital, 1957 born physically handicapped and lived in the Red Cross Crippled Children's Hospital in Calgary from 1954 to 1964. Then she went to the Glenrose School Hospital in Edmonton. While there she graduated from high school.

When Henry started school there was no bus service but since Clarence went out drilling every day he could take him to school. He made an arrangement with Reitze De Vries and Jake Schuurman, who also had school-age children, that he would take their children along if they would pick them up after school. This was done until the first school bus, a one-ton truck, took over the job.

The children are grown now. Henry married Lena Ribar. Marjorie married John De Kam on May 13, 1963. Three children were born to them but their oldest son, Randy, was killed in a traffic accident in 1975. The following year they adopted a seven-month-old baby. They live on a farm near Barrhead. Arthur married Dorothy Walsh. They have three children but the marriage ended in divorce. On August 20, 1982, he married Yvonne La Bonte. They live with her two children on a farm in Bloomsbury. Leo's home is in Westlock, but he has worked in the Arctic since 1974. Carolyn now lives on her own in Edmonton and prepares floral arrangements for various occasions.

In the spring of 1964, Clarence was diagnosed as suffering from cancer and died August 1, 1975. After his death Helen worked and lived in Barrhead for a few years but then moved back to the farm.

Helen Wierenga

HENDRIK AND HILJE (PETERS) WIERENGA

Hendrik Wierenga (January 26, 1886) and Hilje Peters (May 14, 1889) were married in May 1911. They lived in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, and seven children were born to them there: **Clarence** (Klaas, February 26, 1912), **Tenie** (Trientje, April 26, 1913), **Kay** (Katrien, December 16, 1914), **John** (Jan, June 6, 1916), **Sophie** (Siepke, September 17, 1917); **Joe** (Johannes, May 29, 1921), and **Lambert** (May 11, 1924).

Owning only a small place in the Netherlands along with a few pigs, cows, chickens, and ducks, the dream of owning more land and having more freedom was very appealing to Hendrik and his two brothers, Lammert and Andries. They had heard about Canada, the land flowing with milk and honey. With great expectations, in the spring of 1928, the three families set sail for Canada on the *Ryndam*, not knowing what was in store for them and what obstacles would have to be overcome before their dream would be a reality.

During the voyage, Hendrik was seasick most of the time. For the Wierenga children, though, the trip was an adventure. They used to wander over the decks and investigate the many interesting things on the ship. One day two of the cousins discovered a big bathtub, something they had never seen before. They had a great time in the tub until they were discovered. There were dances on board the ship, but being good *Gereformeerde* folk, none of the Wierengas were allowed to watch.

During the train trip, Hilje usually sat with her sister-in-law Hendrika. As they looked out, Hendrika would say, "Look at those old *huten* (huts) and that's what we will have to live in." The immigration agents had shown them photos of nice farm homes, not of log houses. Both women were discouraged. The families had taken sausages and bread along to eat on the train. They eventually landed in Tofield, Alberta, where they stayed in the train for three weeks before a place was found to live in. Hendrik and his family moved in with Lammert's family in a house called Tofield House, but it was crowded, so Hendrik soon found another house. It was divided in two and Anne and Haitena Elgersma lived in the other half with their two sons.

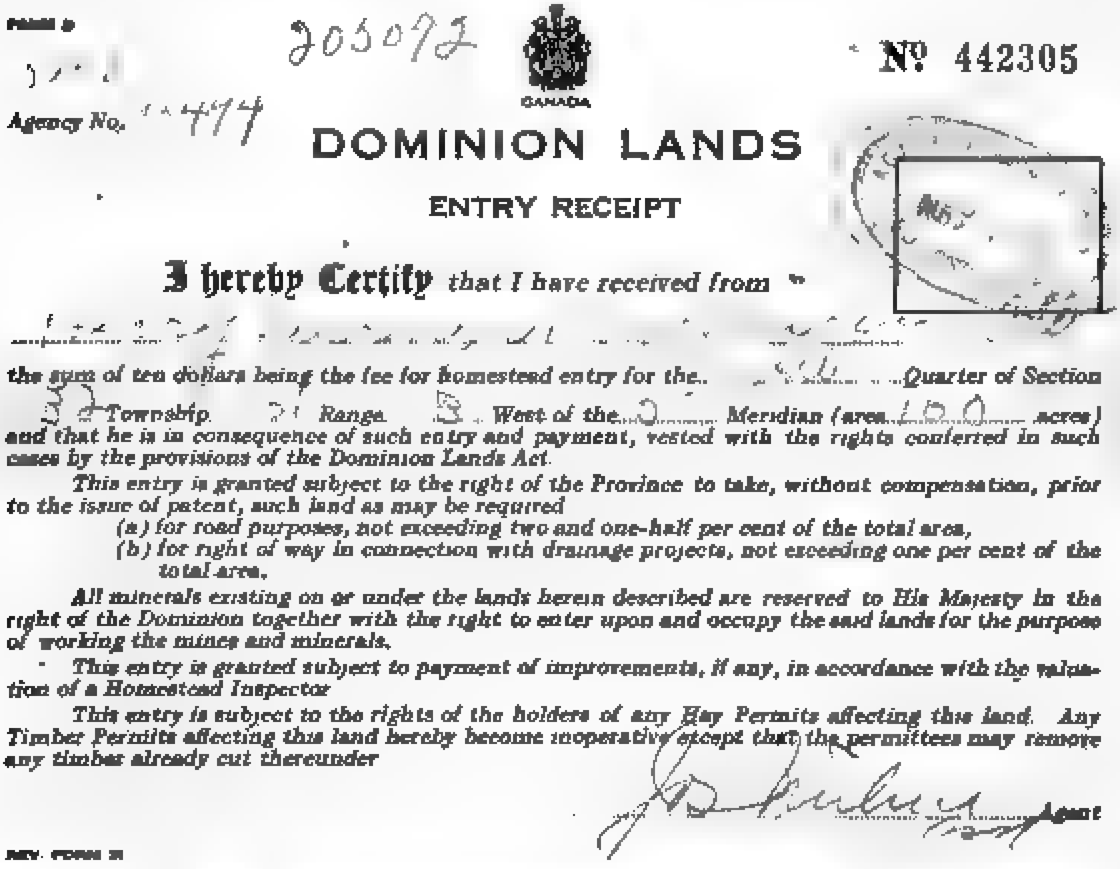
Back: Klaas, Tena, Hendrik, Hilje, Kay. Front: Sophie, John, Lambert, Joe. 1928.

Hendrik found work with farmers in the area. Tenie and Kay managed to find jobs for about ten dollars per month. The language barrier made it difficult for them and also meant less pay, since those who could speak English made fifteen dollars per month. Hilje had difficulties taking on new tasks as well as household duties. While chopping wood using a double-edged axe, she swung it back too far and struck herself on the head, causing a deep cut. The neighbours patched it up for her so she saw no need to go to a doctor.

After the Wierengas had lived in Tofield for six months Rev. Selles, a visiting preacher from Edmonton, told them of the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia and encouraged them to move there. With new hope the family boarded the train for Barrhead. (Their son Clarence moved to Edmonton.) Upon their arrival in Neerlandia, they set up temporary residence in an old store building on the Kampnar place. The family became part of the Neerlandia community and attended the Christian Reformed Church. Hendrik took up a homestead (SW 32-61-3-5) and, while the family lived in the old store building, built a small lumber house on the homestead. Hendrik easily lost his sense of direction, so instead of going cross-country, he walked along the creek from Kampnar's to the homestead to ensure he would not get lost.

Times were tough. Hendrik cleared land for others to make money for groceries. He and Hilje made their own cheese and also their own coffee by roasting peas or grain. In their lunch buckets, the children would get brown bread spread with lard and some salt and pepper added. When the Siebren Tiemstras butchered a hog, they would give Hendrik the head and Hilje would make head cheese, which was a treat. When Hendrik worked on a threshing crew, he would sometimes bring his apple home and divide it among the four youngest children. The family lived frugally, but there was always enough to eat. Often, though, the children would not have adequate footwear during the winter. Albert Mast often gave the family a ride to church on his democrat, since they had no way of getting to church at first.

After about one-and-a-half years, the family



205092

№ 442305

Agency No. 477

CANADA

DOMINION LANDS

ENTRY RECEIPT

I hereby Certify *that I have received from* [illegible]

the sum of ten dollars being the fee for homestead entry for the [illegible] *Quarter of Section* 32 *Township* 61 *Range* 3 *West of the* 5 *Meridian (area* 160 *acres) and that he is in consequence of such entry and payment, vested with the rights conferred in such cases by the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act.*

This entry is granted subject to the right of the Province to take, without compensation, prior to the issue of patent, such land as may be required

(a) for road purposes, not exceeding two and one-half per cent of the total area,

(b) for right of way in connection with drainage projects, not exceeding one per cent of the total area.

All minerals existing on or under the lands herein described are reserved to His Majesty in the right of the Dominion together with the right to enter upon and occupy the said lands for the purpose of working the mines and minerals.

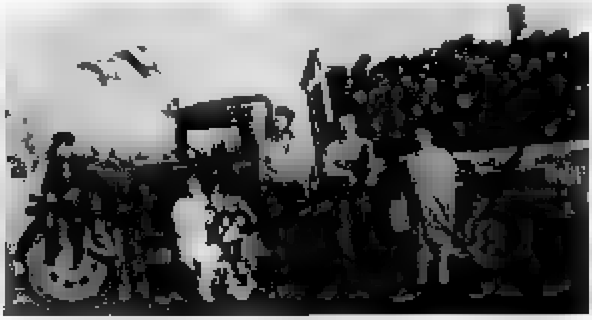
This entry is granted subject to payment of improvements, if any, in accordance with the valuation of a Homestead Inspector.

This entry is subject to the rights of the holders of any Hay Permits affecting this land. Any Timber Permits affecting this land hereby become inoperative except that the permittees may remove any timber already cut thereunder.

Agent

moved into their house on the homestead. At first drinking water was taken from the creek but later several wells were dug using a shovel. One well was dug around seventy feet deep. The dirt was lifted out with a rope and pail. Hendrik had a narrow escape while digging one well when the rope broke while the boys were lifting the pail out of the well and a full pail of dirt fell, just missing him. Another time he returned to continue digging a well and after jumping in, discovered that a porcupine had found its way into the hole but had not found its way out. He was not sure if it would have been worse to encounter a live porcupine or a dead one, as the stench was almost unbearable.

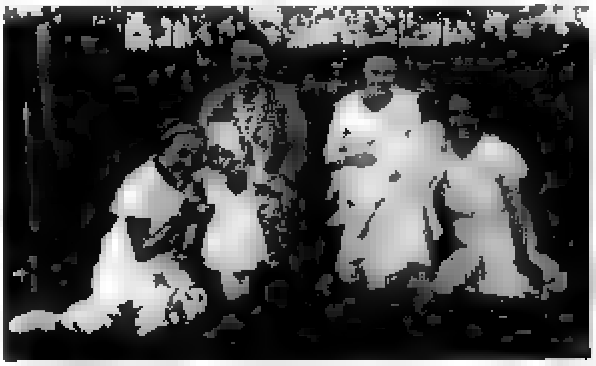
One time while clearing land Hendrik had an accident. He had been climbing up the trees with a large chain which he wrapped around each tree in order for a team of horses to pull it over (after cleaning the dirt away and chopping the roots). While climbing one tree he slipped and fell. The chain and the fall broke several of his ribs and injured his shoulder. He managed to walk home despite the pain, and did not think it warranted a trip to the doctor. Many of the trees that were cleared were used to make fenceposts which were not only used for fencing but were also traded for secondhand machinery brought by a trucker from Calihoo.



Trading fenceposts for machinery. Lambert, Hendrik, Tenie, Sophie, Johanna, John, Hilje, c. 1937

A quarter mile of corduroy road was built over a stretch of muskeg between the Wierenga homestead and the Centre. Hendrik cut and laid the roadbed of logs and, through councillor Joe Holwerda's influence, the M.D. of Shoal Creek supplied the dirt to finish the road.

Tenie married Albert Tiemstra in 1931. Also in 1931, Sophie began working for the Koning family, which she continued to do for about four years. Around that time, Hendrik took the contract to clean the two-room school. He would have to chop the wood and bring it in. Sophie helped clean, since she was staying at Konings'. Some of the money was used to pay off taxes. Hendrik worked as janitor until 1936. Kay had married Dick Fisher in 1935, and Sophie married John Molodowich in 1938.



Sophie, Johanna, Hilje, Kay holding Bill, Tena, 1936

Joe, John, Lambert standing, c. 1936

Hendrik made many of his own tools which he needed such as punches, chisels, and wood planes. He was very athletic and, even though he was short and stocky, could outrun many a younger man.

Hilje was always busy scrubbing and cleaning, as well as mending and patching clothes. For meals, she would cook up big pots full of soup or potatoes. After the morning service on Sunday, some of the Lammert Wierenga family often came over since it was quite far for them to go home between services. They would have dinner at Hendrik and Hilje's and then they all would go to church in the afternoon. Another daughter, **Johanna**, was born December 14, 1934

Hendrik worked out to obtain some livestock, usually paying for the animals by clearing land for others. When he got a horse he made his own harness, but did not put any breeches on it As a result, if he was in the cutter and pulled, the cutter would pull up against the horse's heels. The cutter was also homemade. Hendrik had made a removable cutter box so it could be taken off the sleigh during the week when the sleigh was needed for other things. The cutter box sat in a frame on the sleigh

One winter day, when Hendrik was coming from the store with the horse and cutter, he realized that they were going at too fast a pace to make the bend that went south in the road just before Menne Nanninga's So he pulled on the reins to slow the horse, but the more he pulled the faster his horse went. They went around the bend at such a clip that the box came right off the sleigh and Hendrik was under it. When he came from under the box, the horse and sleigh were out of sight. After that, Hendrik bolted the cutter box to the sleigh

Once Hendrik was bringing a boar home in a wagon box with boards across it to keep the boar in. Hendrik rode on the wagon too. But soon the boar was pushing the boards up with his snout and it appeared he would not stay in for long So Hendrik figured he would fix that boar and sat on top of the boards to keep him in. But to no avail — within a short time Hendrik was flying through the air and landed on the roadway. The boar soon followed. Another time, Hendrik had to fight off an angry sow She attacked him while he was in the field and, to keep her away, Hendrik had to hit her with her piglets — she finally backed off, but by that time all her piglets were dead

Lambert, Joe. Bert Nannings, Johanna, John Molodowich Jr. with the moose Daisy c 1945

In 1942 the Wierengas became the proud owners of a newborn moose calf, whom they named Daisy. Daisy became a real pet for everyone, especially Joe and Lambert She soon graduated from the milk bottle to the milk pail and would often cry for her milk. She loved to follow the family around the yard, nuzzling them affectionately On one occasion the dog nipped Daisy in the heel while she was following Hendrik during chore time. She nearly cleared Hendrik, but one hoof clipped him on the head, knocking him flat to the ground Just to try Hilje's temperament, Daisy would often walk up to the kitchen windows, licking them all over as she looked in. She also loved to help herself to the cabbage patch, taking a nip out of each cabbage When she was not making a nuisance of herself, one of her favourite pastimes was walking along the furrow behind the plow

"The Brotherhood." John, Lambert, Joe, 1945.

About 1940 a large stucco house had been built In 1947 Joe married Grace Tuininga and John married Agnes Zwaaneveld Lambert married Sophie Anema in 1949, and took over the family farm. At that time Hendrik retired so he, Hilje, and Johanna moved into a house which they had purchased at the Centre. Johanna later married John Kostelijk. Hendrik passed away March 22, 1954, at 68 years of age from a heart attack. Hilje moved into the Barrhead Nursing Home in 1974 and passed away September 17, 1975, at 86 years of age.

Lambert Wierenga

HERMAN AND HARRIET (WESTRA) WIERENGA

Herman and Harriet Wierenga lived in Neerlandia for a short happy eight years. They moved to the area in 1942 from Randolph, Wisconsin, where Harriet, born April 10, 1916, was raised. In 1934 she married Herman, who was originally from the Netherlands.

It was not easy to leave Wisconsin with three young children, but they were motivated by Herman's parents, Andries and Hendrika Wierenga, who farmed in Neerlandia. Herman and Harriet had been renting a farm in Wisconsin and were confident they would have a better chance of owning land in northern Alberta.

Herman and Harriet arrived in Neerlandia with their children **Dixie** (Edigna, August 27, 1935), **Andrew** John (December 2, 1937), and **Gladys** Hendrena (August 10, 1940). They lived on Herman's father's farm until March 1943 even though they had their own little home on the property — a cedar-sided house they had bought near Barrhead and had moved on skids to the farm.

Harriet, Dixie, Andrew, Herman, Gladys in front, c. 1940.

Like most people in those days, they managed to get by without electricity or running water, cooking their meals on a wood stove. It was different from what Harriet had been used to in Wisconsin, but that did not worry her too much. She was young, had her little family about her and, because she believed things would get better, was ready to put up with anything.

The land Herman bought in March 1943 was known as the Wilson farm (NE 22-61-3-5). The Wilsons had a telephone, which the Wierengas were quite happy to take over as it was a luxury few country people enjoyed.

The Wierenga's fourth child, **Peter**, was born December 31, 1945. Since Barrhead was without a doctor for a while that year, he was born in the Westlock hospital.

The Wierenga children were happy and healthy in Neerlandia although their daughter remembers the school as being so cold that the frost stayed on the inside walls throughout the school day. The children wore heavy ski pants which they had to keep on all day.

Women had little chance to participate in activities outside the home; they were just too busy. Harriet remembers all the canning she did — a tremendous amount. She canned hundreds of quarts of beans from their garden as well as fruit from B.C. All of that work was done on a wood stove! The only thing Harriet was unable to learn was splitting wood, even though all the other women seemed able to do it.

With the increasing flow of immigration from the Netherlands, Herman became involved in the work of finding new homes for immigrant families. In 1948 he started working for the Immigration Society of Canada, which was sponsored by the Christian Reformed Church. He tried to keep up with his work on the farm as well, but eventually found it impossible to manage both.

Although the Wierengas enjoyed life on the farm, Herman sold the farm to his parents in September 1949 and he and his family moved to Edmonton. In the years following, they bought a house there and had two more children. Herman worked hard for the Immigration Society, believing that in this way he could make his contribution to society.

It was in the course of his work that God took Herman from this life. On July 3, 1954, he

was returning to Edmonton with an immigrant family to whom he had been showing a farm near Camrose when he had a head-on collision at Nisku, near Edmonton. Herman was killed, along with three of his four passengers — a young mother and her two children. The driver of the other car died too.

Harriet tried to carry on as well as she could and, with the help of the Christian community, raised their six children. But there was a further trial awaiting the family. On August 11, 1963, a head-on collision on a dusty road north of Neerlandia took the lives of Harriet's daughter Gladys and son Andrew and Andrew's wife, Carolyn. The only survivor was Gladys' fiancé, Jerry Joldersma. The two couples had been driving in the area on their way to visit relatives. Andrew and Carolyn left behind a two-year old son, Mark, who was not with them. In 1974, Harriet moved into an apartment in St. John's Parish Hall, where she works as a housekeeper for a priest.

Harriet Wierenga

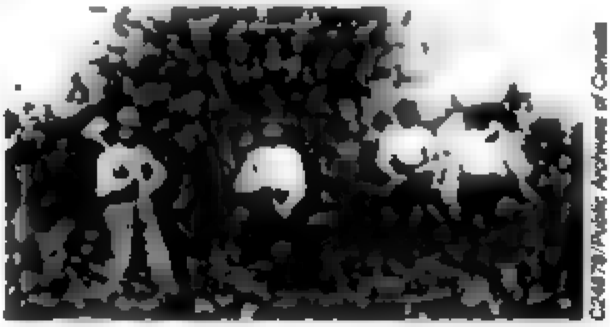
LAMMERT AND HENDERTJE (OOSTERHEERT) WIERENGA

Lammert (March 7, 1875) and Hendertje (June 25, 1879) lived in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, with their family of fifteen children. Lammert was a farmhand, and even though he got the hardest jobs and highest pay, it was not enough to keep such a large family clothed and well fed. As the older children grew up they began working and bringing money home too. In 1928 some CPR agents from Canada held a meeting in Uithuizen. Their talk was smooth and silky: in Canada one could eat meat everyday — as much as one wished, there would be work available for the men and girls, and there would be houses ready to move into. Lammert was uncertain about emigrating, but his brother Andries wanted him to come with them and offered to lend him some of the money for the trip. The *burgemeester* offered to lend money as well. So a decision was made. It was not made lightly, but with prayer for the Lord's guidance.

Back: Jantsen, Catherine, Sophie, Klaas, Hendrik, Grace, Ike, Trientje, Johanna. Front: Jenny, Lammert holding Hennie, Elda, Andrew, Hendertje holding Elie, Bertha, c. 1925

Lammert and Hendertje sold their house and furniture, and packed their personal belongings into big boxes for the trip to Canada. When they left from the station in Uithuizen, the *burgemeester* and many others came to say farewell to the large group of about seven families that were leaving Uithuizen. Lammert and Hendertje said goodbye to their sons Klaas (1905) and Hendrik (1906), who were staying behind and whom they did not expect to see again. After all, the agents had said, "You are burning your ships behind you. You'll never get back!"

At Rotterdam Lammert and Hendertje and thirteen children boarded the *Rijndam*. After nine days they landed in Halifax, where they boarded the train. They were headed for Camrose, Alberta, where jobs and houses were supposed to be waiting. The train was dirty, slow, and noisy and had no beds! At the stop in Winnipeg they were told that things had changed — they were going to Tofield instead of Camrose. On April 12 they arrived in Tofield where they were welcomed by cold weather and snow on the ground. There were no houses ready for them either, so they had to live in the train car for a few weeks. When **Ite** (August 9, 1903) got double pneumonia, the family was moved to Tofield House, where a private nurse came to look after him. Some farmers from the area came and offered jobs to the men, so Ite and Andries found work there. **Ekke** (March 17, 1915) and **Andrew** (Andreas, January 2, 1917) found light work in a coal mine. **Trientje** (March 29, 1902), **Grace** (Grietje, August 19, 1907), **Sophie** (Siepke, February 1, 1909), **Catherina** (Catrien, April 12, 1910), **Jantien** (August 14, 1911), and **Johanna** (February 26, 1913) soon found work housekeeping.


C24878/Public Archives of Canada

Martin Benninga, Andries Wierenga, Ite, Lammert clearing land in Tofield

Sometime later Rev. Selles of the Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton came to visit the new immigrants and held services in the Tofield House. He told them about the Dutch settlement in Neerlandia. In the fall of 1928 the Wierenga men went to Neerlandia and took up homesteads. Lammert took up the NW 12-62-3-5 in November 1928. That winter Hendertje and the smaller children stayed in a rented house in Edmonton, and the older girls went to the prairies (Nobleford and Granum) to work for Dutch farmwives who wanted Dutch girls to help. The girls made twenty to twenty-five dollars a month — a good wage for that time. Ite worked on a dairy farm in Edmonton.

Lammert and Ekke worked on the homestead and built a log house. One day when they were clearing, Lammert was scraping dirt off some roots with a shovel and Ekke was chopping the roots with his axe. Somehow they got too close, and Lammert's hand was cut. They first went to Henry Kippers' house. There they found Lammert's brother Andries — with a bandaged hand. One of his sons, too, had accidentally cut him with an axe and Andries had made a visit to Dr. Verreau in Barrhead. Lammert also had to go to Dr. Verreau to have his hand bandaged, but he had to stay in the Barrhead hospital for nine days.

When the log house was ready in the summer of 1929 Hendertje and the children came from Edmonton. Hendertje did not mind the homesteading life and never complained about the conditions. She fixed up the log house so it was cozy, and it kept the family warm. Klaas Tuininga Jr. saw Wierengas when they first arrived and was sure, after seeing their dark colouring, that some Frenchmen had moved into the area. Hendertje always told the children that they had descended from an Indian princess.

Soon after Lammert came to Neerlandia Henry Kippers gave him a piglet. After feeding it Lammert sold it for thirty-nine dollars. Then the Depression came, and market hogs sold for only three dollars. The girls, though, sent all their money home, and that helped to buy horses, cows, and things that were needed on the homestead. Ite also moved to the homestead to help with the work. All the clearing on the quarter was done by hand. Ite took out the NE 12-62-3-5 in 1930. Three years after coming to Canada Lammert had paid back all the money which had been borrowed for the trip. The older Wierenga girls soon married. Grace to Oene Piers in 1931, Trientje to Klaas Tuininga Jr. and Sophie to Henry Kippers Jr. in 1932, Catherina to Joe Holwerda in 1934; and Jantien to Nick Vriend

In the early forties a lumber house was built on the homestead. Hendertje died December 14, 1943 During the forties more of the Wierenga children married. Johanna married Joshua Rowaan in January 1941. In 1943 **Jennie** (Jantje, April 1, 1918) married Andy Elzinga, and **Elie** (Ieltje) Margaretha (July 4, 1924) married Norman Terpsma. **Bertha** (Lambertina) Hendrika (June 23, 1919) married Simon Tuininga in 1945. Andrew married Rene Janssen in November 1942, and Ekke married Egberdina Norden in July 1948

Ite married Henny Bartels in 1951. They moved to Ontario, where Ite died in October 1956. **Hennie** (Hendrika, January 3, 1921) remained single and lives in B C. with Catherina

Lammert never felt at home in Canada. He was fifty-three years old when he came, and never mastered the English language. He went back to the 'old country' twice and would have stayed there had it not been for his children living in Canada. He died August 4, 1962

Wierenga Family

You know you're an old-timer if you can remember

— bamboo binder whips.

— a use for last year's catalogue

— where Anema's corner is

— when skidding meant dragging logs with a horse and not sliding sideways with your car on an icy patch

when an angry glare from Rev Van Der Woude could silence you

— when everyone wore their best clothes to the July First picnic

— when playing cards was considered a sin

— when the only recreation for dating couples was parking on a lonely road.

— the night the church burned down.

— going to school barefoot

— a slate as something to write on and not as a floor covering.

when you had to sit through a reading of all of Psalm 119

— how cold the outhouse was in winter.

— threshing crews coming down the road and being able to identify the teams

— when you took piano lessons on the organ

— going to the creek on a class hike or for a wiener roast

— the difference between a one-holer and a two-holer.

— when horsepower meant how many horses you had.

— when five children made a small family.

— what Rev. Van Der Woude said, and quote him to prove a point.

1946-1984

1946-1984

Beginning in 1946 Neerlandia entered a new era. The Second World War was over and the soldiers were returning home, some with their European brides and others with the girls they had met and married during their training in B.C.

Then came the postwar immigrants from the Netherlands. Though many stayed for only a short time, several made Neerlandia their home.

The young people born in Neerlandia in the previous decades were also marrying and making their homes there. With the increased mobility of modern transportation, there was more communication with other Reformed churches. The young men of Neerlandia brought home their brides from Edmonton, Lacombe, and Nobleford. As other young people began attending colleges in the U.S.A., more bonds were formed and more young men and women began a new life in Neerlandia.

The experiences differ but together these are the people who help to make the community of Neerlandia. It is their stories which are told in this section.

"THERE IS NO PLACE ANYTHING LIKE THIS PLACE, ANYWHERE NEAR THIS PLACE, SO THIS MUST BE THE PLACE"

I, Sandra Lynn Wichers Olthuis, was born in Chicago, Illinois, on December 12, 1951 I grew up in Bradenton, Florida, having moved there with my parents in 1952 I graduated from Manatee High School in 1969 and attended Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, from 1969-73 It was during this time at Trinity that I met Frederick David Olthuis and as they say the rest is history

It was May 1973 when I was first introduced to life in Neerlandia What I had expected and anticipated it to be, as a town and future home of Fred and me as a married couple, turned out to be mere imagination on my part The "Neerlandia Highway" seemed an endless stretch of hills (having since been to Jasper I now know what real hills are) and the light at the end of road seemed so far away The road itself was a mystery, for who had ever heard of paving a road with oil? Our street in Bradenton was paved with shell which is also unusual but, having grown up with it, it was labelled as normal and oil deviated from this norm This biased thinking towards my new life in Neerlandia took years to be replaced by acquiring Neerlandian viewpoints towards life within and without the community.

The William Olthuis home was one-half of a mile east of the Neerlandia crossroads and if you have grown up with streets and avenues, you know this giving mileages and directions is a totally useless method for finding one s way around Now, of course, I see it is the only way to navigate in the countryside No doubt it would not have taken me two months to remember which side of the road the farm was on if I had been more open-minded and had not construed Neerlandia as being upside-down.

When Fred and I arrived at the farm and got out of the car I immediately noticed a peculiar smell in the air This was unexpected because Fred had told me that it did not smell! Fred's parents were waiting up for us in the kitchen and while this appears insignificant, it was my first introduction to visiting at the kitchen table In our home the only activity done at the dining table was eating. In accordance with our normal living pattern we only ate three times a day and I had no conception of morning and afternoon "lunches" In the two months that followed it was great being on the receiving end of the huge delicious meals and all the home-baked goodies I had never prepared a full course meal by myself and the only baking I had done was with prepared mixes Little did I realize what it would be like to provide and be responsible for the preparation and sometimes the delivery of this same fare for my husband three months hence I remember my feelings of despair once when I went to the store to buy frosting for a cake I could not imagine that the Co-op did not stock this essential! The feelings worsened when I went home and I tried to make the frosting myself with ordinary sugar I soon came to the conclusion that my college education was not going to help me in becoming a homemaker. Poor Fred learned to cope with four-pound pies, raw or soggy vegetables, and various burnt offerings. It took eight years and the help of a dear friend before I seriously undertook baking bread from scratch. Fred must have been fearful because for years he had been served rock biscuits and, undoubtedly, was not to anxious to have stone bread

My first visit to the "center" took only 5 minutes but it was a shocking experience . . . culture shock! I wondered where the wooden sidewalks were (Neerlandia was a "western" town) and where Dad's office was — being a County Councillor I knew he must have an office I later saw his chair in the council chambers in Barrhead and I saw his secretary everyday: Mum Olthuis The Christian Reformed Church building looked quite large and impressive on the outside but once inside I was disappointed in its plainness. My hometown church was originally a small and simple cement block structure so I was just hoping for something special Over the years I learned to appreciate it for the Word presented there and saw it as the meeting place it was I was impressed by the fact that everyone went to either the Canadian Reformed or the Christian Reformed Church Meetsma's Garage seemed quaint as did the homes, and the school was just a plain old school The Neerlandia Co-op was the center for the center and I enjoyed going there for the mail and found it a great place to shop without money

As is the case when you move anywhere new, there were a lot of people to meet The first people I met were Fred's family Fred was the youngest one at home, so of course everyone seemed and was older. Coming out of a college campus situation and from a family where all but one were at home, it was strange to go visiting and also to visit families I tried to remember Fred's brothers and sisters by who was married to whom, how many children they had and how far away they each lived As time passed each had a special place in my memory for what they had taught me and I often wonder how they had the patience during that transitional stage from a know-nothing to a know-it-all. This was especially true with Fred's parents who lived on the same yard Initially I thought this arrangement very undesirable but as it turned out I could not have survived without them helping and teaching me whenever I needed them This cataloging of people by marriage partners, number of children, and farm location was also the way I kept everyone else straight Since almost everyone was a farmer the few that were not were the easiest to remember It appeared that everyone was either a Tuininga, Wierenga, or Nanninga I was never sure who used to be which before marriage but I was sure that they were all related It was common to distinguish the various people with the same first or surname as "Joe of Sophie", "Elsie's Henk", "Joan from Ralph", etc It was not long before I concluded that visiting was the favorite pastime in Neerlandia and it was an avocation everyone shared It was easy to engage in because of the everyday familiarity with everyone's work and family and there were not that many other social outlets.

My father sold frozen foods and we never had a garden so I had to get used to the idea of home-grown vegetables and fruits It was interesting to see how things grew above ground and in the ground and how each vegetable was picked and then frozen or canned This learning process for acquiring the skills and knowledge for planting and preserving initially seemed a burden and at times I thought if I had to learn one more thing I would scream I remember going with

Rose Olthuis and her children to pick apples. When we got home and she volunteered to demonstrate how easy it was to make applesauce I rebelled and passed the apples on to another poor soul. I was never fully persuaded that all the results were worth the effort or tasted any better than store-bought. Of course in terms of dollars and cents it is more economical to have the wife invest her time in gardening rather than buying everything at the store. Another Neerlandian natural resource which it took me awhile to get used to was the water. Fred's Dad would run the faucet until it was ice cold and then take a drink and pronounce the water the best anywhere. Needless to say I thought he was crazy, first of all for wasting the water and secondly because I thought it tasted awful. Through experience I discovered it was best to run the water for awhile because it allowed the natural gas, which came out with the water and caused it to shoot out at the most inopportune times, to escape. The water also fizzed, which confirmed my suspicions that it was not as good as city water. Later on I learned that you could not waste the cold water because you did not pay for any water; besides that Dad had dug the well himself, and eventually I did acquire a taste for the water.

I was overawed by the life and abilities of the farmer, particularly those of Fred whom I married on July 28, 1973. It appeared that he could do everything, whether it was fixing or working with the machinery, of which there was an endless variety, or handling the many aspects of a hog operation. I had no idea he had so many talents and it was obvious that he needed them all. Never having been around animals and much less a pig, I found these creatures with their peculiar habits quite amusing. Known to eat almost anything, they were ingeniously employed as garbage disposers through the use of the "slop bucket". Usage of an empty ice cream pail for edible garbage, a burn barrel for other waste, and a third container for tin cans and bottles was a novelty to me since I had grown up with black garbagemen who came to the back door for our garbage cans. Until Fred built his feeder barn in 1975 he ran a few sows outside and housed his feeders in an old barn. The barn was dark and forboding with dangling spider webs and it was very smelly. It was not my favorite place to be in but when you are someone's shadow you go wherever he goes. I adopted a pair of old coveralls and often "helped" Fred with his chores. I thought it was fun when the pigs got out and we had to chase them back into their enclosure. I soon realized through Fred's verbal commands that there was a right and wrong way to get pigs to go where you want them to. One adventure I remember was when a sow had farrowed by the far fence line and I obediently went down there with a pail to put the little pigs in. I thought this was cruel and heartless but who was I to make another judgement? The sow was not too fond of this idea either but fortunately I was on the right side of the fence and Fred soon had her "coaxed" back to the pen for a family reunion. There was also the time Case Van Beek came to load a boar which had tusks. After about an hour of chasing Fred and Case around he finally decided to follow the bait, an enticing sow, up the ramp and later that week we got a souvenir tusk. Another misadventure was when I was helping Fred take out a fence. Again through Fred's

verbal barrage I surmised that there was a right and wrong way to do this job. When the chain is wrapped around the fence post and the command is given to "pull", this does not mean to deliver a wrenching tug. Could I help it if the tractor jerked when I let off the clutch too quickly? The gradual tightening of the chain is also essential when one is pulling another vehicle with the tractor. The job is no less difficult when one is in the driver's seat of the vehicle being towed. Watch the chain, watch the hand signals, keep a steadyfoot on the clutch, be ready to brake, and make it all a smooth operation. Somehow driving a tractor was not the same as driving a car. To this day whenever Fred asks me to help pull him out or tow him with the tractor I shudder.

The only livestock on our farm were hogs, but one summer we had a horse and filly fenced in our backyard. This satisfied my yearning to have a horse and reinforced Fred's dislike of them. I never knew a horse could train a human but every time we went away and came back she would whinny for her food and water. I remained afraid of horses, but did manage to somewhat overcome my fear of dogs. Fred's parents had a Doberman pinscher and after walking around her the first two weeks I accepted the fact that she did not bite. She was very affectionate and the two puppy litters she gave us were adorable. We kept one male pup for ourselves and commenced training him. Although he was good company and an adequate watchdog we hoped training a child would be easier and more rewarding.

Some of the facts of life in the country that made an impression on me and also at times frightened me were the total darkness at night, the quiet, and the howling of the coyotes. These three things in combination were enough to send an occasional chill down my spine. If for some reason I had to be outside alone at night, I would call for the dog and focus the flashlight on my path, rather than taking the chance of seeing something scary to the left or right. I would run from the car to the house at night and, as this was more likely to happen in the winter, it also lessened the chances of getting a chill from the cold. On occasion, before and after our marriage, we would go for a drive to the river. It was on the first of these drives that we pulled off of the road and stopped for a look. First, I was surprised to see that this particular spot on the bank was used as a dump. The second thing I noticed was how very quiet it was and, as a matter of fact, we were whispering. On another occasion we took my parents to this location and suddenly heard coyotes howling. This was a very eerie sound and was equated in my mind with the cry of a werewolf in a horror movie. I was glad to get back to the safety of the car. Thereafter the howl of a single coyote was not so frightening.

Going to college in the North acclimatized me somewhat to all the seasonal changes one goes through in Alberta. However, the college was in a suburb of Chicago where all the streets were paved and a custodian took care of the work involved with the yards, sidewalks, etc. I would say August 1973 was the beginning of my initiation into the coping and accepting as a fact of life what rain, snow, and cold involves in a rural setting. A supper was given for Gordon and Marjorie Tuininga and ourselves at Vega Hall by friends and family who could not attend our weddings, in British Columbia and Florida respectively, the month before. I cannot remember if it was raining or had just rained but the grounds were quite muddy. Marjorie and I had decided to wear our wedding dresses and it was quite an accomplishment to get into the hall with them still spotlessly white. I think everyone had a good time that evening but after a trip to the bathroom(?) I did not feel like celebrating. I cannot call using a pit toilet with a wedding dress on a fun experience. In retrospect this was a minor inconvenience but then it was yet another thing to be endured. The rest of the evening I wondered how I could go home and still remain married to Fred. The thrill of having Fred carry me to the car was and is the only good that ever came from mud. After our children came along and as I removed their boots to place them alongside their boots for wet snow, dry snow, and the barn, I would try to see the fun of mud and farm life from their perspective. There is a lot to be said for patience and sunny climates. The driving skills needed for snow, mud, and ice all had to be acquired. My first muddy road was en route to Clarence Olthuis' farm. After much slipping and sliding I left the car halfway down the road and ran crying to the house. This was understandable but years later when I tried to drive our 4 by 4 truck through three feet of snow, as Fred would drive his tractor through it, that was unforgiveable. Some things only experience can teach you and as one woman put it, "I never feel bad when something goes wrong because you always learn from your mistakes".

Another idea I strived to adopt was the concept of deriving pleasure from work. In my upbringing summers were holidays, but in Neerlandia there was always work to do and with the hours of daylight exceeding those of nighttime it is a workman's paradise. It took a long time to get used to Fred working all the time in the summer. As soon as I comprehended how the change of seasons affected his work load, as well as mine, I would look forward to the coming of winter.

Fall I found beautiful with the leaves changing and disappearing all too quickly. Autumns were also busy, exciting, and fulfilling; and the sense of accomplishment, relief, and thankfulness when the garden and field crops are in cannot be matched. The celebration of Thanksgiving Day took on a whole new meaning and dimension for me.

After the first lasting snowfall and freeze, when the leaves you never got around to raking are covered and forgotten and the field work is done, it's a good feeling to slow down and settle down for the winter. However, it does not take long for a smart wife to deduce that the talents and energies so wonderfully displayed from April through October can be used to her advantage in the home during winter. It only makes sense for the husband to engage in making the house "our home" while the wife seeks to improve herself and better her skills. This was effected through numerous winter courses offered by Barrhead County and ranged in my case from sewing to calligraphy. I cannot tell you how impressive all these acquired skills sound to those back home and others I write. Otherwise all my seasonal letters seem filled with the same events year in and year out.

I always thought it was a joke that Alberta was called "Sunny Alberta" when I had come from the "Sunshine State" and could see little similarity in the amount of sunshine Of course, Florida experiences little seasonal change at all. In Florida the rain in no way hinders your work because it does not reduce the temperature and the sun usually returns soon after a rainfall. On a farm I discovered it makes a great deal of difference in terms of planting and harvesting and the quality of the crops and gardens. Always looking for the positive side of things I found out that rain can be welcomed in spring, summer,and fall as an excuse for an outing to Edmonton Planning for a holiday is a real tricky endeavor as there's never a "good" time to go because of the chores and other work, but the need for one usually develops for the same reasons

The revelation of the quality of life in Neerlandia did not come upon me the first six months of our married life The first one-half year together I went everywhere with Fred After fall work however, he got a construction job in Barrhead and I was left alone during the day. I hated going out in the cold and snow, and with only two people in the family there was not much work involved in looking after us or the house Providentially I was hired as the first official librarian for Neerlandia School. I discovered a whole new world going on one-half mile from the farm. What a challenge learning how a library works and how to catalog books. Working in the school was a great way to get involved with the community by learning who everyone was and it also became a basis for socializing The children seemed a rowdy bunch and did not readily comprehend that a library is supposed to be "Quiet!" I deemed it my duty to teach them, pushing to the back of my mind recollections of a library as a great place for visiting with friends. I remember the day some boys decided to inspect Fred's car engine during recess. I was appalled and wondered what would become of these children Reading to the Grade One class was my favorite task as they were good listeners and showed some respect — or was it fear? I worked in the library for one-and-one-half years, until November 1975, and retired, so to speak, to await the birth of our first child At a school assembly the students and faculty gave me a parting gift and I was very touched by that.

* * *

The Patter of Tiny Feet

One night during our first year of marriage, Fred and I were lying in bed when we heard a familiar scratching in the wall. Although it was reassuring to know that there was no way that the scratcher — a mouse — could get through the wall and into our room, we knew we would not rest until the problem was eliminated Fred, with his innovative mind, discovered a unique solution to the problem. He filled a pig syringe with Crenolin and injected it into a nail hole in the wall Surprisingly we heard no more annoying sounds coming from the wall.

* * *

Our son **Seth** David was born January 5, 1976, in Barrhead. The Barrhead hospital was undergoing renovations at the time and I remember frost on the baseboards, a cold room, and ice forming when they washed the hallway floors. I was surprised to see that my son looked exactly like his Grandpa Olthuis, I guess he did not know he was supposed to be a Wichers. Not to be deterred by this fact we still took him home to Florida to meet my family in April. I found myself as ill-equipped for caring for Seth as for all the other duties I had assumed the past two-and-one-half years. I never realized a baby did not sleep all day and night and would not want to. I distinctly remember my youngest brother asleep like an angel in his crib. Also implanted in my memory was going for walks with the baby carriage. I found this was impossible in the winter because of the snow, next to impossible in the spring because of the mud, and only occasionally possible in the summer and fall because of the time factor and the mud. On the one hand we could not wait for him to grow up, and on the other hand each stage of development was so interesting we never wanted him to change. Helping to solve this dilemma, **Erin** Michele was born January 16, 1978, in the new hospital wing. While revelling in the joys of being a real family, we were amazed to discover how different siblings can be. By this time I had discerned that a person's work, no matter how pleasurable, is never done.

1978 was a busy year and found us more involved with the community. In January Fred was elected to the Neerlandia Co-op Board of Directors. He also served as one of the local delegates on the provincial board of the Christian Farmer's Federation. In the summer of 1978 I began serving on the first Refugee Committee of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and was its secretary until 1981. This was an enriching and enlightening experience in terms of becoming acquainted with the refugees and working with others from the community. Aside from this I belonged to the Christian Reformed Church's choir before Erin was born and taught Sunday School for one term in 1979 and 1980. We were now fully emerged as a family in Neerlandia and its way of life.

Our third child, **Zachary** Ashton, was born July 2, 1981, in Barrhead. Our home was now merrier and noisier and I changed my work theory to say that one's work is never done but it does not matter.

Fred, Sandra, Seth. Front: Erin, Zachary, 1984.

This has been my experience to date and I find our life revolving around the family, farm, church, and community following the patterns dictated by the seasons and the traditions found in Neerlandia. The quotation at the beginning of this story was given to us as a poster when I had been in Neerlandia only one year. At the time I thought in a derogatory way, "You can say that again!" but now in an approving and complimentary way I can say: "There is no place anything like this place, anywhere near this place, so this must be the place!"

Sandra Olthuis

CASE AND JENNIE (BROUWER) AARSEN

As a boy growing up in Lacombe, **Richard** Aarsen always had dreams of becoming a farmer. When in 1976 Richard's father Case (Cornelius) saw an ad for a two-man pig farm in Bloomsbury, they decided to try farming together. The home place in Lacombe was sold, their goods were packed, and the family, composed of Case and Jennie and their children Richard, **Jan**, **Brian** and **Corinne**, set out for Bloomsbury.

Not having farmed on this scale before, there was much to learn. Much was done "by the book", but the Aarsens also accepted advice from seasoned farmers of the Neerlandia community.

Although they lived in Bloomsbury, the Aarsen family attended church and school in Neerlandia and soon felt a part of that community.

Richard married **Carolyne Dykstra** of Edmonton on November 20, 1976. A city slicker, Carolyne had a romantic idea of farming, but the realities of smelly manure and squealing pigs made her realize that it had disadvantages as well as advantages. Carolyne's education on the farm included learning to give pigs shots, clip their tails, and chase sows, as well as learning to cook just like mom.

The next year Case moved to Fort McMurray. A year later, after considering the good times and the bad, the Aarsens sold the farm. Jan and Richard took up carpentry. Then the Aarsen wanderlust struck, and Jan was off for a one year sojourn in Israel, where he worked at the Nes Ammim *moshav* (kibbutz). Later, Jennie Aarsen moved to Edmonton, taking Brian and Corinne with her.

Richard tried his hand at a number of things, including an attempt to start hog farming on a smaller scale (thwarted by local and provincial boards) and doing carpentry work. In 1980, Richard and Jan began Aarsen Carpentry and soon had their hands full. Busy as they were, Jan still found time to court **Corinne Dubbeldam**. They were married June 1, 1984. Richard too found time for his own pursuits. He and Carolyne have three children — **Jesse** Jan (July 27, 1978), **Cheyanne** Grace (August 8, 1980), and **Fern** Cherith (February 17, 1983).

Back: Richard, Carolyne, Fern. Front: Cheyanne, Jesse. 1984

Jan, Corinne, 1984.

The Aarsen wanderlust seems to be under control, both Richard and Carolyne and Jan have found life in the unique, Christian community of Neerlandia good and spiritually strengthening, as they give and receive the benefits which they in Christ possess.

Carolyne Aarsen

STEVE AND TINE (BOUMA) ABDAY

Tine (Tryntje) Bouma was born in Jakarta on the island of Java in Indonesia on March 28, 1917. Her father **Sijtse** (December 6, 1886), was a missionary teacher on the island. In 1934 Sijtse, his wife **Jantje** (June 25, 1892), Tine, and three brothers returned to the Netherlands.

Steve Martin Abday was born July 28, 1920, at Saksenhill, Saskatchewan. He grew up on his father's farm with four brothers and six sisters. During the Second World War he joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He was sent overseas and served four years in the army as a mechanic and truck driver. He was one of the soldiers who liberated the Netherlands. Tine Bouma came to Canada in May 1947 where she married Steve in the United Church in Melville on July 10, 1947.

On September 4 they arrived in Neerlandia where Tine was to teach. The people of Neerlandia gave them a welcome shower of household items including fresh and canned fruit, vegetables, and meat. A pleasant surprise! They boarded at George Anema's, where George's sister Anne did the housekeeping and cooking.

Steve and Tine, 1947

John Van Riper, the school principal, and his family lived in a little shack which was the only teacherage in Neerlandia. But in November a larger white house was pulled in on skids and placed behind the shack. The Van Ripers moved into the "White House" and Steve and Tine into the shack. Tine sent a picture of the two houses to her parents, and her mother got the impression that Steve and Tine lived in the white house. She wrote back, "If I were you, I'd have that old little shack in front of my house broken down and removed." Tine did not write that the 'old little shack' was their home.

The Abdays needed many things such as blankets, cutlery, and towels, which Tine's parents sent from the Netherlands. But they had a great laugh when one day they received a shoe box full of onions that Tine's dad had sent because he thought no onions would grow in this barren country.

The School Division had provided a McClary kitchen stove, a drum heater, and a bed in the little teacherage. The drum heater in the living room always frightened Tine. When the tamarack blocks ignited in the middle of the night they gave a big bang and lifted the lid, which came down again with another bang. It made Tine jump up in bed, asking Steve, "What was that?" His answer: "Oh nothing, just the tamarack blocks igniting. I'll put some sad irons on it tomorrow before we go to bed." The following night there was a greater bang followed by heavy clangs! The lid had lifted up again and had sent the sad irons flying through the room.

A greenhorn has to learn so many things about Canada! Tine wanted to sleep with the bedroom window open as she had in the Netherlands. "That is healthy," she said. Steve said, "Not in Canada," but she insisted. One morning they woke up with a pile of snow on the bedroom floor and snow on the blankets. The window stayed closed until the spring.

The old teacherage had dry rot in the floor, and once Tine stepped through the floor, hurting her leg badly. The Abdays shared that little teacherage with numerous mice which ran over their feet at night. It also had shrews living in the little hole under the kitchen floor, where they stored their potatoes. The shrews managed to eat most of the potatoes.

That first fall Steve helped with the threshing in the crew of John Ingwersen, and Tine started teaching forty-five pupils in grades four, five, and six.

Some of Tine's grade six pupils were John Piers, Wilfred Holwerda, Henry Gelderman, Lambert Tuininga, Tillie Elgersma, Florence Baker, Tina Jorritsma, and Betty Terpsma. They gave her the regular teacher's treatment, such as "garter snakes in my desk drawer and bugs and a mouse in a bottle." The pupils were surprised when she let the garter snake glide around her arm, and threw the bugs and mouse out of the window.

"Aren't you afraid of such things?" one of the grade six boys asked in surprise.

"Not at all," she answered. "I was born and raised in Indonesia where lizards crawl on the wall and sometimes fall in your hair or neck. Every morning you shake the giant centipedes and bugs out of your shoes before you put them on."

Tine's monthly salary was $92. Their store bill was about $40, and Tine paid $30 for their housekeeper, Anne Piers, a sister of Klaas Piers. So Abdays had $22 left for some extras!

In the spring Steve started working for William Olthuis and Louis Nanninga, driving their Caterpillar tractor. Tine quit teaching April 30, 1948, because she was expecting a baby.

When the baby was on the way into this world, Steve drove his Model A Ford over the corduroy road past the Mast and Tiemstra farms to take Tine to the hospital. It was a horribly bumpy ride since the rain had washed away the mud on and between the tree trunks. On June 11, 1948, their first son, **Sydney** Martin, was born. They were very happy, and so were Tine's parents with their first grandchild.

Tine holding Sydney in front of teacherage, 1948.

In the fall Tine's parents wrote saying that they longed so much to be with Steve and Tine. Her two brothers also were very keen to come, so the family was considering immigration to Canada. The Abdays were perplexed. This country was not for elderly people who had lived in comfort! Moreover, the little teacherage could not hold all of them. The roof was so leaky that they could see the sky here and there through the rafters. Steve had fixed the roof as best he could, but in the winter it was still very cold. Also, Steve and Tine would have to sleep in the attic to make room for her parents.

Steve and Tine advised them not to come, but come they did — with four enormous boxes which contained furniture and other things for both families. The day they arrived in Neerlandia, it had already rained heavily for two weeks and the roads were muddy and rutted. They had never seen anything like it.

In the meantime Steve had obtained the NE 17-61-3-5 through the Veteran's Homestead Lease. He paid Cor Hiemstra $2700 for improvements on it. Steve and Tine had bought Louis Nanninga's old house, but unfortunately the new house which was being built for Louis was not ready by the winter, so the Abdays and the Boumas moved into the drafty old Hiemstra house.

Sjoe, Jantje Bouma, 1951.

That winter 1949-1950 was very cold. Tine's father slept with his long johns wrapped around his head like a turban and her mother had a toque on. They were often sick with colds and so decided to go back to the Netherlands. On March 21 Albert Elgersma brought them by car to Edmonton to board the train.

It was a sad farewell. Tine was never to see her father again, he passed away one-and-a-half years later. Jim and John stayed for half a year and then they went back too. In the spring the house purchased from Louis Nanninga was pulled onto Abday's land and Steve and Tine moved in. A barn had already been moved there in the fall. Steve kept busy working on the Caterpillar and also clearing some of his own land. Nights were short and working days were long for him. Tine had started teaching again. Tom De Groot's sister Sophie stayed with them, taking care of Sydney and keeping house when Tine was at school.

In the meantime Abdays bought pigs, horses, cows, and chickens, and really began to farm. At night Tine helped clean the eggs and separate the milk, and in the morning she, along with the children of Klaas and Pete Tuininga, rode to school in Frank Visser's old truck, which came to Baker's Corner. To get to and from the corner she had to walk.

It was a cold walk in the winter, and the road was muddy in the spring. Big clods of mud clung to one's boots and made walking difficult. Often the road was transformed into a lake which stretched out from the corner to Simon Fisher's farm. When this happened Steve would wait for Tine at the corner, take her bag, and carry her home piggyback.

The Abdays also made an agreement with Klaas Tuininga: whenever possible, Klaas would get the students and Tine from the corner with horse and buggy in the summer, and Steve in turn would get them with the sleigh and horses in the winter. Tine was very scared of the horses, especially when the Tuininga boys clapped their hands to make the horses go faster!

Steve and Tine liked living on the farm, and

Steve the horseman, 1949.

would have stayed on had she not contracted tetanus when she scratched her hand on a rusty nail while whitewashing the chicken coop. She spent four weeks in the hospital and was very weak when she came home. In May 1963 they sold the land to Simon Fisher. Steve then started to work for Dick Fisher, a Massey-Ferguson dealer, and later went to SAIT and NAIT to obtain his Heavy Duty Mechanic License. Abdays bought a plot of land west of Neerlandia store and moved the house there. Steve worked as a fieldman and mechanic for Massey-Ferguson until 1967. Then he became a mechanic in the Co-op Service Centre in Neerlandia.

In 1966 Tine's mother, Jantje, and her brother John came to Neerlandia again. John taught here for three years and then returned to the 'old country'. In 1968 Jantje was hospitalized as a result of a fall. She remained in the hospital until she died of cancer on March 3, 1971.

The Abday family was blessed with two more boys, **Cedric** Charles (November 24, 1955) and **Robin** Steve (March 18, 1958). Sydney married in April 1970 and has four children. With a degree in environmental ecology, he got a job with the Alberta Government in that field. Robin finished his studies in electric computer engineering at NAIT in Edmonton and has a job with Johnson's Computer Controls in Edmonton. He married in June 1981. Cedric is very musical and is still finishing his studies toward a Master of Arts Degree at the U of A.

Steve holding Robin, Sydney, Cedric, c. 1958

Tine retired from teaching in 1980. The Abdays were truly blessed and looked forward to Steve's retirement in 1986, but it was not to be. Unexpectedly, the Lord took him to his eternal Home on February 2, 1984. Steve will be remembered by many for his cheerfulness and helpful nature.

Tine Abday

GILBERT AND JEANNETTE (WIESE) BAKER

Gilbert Baker spent most of his childhood in the hamlet of Neerlandia. Gilbert's father, Raymond Baker, passed away when Gilbert was four, so the family moved from the farm to the hamlet. Since the skating rink was only about 150 feet from the Baker home, Gilbert spent a lot of time skating and playing hockey with the other kids around the center. He also spent a lot of time with his brother, John, at their uncle George Anema's place. When Gilbert was fourteen the family moved back to the family farm and after a couple of years began to farm it themselves. In the winter Gilbert and John took turns working away from home. In 1967 Gilbert and John bought two quarters of land from Julius Betke. They farmed it for five years and then sold it.

In 1970 Gilbert married Jeannette Wegner (nee Wiese). Jeannette Winnifred was born December 14, 1943, in Herbert, Saskatchewan. When she was three years old the family moved southwest of Barrhead. She married Edward Wegner on July 7, 1962. They took over the Wegner farm (SE 13-61-3-5) in the Naples area and were blessed with three children: **Karl** Edward, born April 6, 1963; **Connie** Jean, born June 21, 1966; and **Timothy** Todd, born November 14, 1969. Then on March 12, 1970, Edward was killed in a farm accident. Jeannette's brother Larry helped her on the farm that year. Gilbert and John had to go past the Wegner farm to get to the Betke place. When Gilbert went by he would stop in to see if Larry needed any help. As time went on Gilbert stopped by more often. On October 31, 1970, Gilbert and Jeannette were married. They were blessed with three more children. **Raymond** Scott, born January 26, 1972, **Kelly** Gilbert, born November 25, 1974, and **Brian** Steven, born April 15, 1979. Gilbert and Jeannette were also foster parents to ten children over a period of six years. The Wegner farm was bought from the estate by Gilbert and Jeannette in 1973 and they still live there.

Back: Carl, Gilbert. Middle: Raymond, Connie, Jeanette, Kelly, Timothy. Front: Brian, 1982

Over the past years the Baker family has been involved in many activities. Gilbert had been a Boys Scout Cub leader for five years. Tim, Raymond, and Kelly were also involved in the scouting groups. Through the scouts, Tim had the opportunity in 1981 to attend CJ (Canadian Jamboree) 81, a worldwide jamboree held at Kananaskis Valley, near Calgary. Gilbert, Karl, Raymond, and Kelly are involved in hockey — Gilbert as coach and his sons as players. Karl is goalie for the Neerlandia Knights. Jeannette has taken advantage of several county courses and enjoys many handicrafts. Connie and Jeannette have also been involved in the Calvinette program of the Christian Reformed Church. Jeannette served for ten years as counsellor. Jeannette and Connie are both enrolled in the beauty culture program in the Barrhead Vocational School. Karl is employed at Champion Feeds in Barrhead.

Jeannette Baker

JOHN AND LEONA (MAST) BAKKER

John was born June 25, 1953, in Edmonton, approximately two years after his parents had emigrated from the Netherlands. The family first lived in Namao and later moved to the Barrhead area.

Leona Mast spent most of her childhood years in Neerlandia. She met John at a Young Peoples' Rally held in Edmonton. They were married March 22, 1974.

John worked as a hired man for approximately eight years for farmers in the Neerlandia district — first for Case and Adrian Hamoen, then for Simon Tuininga, and finally for Simon Elgersma. After John had worked for Simon for two years, he and Simon went into partnership, calling themselves B & E Farms. Under this arrangement John and Leona bought the NW 18-62-3-5 in 1982 and put up a farrowing operation. The quarter they had purchased was all bush, so they had to do some clearing before they could build.

Back: John, Leona. Front: Jeffrey, Calvin, Ramona, 1984.

The Bakkers have three healthy children. **Calvin** John (November 22, 1974), **Ramona** Lucille (July 20, 1977), and **Jeffrey** Dwayne (May 29, 1980).

John and Leona both enjoy various hobbies John enjoys hunting, fishing and trapping. Leona enjoys sewing and sports, and has recently begun taxidermy. The whole family enjoys living in the bush, where they often see wildlife

Leona Bakker

HENRY AND JO (KRIKKE) BENDER

Jo (Johanna) Krikke was born in 1919 in Neerlandia. In 1933, when Jo was fourteen and had passed grade nine, she, like everyone else, quit school. A few years later grade ten was added to the school, so Jo went back to be taught by Mr. Ashley. Lulla Bos and Jo were the only grade ten students that year. Jo and her sister Gladys did the janitor work in the two-room school during that time

After passing grade ten, Jo went to Sunnybank, Alberta. She and her friend, Annie Lievers, worked for room and board plus clothing on a farm there While working, Jo also took grade eleven in the local school. On completing that grade, she came back home to take grade twelve by correspondence and private study. Her father, Klaas, paid eight dollars for each of the four correspondence courses. After nurses' training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton, Jo became a registered nurse in 1943. After working hard to get through school, it was a pleasure to get a monthly paycheck!

Henry, Jo, David, 1978.

Back: David, Debbie. Front: Trina, Dayna, 1983.

Jo was nursing in the Barrhead hospital when she met Henry Bender. Henry had been born May 24, 1908, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and come with his parents to Mellowdale in 1909 Henry later began farming the NW 34-60-3-5

Henry and Jo were married February 13, 1952, and then settled on Henry's quarter. One son, **David** Carl, was born to them on November 21, 1952. Dave took his schooling in Barrhead. In 1966, he quit school to take up farming with his father Dave married **Debbie Rau** of Edmonton on June 17, 1978. Two daughters, **Trina** Danielle (May 6, 1981) and **Dayna** Shantelle (September 22, 1982) have been born to Dave and Debbie

Jo Bender

GERHARD AND WILHELMIEN (SCHUURMAN) BEYERS

The Beyers' story begins in the Netherlands where Gerrit (Gerhard) was born September 1,

1928. He was raised on a farm just outside the city of Winterswijk, Gelderland, near the German border. In the early fifties the Canadian government was giving agricultural immigrants priority over other labour immigrants, as there was a shortage of farm labourers. Gerrit wanted to own his own farm and, since he had heard there was plenty of land in Canada, he felt this was a good opportunity.

Gerrit arrived in Edmonton in May 1952, where he was greeted by Henk and Jean Lievers. His initiation into the English language was immediate: Jean did not know any Dutch. Ben and Alice Lievers, the old folks, were the original sponsors, but Henk and Jean took over sponsorship when Gerrit came.

Gerrit had left his fiancée, Wilhelmien Schuurman, in the Netherlands and the year that followed was a lonely one. In 1953 Wilhelmien arrived, and they were married within the month (June 20, 1953), as the law required. Wilhelmien had been born (December 21, 1930) and raised in Winterswijk and had enjoyed all its modern conveniences. As Gerrit carried her through ankle-deep mud to their first home, he realized that it was not going to be easy for her. Here there was no running water and, of course, no indoor plumbing — something they had taken for granted in the Netherlands.

Wilhelmien had hardly ever been to a farm and was terrified of farm animals. But she was a seamstress who had no sewing machine, and that motivated her to act out of character — she decided to make money by raising pigs. Bert Michael had rid himself of what he considered a nuisance when he sold Gerrit a nasty lame sow. The sow was in pig and bore nine healthy piglets. Wilhelmien helped raise them and got enough money for a sewing machine, but since then never wanted anything badly enough to use this method of raising money again.

Gerrit spent the winter months in the lumber camps. This meant that Wilhelmien was alone for two-week stretches. Isolated from her family, she had long, lonely weeks. Letters from the Netherlands eased and at the same time increased this loneliness.

Gerrit worked for several different farmers. He had started out with Henk Lievers and later helped George Anema. At George's, he built his own small house and moved it to Simon Turunga's when he started working there. On March 23, 1955, their first daughter, **Shirley Elmona**, arrived. In November 1956, Gerrit was offered a job with the Neerlandia Co-op for an unheard-of $230.00 a month. The extra money was certainly welcome, as their second daughter, **Winnifred Rosalie**, had arrived that fall on October 13. The family moved again, this time to the hamlet. The house was not fancy — several women, in fact, came to offer Wilhelmien their condolences because of the poor accomodations. But it was all they could afford.

Wilhelmien raising pigs.

As a clerk in the Co-op, Gerrit worked under Bart Vander Wal and later under Mike VanderKeemel. On October 24, 1962, **Gerald Lambert** was born. One year later, Gerrit became the manager of the Co-op. The highlight of his career was the Gerrit Beyers Dinner and Roast, celebrating his twenty-five years with the Co-op.

Gerrit never did buy the farm he had dreamed of while still in the Netherlands; God had other plans. The Beyers consider themselves richly blessed in their adopted country.

The Beyers' children no longer live in

First trip back to the Netherlands. Back: Wilhelmien, Gerald, Gerhard. Front: Winnifred, Shirley, 1965.

Being roasted. Wilhelmien, Gerhard.

Neerlandia. Shirley and her husband, John VanNeck, live with their three children in Spruce Grove. John works as a x-ray technician. Winnifred works as an accountant and is married to Ernie Kotylak. Ernie owns a backhoe operation in Edmonton. Gerald took business administration at NAIT. He is married to Cindy Burnside, who teaches the mentally handicapped. They also live in Edmonton.

Wilhelmien had a heart condition in the last years of her life. On March 1, 1984, she passed away after a short illness.

Gerrit Beyers

RALPH AND JOAN (OLTHUIS) BOS

It was a cold day in February 1932 when the stork flew over the Vega district, directly over the farm of Bertus and Hilda Bos (NW 22-62-5-5) and dropped a small bundle into the snowbank. Bertus and Hilda were delighted — it was a bright blue-eyed baby boy, and they named him Ralph (Roelof). Ralph was the fifth in line of seven children in the Bos household.

During Ralph's youth he was active and inquisitive as are most young boys. He and his sister Betsy spent much of their time together, and they often went out exploring the homestead. One day Ma Bos took the two of them out strawberry picking. En route to the strawberry patch they had to pass through a spruce windbreak. Not content to walk on the path, Ralph and Betsy went darting in and out among the trees. Unfortunately there was a low hanging spruce branch which housed a hornet's nest. Ralph ran directly into it — and a great commotion started. Ralph stood in the midst of the furious hornets, yelling hysterically, and Ma Bos had to rush in and grab him out. They all ran home where Ma dabbed the swelling stings with vinegar. This was almost as excruciating as the stings themselves. Needless to say, there were no strawberries to show for it all.

On another adventure, Ralph and Betsy discovered an owl's nest about twenty feet up in a dead tree. They thought it would be fun to capture a young owl and make a pet of it. They quickly gathered together some sticks for Betsy to throw at the mother owl if it came near while Ralph climbed the tree. Everything was going smoothly until Ralph was about three feet from the nest. Then, pow! Something hit him on the head and took his cap off. The mother owl dodged the flying sticks and got in a second attack. Blood started to flow down Ralph's face from the claw marks on his scalp. Ralph was down the tree in a flash and the two ran home empty-handed.

During the winter Ralph's fun and imagination came alive at sawing time. Pa Bos would haul loads of wood out of the bush with his horses and sleigh. Henry Erickson from Vega, taking along some other men, would come with his saw - powered by a Model-T motor — to saw the firewood. Ralph and his brothers and sisters enjoyed building houses and forts from the wood blocks. It was all fine when they could pack the wood around for fun, but they complained profusely when they had to go out in the freezing cold to bring the wood in for the stove.

Ralph had most of his schooling in Vega School, but in grade eight he attended Neerlandia School. After this he was needed at home, and he quit school.

When Ralph was eleven years old he began to work occasionally for their neighbour, Andrew Nanninga. In 1948, Andrew advised Ralph to file on some land, as there was some available in the Misty Ridge area. Andrew assisted Ralph in selecting a quarter section. Ralph was not old enough to file for land, so his sister Elizabeth took up the quarter (NW 15-62-4-5) in 1949. The first year William Olthuis cleared ten acres of Ralph's land with his D8 Caterpillar.

Ralph began working in Edmonton at various jobs during the winter, living and working on his homestead in the summer months. In the second year, Ralph built a twelve-by-sixteen-foot shack as his home. He ordered a small tin stove from the Eaton's catalogue for cooking and heat. His pantry shelves supplied him with canned weiners and beans and canned strawberries. After a tiring day of picking roots, Ralph found comfort and rest on his single-spring cot. One spring when he came home from working in Edmonton, Ralph found that a bear had got in through a window and had also found comfort on it.

Meanwhile, Joan Olthuis was growing up in Neerlandia. She completed grade nine at Neerlandia. She has many fond memories of the walks home from school with her sisters and friends. For one thing, they found things to eat: peavine, wild strawberries, and rose hips became part of their daily diet. If Evelyn or Cecelia Tiemstra were with them they would get a special treat of spruce gum. Not only were the Tiemstra girls excellent tree climbers, but they were also very good at chewing the spruce gum to a good chewing gum stage, which few of the other children could do. Thus they did the first chewing for almost everyone. The children also liked to hunt for bird's nests, play hopscotch on the hard road, or throw stones at the telephone lines to see who could make them sing.

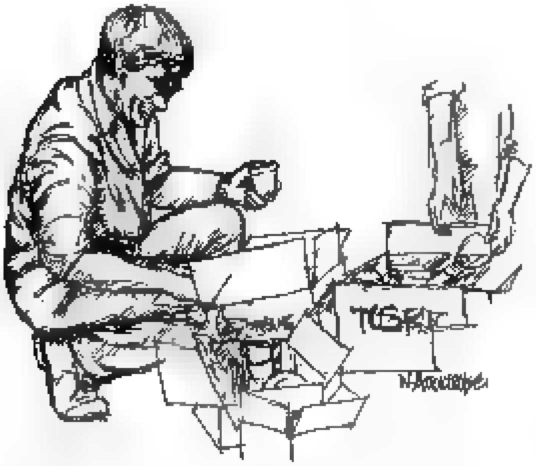
Although Ralph and Joan had known each other for many years, they did not become interested in each other until the summer of 1954. Joan's sister Elsie was working in Edmonton, and when she came home she talked about her friends there — one of them being Ralph Bos. Joan was intrigued.

After having heard about Ralph from Elsie, Joan had opportunity to see him at George Terpsma's farm sale (auction) on May 6, 1955. Here was her first clue to his strong addiction to auction sales - which has not weakened over the years. It was here they planned their first date, which was to attend the wedding party of Gerrit van Dijken and Joyce Reitsma that same evening. So began their two-year courtship.

On August 23, 1957, a beautiful, hot and humid evening, Ralph and Joan, and Joan's sister, Shirley, and Norman Matheis exchanged their marriage vows in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev. J. Piersma officiated. A reception followed in Neerlandia School gymnasium, with Joan's uncle Simon Tuininga as the master of ceremonies. The reception ended abruptly with a severe thunderstorm. Despite the storm, Ralph and Joan fled to Jasper where they had previously planned to spend their honeymoon.

After the honeymoon, Ralph carried Joan over the threshold of a little white house he had rented from Fred Toebes. In the summer of 1959, Ralph brought Joan to his homestead. Being a handy kind of guy, Ralph had converted his garage into a cozy home with a white exterior and bright blue shingles. The interior consisted of a large bedroom and a spacious living room and kitchen, but no indoor plumbing. Joan did her best to make it homey. She made cloth skirting around the kitchen cabinets and frilly white curtains for the windows. Several hand-braided rugs brought warmth to the floor. The only source of heat came from an airtight, wood burning heater, and on cold winter nights someone would have to get up several times to stoke the fire.

Throughout the years the Bos home has been furnished by a variety of articles purchased at auction sales. Ralph would come home with anything from fine bone china to a load of junk and an old cupboard full of chicken nests. When Joan questioned Ralph as to the value of paying money for a bunch of old chicken nests, she was soon informed that the cupboard contained some valuable oak boards which would be used for repair work in the future. After some investigation Joan discovered that, although they had been rearranged to house chickens, all the parts of a buffet were still there. After hours of elbow grease, sandpaper and a bit of Swedish oil the "chicken nests" became a beautiful piece of furniture.



The farm, which trimmed the south of the Athabasca river, presented a spectacular view and was never a dull place. Often wildlife would wander around the yard or could be seen passing through the fields. The most frightening visitors were the bears. They would saunter around, sniffing the animals and, on one occasion, they tore sheets of plywood off the barn. The pigs and cows were set out to graze in a fenced-off area of the forest, and often the pigs were attacked by bears and would return home with bloody scratches and gouges in their backs.

Living "up west" was a long drive from Grandma's house and the Centre so in the winter of 1966, when the Plantinga farm (W½ 5-62-3-5) just two miles from the Neerlandia centre, was posted for sale in the Neerlandia Co-op, Ralph and Joan took a great interest. There was much prayer and discussion in the Bos home as to whether they should try to purchase the farm. Finally it was decided that in order to live their lives and bring up the family in a way pleasing to God, they should choose the Plantinga farm. Although the homestead was often missed, there were no regrets about this decision.

After the family moved into their new home Ralph went right to work fixing up the house and installing an indoor bathroom. Throughout the years the little house had many renovations and additions. Today it is a comfortable home with white siding and bright blue shingles.

Ralph worked on road construction for the County of Barrhead and farmed the half section while Joan and the older children cleaned the Neerlandia School. This life-style proved to be very much of a strain on family life. In the fall of 1978, Ralph became ill with myasthenia gravis, a disease causing loss of muscle control and in Ralph's case badly affecting his vision. Although there is no known cure, the disease was in remission for five years. It is now increasingly limiting Ralph's activity again.

Glen, Wendy, 1961

On May 16, 1958, **Wendy** Lee was born. She married Adrian Aarnoutse on August 7, 1981, and they live in Edmonton with their son. Adrian is part owner of Rainbow Eavestroughing.

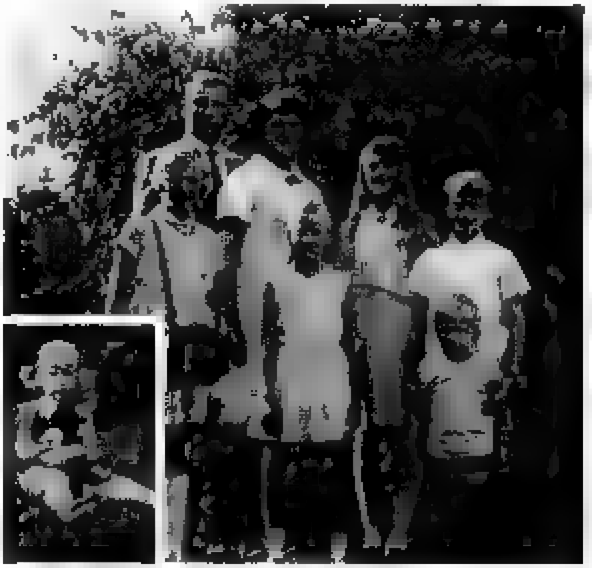
As the first snow fell on November 1, 1959,

Glen Miles joined the Bos family. Glen attended NAIT and has completed his fourth year as an electrician.

By the time January 5, 1961 rolled around, **Shelley** Joan brought joy to the Bos family. Shelley decided to make farming her career and has gone into the dairy business with her dad.

In the year of 1963 **Karen** Hilda made her appearance into the Bos family on May 24. She is attending Dordt College.

The summer of 1967 is a time the Bos family will never forget — all the heat, the dry thunderstorms, and the numerous brush fires. During that summer, on August 11, **Sheldon** Bertus joined the family.



Ralph, Joan, Wendy, Glen. Front: Shelley, Karen, Sheldon, 1970. Inset: Stephanie, 1976.

On August 3, 1974, the Bos family experienced the happy occasion of the birth of **Stephanie** Jayne, who made the family complete.

Joan Bos

TEAKE DOUWE BULTSMA

Teake Douwe Bultsma was born on March 31, 1880, in Wolvega, Friesland, the Netherlands. In May 1905 he married Beeuwkje Hoekstra. In 1916 they immigrated to Canada and raised four children on a farm south of Burdett, Alberta. In 1945, his wife passed away. About 1949, Teake came to Neerlandia to be near his daughter Grace Schuurman and her family. He resided on the lot in the hamlet presently owned by John De Gier (1984). In 1967 he passed away and was buried in Lethbridge. He is remembered by many for his habit of migrating south for the winter. When Teake Bultsma headed south (to visit his family in southern Alberta), one knew winter could not be far behind. One humorous incident comes to mind regarding Teake Bultsma. A teacher once asked her pupils, "What are the signs of spring?"

She received the following replies.

"When the snow melts."

"When the robins come back."

And one particularly astute lad replied, "When Mr. Bultsma comes back."

Grace Schuurman

WILLIAM AND MARIA (HOFING) DE BOER

In June 1951, the De Boer family left the Netherlands and boarded the *Volendam* for the voyage to Canada. The family included William, born November 1, 1915, in Wester Nijkerk, Friesland, Maria Theodora, born November 10, 1912, in Rinsumageest, Friesland; and their children, **Arny** (Akke), born in 1938, **Richard** (Rindert), born in 1939, **Ruby** (Romkje), born in 1942; and **John** (Jan), born in 1948. Work for William was available in Coaldale, Alberta, with a sugarbeet farmer who was sponsoring them. William, even though he had been raised on a farm, was not a farmer at heart. In the Netherlands, he had worked for the government, but had decided to emigrate because he disagreed with the post-war government's interference in economic affairs.

The family arrived in Canada on June 26 and were soon aboard a train headed for Alberta. When they arrived in Winnipeg, however, they were informed that their sponsorship had been cancelled, and were directed to Edmonton. From there, they went to Pickardville, where William got a job working on Louis Lambert's farm. In March 1952, their youngest child, **Ann Marie**, was born.

In June 1952, the De Boer family moved to Barrhead, where William worked in Barrhead Creamery for a few months. While there, he met Jerry Reitsma of Neerlandia, who informed him of a position available at Neerlandia Co-op. William was appointed to fill the vacancy, taking over from Alie Munneke

The De Boers arrived in Neerlandia in the fall of 1952 and occupied the living quarters upstairs in the Co-op store building. Since they were used to urban living in the Netherlands, Maria especially had difficulty in getting used to the rather isolated situation here, more so since they could not afford a car. It also soon became apparent to William and Maria that career possibilities for their children in and around Neerlandia were not promising. They did not look forward to staying behind here while their children moved to the city. For these reasons their stay in Neerlandia was rather brief.

Three years after the De Boers' arrival, their oldest child had already moved to Edmonton, and they decided to make the move as well. From 1959 to 1965, William was business administrator for the Edmonton Christian Schools, then was appointed assistant manager of Edmonton Christian Credit Union Ltd. He held that positon until his retirement in 1980.

Although the De Boers' stay in Neerlandia was brief, they will never forget that period of their lives. William had the privilege of serving for about two years as elder in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, while Rev. Lambertus Mulder was pastor. They appreciated the many friends they made during that time. The people of Neerlandia contributed much to their adjustment to Canadian life and customs.

William De Boer

JOHN AND ALICE (LAM) DE GIER

John (Jacobus Johannes) De Gier was born in Waarder, South Holland, the Netherlands, on the 20th of November 1925, the second child in a family of four. After John trained in business management and bookkeeping, he got a job with the *Christelijke Boeren Tuinders Bureau* (Christian Farmers Greengrocers Bureau) in Utrecht. Through this work, he met Alice (Alie) Lam, whom he married in 1953. Alice had been born in Amersfoort, Utrecht, in 1923.

John had served with the Netherlands Marine Corps in Indonesia for three years, and on his return to the Netherlands had found his homeland too small and overcrowded. In addition, houses were hard to come by, so in May 1953 John and Alice took their honeymoon on the *Veendam*, enroute to Canada.

After their arrival in Alberta, they worked in many small towns before settling in Neerlandia in 1963. Earlier that year, while working as a bookkeeper in a furniture store in Edson, John had read in the *Calvinist-Contact* (a Christian weekly newspaper) about an accounting job at the Neerlandia Co-op. He went for an interview, got the job, and a month later moved to Neerlandia. By now it was not just John and Alice, however. Little De Giers had arrived one after the other. There were now six children: **Mary Jane** (1954), **Bert** (Gysbertus, 1955), **Evelyn** (1956), **Jeanette** (1958), **Grace** (1959) and **Connie** (1963).

Back: Bert, Evelyn, Mary-Jane. Front: Jeanette, John, Grace, Alice, Connie, 1965

The only place for them to live was in the house over the store. With six children, ranging in age from six months to eight years, Alice had her hands full. They would ride their three-wheelers around the kitchen table, bounce balls, jump off the steps, and generally make a racket like children do. Meanwhile, downstairs in the office, Gerrit Beyers, the store manager, and John would try to get their work done. At least once or twice a day, Gerrit would run upstairs to tell Alice to keep those kids quiet once and for all, but to no avail. Sometimes he would come up to ask Alice whether she had the stove fan on, because the store smelled like sauerkraut. Somehow, they managed to get along through the years.

One day, it was so windy that Alice's wash — diapers, sheets, and all — had blown around the clothesline. When Carl Mast, who worked as the gas truck-driver at that time, noticed Alice's fruitless efforts to turn it back, he jumped into his truck and drove it under the clothesline. He stood on top of the truck and rescued the wash by straightening the mess out with a long stick.

When Connie was four years old, her playmate was Gerald Beyers. In all of their school years, no one ever let them forget the locally famous "flour-shed incident". One day, Gerald and Connie saw the door of the flour shed open, so they went in. They found a jack knife and proceeded to rip open a couple of bags of nice, white flour. They laughed and began throwing it all over each other. When Gerrit walked out of the store, he saw great white clouds billowing out of the shed. Was he upset! He sent Gerald and Connie both straight home. Connie did not dare walk in, so she knocked on the door. When Alice answered, she did not know who it was. Connie was white from head to toe!

There were many Hallowe'en pranks that young people used to play around the store. Three young boys were so strong that they could push John De Gier's rabbit coop right over, with rabbits and all. The boys did not turn out too bad after all, as today (1983) one is a teacher, one a deacon in the church, and another a fine citizen and father of four.

Presently, John and Alice reside in Neerlandia with John still working at Neerlandia Co-op as postmaster and bookkeeper. John takes pride in his mathematical skills and ability to remember the details of financial transactions. He is Neerlandia's answer to the computer age. Throughout the years, John has retained his military bearing and can be seen striding briskly around the hamlet; riding his bicycle in the summer; or, in the winter, cross-country skiing for miles on end. His physical fitness level would put a younger man to shame, as he has often demonstrated while helping to unload the truck delivering groceries to the Co-op. Alice, meanwhile, goes quietly about her housekeeping tasks, though she may be seen biking with John or busily involved in other community activities.

By railing: Jeannette, Bert, Grace, Mary-Jane. Seated: Evelyn, Connie, 1982

Mary-Jane is living in Edmonton, where she enjoys a hairdressing career. Bert has his own house in Vega and works as a carpenter. Evelyn works at Edmonton International Airport. Jeannette attends Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grace is teaching home economics at Edmonton Christian High School. Connie lives at home and works for Barrhead Recreation Department as a secretary/programmer.

Alice De Gier

SIMON AND HENRIETTA (TUININGA) DE GROOT

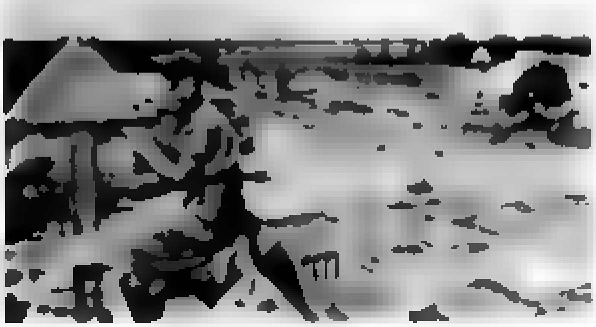
The family of Auke and Trientje de Groot lived in the small village of Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1948 there was much talk about immigrating to Canada. Father Auke decided that perhaps his son Siebren should immigrate because Siebren's younger brother Ulbe was coming home from Indonesia and there was not enough work on the farm for both of them.

So on August 16, 1948, Siebren stepped on the boat *Tabinta* in Rotterdam and steamed across the ocean. Nine days later at 10:00 a.m., he arrived in Quebec City, and set out again that evening on a four-day train trip to Edmonton. From there he left by train for Barrhead, where he had relatives waiting for him. His cousin Gerben Tiemstra took him to his home in Neerlandia, where he stayed with Gerben and his wife Trientje.

Since Siebren arrived just in time for harvesting, there was plenty of work waiting for him. Stooking and throwing bundles proved to be very tiresome work, and he had a hard time keeping up. Once he was familiar with the work, he found that he was enjoying himself.

But my, did that bed look inviting after a day's work!

For the first three months of 1949, Siebren did farm chores for Herman Wierenga, who was very busy as a fieldman for the Immigration Committee. Then in April, Siebren went to work on the farm for Gerben Tiemstra. That summer he also spent many days working on the new Christian Reformed church building, after the second church building had burned down in November 1948. The next two years Siebren worked in the bush during the winter, and did odd jobs during the summer.


Putting up the first rafter of the church, Simon, 1949

Beginning in 1950, Siebren lived with his brother Tom and his family. He got to know the Clarence Tuininga family, as they were Tom's closest neighbours. Many times Siebren rode with Jele and Lambert Tuininga to Young People's meetings on Sunday night. A warm relationship started to grow between Henrietta Tuininga and Siebren.

During the years of 1952 to 1955, Henny worked as a clerk in the Neerlandia Co-op and for part of the time Siebren was working for a construction crew building on the six-room school. Siebren and Henny went to work together. There were times when they had to walk to work because of poor road conditions or flooding. One spring Siebren carried Henny over several washouts in a field. They did not stick to the highways as the shortcuts were much shorter and more interesting! Siebren and Henny set their wedding date for October 21, 1955, so Siebren's parents could attend because they were coming from the Netherlands in August to visit. The first year-and-a-half the couple lived in Edmonton where Siebren worked. In June 1956 Siebren became a Canadian citizen and officially had his name Canadianized to Simon. On September 26, 1956, their first child, **Christina** Irene, was born at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton.

At this time, Henny's uncle Simon Tuininga had a quarter and a fraction of land for sale (SE 26-61-4-5, NW 26-61-4-5). Simon and Henny bought that land and moved back to Neerlandia in March 1957. They also bought a small one-room house from Uncle Simon Tiemstra, which was moved to the farm on which Simon's brother Tom was already living (NE 19-61-3-5), since Simon and Tom farmed together. A bedroom and porch were built on to their small house. Light was provided by gas lamps that had to be pumped up every hour. On February 26, 1958 their son, **Alfred** Charles, was born. Those were the days of hauling water and wood for the cook stove. Most of the time they had no problem keeping the one-room living quarters warm. But on New Year's Day 1959 the temperature dropped to 35 degrees below zero with high winds. That night Simon slept (or did he?!) on the kitchen floor with his feet under the cook stove. When his feet got cold he knew it was time to stoke the fire. The children slept in the bed with Henny. A bottle of Eau-de-Cologne on the dresser froze solid that night. By February 1959 they were hooked up to Calgary Power.

On April 15, 1959, Simon and Henny were blessed with the births of twin boys, **Clifford** and **Clayton**, and the one bedroom was bursting at the seams. The de Groots learned that Joe and Sophie Tuininga had their home for sale, bought it, and moved it to their location.

During the next five years, Simon and Henny's family was enlarged with the births of three girls: **Teresa Jane** (July 11, 1960), **Emma** (December 26, 1961), and **Rita Arlene** (February 23, 1964). Every time the family grew, more living space was needed. They finally built a new house to hold the increasing family. Until that time they did not have the convenience of running water. It was in 1968 that the benefits of plumbing were first enjoyed in the house. How delightful that first tub bath was!

Three more boys were added to the family: **Eugene** Oliver (September 9, 1965), **Jarvis** Glenn (November 28, 1967) and **Timothy James** (August 23, 1969). With this family of ten children, the pains and trials of sleepless nights

Cliff, Alfred, Clayton. Seated: Teresa, Simon, Christina Emma, Henny, 1963.

were endured often, due to every conceivable communicable disease that hit the country: colds, flu, measles, ringworm, trench mouth, impetigo, pinkeye, mumps, chicken pox, the 'fifth disease' (some kind of rash), and others.

Back: Rita, Alfred, Clayton, Clifford, Christina, Rita, Emma Front: Jarvis, Henny holding Carla, Simon, Timothy, 1977

Carla Simone was born July 6, 1975. Timothy had started school by this time, so Carla's presence was much enjoyed by her dad and mom.

All of the children attended the Neerlandia School through grades one to ten. Then they went to the Edmonton Christian High School for grades eleven and twelve.

After high school, Christina went to Dordt College for one year and then worked five years in Edmonton at the Christian Credit Union. On July 6, 1979, she married Robert Koole, a teacher in the Edmonton Christian High School. They live in Edmonton with their two children.

After completing high school, Alfred returned to the farm to help his dad. He did some travelling before settling down with his wife, **Rita Boender.** Rita was born June 10, 1957, in Edmonton. But for the first eighteen years of her life she lived on a dairy farm in the Ellerslie area. After receiving her B.Ed., majoring in Special Education, Rita applied for a position as a counsellor at Rehoboth summer camp for handicapped children. Here she met Alfred. Their courtship consisted of one week per year for four years — and this week was always spent at camp. After the week was over they said their goodbyes, Alfred would return to the farm and Rita again taught native children with special needs from the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve in the St. Paul area. On July 30, 1982, Rita and Alfred married and she is back on a dairy farm again. Alfred is operating a dairy business on a quarter of land (NW 20-61 3-6) he bought from Simon. A baby girl, **Lisa** Maria Trientje, was born to them December 20, 1983.

Alfred, Rita, Lisa, 1984

Clifford attended Dordt College for four years to obtain a political science degree He then worked for one year in Edmonton at Edmonton Potato Growers and is presently in Toronto at the Institute for Christian Studies furthering his education in politics

After school, Clayton took one year at Old's Agriculture College but quit when he married his high school sweetheart, Jackie Zylstra, on March 20, 1981. They are presently living in Lacombe helping brother-in-law Peter Den Oudsten with his pig operation

Teresa took a two-year course at NAIT in biological science and is presently working at the U of A as a lab technician doing research in juvenile diabetes

Emma took a one-year sewing program at NAIT to become a seamstress. She met Peter Den Oudsten, from Lacombe. They were married in November 1981 and have a flourishing pig farm. They have one son

Rita took one year of general courses at The King's College and is presently taking a two-year program for a rehabilitation practitioner diploma at Grant MacEwan. She is engaged to Timothy Schouls Eugene is attending Vermilion Agriculture School (Lakeland College)

For many years Simon and his sons worked together on the farm, milking cows and selling hogs In 1966 a new cow barn was built and milking machines were introduced. In August 1980 the milk was put into a bulk tank and sold as fluid milk. What a relief it was not having to wash the separator any more. In November 1982 Alfred took over the dairy business and started on his own. This left Simon to tend his hogs, calves and some beef animals. This lighter work load is enjoyed by Simon, as he is getting older and there are not as many helping hands around

Henrietta de Groot

TOM AND IDA (TYMSTRA) DE GROOT

Tom (Thomas De Groot was born January 16, 1919, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Ida (Itske) was born March 30, 1920 in Makkum, also in Friesland. They were married September 19, 1945. Two children were born to them in the Netherlands, **Arthur** (Auke) on November 7, 1946, and **Hilda** (Hiltje) on October 31, 1948

Both Tom and Ida grew up on farms and felt a kinship to the land and the life of a farmer. But they lived in Alkmaar, North Holland, where Tom was employed by the City Police Force. In 1948 they made up their minds to immigrate to Canada, where there were greater possibilities for farming. After making that decision Tom wrote to his uncle Simon Tiemstra about their plans Soon they received a letter from the fieldman, Herman Wierenga, that George Anema was to be their sponsor and that they should begin preparation for immigration to Neerlandia, Alberta

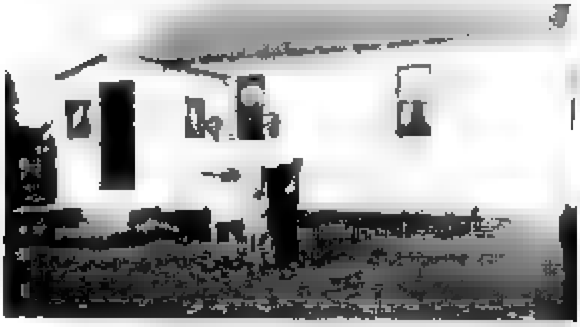
The family left the Netherlands on March 26, 1949, with the *Edam* of the Holland-America line The trip was great; the De Groots did not experience seasickness as so many others did They landed in New York on April 8 and from there travelled by train to Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and finally to Barrhead. They were very happy to be off that train, and to see Tom's brother, Simon, and Gerben Tiemstra, who were there to welcome them

After staying at Gerben Tiemstra's place for a week Tom Ida, and family moved to a little house in the hamlet of Neerlandia Tom started working on building the new church He worked there until the fall of 1949, and then helped Albert and Gerben Tiemstra with the harvest

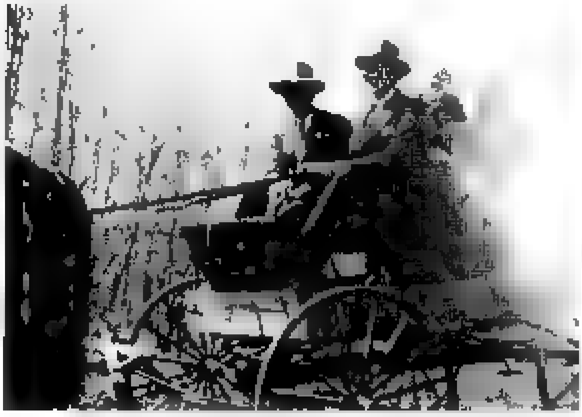
With winter approaching, Tom and Simon had some long talks with their uncle He agreed to sell them the N ½ 19-61-3-5. A deal was struck and the papers were signed. Tom and Simon were landowners, and the farming worries began. The first task was to go to the bush for poles and rails to make a fence.

When winter came Tom and Simon went to work at the Imperial Lumber camp about forty or fifty miles from Neerlandia. They worked there all winter. Ida was left to manage on her own. Water was hauled from the store, and milk from John Ingwersen. Most of the time little Arthur and Hilda would go along, but when it was very cold Ida decided they must stay home. At these times Arthur was tied down tight on the cot, and Hilda tied in her bed. This was to protect them from the dangers of the burning-hot wood stove

In the spring of 1950, Tom decided they would move to the farm The house was put on skids and moved to the farmstead. Summer quickly turned to fall, and in return for having their grain threshed, Tom and Simon helped the Tiemstras again.



Gerben brought us to the store, where he had bought a little house for our family that was standing at the place where Merkus old house now is.



For going to church we had the team of horses and the buggy. In the summer time this was nice to have a ride with horse and buggy. But when it was getting colder, we had warm stones in the grain box with canvas over the box. Between church time, lots of people invited us over for dinner, what we greatly appreciated.

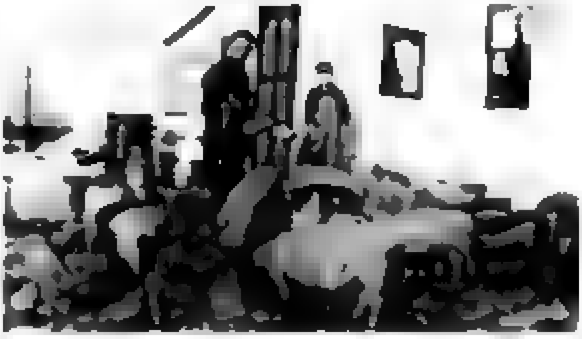
I could start working, with helping to build a new Church in Neerlandia the old church was burned down in the Fall of 1948.

In the spring of 1950 we came back to the store. The first we did was to get it little house on skits and moved it to the NE 19-61-3-5. We get a old Mc Cormick tractor an steel wheels with a breaking plow, so that we were able to do some field work and also some breaking.

The next picture you can see the threshing outfit in operation also the old school bus (truck) which Albert Tiemstra was driving that time. At harvest time Frank Visser was doing it for Albert. Theresa, Harold, Simon Albert and Tom on the load pitshing bundles in the thres machine.

In the fall 1950 we where helping the Tiemstras again for the harvest and they were helping us for threshing. Albert Tiemstra had a team of mulles that were really able to pull a load of bundles, but sometime you came in a soft spot, and they flicker, being not able to pull it anymore, no matter what you did, they just would not pull. The best was, put the line on their back and walk away from them. You start helping other men to pile the bundles on the load and in the meantime the mulles pull the load out by themself. You can see us standing with the mulles on the picture. Also you see on the picture our sister Therese with little Harold (from Albert Tiemstra) on her shoulder. She came a couple months before from Holland and was staying at Albert Tiemstras place. Later on she was staying at Steve Abday's place taking care of Steve and the boys while the Mrs. was teaching at the Neerlandia School

After the harvest of 1950, John Ingwersen, Bert Nanninga, and the Tiemstras, and we Simon and Tom get a farmer's timber permit for lumber by the Athabasca river north of Vega. John and Bert where the men to operate the outfit. First we have to build a bunkhouse where we could eat and sleep.



Winter 1953 Simon was working out. I was home taking care of the family and doing the chores. At winter time we had the porkyes mostly running rond on the yeard. You can see the porkyes like to help me whyle I was making clean some frozen fish. Little Arthur also has a look

There were lots of cajoute rond that time. When they came too close it could cost his life, as you can see on the picture. It was little Wild West here

In the spring 1953 we bought a old car from Romke Stel (Neerlandia Garage) but we had bought somebody else's troubles. Soon we traded them off for a better car in Barrhead. This was a great improvement compared with the horses and buggy.

More people means more food consumers so once in a whyle we have to buch a porkje.

In 1961 we decided to build a new house and in 1962 the first March we moved in. It was sure a big change for our family. This move had good results. On Canada day 1963, Patricia came to join our family.

The family start growing up and there came marriads in the family. Here is the whole family together at the wedding from Arthur in California August 1973. Tene, Arthur, Hilda, Ida, Tom, Patricia, Alice, Rose (1973).

Spring 1977 Tom start driving the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, till near the end of 1983. I was injoying this job going round in the country seeing what all the farmers where doing.

Editors' note: Tom De Groot wrote the captions for his own pictures. With his permussion we have written them exactly as he submutted them.

Tom's sister **Theresa** came from the Netherlands in 1950. She worked at Tiemstras and Abdays for a few years before marrying Klaas Huisman of Edmonton

After the harvest of 1950 Tom and Simon, along with several others, did some logging north of Vega to make lumber for their own use When that was done, it was back to Imperial Lumber for the rest of the winter with Ida and the children again staying by themselves on the farm. A neighbour boy, Jelle Tuininga, would bring Ida two barrels of water each week, because there was no well on the farm The Klaas Tuininga family also provided Ida and the children with transportation to church

In the spring, Tom and Simon arrived back home from the bush camp only to find Albert Tiemstra and John Ingwersen waiting for them They were needed to help haul the sawed lumber from the bush north of Vega. It was March and there was still much snow, but it was getting very soft so it was important to work quickly. The road took them over and around hills and they got stuck more than once with the loads. It took two days and two nights of steady working to get that lumber out: no rest periods! By Sunday morning the job was done and John said that he would take Simon and Tom by car as far up their road as he could. There were high snowbanks on the sides with deep ruts down the centre and soon the car could go no further. Simon and Tom started walking home, but they were just like drunks from the exertion of the past two days. They sat down on a snowbank for a rest and neither knew how long they sat there — the howling of the coyotes finally woke them up. They walked home, crawled into bed, and slept the rest of the day, not waking up till Monday morning

That summer was a busy one: the new lumber was made into a barn for cattle and pigs, and some fencing was done. Winter came too soon that year and one quarter had to be left in stooks in the field But by April 17, 1952, they were able to complete the threshing. That spring the family increased in size too. **Tena**, their first Canadian, was born May 7, 1953. The temperature was around 70 degrees above, and about two days later the trees were full of leaves

The next winter Tom stayed home to care for the family and feed some pigs and cattle. On February 3, 1956 the De Groots rejoiced when another child, **Alice**, was born. That year they also bought two quarters (NW 26-61-4-5, SE 26-61-4-5) from Simon Tuininga

Tom and Ida were happy with Canada, so the next step was citizenship. On the cold, windy February 21, 1957, they became Canadian citizens. The same year Simon and Henny De Groot moved from Edmonton and began farming with Tom and Ida on a fifty-fifty basis. That meant they could farm more land, so in 1958 an adjoining quarter, the NW 20-61-3-5, was purchased from Jack Tuininga

The family kept growing too. Another girl, **Rose**, was born November 17, 1959 The little house was getting too small, so plans were made for a larger one. On March 1, 1962, they moved into their new house and on July 1, 1963, **Patricia** was born.

The family grew up all too fast. All the children left Neerlandia. Arthur, Alice, and Tena are married. Arthur and Alice and their families live in B C. Arthur teaches in the Christian School at Abbotsford. He received his BA degree at Dordt. Tena and her family live in Edmonton The other three children are single and live in Edmonton. Hilda is an RNA at the Royal Alexandra hospital. Rose is a doctor's assistant at the Lincs Associates Clinic, and Patricia works at the Bank of Montreal

In 1976 Tom sold his share of the farm to Simon, keeping only the yard site and a few acres. A retirement job — driving the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op — became available in 1977. Tom enjoyed delivering fuel and seeing what all the farmers were doing. But, as Tom said, "On everything here on earth comes an end." Tom and Ida, senior citizens, are retired They look back and are thankful for the many blessings they have received, they look ahead to far greater blessings

Tom De Groot

MARTEN AND HILDA (TERPSTRA) DE JONG

Marten de Jong (born January 31, 1905, in Scharnegoutum, Friesland, the Netherlands) arrived in Canada for the first time in 1928. His first impression was that Canada was big and it was cold. Marten lived in Edmonton in a boarding house and worked the late shift as a baker at McGavin's. After a few years in Canada, Marten went back to Friesland and married Hilda

Terpstra, who had been born September 24, 1905, in Lollum

In the Netherlands eight children were born to Marten and Hilda: **Nellie** Winnie (June 25, 1931), **Winnie** Nelhe (January 15, 1933), **Adrian** Wily (July 30, 1934), **Mike** Douglas (August 9 1936), **Willy** Adrian (April 27, 1938), twins **Ann** and **Alan** (September 30, 1939), and **Pat** Julianna (April 30, 1946)

On August 16, 1948, Marten de Jong immigrated with his family to Canada. This time his destination was Neerlandia, where their sponsor, Pete Tuininga, lived. Marten liked Canada the first time, and that's why they came back They travelled on the boat *Tabinta*, which had once carried troops As soon as they docked in Quebec they went to the train station for their three-day trip to Edmonton

The train they travelled on had a steam engine and it was filthy The de Jongs even found sand between their sandwiches. On Saturday the family arrived in Edmonton and took baths at the Immigration Office. The water instantly turned black, it took at least two baths just to get the dirt off For the weekend they stayed at the George Visser and Frank Stiksma homes

On Monday morning the de Jongs boarded the train for Neerlandia. Pete Tuininga met them at the train station in Barrhead. He drove the family to Neerlandia and showed them their house which was located on his chicken farm. On September 1, Marten started to work for Pete on the farm.

The de Jongs were only in Neerlandia a few days when there was a knock on the door, and there stood a couple and their seven children — the Kippers family had come to welcome them. This was very nice, but Marten could not understand why they took all their children along This was something that had never been done "back home."

It was quiet and roomy in Neerlandia compared to the noisy and crowded Netherlands. The de Jongs found it hard to adjust to the change. The chickens, though, were unbearably noisy. Marten used to tell his children "all they do is yack and yack but they don't tell me anything" Chickens wearing glasses was another thing the family had to get used to. The chickens used to wear steel blinders so that they would be able to look straight ahead only and could not pick at each other.

The de Jong children would often see men pick celery, carrots, and corn out of the garden and eat them raw The children did not understand how the men could do this and did not even know what it was the men were eating. To them it was all new.

Marten recalls when his ninth child was born, "On October 28, 1948, our ninth child decided to arrive. We didn't have a car so I got on one of our bikes and went to the Hiemstra's They had a car and could give Hilda a ride to the hospital in Barrhead. Arnold, one of the Hiemstra's sons, drove me back to our house to pick up my wife. This boy was nineteen years old and he was petrified that the baby was going to be born in the car. He had good reason to worry because our ninth child, **Jenny** Folkje. was born only ten minutes after we arrived at the hospital. For six weeks after Jenny was born, my wife was critically ill with inflamed lungs. There seemed to be absolutely no hope but she survived and healed very nicely."

Winter came, and the de Jongs had only their Dutch bikes for transportation. One Sunday Winnie, Adrian, and Marten got out the bikes and started to bike to church in all the snow. When they were halfway there the Hiemstras stopped and gave them a ride Sometimes the snow was so bad that on Saturday the grader would plow the roads and on Sunday they were totally blocked with snow again.

Marten was earning seventy-five dollars a month for a family of eleven people, but managed to save twenty dollars a month since they did not have to pay rent on the house. The de Jongs' stay in Neerlandia came to an end because Pete's daughter Grace was getting married and the young couple were going to live in de Jong's house. So the de Jongs packed up their things and moved to Edmonton There Marten first worked in Alberta Bakery and soon afterward started his own bakery. Another daughter was born in Edmonton

Marten de Jong

JERRY AND ANN (ELGERSMA) DeVRIES

Jerry DeVries was born in Barrhead Hospital on December 11, 1942. He went to school first in Neerlandia, then in Barrhead, and finally to the University of Alberta in Edmonton. After one year at university, he decided that was not the place for him. He returned to Neerlandia,

Jerry holding Ryan, Evelyn, Ann, Jason, Beatrice, Larry, 1980

where he spent the majority of the next five years on his father's farm

On June 16, 1967, Jerry married Ann Elgersma, then they started a farming operation on the S.W 8-62-3-5 Here Jerry and Ann raise hogs and cattle

They have been blessed with five healthy children. **Beatrice** May (June 22, 1968), **Evelyn** Rose (October 24, 1969), **Larry** Grant (October 23, 1972), **Jason** Edward (September 18, 1975) and **Ryan** James (November 13, 1979).

Jerry DeVries

TERRENCE AND JENNY (VAARTSTRA) DE VRIES

Terrence de Vries and Jenny L. Vaartstra (August 20, 1946) of Edmonton were married August 4, 1967, in the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. They began farming on the de Vries family farm. Their five children **Patricia** Grace (October 1, 1968), **Susan** Wendy (September 15, 1969), **Robert** Jay (April 1, 1971), **Sandy** Lee (June 2, 1972), and **Beverly** Jean (December 6, 1974) help on the mixed farming operation which is located on the SW 7-62-3-5.

Jenny de Vries

EDWARD AND JOANNE (HULSMAN) DOORNENBAL

Ed (Edward) Cornelius was born May 24, 1955, to immigrants from Utrecht, the Netherlands. After graduating from Lacombe High School, Ed spent two years at Dordt College and four years at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he earned the title of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1979

During Ed's last years of schooling he began courting Joanne Hulsman. Joanne had been born February 11, 1955, to immigrants from Overijssel, the Netherlands. After graduating from Ponoka High School, Joanne worked for the provincial government for two years. She then attended RBC and after graduating from there, entered Royal Alexandra Hospital School of Nursing in Edmonton.

Meanwhile, Ed had accepted a position with Long-Muri Veterinary Clinic of Barrhead in 1979 He was attracted to the Barrhead area because of the proximity to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed community, where he was acquainted with a few Dutchmen

When Joanne graduated as a registered nurse in 1980, she also found work in Barrhead. Ed and Joanne were married on November 28, 1980, and settled in a rented home in Bloomsbury.

Since then, they have been blessed with **Brent**, born October 13, 1981, and **Kendra**, born July 12, 1983. Ed became a full partner in the veterinary clinic in 1983, and the business name was changed to Barrhead Vet Services. Ed enjoys his work and also loves sports. Joanne is working part-time at Barrhead Nursing Home. In 1984 they purchased an acreage on the NE 24-61-4-5 in the Neerlandia district.

Joanne Doornenbal

WILLARD AND MARGARET (VELDHUISEN) DYKSTRA

Willard and Margaret Dykstra moved to Neerlandia in 1978, just a few weeks after they were married Willard is originally from Owen Sound, Ontario, and Margaret from Emo, Ontario

They met in Calgary, where Margaret taught in the Calgary Christian School and Willard worked at various jobs. One weekend, they came to Neerlandia to visit Liz Esselink, a relative of Margaret, and to see more of Alberta at the same time Since they were impressed with the community and wanted to get out of the city, they decided to move to Neerlandia Willard found employment with Clay-An Industries, a local construction company

Willard, Margaret, and their two sons, **Nathaniel** Nicholas (December 27, 1978) and **Theodore** Adriel (May 20, 1981), live on an acreage purchased from Lambert and Gordon Tuininga (N E. 24-61-4-5).

Margaret holding Theodore, Willard holding Nathaniel, 1981

BERT AND TJAMKE (MOES) ELGERSMA

Bert (Bouke) Elgersma and Tjamke Moes were married on September 3, 1954, in Beverly Christian Reformed Church. At that time Bert and Tjamke were both working in Edmonton, Bert at Swift's Feed Mill and Tjamke at Hotel Macdonald

Bert had bought the SE 33-61-3-5 from his dad in 1949, and now the young couple worked hard to pay it off. After a two-week honeymoon they came to Neerlandia to harvest the crop. Then they went back to the city to work until spring, when they returned to put the crop in For two years Bert and Tjamke made this biannual migration but in 1956, with a baby on the way, they decided to live full-time in Neerlandia.

Since Bert's father, Anne, and his sister Haitina were still living on the farm, the farmhouse was shared by the two families. When **Marilyn Grace**, Bert and Tjamke's first daughter, was born on November 8, 1956, Anne began to realize that it was time for him to move out Therefore he bought a little house into which he and Haitina moved in 1957

While working in Edmonton, Bert had studied the inner workings of the feed mill. After his return to the farm, he used what he had learned to construct a grain elevator which automatically conveyed grain from his storage bins to the crusher. At a time when everyone else in Neerlandia was shovelling grain from granary to truck box and from truck box to crusher, Bert had provided himself with a set up which required no manual labour at all

When Bert and Tjamke married, Bert's father was concerned that Tjamke, being a city girl, would not make a good wife for a farmer Determined to prove him wrong, Tjamke learned to milk cows, though she was afraid of them, to judge the quality of a crop, though at first she could not distinguish wheat from oats or barley; and to give sick pigs a shot with a hypodermic syringe In short, she proved to be an excellent helpmeet for Bert

Back: Rodney, Beatrice, Anita, Marilyn, Andrew. Front: Bert, Tjamke, 1980.

Through the years more land was purchased and **Anita**, who was born on January 6, 1960, quickly grew up and became her dad's right-hand man on the farm until her marriage on November 23, 1979, to Norman Spronk of Edmonton They have two sons. A third

daughter, **Beatrice** Carol, was born on December 18, 1961. All of the girls are married. Marilyn married Don Plantinga, and Beatrice married Rick Visser. Both of them live in Neerlandia with their husbands.

After the three girls, the farm boys came along. **Andrew** Glenn, born on July 3, 1965, is now farming with Bert and is also raising his own hogs. **Rodney** Bert, who was born on November 28, 1970, also enjoys working on the farm.

Tjamke Elgersma

SIMON AND EVA (MAST) ELGERSMA

Simon Elgersma married Eva Mast on November 19, 1971. When Simon's father, Albert, retired in 1971, Simon bought the farm from him. With his new bride, he began farming on the S½ 16-62 3-5. Simon raises hogs and cattle. Prices were poor for hogs when he first started out, but they gradually improved to provide to provide a comfortable living.

Simon enjoys working and keeps busy on the farm. Eva's favourite pursuits are gardening and other outdoor work. Simon and Eva have three children: **Nelson** Miles, born November 22, 1977, **Simone** Alexandra, born October 1, 1979, and **Vanessa** Adrienne, born April 7, 1982.

Eva Elgersma

Back: Simon, Eva. Front: Nelson, Simone, Vanessa, 1984.

PETER AND EVE (GERRITSEN) EMMERZAEL

Peter was born, raised, and schooled in Neerlandia. At the age of twenty-one, in August 1941, Pete was called into the army. He enlisted in active service with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC) in September 1941. In March 1942, he was sent overseas to England for training and manoeuvres. This lasted until October 1943, when the RCASC were sent to Italy to help the American Eighth Army. In the beginning of 1945, they were sent to join the rest of the Canadians in the Netherlands. Soon after, the war was over.

Pete, 1945.

While in the Netherlands, Pete met Eve Gerritsen. Eve (Evertje) was born in Arnhem on August 21, 1921. Eve and Pete's meeting occurred because her mother had agreed to do laundry for Pete and a friend. Pete and Eve became engaged in July 1945. Pete left the Netherlands in October 1945 and came back to Canada in December. He was discharged from the army in January 1946.

Eve.

Eve regarded her next move in life as an adventure. She took a train to Sweden and then boarded the *Grypsholm*, a Swedish ship bound for New York. From there the train took her closer to her destination - Neerlandia. She arrived in May 1947. Pete and Eve were married June 6, 1947, in Neerlandia by Rev. John Rubingh. It was just a quiet ceremony in the Neerlandia parsonage. Life in Neerlandia was a complete change from the city life of Arnhem, but Eve adapted well and was never homesick.

The Emmerzaels built their home in 1948 on the NW 11-62-3-5, which was part of a school section. Sam Howey helped clear the land by doing the Cat work. (Cutting cost was approximately $15.00 per hour and piling $14.00.) Thus, Pete's mixed farming operation began. Their oldest son, **Fred** (Frederick Leonard), was born April 29, 1948. He was followed by **Bill** (Arian William) on January 16, 1950.

From 1952-57, Pete sold Watkins Products. This new venture was started because of a crop failure the previous year. Furthermore, Pete had fallen and hurt his hand, which was already missing a few fingers due to an accident in his youth with a grain crusher.

In October 1953 Eve's parents **Frederik** and **Hendrika**, immigrated to Neerlandia. Canada, however, and Neerlandia, in particular, was not to the Gerritsens' liking so in 1955 they returned to the Netherlands.

A daughter, **Barbara** Joan, had been born to Pete and Eve on November 10, 1954. After staying on the farm one more year they moved to Barrhead, which was more convenient for Pete's business. In 1957, the Emmerzaels moved to Hinton where Pete worked in a pulp mill. **Bob** (Robert) Peter was born there April 2, 1957, and Henrietta **Marlene** on April 29, 1961.

In August 1963 the Emmerzaels moved back to Neerlandia, but in March 1964 they sold their farm to Ko Rowaan and bought the Mellowdale Store. They operated the store for about four years and the post office until about 1969.

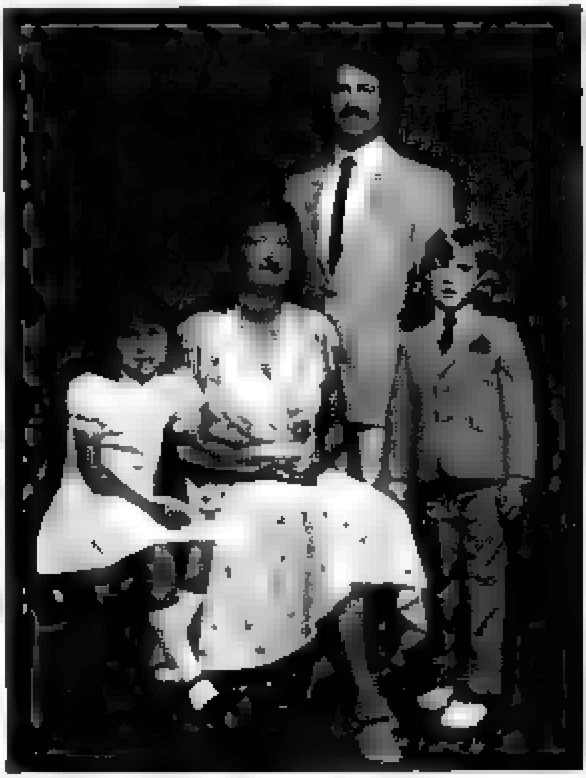
Pete and Eve took three trips back to the Netherlands to visit family and friends. During their last trip in 1982, Eve contracted Creutzfeld-Jacob disease. At present she is in the Barrhead hospital. Even through this trial, Pete says that God has been good to them in all their years.

Pete Emmerzael

EDMOND AND VIOLA (JANSSEN) FILLION

Edmond Fillion was born April 27, 1948, in Matane, Quebec. He came to Calgary with the Canadian Army, which he had joined in 1973. Soon after being released from the army, Edmond met Viola Janssen. They were married August 30, 1975. In 1976 Ed and Vi were able to purchase a vacant farmyard consisting of eight-and-a-half acres, formerly owned by Arnold Hiemstra, located on the SE 25-61-4-5. The following summer, on August 10, 1977, **Kelly** Guy was born to them, and **Tammie** Jo came to join their family in 1980. They now have a modern hog operation on their acreage.

Viola Fillion



Tammy, Vi, Ed, Kelly, 1984.

JOE AND HILDA (WIERENGA) FISHER

At seventeen years of age, Joe Fisher started truck driving for his uncle Dick Fisher. He hauled livestock to Edmonton, and groceries from there for the Vega Mercantile store. Four years later, in 1967, Joe became truck driver for his cousin Ted Reitsma and bought the business from him in 1970.

Joe married Hilda Wierenga, eldest daughter of "Henry by the Creek", on July 3, 1970. Later in that year, Hilda became treasurer of the Neerlandia Credit Union and did this work for 9½ years. The job was done at home, and the starting salary was $50 a month. Joe and Hilda have three sons: **Marlo** Jay (August 3, 1971), **Derek** Jonathan (March 30, 1973), and **Shawn** Jason (May 21, 1976). The family lives on an acreage on the N.W. 9-61-3-5.

Hilda Fisher

Back: Hilda, Joe. Front: Marlo, Shawn, Derek, 1984

WAYNE AND HENDRENE (WIERENGA) FISHER

Wayne Fisher helped his father, Cor Fisher, on the farm after he left school. He also drove truck for Joe Fisher Trucking, his brother's company. On October 7, 1972, Wayne married Hendrene Wierenga. They first lived in a mobile home on Cor Fisher's yard on the NW 10-61-3-5. Then in March 1979 Wayne took over the farm and the family moved into the farmhouse.

In March 1980 Wayne and Hendrene got a big surprise when they won a trip to Hawaii from the Westlock Massey Ferguson dealer. In his spare time Wayne likes to play hockey and go hunting, and Hendrene enjoys sewing. They have four children: **Tammy** Lyn (February 3, 1973), **Mona** Joy (August 4, 1975), **Brent** Cornell (May 26, 1977), and **Gregory** Wayne (September 2, 1979).

Wayne and Hendrene Fisher

Back: Tammy, Mona. Middle: Wayne, Hendrene. Front: Brent, Greg. 1983.

GERRIT AND HILDA (NANNINGA) GELDERMAN

Gerrit Gelderman and Hilda Nanninga were married on the cold, crisp, bright December 19, 1946. Before his marriage, Gerrit had worked with his dad, John Gelderman, on the farm, was a partner in the Dutch Mill, and also served in the Army. He was released from the Army on VE day (1945) and was glad to be home on the farm again. In 1946 the Gelderman family purchased the NE 2-62-3-5. This was to be Gerrit's farm. Hilda Nanninga worked in Neerlandia Co-op for three years previous to her marriage. The wages at that time were eighty dollars per month. She also played the organ in church and directed the church choir for a time.

Gerrit and Hilda's home life started out in the usual way. They bought all used furniture. A table and four chairs were purchased for eighteen dollars at a Shoal Creek auction. Gerrit did not have to buy any machinery because he continued to farm with the Gelderman family. He raised cows, pigs, and chickens.

Gerrit and Hilda had five children while on the farm. They are **Audrey** Hilda (May 25, 1949); **Ruth** Grace (January 22, 1951); **Martin** John (May 27, 1955), **Jerry** Gerrit (August 26, 1956), and **Neil** Henry (January 18, 1958).

In the summer of 1949 Gerrit began building a large two-storey hip roof barn. It would later house 800 laying hens. They also had close to forty sheep and sold the wool and lambs.

In 1957 Gerrit and Hilda sold the farm to Ike and Henry Nanninga, and started in the garage business with Fred Toebes in Vega. Gerrit apprenticed as an automobile mechanic under Fred and attended school in Calgary for six weeks every year for four years. During this time the family lived in a house on the Toebes farm. In 1960 Fred and Gerrit purchased Neerlandia Motors and moved their business to Neerlandia. They worked together at the Centre until 1962 when Fred moved back to Vega. The Gelderman family then moved to the little house by the garage and Gerrit became sole owner.

One day a fellow filled up his gas tank at the garage and drove over and parked at the Co-op store. What he didn't know was that his gas tank was leaking. Gerrit recalls that a group of men were talking beside the garage. One lit a cigarette and threw the burning match to the ground. It ignited the gas, and the fire followed the gas trail across the road to the car parked beside the Co-op. Fortunately the men were watching (probably with their mouths wide open) and quickly doused the flames and pushed the car out of danger's way.

As the children grew up, the boys began helping in the garage. The girls were kept busy with babysitting. Audrey also worked for C. P. Mast on the switchboard, and Ruth had a Saturday job in the Co-op.

Gerrit was an active member of the community, he served on the local school board, credit union, store board, and in consistory. He also was involved in the development and building of the local skating rink. Because he was in the centre of the hamlet, he became a contact person for a proposed curling rink, asking people to donate time and money. There was, however, a fair amount of opposition to this project, and the community as a whole did not support it sufficiently for it to become a reality.

Back: Martin, Jerry, Ruth. Front: Hilda, Neil, Gerrit, 1967

In the fall of 1966 Gerrit and Hilda made a trip to southern B.C. It was November — snowy and cold in Neerlandia, but warm, sunny, and green in Abbotsford. Quite a contrast! Gerrit was offered a job there and it was very tempting. The garage business was not all roses. Some people could not pay their accounts promptly, and Gerrit, an easy-going person who loved the mechanical work, lacked the administrative skills which are an important part of a successful business. All things considered, Gerrit took the job offer.

There were some things to finish in Neerlandia, so it was August 1967 before all the family — except Audrey, who was studying to be a Certified Nurse's Aide in Edmonton — moved to Abbotsford. Gerrit worked for Avenue Farm Machinery, first as mechanic and then as foreman.

Gerrit and Hilda have been back to Neerlandia many times to visit, but are content to be surrounded by their family where God has placed them, in Abbotsford.

Gerrit and Hilda Gelderman

HENRY AND BETTY (FISHER) GELDERMAN

Henry John Gelderman, the youngest son of John and Reka Gelderman, was born on September 11, 1935, on the farm where he presently lives. On August 12, 1960, in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, he married Betty Fisher, daughter of Cor and Elizabeth Fisher. They purchased the Gelderman homestead (NE 35-61-3-5), where they maintain a mixed farming operation.

From their marriage four children were born. **Pearl** Ellen was born on May 24, 1961. After graduating from high school, she attended Dordt College, where she met her future husband, Glenn Vander Lugt. On August 14, 1981, they were married and now live and farm with their daughter in Edgerton, Minnesota.

Dale Wesley was born on July 12, 1962. Since August 1981, he has been employed by Paddle Plumbing Ltd. of Barrhead.

Randall Wade was born on February 11, 1965. He is currently working at home. Randy and his cousin, Howard Gelderman, won gold medals in the Alberta School Association Provincial Badminton finals. In 1982 they took first place in the intermediate class at Lethbridge, and in 1983 they took first place in the senior class at Calgary.

Kevin Lyle was born on April 22, 1968. All three sons are talented in badminton and hockey. Henry and Betty are loyal sports fans.

Randy, Kevin, Pearl, Dale, Henry, Betty, 1981

They are involved in other activities as well. Henry has served on community boards. Betty is well known for her success in growing plants. Their home is filled with plants of many kinds. Each summer she has a large vegetable garden and a colourful display in her flower beds. Her floral arrangements have won awards at the Barrhead Blue Heron Fair. She has given instruction in dried flower arranging and other crafts.

Henry and Betty are happy to be part of the community of Neerlandia. They are thankful to the Lord for his ever present nearness and salvation for them and their family.

Betty Gelderman

HERMAN AND LULA (KRIKKE) GELDERMAN

Herman Gelderman wed Lula Krikke on her birthday, June 17, 1953. Prior to their wedding Lula had worked at the Neerlandia Co-op for six years and Herman had worked for his dad. Herman and Lula bought the SW 36-61-3-5 from Gerrit Ingwersen and started their life together.

Marcia Carol was born April 7, 1955. Lula came home with her just before a blizzard confined them to the farm for a month. During that month the doctor's book was the complete source of medical advice for the minor complications of a firstborn. After high school Marcia obtained a degree in special education from the U of A. She married Henry Stiksma of Edmonton on August 2, 1975. She taught at the North Edmonton and Calgary Christian schools until their son was born in 1982.

Rosalie Lynn was born July 19, 1956, during a hot summer. Her birthday was always during the busy haying time. Not only was it rare that she had a birthday party, but one year her birthday was forgotten until a gift-bearing uncle drove on the yard. After high school Rose continued her education at Calvin College, where she received a BA degree in sociology. This led to an internship as a community organizer in the Chicago area. She returnd to Edmonton in 1980. Since then she has held a number of social service-related jobs.

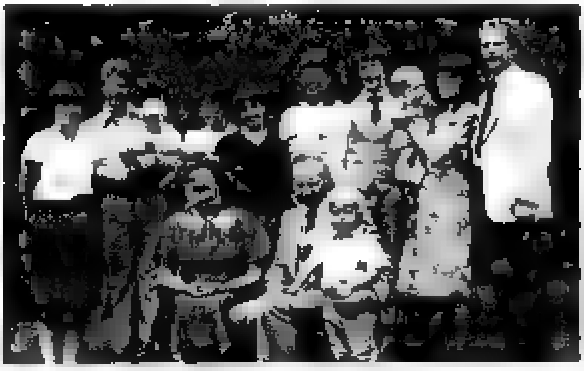
John William, his grandfathers' namesake, was born April 27, 1958. After working at carpentry in Edmonton, he married **Patricia** Jeanette **Van Eck** on September 2, 1977. Pat had been born in Edmonton on February 28, 1958.

After their marriage John and Pat moved to Neerlandia, living first in the hamlet. In February 1983 John and Pat with their sons, **Michael** John (October 26, 1979) and **Nicholas** Joel (April 7, 1982), moved into their new house on the SE 35-61-3-5.

Wendell Allan, born April 5, 1960, aspired to become an Indian and pitch his teepee in the back of the field. He has since changed his mind and became first a plumber and then tried his hand at carpentry.

To carry on the Indian tradition, when the fifth child was born (June 18, 1962) her parents stopped enroute to the hospital to watch a lynx cross the road. They soon changed her name from Running Lynx to the more feminine **Karen** Joan. Karen is working toward an education degree.

Howard Glenn, baby of the family, was born August 30, 1965. After a year at The King's College he transferred to the U of A where he is working toward a degree in physical education.



Back: Rosalie, John holding Nicholas, Pat, Karen, Wendell, Howard, Marcia holding Timothy, Henry Stiksma. Front: Lula, Herman, Michael, 1983.

In addition to raising their own family, Herman and Lula have made a home for four foster children for periods of time from two months to one-and-a-half years. They are thankful to their covenant God for His blessings, and hope and pray that they and their children will remain faithful to the Lord.

Gelderman Family

ADRIAN AND EEF (VAN ROON) HAMOEN SR.

Adrian (Adrianus) Leendert Hamoen, born August 13, 1903, in Utrecht, Utrecht, the Netherlands, married Eef (Everdina) Van Roon from the same city on February 21, 1927. Eef had been born July 7, 1907. They had three children: **Annie** born November 19, 1929, **Adrian** (Adrianus) Leendert, born March 29, 1940; and **Kees** (Cornelius), born October 11, 1943. Adrian owned a milk and milk products store in Utrecht but was bothered by government restrictions. Through a Reformed immigration society he heard that there was a Dutchman from Canada visiting Groningen. There the Hamoens met Andries Wierenga, who told them about Neerlandia.

In Utrecht, just before coming to Canada. Standing: Annie. Seated: Adrian Sr., Adrian, Kees, Eef, 1948.

Adrian and Eef decided to move to Neerlandia and on April 8, 1948, they boarded the ocean liner *Kota Inten* with their children. The *Kota Inten*, originally used for carrying troops, had been converted into an immigrant ship and did not make for an entirely enjoyable trip. At one point Adrian asked another man on the ship where he was headed. The man said, "Canada." That was logical — so was everyone else on the ship. This man though, like Adrian, was headed for Neerlandia. His name was Dick Froma.

After disembarking at Halifax on April 17, 1948, the family boarded a train for Edmonton. That trip was about as bad as the one by boat. The immigrant trains were filthy and gave one the impression of being converted cattle liners. The trip was four days and three nights of jostling, soot, and smoke. Upon arrival at the Immigration Hall, the family headed immediately for the bathrooms where there were bathtubs.

After a night's rest in the Immigration Hall, the family boarded the train for Barrhead. This trip took a whole day. At the train they were met by Andries Wierenga, whose son Herman was the fieldman. The first thing Andries did was take them to the Neerlandia Co-op to buy rubber boots It was a wet, late spring and Neerlandia was a big mud hole

The Hamoens intended to stay at Andries Wierenga's place for four to five days, but this time stretched into three weeks Adrian was supposed to work for a farmer in Westlock, but the roads were impassable. After waiting three weeks, the family boarded the train at Barrhead and travelled to Morinville From there the farmer picked them up and they went to Westlock. Adrian learned all about picking roots quite a change from being a merchant in Utrecht

But Westlock was a long distance from church and the wages were very low, so in August the family moved back to Neerlandia There Adrian began to work for George Anema. In February 1949 Adrian bought a quarter of land from John Terpsma (NW 36-61-3-5) and started farming. He began with six cows, five sows, three horses, and some chickens

In 1958 Adrian sold the farm to Albert Mast, who had married Annie, and the rest of the family moved to Vega where they had bought three quarters of section 31-62-3-5 from Wanda Janz. They had made their plans on the hopes of receiving the then-current price of about forty dollars per hog. However, the price plummeted to about twenty dollars per hog. Penny-pinching and an awful lot of hard work became all too familiar

On August 10, 1959, the Lord in His unsearchable wisdom called Eef Home. For fifteen months Adrian Sr. and his sons were on their own. Housework was shared. Adrian Sr. did the cooking (wheatlet porridge for breakfast and dessert), Adrian Jr. did the housework, and Kees did the baking. Kees loved to make pies for Sunday dinner but, much to his disgust, Adrian Jr. loved to eat the filling on Saturday nights Johanna Kuhn, a neighbour, did the laundry.

On October 28, 1960, Adrian Sr. married **Henrietta** (Hendrikjen) **Selles** of Edmonton. Henrietta had been born January 11, 1905 in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. She was a widow when she immigrated to Canada in 1953 with her four boys. The youngest son, **Bill** (Willem), came to Vega with her. The other three boys were already married

In 1965 Adrian Jr. married Lies Pieffers. Kees married Dinie Vogelzang in 1967. Bill Selles moved to the city and now lives in Spruce Grove where he works in construction He is married to Gretchie Boonstra and they have three children

In 1972 Adrian Sr. retired from active farming, and his sons took over the farm. Adrian Sr and Henrietta remained in their own home on the farm. On April 5, 1978, Adrian Sr. died Henrietta stayed on the home place until 1984 when she moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton

Lies Hamoen

ADRIAN AND LIES (PIEFFERS) HAMOEN JR.

Adrian Hamoen and Lies Pieffers were married August 11, 1965, in the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale, Alberta. The bride's father officiated at the ceremony. After their honeymoon, Adrian and Lies settled down on Adrian's farm (NE 1-63-4-5) in Vega. A small house already on the property had been renovated, and two barns and a garage had been added.

On April 5, 1967, the Lord blessed the marriage with the birth of a daughter, **Evelyn** Rietta Later that summer a bigger house was moved onto the place It too needed renovations, but was finished in time for the arrival of a second daughter, **Geraldine** Phyllis, on May 5, 1968.

March 17, 1971, was a special day because **Leonard** Adrian was born, and another happy occasion was October 1, 1972, when **Jody** Albertina was added to the family

Adrian Hamoen Sr. retired in 1972 and for a number of years his sons farmed together. Besides the home quarter, Adrian also farmed the NE 36-62-4-5 and a section in the Fawcett area. In 1983 he bought the SE 6-63-3-5 from Philip Bryan of Vega

The family built a new house on the home quarter in 1977 That winter Adrian was busy trying to build the house as well as doing his own work and visiting Lies in The University

Back: Geraldine, Evelyn. Middle: Leonard, Adrian, Lies. Front: Ronald, Jody, 1978.

Hospital in Edmonton. Lies was having trouble with a pregnancy, but January 24, 1978, saw the birth of a healthy boy, **Ronald** Keith. On March 10, 1978, the family moved into their new home, leaving the old one to Lies' brother, Henry and his wife Christine, who had been living with them since November 1977. Christine had been looking after the Hamoen family while Lies was in the hospital.

On March 31, 1979, God took Leonard unto Himself after a tractor accident at home. The Hamoen children attend the Covenant Canadian Reformed School in Neerlandia, where Lies teaches typing and supervises classes during their library periods.

Lies Hamoen

KEES AND DINIE (VOGELZANG) HAMOEN

On June 9, 1967, Kees Hamoen married Dinie (Gerritdina) Vogelzang of Barrhead. She was born in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on June 18, 1944, and immigrated with her parents to Edmonton in 1951. From there she moved to Rocky Mountain House, Fawcett, and last of all to Barrhead.

Since the wedding was in June, the families had hopes of beautiful warm weather. Instead there was a regular snow storm in the morning. By afternoon everything was muddy. Even the suit of the officiating minister, Rev. G. Pieffers, had to be brushed off before the ceremony because it was caked with mud.

In March 1967 the building of a small house had been started on Kees' farm. It was finished on June 9. At the time of his marriage Kees was farming with his father in dairy and hogs. Kees and Dinie live on the NW 31-62-3-5 and also own the S½ 31-62-3-5.

Back: Joanne, Helena, Adrian. Middle: Elaine, Dinie, Darlene, Kees. Front: Marie, Kenneth, 1982

In the next four years, **Elaine** Rita (May 27, 1968), **Adrian** Walter (April 26, 1969); **Joanne** Gail (July 10, 1970); and **Helena** Rosanne (December 17, 1971) were born. When **Marie** Lynn (April 21, 1974) was born, the house became too small and three bedrooms were added. In 1976 **Kenneth** Neil (February 7) was born, and two years later **Darlene** Joyce (July 20, 1978) was added to this richly-blessed family.

In 1971 the dairy cows were sold and Kees went into hog production. In 1972 he went into partnership with his brother Adrian. In 1979 a new house was built as the old one was bursting at the seams again. In 1982 Kees and Adrian dissolved the partnership except for the equipment, which they still share.

Dinie Hamoen

KARL AND TILLIE (ELGERSMA) HESTERMANN

Tillie Elgersma left Neerlandia in 1951 to go to the city (Edmonton). In the winter she did housework and in the summer she came home and helped on the farm until her brother Bert got married. Then she got a full-time job at G W G. and later at Hotel Macdonald. Tillie met Karl (Karlheinz) Wilhelm Hestermann in 1956. Karl, born in Wattenscheid, Germany in 1930, came to Canada by himself in 1952. He was the adventuresome type and thought five years in Canada might be good. But that period was extended when he met Tillie On December 6, 1957, they were married in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church.

They lived in Edmonton where Karl worked as a labour foreman with Christianson Mcdonald Construction for nine years. After that he worked for Pool construction. In 1964 they bought the NE 18-61-3-5 from Tillie's father, Anne Elgersma, who wanted to retire from farming. In 1974 the Hestermanns bought the E½ 23-61-4-5 from Bill Reitsma, and a year later decided to move to Neerlandia and make farming a full-time job. They started off with mixed farming, and five years later were able to go into dairy — their original plans for farming

Karl and Tillie have three healthy children The oldest, **John** Karlheinz, was born September 7, 1958. John now has a job with Esso in Swan Hills On July 26, 1980, he married Cheryl Petrunia of Calgary. They have one child

Haitina Elizabeth was born July 22, 1968, and **Andrew** Karlheinz arrived November 9 1971 As did John, Haitina and Andrew help their parents with the milking and looking after the calves. They share their mother's love for horses and spend many hours breaking and riding them. The farm is also shared with three dogs who are appreciated most of the time

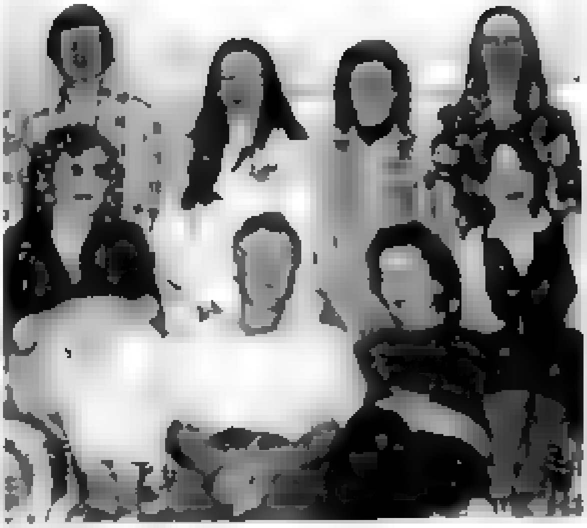
Tillie Hestermann

ARNOLD AND GERRI (CLEMENTS) HIEMSTRA

Arnold was born in Neerlandia and went to school there until the age of fifteen, when he went to work on farms in the area Arnold took up as homestead the SW 25-61-4-5 in 1952. He married Gerri (Geraldine) Clements of Provost, Alberta, on June 24, 1953. Gerri had been born December 27, 1935. Arnold and Gerri have six children. **Leslie** Arnold born July 9, 1954, **Gwendolyn** Joyce born July 3, 1955; **Jeanne** Marie born June 12, 1956; **Rosalie** Anne born August 2, 1957, **Lori** Lynn born May 21, 1959, and **Debra** Lee born February 2, 1961

Arnold and Gerri left Neerlandia in February 1968. They moved to Barrhead, where they could both get work and where the future looked better than on the farm. They live on a small acreage eight miles north of Barrhead. Arnold drives truck for the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool. All of the children are married

Gerri Hiemstra



Leslie, Gwen, Jeanne, Roselee. Front. Lori, Arnold Geraldine, Debra, 1979

COR AND JENNIE (SEINEN) HIEMSTRA

Cor Hiemstra, born and raised in Neerlandia, joined the Canadian Army in April 1942 and left for England in June 1942 He was stationed in several different countries in Europe and was involved in the liberation of the Netherlands. Cor returned to Canada in January 1946 with the rank of Signalman He helped on the farm for one summer but his love for the

Cor

mountains, which he had acquired in Italy, compelled him to leave for B.C. where he worked for various sawmills, logging firms, and the CNR.

Cor ended up in Houston, where he met Jennie Seinen whom he married April 7, 1948. Together they returned to Neerlandia to try farming once more, taking over the SE 20-61-3-5 from Cor's father, Henry. Farming still did not satisfy Cor, so he returned to the army in January 1952, serving as a communicators operator. After serving in Vancouver, Whitehorse, and Namao, he retired in April 1971.

God has been very good to the Hiemstras. Their marriage was blessed with seven children. Since retiring from military life, Cor has been employed in Edmonton by the Department of National Defence as a communicator. Cor and Jennie reside in Sherwood Park.

Cor Hiemstra

CORNELIUS AND GRACE (TUININGA) HIEMSTRA

Corny (Cornelius) Jakob Hiemstra, son of Jacob and Janke Hiemstra, married Grace Tuininga in December 1948. They first lived in a small house on Corny's parents' yard. Later they moved to the SW 19-61-4-5, which Corny farmed for a few years.

Corny and Grace moved to Edmonton in 1954, but returned to Neerlandia two years later. This time they purchased a lot in the hamlet onto which they moved their farmhouse. Corny began working as a truck driver for Simon Tuininga, while Grace looked after their home and family.

By this time there were two little Hiemstras. **Richard** Jacob had been born on June 30, 1949. He had been followed by **Bernard** Peter on September 22, 1952. A third son, **Donald** John, was born on May 15, 1956, and a fourth, **Wesley** Cornelius, on December 5, 1959. On October 28, 1963, the last of the boys, **Kevin** David, was born.

In 1965 Corny and Grace and their family moved back to Edmonton. On December 3, 1969, their only daughter, **Charlene**, was born. Grace and Corny continue to live in the city (1984).

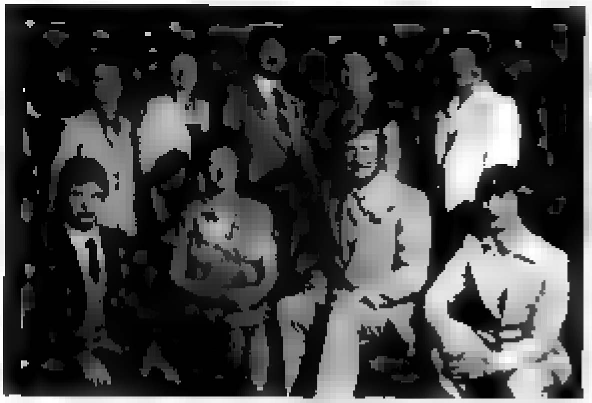
Donald is the only child who has returned to live in Neerlandia. On July 19, 1975, he married Grace van Dijken. Don worked at a variety of jobs until he and Grace purchased Bill Fisher Trucking in 1980. They operate the business, which they renamed Graydon Trucking Ltd., from their home. They live on an acreage on the NW 24-61-4-5, and have two sons, **Christopher** Don, born on January 31, 1976, and **Shannon**, Cory born on September 25, 1978.

Shannon, Don, Grace, Christopher, c. 1982

Jenny Fisher

HENRY AND JESSIE (McCULLOUGH) HIEMSTRA

Henry Hiemstra was born and educated in Neerlandia. He married Jessie McCullough of Holmes Crossing on October 14, 1955. Jessie had been born September 11, 1936. Her father was a cook and later worked in steel construction in Edmonton. Henry and Jessie live on the original Jacob Hiemstra homestead. Henry is presently employed by Alberta Transportation. Henry and Jessie have a family of five boys and two girls.


Back: Bradley, Patricia, Ronald, Beverly, Kenny. Front: Jacob, Jessie, Henry, Douglas, 1983.

Ronald Henry was born May 13, 1956. He married Pauline Grosschmidt of Camp Creek on July 17, 1976, and they have two children. They make their home in Norman Wells, N.W.T., where Ron is employed by Esso Resources as a process supervisor.

Douglas William was born April 16, 1957. He married Pauline's sister Nancy on June 3, 1978. Doug and Nancy have four children. Doug is employed by Esso Resources and they live in Swan Hills.

Kenneth Ellen was born February 22, 1959. On July 17, 1982 he married Geraldine Gosselin of Longlac, Ontario. They make their home in Swan Hills and are both employed by Esso Resources. They have one child.

Patricia Ann was born June 25, 1960. She married Warren Bready of Fort Assiniboine on July 11, 1981. They have one daughter and live in Swan Hills. Warren also works for Esso Resources.

Jacob James was born August 28, 1961. He married Wilma Selies of Barrhead on September 18, 1982. They have one daughter. Jacob is employed by Home Oil and they live in Swan Hills.

Beverly Jean was born January 18, 1963. She married Arley Currie of Swan Hills on May 19, 1984, and works there at the Derrick Motor Inn.

Bradley Wayne, born June 9, 1964, works in Swan Hills for Swan Hills Trucking as a mechanic.

Jessie Hiemstra

HAROLD AND NELLIE (DE KRUYF) HOLLANDER

In the spring of 1962, Harold Hollander received a call to be the pastor of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. At the time, he was the first pastor of two small churches in Alliston and Orangeville, Ontario. These two churches had developed to the point where each one could have their own pastor, hence it was a good time to consider seriously a call from another field. The thought of serving the Lord in the far north was intriguing to him and he felt led to accept the call.

Harold and Nellie made the move by loading their furniture in a boxcar to be shipped by rail. The family and the dog, a fox terrier, were piled in a black '59 Plymouth Fury. The Neerlandia consistory had graciously given Harold time to fulfill his obligations to the Classis Ontario, which had delegated him to attend the annual Synod at Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was eager to do this because he was still young enough (43 years) to believe that his insight and wisdom were needed in Grand Rapids and, besides that, this was the first time he had been conferred this honour.

By the time Synod was over, he looked forward to the vacation he still had coming, so they travelled to northwest Iowa, where both he and Nellie had been born, had received their early education, and had survived the Great Depression. Life had been rugged then, but they had learned many lessons in the art of survival which stood them in good stead in their early years in the parsonage.

The Hollander family made their arrival in Neerlandia in August. Their oldest son, Marlo, had preceded the rest of the family, having moved to Edmonton. The three youngest children, **Howard** Leon (June 20, 1944), **Sharon** Ruth (February 7, 1948) and **Clarice** Joan (September 1, 1950) came to Neerlandia with their parents.

Harold wrote, "We were all royally welcomed into the community by the entire church, young and old. A reception supper was held by the consistory and their wives. The following night a reception was held in the school gym. Everyone attended. There were songs, readings, skits, and speeches — everything to make a great welcome and an unforgettable occasion! Klaas Tuininga, vice-president of the consistory, gave an unforgettable speech. The evening was marked by vim, vigor, and vitality. There was participation by young and old. It was evident that there were great possibilities for this congregation."

Thus began four years of ministry. Not everyone agreed with what their pastor said or did. He was not as enthusiastic about the Association of Reformed Scientific Studies as some wanted him to be. There was much discussion and tension mounted.

In June 1966 Nellie had a small dark spot removed from the skin of her leg. This proved to be a dangerous form of cancer — melanoma — and required extensive surgery. Harold had been struggling for four years with stomach ulcers. When he received a call to Wellsburg, Iowa, he came to the conclusion that his work at Neerlandia was finished.

One addition was made to their family during these years: a son, **Timothy** Jay (March 5, 1965) was added by adoption.

After serving in Wellsburg for nine years, Harold and Nellie went to Harrison, South Dakota. They retired in 1983 and intend to make Lynden, Washington, their home.

Harold Hollander

WILFRED AND HILDA (PETERS) HOLWERDA

Wilfred Holwerda married Hilda Peters on May 6, 1955. After their marriage, they lived one year in Neerlandia, then moved to Edmonton and later to Cherhill. They returned to Neerlandia to work for Simon Tuininga for three years and afterward lived in Bloomsbury and Campsie. From 1971-79 they lived in Neerlandia on the NE 36-61-3-5, where they raised hogs.

The Lord blessed their marriage with seven children: **Harold** (November 30, 1955), **Vivian** (September 19, 1957), **Carolyn** (September 2, 1959), **Valerie** (December 26, 1962), **Brian** (October 26, 1965), **Colin** (August 27, 1969), and **Randal** (March 3, 1973).

Back: Valerie, Carolyn, Vivian, Harold, Brian, Colin. Front: Wilfred, Hilda, Randal, 1984

Wilfred has done many things in his lifetime, including farming. There is a saying, "So father, so son", and Wilfred, like his father, enjoys serving the public. He is presently working as a salesman in the agricultural field, employed by Daco Feeds.

Harold married **Jane Nijenhuis** of Fergus, Ontario. They have four children: **Heather** (February 7, 1978), **Kevin** (February 3, 1980), **Clayton** (September 4, 1981), and **Charlotte** (May 4, 1983). Harold is presently working for Simon Tuininga. The three Holwerda girls are also married. Vivian married Terry Hoeksema and they have three children. Carolyn married Louis Haan. Valerie married John Vanderdeen. They have two children.

Wilf Holwerda

HANS AND INA (ROOSTEE) INGWERSEN

When the Second World War began, Hans (Johannes, May 20, 1915) and Ina (December 8, 1915) Ingwersen and their daughter, **Iteke** (December 20, 1937), were living in the Netherlands. Hans was studying in Germany, but had to flee when the Germans invaded the Netherlands. Since he could not get back to his country, he found his way onto a Holland-Amerika Line ship. He first scrubbed floors, then worked himself up until he became the ship's purser. After becoming ill, he was taken ashore in New York, U.S.A., where he continued working for the Holland-Amerika Line. After the war he was reunited with Ina and Iteke, whom he had not seen for seven years.

Iteke, Hans, Ina, 1950s.

Hans was interested in returning to America, so he wrote to his uncle, Case Ingwersen of Neerlandia. Consequently, in 1947, Hans and his family immigrated to Canada, sponsored by John Ingwersen. Since John's Dutch name was also Johannes, it was decided to call cousin

Johannes by the name Hans. While in Neerlandia, the Hans Ingwersen family lived with the John Ingwersen family. Hans had never been on a farm before, but he learned how to milk cows, harness horses, and work with a tractor. Ina, a registered nurse, wrote an exam in Edmonton and then got a job in the Barrhead hospital. After staying here for about nine months, Hans moved east to work while Ina continued working in Barrhead. Hans soon went to New York, where he wanted to study, and the family was reunited there. After completing his studies, Hans became a college lecturer, while Ina continued nursing. They are now both retired and live in Tennessee, U S A.

John Ingwersen

GERT AND ULLA (CARLSSON) JACOBSSON

Gert Erik Jacobsson was born March 20, 1942, in Landskrona, Sweden, where his father worked for a big shipbuilding company. When Gert was four years old the family moved to a small rented farm. Two years later they moved again to rent a bigger farm where Gert and his three brothers grew up. Gert belonged to the Lutheran Church, to which ninety percent of the Swedish people belong.

Ulla Carin Carlsson was born October 2, 1946, in the small village of Silvakra, Sweden, where her family had a small farm. When she was five years old the family moved to another village where they bought a smaller farm. Here Ulla's father became a carpenter and with his wife raised their six children. Like Gert, Ulla belonged to the Lutheran Church.

Gert and Ulla were married October 29, 1966. They rented a farm in Havgard, where Gert **Johnny** was born on February 4, 1967. **Ralph** Erik was born the following year on January 30. In 1969 the family bought their own farm in Alested. Here Susanne Ulla **Carina** was born on June 15, 1969. Another daughter, Anna **Cecilia**, was born May 31, 1975. On this farm the Jacobssons grew potatoes and raised hogs.

Soon it was time for the family to move again, but this time they decided to move to another country. They chose Canada, in particular western Canada, which held special interest for Gert. Two holidays were taken to Alberta to see if it would hold a good future for the children and for farming. Finally, on February 25, 1981, after two years of planning, the Jacobssons took most of their belongings and moved to Canada. They first rented a house in Rainier, Alberta. To get better acquainted with farming in Canada, Gert became a farmhand in nearby Scandia. Ulla got a job working in a restaurant to help her learn the language. Every now and then they took a couple of days off to drive around Alberta, looking for a place where they could settle down.

Ulla, Cecelia, Gert, Johnny, Ralph. Front: Carina.

Upon coming to Neerlandia, they were very impressed by the well-maintained farms and nice surroundings. The Co-op Store and Service Centre were other advantages. When they came to the Clarence Olthuis farm they knew this was the place they had been looking for. The Jacobssons purchased the farm, located on NE 31-61-2-5, in April 1982.

The family did not know at the time that just about everyone in Neerlandia had a Dutch background, but it did not take them long to find out. The Jacobssons say: " . . . this has not been a problem, the other way around, everything and everybody in Neerlandia has been very good and willing to help, and the family likes it very much here"

Jacobsson Family

BERT AND BERTHA (STRYDHORST) JANSSEN

Bert (Lambertus) Janssen and Bertha Strydhorst were married in Neerlandia on June 10, 1966. They went to live on the old Jake

Witzke homestead in Vega, on the NE 6-63-3-5. The only things on the place were a few beat-up, broken-down, battered, bruised, and good-for-nothing log buildings, including the house which had been built twenty-four years previously by Grampa and Harry Janssen for Harry and Tinie. Later the house had been bought and moved to its present location by Jake Witzke. Bert and Bertha had no windbreak except for a few scrub trees (which were only eyesores anyway) and, consequently, the hill on which the house stood must have been the coldest one south of Alaska. There was no phone, gas, or running water. The only convenience was electricity. The house was heated by a coal furnace.

On May 15, 1967, **Brenden** Lyle was born. At this time the Janssens had an "excellent" well which put out one gallon of water every three minutes. On wash days Bertha spent hours waiting for water. To help speed up things a bit she took diapers to the well, which was unaffectionately known as The Drip, to rinse them out instead of packing water to the house.

In April 1968, Bert took a half a day off to get some trees from Bill Fisher to plant on the barren hill. Then in June of the same year, Bert's brother Ivan brought some five-foot spruce trees and some small maples. The maples did well, considering the land was quite run down and would only produce thirty bushels of wheat per acre. What a joy to have a windbreak!

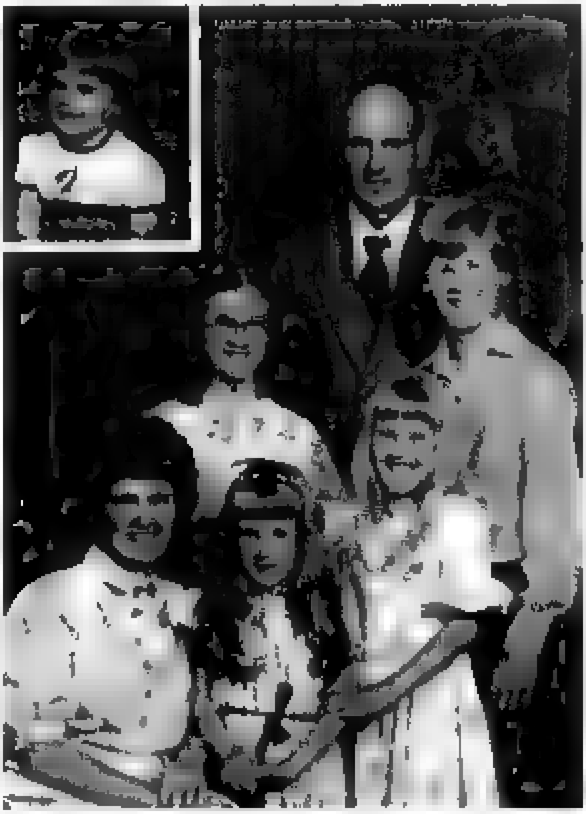
Norine Ruth was born August 2, 1969. The same year Bert built his first barn after trying unsuccessfully for three years to raise pigs in the cold, uninsulated shacks which "decorated" the yard. The barn was built with the help of neighbours who were paid one dollar an hour.

During some of these early winters, Bert and Bertha were drifted in for days at a time. On one occasion Bert packed water over the drifts to his neighbour Vladymir Bukieda, who had no well and whose son was unable to climb over the drifts to Bert's well to bring water home. To get to church one Christmas, Bert and Bertha walked nearly a mile with the kids to a corner where Bert's dad could pick them up.

Verndel Faith was born October 7, 1971, and her diapers were washed at the same water system, The Drip. However, the pigs now drank from a new dugout.

The "great divide" happened in 1972 when Bert and Bertha split up with his folks. Until this time they had farmed together. **Marlene** Dale was born July 11, 1974.

Until 1975 the Janssens were hailed out many times but the worst came on July 27, 1975, when a bad hailstorm and a tornado claimed every bit of hay, grain, and garden. The grain grew back and Bert made silage from it. Minimal damage was done to the buildings.


Back: Norine, Bert, Brenden. Front: Bertha, Marlene, Verndel, 1979. Inset: Jacqueline, 1982.

In January 1981, with the family growing, it became necessary to replace The Drip with a well drilled by Big Iron. What a blessing to have enough water! On July 7, 1981, **Jacqueline** Carmen was born.

At the present time Bert and Bertha still live in the same house, though they have been renovating since they moved in. All of the other shacks have been replaced with good buildings. They farm the one quarter and milk thirty cows.

Bert and Bertha Janssen

JACK AND RUTH (SCHOENROCK) JANSSEN

Jack was born June 17, 1928, in Edmonton, where the municipal airport is now located. His father, Bart, operated a dairy farm right next to the original airport, using the land around the existing runways as pasture for his cattle. Jack spent the first years of his life watching the planes come and go, which resulted in a lifelong love for airplanes. In 1938, with war on the horizon, an expansion of the airport was imminent, so the farm was sold to the city and the Janssens moved to Neerlandia.

True Love. Jack and his dog, 1939

Jack began school in Neerlandia when he was ten years old, getting into the usual fights and mischief which were so prevalent among children who had to walk long distances to school. During the summer he and his dog spent long hours herding cattle along the roads or on summer fallow. Sometimes they were so busy playing they forgot to watch the cattle, who were busy eating grain. As Jack grew older, he helped his father and his brother Harry on the farm. Horses were still the order of the day but Jack dreamed of the time when tractors and trucks would take over the work done by horses.

In 1948 Jack's mother died. By this time, all Jack's brothers and sisters were married, so Jack and his dad felt the loss all the more. It was while the two men were baching that Jack met Ruth Schoenrock.

Ruth, born in Ponca, Nebraska, on March 15, 1931, had come with her parents to the Barrhead area in 1935. She came to Neerlandia in April 1949, just three days after writing her last examination at the U of A, to teach grades three and four. She first met Jack at the local post office, which at that time stayed open Friday evenings. Ruth had to sign for a parcel and, quite typically, could not find her pen. Jack offered her his pen and from then on their relationship grew. They were married in the Trinity Lutheran Church in Westlock on March 29, 1951, and Ruth subsequently moved into the Janssen family home.

Jack's family had always been fond of animals, especially dogs. Ruth, on the other hand, viewed animals differently; she did not mistreat them but neither could she fuss over them. This sometimes caused some friction as Jack allowed the dogs in the house and Ruth desired otherwise. One day Jack's dad came home from the auction mart with yet another animal — a goat. Jack promptly named him Skipper and enjoyed his antics, but Ruth and the goat were constantly at war. He would butt her as she walked across the yard, chew off her flowers, and jump on cars. One day when Ruth had to do chores, she accidently locked Skipper in the chop house. The next morning he was dead, his greediness for chop doing him in. To this day Jack claims that the goat was deliberately locked in. Though Ruth claims differently, you may be sure she did not shed any tears.

Another thorn in Ruth's life was the old black cook stove. No matter how she stoked and poked and prodded, it simply would not bake. She was sure it had a personal grudge against her. It did not improve matters when her father-in-law claimed it was an excellent stove — that she simply did not know how to stoke it. What a happy day in her life when it was sold and a brand-new gleaming white propane stove was installed in its place.

Jack and Ruth's first child, Karen Hope, was born September 9, 1954. This year the storm clouds gathered again and the crops were flattened by hail. Even after the hail, the rains came and came. Finally, in October, after the rains stopped, an attempt was made to salvage a bit of grain. Jack had no combine but his neighbour Fred Toebes had one and he offered to help them. Because the ground was still very soft, two tractors were put in front of the little pull-type combine. Everyone worked! Fred operated the combine, Jack and Sena, Fred's wife, each drove a tractor; and Jack's dad drove the truck and unloaded the grain with a shovel, managing to keep up with the combine. Meanwhile, Ruth cooked the meals and looked after nine-month-old Janice Toebes as well as their own newborn baby. After a week of this, the crop was finally harvested — 580 bushels of grain, an average of five bushels to the acre, requiring four people working five days! Even though prospects looked bleak, there was some good in all this: it was the beginning of a lasting friendship between the two families.

Christmas, 1954. Ruth, Jack, Karen

One Farmer's Day on the way home from Goose Lake, where the Janssen and Toebes families had spent the day, Jack and Fred decided it would be fun to float down the Freeman River in the boat. Sena and Ruth (and the kids of course) were sent ahead by car to wait for them at the Fort Assiniboine bridge. They waited and waited, long after the expected arrival time, but no voyageurs appeared. As the children became more tired and cranky, the women became more worried. Hours later the two men appeared, but not by boat. The water had been so shallow that the boat had to be dragged most of the way. Finally, they had beached the boat and then walked to a farmer's home. He drove them to the bridge. Sena and Ruth hardly knew whether to be joyful or angry after all the worry they had gone through.

As the years passed, two more children joined the family. **Virgil** Wayne was born November 12, 1959, and **Scott** Henry on June 22, 1965. Jack's dad, by this time, had moved to B.C., but all three children were fortunate to have their grandfather live with them during the summer months. He spent many hours talking to them and listening to their problems. Certainly their lives were enriched by the many stories he told of pioneer days. Everyone felt a great loss when Grandpa passed away in 1978.

Karen, Jack, Ruth, Virgil, Scott, 1976.

The passing of the years brought other changes. Jack got his bus driver's license in 1960 and worked for the Barrhead County, first as a spare bus driver and then as a regular driver. A few years later he fulfilled one of his dreams when he was able to take flying lessons and buy a share in an airplane.

In 1974, Karen went to work in Terrace, B.C., where she met **Myron Kellogg**, whom she married a year later. Their first child, **Alicia** Dawn, was stillborn on February 28, 1978. She was buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. After living in Calgary several years, Myron and Karen moved out to Neerlandia. They now live in the original farmhouse on the Janssen farm. They have two boys, **Shea** Andrew, born February 19, 1979, and **Darcy** Grant, born May 25, 1981. Myron works for Paddle Plumbing in Barrhead and Karen works in the Neerlandia Co-op store.

Karen, Myron, Darcy, Shea, 1983

Virgil moved to Calgary after completing high school. He began work in a service station, where he became assistant manager. Scott plans to attend The King's College in the fall of 1984.

Jack and Ruth still live on the farm as they continue at their respective jobs — driving school bus and teaching. Ruth is also assistant principal at Neerlandia School. Both are members of the Christian Reformed Church. They are thankful to God for enabling them to be a part of the Neerlandia community and for having given them a good life together.

Ruth Janssen

ROELOF JANSSEN

On August 21, 1960, Roelof Janssen was born in Ter Aard, Drenthe, the Netherlands, the eleventh and youngest in his family. His father had a mixed farm.

One year, Dick Barendregt came from Canada to board at the Janssen's while he attended Teacher's College in Groningen. He and Joanne Viersen planned to get married in Neerlandia in 1979 and Roelof resolved to attend their wedding. He made arrangements to work and board at Viersen's. On July 4 he arrived in Neerlandia and was pleased to discover that the Viersen children spoke Dutch. The next day a truck came on the yard and Roelof was a little shy when the driver came toward him. He expected a real Canadian and thought he would speak English, but the man said, "*Goede morgen, is je baas er ook?*" (Good morning, is your boss here?) Then he gave him a hand and said, "John Van Assen." Roelof was surprised and thought, "Maybe everybody still talks Dutch here." Later he heard that John had known he was coming.

During that summer Roelof helped build the addition and gymnasium onto Covenant School. This gave him a very good impression about the way people worked together in the service of the Lord. He enjoyed his stay in Neerlandia so much that, as soon as he was back in the Netherlands, he made short work of immigrating. On April 30, 1980, he was back in Neerlandia to stay.

After working for John Van Assen for the summer, Roelof started a phonograph-record business. In October 1981 he started traveling throughout Alberta and was soon sold out. A trip to Ontario brought similar results. Because his records came from the Netherlands there was often a long delay before he could obtain replacement stock. Since then the initial problems have been solved.

He enjoys living in Neerlandia where, by means of another job — driving gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, he is able to maintain contact with the farmers. Roelof appreciates the many friendships he has made in Neerlandia.

Roelof Janssen

SAM AND ALICE (LIEVERS) KIFFIAK

Alice Lievers was born in Neerlandia in 1920. She had two brothers just a bit older than she and three sisters quite a big older than she. Later she had three younger brothers too, so she really was a loner in the family. But she survived and passed grade eight by the time she was thirteen. After that there was no more school for her because grade eight was the highest taught in Neerlandia at that time.

After her schooling, Alice was needed at home to help Mother Lievers since her older sisters were out working and most of the boys were still at home. That meant getting up at 5:00

a.m. to do the work. All the overalls and other dirty clothes had to be washed by hand with the water hauled from the well. Once a week fourteen loaves of bread had to be made and then baked in the wood cook stove — hot weather or not. In the winter, the men would be off to the bush logging or getting out firewood, so they were hungry and needed lunches each day.

The Lievers' home was always open — to preacher and peddler alike. Alice can recall that, except for one week, their guest room was once in constant use for a whole year. Mother Lievers was noted for her hospitality, and all were welcome to her home. This was true even during the Depression years when the family had to struggle to make ends meet.

Alice, Sam, c. 1942.

In 1941 Rieka and Alice went to a Bible camp at Lac La Nonne, where Alice met the man of her life — Samuel (meaning asked of God) Kiffiak. But it was during the war years, and Sam still had four years to serve, so their courting was done by letter. When he was discharged, he took two years of study at Three Hills Bible College, Three Hills, Alberta. It was June 5, 1948, before Sam and Alice were married. They first lived in Neerlandia on the Lievers' homestead. Sam worked for Sam Howey and John Molodowich driving a Caterpillar tractor and brushing. Their oldest son, **Gerald**, was born December 18, 1949.

After about three years the family moved to Edmonton where Sam got work with Import Tool. After thirty-two years Sam is still working there. Another son was born in 1954.

Alice Kiffiak

JOHN AND LUCY (POST) KIPPERS

John Kippers came to Neerlandia with his parents in 1913. He first lived with them on NE 16-62-3-5. Later he built a house there for himself, but he only lived in it for about one year before moving back to live with his parents. Baching was not an enjoyable way of life. In the 1940s when John's parents moved to the hamlet of Neerlandia, he would live with them during the winter months and on the farm in the summer.

In February 1948, Lucy Post came to Neerlandia. Lucy had been born August 2, 1911, in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. She was distantly related to John and had been writing to him for some time. She came and never looked back. John and Lucy were married March 23, 1948, and that same year John bought NE 10-62-3-5 from his father.

Front: Lucy and John. Their chaperones, Mrs. and Rev. Rubingh, 1948.

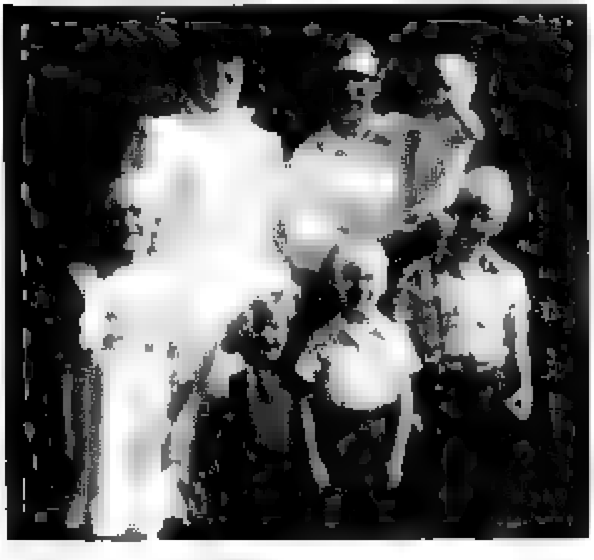
Until his marriage, John had bought farm machinery with his father and brothers, Henry and George. When his father retired the boys split up, each buying his own machinery.

John and Lucy were blessed with two children. **Tena** was born December 17, 1949, and **John** Henry arrived January 15, 1952.

Tena, Lucy, John Sr. John, 1954

After high school Tena took training for a nurse's aide in Edmonton and then worked for three years in Barrhead General Hospital. She married Bert Wierenga in 1971.

John H. married **Alida Van Dasselaar** on April 19, 1973. Alida was born May 14, 1953, in Amersfoort, Utrecht, the Netherlands. She spent most of her growing-up years in Carman, Manitoba. In 1975 John H. and Alida bought the two quarters of land owned by his father. They and their five children live in a trailer on the NE 10-62 3-5.



Alice, John, and family.

After retirement, John and Lucy continued to live on the farm and enjoyed themselves taking trips to the Netherlands and across Canada to visit relatives. In 1980 John passed away at the age of seventy-two. Lucy enjoys good health and lives on John's farm.

Kippers Family

ARIE AND CECELIA (TIEMSTRA) KRIKKE

Arie Krikke was born at the home of his parents, William and Cornelia. He was very shy and scared when he began attending school. The first days were spent at the side of sister Clara, who was in grade five. Mr. Ashley tolerated that for only so long, and then Arie received a paddling on the seat of his pants and was brought into the class of Miss Boer.

After nine years in school, Arie went into full-time farming. Farming was a busy life, but there was always time for berry picking in the summer. That was where Arie met Cecelia Tiemstra: in the blueberry patch. Arie kept his eye on Cecelia — he had long ago forgotten his shyness — and proposed marriage to her. They were married in a triple wedding ceremony on June 17, 1953, and made their home on the NW 3-62-3-5. Later they purchased two quarters in the Shoal Creek area. In winter Arie enjoyed hunting, fishing, and trapping, and used these means to supplement the farming income.

Back: Sheryl, Emily, Wendy, Arie. Front: Vernon, Christine, Cecelia, Warren, c. 1974.

Arie and Cecelia have six children, all born in Barrhead: **Sheryl** Aileen (November 16, 1954), **Christine Mae** (November 23, 1956), **Emilene** Susan (February 14, 1959), **Wendilene** (July 27, 1961), **Warren** (also July 27, 1961), and **Vernon** Arnold (June 19, 1965).

In 1974, Arie and Cecelia rented out their farm in Neerlandia and moved to Spruce Grove, where Arie had a job at Lilydale Broiler Farm. They sold their farm in 1979, and bought a home in Edmonton where they live today (1984).

Three of the children are married and all remain in Edmonton. Arie and Cecelia are doing janitorial work in the city.

Arie Krikke

RALPH AND RITA (GELDERMAN) KRIKKE

Ralph Krikke was born and raised in Neerlandia. When his education in school was completed, Ralph worked on his father's farm, clearing, and breaking the land. He also worked for other farmers in Vega and Neerlandia for fifty dollars a month, often working twelve-hour days. He worked at clearing the land with a Caterpillar tractor. Brushing, piling, and bulldozing with a Cat now became the way the land was cleared. In 1951 Ralph bought a quarter of land (SW 22-62-3-5) in Vega from Andy Elzinga. With this land and an agricultural lease on the quarter next to it (SE 22-62-3-5), Ralph started farming on his own.

Ralph, Rita, 1953.

Rita Gelderman also worked at home after her education at school. She did housework in other homes in Neerlandia and Edmonton as well. On June 17, 1953, Ralph and Rita were married and moved onto Ralph's farm. Dairy farming became the prime interest in their lives for many years though they added beef cattle as time went on.

Six children were born to bless the Krikke home. **Kathleen** Joy, born October 16, 1954, became a registered nursing assistant and works in the Barrhead hospital. On April 25, 1956, **Lois** Ann entered the world, and later took up a career as a registered nurse in Edmonton. A third daughter, **Trudy** Carol, was born July 31, 1958. Trudy had various jobs as a clerk in stores and worked in a bank in Edmonton. She married Otto Schlosser in 1980, and they have one daughter. They now live on an acreage near Stony Plain. In 1961, on May 28, **Jocelyn** Joan was born. She became a computer operator, working in Edmonton and Calgary. Jocelyn and Allan Tukker were married in 1982 and reside in Edmonton where Jocelyn works as a tape librarian. Another girl, **Colleen** Ruth, was added to the family on March 6, 1966. Though very happy with their family of girls, Ralph and Rita were pleased when a son, **Karlen** James, was born to them on October 2, 1968.

Rita Krikke

RYER AND JURINA (ELGERSMA) KRIKKE

Jurina Elgersma was born in Neerlandia. She had her schooling there and was quite determined to go everyday whether it was sunny, rainy, or cold. The children had to leave for school early in the morning. One day Jurina started off, although her parents thought it was too cold. But when she got to Henry Hiemstra's place, a mile down the road, they sent her back because none of their children were going. She returned home — crying at first, but she soon quit because the tears froze on her cheeks.

After Jurina quit school she worked for several years in the Neerlandia Co-op. Besides working hard, she and Lula Krikke had many good times there.

Ryer Krikke was also born in Neerlandia. He, too, had his schooling there but often, as a lad, had to stay home to help his father crush grain, harness horses, and do field work since his father had trouble with asthma. Ryer worked at Pete Visser's radiator shop in Edmonton several winters, until he married Jurina on October 30, 1952. Ryer and Jurina then started farming on the SE 9-62-3-5, which his father had bought from Wouter Groothuis.

Born to the Krikkes on November 12, 1954, was their son **Richard** Clarence. After his schooling he followed in the footsteps of his father and proved to be a true farmer at heart. On March 21, 1981, Richard married **Margaret Dykslag** of Lethbridge. On November 11, 1982, their daughter, **Alicia** Dawn, arrived.

Rosemarie Haitina was born April 18, 1958, and after her schooling had a year of university. But she preferred the country and found work in the Barrhead Hospital as an admitting officer. On June 12, 1982, she married Albert Wierenga. They live on a farm east of Barrhead.

Donald Andrew came along on June 2, 1960. He was another farmer to help Ryer with the farming operation and a hunter as well to bring in the meat. Donald plans to marry Sheryl Jaarsma of Houston, B.C.

Then, on a very stormy day, February 18, 1965, **Darryl** John came upon the scene to enrich the Krikkes' lives still more. He also has gone into farming full-time.

July 15, 1968, brought much excitement and joy to the four Krikke children as well as their parents. On this day their dark-haired baby sister and daughter, **Annemarie** Joan, was born.

Back: Darryl, Richard, Rosemarie, Donald. Front: Jurina, Annemarie, Ryer, 1977

On July 5, 1982, after suffering from cancer for six months, Ryer was taken home to be with the Lord. He died having enjoyed almost thirty years of marriage and the many other blessings God had showered upon the Ryer Krikke family.

Jurina Krikke

GERBEN AND ROELFKE (ALGRA) LAND

Gerben and Roelfke Land came from Buitenpost, Friesland, the Netherlands, in 1948 with seven children: **Albert, Walter, Anna, Clarence, Jenny, Peter**, and **Bill**. They were sponsored by Melle Elzinga.

Gerben was a mechanic, and work was found for him in Walter Bell's garage in Barrhead. The family first lived in Barrhead in a garage. This was less-than-adequate housing, and Melle asked Albert and Mabel Elgersma if they could help. Elgersmas had an old house and they helped Lands to make it liveable. Gerben was offered a job in the Neerlandia garage managed by Ed Visser. He accepted and, to keep from commuting each day, moved his house just south of the Centre. While in Neerlandia another son, **Henry** (October 22, 1949), was born to Gerben and Roelfke.

Lands left Neerlandia in 1949 for Edmonton, where Gerben hoped to provide a better life for the family by starting a garage of his own. Gerben died in a car accident in 1963, and Roelfke passed away in 1982.

CLAUS AND JUNE (JANSSEN) LANGEVELD

Claus (Nicholaus Antonius) Langeveld was born on July 7, 1952, in Amsterdam, North Holland, the Netherlands. He was tenth in a family of eleven children, and was raised on a dairy farm. After trade school he also completed agricultural school. In May 1975 he immigrated to Canada, and worked on a dairy farm in London, Ontario, for one year. After that, he worked at odd jobs and travelled throughout Canada. Before he left Ontario a friend had said, "If you're out that way, pay a visit to my cousin, Case Van Beek, in Neerlandia." Claus did just that and the Van Beeks quickly made him feel at home. The longer Claus stayed in Neerlandia the better he liked it, so when Case offered him a job he accepted it. In the fall of 1977 he began working for Case, who owned Neerlandia Transport. On July 1, 1978, Claus took over the business from Case. Claus married June Janssen on June 12, 1981, and they now live on the N.W. 26-61-3-5 (1984).

Claus Langeveld

June, Claus

BEN AND MAUDE (FLINT) LIEVERS

Ben Lievers was born in 1923. His first recollections are of sleeping upstairs in the old Lievers house on a wooden bunk with hay for a mattress! Ben was soon old enough to work on the farm. He had cows to milk before and after school and as he grew older there was bush to clear using an axe, a chain, and horses. He was often too tired to learn at school so he did not go far in school.

In 1938, at the age of fifteen, Ben got a ride on the back of a truck to Edmonton to his first paying job. He arrived with fifty cents in his pocket at the dairy farm where he was to work. There he worked from 5:00 a.m. till 9:00 p.m. for fifty cents a day. He did not get home again for a year. He worked until the war broke out. Then, since his brothers Bill and Henry were called up to serve, Ben came back to help farm the five-and-a-half quarters they had. Although farming was a busy life, there was still time for fun. Once at threshing time a cowbell was tied to the threshing machine shaker and when the machine started the boss yelled, "Whoa, there is a cow in the machine!" Ben stayed on the farm until the war was over.

When his brothers returned, Ben went back to Edmonton to work for Hook Signs and did carpentry as well. A year or two later he did brushing in the Neerlandia area for two years — driving a Caterpillar tractor, first for John Molodowich and then for Sam Howey. By that time he had a lease on the NW 5-62-3-5.

Ben, John

Ben married Maude Flint on August 30, 1952. She had been born January 24, 1927, and grew up on a farm near Paradise Valley. Ben had bought the SW 4-62-3-5 from his dad and built a house there. He and Maude tried farming that land as well as that of Ben's brother John. In three-and-a-half years they had been dried out, rained out, and frozen out, so in the spring of 1956 they sold out and moved to Paradise Valley. During their stay in Neerlandia, their two oldest children were born. **Karen** on November 15, 1953, and **Janet** on April 14, 1955.

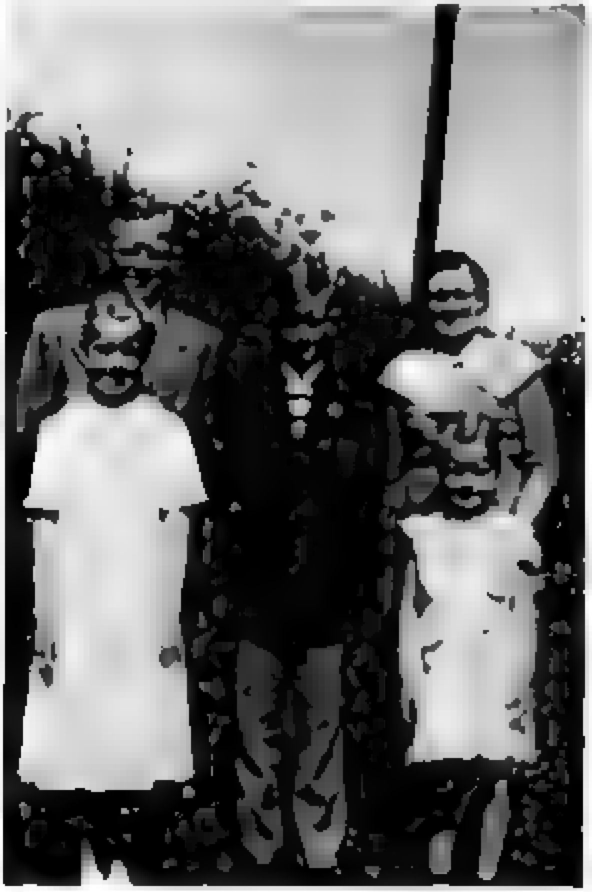
Ben and Maude farmed in Paradise Valley but with the same lack of success! They sold the farm in 1959 and moved their house into the town. Ben bought a lumber yard and, combined with his carpentry, the business went well. Four more children were born to them. Maude taught school in Paradise Valley but had to quit due to heart trouble. Ben is semiretired but still does carpentry part-time

Maude Lievers

BILL AND GWEN (BROADHEAD) LIEVERS

Bill Lievers, son of Ben and Alice, went to school in Neerlandia to grade five. He bought his father's second homestead, the NE 32-61-3-5, and on it raised cattle and grain. He married Gwen Broadhead (born April 15, 1907) of Waseca, Saskatchewan, on June 11, 1946. They have three children. **Kenneth** was born April 24, 1947; **Kathleen** on November 13, 1949; and **Elizabeth** on May 18, 1953. In 1957 the family moved to Vega, where they also farmed. They moved again, first to Highridge in 1962 and then to Westlock in 1967, where Bill and Gwen still live

Maude Lievers



Back: Bill, Gwen. Front: Kathleen, Kenneth, Elizabeth, 1958.

ALBERT AND ANN (HAMOEN) MAST

In April 1948, Annie Hamoen came to Canada with her parents and her two brothers. They lived first in Westlock and then moved to Neerlandia in 1949, where Adrian Hamoen Sr. bought the John Terpsma farm on NW 36-61-3-5

Annie stayed at home to help with the farm work, but also worked for women in Neerlandia from time to time. When threshing time came around she went along with the threshing crew, helping the women cook and bake, and bringing lunch out to the field. This was a time she enjoyed very much

In the fall of 1948 Annie met Albert Mast. Cars were not so easy to get in those days, so during their courting days Albert and Annie often walked. Then Albert made a truck out of an old car. He had taken the back off the car and all that was left were the floorboards and the cab with no roof. Annie found her first ride in it quite exciting, but that mode of transportation lost its appeal when it was raining and she was getting soaked to the skin and the mud was flying around her ears.

On April 25, 1952, Annie married Albert Mast and moved to Barrhead because Albert was driving truck for Bredo Transport. Albert drove to Swan Hills which was just opening up. The roads were often so bad that Albert was gone from home for days at a time. During those years four children were born to the Masts. **Eva (Everdina) Hendrika**, born March 9, 1953; **Leona Audrey**, born June 8, 1954, **Albert**, born November 9, 1956; and **Thelma Ann**, born February 21, 1958. In 1958 Albert and Annie bought her father's farm because Albert was tired of being away from home so much. Unfortunately, starting to farm was not easy, so in order to make a go of it Albert had to go out working again. He began driving school bus in 1960. Annie did the yard work, a task she enjoyed though it was not easy to manage with three small children. They loved to play around the water barrel by the pigs though they had been told to stay away because of the danger of falling in. Like all youngsters, they found playing in the water much more exciting than listening to Mom and Dad. One bright and sunny day they were at it again, but this time Dad was home. He came up behind them and each one got a good dunking in the barrel. That cured them of playing in this dangerous spot. As the children got older they had to help weed the garden, a task that young Albert detested. One day he had the bright idea of using a stick and scraping the weeds out. The result was that there were no carrots left either. Oh well, at least he finished his row before his sisters did theirs!

Albert had to give up the bus driving in 1966 due to illness. He underwent brain surgery to remove cancerous growth, but the cancer was not arrested and in 1967 he passed away. Albert and Annie had already sold the farm to Norman Terpsma and rented a house on the NW 35-61-3-5. Annie had obtained employment at the Co-op store on September 1, 1966, and worked there until May 1970. Once again things were not easy for Annie, but it was a great comfort to her that God was always beside her. With that security she could always go on.

As the girls were reaching their teens, the boyfriends started coming around. Eva suddenly developed an interest in U.F.O.'s. Then she started taking the garbage out at night even when there was hardly anything in the can. That made Annie suspicious and soon the truth came out — Eva was meeting Simon Elgersma. That was the start of their courtship.

Annie's daughters were not the only ones being courted. Annie had been invited to a wedding in Vega. There she met Fred Dofka who came visiting two weeks later. He lived across the Athabasca River and sometimes the ferry was not in operation. Then Fred would come courting in his airplane which he would land in either Norman Terpsma or John Visser Sr.'s field. On July 17, 1970, Annie married Fred Dofka in the Lutheran church in Mellowdale. Annie and Fred moved with Albert and Thelma to Fred's farm across the Athabasca River. They had to make use of the Klondike Ferry in the summer, and cross on the ice in the wintertime. When neither could be used, they went across by basket or airplane. Albert and Thelma had to walk one-and-a-half miles to catch the school bus. When the river was too high in summer, the basket could not always be used, then Fred had to fly Albert and Thelma across to catch the bus.

Eva married Simon Elgersma in 1971. Leona married John Bakker in 1974. When Albert graduated from high school he obtained work at the I.G.A. in Barrhead and worked there till April 1976 when he was hired by the Neerlandia Co-op. In 1977 Albert took a trip to Iowa and met **Karen Jaarsma** who was attending Dordt College. Karen had been born February 21, 1960, in Houston, B.C. After corresponding for six months Karen came to Alberta to be near Albert. They were married in Neerlandia on August 24, 1979. They live on an acreage on the NE 11-62-3-5 which they purchased from Marvin Nanninga in 1984. Since her arrival in Neerlandia, Karen has been employed as a secretary by the County of Barrhead No. 11, first in Barrhead and since 1981 in Neerlandia. Albert continues at the Neerlandia Co-op. In his spare time he enjoys hunting, fishing, and trapping, a love inherited from his father. Albert and Karen are both active in community activities. Thelma, the youngest daughter of Albert and Annie, married Percy Ogden in January 1982.

Karen, Albert, 1984.

On July 10, 1975, Annie and Fred had a baby girl, Mona Lee. In 1972 Annie took over the Vega Post Office from Henry Erickson, and stayed until 1977 when the family moved to Grande Prairie. In 1981 they returned to Vega, where Annie is again operating the Post Office.

Annie Dofka

CARL AND AGNES (MUIR) MAST

Carl Peter Mast quit school after grade four to help clear land and pick roots. When he was older he also went out working so that Masts could hire someone to break the land for them with the breaking plow. In 1928 he worked for the summer months in Nobleford. He earned forty-five dollars — just enough to pay off Rev. Harm Van Der Woude who had lent him money to buy false teeth for his mother

During the winter of 1930 Carl worked in the bush for the Chisholm Lumber Company Wages were poor. That same year, he took up a homestead, the SW 13-62 4-5. He built a shack and lived there to prove up his quarter. For some reason, unknown to him, the shack later burned down. Carl still owns this land but rents it out

Carl had once fallen from a tree while breaking land, and he began to have trouble with his back. Doctors could not find the cause It grew worse, giving him much pain and preventing him from doing his usual work. In the 1940s he worked setting up machinery for his uncle Carl K. Mast, a John Deere agent

One day his uncle invited Carl to a farm show in Edmonton. Before the show they stopped in at Dick Baker's place. Dick said right away to Carl, "You are a sick man " Soon the bone specialist Dr. Fred Day was called. Carl had a serious case of tuberculosis in the spine He was given a body cast and had to spend two years in the Royal Alexandra Hospital. It was there, however, that he met the woman who would later become his wife

Agnes Muir was born March 13, 1908, in Saskatchewan Her father had come from Scotland and her mother from England, and they had met in Canada Thomas was a cabinet maker by trade but in Canada he farmed and did other construction. The open prairie they lived on was much the opposite of the landscape of Neerlandia. The 1930s with its dust storms and grasshoppers sent Agnes looking for work in Edmonton. She came in 1948 and started work in the Royal Alexandra on the housekeeping staff. At work she met Carl. "It was love at first sight," says Carl. Agnes continued work until November 1953. The next month, on December 30, they were married

Carl and Agnes first lived in a little house beside the Abdays in the hamlet Carl drove the school bus for twenty-two years. They both worked as janitors in the school for a while and Carl drove the gas truck for the Neerlandia Co-op, first part-time and later full-time, for a total of twenty years.

Agnes, Carl, 1953.

When the store wanted to get rid of the telephone switchboard, Carl and Agnes took over and had the switchboard moved to their house They started with three customers. In 1961 they bought the Ashleys' property and house in the Centre. Again the switchboard was moved. By this time many more people were getting phones, and A G T wanted to put in a 24-hour service With the extra workload. Masts had to hire operators to help out. Carl and Agnes operated the switchboard for twelve years. When underground cable arrived in December 1969, they retired They received two service awards for their work.

In 1971 Carl took the job as treasurer of the Funeral Society and held it for thirteen years. Agnes took over after him. Both are members of the Christian Reformed Church and enjoy the fellowship of the community

Carl and Agnes Mast

CLARENCE AND GRACE (DOP) MAST

Clarence Mast was born in Neerlandia When he was six years old, his family moved to Edmonton, and in 1926 the family returned to Neerlandia. Clarence remembers they lived in a chicken house which had some granaries added onto it for bedrooms. In the winter they slept under some horsehide blankets, and often there was snow on top of them which had sifted in through cracks in the walls

Clarence spent most of his time outdoors.

Although there were chores to do and wood to cut and haul, there was time for hunting, fishing, and trapping with his brothers

Clarence was a very persistent person. he would never give up. One time when he was in his early teens he was hauling firewood home from the bush with a horse While hauling the last load, the horse refused to pull anymore Clarence just walked home and left the horse hitched to the load. It was getting dark and he thought that if the horse got hungry enough he would return home or spend the night in the bush It did not take long for the horse to realize that he was fighting a losing battle and he soon came home with the load Even a stubborn horse was no match for Clarence

At the age of twenty-four Clarence joined the army. He spent two years in Europe as a tank driver. He learned a lot in those few years overseas. He also brought home many interesting souvenirs of his adventures one of them being his wife, Grace (also known as *Moeke*)

Grace (Grietje) was born December 23, 1921 in Zwolle, Overijssel, the Netherlands. When she was thirteen years old, her family moved to Utrecht Life in the city at that time was very pleasant People enjoyed many conveniences such as electricity and running water. There were many opportunities for bettering oneself Grace was able to attend swimming lessons, piano lessons, gymnastic training, and dance classes. At school, students learned the usual three R's, an assortment of languages, and even handicraft work. This early training was a great asset to Grace in her later years

After completing grade seven, Grace quit school and went to work in the drapery department of a home decorating store That was where she learned her sewing skills, and many people today have drapes in their homes which were made by her

When Grace was eighteen, the war came and her life changed drastically. Suddenly hunger and fear replaced a happy, carefree existence Later her children listened in awe when she told some of those wartime experiences

Just when Grace thought things would never improve, she met Clarence. They were married March 6, 1946 Grace travelled to Canada on a ship called *Aquatania* with hundreds of war brides from various European countries They landed in Halifax, and from there she travelled by train to Edmonton. There she was met by Clarence, who had returned to Canada three months earlier, and some strangers who were her in-laws. They were no stranger than anyone else, but she had never met them before

Clarence and Grace began farming on the NW 7 62-3-5. Only forty acres had been cleared so Grace found herself "in the sticks." Life was quite different from what she had known. There was no electricity, and the only way to get running water was to get a pail and run for it to the pump. Now there was no longer a milkman coming to the door, there was a cow instead, and Grace could help herself But she never did milk a cow, although she did feed many pigs in later years. Neither was there a baker or a vegetable salesman who came to the door Grace had to learn to grow vegetables. The worst part was when she discovered that she had never learned to bake bread she learned how from her mother-in-law (with some help from Clarence). Their first home was quite small, but Grace made it very cozy with homemade curtains, doilies, and handicrafts That house was later converted to a garage

Meet "Case" our first combine. Jack, Grace holding Donna, Lydia, 1952

Clarence was always an early riser. In summer he would get up with the sun and retire long after sundown. Grace would busy herself with her knitting or other handicrafts by her coal oil lamp. Somehow they managed to have five children. Lydia (Alida) Auwena was born

September 24, 1947. She married Raymond Sturwold (now Seinen) on May 10, 1968. **Jack** Mitchell was born September 22, 1949. He later married Pat O'Dell in August 1970. **Donna** (Evelyn Diane) was born January 1, 1952. She married Andrew Strydhorst on November 27, 1970. In 1956 **Roselea** Jean was born February 2. She lived only a short while and passed away July 28 of that year. She had cerebral palsy and spent most of her life in the hospital. On July 23, 1957, their last child was born, Don **Clifford**. He lived to be nineteen years of age, when he was suddenly taken Home in a highway accident on July 28, 1976.

Although the family experienced some sorrows, they experienced many joys as well. Donna recalls one summer day: "We went to the lake with *Moeke's* brother Harm Dop and his wife, Hillie, and their two sons Hans and Jack. The time at the lake was very pleasant but on our trip back home we had to go over a very muddy road. *Oom* Harm was not used to this sort of driving, and before long we found ourselves stuck. Everybody had to get out and push. The mosquitoes were thrilled and proceeded to help themselves to all these people. Well, *Tante* Hillie had the solution. We covered all our exposed skin with mud, an old Indian remedy which worked surprisingly well. Well, we finally did get the car out, so we all piled back into the car and made our way home. Once we got there we decided that we could not just go into the house the way we were, so we took turns stepping into a tub filled with rain water. All was well until *Tante* Hillie stepped in — right on top of a big frog! She gave a loud shriek, but we told her it was her own fault for playing in the mud."

Back: Jack, Grace, Clarence. Middle: Lydia, Clifford, Donna, 1971

Over the years many new immigrants found their way into the community. Some, for whom it was a big adjustment, discovered that they could pour their hearts out to Grace. She would listen and nod sympathetically because she understood their problems — she had experienced them too. Many people received a warm welcome at their home, and that is why Clarence and Grace now have many "adopted" children who fondly refer to them as *Pa* and *Moeke*.

Donna Strydhorst

JOE AND MARION (POSTMA) MAST

Joe (Johannes) Mast is the youngest of a family of eleven born to Albert and Everdina Mast. For the first six years of his schooling he and his brothers and sisters walked three miles to school and back. Later on they used a dogsled to travel back and forth. Their favourite dog named Sport used to pull Joe and his brother Albert home with some groceries in fifteen minutes. During his last two years at school, Joe travelled in a covered truck.

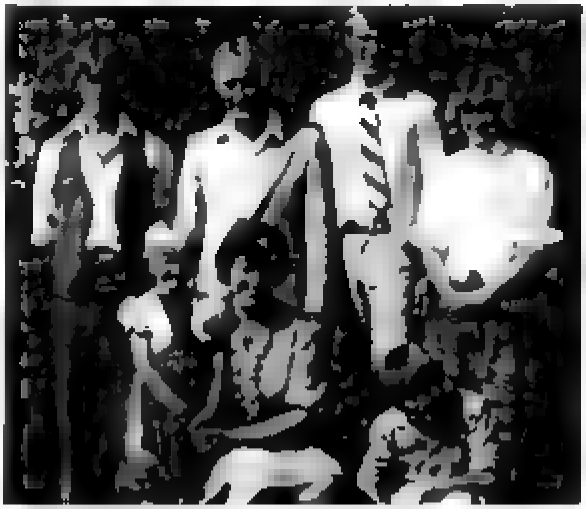
After he finished school Joe stayed home and farmed with his dad until 1954, when his dad passed away. In 1953 Joe bought the SE 23-61-3-5, which was crown land, and cleared it as the years went by. He lived and cared for his mother on the home place (SE 22-61-3-5) till 1962.

Marion (Maryke) Janke Postma, born March 21, 1938, immigrated with her family from Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, to Toronto in June 1953. Not knowing any English, the only jobs she could get were cleaning houses and taking care of children. After working out for a few years and learning to speak English, Marion worked for the Toronto Dominion Bank for about nine months. Then a girlfriend who was going to the west to visit her sister for a year asked Marion to come along. Being young and unattached, the two set out for Calgary. Instead of one year it became three years in Calgary, and Marion was then transferred to a branch of The Royal Bank in Edmonton in 1961. She attended a Young People's rally in Neerlandia in May 1961, and there she met Joe. The following year, July 6, they were married.

In the fall of that year Joe's brother Bill moved to Grande Prairie and sold his land (NE 13-62-4-5, SE 24-62-4-5) to Joe. The next spring Joe also bought Uncle Henry's land next to the home quarter (E½ 15-61-3-5).

On May 31, 1963, **David** Allen was born and was followed by **Ronald** William (July 12, 1964). Those years Joe and Marion worked hard. They put the boys in a box in the barn when they were milking. They fed steers, sows, and fatteners. In the spring during lambing season they had to take care of the special sheep. Also goose eggs had to be collected to prevent them from freezing, and brought out again later when the goose was ready to sit. Mixed farming made for a busy life but there was always "new life" in the spring: the sheep with their lambs, the cows with their calves, and the geese with their goslings. On March 13, 1967, Centennial year, **Ramona** Marie was born, and on November 20, 1970, **Trevor** Johannes came along. Eight years later daughter **Renate** Maryke was born January 21.

Around 1972 Joe's horse fell over backwards on him and pinned his leg down. Joe developed blood clots and had to elevate his feet for three weeks. It was haying time. Deacon Joe H. Wierenga put a notice in the bulletin that Joe Mast needed help. In response, many men of the community came with their trucks and wagons. They brought the hay from Joe's other quarters and in one day put it up — an instant haystack.



Back: Ronald, Joe, David, Ramona. Front: Renate, Marion, Trevor, 1983.

In 1977 the Masts put up a dairy barn, they quit shipping cream and started shipping milk. They milk about fifty to sixty cows, which along with the hogs, the beef, and the sheep, keep them busy. Father, mother, sons, and daughters all pitch in to do the work.

After completing high school, David attended The King's College in Edmonton for two years and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for one year. He is now at RBC in preparation for the ministry. Ronald is farming with his dad, and set up a farrow-to-finish hog barn.

The Lord has blessed the Masts richly with a healthy family. Theirs is a busy but good life. They are thankful to be part of the Neerlandia community.

Marion Mast

JOHN AND HENNIE (VANDERMEULEN) MAST

John Mast was born and raised in Neerlandia. When he was old enough to leave the school bench he went to work on the family farm. In the winter he supplemented his income with other work. He tried his hand at various jobs, including working in a lumber camp, tinsmithing and Catskinning. On August 28, 1953, John married Hennie Vandermeulen in the Barrhead Christian Reformed Church. At that time Hennie was working as a housekeeper in Barrhead and John was driving truck for Bill Bredo. In the fall of 1956 the Masts moved to the Gerrit Nanninga farm (NW 13-62-4-5) and tried their hand at farming. By then they had two children, **Allan** (March 20, 1954) and **Bernice** (October 4, 1955). A few months later a second daughter, **Sonia** (November 19, 1956), was born.

When John and Hennie first moved onto their farm, they lived in a two-room house and a granary. Later they bought a house and had it moved to their place. What a joy — no more sleeping in cramped quarters.

On January 18, 1959, **Lorne** was born, and on December 12, 1960, **Deanna** came along. In 1963 a barn was bought and moved onto the farm. The shack became a garage and well house. In 1965 a large hog barn was built, and the Masts had to feed pigs as well as milk cows.

On April 4, 1964, **Wayne** was born. In the fall of 1967 they had a disastrous farm fire which burned the cow barn, the cattle shed, and the winter's supply of hay. But thanks to all their neighbours, especially Henk and Elsie Navis, they managed to save the house, garage, and hog barn. They did, however, lose their feeder hogs, which ran into the fire. The house had been completely emptied, and all its contents brought to neighbours. After that some of the glow went out of farming.

On May 9, 1968, the Masts were happily surprised by the birth of twin sons, **Kirby** and **Curtis**. Shortly after they had another fire. This time the fire was not as bad, but a lot of time was spent putting it out. The neighbours again came to their aid and emptied the house. Hennie writes, "At times like that you really find out that people care."

After that second fire John went into trucking to make money to get ahead again. Hennie and the children did the chores on the farm. In January 1975 John and Hennie moved to Barrhead. Since then many changes have taken place in their family. Their four oldest children are married and have families of their own. John is driving school bus and works part-time at Kramm Construction. Hennie is working as a teacher aide in Barrhead Elementary School.

Hennie Mast

PETE AND GLADYS (KRIKKE) MAST

Pete and Gladys were both born in Neerlandia. They attended school in Neerlandia until grade eight, as was the custom, and then worked at home. Pete helped with the clearing, breaking, root picking, and other farm duties. In the winter he usually went to the logging camps. In 1942 he entered the army and served for two years. He was discharged due to a severe case of rheumatic fever and was in the hospital six weeks.

Gladys worked in the Westlock hospital for two years as a ward aide. She earned fifty dollars a month, out of which she had to pay board. She still managed to save a few dollars, but she finally decided she could better do housework in the city, where she would not have to pay board and could save more. She returned in the summers to help with work at home.

Pete and Gladys were married March 25, 1949. While they were celebrating the event some young men entered their house by prying open a window. They were, however, unable to get the window completely closed again and put a piece of tin in front of it to keep out the cold March weather. When Pete and Gladys came home they immediately noticed the tin so began to check to find out what tricks had been played on them. They found that the pranksters had put horsehair clippings in the bed — a good shaking solved that problem — and stuffed the stove and chimney with bags and rags. "Must have been fun for them," Gladys said.

Pete and Gladys lived on the SE 18-62-3-5, which Pete had bought from Dielemans. The house had been purchased from Gerben Tiemstra.

Maynard Allen, Pete and Gladys' first son, was born February 28, 1950. They could not have the baby baptized right away since there was no minister in Neerlandia at the time. In April a visiting minister was scheduled to come out. That Saturday evening there was a bad snowstorm, but on Sunday the Masts set out anyway. They got as far as Roelof Krikke's place where they had to be pulled out of the drifts. They never did get to church that Sunday and had to wait to have Maynard baptized until the minister came again.

Another winter they had terrible drifts. It was impossible to get through them with a car so Pete and Gladys went to church with the sleigh. Most of the neighbours rode along. The drifts were so hard that they drove right over top of them. It took Bill Olthuis' big Cat to clear the roads that year.

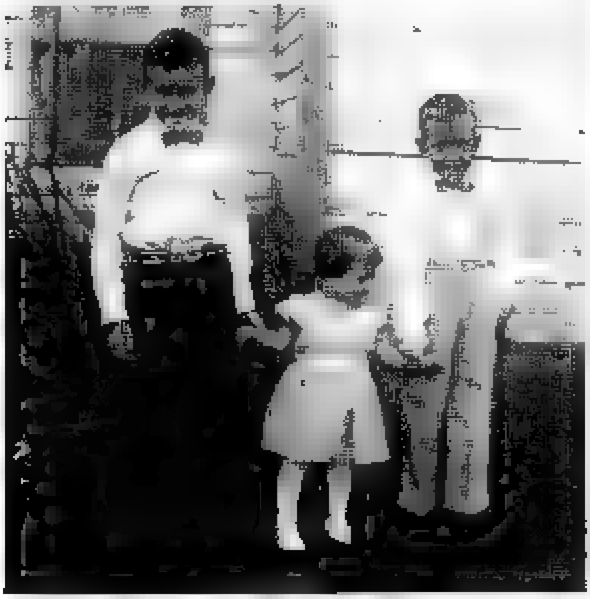
The first years of their marriage Gladys helped Pete with the bindering. She drove the tractor and he was on the binder. "I was a lousy driver," she said, "either I'd be too far from the grain or right in it. Pete would holler, and after a few hollers I'd hear him above the noise of our John Deere tractor. Pete would have fired me on the spot, but he didn't have much choice as he couldn't afford to hire anyone." While bindering they would put Maynard in a box on the tractor, where he usually fell asleep.

Pete and Gladys had some hard years. One year the crops froze and another year they drowned out. In the fall it was so wet they could in no way get on the land. In the meantime their second son, **Klaas**, was born (March 30, 1953).

In the winter Gladys would sew clothes for the boys, making secondhand clothing over into garments for them. One winter Maynard needed a winter coat, but Gladys had nothing

to make it from. She reluctantly decided that she would have to use one of her own for that purpose. Meanwhile Pete had gone to the store for groceries and the mail. When he came back he had a big box from California. It was full of clothes. There were clothes for everyone, and even a coat for Maynard. A friend, Cobie Leder, had sent them. Gladys always felt that this was God-sent.

A daughter, **Viola** Janeth, was born June 30, 1956. She was named after Gladys' mother, Janna.



Maynard, Viola, Klaas, 1958.

Pete used to cut hair for most of the neighbours. People just didn't think of going to the barber in those days. For awhile Pete was cutting hair for fifteen people. The Masts enjoyed the company too.

Ten years after their marriage, Pete and Gladys moved to Mellowdale and had to start all over. They bought the old Davis place on the SE 3-61-3-5. The first summer they were there, their old log barn burned down. Klaas and one of the neighbour's children had found a bee nest between the logs and decided to kill them by burning them. Their efforts were successful — they burned the barn as well. Pete bought an old barn for five hundred dollars with the help of some neighbours. Pete and Gladys were very thankful for that help. From then on things began to pick up for them.

Gladys, Pete, 1973

Maynard married Nora Janssen on June 10, 1972. They are farming in Bloomsbury and have five children. Klass is farming and living at home. Viola married Vern Mahar on July 27, 1978. They live on an acreage in Campsie with their two children.

Gladys Mast

HENRY AND GRACE (RUNIA) MEETSMA

Henry (Hendrik) Meetsma was born January 13, 1917, in Zandbulten, Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1920 his family moved to Ter Apel, Groningen. Thus Henry mastered *Fries* as well as *Gronings* and, since his father owned a garage, he became an all-round mechanic.

Grace (Grietje), daughter of Arend and Pietje Runia, was born March 25, 1918, in Bolsward, Friesland. Henry and Grace were married in 1944. From then until the end of the war, they were in hiding in Blija, Friesland, because Henry had refused to register with the Germans as a military man. After the liberation Henry worked at a Chrysler garage in Leeuwarden. On the way to work in the morning he would meet Romke Stel on his way to his job at Ford, but Romke left for Canada in 1948.

The Meetsmas immigrated to Canada too, in 1953. Henry and Grace felt that Canada held a better future for their children Gerald (Tjidsger, April 25, 1945), Arnold (Arend, May 2, 1947), and Pat (Pietje, April 2, 1950). When the family arrived in Canada, they found their sponsorship had been cancelled, so through fieldman Herman Wierenga they came to Barrhead. During their twelve years there, **Henry** C. (July 1, 1954) and **Richard** Quentin (July 23, 1956) were born.

Henry worked in several garages and, through his work and the church, the Meetsmas came into contact and made friends with many people in Neerlandia. Their first visit to the hamlet was to the Romke Stel family. When Gerald and Arnold were in their teens, they went to Neerlandia for catechism and Young People's activities. But in 1965 the family moved to Calgary, where Arnold wanted to study. Gerald stayed in Barrhead, since he had a job there.

Grace's father came from the Netherlands for a visit in 1969. Arend had been a close friend to Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra, but they had lost contact after the Tiemstras had emigrated. His friend Siebren Tiemstra had passed on, but he went to see Willemke, who was still living in Barrhead. What a meeting that was after sixty-four years! It was during that visit that the idea of buying the garage in Neerlandia first came up. The garage, which belonged to Gerrit Gelderman, had been empty for a year-and-a-half and looked quite run-down. After much deliberation and with the mediation of Meile Elzinga, a deal was made. Ted Reitsma, who had moved the family to Calgary four years before, hauled their belongings back to Neerlandia, where they were unloaded into the little house next to the garage. The children all pitched in to make the place livable and Meetsma Motors opened for business on September 7, 1969.

Grace, Henry

After the garage opening, Arnold and Pat went back to Calgary to their studies. Gerald had already married, so only Henry Jr. and Richard were living with their parents. After his schooling, Henry joined the Canadian Armed Forces. Richard left in 1973 to study mechanics. While Henry and Grace lived in Neerlandia, all their children and grandchildren loved to visit and often as many as sixteen people were crowded into their little house.

Ever since he immigrated, Henry had hoped to run his own repair shop. He kept busy in the garage and enjoyed the work. He put his knowledge of *Fries* and *Gronings* to good use in his contact with the customers. After seven years, the Meetsmas sold their garage to the Co-op. The community gave them a farewell at a potluck supper in the church basement. After leaving Neerlandia, Henry worked in a service station in Calgary. In 1978 Henry and Grace took a job as caretakers of an estate, where they worked until retirement in 1982. They thank the Lord for a richly blessed life of which their time in Neerlandia stands out as something very special.

Grace Meetsma

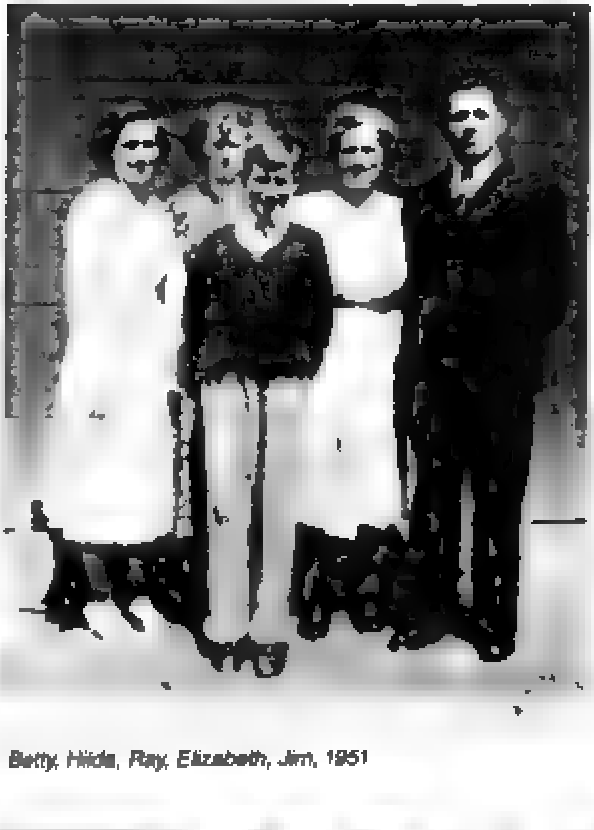
JIM AND ELIZABETH (FENNEMA)
[redacted]

World War II was over and Jim (Ymke) Merkus of Marrum, Friesland, the Netherlands, began to wonder about the future of his family. There was much talk of emigration among the townspeople, and Jim's brother John, who had left for Neerlandia in 1947, encouraged Jim to leave. Finally a decision was made: on June 4, 1948, Jim, his wife Elizabeth (Lÿsbert), and their children, **Betty** (Elisabeth, March 27, 1932); **Hilda** (Hielkje), June 30, 1934); and **Ray** (Rinze, June 21, 1938), left for Canada aboard the *Kota*

Inten. They arrived in Quebec City on June 16, and boarded a train for Edmonton. From Edmonton they took a bus to Barrhead. There brother John greeted them and took them to Catherine Holwerda's place, where they were warmly welcomed.

Jim worked for Catherine till fall, when he, Elizabeth and Ray moved to Westlock where Jim and Elizabeth worked for a bachelor farmer. Their daughters, Betty and Hilda, stayed in Neerlandia and worked in the homes of families who needed help. On the Sundays that the Neerlandia congregation celebrated the Lord's Supper, the Merkus family was brought to Neerlandia by members of the congregation.

After about one year in Westlock, Jim lost three fingers of one hand in a sawing accident. This changed the course of his life. The Merkus family moved back to Neerlandia where Jim became janitor of the church. For six hundred dollars he bought a vacant house from Clarence Mast. Jim and Elizabeth bought a lot in the hamlet from Siebren Tiemstra. They dug a cellar by hand, repaired the cracks in the walls and repainted the house, gradually transforming it into a cozy home.


Betty, Hilda, Ray, Elizabeth, Jim, 1951

Soon the children found life partners. Betty married Albert Tiemstra. Hilda married Daniel Berkhout on November 28, 1958. They live in Edmonton with their six children. Ray married Eleanor Nanninga. In the meantime Jim and Elizabeth were busy with their own lives. As part of his duties when he served in the consistory, Jim taught catechism — a task he enjoyed. They grew a fine garden, and Elizabeth canned many vegetables for herself and her daughters. In 1979 Jim and Elizabeth left Neerlandia for the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton, where they enjoy the fellowship of other elderly people. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on May 28, 1981. In looking back, they see that the Lord has been faithful through the years and blessed their lives richly.

Betty Tiemstra

JOHN AND CATHERINE (BOUMA) MERKUS

John and his wife, Catherine, were both born in Twijzelerheide, Friesland, the Netherlands. John, younger brother of Ymke, was born October 30, 1911, and raised on a small farm. Catherine Bouma was born June 29, 1912, the oldest of eleven children. Her father was principal of *De School met de Bijbel* (The School with the Bible), and raised his family in the schoolhouse.

John and Catherine were married April 29, 1943. The next year, on April 13, **Catharina** was born and on November 18, 1945, **Raymond** (Rinse) was born.

Several articles in the newspapers encouraged immigration to Canada, so in September 1947 the Merkus family left for Canada. A distant relative, Gerrit Dyk of Westlock, sponsored them but, since he did not have much work for them, he took them to Neerlandia as soon as possible.

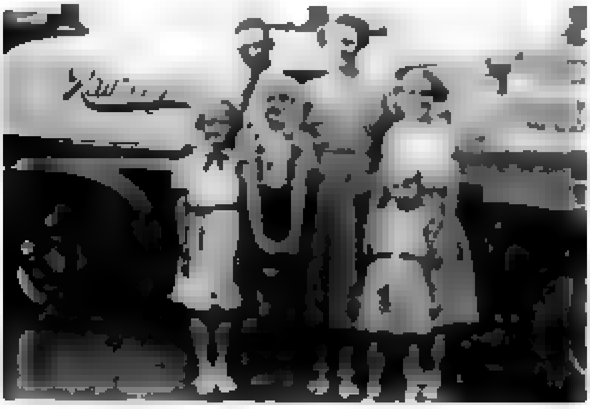
In Neerlandia, threshing was in progress and John started working for Andries Wierenga. Later they moved to Catherine Holwerda's place, where John worked with Ekke Wierenga. A house was bought and moved to the Holwerda yard. What followed was a winter they never forgot: the snow was as high as the fence posts and a Caterpillar tractor had to come and open up the roads.

During World War II, in the Netherlands, the Merkus family had to use ration coupons for food. Per person, they could get fifty or one hundred grams of each food item such as sugar, flour, and meat a month. When they came to Canada, coupons for certain foods were still in effect but what a contrast: each person could get twenty-five pounds of sugar — that amounted to one hundred pounds for the family! They were advised to buy all of it, plus one hundred pounds of flour and more foodstuffs as well because they might be snowbound for the winter! So they stocked up and felt they had landed in *luilekkerland* (land of Cockaigne).

There was more. In Catherine's words, "What a surprise the Ladies' Society of Neerlandia had for us." Some immigrant women were invited, supposedly to attend Ladies' Society. But when they arrived in the room above the store, it look more like *Sinterklaas*. "The parcels were stacked to the ceiling and we felt overwhelmed and almost choked in our word of thanks. It was enormous, such a hearty welcome." The next morning John had to use the grain box and a team of horses to bring all the goodies home.

After a year, more immigrants arrived and the Merkuses had to move on. Oene Piers found work for John at Henry Bender's in Mellowdale and Dick Fisher came with the truck to move out their few belongings. Although it was the end of May, everything was still soaked and the roads were still very rough due to the spring break up.

Every Sunday, one or two elders from Neerlandia picked the Merkus family up for worship services held in an Anglican church in Barrhead.



Back: John, Catherine. Middle: Grace, Raymond, Catherine. Front: Margaret, 1956

John picked roots all summer and also found out how bothersome mosquitoes can be. Working for Henry Bender, John received one hundred dollars a month. Several immigrants envied this wage. At harvest time, John received seven dollars a day, an enormous amount in his eyes. When winter came, the family could stay rent-free in their house and there was plenty of good firewood, but no work. Herman Wierenga came to the rescue — John could cut some brush along the roads at fifty-five cents per hour.

On April 3, 1949, a daughter, Hilde Grace, was born. Later that spring John found work in Barrhead and the family moved there. Another daughter was born to them there. On January 15, 1966, Raymond died of meningitis. John died of a heart attack on February 7, 1979. They both are buried in the Neerlandia cemetery. Catherine now lives in Edmonton.

Catherine Merkus

RAY AND ELEANOR (NANNINGA) MERKUS

Growing up in a small town in Friesland, Ray Merkus spent his childhood jumping canals, floating boats, attending school, delivering papers, and having fun with friends. But at nine years of age, Ray left all that behind. The Merkus family moved to Canada. Here they had to adjust to a new language, strange customs, and harsh living conditions. The words learned first were not necessarily the best!

After several moves, the family settled in that part of Neerlandia known as the Corner. This put them near the skating rink, and that became one of Ray's favourite places. He and the other boys from the Corner cleaned the rink many times so that they could skate and play hockey. Soon the controversy began in the settlement: should we or should we not play hockey in Barrhead against other teams? Fortunately Ray was given permission by his parents to play his favourite sport in Barrhead.

Against his father's wishes, Ray quit school at age sixteen and went to work in Edmonton. The prospect of a weekly paycheck was much more inviting than that of perfecting the three R's. After obtaining a variety of jobs, Ray worked out a routine. In the fall, he worked as poultry inspector for the Alberta Department of Agriculture. When that was completed, he worked at the Barrhead Hatchery until the end of the season. He continued this routine for five years, living either at home or in Barrhead.

While attending Neerlandia functions, Ray caught sight of a young miss by the name of Eleanor Nanninga. They dated two years, and were married February 18, 1961.

Ray and Eleanor's first house was a little two-room affair in Barrhead, with another little house out back. Eleanor also worked at the Barrhead Hatchery. Their first two children were born in the Barrhead hospital. **Clark** Douglas was born September 30, 1961, and **Crystal** Rose on October 30, 1962.

In November 1962, the Merkus family moved to Grande Prairie. Ray had taken out a homestead in a romantic-sounding place called Blueberry Mountain. There, a second son, **Glen** Allen, was born June 26, 1965.

After having moved about twice a year, the Merkus family settled down in the Sexsmith area for ten years. Both Ray and Eleanor held a variety of jobs there. Ray always told his wife, however, that if anyone would buy his farm in Blueberry Mountain, the family would move south. Sure enough, someone came along and wanted the "stump ranch". Ray made good on his promise, and in 1976 they moved to Lacombe.

In Lacombe Ray and Eleanor owned and operated Glendale Trailer Park and did other jobs as well. During these five years, in addition to keeping track of their three active teenagers, Ray and Eleanor provided a home for eight different foster children. Both consider that a very rewarding experience.

In 1981 the trailer park was purchased by the town of Lacombe, requiring the Merkus family to move yet again. Where to now? The logical place seemed to be the Barrhead area, so in August 1982, Ray, Eleanor, Clark, and Glen moved back to Neerlandia. Ray, who had worked at seed-cleaning plants before, had long considered a mobile seed-cleaning unit. Now his chance came. In partnership with Clark, who was then twenty years old, this unit was bought at the end of 1981, and began operation in the beginning of 1982.

Clark got tired of travelling back and forth to Lacombe, so on September 9, 1983, he and **Vicki Jane Heistad** were married. Vicki was born in Raymond on July 2, 1961, but moved with her family to Blackfalds when she was two years old. Before her marriage she drove a gravel truck for her father for four years. Clark and Vicki purchased a mobile home and live on the SE 14-62-3-5. Clark enjoys the grain-cleaning business, and Vicki is employed at the Neerlandia Co-op. Crystal married René Hoekstra from Cobourg, Ontario, and they live and work on a dairy farm in Lacombe. Glen lives at home, but plans to attend SAIT in Calgary to become an aeronautical engineer.

Crystal, Glen, Clark, Eleanor, Ray, 1982

Ray and Eleanor love travelling and meeting people. Each move represents a new challenge and reward. They wonder what the Lord has in store for them in the future.

Eleanor Merkus

BERT AND JENNY (BOUWMAN) MICHAEL

After a courtship of three years, Bert Michael married Jenny Bouwman on June 13, 1945. A new house was built on the Michael homestead (NE 4-62-3-5) by Bert and his father and Henry Bouwman. The old house was converted into a garage for the John Deere H tractor, bought in 1942 from agent C. K. Mast, and the 1935 Chev car purchased in 1943

Bert and Jenny were blessed with five children: **Herman** John, born April 26, 1946; **Annette** Elizabeth, born October 19, 1947; **Gerald** Albert, born September 12, 1949; **James** Peter, born September 11, 1952, and **Marwynn** Mildred, born July 28, 1956. Grandpa Michael lived with the family until he died in 1960.

Back: Bert, Henry holding James, Gerald, Jennie holding Marlwynn. Front: Herman, Annette.

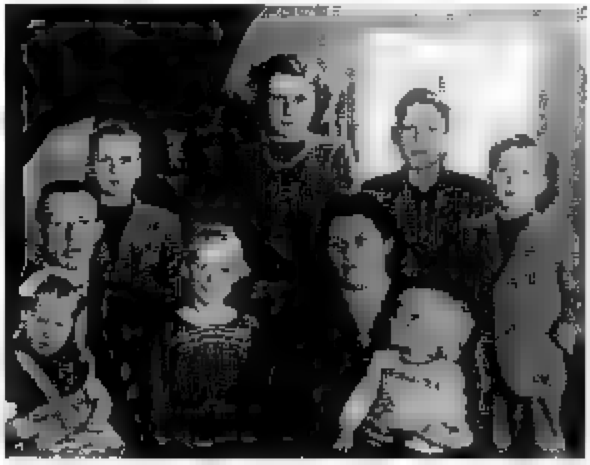
There was no room for expansion in Neerlandia, so Bert and Jenny sold the farm in 1963 to Jacob Sturwold and bought three quarters in the Sunniebend district The Michael children all married and have families of their own. In 1973 Bert and Jenny had to sell the farm due to Bert's poor health and bought an acreage in Hazel Bluff, where they still reside

Jenny Bouwman

RALPH AND MARY (VAN HUIS) MOES

Ralph (Roelof) and Mary (Mietje) Moes had lived for some time in Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands, when they began to consider emigrating Their daughters, **Tjamke, Grace** (Grietje), **Ida**, and **Mary** (Mietje), and sons, **Hugo** (Huike), **Ben** (Bernardus), **Ron** (Romke), and **Walter** (Wieger), were still fairly young and Ralph and Mary wanted to provide a good future for their children as they grew older. They had been planning to go to Australia but, after hearing many stories about Canada and realizing that life in Australia would not be so good, they changed plans to immigrate to Canada instead

In March 1952 the Moes family left Rotterdam on the *Zuiderkruis*. From Holland to Halifax the travelling was rough due to a bad storm. All their children were seasick, except the youngest daughter, Mary, who at that time was nineteen months old She was in a little walker that rolled across the cabin with the wildness of the ocean. The captain would laugh, watching her walking up and down the decks with her little wooden shoes on her tiny feet.



Ben, Tjamke, Hugo, Walter Seated: Ida, Roelof, Grace, Mary, Mary, 1952

It was not a good trip, but they made it, arriving in Neerlandia on March 17, 1952, and living there for about three months. The Moes family's trip to Canada was sponsored by Oene Piers, and their oldest daughter, Tjamke (June 27, 1934), who was seventeen, went to live and work at the Piers home. The Moes family did not like the way they were all separated and spread about in different places at first Ralph, Mary, and little Mary stayed at the minister's house. Grace and Ida joined Tjamke at the Piers' home, and the four boys were split up, two at one place and two at another. Ralph worked in farmers' fields threshing, and then went to work for Lucas Sturwold making lumber at a sawmill

When there was no more work for Ralph, he went to Edmonton to look for a job and a house for the family. Tjamke also went to work in Edmonton, and later married Bert Elgersma When Ralph and Mary first moved to Edmonton, they missed Neerlandia because the people there had been so good to them Trying to feed eight children was difficult when they had little money, but the family did not starve The people of Neerlandia provided them with plenty to eat, bringing them meat and other things, for which they are still thankful

Ralph and Mary are now retired and live in Edmonton. The children are all married and have families of their own.

Mary Moes

ALVIN AND JOANNE (GELDERMAN) NANNINGA

Alvin Nanninga and Joanne Gelderman were married August 16, 1963. They moved into the house in which Alvin had grown up. Alvin and his brother Henry farmed together, sharing the machinery and the fieldwork. Before their marriage Joanne had attended RBI for two years

Alvin had always worked at home so in 1970, when he had the opportunity to manage a turkey farm at Gibbons, he was eager to try it He felt that this would give him a chance to broaden his horizon. At this time Alvin and Joanne had four children. **Charlene** Ann, born October 24, 1964, **Beatrice** Elaine, born May 28, 1966; **Travis** Jay, born June 5, 1967, and **Jody** Lynn, born October 4, 1968. The Nanninga family lived in Gibbons for three years and then returned to Neerlandia. Henry had maintained the farm in their absence Two years later on July 8, 1975, their last child, **Wesley** Dean, was born

Back: Charlene, Alvin, Travis. Front: Jody, Joanne, Wesley, Beatrice. 1984

The Nanningas maintain a mixed-farming operation with one unique facet — that of raising chickens for other farmers. The farmers supply the chicks and Alvin and Joanne raise them till they are ready to lay

Sports play a big part in the Nanninga family's leisure time. Badminton and horseshoe are the favourites. At the Alberta Summer Games, held annually, Alvin, Joanne, and Travis have won gold and silver medals in horseshoe Travis placed fourth in the junior division of the Canadian Horseshoe Championships held in Regina in 1984.

Life is busy and satisfying for the Nanningas They are happy to be part of the Neerlandia community

Joanne Nanninga

BERT AND BERTHA (GELDERMAN) NANNINGA

Bert Nanninga went to Neerlandia school until he was legally allowed to quit, then worked at home on the farm. On February 5, 1942, Bert enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces He took his basic training in Camrose, Alberta, then transferred to Nanaimo, B C He spent the next few years serving in western Europe and as a prison guard in Jamaica. He was discharged on February 8, 1946, and that same year he bought the farm (SE 32-61-3-5) from his dad

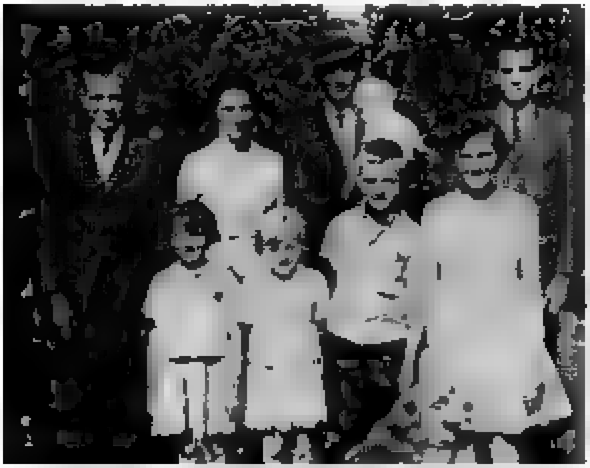
On June 17, 1947, Bert married Bertha Gelderman. Their first home was the Nanninga farmhouse, built in 1920. The first years Bert and Bertha's means of transportation was a 1938 Dodge truck. When the roads were bad they took out the horse and buggy or sleigh

Soon the Nanningas were blessed with two children· **Edward**, born April 3, 1949, and **John**, born August 26, 1950 Bert and Bertha bought Dick Fisher's house in 1956 and hired Fishburn Moving Company of Edmonton to move it to the farm.

Ed and John loved playing by the creek. One day when Ed was four and John was three years old, Bertha had looked out the window and seen the boys playing on the bridge. But the next time she checked them John was lying on the edge of the bridge and Ed was nowhere to be seen. Bertha immediately suspected that

Ed had fallen in. She went outside and could hear them calling for help. In some miraculous way John had caught hold of Ed's hand and held him until help came. There was not a lot of water in the creek at the time but, unknown to the Nanningas, a hole about four feet deep had washed out at the point where Ed had fallen in. The boys had certainly learned their lesson: the next time Ed and John brought Dad lunch in the field, they did not stop to play on the bridge but, one behind the other, keeping close to the centre of the bridge, dashed across.

Five more children were born to the Nanningas. **Phyllis** was born February 1, 1954, **Larry** came on May 12, 1956; **Ruby** on January 13, 1959; **Fern** on December 1, 1960; and **Bradley** on October 2, 1963.



Back: John, Bertha, Bert with Bradley, Ed. Front: Ruby, Fern, Larry, Phyllis, 1965.

Ed works as an electrician for Barrhead Electric. On September 23, 1971, he married Ingrid Ronaasen of Mellowdale. For one year they lived in Inuvik, N.W.T., where Ed had a job. Five children were born to them. On March 22, 1983, their three-year-old son, Nolan, was attacked by dogs. In spite of efforts to save him he died the next morning.

On June 15, 1974, John married Jean Wierenga. They are working with John's father on the farm and for many years lived in a trailer on the yard. In 1982 they moved into the old farm house while Bert and Bertha moved into a new house a short distance away. John and Jean have four children. **Amanda** Jean, born April 25, 1976; **Clinton** John, born July 7, 1978; **Willis** John, born January 6, 1983, and **Charlotte** Jean, born June 9, 1984.

Jean, Willis, John, Amanda, Clinton, 1983.

After graduating from Dordt College with a major in biology, Phyllis worked as a laboratory assistant in the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. A two-year course at NAIT enabled her to become a laboratory technician in Barrhead. Phyllis enjoys painting with oil and water colours in her spare time.

Larry married Trixie Wierenga, a sister to Jean, on July 9, 1976. They built a house and a hog barn on the NW 33-61-3-5, which Bert had purchased several years before. They have two children, **Tara** Ruth, born August 3, 1977, and **Maria** Beth, born July 31, 1980.

Ruby married Eugene Tiemstra on May 27, 1979. Fern married Brad Wierenga on October 27, 1979.

Bert and Bertha's youngest son, Bradley, was born a "special child". At age seven he attended Winnifred Stewart School in Edmonton. He stayed at Norman Prins' during the week, and came home on weekends. After one and a half years in Edmonton he attended the School of New Hope in Barrhead. In the sum-

Trixie, Larry. Front: Marie, Tara, 1983.

mers he enjoyed the one week stay at the camp sponsored by Rehoboth. He participated in sports competitions held in Red Deer and Peace River, and won several awards. Bradley also enjoyed watching animals and birds of all kinds. He and the dogs were fond of each other and often went out hunting for mice, gophers, and skunks. On August 18, 1980, Bradley went to be with the Lord. While crossing the road he was hit and instantly killed by a gravel truck.

Bradley with his two dogs, Louie and Tucker, 1979

On March 8, 1981, the Nanninga's hip roof barn burned down and with it several hundred hogs perished. With the generous help and financial contributions of relatives and community, however, a new barn was built the same spring. The help given was indeed a blessing, lightening the burden of their loss. Through the past years the Nanninga family has enjoyed the sustaining grace of God and the fellowship of the Neerlandia community.

Bertha Nanninga

BILL AND ANNETTE (ELGERSMA) NANNINGA

Bill (William) Nanninga, son of Corny and Sena, was born June 14, 1949, and grew up in Neerlandia. He married Annette Elgersma on December 8, 1972. Before their marriage, Bill had worked as an apprentice and a mechanic in Edmonton for seven years. Annette had trained as a Certified Nursing Aide, and in 1971 she began work at The University Hospital in Edmonton.

In 1973 they moved to Neerlandia, and in 1975 they moved to their present farm. They live on the NE 6-62-2-5 where they began a new farmstead on land purchased from Bill's father.

Nicole, Bill holding Margo, Annette holding Troy, Justin, 1984.

Bill has a mixed-farming operation which includes raising hogs and grain. Annette enjoys handiwork and gardening, and both enjoy raising a family and being a part of the community. Their four children are **Justin** Robert (May 28, 1974), **Nicole** Andrea (April 11, 1976), **Margo** Reneé (May 21, 1979), and **Troy** Merlin (May 23, 1982).

Annette Nanninga

DENNIS AND PATRICIA (SCHOONEKAMP) NANNINGA

Dennis Nanninga was born January 9, 1947, to Corny and Sena Nanninga, and grew up in Neerlandia. After graduating from the Barrhead high school, he moved to Edmonton where he earned his license in the specialized branch of carpentry concerned with acoustics.

Dennis and Triss (Patricia) Schoonekamp were married June 6, 1969, in the First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton. They continued living and working in Edmonton until the spring of 1970. Then, because Dennis wanted to farm, they moved back to Neerlandia to join Dennis' family in a mixed farming operation. Their home is the NW 6-62-2-5. Dennis and Triss have four children. **Quentin** Lee, born April 30, 1971; **Laura** Dawn, born January 21, 1973, **Daniel** Grant, born April 8, 1976; and **Lindy** Jean, born July 18, 1980.

Besides farming, Dennis is also involved in various committees and enjoys sports. Triss enjoys sports and is interested in gardening and painting.

Patricia Nanninga

GERALD AND DORA (PLANTINGA) NANNINGA

After graduating from the Barrhead high school, Gerald Nanninga moved to Edmonton. He worked for one year, and then attended NAIT for two years, studying electronics. In 1967 Gerald moved back to Neerlandia and worked on the family farm. He married Dora Plantinga on December 27, 1971, and they settled on the NW 35-61-3-5, which was originally homesteaded by Gerald's grandfather, John Anema.

Paul, Kirsten, Dora, Gerald holding Heather. Front: Rachel, 1982

Gerald and Dora's first child, **Kirstin** Ruth, was born March 12, 1974. Next came **Paul** Jason, who was born April 13, 1977. Their third child, **Rachel** Leanne, was born June 18, 1978, in Edmonton, about two months premature. After a month in the hospital she was able to join the family at home. Then **Heather** Diane was added to the family on November 25, 1981.

Gerald and Dora are both actively involved in church and community activities.

Gerald Nanninga

HENRY AND ROSE (MAST) NANNINGA

Henry Nanninga was born and raised in Neerlandia. After working for a few years in Edmonton for Edwards Hatchery, O.K. Construction, and Canada Packers, he returned to Neerlandia.

On September 3, 1958, Henry married Rose Mast. They took up farming on the NE 2-62-3-5. Henry and Rose continued with chicken and grain farming and used the two three-storey hip roof chicken barns built by Gerrit Gelderman, who previously owned the land. The years brought changes to the Nanninga farming operation. Henry at one time added a 40×148-foot two-storey barn, heated by a coal stoker, which later burned down, chickens and all. Henry now farms one section.

Henry and Rose have five children. **Irene** Ina, born April 16, 1959, now lives in Edmonton. **Barbara** Rose came along on August 12, 1960, and married Ron Besler in 1981. They reside in Bloomsbury. Another daughter, **Corinna** Fay, was born December 16, 1961. She lives in Barrhead. Finally two sons were born. **Dale** Henry, on April 12, 1965, and **Steve** Allan, on December 5, 1967. The boys are still living at home helping with the farming and going to school.

For the past several years Rose has worked for the *Barrhead Leader*. She works in the production of ads and also in the darkroom enlarging pictures.

Henry has a great love for the outdoors. He is very active in hunting with both rifle and bow

Back: Barbara, Rose, Henry. Front: Dale, Steve, Corrina, Irene. June 1978

and arrow. In the fall he goes out guiding Americans who come to hunt moose along the Athabasca. One particular group of six Americans have come since 1966 and Henry has been their guide since 1981. They come to hunt moose for trophies but always give the meat away to be eaten.

During the summer the Nanningas often take their Argo and all go travelling through the bush, camping out overnight. On these trips they fish and take pictures of wildlife and scenery. Wintertime finds Henry busy in the bush, falling trees until spring breakup. Then it's back to farming in the spring.

Rose Nanninga

MANNY AND LOIS (VAN DYKE) NANNINGA

Menno Nanninga was given a Dutch name after his grandfather, but he was soon called Manny. He attended Grandale School the first three years and then Neerlandia until grade nine. There was no school bus and walking to school meant wading through mud and water holes in the spring and climbing over hard snowdrifts in the winter. Manny and his brothers rode bikes when they could and on Monday morning they would ride with Ike, either in the sleigh or wagon, as he drove around to pick up cream cans and egg crates for shipment to the city.

Manny learned to skate and play hockey on a pond on the farm, and later enjoyed the community hockey games as a player. Manny quit school after grade nine to stay home and help on the farm because his dad was suffering from cancer. During the summer of 1954 Manny drove a small road grader for the County of Barrhead. From 1954 to 1956 he attended Vermilion School of Agriculture (now Lakeland College) in the winters.

After that Manny worked in Red Deer and Edmonton for a time. In 1959 Ike and Manny bought the Neerlandia Egg Grading Station. Manny enjoyed this business and installed a modernized egg candler, enabling him to candle more trays of eggs per hour than before. Approximately 150 to 250 cases of eggs were shipped per week from his station. A case holds 30 dozen eggs, so Manny was definitely an "egg handler".

While he was working in Edmonton Manny met his future wife, Lois Van Dyke. She had been born in Edmonton on April 14, 1940. Lois' mother, Grace Boer then, was a teacher in Neerlandia school in the thirties. Lois trained as a beautician at Marvel Hair Styling School. Manny and Lois were married July 8, 1960, and rented a little house from Marvin Nanninga. Lois applied for a shop owner's license to open Lois' Beauty Salon in her home.

On June 9, 1962, **Heather** Joy came to bring them happiness. In early 1964 the egg grading station was closed because eggs were beginning to be shipped to larger wholesalers in Edmonton. Manny and Lois then moved to Edmonton, where Manny worked at several jobs before starting his own general construction business in 1968. They were blessed with four more children and now live near Edmonton.

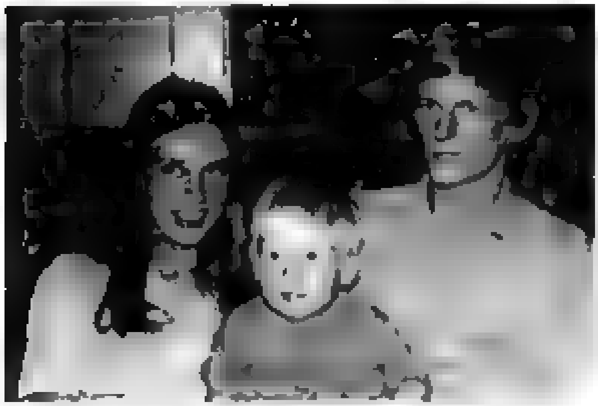
Manny Nanninga

RONALD AND HAZEL (FISHER) NANNINGA

Ron and Hazel returned to Neerlandia in August 1973. Both had grown up here but had been gone for several years. Now Hazel had a teacher's certificate and the Neerlandia school offered a new job: a half time teaching position, part-time librarian for the new library, and instructor for a remedial reading program the county was starting that year. Here Hazel worked for two years taking a leave of absence when their first child was born and also giving up the position of librarian. Ron was hired to operate the maintainer in the Neerlandia-Vega area, District #7.

Nanningas had planned on moving a house trailer onto the county site just behind Bomer's teacherage in the hamlet but when Bill Olthuis offered another site on SE 14-62-3-5, they moved there. There they stayed for the next five years.

The heavy snowfall made their first winter in Neerlandia a busy one for Ron. Their driveway was a narrow lane between tall snowbanks, which continually needed to be plowed out. That had to be plowed out last, of course, after miles and miles of country roads. That spring the melting snow caused much flooding.


Hazel, Keith, Ron, 1975

Nanningas' first child, **Keith** Ryan, was born that winter on Valentine's Day, 1974. **Michael** Ross came November 4, 1975. By then Ron had started working in Barrhead as an apprentice mechanic. **Lynn** Carmen arrived March 2, 1977. About a year later the Nanningas moved their trailer into Barrhead, where Ron is now shop foreman for A. Miller Farm Equipment Ltd. Since then they have been blessed with two more boys.

Hazel Nanninga

HENDRIK AND DENA (VAN HAARLEM) NAVIS SR.

There was great rejoicing in Zuidwolde, Drenthe, the Netherlands, on March 19, 1930, and again on April 11, 1932, for it was then that two sons, **Bill** and **Henk**, were born to Derk Hendrik and Dena Hendrika Navis, who till then had a family of only girls — seven girls. From then on, life centered around the boys, and the aim of the parents was to make a good life for their sons. World War Two devastated the Netherlands, so when immigration to Canada became possible, Derk contacted his cousin Alice Lievers in Neerlandia. The Lievers family agreed to sponsor them. Therefore, on March 12, 1948, Derk and Dena, Bill and Henk, and the two unmarried daughters **Siny** and **Lily** set sail from Rotterdam on a converted freighter, the *Kota Inten*.

After arrival in Halifax, they embarked on a long, tiring train trip across Canada with other immigrants. At one stop, Frank Hessels, who was also headed for Neerlandia, got off the train to look for some milk for the baby and, to everyone's consternation, almost got left behind. The Navis family arrived by bus in Barrhead on a cold March 28, where they were met by the Lievers, with their car. Snow was everywhere, with big banks along the road. Just before they arrived at their destination, the car swerved into one of those banks and the immigrants had to walk the last few yards to their new home. What a change for the Dutchmen! When they left the Netherlands, the grass was green and the cattle were out grazing.

On arrival in Neerlandia, the family was housed in an 18 by 20-foot house, which the Lievers family had built for them on their yard. This house was uninsulated, as custom was in those days, and lacked storm windows. Many a winter morning Henk woke up to find frost on his blankets. At first, the boys worked by the day on the farm, earning one dollar a day and that for only the days worked — there was no pay for a rainy day.

In 1949, Derk and his sons built a tiny house on skids and moved it to the SE 18-62-3-5. They rented this quarter for three years from the Lievers, paying them one-third of the crop. Here they lived kitty-corner from Clarence and Grace Mast, with whom they became friends. Grace says the boys were so shy that no matter what she asked them, they blushed and replied, "I don't know." To help make ends meet, Siny and Lily soon found work in Edmonton.

Renting land with no prospect to buy was not Mr. Navis' idea of providing a better life for his boys, so in June 1949 when Oene Piers and Albert Elgersma offered to take a group of immigrants to look for land in Peers and Rocky Mountain House, Mr. Navis went along. The road to Peers runs through muskeg and cat spruce. At that time, very little land there was under cultivation. The bleak aspect of the land did not appeal to them. Then, it was on to Rocky Mountain House. There it had rained, and the roads were so muddy that the drivers had to stop and scrape the gumbo off the wheels before they could continue. What a prospect! Was this what they had left the Netherlands for? Later Mr. Elgersma said to his wife, *"Wat verder wij gingen, wat meer de kinderen van Israel mumureerden!"* (The farther we went, the more the children of Israel mumured.) They returned to Neerlandia, with Mr. Navis convinced that here the future of his family lay.

That same year Bill and Henk bought the SE 11-62-4-5 from 'The Big Three' — George Anema, Louis Nanninga, and William Olthuis. In 1951, they moved the little house to this quarter. From there they travelled to church by horse and wagon, leaving at 8:30 a.m. in order to be on time for the 10:00 service. For the next three or four years Henk had the cream haul. This entailed stopping at each farm on the road to pick up cans of cream and take them to the truck, which was waiting at the store. In order to meet the truck at 9:00 a.m., Henk had to leave home at 7:00 a.m. During this time, Henk and Bill took turns going out to work in the winter, either in Edmonton or in James Thachuk's lumber camp.

On June 5, 1959, Henk married Elsie Olthuis and thus began a new chapter in the Navis family chronicle. Bill bought an acreage in Bremner, Alberta, and took his parents to live with him there till he married Alice Rodermond and moved to Edmonton. Later, Bill returned to Bremner and built another house on the same property. This way the old folks were able to be independent till Mr. Navis' death on May 12, 1980, at the age of 97. His wife died two years later on April 20, 1982, at the age of 88. They had lived to see their desire to provide a better life for their children fulfilled and, having lived close to the Lord all their lives, were ready to go to live with Him.

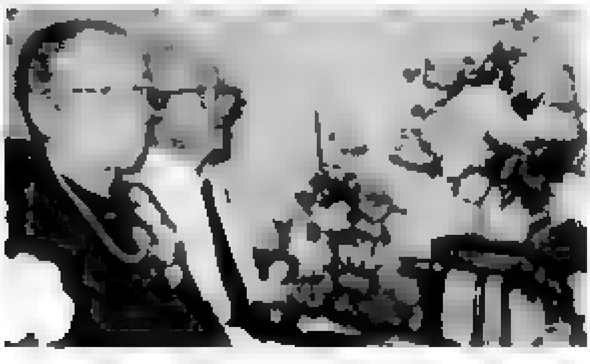
Bill and Alice continue to live in Bremner. Four children were born to them. Their son Albert died at the age of 14 on May 20, 1977, from lymphoma, a rapidly growing cancer. This sad episode in their lives has served to bring the family closer to each other and to the Lord.

Elsie Navis

HENK AND ELSIE (OLTHUIS) NAVIS

On June 5, 1959, Derk Hendrik and Elsie Olthuis were married in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Van Dyken was the officiating minister, and in the course of his sermon he stated that Henk was to be king in his house. Whether or not Elsie was to be queen was left unsaid. Needless to say, Henk has never forgotten this statement and has made good use of it.

Elsie, though a teacher, had grown up on the farm and enjoyed doing farm work and chores. Doing chores together was a lot of fun, as each milked three cows. Whoever finished their three first sat on the opposite side of the last cow to be milked and helped finish it off. If you are a milker, you will realize that these must have been good-natured cows. One wonders sometimes if milk production suffered when early marital adjustments were made by means of loud, albeit friendly, arguments during chores.



A wedding anniversary, Dena, Hendrik.

Henk, Elsie, July 1, 1957

At first Henk and Elsie had two tractors: an old steel-wheel-brute used only for breaking and an International WD 6. Sometimes both Henk and Elsie would be out in the field, each with one tractor. There was also haying to do, with Elsie on the tractor and Henk on the baler; other times cutting grain with tractor and binder had to be done. Lunch times were the most fun of all. In those days there were still straw stacks for leaning against while eating, and for amusement afterwards. But it was not all fun! Elsie learned some strange new words from Henk when a root got stuck in the baler and bent the knife. Where a good Christian boy learned such words she could not imagine — must be from his lumber camp days.

One disappointment marred those first years. There were no children. After prayerful consideration, they came to the conclusion that God had some other task in mind for them. To that end, Elsie took up her education again by means of night courses, summer school, and correspondence, and finally achieved her Bachelor of Education degree in 1981. She continues to teach in Neerlandia Public School where she, along with the rest of the staff, strives to provide Christian education.

In the meantime, Henk farmed on the three quarters of land he had by now acquired. Of these, only the home quarter had any land broken on it when he bought it. After bringing most of it under cultivation, he looked for a new challenge. This he found in the Neerlandia Co-op Service Centre, where he became manager in 1982. Henk and Elsie built a house in the hamlet and moved there. Having no son to leave the farm to (and desiring to help a young farmer get a start), they sold the farm to Don and Marilyn Plantinga, who began farming it in 1979. Henk and Elsie are pleased to see that Don is continuing to farm the land in a stewardly way. Henk is pleased too with his parents' choice of Neerlandia as a home — a caring Christian community where, though the winters are cold, the hearts of the people are warm.

Elsie Navis

CLARENCE AND ROSE (NANNINGA) OLTHUIS

The Clarence Olthuis family history began June 9, 1965, when Clarence married Rose Nanninga and settled on the SE 14-62-3-5, better known as Sparky's. At first life went smoothly for them but during the first winter the largest structure on the farm, an old log hip roof barn, burned to the ground. A neighbour, Bert Wierenga, noticed the smoke and gave the alarm and, thanks to the neighbours, most of the animals were saved. Some grain had been stored in the barn and in an attempt to avoid the heat a little pig had burrowed into it. Sad to say, his rear half had burnt along with the outer two inches of grain. He was dead.

After two-and-one-half years, Clarence and Rose moved to the NE 31-61-2-5. In the transition from mobile home to house their son Kurtis, exhilarated by all the space, ran happily from room to room slamming doors.

Clarence immediately began to prepare this farm for a farrowing operation to which he later added a finishing barn. From this venture he was able to sell breeding stock throughout Alberta and into B.C. As well as raising hogs, he built a poultry barn which he used to raise broilers, Cornish hens, and other poultry.

Kurtis Alan, born June 15, 1966, was to furnish Clarence and Rose with many and varied experiences. A playmate for him arrived two years later on June 8, 1968, when **Warren** Drew was born. They remember in particular the summer of 1970 when Warren, a toddler, ate half a bottle of candy-coated pills. Even though he was rushed first to Barrhead Hospital to have his stomach pumped and subsequently to Edmonton because of a collapsed lung, he remained unconscious for two days. But within ten days God had completely restored his health. Later that same summer Kurtis was bitten in his cheek by their pet dog and required stitches, the dog did not remain in the family.

The following winter, on January 16, 1971, **Tracey** Lynn joined their family, and **Graham** Matthew arrived December 26, 1974. For the children, the days and years were filled with many new activities and learning experiences such as riding tricycles, bicycles, mini bikes, and dinghies as well as attending school, catechism, swimming, music lessons, and sports events. There were a few summers that the carpenters were awarded the "Baby-sitting Award" as the kids, always wanting to see the action, would hang around the big barns being built while Mom picked berries and canned vegetables.

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home

Standing: Warren, Graham, Kurtis, Rose. Seated: Tracey, Clarence.

quarter to Gert and Ulla Jacobsson. Clarence and Rose bought the NE 13-61-3-5, which had been Bill Olthuis' homestead, from Clarence's dad, Bill. There they built a house and poultry barns near the creek that winds through the property.

Clarence is active in local affairs and in the larger community as both a director and delegate of Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and Lilydale Co-operative Poultry Processors

Rose Olthuis

ART AND HENNY (BULTENA) PETERS

As a young boy of six, Art Peters moved with his family to Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, the Netherlands. He grew up in the 1930s, when times were tough everywhere At thirteen years of age, he started working for farmers in the area, at a wage of nine cents an hour for a ten-hour day, six days a week. In 1946, he went to serve in the army, but was dismissed eight months later for health reasons.

hockey. It was decided to do it the easy way — with the tractor. This job was never completed because the tractor fell through the ice! What a mess! No one was injured, but the enthusiasm for hockey diminished for a while

In 1982 Clarence and Rose sold their home

Henny (Hendertje) Bultena had been born on February 19, 1926, in Roodeschool, Groningen. Art and Henny were married in January 1948. In April of that year, they made their honeymoon voyage aboard the *Kota Inten* to Canada, hoping to make a new life for themselves and any offspring the Lord would choose to give them They arrived in Edmonton on May 21, and spent their first night in the Immigration Hall.

The next day, a Sunday, they were met by their sponsor, Albert Tiemstra, and brought Neerlandia. The summer of 1948, Art worked for Albert, who had built a little shack on his yard for the young couple. In the winter of 1949 the shack was moved to Albert's north place, the NE 17-62-3-5, where Art did some land clearing. In the summer of 1950 Art worked on the new Christian Reformed Church building, and later he helped Henry Kippers build a new barn to replace one that had burned down.

Henny and Art doing chores on A. Tiemstra's place, 1948.

Art and Dick Froma bought Harry Proverb's place (SW 35-61-4-5) in 1950 and began farming together. In 1951, Art moved his shack to his father's place and worked out wherever he could. In the meantime, he applied for his own homested In 1952 he obtained the NE 3-62-4-5. Once again he moved his little shack. Art farmed with Dick Froma until 1967, when he started in the dairy business with his family

Art and Henny were blessed with five children. **Henry** (Hendrik), born on July 16, 1949, **Jenny**, born on September 2, 1952, **Martin**,

Art, Henry, Henny, c. 1952

born on January 7, 1956; **Anita**, born on April 17, 1959; and **Erwin**, born on April 21, 1964

Henry married **Grace van Huizen** in 1975 Grace had been born in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, on April 5, 1952. She had immigrated with her parents to Winnipeg in 1958 and, before her marriage, had worked as a nursing assistant. Henry and Grace were blessed with three children. **Michelle** Elizabeth was born on July 31, 1976, and **Melanie** Rose on April 10, 1978. Their son **Arden** Arthur was born on July 3, 1981, and died in infancy

Soon after Henry and Grace were married, the old shack which had been home for so many years and which had been moved and built on to several times, was finally replaced by a duplex. Art and Henny and their youngest son, Erwin, moved into the one side and the newly-weds moved into the other

Martin married Bernice Tuininga, youngest daughter of Simon and Bertha Tuininga, in 1976. They took up residence in a mobile home They have four healthy boys: **Marcel** Bruce, born on September 25, 1977; **Trevor** Scott, born on October 10, 1978; **Curtis** Dale, born on April 27, 1981, and **Randy** Alan, born on March 25, 1983

Jenny lives in Langley, British Columbia, with her husband, Bert Koning, and their five boys. Anita married Jake Oussoren and they reside in Edmonton with their daughter and son

The three sons of the family continue to work together with their father on the dairy farm Henny, too, continues to be actively involved in the business. She has worked hard for many years alongside her husband and her sons to make the operation a viable one She still milks the cows morning and night

"Art Peters and Sons" now farm four quarters and their crops are used for feeding the dairy herd In 1979, they had a 2590 Harvestore system put up for haylage. This made the work easier for the men. But it paid off for the wives too: they did not have to mend as many jeans as when their men had handled many bales of hay or straw.

Art enjoys doing carpentry in his spare time. He did much of the finishing work in Covenant Canadian Reformed School as well as in the basement of the parsonage

Henry's interests include mechanics and welding He looks after much of the general maintenance and repair of the farm vehicles and machinery

Without the providential care of the Lord, in whom they trust, the families of Art and Henny Peters would never be what they are today. He continues to lead and guide them in the ways of the truth

Grace Peters

HENRY AND MARTJE (BANNINGA) PETERS

HENRY PETERS JR.

Hendrik (August 8, 1903) and Martje (September 22, 1904) were both born in Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, and were married May 19, 1923. In 1928, in Uithuizen, there was a lot of talk about immigration. The Hendrik Peters family, along with the families of his brother Johannes, his brothers-in-law Marten Banninga and Hendrik Wierenga, as well as two other Wierenga families, were planning to go to Canada They were, in fact, all in Rotterdam ready to board the ship, when Hendrik Peters found that he was not allowed to leave. His immigration papers were not in order. His father, Jan Peters, had come from Germany illegally, and now Hendrik was considered a *staatsloze* (displaced person). Much to their disappointment, Hendrik and his family had to return to Uithuizen

Immigration to Canada, however, never left Hendrik's thoughts in the following years, so he set about getting the proper papers. Meanwhile, the family had grown to include twelve children — seven girls and five boys. After World War II, when immigration was possible again, Hendrik and Martje once more made plans for going to Canada. Their older sons, **John** (Jan, August 29, 1923) and **Art** (Ate, March 8, 1926), each had a girlfriend by this time, and their oldest daughter, **Corry** (Kornelia, October 25, 1924), was being courted by Dick Froma. John and Art were interested in immigrating as well, but at that time no single girls were allowed to immigrate. So on January 29, 1948, in Uithuizermeeden, three couples were married: John to **Sina Poel**, **Art** to Henny Bultena, and Corry to Dick Froma. In April 1948 Hendrik, Martje, and the family, as well as Dick and Corry Froma, boarded the *Kota Inten* for Canada. After a long boat trip, they landed in Halifax. From there they took the train to Barrhead, and arrived in Neerlandia on April 23.

Art and Henny's papers took longer to come through; they arrived in Neerlandia a month later. John had medical problems, so he was not allowed to immigrate unless he had a lifetime sponsor (to guarantee to the Canadian government that he would not become a burden in the future). It took two and one half years before John, Sina, and their daughter, **Reta**, sponsored by father Hendrik, came to Neerlandia. They stayed for only two years before moving, first to Barrhead and later to Edmonton.

In the fall of 1948, Hendrik (Henry) bought the Harry Lievers homestead (SE 6-62-3-5). He farmed it with help from his sons **Joe** (Johannes), born January 15, 1932; **Henry** Jr. (Hendrik), born February 4, 1933; and **Rieks** (Henderikus), born September 28, 1935. During the next few harvests, the boys worked on various threshing crews; in the winter they worked in lumber camps.

In the Netherlands, Henry Sr. had been a licensed electrician, skilled in residential and rural wiring. But once in Canada, he had to take an exam in Edmonton to obtain his Canadian license. The first time he tried, he took along a minister from Edmonton to translate for him. But because the minister was unable to translate the technical terms, Henry had no success. The second time, young Fred Toebes came along. Fred and his father had done some wiring for power plants, so Fred was familiar with electrical terms. He translated for Henry, although in a few instances he also did not know the correct Dutch terms. In those cases Fred would tell him which answer to check. This time, Henry passed and got his license.

In the following years Henry Sr., with the help of his son Rieks, did most of the wiring in Neerlandia for power plants and for hookups to Calgary Power. For about eleven years, Henry sold both Beatty equipment, which involved items such as gutter cleaners and water pressure systems for barns, and Fairbanks Morris household appliances. The item was chosen from a catalogue, then Henry would pick it up in Edmonton and install it for the customer. Meanwhile, Henry and his sons continued to farm. Joe bought his own farm in 1962 and some years later Henry Sr. went into partnership with Rieks and Henry Jr.

Art, John, Rieks, Joe, Henry.

Martje, Hilda, Pat, Ann, Tienie, Corrie, Johanna, c. 1980.

Through the years, all of Henry and Martje's children, except Henry Jr., married. Their daughter **Martje** (June 1, 1930) married Dick Vander Veen of Edmonton, and they raised twelve children. Joe married Fredrika Vogelzang. **Tienie** (Trijntje). May 8, 1934) is the wife of Peter Stiksma of Edmonton. They have five children. Rieks married Henny Kippers of Neerlandia, and they moved to Edmonton after the family farm was sold to brother Joe. They had four children; one of them passed away. **Anje** (March 4, 1937) and her husband, Koos Duker of Edmonton, raised six children. **Hilda** (Hilje, March 24, 1938) married Wilfred Holwerda of Neerlandia. **Johanna** (July 8, 1939) and her husband, John Werkman, live with their four daughters in Edmonton while **Pat** (Pieterdina, March 22, 1942) and her husband, Sid Oostenburg, with their three children live in Mission, B C.

Martje Peters died March 13, 1973, after a stroke. In the spring of 1973, the family farm was sold to son Joe and Hendrik Sr. retired. He married Jacoba Boonstra-DeBoer on May 10, 1974, and moved to Edmonton where he still lives (1984).

Henry Jr. owns the SW 2-62-4-5 and the NW 36-61-4-5, and rents the land out. He has done custom breaking with his Caterpillar bulldozer and now works at W B. Forest Products. His favourite sport is hunting and he is well-known among local hunters for his imitations of moose calls

Art Peters

JOE AND FREDRIKA (VOGELZANG) PETERS

Joe, the third son of Henry and Martje Peters, married Fredrika Vogelzang of Barrhead on August 31, 1962 Fredrika had been born on April 17, 1939, in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, and had immigrated with her parents to Edmonton in 1951. Joe and Fredrika bought the SW 18-62-3-5 from Peter Mast, and farmed there for ten years. Then they sold to Joe Van Assen and bought the dairy farm (SE 6-62-3-5) from Joe's father and brothers in 1973

Joe and Fredrika have five children: **Harry** (June 29, 1963), **John** (June 13, 1965), **Marvin** (July 25, 1967), **Richard** (July 2, 1971), and **Rose** (September 21, 1973). The family manages a dairy operation of about fifty milking cows and raises crops of oats, barley, and alfalfa

Joe Peters

JOHN JR. AND KAY (BAKER) PETERS

John bached with his father for quite a while before he got married, and was not too interested at that time in making improvements on the farm. He worked out, getting jobs on the oil rigs or driving Cat. He married Kay Baker on November 21, 1956, and they began farming on the Peters homestead. They have one son, **Roger** Don, who farms with John.

After they got married, John and Kay worked on improving the farm. They had a well drilled and electric power put in. They built some new barns and also built up a better sow herd for their farrow-to-finish operation They grow enough grain every year on their one-half section land to feed their hogs, unless they get hailed out (as happened in 1983).

John, Kay, 1981

John suffered a heart attack in 1969 but, after taking it easy for a year, is doing well and works just as hard as he did before. Besides working on the farm, he works part-time for the County as road grader operator. Kay has worked in Neerlandia Co-op for about fourteen years, the

Roger

first six years full-time and the last eight years part-time

Kay Peters

GERRIT AND LIES (SCHEELE) PIEFFERS

Gerrit (Gerhardus Philippus) Pieffers was born January 10, 1906, in Gouda, South Holland, the Netherlands. Lies (Elizabeth Catharina) Scheele was born March 15, 1908 in Axel, Zeeland. In 1927 Gerrit Pieffers was admitted to the *Theologische Hoogeschool* of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in Kampen, Overijssel. After having to interrupt his studies for a number of years, he passed his candidate examination in 1939, and was admitted to the ministry. On July 18, 1940, he was united in marriage to Lies. In Zuilichem, Gelderland, two daughters were born. **Lies** (Elizabeth) Catharina on December 8, 1941, and **Tineke** (Albertina) on March 9, 1943.

From 1943 to 1946, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bergentheim, Overijssel, where both he and his wife became deeply involved in the Resistance Movement. Gerrit spent three weeks in *Kamp Erica* (a work camp). He managed to escape and the Germans did not capture him again. Shortly before the liberation of the Netherlands in 1945, another daughter was born, Joke (Johanna).

From 1946 to 1952, Rev. Pieffers served the church at Bussum, North Holland, with a two-year release from this congregation to serve as army chaplain in Indonesia. This was work he loved: working with the boys on the fields or wherever duty called. In Bussum a son was born on September 15, 1947: **Henk** (Hendrik).

In 1952 the Pieffers family boarded a plane for Canada. They arrived in Montreal, then went by train to Alberta, where Rev. Pieffers was installed as minister of the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale. After 1963 Gerrit suffered three strokes which left him unable to continue the work in Coaldale.

Yet God gave him work to do. Gerrit and Lies and Tineke moved to Neerlandia in 1966, into the parsonage. Tineke had had to undergo open heart surgery (as a result of rheumatic fever she had a damaged heart) in June 1965, and because of infection on the artificial valve six weeks later, she could not take up the teaching position to which she was appointed. She had graduated in May 1965 from the U of A. Now she worked as substitute teacher for one year in Barrhead and Neerlandia.

Lies, Gerrit, 1967

In Neerlandia Rev. Pieffers preached once a Sunday, gave catechism classes, made sick visits, and family visits. Although it often hurt him that he could not preach more often, he was very thankful he did not have to sit idle "twiddling his thumbs." How he used to be jealous of ministers, older than he, who could still fulfill all their duties. After a trip to the Netherlands in 1967, the first thing he said on his return was, *"Ik heb lekker een keer drie keer gepreekt* (I nicely preached three times one Sunday)." On Sunday, March 24, 1968, Rev. Pieffers still led the worship service. On Thursday, March 28, God took him home.

Lies went to live with Adrian and Lies Hamoen after Gerrit's death. On March 20, 1969, the sad message was received that God had also taken Tineke unto Himself. She had been teaching in Smithville, Ontario. In August 1970 Lies Pieffers was admitted to the Barrhead hospital and there she died December 3, 1970.

On April 30, 1971, Henk married Christine Kippers, daughter of Henry and Sophie. They live in Vega where they operate a hog farm.

Lies Hamoen

JOHN AND LUCILLE (TUININGA) PIERS

John Piers was born on October 17, 1936, the fourth son of Oene and Grace Piers. At about two years of age, John suffered from an illness which appeared to be an inability to tolerate the heat of the sun. After a three week stay in a darkened room in an Edmonton hospital, he recovered. His parents were instructed to keep him in a cool environment. Although the illness reappeared the following summer, John gradually outgrew it and was able to take part in farm activities.

Life on the farm involved doing a lot of chores — feeding chickens, carrying water into the house, splitting and piling firewood, filling lamps and lanterns with coal oil, and last, but not least, milking cows by hand. Once, John, who had just learned to milk, was proudly displaying his skills to his brothers. The cow became annoyed with the vigorous activity and kicked John, the pail, and all across the gutter, much to the amusement of the brothers.

The coming of electricity to the farm was a time of great excitement. The house and barn could now be "magically" lit up with a flick of the switch. John and his brothers were delighted to have no more lanterns or lamps to fill up and carry around.

Things could get rather hectic at times when John and his five brothers played together. Both outdoor and indoor games could lead to physical battles. The Monopoly game met a fiery demise in the coal furnace when Mom got fed up with the frequent skirmishes. In spite of the squabbles, there was always a strong bond of love among all the family members.

John enrolled in the University of Alberta in Edmonton in 1955, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree four years later. He then attended Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for one year, majoring in Education. In September 1960 he began teaching in Neerlandia, where he became principal in 1962.

On November 1, 1963, John married Lucille daughter of Peter and Tena Tuininga. Before their marrige, Lucille had worked at the Neerlandia Co-op, where her starting wage in 1960 was $85.00 a month.

John and Lucille's wedding day was a beautiful day with no snow, but when they returned from their honeymoon, snow lay everywhere — including on their unfinished house. They had to move in with Lucille's parents for a few weeks. Soon, though, they took up residence in their house in spite of no well or indoor plumbing.

Back: Maureen, Brian, Kelly, Crystal. Front: John, Lucille, 1984

God blessed this union with four children: **Brian** John (January 18, 1965), **Crystal** Joy (April 1, 1967), **Kelly** Dean (July 18, 1969), and **Maureen** Denise (January 13, 1972). Lucille is working as teacher's aide in Neerlandia Public School, where John continues as principal (1984).

John Piers

JAN AND ELIZABETH (STUIVE) PIERS KLAAS AND TILLY (ZUIDEMA) PIERS

Jan Piers and his wife, Elizabeth, were not so young anymore when they decided to leave their farm in Doezum, Groningen, the Netherlands. Jan, born on August 16, 1894, and Elizabeth, born on July 22, 1893, were only renting anyway, and the fact that 200 people had applied to rent the land they left tells us a bit about the situation there at the time. Besides, Jan's brother Oene Piers was already living in Neerlandia. He said land was available, and he would sponsor Jan and his family if they wanted to come.

On April 26, 1948, Jan and Elizabeth left the Netherlands with their son **Klaas**, born September 2, 1925, and their daughter **Anna**, born January 16, 1934. They sailed on the *Tabinta* from Rotterdam and landed in Quebec City on May 6, 1948. From Quebec they travelled by train to Edmonton, and were picked up there to be brought to Neerlandia.

When they arrived in Neerlandia, Klaas worked for Jack Tuininga, while Jan and his wife worked on his brother Oene's place. Anna worked for awhile at Andy Elzinga's place, and also for Steve Abday, taking care of Sydney while Tena Abday was teaching.

In November 1948, having a job already secured, Klaas moved to Ladner, British Columbia. Half a year later, the rest of the family followed. Klaas worked for a farmer who did mixed farming. Jan took odd jobs until 1951, when he and Klaas started dairy farming together.

Not so long after that, in 1954, a blonde girl from Ferwerd, Friesland, the Netherlands, came to Canada. Tilly Zuidema, born on November 4, 1929, decided to visit her brother Berend Zuidema in Woodstock, Ontario. Though she intended only to visit, she had followed advice given to her to immigrate so that she would have the option of staying in Canada if she later wished to do so.

The same adventurous spirit that brought Tilly to Canada soon led her into something deeper. Through friends, a correspondence with Klaas in Ladner began. And later, when he came to visit, she found herself going west with him. As the saying goes, "In love and war, strange things do happen." Tilly got a job in Vancouver, and on March 21, 1957, Klaas Piers and Tilly Zuidema were married in First Christian Reformed Church of Ladner. Klaas kept working with his father for four years. During that time **Annette** Margaret (December 6, 1958) and **John** William (April 17, 1960) were born. But Klaas still had Neerlandia on his mind, and when the family took a vacation in 1960, it was to see the relatives and check whether perhaps there was a suitable farm for purchase.

In the fall of the same year, they returned and bought the farm of John Tansowny on the SW 13-62-3-5. Then in March 1961, Klaas and Tilly and their two children moved to their new farm in Neerlandia.

The new farm brought some excitement of its own. In the fall of 1967, Klaas learned from their neighbour Alex Tansowny that their brush piles were smoking. They had burned the brush the year before, and had assumed that the winter snow and spring water had killed the fire. To be safe, they thought they ought to go out and throw a few pails of water over the piles. After that, it looked as if the fire was out, and they decided to have tea before getting more water. By the time tea was over, however, there was a roaring fire which eventually destroyed a chicken coop, the old barn, three full granaries, part of the swathed crop, and a 500-gallon fuel tank full of gas. Only the neighbours' coming over to aid with wet sacks saved the new barn that was just in the process of being built. To their relief, the house was untouched.

Back: Tilly, Bradley, John, Annette. Front: Elizabeth, Klaas holding Bonita, Allister, 1969

While in Neerlandia, four more children were born to Klaas and Tilly. **Bradley** Clayton was born on July 9, 1961. He helps on the farm in the summer and works in a logging camp and sawmill during the winter. **Elizabeth** Arlene was born on August 5, 1964, and is training for nurse at Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. **Allister** Ivan was born on May 5, 1966, and **Bonita** Yolanda on January 26, 1969. John is working as a mechanic in Neerlandia Service Centre. The Klaas Piers family is still enjoying a happy and healthy life in Neerlandia.

Klaas' parents remain in Ladner and on May 5, 1984, celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary.

Klaas and Tilly Piers

PETER AND GRACE (VISSER) PIERS

Peter Piers and Grace Visser, second daughter of Frank and Rachel Visser, were married July 23, 1958, in First Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton.

They began farming on the S½ 26-61-3-5, formerly owned by George Ierpsma, only a mile from where Peter was born and raised. Seven children, one of whom died in infancy, were born into the family.

Back: Keith, Michelle, Greg, Pamela. Front: Judy, Grace, Peter, Colleen, 1984

Judy (Judith), born on September 28, 1960, is a medical lab technician and lives in Edmonton with her husband, Mike Slomp. **Pam** (Pamela) Maureen born on February 4, 1962, lives in Edmonton and is a data co-ordinator in a credit union. **Greg** (Gregory) Scott, born on November 16, 1963, is farming with his dad. **Colleen** Beverly, born on November 2, 1965, is engaged to marry Bernie Tiemstra. **Keith** Nelson, born on July 19, 1969, and **Michelle** Andrea, born on August 2, 1971, make up the rest of the family.

Peter and Grace are thankful to God for His covenant faithfulness and the many blessings which he has given them.

Peter Piers

FRANK AND MARION (WIERENGA) RAYMENT

Arthur Frank Rayment was born on January 9, 1953, in Cambridge, Ontario. His family was of English origin. They attended the Brethren Church. In 1977 Frank graduated from the University of Western Ontario in London. In the fall of that year he came to Neerlandia to be the physical education teacher in the public school. By coincidence Frank's father, Charles Rayment, who had always loved the West, had homesteaded for a short time in the 1930s near Flatbush, not far from Neerlandia.

All that Frank knew about Neerlandia before he arrived was that it was an isolated community made up of people of one ethnic group and one religious denomination. He anticipated that it would be similar to a Hutterite colony, and hoped he would be able to endure teaching there till Christmas. Because of his preconceived notions and his own religious background, Frank wore his best suit complete with a tie the first time he attended the local Christian Reformed Church. As a newcomer he was noticed by everyone, but mainly because of his formal attire — many of the other young men wore blue jeans at that time. It did not take long for Frank to shed his erroneous ideas along with his suit and tie. He soon became involved in many community activities.

On July 25, 1980, Frank married Marion Wierenga. Before their marriage, Marion had attended both Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, and The King's College in Edmonton. While attending Dordt College, Marion was operated on for acute appendicitis. She remembers the loneliness of being hospitalized so far from home, but the concern of the community, expressed even at that distance, made her stay in the hospital bearable.

In July 1982 Frank and Marion began to develop an acreage they had purchased from Ralph Bos (N.W. 5-62-3-5). On December 1, 1982, they were blessed with the birth of **Meredith** Renee. When Frank first arrived in

Marion holding Meredith, Frank, 1984.

Neerlandia, he contemplated changing his name to Van Raymentsma, but he now feels as much at home at anyone with a Dutch surname.

Marion Rayment

ARTHUR AND HELEN (BOONSTRA) REITSMA

Art Reitsma attended school in Neerlandia from 1935 to 1945 and worked at home on the farm until 1950. He then moved to Edmonton until 1953, when he moved back home to farm on the NW 24-61-4-5.

Art married Helen Boonstra on April 6, 1955. Helen was born October 31, 1935, in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, the daughter of a mechanic. She came to the Barrhead area with her family when she was sixteen.

From this marriage came six children. **Arlene** Joyce, born March 10, 1956, **Brenda** Jean, born October 24, 1957, **Carolyn** Joan, born December 10, 1958; **Marie** Sandra, born September 1, 1961, **Jeffrey** Arthur, born October 22, 1963; and **Sherrilyn** Wilma, born October 6, 1966.

In 1968 the Reitsma family moved to Barrhead. Art trucked for Canadian Propane from 1968 to 1984 and now works as a school bus driver.

Art and Helen Reitsma

Back: Helen holding Sherrilyn, Art. Front: Marie, Jeff, Arlene, Brenda, Carolyn, 1967

TED AND CAROL (HOWIE) REITSMA

Ted (Theodore) Reitsma was born in Neerlandia on May 1, 1935. He lived there with his parents until 1956, when he left to work on railroad and pipeline construction jobs near Dawson Creek, British Columbia. On January 19, 1957, he married Carol Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Howie of Westlock. Carol had been born in Westlock on June 14, 1937, and lived there until her marriage.

In 1958 Ted and Carol moved to Neerlandia and purchased the trucking firm then owned by Art Fisher. They moved into the house on the NW 10-61-3-5, from where Art had operated his business.

Ted and Carol had three children. On July 2, 1959, **Deborah** Hazel was born. She was followed by **Gerald** Edward on October 17, 1961, and **Kenneth** Allen on June 17, 1965.

Kenneth, Gerald, Debbie, Carol, Ted, 1978.

Ted, Carol, and family lived in Neerlandia for several years. Carol was the manager-treasurer of Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union, which she operated from her house. Ted continued to truck until Dawson Creek beckoned him to return. In 1970 he sold his trucks to Joe Fisher and bought a motel in Dawson Creek. After Ted and Carol had managed the motel for four years, they sold it and Ted has since tried his hand at a variety of jobs. For the past few years, he has been working for a canola plant at Sexsmith, Alberta.

Ted Reitsma

HENRY AND ERNA (HUNKER) ROTH

Henry Roth, the eldest of three children, is a son of John and Emma Roth. He attended Shoal Creek School during grades one through six. When he was 13 years old, he was the janitor for the school with his brother. On the cold mornings, they would have to go before school and light the fire in the wood stove, so the school would be warm when everyone arrived. After school, they would have to stay and sweep the floors. Each month they received $3.00, which at that time was a lot of money. When Shoal Creek School was closed down, Henry attended Neerlandia School. During that time, he played on the Neerlandia Hockey Team.

After Henry left school, he helped his father on the farm. For six winters, he worked in lumber camps in the Swan Hills area. He also drove truck part-time for Ted Reitsma for four or five years.

On June 13, 1964, Henry married Erna Hunker of Thorsby, Alberta. Soon after, he took over the family farm. Henry and Erna have four daughters. **Debra** Erna Lynn, born on July 17, 1965, who is presently employed at the Barrhead General Hospital (1984); **Donna** Emma Joy, born on August 12, 1966; **Cheryl** Roxanne, born on September 4, 1968, and **Shelley** Glorianne, born on December 30, 1972. The Roth family attends Bethel Pentecostal Church in Barrhead.

Debbie's graduation, 1983. Henry, Donna, Erna, Shelley, Debbie, Cheryl

Erna Roth

ALBERT AND CLARA (VISSER) SCHOONEKAMP

Albert Schoonekamp was born and raised in Neerlandia. Clara Visser was born April 13, 1921, to George and Grace Visser of Edmonton and grew up there. Albert and Clara were married June 25, 1947, and in the first years of their life together they had two daughters, Grace **Carolyn**, born August 26, 1948, and **Patricia** Dawn, born October 31, 1949. The home, the church, and the school were the main sources of the girls' early education, but participation in the picnics, parades, sports, and other forms of social life also served to enrich their lives and provide a happy childhood.

After their marriage the Schoonekamps lived in Neerlandia for twenty years, enjoying the life of the community and working for its welfare. When the second church burned down, Albert worked with the many other men who gave of their time and efforts to rebuild it. The Sports Committee also took up much of his time. It took a lot of water from well and creek to make a rink. Hockey was one of his favourite sports and he played on the Mellowdale team for a year, and then as defenceman on the Neerlandia team. Both he and Clara were members of the Choral Society, and Clara taught in Neerlandia School.

The Schoonekamps lives on the Schoonekamp family farm on the NW 34-61-3-5. Before the girls went to school, the farm was the main source of income and the girls enjoyed the kittens, dogs, chicks, and other farm animals. But farming was not to play a large role in their lives for long.

When the two daughters were old enough to go to school, Albert and Clara learned that they were not able to have more children. Clara continued teaching, but Albert decided to give up farming except for cropping the land. He enjoyed mechanics more than farming, so he found employment with Fred Toebes and Gerrit Gelderman at the Neerlandia garage. When Fred set up Fred's Garage in Vega, Albert continued to work for him. While working in Vega he also attended and obtained his automotive license from NAIT. Finding it too demanding to look after the farm, Albert rented it out to John Visser Sr.

Carol, Albert, Clara, Patricia, 1967

In 1967 the family seemed ready for a change. Since Fred was closing his business in Vega, Albert began looking for new employment. Clara was ready for a new challenge and longed to return to her native soil. Carol was attending Dordt College, so it did not matter much to her where home was (although she did miss Neerlandia when she returned for holidays). Patricia, just out of high school, wanted to join the work force rather than attend college, since she already had fond thoughts for Dennis Nanninga. That summer the family moved to Edmonton.

Albert first worked for two different automotive businesses, but now is co-owner of Woodscoon Automotives. Since 1967 Clara has been employed by The Edmonton Society for Christian Education and is presently teaching grade two. Carol earned her education degree from Dordt. There she met Norman Bomer, and they were married a few days after graduation. Patricia worked at The Bank of Commerce for two years and then she and Dennis were married.

Clara Schoonekamp

WILBERT AND WILHELMINA (VANDER ZOUWEN) SCHURING

Wilbert was born August 6, 1934, and attended Grandale School until his formal education was ended. Wilbert recalls the following incidents from his childhood.

I seemed to spend a lot of time in detentions after school for some reason or another. This particular day I came home late again! Dad was hammering grain in his old mill that had to be watched constantly. Dad was not pleased with my late appearance and expressed it. "Dumbbell, are you late again?" Well I looked up innocently and said "Me a dumbbell! I'm smart, you're dumb! You work like a fool all day while I sit in school and do nothing." This reply caused Dad's blood pressure to rise just a little, and with an angry shout he jumped over the hammermill in hot pursuit of me. My small bottom was spared only because the mill ran out of grain. Dad noticed this and quickly ran back to fill it before any damage occurred. I didn't stop running though, because I knew Dad was mad. I shot into the house, zoomed past my startled mother, and dived under the bed. Mom looked at her shaking son and back to her furious husband. She attempted with little success to coax me out from under the bed, asking all the while to tell her what happened. By this time I was crying and burst out with "You tell me that if I tell a lie I'll get a licking. Now I tell the truth and I still get a licking." After hearing this Mom suggested maybe I should go straight to bed instead of waiting until Dad came in

Late that night when Dad came in from chores they both had a good laugh over a cup of coffee about their son's smart aleck reply.

The socializing part of Wilbert's teenage years was generally done around Neerlandia Corner. He played hockey and baseball and enjoyed Young People's Society.

Wilbert met Willy (Wilhelmina) Vander Zouwen at his brother's wedding. He courted her for two years, and they were married February 26, 1960. Willy had been born in Soest, Utrecht, the Netherlands, on July 20, 1941, and immigrated with her parents to Calgary. Wilbert and Willy continued to farm on the home place and Wilbert drove truck for Dick Fisher from Vega. They were blessed with five children. **John** Winson (April 9, 1961), **Hermina** Theresa (June 10, 1962), **Cynthia** Rose (August 13, 1963), **Hendrik** Leonard Cornelius (January 7, 1965), and **Laurianne** May (March 19, 1969).

In 1971 Wilbert and Willy decided to leave the farm. They moved to Medicine Hat and later to Redcliffe where they purchased a greenhouse. Wilbert also drove truck. They now live in Warburg and own a dairy farm.

ROMKE AND MARIA (WACHTENDONK) STEL

Romke Stel was born on January 21, 1918, in Witmarsum, Friesland, the Netherlands. On November 21, 1942, he married Maria Petronella (Rie) Wachtendonk. Rie was born on September 26, 1915, in Nijmegen, Gelderland.

Rom was a mechanic by trade and worked as foreman for a Ford dealer in Leeuwarden. The economy was poor in the Netherlands and Rom was concerned that he might have to go back to crawling under cars again, so he decided to immigrate to Canada. Rom and Rie contacted the Christian Immigration Society and their names were put on a waiting list. In the meantime, Melle Elzinga had written his uncle, Peter Hania of Buitenpost, Friesland, to ask him to look out for a mechanic who would be interested in coming to Canada. Peter Hania, who was a member of the Immigration Society, checked the waiting list and found the name of Romke Stel, who was well-known to him. With the help of Peter, everything was made ready. In three months the Stels, with their three little boys, were sailing from Rotterdam on the *Tabinta*. It was May 23, 1949, the first birthday of their son, **Marten. Sidney** (Sijbe) was four years old at the time. He was born on April 6, 1945, just before the war ended. **Peter** (Petrus), the middle son, had been born on August 14, 1947.

After ten days, the family landed in Quebec City, where Rie was immediately hospitalized with a bad throat infection. The little boys were taken to the hospital with their mother, but not Rom. Rom was taken to a harbour house, where sailors who jump ship, and other suspicious or undesirable aliens were kept. Here Rom sat for eight days, with a guard outside the door. His only exercise was to go up on the flat roof or wander about the house. Twice in the eight days, he was taken by the guard to see his family. On the way, he could stop to buy a package of cigarettes or some such thing. When Rie was recovered, the family was reunited and allowed to continue their journey.

Eighty-eight hours later, they landed in Edmonton where Peter Elzinga, a brother of Melle, was waiting for them. With him was fieldman Herman Wierenga, who took the Stels to the bus station. From there, they set out on the last part of their trip to Barrhead. Melle had found a job for Rom with Walter Bell, the Ford dealer in Barrhead, at $160 per month. The welcome mat was put out for the Stels, all the Dutchies were by the bus station waiting for the new arrivals. How nice to be able to speak *Hollands* or *Fries* in this foreign land!

There was only a small group of Christian Reformed people in Barrhead. Church services were held in the Anglican church on the main street (a cute little white building). Sometimes there was a minister (Rie remembers Rev. Hanenburg or Rev. de Koekkoek), but mostly there were reading services. There was no consistory, but the readers were appointed by the Neerlandia Christian Reformed consistory; if there were problems the Neerlandia consistory handled them too. Many people from the Neerlandia church visited the group in Barrhead and brought all kinds of "goodies".

"One man was especially good to me," Rie says. "As an immigrant you have to be careful with the money, but Rom needed a haircut. I said 'I will do it' and started to cut. I never finished it. I cut it way too high on one side — a disaster! But there came friends; Albert and

Mabel Elgersma. How they laughed but Albert finished the job. Thanks again, Albert."

While Rom was working for Walter Bell, a lot of people from Neerlandia came to have their cars repaired. One day, Bill Olthuis and Albert Elgersma came by — but not to have their cars repaired. The garage in Neerlandia was coming up for sale, they said, and would Rom be interested? Rom was indeed interested, but he did not have enough money to buy a garage. One evening soon after that, Bill and Albert came again, but this time with two other men — Louis Nanninga and George Anema. That evening they spoke *Fries*, Dutch, and English, but the deal was made. When the garage came up for tender, Rom would put his name in, but Louis, George, Albert and Bill would "put up" the money. When the time came, it was discovered that this group of men had tendered the same amount as Ed Visser. The Co-op asked for bids a second time. After that tender, Rom was the owner of the Neerlandia garage which was renamed "Neerlandia Motors, prop. R. Stel."

On January 1, 1950, the Stels moved to Neerlandia. The house beside the garage had been empty for just one day, but when the family came, in the −52° F weather, the walls were iced up. Soon, though, the old wood stove warmed up the house.

On the first morning in the garage, Rom looked at the phone and got scared. What if it would ring? He would have to answer it and speak English. But he made it; there were sometimes mix-ups, but he made it! Rom remembers that one of the first things he had to do was to overhaul the light plant. There was no rural electrification yet, so electricity was supplied by this plant to the garage, store, church, parsonage, and a few houses. This did not work very well, so Rom had to buy a second light plant, which Bert Norden hooked up in such a way that both plants could run at one time. Normally, the plant stopped at 11 p.m. and everybody had to be in bed by then or be left sitting in the dark. Only when the consistory had a meeting was the plant kept going, going, going, — long after 11:00. Those men believed in overtime.

From the start, the garage got a lot of business. Henry Dieterman came from Barrhead as a mechanic; he was followed by Gerrit van Dijken, Bill Vander Leest, Tjibbe Vander Leest, and John Stryker.

On November 11, 1950, the Stel family was blessed with their fourth son, **Hedley** Ralph. Rom was now a sub-dealer for the Ford company and when C. K. Mast died, Rom became the John Deere dealer as well. He even did some trucking for awhile, with Simon Tuininga.

The Lord was good to the Stels. Rom served one term in the consistory. They had many friends with whom they had nice evenings together and whom they will never forget.

People also played jokes on them. One winter evening, Rom and Rie came home from Barrhead with the children. Rom spotted a beautiful white owl sitting on the gas pump. He stopped the car and told the family to stay put. Then he took his .22 rifle and shot the owl. The owl fell down, but was as stiff as a board when Rom picked it up. Then Rom also noticed a coyote standing by the garage door — frozen stiff too. Rie says, "We know, Marten Wierenga, that you played that trick on us."

The Stel boys loved Neerlandia, they "lived" on the rink all winter and also went trapping in Hessels' bush and Bert Nanninga's bush. Bill Olthuis taught them how to skin weasels and muskrats. The boys, especially Sid, were good hockey players. Sid was an all 'round sports boy.

Marilyn Patricia was born on August 30, 1954. After four boys - a girl! What happiness there was in the Stel family.

Standing: Marten, Hedley, Sidney, Pete. Seated: Rom, Marilyn, Rie. 1958

So the years went by, until 1960. In that year, the Stels decided to sell the garage and move to Ontario. The garage was sold to Fred Toebes and Gerrit Gelderman. Simon Tuininga moved the Stels to Richmond Hill, Ontario, for the price of an old Massey combine, which Rom had received as a trade-in. In Ontario, Rom worked for Beaver Lumber Company.

In 1978, after 18 years, they came back to Neerlandia. They could not forget the place where they had spent so many good years and made so many friends. The old garage was gone and so was the house. A new garage had been built by Neerlandia Co-op. There Rom was hired as service manager.

Upon Rom's retirement on September 30, 1982, a farewell party was given the Stels by the store board and employees. A week later, with regret, they left their apartment above the store, to move to Airdrie, Alberta, to be with their family

Rie Stel

ANDY AND DONNA (MAST) STRYDHORST

Andrew was the twelfth child born into the Strydhorst family His childhood was similar to most He broke his wrist twice and as a toddler was rescued from the rain barrel by sister Alice No one knows who pulled him out of the manure pit, but his father was heard to remark, "It's easier to make another one than to clean that one!" Andrew survived the brush piling, root picking, and farm chores, and entered the U of A in 1965 Following graduation in 1969, he worked for Transport Canada as a professional engineer until 1980

Donna Mast was raised in Neerlandia and attended school in Neerlandia and Barrhead, studying music along with the regular courses During 1967-69, hers was that friendly voice on the telephone switchboard at Central from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. She usually slept on the job (there was a cot next to the switchboard) since the night shift was quiet except for the occasional emergency call Thursday mornings were different since this was the day to ship hogs Donna would be partially awakened by the buzzing of the phone at 5:00 a.m. and fully awakened a few seconds later when someone would holler into her ear, "Would you get me the operator, please?" You see, Dick Fisher was a little hard of hearing and assumed everyone else was too. Had she had her wits about her, Donna might have suggested that the Edmonton operator had already heard him.

Andy and Donna were married in Neerlandia on November 27, 1970, by Rev P Van Drunen. After living in Edmonton for about a year they moved to Ottawa **Melanie** Grace (October 30, 1974), **Shane** Andrew (July 27, 1976), and **Amanda** Dawn (September 29, 1979) were born there. **Erin** Lynn (May 25, 1981) was born in Barrhead, following Andy and Donna's return to the farm. Andy has often been asked why they came back to the farm As long as the government was spending money on airports, Andy's job was interesting and worthwhile During his last year with Transport, however, most jobs of any significance were assigned to consultants (privatization) but all personnel were retained (job security). So they all had little to do except invent new words (buzz words) to describe what they were doing

Top: Andy, Donna, Melanie, Amanda, Erin, Shane, 1984

Upon returning to the farm, work once again took on meaning for Andy, although the days are long and 5:00 a.m. sometimes comes too soon. Andy and Donna feel that the Lord has been good to them and are thankful for a place in the Neerlandia community.

Andy Strydhorst

HENRY AND SANDRA (ELGERSMA) STRYDHORST

This chapter of history begins with the birth of Henry Strydhorst in Neerlandia, in 1936. His growing-up years and school years were in Neerlandia. After completing grade nine he quit school and did a lot of carpentry work. His first major project was a chicken coop which he and his brother James put up together when they were thirteen and twelve years of age respectively. Before this their projects were more in the line of fun and games: twenty-foot high swings, stilts and a merry-go-round, which although near to being downright dangerous provided hours of entertainment for them and all the neighbour children

The first few years of post-school life were spent at the home place, but it soon became evident that something would have to be done to supplement the family's meagre income The winter months would surely be the best time to work out so, in the winter of 1954-55, Henry and James found work in a lumber camp. The sawmill, owned by Pete Albreght, was located some thirty miles northwest of Fort Assiniboine; wages were eighty-five cents per hour and, from this, board of two dollars per day was deducted. They worked five-and-a-half nine-hour days so on Saturday afternoon they would go home, returning to the camp on Sunday evening. There were also others from Neerlandia employed in this camp. Riding with Evert Wever who was the proud owner of a 1929 Chev car, Henry, James, and two Peters boys would spend about three-and-a-half hours on a Sunday evening travelling back to the lumber camp. This was at times an endurance test for the hardiest of men, for when it was 40 degrees below zero outside, the temperature in Wever's car (at least in the back seat) was also near the minus 40 mark — without considering the wind chill felt through the ill-fitting doors Needless to say they always wore their parkas and felt boots on these excursions.

During the summer of 1955 Henry began custom carpentry work, and in the next fourteen years constructed a number of houses, barns, and other buildings in the Neerlandia area. For himself and his bride-to-be, he built a house in the winter of 1961-62

On June 15, 1962, Henry married Sandra Elgersma. Like Henry, Sandra had quit school after grade nine. She then worked for a lot of people in their homes, usually taking care of the household while the mother was hospitalized with a new baby. She spent the school year of 1961-62 working for Tine Abday, a school teacher in the area

Upon their marriage Henry and Sandra moved into their new house They had bought the NW 21-62-3-5 from Melle Elzinga, Sandra's uncle Melle, who was living with his parents, had their large house moved a few yards so that Henry and Sandra could build their new house on the location of the old

Henry and Sandra purchased two quarters, the SE 32-62-3-5 and SW 33-62-3-5 from Frank Robinson in 1966 They now operate a mixed farm, raising grain, hogs, and cattle

Farming was often as challenging for Sandra as it was for Henry, especially in the fall when she had to become adept at tractor driving — after which she would have eleven months to either try to remember until the next time, how to do things right, or to try to erase the entire experience from her memory. One of the hardest lessons for her to learn was one in which she had to pull one vehicle with another. On one occasion she had to pull the truck which stubbornly refused to start However, because of its positioning, this was not going to be a simple, straightforward pull, rather, Sandra had to pull the truck backwards while Henry steered it Thinking that the most effective pull had to be accompanied by a fair amount of speed, Sandra tried her best to achieve this. At times Henry and the truck did not seem to be cooperating very well and the pulling got quite hard

Back: Albert, Henry, Harvey, Simon. Front: Barry, Sandra, Gloria, Marianne. 1980

However, Sandra knew how to combat that problem: simply step harder on the gas! After some time had passed and some distance had been covered, Sandra figured they had been at this long enough, a quick check in the rearview mirror revealed that they certainly had! The truck was veering wildly from ditch to ditch, finally coming to rest on its side in the right one, severed at last from its chain. Horrified, Sandra jumped from her vehicle to meet Henry at his. He was struggling to emerge from a side window, and greeted her with the following: "What are you trying to prove? I tried to signal to you that the truck had started, by lightly applying the brakes." At that stage Sandra had not yet learned all the signs and signals.

The years brought many changes, among them the addition of six children. **Harvey** James was born May 8, 1963, and is in law school pursuing a career which has been a long-time dream. On May 16, 1964, **Albert** Andrew made his appearance filling the household with fun and mischief. He is in his second year of study at RBC, having previously studied a year at the U of A. **Gloria** Jean came on the scene on March 26, 1966. Her dad's first comment upon seeing the new baby was, "It's a girl! I can tell by the mouth." Having always enjoyed school, Gloria is studying at the U of A, hoping someday to be a teacher. The trio became four with the addition of **Simon** Wayne on January 5, 1968. He is now in grade twelve and plans to continue his education, apparently not too badly affected by a rather disenchanting first day of school. On that day he didn't know when it was lunchtime — so he didn't eat, he broke his thermos - therefore went without a drink, and he topped off the day by missing the bus! **Barry** Allan was born July 7, 1970, a cute little fellow with a mop of black hair. At his baptism, one young fellow in the pews whispered to his mom, "That baby has more hair than his dad!" It was not natural baldness that had afflicted Dad, rather, it was a barber who wanted to make sure Dad got his money's worth! The caboose, **Marianne** Adana, showed up on September 13, 1974 — a tiny little girl with a mighty voice. After one church service in which Marianne loudly expressed her displeasure with the world, the family faced many accusations of having shown horror shows to the poor girl the night before.

Life has been good for the Strydhorsts. They thank the Lord for the many blessings over the years.

Strydhorst family

JAMES AND RETA (STURWOLD) STRYDHORST

Although James and Reta both grew up in Neerlandia, they did not make it their permanent residence until 1972.

James graduated from high school in Barrhead and then attended the U of A. He became a teacher, and taught for one year in each the Neerlandia school and in West Edmonton Christian School, and then in Lacombe Christian School for five years.

After finishing high school, Reta attended Dordt college for four years. After graduating, she taught at West Edmonton Christian School and also Lacombe Christian School. After the family moved to Neerlandia, she taught at the Neerlandia school for one year and has since served as a substitute teacher.

James and Reta were married August 2, 1968, in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church with Reta's uncle Rev. Jack Stulp officiating. James and Reta spent the first four years of their married life in Lacombe, where they both taught. In the summers, James sold World Book Encyclopedias.

Russell, Leslie, James, Reta, Shawna, 1984

Leslie and **Russell** were born in Lacombe. Leslie James was born November 18, 1969. He was born with spina bifida and as a result must use a wheelchair. He first went to school in Neerlandia and later transferred to Barrhead

In 1983, a hydraulic lift was put on the schoolbus to accommodate his wheelchair. Russell Kent was born January 15, 1972.

In July 1972 the family moved to Neerlandia after they had bought farm owned by Reta's parents, Lucas and Annie Sturwold. James grows grain on the land and also manages a farrow-to-finish hog operation. In 1982 and 1983, he was in the Top 20 (according to grade) hog producers in Alberta

Shawna Marie was born in Barrhead on April 9, 1975

After moving to Neerlandia both James and Reta have been happy to use their talents in church activities and community affairs. James has served in the consistory

Reta Strydhorst

JOHN AND GRACE (MEYERINK) STRYKER

John (Aaldert Jan) Stryker was born June 2, 1930, in Hoogeveen, Drenthe, the Netherlands. He was married December 7, 1955, to Grace (Gelsje) Harmina Meyerink (born January 27, 1935) who was also from Hoogeveen Two children were born to them there **Jackie** (Jacqueline) Francisca (June 21, 1956) and **John** (Jan) (December 3, 1957).

John was employed as a mechanic, but he quit his job and since the house was part of the employment package they no longer had a place to live Thus the decision was made to immigrate to Canada. Strykers sailed on the *Grote Beer* on May 1, 1958. The ship had no stabilizers to cushion the wave action and the voyage was rough. The train trip from Halifax was even worse. Immigrants going to Winnipeg so provoked the train conductor that he retaliated by locking the doors to the bathrooms on the immigrant car for two days.

John immediately found a job in Evansburg, but within three months a friend told him about a house and a job as mechanic available in Neerlandia, so the Strykers moved again. They rented the Canadian Reformed parsonage for twenty dollars per month plus janitorial help in the church.

When they were here for two weeks, John lit the furnace in the basement of their house and went to work. It was raining outside, but the inside was soon filled with smoke. Grace went downstairs and discovered a pipe from the furnace had rusted through and fallen off. She also discovered what a dusty road was like when it rained — she had put on low boots and was going to the garage to call John, but became stuck in the mud

Jackie, Grace, John, John Jr., 1958.

One day John had gone to Edmonton and Grace decided to empty the ashes from the furnace There must have been a few hot coals in the ashes because in no time there was a fire, fanned by a wind. The fire went into Fisher's field and, although the grain was off, the granary was full. Fortunately someone sounded the alarm and within a short time men with tractors were plowing a fire guard

That first winter John and Grace bought a butchered pig. Since they had no fridge or freezer, it was kept frozen in a barrel outside But the weather suddenly turned warm. They tried to can the meat but didn't know how, so for a few days they ate meat like never before

In the three-and-a-half years they lived in Neerlandia they had two more sons. **Richard** Dale was born September 16, 1959, and **Aubrey** Douglas on July 8, 1961. Strykers learned the language and customs and also learned to appreciate the people and the country. In 1962 a promising job offer came from Red Deer and the family moved there. One more son was born there

Grace Stryker

JACOB AND TENA (SEINEN-KONING) STURWOLD

Jacob Sturwold was born in 1919 on the Sturwold homestead (SW 10-62-3-5). He lived on the same farm the first fifty-four years of his life. Jake went to school in the hamlet of Neerlandia for eight years. He missed a lot of school to help his father with custom grain crushing. He worked on the farm until he was about twenty-one years old. Then he drove truck for Fisher Bros. for a few years and also did some Cat driving for Bill Olthuis before settling down to farm with his dad

In 1950 Jacob married Tena Seinen from Houston, B.C. Tena was a widow with a two-year old son, **Raymond** Calvin (born September 6, 1943). At this time Jacob took over his father's farm

On October 26, 1951, **Lester** Jacob was born. Since the family was growing, the Sturwolds made many improvements on the farm including a good-sized hog barn. In 1952 and 1953 they experienced severe hail damage to their crops. **Stanley** Douglas arrived on March 8, 1955, followed on September 18, 1958, by **Keith** Alan. Another son, **Wade** Ivan, was born April 24, 1961. Their family not being complete, the Sturwolds in 1965 adopted **Denise** Marie (born March 7, 1964). The next year they started building a new house. In August 1966 they adopted **Colleen** Mae (born February 9, 1966). A month later the new house was ready for occupancy. What a busy time — a new baby, moving, and all the farm duties.

Back: Ray, Lester. Front: Stan, Jake, Denise, Keith, Wade, Tena, 1966. Inset: Colleen, 1966

Tragedy came to the Sturwold family on September 17, 1967. Their fifteen-year-old son Lester was hit and killed by a car as he was walking to Young People's Society at the church that evening. God graciously comforted them in their sorrow and helped them through the hard days that followed.

In 1967, after Ray finished his schooling, he got a job in Edmonton. On May 10, 1968, Ray married Lydia Mast. They made their home in Edmonton. Stanley also got a job in Edmonton after his graduation in 1973

One of Jake's dreams was fulfilled when he got his pilot's license at the age of fifty-one. Flying was a great joy to him

Though the years in Neerlandia had been good ones for the Sturwolds, Jake thought it was time to leave after spending fifty-four years on one farm. So in 1973, they sold the farm to Charlie Baker

After a lovely farewell party given by the community, the Sturwolds moved to Abbotsford, B.C. — they were looking forward to living in a milder climate in the Fraser Valley

Jake worked on maintenance for almost eleven years at Cargill Hogs. He is now enjoying retirement.

Albertina Sturwold

ALBERT AND BETTY (MERKUS) TIEMSTRA

Albert Tiemstra, the oldest son of Charlie and Sadie, spoke only *Fries* until he started school. Once school began he soon learned the English language. He enjoyed school until grade nine when he was the only student in his grade. Then the lure of farming became too great, so he left school to help his dad on the farm

When Albert was nineteen years old he went to work for his uncle Pete Tuininga, who owned a hatchery. During this time his interest also turned to girls, and he met Betty Merkus. She had come from the Netherlands with her parents in 1948. Two days after her arrival in Neerlandia she went to work for Elizabeth Bender of Mellowdale. This was a big change: she had to learn a new language and cook for a threshing crew. When the weather was good, Betty and her Uncle John rode bicycle to Neerlandia to attend Sunday church services. She appreciated the way the young people accepted her. Betty did housework in Neerlandia and Barrhead until her marriage to Albert on January 17, 1952.

Engagement day.

Albert and Betty's first home was an old twenty-four foot square chicken coop attached to the Barrhead Electric Hatchery. One morning after living in the chicken coop for five years, Albert got out of bed and stepped right through the floor of the bedroom. The tamarack supports and part of the floor had rotted away. The Tiemstra family soon found a new home across from the Barrhead school.

Albert and Betty's marriage was blessed with nine children. Liz (Elizabeth) Helen, December 12, 1952, **Charles** August 6, 1954, **Sharon**, July 31, 1955, **Eugene**, September 26, 1957; **Marjorie**, December 24, 1958; **Pearl**, May 19, 1962, **Barbara**, April 19, 1964, **Phyllis** Marie, November 11, 1967, and **Arlan** David, June 26, 1973

Albert holding Phyllis, Charles, Liz. Eugene, Sharon. Marjorie. Seated: Barbara, Pearl, Betty. Inset: Arlan, 1982

In 1955 the Tiemstras took over the hatchery business from Pete Tuininga and operated it until 1964. Then they bought five acres in Mellowdale (SE 14-60-3-5). They continued with the hatchery business and also raised turkeys and broilers. Their first home on the acreage was a double garage to which Jerry Reitsma helped them build an addition. Later they bought the rest of the quarter and grew grain and grass. Since the family was growing up and helping more, Albert was able to spend time as director of the Alberta Broiler Growers Marketing Board and to serve as member of the church council.

Betsy with duck eggs.

In 1970 the Tiemstras transferred their church membership from the Barrhead to the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church because there was a larger group of young people for their children to associate with there. All the children except Phyllis and Arlan attended school in Barrhead. After high school, Liz graduated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing. She married Arnold Nanninga. Charles graduated from NAIT in 1982 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Sharon also graduated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing. On November 10, 1979, she married Chris Rottier. They farm in Pibroch and have three boys. Eugene graduated from the U of A with an engineering degree. He married Ruby Nanninga on May 27, 1979. They live in Edmonton where he is employed by the Nova Corporation. They have one child. Marge was seventeen years old when the Lord took her home on her high school graduation night, May 21, 1976. The church members were very supportive during that difficult time. Pearl graduated from the U of A in 1984 with a Bachelor of Education degree. Barb took one year of business administration at NAIT before marrying Glenn van Dijken.

Although the Tiemstras were content on the farm and had planned to spend the rest of their lives there, this was not to be. When it became clear that the boys had no interest in farming the Tiemstras sold all except ten acres where they now live. Mission work had always been important to them and the sale of the farm gave them the opportunity to become more involved. In preparation for their work Albert and Betty attended the Summer Institute of Linguistics of Wycliffe Bible Translators at Norman, Oklahoma. Since 1979 they have represented Wycliffe in northern Alberta and B.C. Looking back over their lives, the Tiemstras find that the words of Proverbs 16:9 speak to them. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

Betty Tiemstra

CLARENCE AND ANN (STRYDHORST) TIEMSTRA

Clarence Tiemstra married Anna Strydhorst on October 7, 1955. Both had been born and raised in Neerlandia.

Prior to their marriage, Clarence and Ann worked in Edmonton. During the winter of 1954-55, Clarence worked in a feed mill and delivered feed. His wages were ninety-five cents per hour, but he was able to put in a fair amount of overtime, which paid time-and-a-half. During that summer he worked for a construction company and also bought his first car. In September he went out blood testing chickens. Ann had gone to Edmonton in December 1952 and, after working for Annie Haagsma for one month, got a job at Trudeau's Dry Cleaners. She worked there for three years. The starting wage was sixty cents an hour. Later she received seventy and finally eighty an hour. Ann lived in an upstairs suite in a private home with Grace Bos and Bertha Vanden Born. They used the same bathroom as the family downstairs. They paid sixty-five dollars a month rent and their groceries came to about sixteen dollars a month per person.

After Clarence and Ann's marriage, they lived in Edmonton for two-and-a-half months. Clarence was out in the country blood testing chickens for pullorum so he was home only on weekends. At the end of December they moved to Barrhead where they rented three rooms in a house for forty-five dollars a month. They lived in this house and then in another one until June when they bought a small house south of the railway tracks for two thousand dollars. Natural gas was in all three of these homes but no water or sewer. The water was carried from a neighbour's well and outside toilets were used. Clarence and Ann both worked for brother Albert in the Barrhead Hatchery. Together they received three hundred dollars a month.

During the summer of 1956 Clarence worked on an oil rig, drilling holes in the Lac La Nonne area. In the fall, he went out testing chickens again. In those days there were many small flocks (200-500 birds) of chickens for hatching eggs and it was government regulation that they be tested.

Clarence and Ann's first son, **Philip Lawrence**, was born January 23, 1957. That winter and spring Clarence worked in the hatchery again. During July and August Clarence and a very short man named Henry painted several stores together. That worked out very well since Clarence, who is tall, could paint the top boards and Henry the bottom boards.

After testing chickens in the fall and working in the hatchery again during the winter, Clarence and Ann moved to Neerlandia in May

1958, onto the farm where Clarence had grown up (SE 27-61-3-5). Clarence had no interest in grain farming and did not want to borrow a lot of money to buy the whole quarter plus machinery, so together he and Albert bought thirty acres from their dad. Later Albert sold his share to Clarence and Ann

When Clarence and Ann moved onto the farm, they had no electricity, as the plant which the folks had used had given up. But they got Calgary Power within a month or two. They had no running water either, so when they got tired of carrying it, Clarence put a big rain barrel upstairs and a pipe with a tap on the end down to the kitchen. He did not bother to put an overflow on the barrel, so many times when it was filled it ran over. Finally, after being soaked many times, part of the kitchen ceiling came down. It was repaired and from then on more care was taken to prevent another accident

Clarence and Ann were blessed with more children, **Roberta** Glen, December 18, 1959 **Bernard** Dean, March 10, 1963, **Kevin** Lee, November 7, 1966, and **Stephen** Drew, May 18, 1971

Back, Phil, Ann, Clarence. Front Bernie, Roberta, 1963

The first years on the farm Clarence milked four or five cows and had a two-storey barn with about fifteen hundred chickens. After a number of years of struggling along, trying to make ends meet, Clarence went back to testing chickens in the fall. Ann and Phil looked after the chickens, and Phil milked the cow while Clarence was gone

Clarence's chicken testing ended with a car accident on November 12, 1968. He spent only two weeks in the hospital but could not work for the rest of the winter. He received workman's compensation and with the help of the neighbours and relatives managed to keep the farm going. The Tiemstras even did without a car for about four months. Their neighbours, Peter and Grace Piers, picked Ann and the children up for church on Sundays and Wilma Wierenga took Ann to the store for groceries every Friday. Clarence had therapy in Edmonton for the month of March.

For several years Tiemstras had a flock of turkeys for hatching eggs and later raised six or seven thousand a year for meat

Clarence served on the church council and on the store and school boards. He was on the Lilydale board for four years and presently is vice-chairman of the Egg Hatching Marketing Board Ann is capable with a hammer and nails and her sons have inherited this capability

After graduating and working at several jobs in Edmonton, Phil attended Dordt College for two semesters He married **Carolyn Ruiter** from Edmonton on August 14, 1977. They and their two children, **Jil** Lyn (February 8, 1979) and **Levi** Mark (June 12, 1981), live on the south end of the home place. Phil works with his dad and enjoys Neerlandia's number one sport — hockey. Carolyn enjoys participating in fitness activities

Steve, Kevin, Ann, Clarence, Carolyn, Bernie, Phil. Front Levi, Jil, 1984. Inset: Roberta, 1977

After graduating from high school, Roberta attended Dordt College, where she met Ron Biel of Lacombe who was earning a degree in agriculture. On May 30, 1980, Ron and Roberta were married. They lived in Lacombe for one year before they went to Swaziland, Africa, for a three-year volunteer term sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. There Ron worked on water projects while Roberta set up a library for a teacher training college and later did secretarial work for a doctor. Clarence, Ann, Kevin, and Stephen visited them in Swaziland in March 1983.

Bernie, an apprentice at Paddle Plumbing, is engaged to marry Colleen Piers August 10, 1984. The other boys are still at home. Clarence and Ann are thankful to God for the good life He has given them in Neerlandia.

Clarence and Ann Tiemstra

SIMON AND DOROTHY (BAKER) TIEMSTRA

Simon Tiemstra married Dorothy Baker on March 21, 1957. Simon and Dorothy farmed with Simon's parents until 1963, then bought the family farm, which consisted of four Tiemstra homesteads. From their marriage five children were born: **Albert** Simon, November 6, 1957, **Denise** Trudy, July 23, 1959, **Teresa** Charlene, May 3, 1964, **Craig** Simon, February 24, 1970; and **Melanie** Joy, March 15, 1975.

Standing. Denise, Simon, Teresa, Craig. Seated. Melanie, Dorothy, Albert.

On March 14, 1981, Albert married **Lori Mae Kistemaker** of Clinton, Mississippi, U.S.A. She had been born February 19, 1959, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She received her BA degree in education from Dordt College in 1980, then taught kindergarten in Jarvie for two years. Albert and Lori have one daughter, **Natasha** May, born July 22, 1983. They bought two quarters of land from Albert's parents and are now fourth-generation farmers on the Tiemstra land.

Lori holding Natasha, Albert, 1983.

Denise attended Dordt College for two years, then later received her BA degree in education from the U of A in 1982. On July 25, 1981, Denise married Harry Ludwig of Edmonton. He is studying law and Denise is teaching at West Edmonton Christian School. Teresa is living in Westlock, working for the *Westlock News*.

Dorothy Tiemstra

FRED AND SENA (KONYNENBELT) TOEBES

When Fred Toebes was one year old, his family came to live in Neerlandia. During his early childhood years there were no neighbour boys his age, but that changed in 1938 when Lambartus Janssen bought the farm north of the Toebes homestead. Janssens moved in during the summer holidays. Their youngest son Jack was ten years old — exactly Fred's age — and he and Fred soon became very close friends Jack, having lived in the city and having gone to a much larger school, had an entirely different range of interests and storybooks than Fred had ever dreamed of. The boys spent many happy hours together. In the summertime they would often go swimming in the creek on Uncle Bill Bouwman's land or fishing in the Shoal Creek near the Wilsons' In wintertime, after spending a lot of time clearing the snow off the ice, they would skate on Kippers' pond or on Baird Lake. Even today, forty-five years later, Fred and his wife, Sena, and Jack and his wife, Ruth, are the best of friends

Fred's formal schooling ended in 1943 when he graduated from grade nine His first job was in the Neerlandia Co-op store The days seemed awfully long! He worked from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and, as well, had to walk the two miles to and from the store morning and night. In 1945 he started taking a correspondence course in auto and diesel mechanics from the Chicago Vocational School This course lasted two years, with shop training in Edmonton for three months during the winter. Fred graduated from Chicago Vocational in March 1947 and one month later began working in Neerlandia's first Co-op garage, where he worked for two years. Then he took a job clearing land with a D8 Caterpillar tractor, working for Bill Olthuis and Louis Nanninga

Fred attended a youth camp at Gull Lake in the summer of 1949, and while there met a girl from Nobleford. They had a very good time at the camp, but after going back to work Fred forgot about her. But there she was again at the next youth camp — looking better than ever. After that camp, they started dating but had one real problem: Nobleford and Neerlandia are four hundred miles apart. In 1949 that was a long trip, so their courtship had to continue by mail. After three years of writing letters every week and visiting for two weeks each year, Fred finally married Sena (Gesina) Konynenbelt on June 26, 1952. Sena had been born in Lethbridge on January 11, 1931, and grew up in Nobleford.

Fred was very happy and things had never looked better for him. He and Sena bought the family farm from his dad, to be paid for in monthly payments. Sena, being a farm girl, loved doing chores and gardening, and Fred had a job in the Neerlandia garage working for Stel and Dieterman. On the farm they had six milk cows, three hundred laying hens, and a few hogs. Besides that, the fall of 1952 brought an excellent crop, so they really had it made

Fred and Sena on their honeymoon.

But, sad to say, this beautiful situation was not to last very long. On November 12, 1952, Fred contracted polio and was taken to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. There he spent two-and-a-half weeks in isolation and was then transferred to the University Hospital for rehabilitation. He was hospitalized for one hundred days. After much therapy he finally came home at the end of March 1953 wearing a steel brace to support his back and upper body and walking very carefully with two canes During his hospitalization, Fred's dad came back to the farm and did the chores. Sena lived in Edmonton with friends (for whom she did housework) and visited Fred every day

After coming home in the spring, Fred and Sena experienced firsthand what community living is all about. They got help from friends and neighbours, and their crop was put in free of charge. The crop that year (1953) looked really good until August 26 when they were hailed out one hundred percent. On December 19, 1953, they received a new ray of hope when their first daughter, **Janice** Lorraine, was born. She gave them much pleasure, but also added responsibility. The following spring the neighbours again put in their crop, but again on July 26 they were hailed out one hundred percent. These two years left them totally ruined financially. They were unable to make any farm payments, but lived thankfully each day, receiving the love and support of community, neighbours, and friends.

In September 1954 Fred accepted a job offer from a service station in Lethbridge, pumping gas and doing lube jobs for $1.25 an hour. Fred and Sena rented out the farm to a neighbour, Jake Sturwold, and stayed in Lethbridge for almost two years. They returned to Neerlandia in July 1956. One month later they sold the farm to Ryer Krikke and bought a garage business and house from Harry Branden in Vega. On April 24, 1962, a second daughter, **Carolyn** Mae, was born, again giving them much joy and satisfaction.

With Fred's health and strength gradually improving, they were enabled to work in Fred's Garage until February 1976. Although they experienced some lean years (along with the farmers) when snows came early and crops could not be harvested, they also had many good years. They look back, in fact, on the years in Vega as the most satisfying years of their lives. On March 1, 1976, Fred began working at the new Co-op Service Centre in Neerlandia, after selling the garage and house in Vega. Later that year, the Toebes moved into a new home in the Centre and now enjoy working in Neerlandia. Janice married Hank J. Wierenga in 1973 and Carolyn is working and living in Edmonton.

Fred Toebes

Eldon, Janice and Hank Wierenga, Sena, Fred, Kent Wierenga, Carolyn, 1980. Inset: Marlys Wierenga, 1984.

CLIFFORD AND ANGELA (VANDER SLUYS) TUININGA

Some of Clifford Tuininga's earliest memories are of his dad and mom at odds on a few issues such as the place of sports in a person's life, the things a Christian should and should not do, and who are better, *Friesen* or *Groningers*. Much of this was heard at night through the opening in the ceiling of the living room which allowed the heat to go upstairs to the bedrooms.

Cliff still remembers with pleasure the days his dad came home with a prairie chicken or other game. That was mighty good eating! Dad also had a knack for getting spruce gum. How the kids loved it!

During the harvest season Cliff was allowed to stay home and drive tractor. These days were exciting because of the tales told and the pranks pulled. One day while they were threshing, a cow ventured onto the field for the umpteenth time. The crew decided to round up the cow and tie a bucket with a rope to the tail of the cow. This worked great with dogs, but would it work with a cow? Yes it did! The last that was seen of the cow was an occasional reflection of the bucket as it bounced.

Cliff started grade eleven in Barrhead but after four days traded his books for a shovel, beginning work for his Uncle Simon. At this time much farm work was manual and, since he worked long hours, Cliff was very tired by the end of the day.

There are many good hunters in Neerlandia but Clifford is not one of them. At one time he and some others went hunting in the Blueberry Mountain area. Clifford set off by himself, following a moose trail. He soon suspected that he was lost. When he checked his compass, he found it to be inaccurate. In panic he fired a shot with his rifle and his hunting partners soon came running. Clifford found, though, that he was only one hundred and fifty yards from his truck

In 1964 Cliff went to Dordt College as an adult student to study for the ministry Latin proved to be too much for him to handle, however, so he ended his college life two years after he started

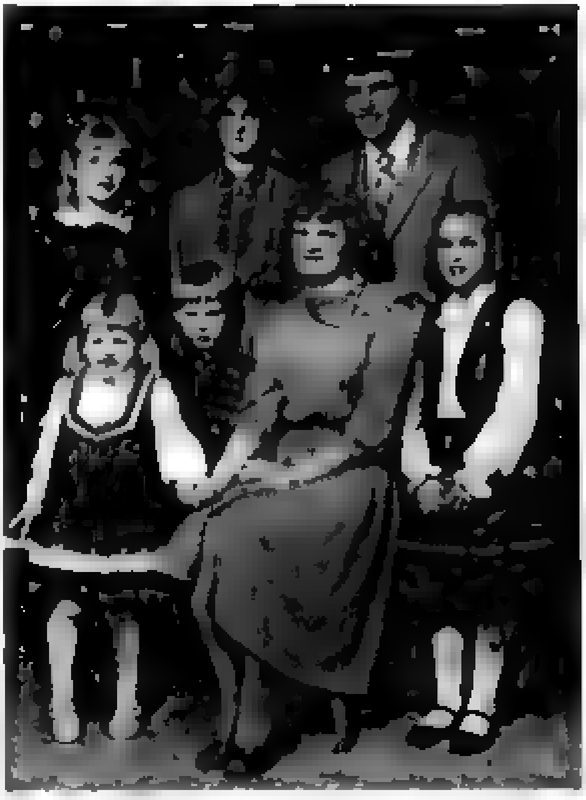
Now started another phase of Cliff's life. In partnership with Case Van Beek, he bought Neerlandia Transport from Simon Tuininga. He still had time for other things besides trucking. Cliff attended a student high school conference as a discussion leader The conference, held in Red Deer, dealt with the relation of the Bible to learning. It was here that Cliff met his future wife, Angela vander Sluys

Angela, born January 13, 1949, in Alkmaar, North Holland, the Netherlands, came to Canada with her parents and three older sisters in 1951 Her father was a painter. The weekend was the beginning of a budding romance, somewhat stormy at times. At one point, to determine how good their relationship was, Angela went to Trinity College This was indeed the separation they needed. Upon her return they decided to be married. They exchanged vows in Maranatha C.R.C. in Edmonton on December 21, 1968.

There was a cold spell of 40-50 below zero Fahrenheit for the first six weeks after Cliff and Angela settled into a new trailer Trucking, farming, and marriage were too much for Cliff so he sold his share of the trucking business to Case. He entered into a farming partnership with his dad and brother Andrew. Later they were joined by Alfred and Sidney and finally Cecil After several years, the partnership was dissolved Now on his own, Cliff has a farrow-to-finish hog operation with a few cows as a sideline

Cliff and Angela were blessed with five children. **Jillain** born on October 11, 1969; **Cindy** Mae on April 10, 1971, **Melisa** on May 29, 1974, **Joel** Clifford on May 13, 1978; and **Laura** Joy born on May 10, 1980

The Tuininga family was quite healthy as it grew, although it did have a few mishaps. In 1974 Jillain needed to be rushed to the hospital to sew up a gash in her forehead after she ran into an axe. In 1979 Cindy fell from a pole at school and broke her arm badly At the University Hospital in Edmonton she had pins put in to help set it properly Lisa spent ten days in the Barrhead hospital in 1978 after twenty-seven percent of her body was burned by hot water


Cindy, Jillain. Clifford, Laura, Joel, Angela, Lisa, 1983.

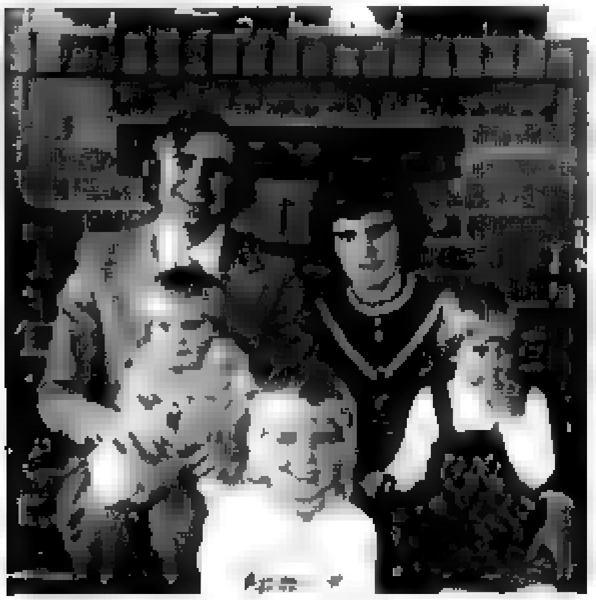
Cliff and Angela still reside in Neerlandia They are happily busy with their family, farming, and community

Cliff and Angela Tuininga

DAVID AND ALIDA (VANDERGRIFT) TUININGA

The David Tuininga family history began on November 4, 1972, when Alida and David were married in Smithers, British Columbia This event was the culmination of many trips and long distance phone calls to and from Smithers. Alida and David had first met as a result of the efforts of Rev Jelle Tuininga, who extended his pastoral concern to his brother Gordon and his friends, David and Andrew Tuininga. These young men seemed well on their way to becoming confirmed bachelors, so Jelle issued an invitation to them to come and see the many beautiful girls in Smithers. Although somewhat skeptical of Jelle's judgement in this regard, the trio accepted the invitation. David's doubts vanished when he met Alida, and the rest is history

Alida had been born in Smithers on June 11, 1953, and after her schooling worked as a receptionist in Smithers General Hospital



David, Alida, Jeremy, Julie, Marlene. c. 1983.

David and Alida's first home on the SW 20-61-3-5, was the farmhouse which Pete and Tena Tuininga had built in 1937 **Julie** Elizabeth, David and Alida's first child, was born on May 4, 1975. **Marlene** Grace was born on October 4, 1978, and **Jeremy** David on June 8, 1981

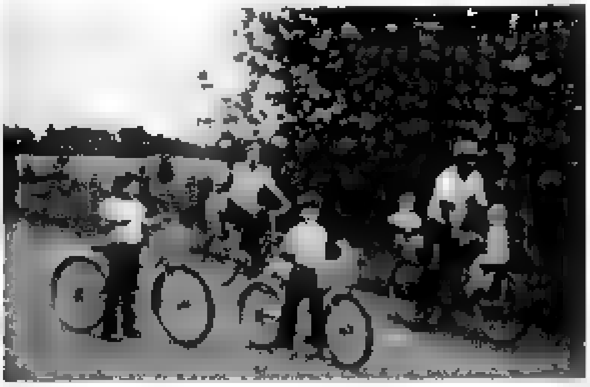
David and his father and brother own Kapeda Farms Ltd. They maintain a mixed farming operation producing eggs, grain, and hogs

David Tuininga

GORDON AND MARJORIE (HORLINGS) TUININGA

Gordon Tuininga and Marjorie Horlings met in Smithers, British Columbia, when Gordon went to visit his brother Jelle who was minister there at that time Marjorie had been born in Smithers on July 3, 1953. During their courtship, Gordon worked as a trucker in Smithers, in order to be near Marjorie. After three months, he was eager to get back to farming He preferred the flat open land in Neerlandia and being his own boss. In October 1972 Marjorie moved from her home in Smithers to a basement suite in Barrhead. There she worked at Barrhead Clinic till her marriage Gordon and Marjorie were married in Smithers on July 20, 1973, and then moved into their mobile home on the Tuininga farm (SE 19-61-3-5).

The practice of describing location by means by means of north, south, east, or west was foreign to Marjorie Having come from an area where no road was straight and most were named, she had learned to use directions only in terms or right or left. To this day, unless the road is very familiar, Marjorie would soon be lost if she were told, "Go two miles east and one mile north."



A family outing. Juanita, Shannon, Marjorie, Kevin, Christy, Gordon, Corinna, 1983.

On January 14, 1975, Gordon and Marjorie's first baby, **Juanita** Lynn, was born **Kevin** Shane was born October 24, 1976. In October 1978 they moved into their new house, which had been built that summer Their second son, **Shannon** Dean, was born on December 27, 1979. They had a real surprise on December 15, 1981, when twin girls, each weighing about two and one-half pounds, were born to them. After two months in an Edmonton hospital, the two tiny girls, **Christy** Lenore and **Corinna** Leanne, were welcomed home Gordon became more domesticated than he had ever been, as he did his share of caring for them. Gordon and Marjorie feel that God has richly blessed them and their family

Marjorie Tuininga

KLAAS AND ESTHER (NANNINGA) TUININGA

Klaas Tuininga was born at home on September 18, 1938. From the time he was a small boy he wanted to be a farmer. At that time in Neerlandia's history it was common practice for sons to quit school as soon as they reached the legal age to do so. They would then work full-time on the family farm. Klaas was happy that his dad expected him to follow this procedure, and he quit school after grade nine.

Esther Nanninga was born on December 8, 1944, to Corny and Sena Nanninga. She went to school and helped her parents on the farm. Then, on June 14, 1963, Klaas took her for his bride.

They made their home in Neerlandia on the SW 20-61-3-5, in the house in which Klaas' parents had lived for many years. Their married life started out hilariously. They came home to discover that chickens and chicken roosts were occupying their home. When a kitchen cabinet door was opened, a chicken flew out squawking. Some pranksters had used the time during the wedding reception to drag the roosts and their occupants into the house to give the newlyweds a lively welcome. Things settled down quickly thereafter, with Klaas and Esther continuing to develop their farming and homemaking skills.

God blessed their marriage with four sons: **Russell** Kent, born on November 23, 1965, **Jeffrey** Dean, born on July 23, 1967; **Colin** Ward, born on January 30, 1969; and **Murray** Jay, born on June 11, 1976. The birth and rearing of their sons brought them much happiness, laughter, and tears. All too soon, it was time for Russell to begin school. How long that first day of school was — for his parents! It seemed just a short time later that the other boys followed in Russell's footsteps.

Back: Colin, Russell, Jeffrey. Front: Klaas, Murray, Esther. 1984.

In 1972 a new house was built on the SE 20-61-3-5, and the family moved in. It was quite a challenge to start farming there, since there was not a tree or a building on the place when they began. With a lot of hard work, trees were planted, the yard landscaped, and hog barns erected. A small greenhouse was also built to provide flowers for the flowerbeds and to give Klaas opportunity to exercise his green thumb. On this farmstead Klaas maintains his share of the Kapeda Farms' farrow-to-finish hog operation, which he owns in partnership with his father and brother.

Klaas and Esther's eldest sons have left home a second time to go to school, this time they went to the Christian high school and The King's College, both in Edmonton. The wrench that Klaas and Esther felt was no less painful the second time around. Klaas and Esther are actively involved in church and community affairs.

Esther Tuininga

LAMBERT AND BETTY (JANSSEN) TUININGA

On August 20, 1964, Lorne Tuininga and Betty Janssen were married in the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. They had built a house on NW 17-61-3-5. There was no previous farmstead on this land, so everything had to be started from scratch. Power had to be brought in, a well had to be drilled, and so on. Lorne and Betty built a garage the same year they were married, and a barn in 1965. There were no trees on the place, so for the first few years it could be very windy around the house. They planted approximately two hundred trees by hand, some taken and transplanted from neighbouring land, but most came from the government tree nursery near Edmonton.

A daughter, **Dawn** Marie, was born to Lorne and Betty on September 21, 1965. Two years later, on June 25, 1967, another daughter, **Kimberly** Ann, was born.

Lorne farmed with his brother Gordon and father Clarence for the first years of his married life. (Later Lorne and Gordon took over the farm in a partnership.) With the three men on the farm, there was little for Betty to do. A number of times she did attempt to help by driving tractor during haying season. Lorne had a John Deere 60 at the time, which Betty drove while he stood on the stoneboat to stook the bales before unloading them. Things went fine when the swath was even and the ground level, but Lorne found himself jerked off the bale stooker many times when going up a hill or when a heavy swath was too much for the baler.

Feeling very incapable on the farm, Betty longed to go back to work. When a part-time job as typist in the Neerlandia School became available, Betty took on the job. She worked for twelve years in Neerlandia before she transferred to Barrhead, where she still works today.

Kim, Dawn, Betty, Lorne, 1980

Lorne has been actively involved in the Christian Farmers' Federation, serving as provincial president for the past five years. He is also serving in the board of governors of The King's College and has been president of the Neerlandia local of the Christian Labour Association since it began sixteen years ago. Lorne is an enthusiastic backpacker, and has done some hiking in Jasper and Yoho National Parks.

Dawn now attends The King's College and Kim attends Edmonton Christian High School. Lorne and Betty thank the Lord for the many blessings of the past.

Betty Tuininga

SIDNEY AND SHIRLEY (JAECK) TUININGA

Sidney Tuininga lived in Neerlandia until he was in his teens. When he was in grade eleven he left school to go to work on his brother-in-law's potato farm in Winterburn. He soon decided that life on the potato farm was not for him, so he went to Edmonton where he worked for various construction companies.

While in Edmonton he met his future wife, Shirley Mildred Jaeck. Shirley had been born September 7, 1951, in Sudbury, Ontario, but had come to live with her grandmother in Westlock in 1961. After Sid and Shirley were married, they continued to live in Edmonton where Shirley was working for the Public Trustee and Sid was apprenticing to become a heavy-duty mechanic.

Then in May 1973, Sid was given the opportunity to farm with his family in Neerlandia. Sid and Shirley moved to the NW 30-61-2-5. Here they are raising a family of four daughters: **Tracy Ann** (March 6, 1971); **Tania Elizabeth** (February 14, 1974), **Tiffany Lynn** (November 26, 1976); and **Sarah Jane** (November 26, 1980).

Tiffany, Shirley, Tracy, Sid holding Sarah, Tania, 1983.

The Tuininga partnership was dissolved in 1982. Sid and Shirley and girls then began farming independently. They operate a commercial egg barn and pullet barn and raise feeder cattle.

Sid has been actively involved in sports in the community. He received the County Volunteer Appreciation Award for community work in 1982. Shirley enjoys doing various crafts, sewing, and painting.

Sid Tuininga

CASE AND SHIRLEY (WIERENGA) VAN BEEK

Case Van Beek was born January 8, 1944, in Lunteren, Gelderland, the Netherlands. In the spring of 1948 his family immigrated to Canada, settling first in southern Alberta. Being immigrants, they were continually looking for ways to better themselves and thus moved and lived in various places in Alberta and B.C.

In 1961 the Van Beek family was living in Peers, Alberta, when Rev. Kruis, who had just been in Neerlandia on a classical appointment, informed Case's father that there was a job available there at Co Rowaan's. In the fall of 1961, Case packed his belongings into his 1952 Austin and left for Neerlandia. After he arrived at Rowaan's he was soon busy doing most of the farm work, because Co was suffering from arthritis.

This was the first time Case had ever lived in a Christian community and with people of the same cultural background. Since he was a single fellow and had no family here, several families opened their homes to him. He was surprised at the great number of young people and soon became acquainted with them. He enjoyed many activities with them and found good friends.

One thing that stands out in Case's mind is the Young People's meetings on Sunday evenings in the church basement. The boys and girls met separately for Bible discussion. After the meetings were over, they would all go to one person's place for coffee. However, before going, the girls would line up on either side of the stairs in the church basement — each one hoping that some young man would offer her a ride to where the coffee was being served. Case, not related to any of them, thought this was fantastic as he could have his pick of thirty girls!

Case quit working for Co Rowaan in the summer of 1962 and began working for Simon Tuininga. The job involved driving truck and taking care of the livestock, which included many hogs and cattle. In the summer of 1966, Clifford Tuininga and he bought the trucking business from Simon Tuininga and started a business of their own. In 1969 Clifford sold his share to Case, leaving Case sole owner of Neerlandia Transport.

In September 1966, Case married Shirley Wierenga, daughter of Joe and Grace Wierenga. Shirley had been born and raised in Neerlandia. After quitting school at the end of grade nine, she worked as a clerk at Neerlandia Co-op for three years. As part of her duties she pumped gas and helped unload the truck.

For the first seven years of their marriage Case and Shirley lived on the Case Ingwersen homestead, which was owned by Shirley's father. In June 1972 they bought the Michael farm (NE 4-62-3-5) from Jake Sturwold. After purchasing a house in Edmonton, they moved it onto a basement on their farm. Then, in the fall of 1973, they took up residence on their own property.

They were blessed with five children: **Irene** May (April 30, 1967), **Timothy** Case (October 18, 1968), **Michael** Scott (July 16, 1970), **Darcy** Brett (February 12, 1973), and **Taralee** (Grace) (March 28, 1977).

Back: Tim, Irene, Shirley, Case, Michael. Front: Taralee, Darcy, 1982

Raising their family was not without mishaps. In July 1972 Michael was run over by a riding lawn mower. He was rushed to Barrhead General Hospital by his mother and was in the operating room for four hours. He got over 200 stitches in his knee, ankle and elbow. Also, his leg was broken, and he was in a body cast for two months. Case and Shirley were thankful to their Lord for Michael's complete recovery

Eventually Case decided that he wanted to spend more time at home with his family, and so in July 1977, after many years of trucking, he sold his business to Claus Langeveld. Case and Shirley now have a mixed farming operation

Through the years Case has returned the welcome he received when he first came to Neerlandia Case and Shirley's door is always open to the unexpected visitor. Many young single newcomers to Neerlandia have found a second home there

Shirley Van Beek

MIKE AND HILDA (SCHOEMAKER) VANDERKEEMEL

Mike (Machiel) Vanderkeemel was born August 18, 1909, in Rotterdam, South Holland, the Netherlands. As a young man he worked for the Holland Amerika Line (HAL). He secretly dreamed of going to America, and thought about it every time he brought an administrative list aboard a ship but, being an only son in a working family, he knew it would displease his mother. Mike married Hilda (Hillegonda) Schoemaker (February 25, 1908) of Vroomshoop, Overijssel, on August 24, 1939 By 1948 they had three children. Michael (Machiel, June 28, 1940), John (Hillegondus, September 16, 1941), and **Barb** (Teunia Barbera, July 11, 1947)

After the war Mike worked for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, but the ministry was cutting back and things did not look very good. It was at this time that Vanderkeemel decided to take the step of immigration Because he was a city man with a business education rather than a farmer, he had trouble getting a visa. Nonetheless in April 1953 he obtained permission to immigrate and sailed on the *Ryndam*.

It was not unusual for the post-war immigrants to change jobs frequently as they tried to find a good position for themselves. Mike was no exception. He started out as an assistant caretaker of a Vocation School in Chatham, Ontario. He then worked in accounting in two different places in Ontario — Tilbury and London Then he took one year of study at RBC in Grand Rapids

It was while he was in Grand Rapids that Mike discovered from the *Calvinist Contact* that the Neerlandia Co-op was looking for a manager-bookkeeper. He applied for the position and in mid-summer 1960 was awakened by a long-distance call. Charles Baker, who was secretary of the Co-op at the time, told Mike that he had been chosen out of ten applicants and could begin working September 1, 1960

By this time Barb was the only child still living at home. Mike writes, "We packed our belongings and headed for the West. I realized that by doing so my wife, my daughter, and myself became two hours younger."

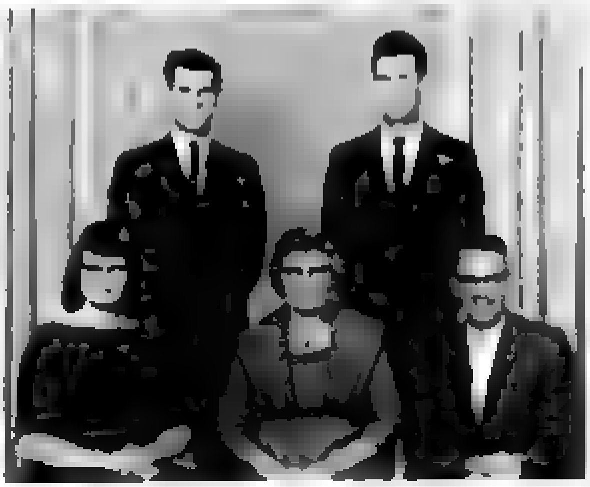
Life in Neerlandia proved to be vastly different than city life in the East. One of the first nights they were here, the Vanderkeemels were awakened by the howling of a coyote They were also impressed many times by the Northern Lights. "It was just like it came down on the roof of our apartment above the store," says Mike. Another difference was to hear the farmers talk about their land in terms of sections rather than acres as they did in the east Mike and Hilda enjoyed their apartment with its broad view overlooking the Neerlandia farms. Hilda enjoyed hosting tea parties for the elderly women in Neerlandia

Not used to the Neerlandia roads in wintertime, many times Mike found himself and his car in the ditch when trying to visit his customers at nights. His customers, however, were prepared for it — they kept a tractor handy Mike says, "Oh my, we can laugh about it now but at that time the palms of my hands were sweating."

When Mike began working in the store, he felt overwhelmed by many unfamiliar commodities. Fortunately the staff was very co-operative and together they formed a team, serving the farming community of Neerlandia

It was during Mike's stay that the Neerlandia Co-operative Association celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 1962. The store was closed for one day and festivities were held in the school gymnasium. Several men who had served the store as managers during the previous forty years were present to share in the joy of the day. Mike remembers that the gathering was addressed by the first store manager, Case Ingwersen

One day a salesman from the lumber company MacMillan Bloedel in Edmonton told Mike they were planning to clear the warehouse and were having a special clearance sale At that time one of the farmers had plans to build a two-storey chicken coop and could use lots of plywood Making use of the extraordinary low prices, the Co-op sold four carloads of plywood in the community during 1962-63 This had never happened before For this reason gross sales, having been $180,000.00 a year previously, jumped to just about a quarter of a million in 1962


The Five Canadians. John, Mike. Seated: Barbara, Hilda, Mike Sr. 1962

In 1963 the Vanderkeemels left Neerlandia After working in Edson, Mike worked in London, Ontario, as taxation auditor for the Federal Government for almost ten years. He retired in 1974 He and Hilda now live in Zurich, Ontario, and spend their winters in Florida

Mike Vanderkeemel

WILLIAM AND KOBIE (MAST) VANDER LEEST

On a cold December night a 3½ pound baby girl was born into the Mast family She was named Kobie (Coba) and put in a small box on the oven door of the wood stove to keep her warm. Kobie grew up in a large and lively family She and her siblings got into plenty of mischief.

In the springtime the nearby creek would overflow and the only way to cross it would be over a few fallen logs. The children had been warned many times to be careful while crossing, but the Mast children considered it a challenge to quickly cross over or try to balance on a log. Bill, Albert, and Kobie took the dive one crisp May morning after losing their balance while watching a dead pig floating in the creek. After dragging themselves out, they decided not to go home to change for fear of punishment from their parents, so they headed off to school. It was a good thing that it was a long walk to school so they had time to dry off while walking For enjoyment, Kobie would go fishing with her dad and the boys. For lack of a fishing rod, they used a pitchfork

Once, while gathering eggs, Kobie's mother noticed that the chickens were not producing as many eggs as they had been in the past. This caused her a bit of concern and she wondered what the reason could be. A few days later brother Carl found the little culprits and caught them red-handed. Bill, Albert, and Kobie were seen sucking the eggs right out of the shells This might have ended some of mother's worrying about the chickens, but not the kids' mischievious doings.

Living on a farm meant there was enough work for everyone. Kobie and her brothers often herded the cows down the road to bring them home for milking. On many occasions they got very thirsty and stopped and drank some milk fresh from the cow If the cows were far away and the journey home and long, the children would hop on the cows and ride them home

In 1948, Kobie went to Edmonton with a girlfriend, Gladys Krikke, to look for a job. Her first job was housecleaning After a year she returned home and worked for a time in the Barrhead hospital, then returned to Edmonton. But in less than a week Kobie was asked to come home because her mother had fallen and broken a hip. After several months Kobie returned to Edmonton and went to work in the Aberhart Hospital as a ward aid. In 1953 she was asked to leave her employment, but this new job would be permanent. The wages she was offered were not very high, but it was a lifetime job. She was asked to become the wife of William (Bill) Vander Leest.

Bill had been born in Aduard, Groningen, the Netherlands, on September 3, 1921. His father owned a bicycle sales and repair shop. He left the Netherlands in the summer of 1950 aboard the boat *Samaria*. His sponsor was a Dutch irrigation farmer in southern Alberta. Bill worked there for three months.

He had known Henry Dieterman in the Netherlands and had trained to be a mechanic there. Stel and Dieterman, owners of Neerlandia Motors, asked Bill to come and work for them as mechanic. Bill was glad to have a job but he stayed only one year, boarding with Della Baker. Then Bill moved to Edmonton, where he worked as a mechanic.

On May 8, 1953, Kobie became Mrs. Vander Leest. What a day! It rained all day and night, and during the reception the sewer backed up in the church basement where the party was being held. Everyone had to go home early.

Bill and Kobie set up their first home in Edmonton where their first son, **Paul**, was born February 18, 1954. In 1955 the Vander Leest family moved to Neerlandia and lived in the teacherage. Bill again worked in the garage for Stel and Dieterman. Their second child, **Donna Elaine**, was born December 13, 1955. After one year they decided to move to Edmonton, where they raised their family of six. A truck accident claimed the life of their son Paul in 1981.

At present, Bill and Kobie are happily living on an acreage near Tofield. Bill is still employed as a mechanic in Edmonton.

Kobie Vander Leest

LEWIS AND FRANCES (KAMSTEEG) VANDERMEULEN

Lewis (Lieuwe, November 6, 1909) and Frances (Froukje, September 30, 1906) emigrated from Ryswyk, South Holland, the Netherlands, in 1948. With them came their family of four: **John** (Johannes, October 2, 1933), **Hennie** (Hendrika, May 28, 1936), **Agatha** (Gaatske, October 8, 1940), and **Daniel** (August 8, 1944). Lewis had a teaching position in the Neerlandia School.

The Vandermeulen children received some of their education in Neerlandia. Dan started grade one here and Agatha was put in the same grade. By 1952 Hennie had had her share of schooling and started working as house help or as outside help. At one time she worked for Pete Fisher, who taught her to drive tractor. Hennie wrote, "What a disaster that was. It was during harvest time that this took place. A quickie course — five minutes. 1. Here is the starter. 2. Here is the clutch. 3. Here is the brake. Nobody told me that you had to let go of the clutch real easy-like. I'm sure Pete can still feel his behind when he landed after sailing off the binder the first time we went out into the field. I even backed right onto the platform of the binder. Some people make very poor teachers and some people make even worse students."

Hennie later married John Mast of Neerlandia. In 1952 the Vandermeulens moved to Barrhead, where Lewis taught for one year. Frances worked in the laundry department at the St. Joseph's Hospital. After that, Lewis taught in various places, including Peace River. In 1972 the Vandermeulens retired to Barrhead. As one of his many hobbies, Lewis started growing orchids.

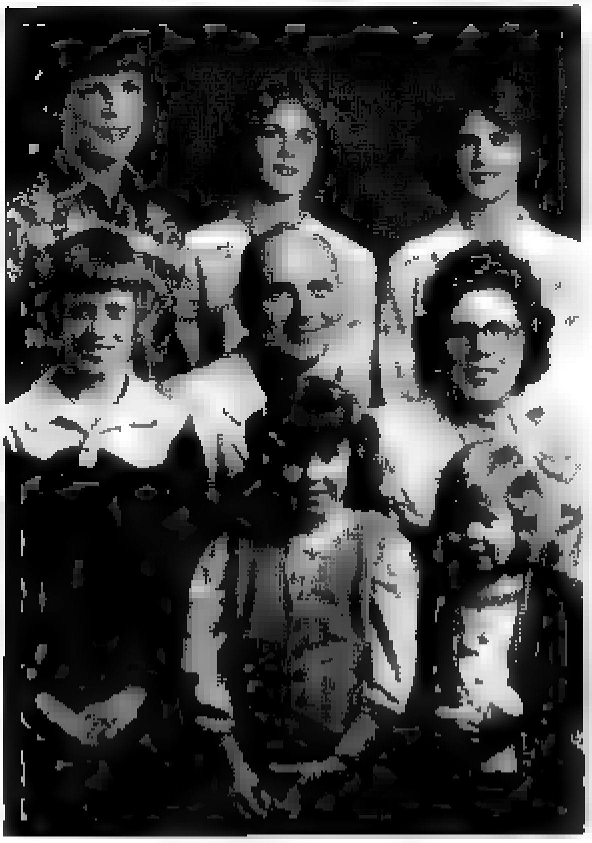
Hennie Mast

SY AND WIEA (VAN DER WOUDE) VANDER-MOLEN

Sy (Siebolt) Vander-Molen was born on March 2, 1937, in Zandeweer, Groningen, the Netherlands. He came to Canada in 1949 with his parents, two sisters and two brothers. They lived first in Fort Saskatchewan and later in Edmonton. After his schooling, Sy worked in a bank for four years and then in an automobile business for 17 years. During that time he took a business administration program which proved to be a valuable asset later for farming.

Wiea (Wietske) Van Der Woude was born on November 24, 1942, in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, and emigrated in 1954 with her parents, two sisters and one brother. They settled in Edmonton, where Sy and Wiea later met. They were married there on February 26, 1965. Four of their six children were born there: **Tracey** was born on May 8, 1966; **Sidney** on April 11, 1967; **Wendy** on April 21, 1968, and **Rodney** on October 3, 1971.

Sy and Wiea were intested in farming — not for its monetary rewards, but for the lifestyle and opportunity to do something on their own. Sy had been acquainted with the Neerlandia community since 1952, mainly through the Ike and Jenny Nanninga family. So in 1972 he purchased a farm (SE 30-62-3-5) in the Vega area, which became the Vander-Molens' permanent home. Farming proved to be somewhat trying



Back: Sidney, Wendy, Tracey. Middle: Rodney, Sy, Wies. Front: Patty, Danna, 1983

for the first four years, but after the initiation period it gave them a comfortable living.

While in Neerlandia two more children were born to the Vander-Molens: **Patty** Myra was born on July 12, 1976, and **Danna** Hope on September 4, 1980. Sy serves actively in many areas of the poultry industry, which is the main enterprise of the Vander-Molen farm.

Sy Vander-Molen

GERRIT AND JOYCE (REITSMA) VAN DIJKEN

Gerrit van Dijken was born September 16, 1928, and spent his childhood years in Roodeschool, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was the fourth of eight children. In 1949-1950, Gerrit served with the Dutch Army in Indonesia. Upon his return to the Netherlands Gerrit saw very little opportunity for himself so when he saw an advertisement written by Herman Wierenga, Immigration Officer, in a local newspaper, he decided to write for information about Canada. In August 1951 Gerrit again boarded the *Volendam*, the same ship on which he had travelled to Indonesia. After ten days by boat and three days by train, Gerrit arrived in Edmonton, Alberta. He began work as a farmhand for the Andries Wierenga sons in Neerlandia. Later that same year, he went to work for Neerlandia Motors and was employed there until 1959. He lived with the Della Baker family from 1951-1954.

On May 6, 1955, Gerrit married Joyce Reitsma. They lived first in the hamlet and then at Anema's Corner in George Anema's vacant house. In 1958 they purchased the Jim Johnman farm (SW 14-61-3-5) and moved there.

Glenn, Rose Anne, Joyce, Grace, Linda, Shirley, Gerrit, Jack, 1974.

Gerrit and Joyce have six children. Their oldest daughter, **Shirley** Anne, was born on March 17, 1956, and in 1975 married Tony Wierenga. On July 8, 1957, **Grace** Karen was born and in 1975 married Don Hiemstra.

Linda Joyce was born August 29, 1958, and in 1979 married Dennis West. They live in Barrhead and have one daughter. Linda is employed as a receptionist at the County of Barrhead office and Dennis is a truck driver for Kanhaul.

Their oldest son, **Jack** Ronald, was born December 7, 1960. From 1979 to 1981, Jack attended Lakeland College, Vermilion, and is a vocational agriculture graduate. In 1981 he received the Lakeland College Recreation Leadership award and also the Student of the Year award. Jack lives at home and is farming with his father.

On September 6, 1962, **Glenn** Jerry was born and on June 11, 1983 married Barbara Tiemstra. They have one daughter, **Jessica** Louise (December 27, 1983). Glenn and Barbara live on the SE 24-61-4-5. Glenn is employed as a driver with Graydon Trucking Ltd. and also farms with his father.

Glenn, Barb, Jessica, 1984.

Their youngest daughter, **Rose Anne**, was born April 27, 1965, and is working in Grande Cache. Jack and Glenn have been actively involved with the hockey teams from Neerlandia. They have both played with the Neerlandia Flyers and the Neerlandia Knights.

Gerrit van Dijken

PETER AND KATHRYN (BRINK) VAN DRUNEN

Peter Van Drunen was born in Sleeuwijk, North Brabant, the Netherlands, on June 27, 1935, the son of a vegetable farmer. In 1951 he immigrated with his parents and four sisters to Holland, Michigan. Pete's first jobs were factory work, farm work, and trucking. One of these jobs proved to be rather significant. Providentially, while picking up hay in the fields for a farmer named Brink, Peter had opportunity to get to know Brink's daughter Kathryn. This developed into a lasting friendship, marriage, and a life together. Kathryn was born in East Saugatuck, Michigan, on October 29, 1933. Pete and Kathryn were married June 27, 1957

The next year on July 29, 1958, **Mary** was born, their first pride and joy. At this time they were living in Holland, Michigan, where they remained until their second child, **Leonard**, was born November 24, 1959. Then they moved to Grand Rapids where Pete, having realized his call into the gospel ministry, had begun his education at Calvin College and Seminary. By the time the seven years of schooling were over, two more children had been added to the family **Lois**, born October 8, 1961, and **David**, born June 13, 1964.

With diploma earned and a call letter answered, the Van Drunens headed westward to Ocheyedan, Iowa, which was their home for the next four years. During this time **Ruth** was born (June 20, 1967).

Pete felt the Lord was soon going to call him to a new field, and when the phone call came from Neerlandia, he, realizing that they had been vacant for three-and-a-half years, felt he could not say "No". So the decision was not difficult, and they began packing.

Everyone talked about how cold it would be in Neerlandia and how far north it was, but on the initial move the Van Drunens did not experience it that way. The morning they left Iowa was one of the coldest mornings during the time they had lived there. They could hardly keep warm in their Checker three-seated car, even with blankets over them. But God was kind, the further north they went, the warmer it got, and they arrived in Neerlandia on a beautiful, sunny "warm" January day in 1970.

Upon arrival in the new pastorate there was the excitement, especially for kids, of quickly looking through the house which was to be their home. It proved to be the most wind-resistant house the Van Drunens have ever lived in. The yard was a joy to look at, and many hours of fun were had in it by the children and their village friends. The Van Drunens also remember looking at the bright Northern Lights — a treat not experienced everywhere. The children used to also look for UFO's and the bats that lived on the third storey of the parsonage and were always ready to entertain at night.

The Van Drunens remember

— the long summer days and the short winter days

- the skating rink which all the kids missed when they left — David more than anyone else
- the muddy road to Barrhead which was later paved
- the natural gas that could be lit with a match as it came out of the water faucet
- the propane gas lines that would freeze up on the worst day of the year and have to be thawed with a lit bale of straw

Yes, that is Neerlandia to them. They especially remember the things that were unusual to them, things that they never experienced before or afterwards any other place.

Back: Lois, Mary, Leonard, David. Front: Pete, Ruth, Kathryn, Mark, 1973.

The Van Drunens recall Neerlandia made a bit of a fuss when **Mark** was born February 23, 1972. Pete and Kathryn were informed it had been many a year since a baby was born in the parsonage, and everyone thought it was a special occasion. Mark, of course, was oblivious to all this ado.

Peter and Kathryn left Neerlandia for Peoria, Iowa, in 1973. While there, they adopted a little boy. In 1982 Pete and Kathryn accepted a call to a church in Delavan, Wisconsin. Kathryn has been involved in teaching special education part-time in the Christian schools the last few years after obtaining a MA from Drake University.

Kathryn Van Drunen

ARIE AND JENNIE (STRYDHORST) VEENSTRA

Arie (Arend) Veenstra was born January 2, 1932, in Kampen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. He immigrated from there in 1951, arriving in Halifax on June 22. Arie did not see any of his family again until April 1972. He was sponsored by his maternal aunt Lucy Kippers and her husband, John Sr. He came to Canada with another aunt, Trien Post, who later returned to the Netherlands.

When they arrived in Edmonton there was no one at the train station to pick them up — a nice start in a strange country with a strange language! *Tante* Trien was concerned that no ride would be coming, so Arie found a cab to take her to Neerlandia. The cab driver had never heard of Neerlandia, and they had to go into the station to look it up on a map. Once *Tante* Trien was safely on the way their ride, John Kippers, showed up — he had gone to the wrong station.

Though Arie was born in a town, he was not a city boy at heart. In the Netherlands he had worked for farmers on days off or before and after work. After coming to Neerlandia he worked for several farmers by the month and also spent a few winters in lumber camps.

Arie married Jennie Strydhorst on December 22, 1953. They have five children: **Dorothy** (October 22, 1954), **Lambert** (September 24, 1955), **Angeline** (October 11, 1957), **Carolyn** (March 27, 1961), and **Henry** (August 12, 1966).

Angeline, Jennie holding Henry, Arie, Lambert, Carolyn, Dorothy, 1967

The first winter Arie and Jennie were married, Arie worked in Thachuk's lumber camp. After that they lived on the NW 16-62-3-5, where they kept chickens, hogs, and cows. The heating system in the uninsulated house consisted of a wood drum heater and a wood-and-coal range. On cold nights the water froze in the water pail, Arie and Jennie even moved their bed into the kitchen for a while during the winter. The Veenstras could not even afford a wheelbarrow, so Arie carried the manure out of the barn with a couple of old pails — a messy job!

After a few years Veenstras moved to Edmonton. Arie had worked making concrete manure pits in the Netherlands, and in Edmonton he again found work in the concrete business. In 1958 the family moved to Didsbury where they rented a dairy farm

After three years in Didsbury the Veenstras came to Neerlandia and rented the SW 8-62-3-5 for two years. They kept a few cows and pigs there, and Arie worked out a lot of the time until they bought the SW 6-63-3-5 in Vega where they presently live. To help purchase the farm they borrowed money from the *Boerenleenbank* in the Netherlands. The Farm Credit Corporation would not lend Arie money for the purchase of one quarter, insisting that only one quarter was not a viable unit

Lambert, Anne-Marie, 1984.

Robert, Daniel, Johnathan, 1983.

All the girls are on their own and have moved away from Neerlandia. Lambert married **Anne-Marie Troost** (December 16, 1959) of Edmonton on November 10, 1978 They have three sons. **Daniel Bruce** (November 22, 1979), **Robert** Alexander (May 6, 1981), and **Johnathan** James (February 2, 1983). The family lives on the SW 34-62 3-5. Lambert owns Lambert's Concrete Finishing Henry works with Arie on the farm

Jennie Veenstra

ANDY AND FETTJE (VEENSTRA) VIERSEN

Both Andy (Andries) and Fettje hail from Friesland, the Netherlands. Andy was born on August 20, 1930, in Anjum — later his family moved to Wieringerwerf, on one of the first polders to have been constructed, Fettje was born on February 10 1935 in Hauterwijk Andy remembers when in 1945 the Germans bombed the dike that protected the Wieringer-Meer Polder, as they fled the oncoming Allied forces This last, spiteful act by the Nazis resulted in almost instant flooding of many acres of farmland (the Viersen farm included), with the water up to 20 feet deep in some places.

Fettje left the Netherlands in April 1951 with her parents and eight brothers and sisters They spent ten days on the *Volendam* before they reached Canada. As the boat docked in Quebec harbour, immigration officials and others on shore warmly greeted the immigrants, who all spontaneously began singing their beloved anthem *Wilhelmus Van Nassauwe*. The Veenstras sang as well. They knew this was going to be a new beginning for them yet they would not easily forget their history and confessions. From Quebec, the family travelled across Canada by train, arriving in Telkwa, British Columbia, two weeks after they had left the Netherlands. Fettje's father soon found work at a local lumber mill

In August 1951, Andy Viersen arrived in Canada by plane and made a similar trek by train to Telkwa. Four years later, in 1955, Andy and Fettje were married, they made their home in the Bulkley Valley, where Andy operated a sawmill. Their first child, Margaret, arrived on July 11, 1956. Later, the Viersens moved to the town of Smithers Six other children were born. **Joanne** on August 31, 1958; **Stanley** on September 1, 1959; **Monica** on October 15, 1960, and **Teresa** on June 10, 1962, **Sharon** on February 3, 1964, and **Yvonne** on August 8, 1966. Then in 1966 a tragic drowning accident claimed the life of Andy and Fettje's oldest daughter.

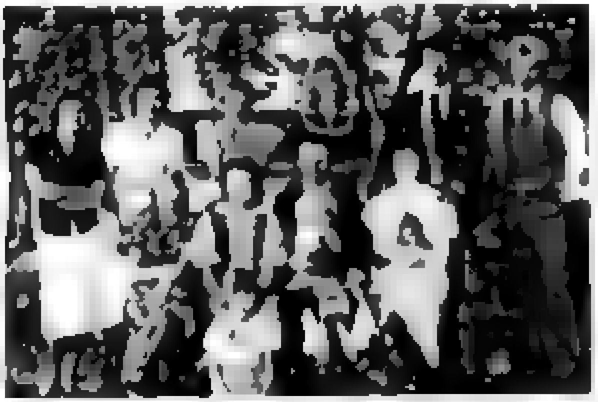
After Andy had worked many years for

lumber companies and in the construction business, the Viersens moved to a farm near Smithers. Andy and Fettje had come from farm families in the Netherlands, and wanted their children to enjoy the benefits of farm life. Three more children swelled the Viersen ranks: **Christina,** October 10, 1969, **Andrew,** March 21, 1971, and **Felicia,** May 5, 1974.

Farming in the Bulkey Valley was not easy, however; rocky soil, distance from markets, and long winters combined to make it a difficult task. Knowing of the Dutch farming community in Alberta called Neerlandia, Andy began thinking of moving there. In 1976 Andy paid a visit to Neerlandia. Things looked promising: the farmland looked good, there was a church close by, and the community was in the process of building a Reformed school. Although there were no mountains in Neerlandia and Andy thought the trees looked like shrubs, the Viersens decided to move to this small, but growing community.

With the help of Simon Tuininga, Andy purchased a farm from Frank Brunner (SE 36-61-3-5, NE 25-61-3-5). In the midst of all the preparations for their move, their eleventh child, **Lydia,** was born May 30, 1977. Six weeks later, they left for their new home.

At first Andy and the children missed the mountains, and sunny Alberta seemed to be just as wet as British Columbia had been. But before long they began to enjoy the landscape here: the herds of cattle in green pastures, the fields of growing or ripening grain, and the beautiful sunsets. Despite leaving behind family and friends in Smithers, Andy and Fettje have never regretted the move to Neerlandia. Here as well as in Smithers, they can hear the gospel preached every Sunday.



Back: Monica, Teresa, Christina, Yvonne, Dick Barendregt Stanley. Middle: Sharon, Fettje, Andy holding Lydia, Joanne holding Peter. Front: Felicia, Andrew, 1980

Some of the Viersen children have started families of their own. Joanne married **Dick Barendregt;** they now (1984) farm in Neerlandia (SE 30-61-3-5) with their children **Peter, Hester,** and **Calvin.** Monica married **Carl Osterhoff** and after briefly living in Neerlandia while working for Simon Tuininga, they moved to Ontario with their son. Stanley, Andy and Fettje's oldest son, married **Irene Vander Burgt** and they reside in Neerlandia, Stan currently is a mechanic at Stephani Motors in Barrhead.

Fettje Viersen

ALLAN AND ELAINE (DIONNE) VISSER

Allan Visser spent many hours at the hockey rink in his boyhood days. When he left school, he began apprenticing as a welder in his father's shop.

On October 2, 1971, Allan married Elaine Dionne. Elaine had been born in Lac La Biche on February 23, 1952, but she grew up in Barrhead where her father worked on road construction crews. After high school, she worked first as a waitress and later as a secretary in a real estate office. **Candace** Lynnette was born to the Vissers on March 21, 1972, and on November 14, 1974, a sister, **Nicole** Dawn, came to make their family complete.

The Vissers first lived in a trailer on Allan's father's yard, but then rented Joe Fisher's house on the NW 10-61-3-5. Allan is a self-employed welder and has his own welding truck and business, Neerlandia Welding. He also enjoys playing ball and hockey. Elaine has driven bus for the County of Barrhead since 1975. She enjoys oil painting and making gate signs. As a family, the Vissers go triking and participate as spectators at hockey and ball games.

Elaine Visser

ED AND TENA (PETERS) VISSER

Ed Visser left the Netherlands with his parents and siblings in 1913 and arrived in Edmonton, where the family set up farming. Ed went to school for a number of years but being one of the oldest in a family of nine children, he had to help out on the family farm. He finally had to leave school to devote his time to the farm and family.

In the summer of 1926 Ed came to Neerlandia with his father and helped with the breaking on the homestead. That fall he left to seek employment and further his education in Lynden, Washington, where other members of the Visser family had settled. In 1927 Ed again returned to Neerlandia for a short time to recuperate from an injury to his spine caused by a fall off a barn roof on which he had been working. After working for a time on various farms in southern Alberta, he returned to the U.S.A. and took up residence there for several years.

While in the U.S.A., Ed took his high school education through night school, and then completed courses at Washington State College in gas engines and tractors and at Cleveland, Ohio, in arc welding. Ed became an American citizen and in April 1942 was inducted into the U.S. Army at Tacoma, Washington. His military job was that of construction foreman with Company A, 344 Engineers, and he attained the grade of Staff Sergeant.

Staff Sergeant Visser attended battles and campaigns in Algeria, French Morocco, Tunisia, Italy, southern France, Rhineland, and central Europe. He received several decorations and citations, among them the Arrowhead and the Purple Heart. He attended Port Navy Diving School and after the war did deep sea salvage work for the Navy. On May 16, 1945, in Germany, he was wounded in action, and on September 24, 1945, he received honourable discharge from the service. In October 1946 Ed moved back to Neerlandia.

On December 27, 1946, Ed Visser and Tena Peters were united in marriage by a Justice of the Peace in Edmonton.

The Peters family had come to Neerlandia in 1928, and Tena's mother had passed away shortly after. When Tena was thirteen, it became necessary for her to quit school and work at home helping to care for the family and doing the household chores. At seventeen she left home to work in Edmonton, Pibroch, and Westlock. She and her sister Della spent a winter and a summer cooking at the Garneau Mill northwest of Neerlandia.

Tena returned to help out at home for about three years before she met and married Ed. Ed and Tena took up permanent residence in Neerlandia and Ed started managing a garage for the Neerlandia Co-op. Their first son, **Allan** Edward, was born June 5, 1948.

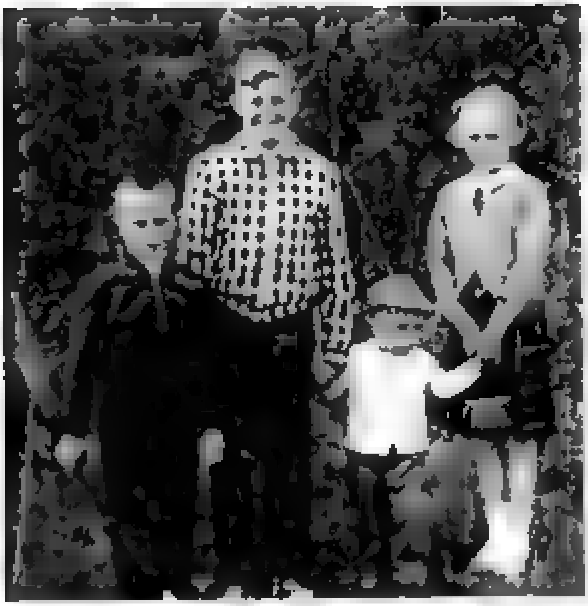
Ed decided to branch out on his own and in the fall of 1949 he and Tena moved from the corner into a small house on the Anne Elgersma yard. There Ed set up his own welding business, first in the garage of Elgersmas' home and then, in the spring of 1950, in his own shop. His 'welding shop' was a granary that he had borrowed from John Ingwersen and set up on Elgersmas' land near the main road.

In October 31, 1950, **Beverly** Ann was born, and in November that same year the family moved into their new home (a house purchased from Harvey Bentz of Mellowdale) on the SW 34-61-3-5. Soon Ed built a shop there and the business became known as Neerlandia Welding and Repair. In order to supplement his income and get his business started, Ed welded for oil rigs in the area and helped in the construction of the Fort Assiniboine bridge.

In the garden, Allan, Tena, Beverly, 1953

Calvin John was born June 5, 1954, and on December 29, 1958, **Terry** Edward was born. The children attended school in Neerlandia and were involved in community activities. Ed served for some time as President of the local Parent Teachers Association.

The fifties and sixties were busy years for Ed and Tena. In the early 1950s Ed took several courses in mechanics and welding. He provided a number of services for the area: welding, blacksmithing, servicing, and mechanics. Ed was a dealer for various machinery companies and sold some of the first snowmobiles that came on the market. He was official grain tester for the community farmers for many years.



After church. Calvin, Allan, Terry, Beverly, 1960

Tena did her share by running to the shop with phone calls and making coffee, tea, and lunches, as well as raising her family. Neerlandia was a growing, thriving community and throughout the years the farmers supplied plenty of work.

Later Ed expanded his business into a limited company (Neerlandia Welding and Repairs Ltd.) with his son Allan and remained in business until he became ill with cancer in 1970. He passed away March 19, 1971.

Tena decided to remain in Neerlandia after Ed's passing, even as the children grew up and left home. She enjoys visiting with friends and going to the occasional tea parties and gatherings with other women in the community.

On July 9, 1971, Beverly married Daryl Morrow of Barrhead. They and their three children have a farm east of Barrhead. Allan married Elaine Dionne in 1971. Calvin and Brenda Schmidt were married August 3, 1974. They live in Mellowdale, where they own and operate Visser's Welding Limited.

Terry and his wife, Karen Brummet, live on an acreage in Mellowdale, where they moved shortly after their marriage on July 24, 1982. Karen is a veterinary technician at the Long-Muir Clinic in Barrhead. Terry works for Visser's Welding Ltd. in Mellowdale, where he also has his own company, Terr Northern Steele.

Tena is involved with the family, helping out and filling in wherever needed. Neerlandia is definitely a home to come back to for the children and grandchildren.

Bev Morrow

GEORGE AND FLORENCE (BAKER) VISSER

George and Florence were both born in 1935, during the tough years of the Depression. Though times were hard, neither experienced deprivation or felt they were disadvantaged. Later, when the Second World War was being fought, they saw the headlines in the *Winnipeg Free Press Weekly* as the armies in Europe fought for position. Finally the explosion of the atom bomb left its mark, and they knew they would live in a world that had changed forever.

Many of George's childhood hours were spent with his dog Sport, digging out groundhogs and roaming together in the bush. His formal education was obtained in Neerlandia. In school, the good times included the "more important" things such as recess and noon hours and the games of baseball, soccer, and hockey. Though formal education ended following grade nine, George continued self education by much reading and with several courses through correspondence school and seminars in Banff and Barrhead. George was interested in sports and played hockey in the old Barrhead rural hockey league. He also curled for several years.

George and his faithful companion, Sport

George farmed with his dad after he left school. He married Florence Baker on July 25, 1956, and they settled on the SE 3-62-3-5

As the oldest child in a fatherless home, Florence had always felt a keen sense of responsibility for the family. She quit school after completing grade eleven. Her early work experience included a summer spent as housekeeper and nanny and an office job at a bank in Edmonton. She then worked at the Neerlandia Co-op, after promising Mr. Ashley that she would not leave to get married for at least two years.

Florence loves music and at an early age began to play the organ in church. She has also been a faithful supporter of the Neerlandia choir.

George and Florence have been blessed with eight children· **John** Bradley (May 14, 1957), **Debbie** (Deborah) Mae (August 16, 1958), **Wayne** Vernon (January 4, 1960), **Rick** (Richard) Glen (August 16, 1961), **Kathy-Jo** (February 14, 1964), **David** George (July 17, 1965), **Scott** Raymond (July 3, 1969), and **Mark** Nelson (September 6, 1972).

John and Wayne bought two quarters of land in Dapp in 1980 In March 1983, John began selling hog and barn equipment under the name Visser's Sales and Services. He married **Joanne Vanden Brink** of Surrey, B.C., on July 19, 1984. Joanne was born July 10, 1958, in Rocky Mountain House After she attended Dordt College and the U of A, she came to teach grade one at Neerlandia from 1981-1983

After spending one semester at Dordt College, Debbie married Andrew Wierenga in 1978. Wayne graduated from Calvin College with a BA in philosophy. He married **Dagmar Smid** on July 15, 1983, and is farming while Dagmar teaches special education in Barrhead Dagmar was born October 23, 1960, in Lethbridge

Rick is farming full-time. He married Beatrice Elgersma on April 7, 1984. Kathy went to NAIT after high school and is a laboratory and x-ray technician. David is attending The King's College

All of the boys are engaged in the farming operation, which includes hogs, laying hens, and grain. George no longer farms with his dad, but now farms with his sons In 1978 Vissers were selected the Farm Family of the Year for the Barrhead County. They won awards in 1982 and 1983 for being in the top twenty for hog gradings in Alberta.

Back: Mark, Wayne, John, Scott, George, Andy Wierenga, David, Rick, Kathy-Jo. Front: Dagmar, Joanne, Florence, Andria Wierenga, Debbie, Jennifer and Christopher Wierenga. Beatrice, 1984

George has been active in church and local community organizations and views his work on the store board with particular satisfaction. He has not limited his time to the Neerlandia community, but has served as a member of the Alberta Egg and Fowl Marketing board and of the Alberta Agriculture Products Marketing Council As an active member of the Progressive Conservative party, he spent two years as regional director for the provincial P C. Party of Alberta

The family is grateful for the opportunity to serve. They have experienced the blessing of God in their lives

George Visser

NEIL AND WINNY (VAN ANDEL) VRIEND

One of nine children in the Vriend family, Neil (Cornelius) was born in Andijk, North Holland, the Netherlands, on June 5, 1932. His father grew flower bulbs and sold them for export, but he found the Dutch government too restrictive and wanted more freedom to achieve his ambitions. Thus, when Neil was seven years old, the Vriends emigrated, settling in Houston, British Columbia. After attending the local public school for nine years, Neil helped on his father's farm, and did some road building and logging for five years. Deciding then on a ministerial calling, he went to high school and then on to Calvin College

Winny (Wilemine) Van Andel was born in

Krommenie, North Holland, on July 7, 1937. Her father, being a minister, served various congregations in the *Gereformeerde Kerk* until 1954, when the Van Andels decided to emigrate. They settled first in New Westminster, B.C. Winny, then sixteen, enrolled in Calvin College's pre-med program, majoring in chemistry and biology. Her goal, already in the Netherlands, had been to be a doctor. Her mother had also had plans to become a doctor before she met Winny's father. Winny's plans also changed after she met Neil Vriend at Calvin. After graduating, she worked as a lab technician. Neil and Winny were married August 22, 1959. Neil graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1962 at the age of thirty, then served Christian Reformed congregations in Emo and Hamilton, Ontario, and in Lacombe, Alberta.

During this time, Neil and Winny were blessed with six children. **Anita** Willemine (born December 6, 1960), **Janice** Ruth (born February 22, 1962), **Christine** Teresa (born February 13, 1964), **Mark** David (born December 21, 1965), **Steven** James (born June 1, 1968), and **Derek** Norman (born November 4, 1971).

In 1974 the Vriends accepted a call from Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church and their stay was to become the longest in their married life; for Winny the longest in her whole life.

It was 2:00 in the morning, on August 14, 1974, that the Vriends had their first impression of Neerlandia. It had been a long day. During the previous night Neil's brother-in-law had suddenly passed away in Lacombe, and the day's priorities had changed unexpectedly. The move to Neerlandia, however, had to be made. All possessions had been packed and were gone. What was their first impression? The silence. After living on or near a highway for nine years they could almost hear the silence. But the silence did not last long. The excitement of a new home — "Which will be my room?" — and finding groceries in the cupboards and casseroles in the freezer made everyone forget how tired and sleepy they were.

Judging by their sincere — though not always successful — efforts with animals of all kinds, the family did their best to fit into the farming community. They had a cow once who insisted on going back where she had come from repeatedly. The turkeys thrived, but made a regular scraping of the church sidewalk necessary. The chickens raised for the freezer often died before they got there. The Vriends were best known, however, for their persistence in raising bantams. The bantams added a decorative touch to the centre, and acted as a speed control as well. However, their ranks were decimated year after year by skunks, traffic, neighbourhood dogs, and even a hawk. Vriends' own dog, Blackie, was known by all. He barked a lot and kept everyone alert to anything that moved. Unfortunately, he cried wolf too often, and when vandals broke into the church one dark night, he only got scolded for being such a noisy dog. It was no surprise that, after services, the Sunday school children could be found in the Vriends' yard admiring the bunnies and chicks and seeing how close they dared get to Blackie on his leash.

Back: Anita, Chris, Janice. Front: Steve, Neil, Derek, Winnie, Mark, 1979.

A minister's family is not supposed to grow roots, but roots grow whether one plans it or not. Anita, after spending two years at Dordt College and The King's College, married **Gary Veldhuisen**, a carpenter from Emo who settled in Neerlandia. A daughter, **Miriam** Joy, was born to Gary and Anita on August 7, 1982, and on May 15, 1984, a son, **Jordan** Neil, was born.

Vriends made the permanent agricultural connection when Janice, after taking two years of education courses at The King's College, married Garry Wierenga and so became part of the many-branched Wierengas of Neerlandia.

Anita, Gary, Miriam, 1982 Inset: Jordan, 1984

The Vriend-Neerlandia link was further solidified when Neil fulfilled his lifelong dream of building a house. After 20 years of talking about loghouses, underground houses, envelope houses, and solar heated houses, he settled on a stackwall house heated by a Russian fireplace It was built on a four-acre wooded lot, the site of the Messelink homestead and also of the first Neerlandia Co-op.

Neil is now (1984) in his tenth year of preaching, visiting, teaching, and building, and Winny is busy with Northern Light Singers (a young people's singing group she had organized in 1974) as well as many other activities Chris, Mark, Steven, and Derek are all at various stages of their schooling. Three chickens, one rabbit, two gerbils, and three goldfish all are doing well under Derek's care

Winny Vriend

EVERT AND LINDA (VEENSTRA) VROON

Evert Vroon was born on March 11, 1943, in Middleburg, Zeeland, the Netherlands. In 1951 he immigrated to Taber, Alberta, with his parents. While attending Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U S.A., he met Linda Veenstra, whom he married in 1966 Linda was born in Hauwlerwyk, Friesland, the Netherlands, on May 6, 1940 She immigrated to Telkwa, British Columbia, in 1951

Evert and Linda both taught in Abbotsford, British Columbia, and Edmonton, Alberta, before moving to Neerlandia in 1976, where Evert taught in Neerlandia Public School.

After renting a house for three years, the Vroons bought the SE 30-61-3-5 in 1979 and built a house there. To gain access to the property a new section of road had been constructed and because the summer was very wet, the truck moving their belongings got stuck several times enroute to the new house. When Evert received a position as principal in Kitchener, Ontario, the family moved there in 1981. The Vroons have five children: **David** (1969), **Danny** (1970), **Everett-John** (1973), **Justin** (1976), **Trisha** (1979).

Linda Vroon

JAN AND ANJE (NORDEN) WERKMAN

Jan Werkman (May 14, 1902) and Anje Norden (July 28, 1904) of Uithuizen, Groningen, the Netherlands, were married June 5, 1930 In 1950 they immigrated to Canada with their ten children. six sons and four daughters ranging in age from one to nineteen. The trip across the ocean, on the old *Beaverbrea*, was a very unpleasant fourteen days. The Werkmans arrived in Halifax and from there travelled by train to Alberta Their destination was Neerlandia, where Anje's sister Egberdina Wierenga lived. When they arrived, however, they found that they would soon have to move on again due to lack of work in Neerlandia They went south to the Lethbridge area, where they found work with sugar beet farmers After two years they moved to Edmonton

In 1954 Jan moved his family back to the Neerlandia area, where they bought the W½ 23-61-4-5. The only building on the farm was an old log barn, so a house was bought in Neerlandia and moved by a D8 Caterpillar tractor It was a small old house, but it was liveable, and by this time only four of the children were still at home: **Jake** (May 7, 1942), **Reka** (June 9, 1943), **Peter** (November 28, 1945), and **Harry** (October 4, 1948).

Since money was scarce for the Werkmans, a vehicle was not a priority and their only means of transportation was horse and buggy They only travelled when they had to go to the Co-op for groceries or to the Canadian Reformed Church on Sundays. They appreciated the Co-op because they could speak the familiar Dutch there Once in a while, however, the

Jan and Anje on the wagon seat, 1954

horse-and-buggy trip proved to be terribly cold. One Sunday the family was halfway to church when they became so cold that they decided to turn back. By the time they had travelled the five miles back, they were so stiff with cold that it took a long time to warm up again

In 1965 illness forced Jan to retire from farming Peter and Harry continued farming until 1969, when Harry moved to Edmonton and Peter bought the farm. In 1971 Jan and Anje moved to the Emmanuel Home in Edmonton, where Anje still lives Jan passed away December 3, 1981

Peter married Carol Tuininga of Neerlandia in 1970 Jake had moved to Edmonton in 1958, but in 1977 he moved to the Bloomsbury area, where he and his wife, Irene Vanderland, are farming with their four children. Reka moved to Edmonton in 1959 Harry married Freeda Vander Zyl. They and their five children live in Edmonton, where Harry works as a plumber.

Peter Werkman

PETE AND CAROL (TUININGA) WERKMAN

On June 19, 1970, Peter Werkman and Carol Tuininga took the big step into wedded bliss. They lived on the SW 36-61-4-5, which Pete had bought from his dad in 1968. They did some fixing to the old house, and the end result was a cute and cosy home

Life was a lot of fun then. Carol even had to learn to drive the combine Everything went fine until they had to combine a newly-broken field that still had some roots on it. That combine sure picked up those roots, it even picked up one the size of a fence post This was a bit too much for Pete who hollered some not-too-positive words — as if she had done it on purpose! Carol, being a newlywed, felt like going straight home to Mom and Dad. But somehow things cooled down and Carol has been the one to run the combine ever since

Five years and four youngsters later, their cozy little home with two tiny bedrooms and no plumbing facilities was rather crowded. So in 1975 — hog prices being good — Pete and Carol were able to put up a new house built mostly by themselves. They enjoy their new home with all the space and the bathroom facilities

Pete and Carol have a successful hog operation. In addition to the home quarter, they own the NW 23-61-4-5. Pete and Carol's family has increased to a grand total of seven children They are **Jason** Dean (April 7, 1971); **Shawn** Patrick (February 26, 1972), **Melanie** Rae (March 23, 1974), **Wesley** Dale (November 13, 1975); **Krista** Leigh (October 13, 1978); **Russell** Grant (December 7, 1981), and **Darcy** Wade (May 3, 1983). Everyone is in good health, and Pete and Carol see that they are blessed in many ways

Carol Werkman

EVERT AND HENRIETTA (KUIPER) WEVER

On March 19, 1952, Evert and Henrietta Wever moved to Neerlandia onto their own farm on the SE 15-62-3-5, fulfilling a dream that Evert had had since he was a child. The realization of the dream was a long time in coming Born in Borger, Drenthe, the Netherlands, on December 9, 1913, Evert had been orphaned at an early age and raised by relatives On November 20, 1939, he married Henrietta (Henderkien) Kuiper who had been born in the same village on October 19, 1912. Since he did not have the financial support he needed to begin farming in the Netherlands, Evert started a milk delivery business. The business grew and so did the Wever family: **Tina** (Harmtien) was born on May 4, 1940, **Henny** (Henderkien) on September 27, 1942, **Amy** (Harmien) on May 3, 1945, and **Egbert** on February 15, 1947

After World War II, Canada opened its

doors to the Dutch. "Perhaps it would be possible to become a farmer in Canada", Evert thought. After much deliberation, the Wevers gave up their milk delivery business to join the flood of immigrants headed for Canada. On June 19, 1949, they left the Netherlands aboard the *Volendam* and arrived ten days later on June 29, 1949, in Quebec City. A farmer near Winnipeg, Manitoba, had sponsored them and so the Wevers boarded a train for that city. In Winnipeg, however, they got off the train only to find that their sponsor had changed his mind and no longer wanted them. The immigration officials put them back on the train and sent them on to Edmonton, Alberta. There, to their great relief, Herman Wierenga met them with a list of farmers who would employ Dutch immigrants. The first place they lived and worked was in Vimy, Alberta. After eight months there, they moved to Linaria, Alberta, where they spent two years working for John Skaret.

Because the nearest Christian Reformed Church was in Neerlandia, the Wevers' church membership papers were sent there. To enable the family to attend Sunday services, members of the congregation took turns picking them up.

During these years, a friendship developed between Evert Wever and Ike Nanninga and Evert told Ike his dream of becoming a farmer. When the SE 15-3-62-5, then owned by John Paas, came up for sale, Ike helped Evert obtain the money to make the deal. Finally the Wevers were landowners, the dream was becoming reality. But moving onto the farm did not go as smoothly as in a dream. March 19, 1952, the day chosen for the move to the farm, was bitterly cold, the thermometer registered -42°F. Furthermore, there was so much snow that the east road to the farm was blocked at the John Kippers farm. This made it necessary to travel an additional six miles to get to the farm from the west. To top it all off, some of the children were sick with the measles. Once again the Nanningas helped out, with Jennie Nanninga looking after the children while Evert and Henrietta settled into their new house. That summer, on August 1, their fifth and last child, William, was born.

Back: Henrietta holding Bill, Evert, Tine. Front: Amy, Egbert, Henry, 1952

Henrietta had a hard time adjusting to life in Neerlandia. She missed electricity, running water, and, most of all, her family and friends. The snow and cold weather added to her difficulties. Because the house was not insulated, it stayed warm only if the heater and the two stoves were constantly filled.

The quarter-section of land which Evert had purchased consisted of 40 cultivated acres, and 120 acres of bush which Evert cleared as he improved the land. Evert spent the first four winters working in James Thachuk's lumber camp, while Henrietta looked after the house, the children, and the livestock. The children all helped with the chores, which included feeding the pigs and milking seven cows. During those years, the Ike Nanninga family continued to offer their help and friendship.

Gradually Neerlandia became home to the Wevers. Henrietta, too, grew to like the community and to accept even the snow and the cold. All of the family worked hard to improve the farm and to make it profitable. As the children grew and finished school, they continued to contribute to the farm with their work and with income from other jobs. Then in May 1965 Evert and Henrietta sold the farm and bought a larger one near Barrhead. They had resided in the Neerlandia community for 13 years.

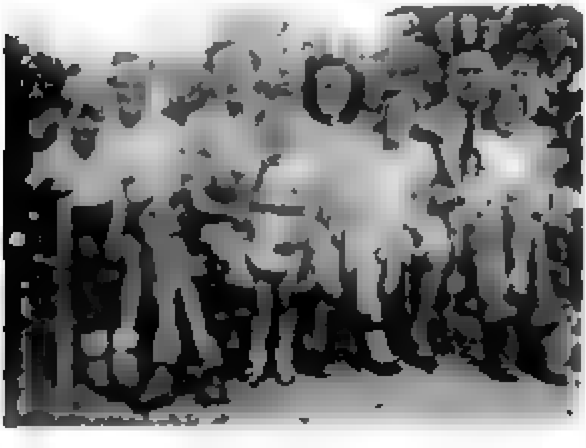
During the years in Canada, many changes took place in the family. Tina married Arie Vander Zouwen of Calgary. Hennie married Ken Anderson of the Glenreagh district and they now have four daughters. Amy is married and lives with her husband, Ron Stewart, and two sons in Fort St. John, British Columbia. Bert obtained his mechanics license at NAIT in Edmonton. He owned and operated the Neerlandia garage during 1969 and 1970. He married Gail Brinton of Bloomsbury. They have three children and now reside in Red Deer, Alberta, where Bert is employed as an airline pilot and mechanic. Bill also attended NAIT, and became a journeyman baker. He is now manager of Barrhead Co-op Bakery. He married Kathy Stanhope and they have one son.

Evert Wever died of a heart attack in September 1983. His wife, Hennetta, resides in Barrhead, in a house they had purchased in 1982.

The Wever family

GEORGE AND HILLIE (BONTKES) WIEGERS

On June 30, 1902, George (Geert) Wiegers was born in Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands. He married Hillie (Hillechina) Bontkes, aged 24, on March 1, 1928. She had been born on December 11, 1904, also in Groningen. Together they owned and operated a furniture, drapery, and flooring store. They became anxious to find a new beginning when extremely high post-war taxes were forced upon them and they felt their children would have a better future in another country. They were encouraged to leave by Lammert Wierenga of Neerlandia, father-in-law to Hillie's sister, who visited them in 1947. Lammert eventually sponsored the family and promised George work on a farm in Neerlandia.



In Groningen, 1948. Seated: John, Bob, Hillie, Rulie, Liz, George holding Jennie. Standing: Ann.

In August 1948 they left Holland aboard the *Kota Inten* with their six children, **Rulie** (Roelfina), aged 19; **Bob** (Wubbo), aged 13; **Liz** (Lieske), aged 10; **John** (Jan) Henry, aged 8; **Jenny** (Jantje) Johanna, aged 4, and **Ann** (Anneke), aged 2. After a tiring journey of two weeks, they finally arrived in Neerlandia. They were welcomed, and found beds and home-canned goods in their new home on Catherine Holwerda's farm. George worked for Catherine Holwerda, a widow. He worked on a threshing crew in the fall of 1948 and cut firewood in the winter. He found the work difficult, especially since he had suffered a badly broken leg in a motor cycle accident in February 1948; it still bothered him. Rulie did housework for John and Henny Kippers and for Cor and Sena Nanninga. She remembers those very cold winter days, when she nearly froze her legs while walking to the Nanningas (about four miles).

Because of a disagreement with Mrs. Holwerda, one Saturday night in October 1949 the Wiegers family packed their belongings and moved to the Herman Wierenga farm, the NE 22-61-3-5. While Hillie stayed there with the children, George went to Edmonton to find a job more to his liking. In early December 1949 the Wiegers family moved to Edmonton, where George was employed at Wm. Troock Furniture. Rulie, however, stayed in Neerlandia, since it was only a couple of weeks until she was to be wed to Henry Wierenga.

Eventually, George and Hillie Wiegers retired in New Westminster, British Columbia. There George died of cancer on August 30, 1978, and Hillie went to be with the Lord on October 29, 1980. Rulie and Henry Wierenga continue to live in Neerlandia. Jenny and Herman Stel live in Edmonton. Bob and Coby (Solomons) Wiegers, Liz and John Winkel, John and Ru (Van Erden) Wiegers, and Ann and Henry Super all live in Surrey, British Columbia. Bob and John Wiegers own Champion Distributors flooring business there, and so follow in their father's footsteps.

Rulie Wierenga

HENRY AND RULIE (WIEGERS) WIERENGA

Henry Wierenga, born in Zuidhorn, Groningen, the Netherlands, immigrated to Canada with his parents, Andries and Hendrika, when he was six. Roelfina (Rulie) Wiegers was born in Groningen, the Netherlands on February 14, 1929. She moved to Neerlandia with her parents in 1948. Here Rulie met Henry, and they were married December 20, 1949. The wedding ceremony took place in the store hall, since the church had burned down.

Henry and Rulie on their engagement day, 1949.

In fifteen years of marriage, Henry and Rulie were blessed with nine children. **Andrew** Bernhard (September 28, 1950), **Hilda** Ann (August 27, 1951), **Hendrene** Gladys (March 1, 1953), **Jean** Georgina Louise (April 29, 1954), **Trixie** (Teresa) Joan (February 7, 1956), **Garry** (Gerhard) John (November 3, 1957), **Marion** Rose (July 23, 1960), **Wesley** Glen (July 11, 1962), and **Irene** Carolyn (June 28, 1964).

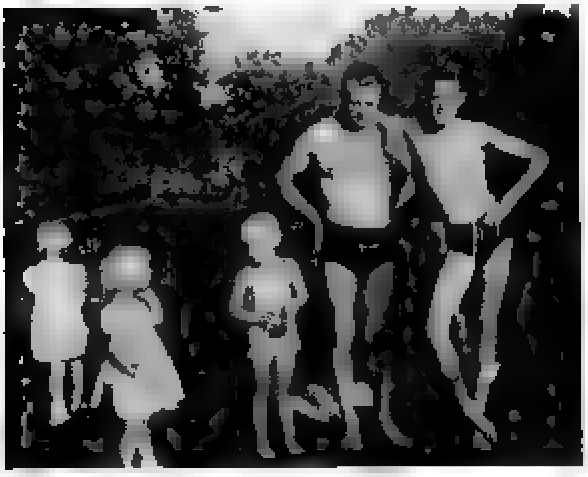
After their marriage, Henry and Rulie moved onto the farm that Henry's dad had bought from Tom Wilson. Henry owned two quarters of land, the N½ 22-61-3-5, and farmed with his brothers Martin and Joe. Each man owned his own land, but they had machinery together. At that time they worked all their land with a Minneapolis U. Henry added to his land base in the early 1970s when he bought half a quarter from Gilbert Baker (SW 22-61-3-5). Henry liked livestock and always kept cows and pigs on his yard. In 1952 he bought an old schoolhouse that stood south of the main Neerlandia School and used it for a chicken coop.

Rulie did not consider herself a farm wife in the sense of helping outside, but she kept busy inside. Rulie had taken three years of cooking and sewing courses in the Netherlands and was well prepared to take on the cooking responsibilities. Besides running a household, Rulie did quite a bit of custom sewing for ladies of the community. She sewed most of the clothes for her children, and her reputation as a seamstress grew through the years.

Besides all their chores, Henry and Rulie were both kept busy raising their family of nine children. All the children had very blonde hair, and whenever people saw Henry or Rulie, they expected to see a few "whiteheads" tagging along.

The Wierenga farm was situated on a hill overlooking a creek. The deep water concerned Henry and Rulie at first — especially the time they found two-year-old Andrew wandering by the creek — but the children all took to the water, and learned to swim at a very young age. Other children of the community also visited the old swimming holes in "Wierenga's creek." Birthday party wiener roasts were generally held down by the creek, and every Saturday morning the Wierenga kids, including those of Martin and Wilma Wierenga, would congregate by the creek and cook up a special recipe of pancakes.

With so many of the Wierenga activities associated with the creek, it did not take long for people to identify Henry Wierenga as "Henry by the Creek." To his family, however, "Henry in the Creek" was more appropriate. For quite often he would come up with a reason for going in the creek. He had either rescued a calf or cow on the other side, or he had slipped off a fallen tree, or had just gone for a dip on a hot day. Many times he would be seen coming home



"Henry by the Creek" by the creek, 1957. Hendrene, Jean, Hilda, Henry, John Wiegers.

soaking wet and even, upon occasion, clad only in his underwear.

Henry and Rulie's "kids by the creek" turned out to be quite a bunch of rascals. When it came to playing tricks, they were always coming up with new ones. For awhile some of the younger ones would hide in the ditch holding onto a rope which extended across the road to the other ditch where it was attached to a sack filled with straw (simulating an animal). When a vehicle approached they would pull it across the road. This was usually done on Sunday nights after Young People's, in the hope of attracting the young people. This tactic often worked, but on one occasion it was a bit too successful: Ken Nanninga jumped out of his car, but in his haste to chase the culprits he had forgotten to put his car in park, and very nearly had to fish it out of the creek.

On January 21, 1959, in the evening, Rulie was cleaning some paint brushes in the house while Henry was at a Mens' Society Meeting. The fumes from the gas were ignited by the flame of a propane hot-water tank, and the fire quickly spread. Rulie grabbed the phone and hollered that there was a fire at Henry Wierenga's. Ed Visser was contacted at the Centre, and he quickly informed the men's meeting in church. Meanwhile Rulie dragged six sleeping children out of bed and hustled them out to the garage. When the men arrived, they pulled the flaming back porch off the house with the tractor, and quickly shovelled snow on the house in an attempt to put the fire out. In the end the porch was destroyed and the house badly damaged by smoke. Henry and Rulie were very grateful for all the support the community gave them at this time. Everyone helped to build a new house that spring — even Rev. Van Dijken, who did the wiring. In September of that year the Wierengas moved into their new house.

Standing: Garry, Hendrene, Hilda, Trixie, Andrew, Jean. Seated: Marion, Irene, Wesley, 1966.

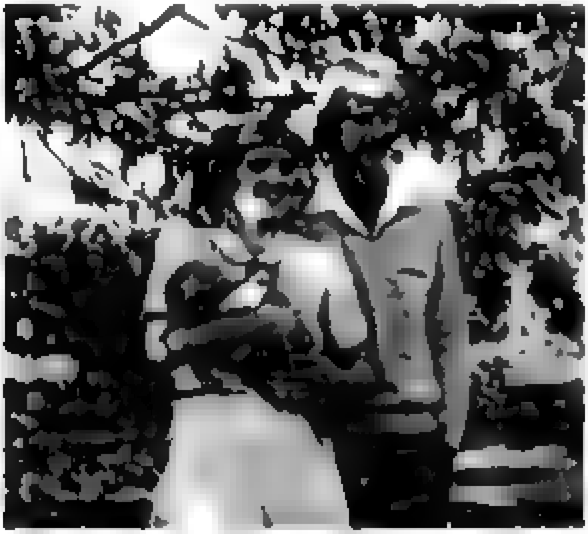
In 1970 Henry and Rulie's eldest daughter, Hilda, married Joe Fisher, and in 1971 Andrew left to go to Dordt College. The next year Hendrene married Joe's brother, Wayne. Jean married John Nanninga. Trixie married John's brother Larry. In 1976 Garry moved to B.C. to work for his uncles in the carpet business.

On February 10, 1978, Andrew married Debbie Visser. They rented a house on the same yard as her parents. They have three children: **Jennifer** Jodel, born November 20, 1978; **Andria** Durene, born January 13, 1980; and **Christopher** Henry, born October 19, 1982. In 1980 they bought one quarter from Lambert A. Wierenga (NE 26-61-3-5). Andrew's father also signed over one quarter to them, where they set up a new farmyard (NW 22-61-3-5). A house and barns for a farrow-to-finish hog operation were built.

Garry returned in 1979 and in 1980 Andrew, Garry, and Wesley formed a farm partnership, calling themselves Grand-West Farms. Later that year they purchased land in the Dapp area.

In 1980 Marion married Frank Rayment. On July 9, 1982, Garry married Janice Vriend

Adam Lee was born to them on August 29, 1983. In 1983, Henry and Rulie built a new home south of the creek and sold the home place to Garry and Janice.



Janice holding Adam, Garry, 1983

Henry still keeps a few cattle, and in the wintertime keeps in shape by cutting wood for his stove in the new house. Rulie is kept busy with her sewing, and with teaching sewing courses in the winter. Wesley lives at home and, when not busy on the farm, works for Lambert Veenstra who owns a cement-finishing business. Irene lives in Edmonton and is employed at All-Alta Credit Union, but likes to come home on weekends.

Henry and Rulie can no longer be expected to be seen with their little "whiteheads" tagging along, but they enjoy watching all their grandchildren grow up around them. They are very thankful to the Lord for being so good to them over the years.

Wierenga Family

HENRY AND LENA (RIBAR) WIERENGA

Henry William Wierenga, born and raised in Neerlandia, quit school when he reached grade eight. He stayed home to help on the farm since his dad was often away well drilling. In 1965 Henry moved the Wierenga's D7 cat to High Prairie and did clearing and breaking for farmers there. He also spent some of his winters working in the bush. In the winter of 1968 he again moved to High Prairie — this time working as a mechanic and later as shop foreman.

This is when Lena Ribar first met him — in the coin laundry. At this time Lena was working in the office at the local Macleod store. She was born July 31, 1947, and has five brothers. She had grown up in a two-room log house on a farm at Sunset House. They had no electrical power, phones, or running water. When she graduated from grade twelve she went to work in High Prairie.

On August 30, 1968, Lena married Henry. That fall Henry's dad persuaded them to move to Neerlandia and help out on the farm. Neither Henry nor Lena enjoyed living in town, so on November 15, 1968, they moved to Neerlandia. Lena wrote, "I'll never forget that day, as I felt very sad moving to a strange community and leaving my family and numerous friends."

Henry and Lena rented a house one-half mile north of Neerlandia, and lived there for about four years. There was no indoor plumbing but at least she had running water. The first winter the mice did not realize that they no longer owned the house. In the evenings Henry and Lena would sit and read, and the mice would run around the room playing tag.

The first year was very lonely for Lena. Henry left early in the morning to go to the farm and did not return till late at night. Lena found it difficult to make friends in the community. The only break in her long days was the time when Henry's dad would drop in to say hello. One day she received two kittens, one of which she kept in the house. Since she had no other company, she and the cat became quite attached to each other.

Lena's life became less lonely when she began to work at the Neerlandia Co-op in 1970. She worked there for three years and quit shortly before her first child, Doreen Hilda, was born October 24, 1973. In 1973 they moved into a small house on the yard by Henry's parents. In 1974 they bought a house from Ben Krikke and moved it to the farm. They were in the process of moving into the house when Lena left for the hospital to have their second baby, Clarence Henry, born October 6, 1974.

In 1977 Henry and Lena decided to replace the sand floor in the basement with a cement floor. They built some temporary shelves, suspended from the ceiling, to hold such things as canning jars and eggs while the floor was being poured. Lena did not trust the arrangement but she was assured that it was safe enough. At about 4 00 a m the next morning the Wierengas were awakened by a big crash followed by a tinkle, tinkle. Henry said, "Don't even bother to look I know what that was." To this day there are about one hundred dozen eggs under the Wierenga's basement floor Fortunately, Lena's fruit jars did not break

Back: Bryan, Henry, Lena. Front: Clarence, Doreen, 1980.

In August 1975 Henry's dad passed away. This made a big difference to both Henry and Lena, but especially to Lena because he was both a father and a friend to her Henry and Lena's third child, **Bryan** Ewald, was born August 26, 1978.

In addition to farming Henry does some custom breaking. He is also active in the North Central Association for the Mentally Handicapped and has served as both a board member and volunteer worker

Lena Wierenga

JOE AND HILDA (PETERS) WIERENGA

Joe A. Wierenga, son of Andries, had lived in Neerlandia for fifteen years when he was drafted into the army in 1943. After serving for three years he was discharged, and returned to Neerlandia to farm with his parents. On November 9, 1948, Joe married Hilda Peters They went to live on the NE 9-61-3-5, which Joe had bought from Andrew Heberling.

Joe and Hilda have four children. Their first son, **Tony** (Anthony), was born June 13, 1950. He married Shirley van Dijken on March 22, 1975. At first they lived in Barrhead but in 1977 they moved to the Shoal Creek area, where they farm They have three children: **Shane** Anthony (March 23, 1976), **Charlene** Joy (August 20, 1978), and **Cynthia** Leanne (June 12, 1980). Shirley writes the "Neerlandia Notes" for the *Barrhead Leader*

Shane. Tony, Charlene, Shirley, Cynthia, 1983.

John. Joe and Hilda's second son, was born May 17, 1953 He and his wife, Carol, live in Edmonton where John is employed by Spiess Construction of Calgary

Joe and Hilda's only daughter, **Elaine**, was born December 3, 1958. On February 12, 1977, she married Fred Rau. They live with their two daughters in Bloomsbury. Fred is a carpenter and Elaine works at Four Seasons Nursery

Robert, the youngest son, was born May 30, 1962. He farms with his father

Hilda Wierenga

JOE AND GRACE (TUININGA) WIERENGA

Joe Wierenga married Grace Tuininga on March 19, 1947, and they came to live on the SW 9-62-3-5. They did not own a car, so were driven home on their wedding night in a Model A Ford by Joe's brother Lambert

The first three years Joe and Grace traveled with horse and buggy or sleigh They had received two wedding gifts of twenty dollars each and with the money Joe bought a buggy at a farm auction in Mellowdale At the sale Joe overheard someone say, "That fellow must have school children who will take the buggy to school."

"Little did they know," said Grace, "that that was our only means of transportation."

The Wierenga home had been built by Jerry Reitsma. The Reitsma family lived in it only a short time and then sold it to John Molodowich. John had lived in it with his family for a short while and sold it to Joe for $3200.00. The price included the coal furnace. Although Joe and Grace had to borrow money to pay for it, they felt rich. One big problem facing them, however, was to move the house to their quarter. It had a full cement basement which had to be taken apart. Joe spent many hours with a sledge hammer, cracking the cement. Then the house was jacked up and put on spruce skids, and it was ready to move. Sam Howey owned a D 8 Caterpillar tractor and without any difficulty moved it for twenty-five dollars.

Then the house stood on spruce props over the hole which would be the basement. Joe had boarded it up, but the cement had not been poured. Joe and Grace set up the furnace because the weather was still quite cool. In the middle of April, however, the spring thaw started, and water ran freely into the basement. Early one morning, they heard a bang against the furnace. When they investigated they found a muskrat swimming in the basement. Now and then it would bang into the furnace.

The first summer the Wierengas had only a shallow well which had been hand-dug by Joe Holwerda. It had not been used for several years. Mice and frogs would fall in, so they used this water only for washing. First they melted clean snow for drinking and later used clean rainwater. Their neighbour Bert Michael walked over one day and told them to get water from his well. They appreciated his offer, and from then on Joe would go over with the horse and buggy to fill a cream can with water for household use. The old well was still used for washing and some other things. That fall they had a well drilled. Grace was delighted with the new well. Not only was the water from the old well unfit to drink, but the well was also a long way from the house. One day Grace was hauling water for her wash. She had just reached the house with two pailfuls when her two dogs bounded up to greet her and knocked over both pails.

Springtime, when the birds were singing and making nests, was beautiful the first years since Joe and Grace's home was surrounded by bush. They could not believe the great chorus of birds — every bird seemed to want to be heard above the others. Grace wrote, "That spring Joe was clearing some bush away and I would bring lunch. There again we were delighted to see the nests of blackbirds and ground sparrows on the ground. They had never been disturbed by humans and were not one bit worried about us intruding on their privacy. We thought there couldn't be any place more beautiful than living near Baird Lake." Joe and Grace both love nature and were living on an ideal location to enjoy the birds. Baird Lake, which was quite close by, helped to attract birds of all kinds, especially the many different kinds of waterfowl.

The Wierengas tamed crows several times. Crows tame easily since they are by nature scavengers and will eat whatever they can get. One year Joe and Grace kept a crow in the hen house over winter and were amazed to find that it could cackle by spring. It fooled them several times since its imitation was so well-done. The Wierengas were sorry to find the crow dead after it hit the power line during a storm.

Joe, 1958

The Wierengas also had a horned owl. It would sit on the porch railings and hoot. It was beautiful, but that summer several crows picked on it and killed it.

After obtaining a license from the wildlife officer, Joe and Grace started raising Canada geese. They had a suitable location for geese and at first the geese did very well. Joe and Grace thought there was nothing more majestic than the pairs of geese with their new goslings swimming in the pond. The wild geese heading north in the spring and south in the fall were attracted by the tame flock. Often fifty or more wild geese would land amongst the tame flock, and the noise as they landed about 4:00 a.m. on a spring morning would wake the whole family. For some years all went well. But one year the skunks destroyed several nests and the magpies got at the eggs. The foxes or coyotes also took their share. Then one day a hunter from Ontario, not knowing the geese were tame, shot nine of them, leaving a grand total of one. Joe and Grace were upset, and so was the hunter when he found out what he had done. Joe told him that he might as well take the birds with him but that he had to pay for them. When the man pulled out his wallet Joe saw that if he paid for the geese he would have no money left for the rest of his holiday. Joe said that he had better keep the money and send a cheque after he got home. For a long time Joe and Grace thought they would never get the money, but eventually a cheque arrived in the mail. Nevertheless, after this loss of the geese Joe and Grace did not feel like starting again.

Since about 1975 the Wierengas have had whistling swans land on their place and stay for about a week at a time. The swans are beautiful to see and nice to listen to. A sandhill crane which the Wierengas had for several months was later taken to the Story Land Valley Zoo because they did not have a license to keep that kind of bird. Joe and Grace have also raised peacocks, guinea hens, and silkies (an exotic breed of chicken) but found that to have real success one must have proper room and fences for them. The peacocks would fly over the fence early in the morning and get into Grace's prized vegetable garden so they did not last very long on the Wierenga farm.

Joe and Grace also took a great interest in animals, but animals were not that easy to get. They had two baby coyotes for a few weeks, but the farm dog killed them. They also had two baby foxes but they did not do very well and were brought away. They have had a great variety of dogs, both purebred and mongrels. One was a St. Bernard, Barry, who served as a sleigh or cart dog. Joe made a harness for the dog and built a cart and a sleigh. The family enjoyed this dog and the boys, on occasion, went to the store with the dog and sleigh to get groceries. One time they stayed away for hours and Joe and Grace feared that perhaps other dogs had started a fight with theirs. But no, eventually the crew came home. The delay had been caused by many little boys in the hamlet who wanted rides on the sleigh. That dog died on the operating table at the veterinary clinic. Many tears were shed by the boys for faithful Barry.

God blessed Joe and Grace with six healthy children, and they are doubly blessed that they all married Christian partners. Their first child, **Shirley** Darlene, was born January 7, 1948. She married Case Van Beek.

Bruce, Joe, Brad, c. 1964

The second child, **Henry** Joseph, was born April 28, 1950. After he quit school he stayed home to work on the farm. On June 30, 1973, he married Janice Toebes, who was a certified nurse's aide working in The University Hospital in Edmonton. They have two boys and one girl: **Eldon** Troy, born October 31, 1974, **Kent** Douglas, born January 10, 1977, and **Marlys** Joy, born October 14, 1980. They farm on the NE 33-61-3-5.

Clayton Bert, Joe and Grace's third child, was born May 14, 1953. Having a desire to further his education after high school he took two semesters at Dordt College. While at Dordt he met **Joy** (Johanna) Engelina **Siebring** (October 30, 1951) whom he married July 27, 1979. Joy, formerly of Mill Bay, B.C., taught school in St. Catharines, Ontario, moved to Edmonton to teach in a Christian school there, and then came to Neerlandia where she taught for two years. Joy and Clayton have three children. **Amanda** Gail, born May 6, 1980; **Julian** Clifford, born December 5, 1981, and **Caleb** Jay, born January 20, 1984. They live in Vega on the SE 7-63-3-5

Julian, Joy, Clayton holding Caleb, Amanda, 1984.

The fourth Wierenga child, **Heather** Irene, was born November 23, 1955. She married Joe Baker. The family was completed with the birth of a pair of healthy twin boys, **Bruce** Norman and **Bradley** Douglas, born December 18, 1959. The birth of twins was a complete surprise and meant the Wierengas had to buy one more of everything.

Bruce married **Diane** Elizabeth **Dubbeldam** (February 19, 1957), formerly of Edmonton, on June 20, 1980. As a teenager Diane learned to weld, and worked in her dad's welding shop after school and during the summer holidays until she became a nurse. Bruce and Diane met at Rehoboth camp where they helped care for the mentally handicapped. Diane, a registered nurse, worked in The University and Royal Alexandra hospitals before she came to Neerlandia. She now works in Barrhead General Hospital. Bruce and Diane's son, **Benjamin** Lee, was born October 8, 1982. Bruce and Diane live in the Shoal Creek area on the SE 20-61-2-5.

Brad farms and has also spent several winters in the bush working for Jack Bozak (B & W Sawmill). He and his family presently live on the NW 3-62-3-5. Brad married Fern Nanninga on October 27, 1979. They have one son, **Daniel** Allen, born March 23, 1984. Fern worked in Neerlandia Co-op for several years before her marriage. Fern is as interested in hunting and trapping as Brad is. She helps with all aspects including setting traps and skinning the animals. Such is her dedication to the sport that she had allowed Brad to rest the gun on her shoulder to steady it for a good shot.

Bruce holding Benjamin, 1983. Inset: Diane, 1984.

Fern, Brad, 1983.

Daniel, 1984

The Wierenga children have many happy memories of their life on the SW of 9. Their father often worked from dawn to dusk, but on Saturday evenings he quit working early and spent time with his family. The children remember this as a cosy time. There was something especially nice about having Dad in the house. Joe enjoyed the land and the crops. Many evenings were spent walking through

the fields with the boys. He often returned from the field with his flat, tweed cap full of duck or Hungarian partridge eggs to be placed under a bantam or some other broody hen

Joe, a quiet, even-tempered man, is known and respected for his level-headed, thoughtful approach to problems He is a man of few words — but they are well-chosen

Grace worked just as hard as Joe, though her domain was the house and garden. A down-to-earth homemaker, she enjoyed her large garden and did a lot of canning and preserving. She loves baking bread, rendering lard, and making soap. She also took an active part in the farmwork, doing chores in the busy season. More outgoing than Joe, she sees the humour in almost every situation. She has a hearty laugh and relates humourous incidents with great gusto

Through the years, dozens, maybe hundreds of people, have dropped in to have a cup of coffee, some of Grace's good homebaking, and an hour or two of conversation — serious as well as humourous. Both Joe and Grace are concerned members of the church and community in which they live.

Standing: Clayton, Shirley, Heather, Henry. Seated: Joe, Brad, Grace, Bruce.

Joe and Grace have many wonderful memories of raising their family There was never a dull moment. Their home was a beehive of activity. A set of twins, with a million ideas, made for many clotheslines full of clothes, much careful watching, and many a good laugh. Travelling was never an important thing in the Wierengas' lives They enjoyed what they were doing and were thankful to be healthy. They have found Neerlandia a great place to live and raise a family and hope to spend their remaining years here

Grace Wierenga

LAMBERT AND SOPHIE (ANEMA) WIERENGA

Lambert H. Wierenga married Sophie Anema on June 24, 1949, in a double wedding with Sophie's sister Frances and Jake Bol. The wedding took place upstairs in the Neerlandia Co-op, which was being used to hold services since the Christian Reformed Church burned down. Lambert and Sophie started farming with three milk cows, two horses, and a few pigs, one of which some pranksters tried unsuccessfully to catch and put in their bed on their wedding night.

Lambert, Sophie, 1949.

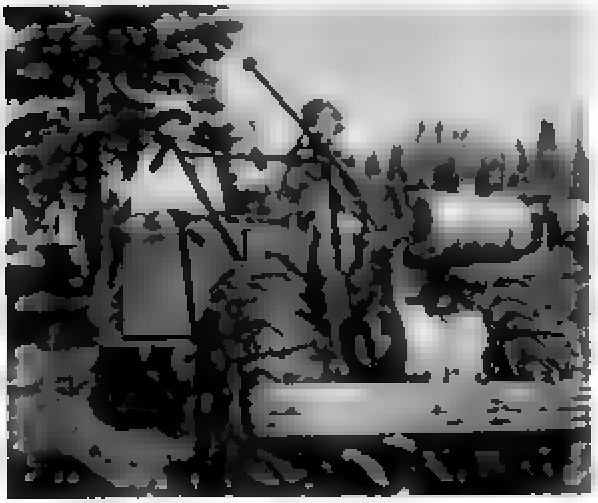
Lambert and Sophie began their married life on the SW 32-61-3-5, which Lambert had bought in 1949 from his dad The farm had been cleared except for about twenty acres which Lambert cleared with his self-made brush piler in front of the tractor. At the same time he purchased the NW 29-61-3-5, which was comprised mostly of heavy bush, and about two years later Sophie applied for a homestead (NE

30-61 3-5). Hardships arose in the early years of their marriage with hail, frost, and wetness causing three crop failures within four years.

Snowfall in those days was so heavy that it was not unusual to be drifted in several times during the winter. This led Lambert and two of his neighbours to build a wooden snowplow. One winter in the early 50s, Lambert got caught in such a terrible snowstorm that he was forced to leave the car stranded on the road, buried to the roof in snow. Then, being unable to clear the road with his wooden snowplow, he crossed the fields to the Corner, where he met Albert Tiemstra with his steel V snowplow. Together with the two tractors and Albert's plow, they opened up the highways, byways, and driveways of Neerlandia.

Lambert has always been inventive. At the age of sixteen he designed and built a windcharger which used a 12-volt generator. It supplied power for lights in the house and was used for charging batteries as well. He also made electric fencers from coils taken from old Model T Ford cars and Fordson tractors.

After he was married, Lambert spent many winter evenings in his garage, fixing and making things from scratch. Sometime after the snowstorm episode, he constructed his own steel V snowplow. Other projects he made through the years include a scooter, a front-end loader, a garden tractor and trailer, and a tractor cab. When it was too cold to work in the garage, whatever needed fixing was hauled into the house. Fortunately, the kitchen was large enough to contain the motors, motorbikes, snowmobile caboose, or whatever else managed to find its way in.


Harvey, Darlene on homemade tractor and trailer, 1956.

Lambert and Sophie's first child, **Darlene** Faye, arrived April 23, 1950. After graduating from high school in 1968, she moved to Edmonton. She is presently head teller at The Bank of Commerce. On February 23, 1979, she married Derk Op den Dries. He works as a machinist, and they live in Sherwood Park.

The Wierenga's first son, **Harvey** George, was born January 9, 1953. Already at a very early age he enjoyed hunting ground squirrels and exploring nature. He still loves the outdoors to the extent that all of his hobbies revolve around nature, including outdoor photography, bush exploration, hunting, and trapping. Harvey chose to remain on the farm with his father, and together they raise hogs, beef cattle, and grain. On June 29, 1979, he married **Marge Neumann**. Marge, born December 14, 1960, grew up in Vega. They have been blessed with two children, **Trenton** Nathan (July 4, 1980) and **Teneale** Lynn (February 10, 1982).

Marge, Trenton, Teneale, Harvey, 1983.

Lambert and Sophie's third child, **Rhonda** Mae, born November 28, 1955, loved being outdoors as well. When her brothers went on their little hunting expeditions, she was right there. After graduating from high school, she completed a hairdressing course at NAIT in 1982. She enjoys all sports, especially softball and broomball, and has been selected as Most Valuable Player and All-Star at a national level.

Next in the family came **Philip** John, born April 22, 1960. He was an adventurous little

fellow, always on the go. On September 4, 1982, he married Karen Los of Edmonton. Phil is a mechanic in Spruce Grove, and Karen is a hairdresser in Edmonton.

Last, but not least, **Pearl** Anne was born August 20, 1964. Also fascinated with nature, she spent many hours exploring the bush for plants, the pond for water life, and the manure pile for maggots to feet the pet crow (the latter interest soon faded). She was exceedingly fond of all the farm animals, especially the cats, bantams, and peacocks that she raised. Pearl received the Rutherford Scholarship and is presently using it to further her education in the nursing program at the U of A.

Pearl, Phil, Rhonda, 1966

All the Wierenga children were fond of animals. In the spring of 1969 they made plans to raise a pair of two-week-old sparrow hawks. The hawks became so tame that they would ride on the children's heads or shoulders, and fly to meet them as they came off the school bus. The little falcons were named Bonnie and Clyde and would come to a human perch when called. They had a great appetite for diced raw meat (which became a chore to obtain and prepare). As the weather grew colder that fall, they started to roost in the barn loft at night. Since it was quite damp there, they died from a respiratory condition.

Then in 1971 the Wierengas decided to try raising a pet crow. It thrived well on bread soaked in milk as the main course, and an occasional side order of worms or maggots. The crow was named Inky and became a real pet. He would meet the family at the door every morning and come when called by name. Phil even taught it to ride on the handlebars of his bike, though it tottered back and forth to keep its balance. It would raid the strawberry patch while the family weeded the garden and often scared them by suddenly and silently landing on their backs. One morning Inky did not come when called and, after much searching, they found him dead under the power pole. He had met his untimely death by electrocution when he perched on the transformer.

Sophie always loved working outdoors, so she got to help with all the fun things like hauling grain, baling, doing chores, and milking the family cow. Her pride and joy was always her garden, its surplus frequently shared with friends and neighbours. A good supply of baked goods had to be kept on hand at all times to keep Lambert happy, even though she had less interest in housework than outdoor work. Modern conveniences, however, made the housework slightly more enjoyable. Hot and cold water at the turn of a tap was much appreciated after having had to carry water by pail from the well. Also, the electric clothes dryer sure was an improvement over hanging the clothes outside in the winter, hauling them in stiff as boards, and finally drying them on lines and racks in the house anyway.

Lambert has always had a great interest in the outdoors. His experience ranges from hunting squirrels during class time to trekking many a mile into the bush to get big game (and almost as many a mile back out without getting his game). Most of his children have followed in his footsteps by becoming fishermen and "Great White Hunters." Lambert served on the Neerlandia Sports committee and on the Christian Reformed Church building committee for a number of years. He was forced to overcome his shyness when he was often required to make grand appearances at the front of the church to adjust the microphone system. Lambert suffered three major heart attacks from 1981 to 1983, but being a strong man and with God's grace, he continues to carry out his daily activities.

Sophie Wierenga

You know you're a Neerlandian when

*you stay *by* a friend's house

*you pass peppermints in church

*you can tell the relationship between any of the Nanningas, Tuiningas, or Wierengas.

*you can answer all the questions of the Bible category in quiz games — but none of the entertainment ones.

*you're not surprised when Rev. Vriend forgets to have the offering taken during a church service

*you say *pantses* instead pants.

*you *booch* animals instead of butchering them

*you are the same big as, the same old as, the same heavy as someone else instead of the same size, the same age, and the same height

*you come at 8:15 p.m. to a meeting that starts at 8:00 p.m.

*you go *acrosst* the road to the neighbours

*you say, "Wil *youse* guys come in for coffee?"

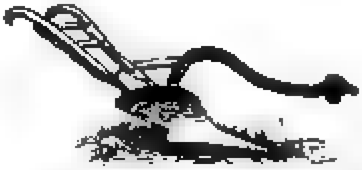
*you hit the ditch on the way to the store and the news gets there before you do

*you dial the wrong number, but talk for fifteen minutes anyway.

*you say, "That sow, he had ten little pigs."

*in spite of all its faults, you still think Neerlandia is the best place in the world

Neerlandians booched in pioneer days. They still booch today. Left: Jack Campbell, Peter Kampner Sr. with his grandson Jack Campbell. Right: Lambert A. Wierenga, Gerben Tiemstra (squatting).



Friends and Neighbours

Renk de Jager pumping water.

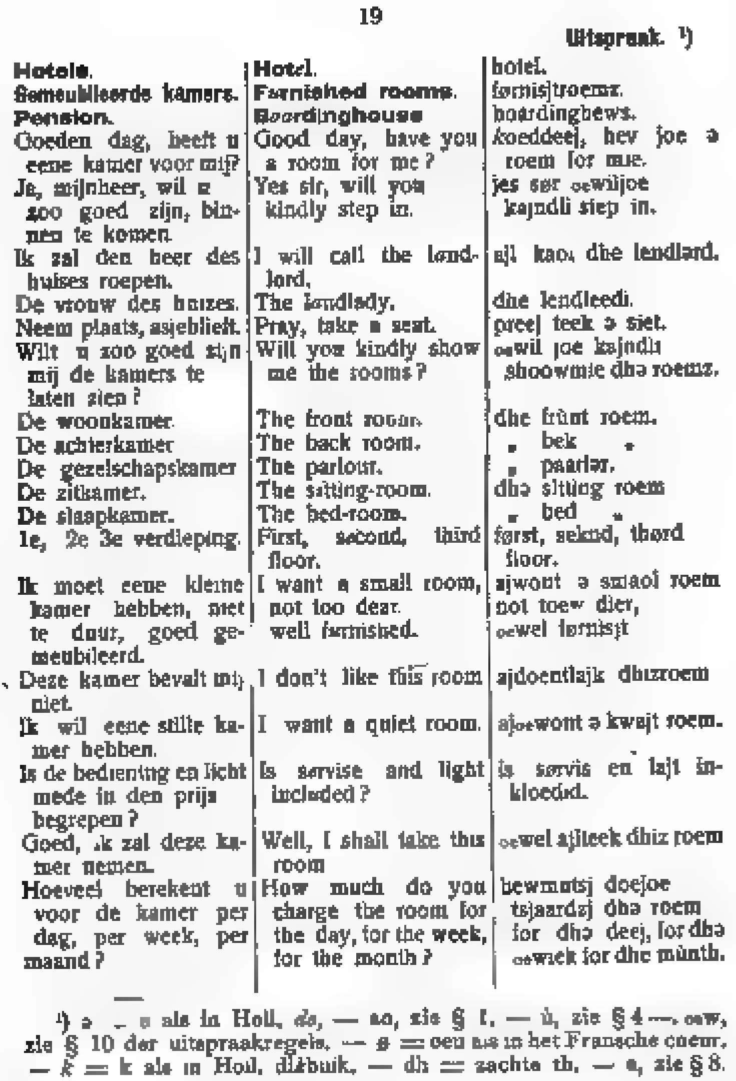
Johanna Oldegbers (centre, poses with her daughter Petertje Schoonekamp, her granddaughter Jennie Nanninga, and her great-grandson Manny Nanninga, 1936. (Jenny sewed the outfit she is wearing).

The Hendricks. They lived on the SE 21-62-3-5.

Back, Sadie Tuininga. Centre. Annie. Bertha. Carrie Tuininga. Seated Tena Terpsma. Front. Grace Tuininga, Harry Schelly, c. 1924

Albert Mast, son of Albert and Everdina, with one of the family dogs. Sport, 1940s.

Coming to a New Land



19

		Uitspraak. 1)
Hotels.	**Hotel.**	hotel.
Gemeubileerde kamers.	**Furnished rooms.**	førnisjtroemz.
Pension.	**Boardinghouse**	boardinghaws.
Goeden dag, heeft u eene kamer voor mij?	Good day, have you a room for me?	*k*oeddeej, hev joe ə roem for mie.
Ja, mijnheer, wil u zoo goed zijn, binnen te komen.	Yes sir, will you kindly step in.	jes sør oewiljoe kajndli step in.
Ik zal den heer des huizes roepen.	I will call the landlord.	ajl kaol dhe lendlard.
De vrouw des huizes.	The landlady.	dhe lendleedi.
Neem plaats, asjeblieft.	Pray, take a seat.	preej teek ə siet.
Wilt u zoo goed zijn mij de kamers te laten zien?	Will you kindly show me the rooms?	oewil joe kajndli shoowmie dhə roemz.
De woonkamer.	The front room.	dhe frünt roem.
De achterkamer	The back room.	" bek "
De gezelschapskamer	The parlour.	" paarlər.
De zitkamer.	The sitting-room.	dhə sitting roem
De slaapkamer.	The bed-room.	" bed "
1e, 2e 3e verdieping.	First, second, third floor.	først, sekønd, thørd floor.
Ik moet eene kleine kamer hebben, niet te duur, goed gemeubileerd.	I want a small room, not too dear, well furnished.	ajwont ə smaol roem not toew dier, oewel førnisjt
Deze kamer bevalt mij niet.	I don't like this room	ajdoentlajk dhizroem
Ik wil eene stille kamer hebben.	I want a quiet room.	ajoewont ə kwajt roem.
Is de bediening en licht mede in den prijs begrepen?	Is servise and light included?	is sørvis en lajt inkloedid.
Goed, ik zal deze kamer nemen.	Well, I shall take this room	oewel ajteek dhiz roem
Hoeveel berekent u voor de kamer per dag, per week, per maand?	How much do you charge the room for the day, for the week, for the month?	hawmatsj doejoe tsjaardzj dhə roem for dhə deej, for dhə oewiek for dhe münth.

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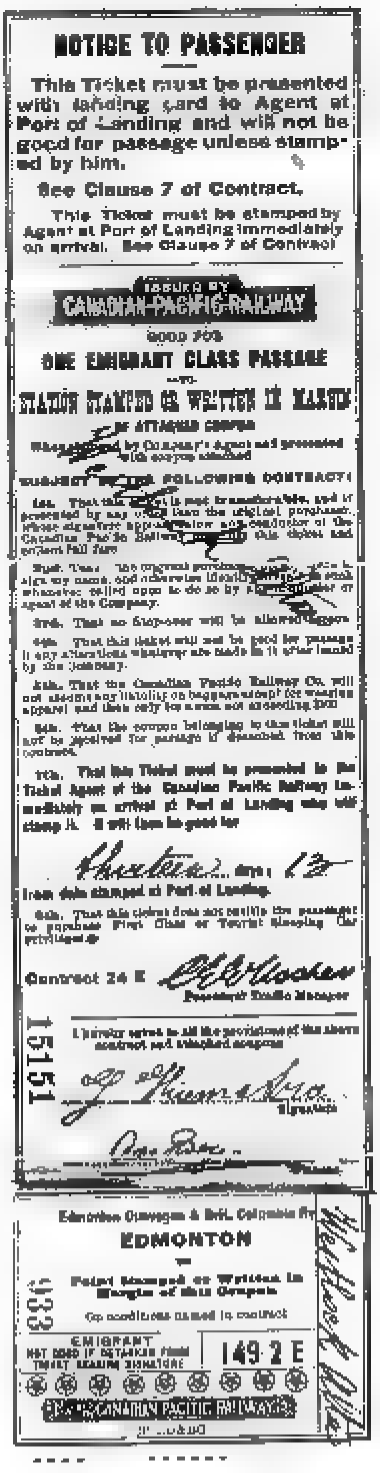
1) ə = e als in Holl. *de*, — ao, zie § 1. — ü, zie § 4 — oew, zie § 10 der uitspraakregels. — ø = oeu als in het Fransche coeur. — *k* = k als in Holl. dikbuik. — dh = zachte th. — e, zie § 8.

Many documents were needed for immigration. On far right a picture of Della Anema taken in South Dakota about 1909.



NOTICE TO PASSENGER

This Ticket must be presented with landing card to Agent at Port of Landing and will not be good for passage unless stamped by him.

See Clause 7 of Contract.

This Ticket must be stamped by Agent at Port of Landing immediately on arrival. See Clause 7 of Contract

ISSUED BY
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
GOOD FOR
ONE EMIGRANT CLASS PASSAGE
—TO—
STATION STAMPED OR WRITTEN IN MARGIN
OF ATTACHED COUPON

7th. That this Ticket must be presented to the Ticket Agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway immediately on arrival at Port of Landing who will stamp it. It will then be good for Thirteen days, 13 from date stamped at Port of Landing.

Contract 24 E

Passenger Traffic Manager

I hereby agree to all the provisions of the above contract and attached coupons

15151

Signature

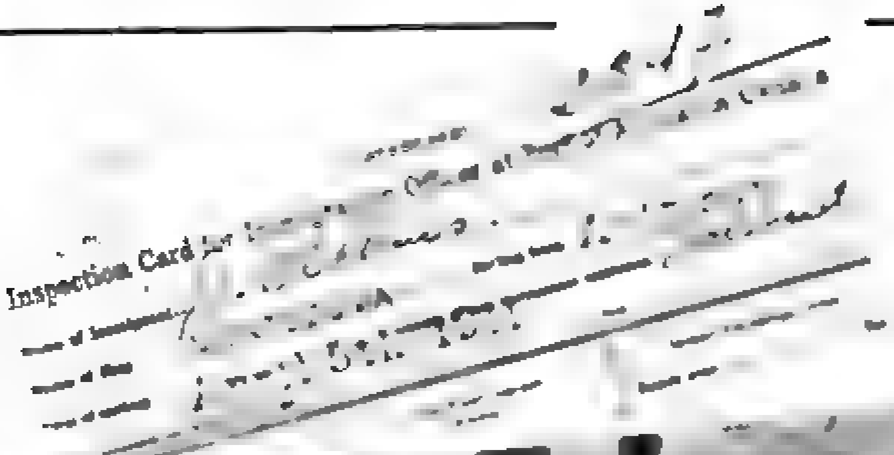
Edmonton Dunvegan & Brit. Columbia Ry
EDMONTON
TO
Point Stamped or Written in Margin of this Coupon
On conditions named in contract

933

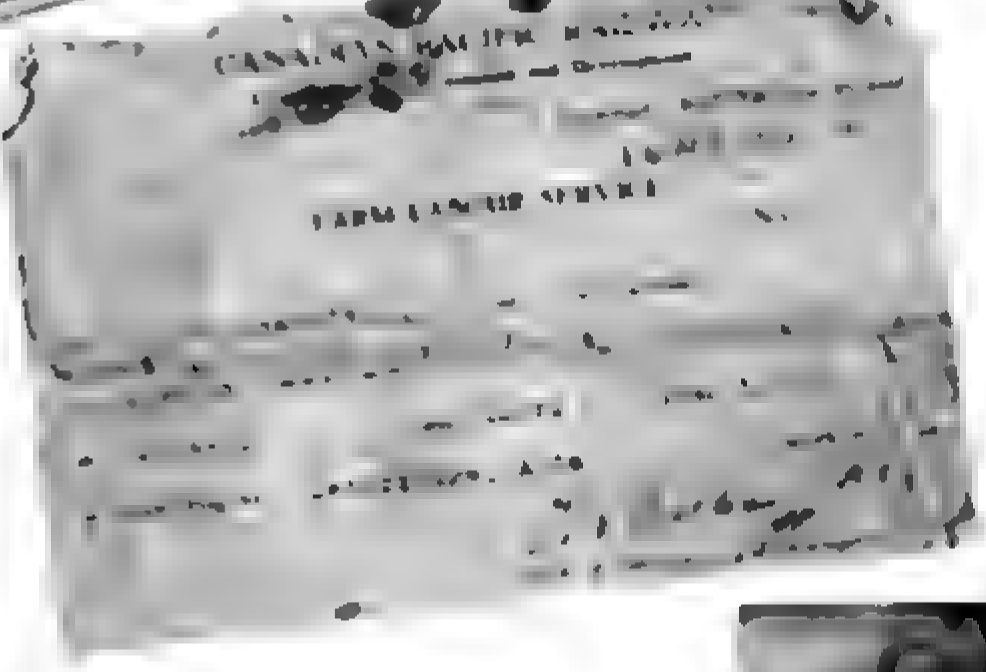
EMIGRANT
NOT GOOD IF DETACHED FROM TICKET BEARING SIGNATURE

149 2 E

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY



Inspection Card



CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

FARM LABOUR SERVICE

IMMIGRATION IDENTIFICATION CARD

Photos were taken outside because cameras had no flash. Back Lucas, Lula, Pauline. Front Jacob, Ralph, Margaret Sturwold, c. 1922

Anna Michael proudly holds her only child, Bert 1917

Nelly van Dalen babysitting Annie Emmerzael at the picnic, c. 1917 How styles have changed!

All dressed up to have their picture taken. The Groothuis family Wouter, Johanna holding Sena, Dick, 1921.

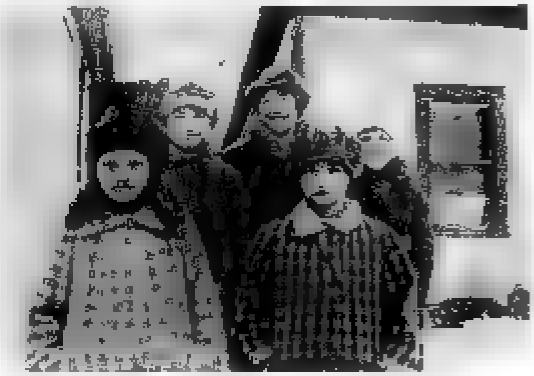
Family Snapshots

Both boys and girls wore dresses when they were babies. Here Rulie Sturwold holds one of her children, early 1920s.

Three stalwart Kippers sons: John, Henry, Gerrit.

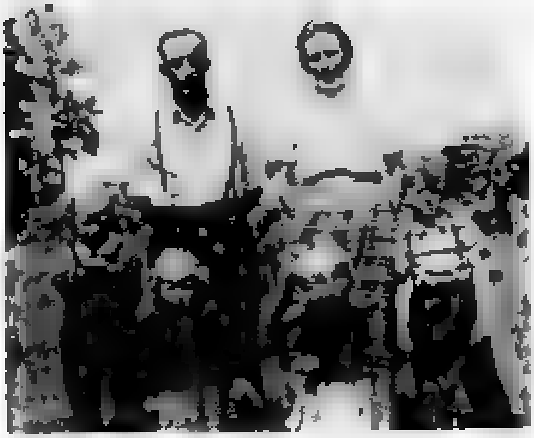
In 1926 Annie, Rulie, and Jenny Schoonekamp posed with their only brother, Albert.

Soon after they arrived in Neerlandia, Bill Bouwman took this picture of his wife, Anna, and their three children Henry, Grace, and Ben. What a big smile, Ben!

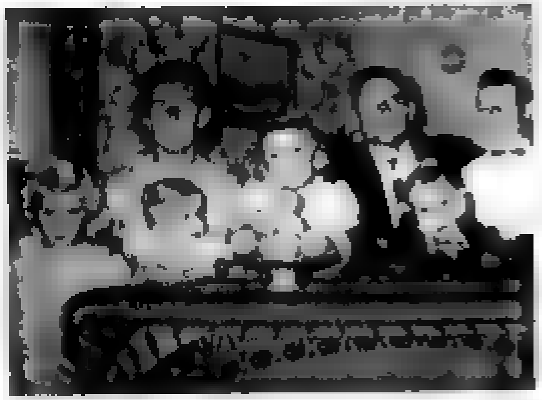


On the way to catechism: Jenny and Andrew L. Wierenga, ?, Bertha Wierenga, Dena Huinink. In Edmonton, c. 1930

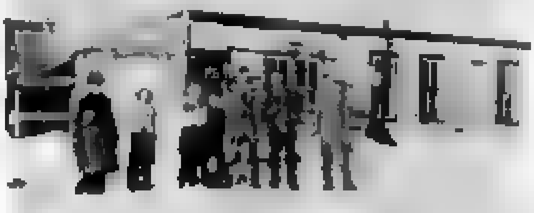
After the War was Over



Dick and Corrie Froma with their children, Martha, Emma, Rinie, and Jerry at a church picnic in 1954

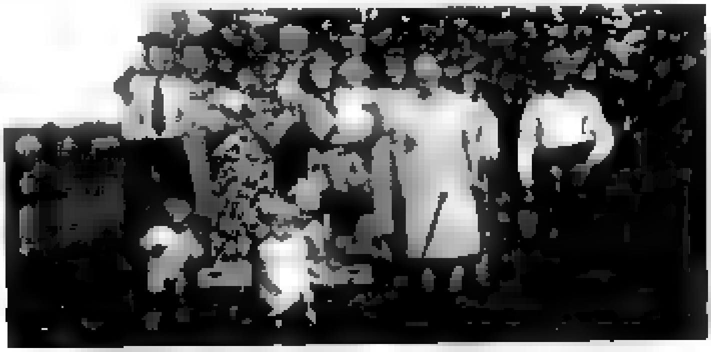


Bart and Jean Vander Wal came to Neerlandia in 1955 Bart worked in the Co-op until they moved to California in 1960



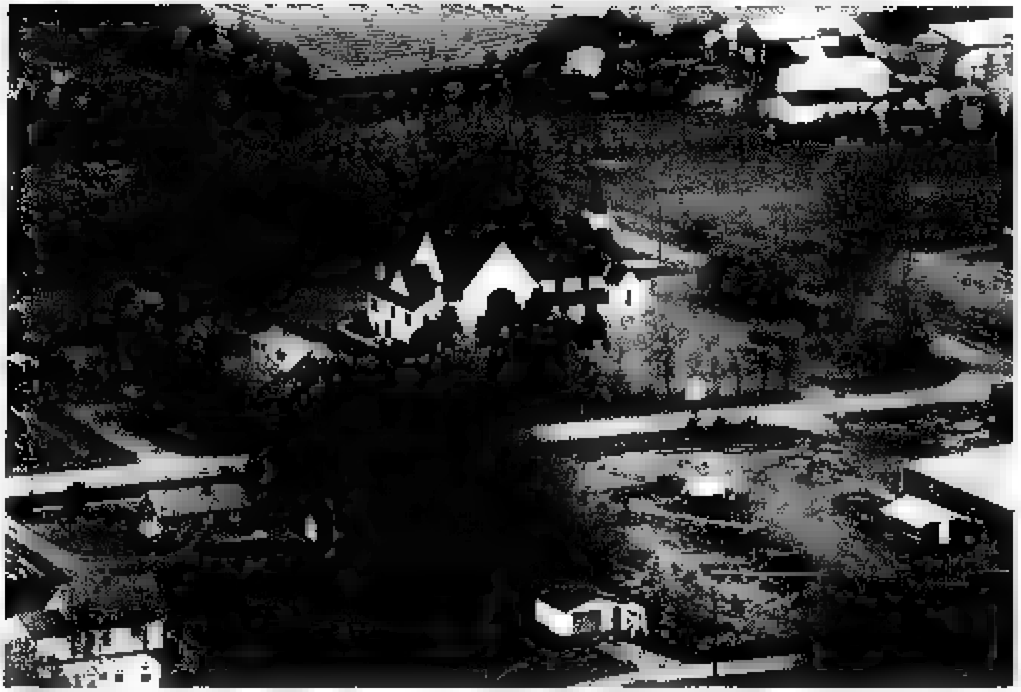
Some immigrant families lived in this house, which belonged to Catherina Holwerda.

The immigrants had to rely on horsepower to get to church. Henk Nevis and his parents ready to set out.



On Sundays the immigrants were invited over for a visit. The Vander Vaart and Boschma families of Barrhead are visiting the Albert Mast family. Back: Jikke and Tamme Boschma, John Kroeze, Dirk and Albertje Vander Vaart, Alice Mast. Annie Piers, Everdina, Bill, Joe, and Albert Mast Sr. Front: Little immigrants with wagon.

THIS IS NEERLANDIA



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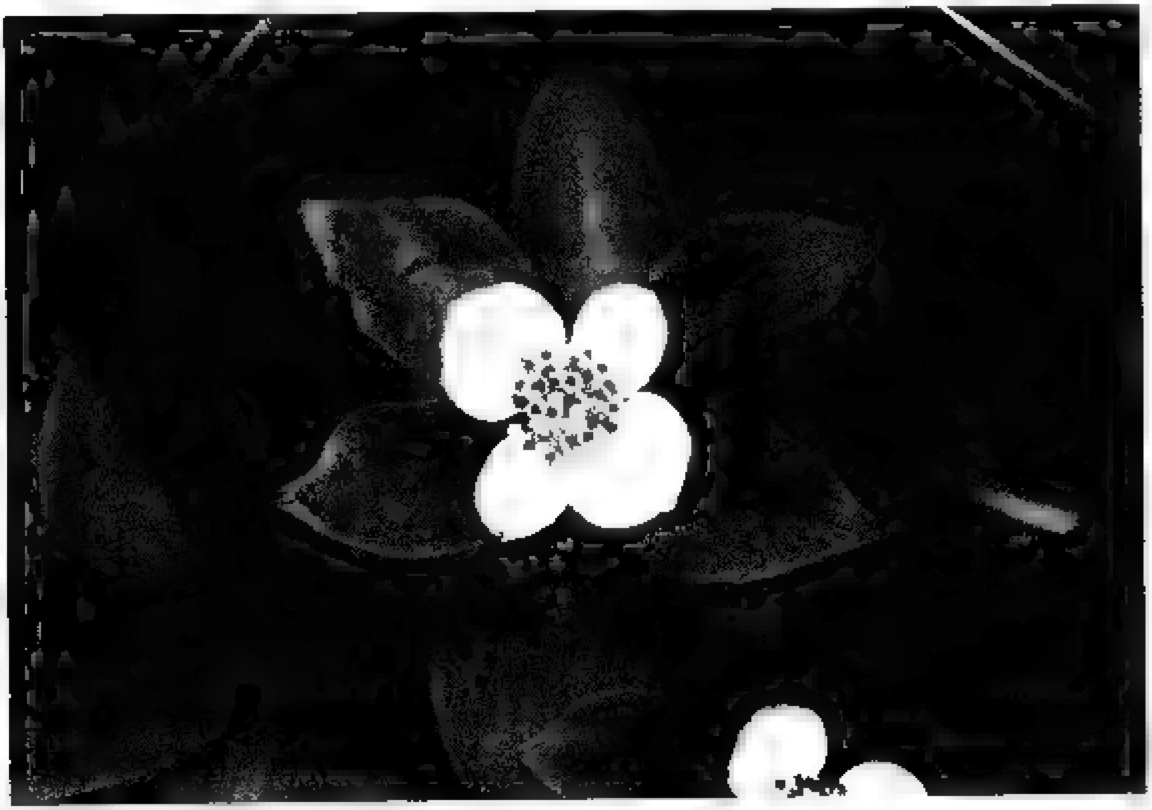

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This is Neerlandia

1. A view of the hamlet — Clarence Olthuis
2. Hare in the woods — Harvey Wierenga
3. Swallowtail butterfly
4. Bluebells (tall lungwort) — Harvey Wierenga.
5. Garden spider web with morning dew — Elsie Navis
6. Highbush cranberry in fall
7. Black poplar loaded with seed
8. Bunchberry — David Baker.
9. Robin's nest — Jim Bosma.
10. Prickly rose — Bernice Fisher.
11. Buttercups (marsh marigolds) — Harvey Wierenga.
12. Red squirrel.
13. The settlers' helper.
14. Barley ready to harvest — Diane Wierenga.
15. Combining — Shirley Wierenga
16. Ducks among the bulrushes — Bernice Fisher.
17. Poplar trees in winter — Harvey Wierenga.
18. Fall splendour — Harvey Wierenga
19. Baled hay — Alvina Dost.
20. The bow of promise — Shelley Bos
21. Muskeg — Harvey Wierenga.
22. A narrow country road — Elsie Navis.
23. A wooded pasture — Alvina Dost.
24. Golden glory — canola — Elsie Navis
25. A harvested field — Alvina Dost.
26. Early winter along the creek — Harvey Wierenga.
27. Lumber in the making — Henry Nanninga
28. Fall sky
29. Round bales stacked for winter — Elsie Navis
30. Bumper crop — Elna Siebring
31. Spraying pesticides by airplane — Henry Nanninga.
32. Oil painting by Janna Oldegbers prior to 1917 — Clarence Olthuis

Part Three

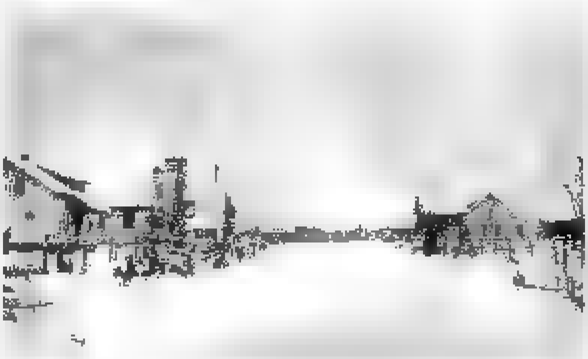
Community Growth

Daily Life

THE HAMLET

Neerlandia is a farming community but the hub of activity is the hamlet. Here, where church, school, garage, and store have long stood, each on one corner of a crossroads, much activity takes place. Most religious, educational, social, and business activities take place in the hamlet. It is in the hamlet that the people of Neerlandia meet and interact. To know the people of the district one must recognize the place of the hamlet in their lives. Its importance is illustrated by its nickname, The Centre.

Looking northeast, c. 1925



Looking west, early 1929.

The term "hamlet" is used throughout the prairie provinces to describe a small unincorporated rural community. Bill Olthuis, former county councillor, believes Neerlandia became a hamlet in the 1940s. Allan Charles, present county manager, states that Neerlandia probably became a hamlet by an order of the Minister.

Looking south, 1940s.

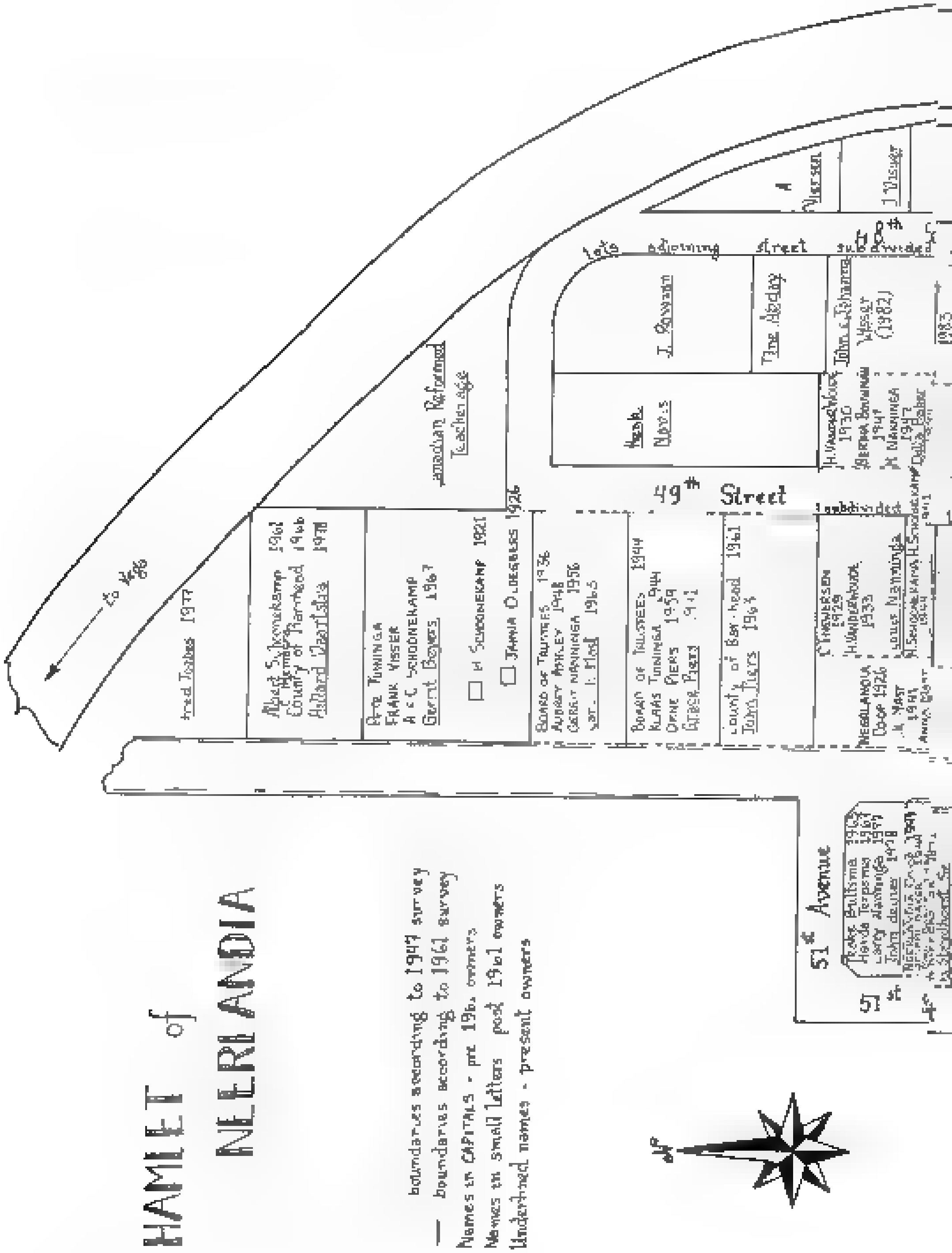
As the settlement developed, the need for public and social services arose. They were located at the central area which is now called the hamlet of Neerlandia. Next the need for a residential area grew. These areas were provided by subdividing farm land adjacent to roadways. The subdivisions were described by metes and bounds and the residents were given a Certificate of Title. However, some plots of land not served by a public access road were also entered in by private treaty and were described, for example, as one-half acre north of a specific point. This did not constitute a legal description so no title of ownership was possible. This was resolved with the assistance of the County of Barrhead and the co-operation of the title holders of the hamlet area. A replotting of the area and a legal survey were carried out in the early sixties. In the replotting, roadways and access were included. A more responsible procedure is now followed for subdividing land within the hamlet area since all plans must be approved by County and Provincial authorities.

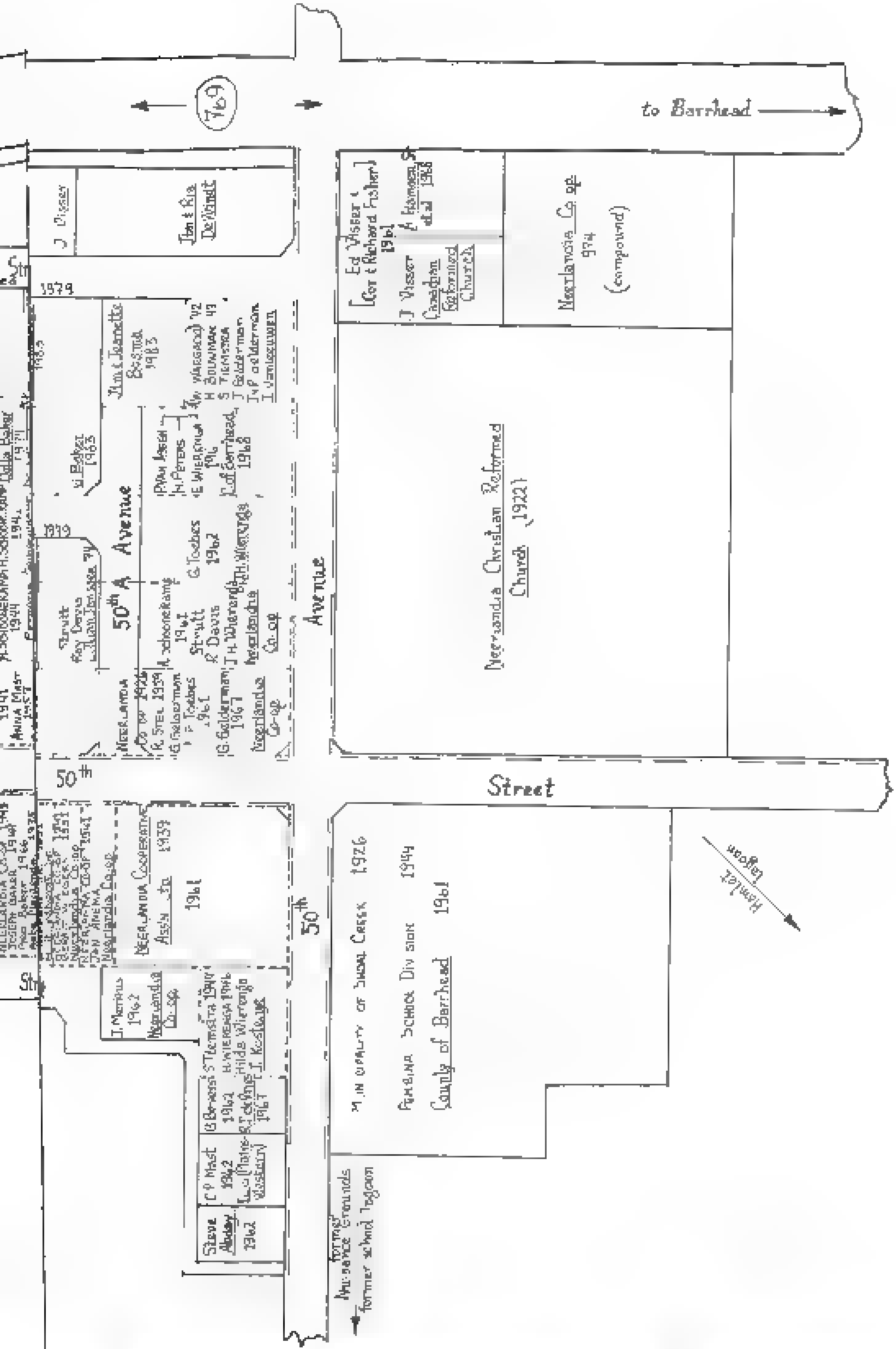
Wm. Olthuis

Looking north, 1957

Looking northeast, 1961

Neerlandia, 1950.


HAMLET of NEERLANDIA
boundaries according to 1919 survey
— boundaries according to 1961 survey
Names in CAPITALS - pre 1961 owners
Names in small letters post 1961 owners
Underlined names - present owners
to Vega
Canadian Reformed Teacherage
lots adjoining street subdivided
48th
49th Street
51st Avenue
51st
Fred Jonkes 1977
I. Bowman
Time Nedley
J. Visser
1926

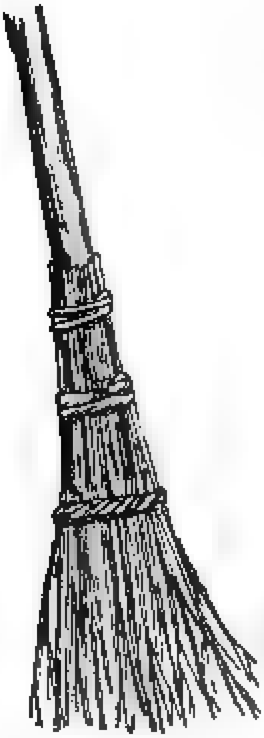

769
to Barrhead
J Visser
Jan & Ria DeVlieger
Ed Visser & Cor & Richard Fisher
1961
A Hamman Sr.
J Visser
Christian Reformed Church
Neerlandia Co-op
1974
(compound)
1979
Jim & Jeanette Bosma
1983
W Baker
1983
1979
Struitt
Kay Davis
Lillian Tuininga '74
50th A Avenue
Neerlandia Co-op 1926
K. Stel 1959
G. Feldeman
P. Toebes
1961
A Schoenekamp
1961
Struitt
R. Davis
G. Toebes
1962
G. Galderman
1967
Neerlandia Co-op
J.H. Wierenga
H. Wierenga
Neerlandia Co-op
H. Bouwman
S. Tiemstra
J. Galderman
H. P. Galderman
I. Vanleeuwen
H. Peters
E. Wierenga
Kalf Barrhead
1968
Avenue
Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church (1922)
50th
Street
Neerlandia Cooperative Ass'n Ltd 1939
1961
Anna Mast
1957
I. Meinius
1962
Neerlandia Co-op
S Tiemstra 1944
H. Wierenga 1946
Hilda Wierenga
E. I. Koster
G. Bosma
1962
1967
C P Mast
1962
Westerin
Steve Abday
1962
50th
Avenue
Municipality of Swan Creek 1926
Pembina School Division 1944
County of Barrhead 1961
Hamlet lagoon
former Amusement Grounds
former school lagoon
Str
Str

FAMILY LIFE

Most of the Neerlandia pioneers were Christian people. They believed that their lives were in God's hand and that their purpose in Life was to serve Him. They believed that God planned for people to live together in families and that, as parents, they were expected to love and nurture the children God gave to them. Indeed, one of the motivations for seeking a new land was to provide a better life for their children. They wanted to establish a Christian community to provide a better environment in which to raise their children. The children for their part were expected to love, honour, and obey their parents. All of this was to be done out of obedience to God.

Out of love for God and a desire to know and do His will the pioneers turned to God's Word. Mealtimes began with a prayer asking God's blessing on the food they were to eat and thanking Him for His care of them. At the end of each meal a portion of Scripture was read, this was followed with another prayer. The common practice was to read through the Bible beginning with the first chapter of Genesis and to continue reading one chapter each mealtime until the last chapter of Revelations was read. Then the reading would begin at the beginning of the Bible again. Children were taught to seek God's guidance in all of their lives and to go to Him in prayer. Before going to bed at night, the parents and children would kneel beside their beds to pray to God.

Parents tried to show by their lives that they loved the Lord. In the midst of the hardships of pioneering they tried to find time to spend with their children. There were close family ties. That is not to say that all was peace and harmony. The Neerlandians were sinful people in a sinful world. There were breakdowns in the communication between parent and child. Some parents got so caught up in the struggle to make a living that they lost sight of the more important goal, to serve God. And some of the children as they reached adulthood strayed from the faith causing their parents anguish. For most part though, family life was stable and satisfying because there was purpose and direction to the lives of the people.



Homemade willow broom

Letters to Mother

Neerlandia, Alberta
June 1, 1917

Dear Mother,

Now we have finally arrived at our destination. What a tedious trip we had. We stopped in Edmonton for a couple of months and got some supplies and so Henk could get a look at the place we were to go and build a log cabin. You can't believe how big Canada is. We thought we'd never get to Edmonton and then what a trouble to get a place to stay with so many little ones. I'm lonesome already for our cozy place back there.

We are right in the bush and can't see any neighbors although some do live a quarter mile away. We are glad to be by ourselves but how hard it is to find out how to do everything. We have to dig a well as we are getting water from a slough. Horrible yellow water! We have a sod roof and sure hope to improve that as soon as we possibly can, as that is far from leak proof.

What a chore to wash for the baby and all the others. I would be ashamed for you to see my wash now. I have learned to bake bread! It was barely edible at first but is getting better. It is so hard to know how to fix the stove. Either the bread is black on top or it stays pretty pale. At least we have food.

It is such a problem to know how to keep the food good. The flies have so many ways to get in. We do have a garden of sorts and I am thankful for that. We build a smudge (a fire that keeps burning but is mostly smoke) so we can keep the dreadful mosquitos away. There are so many.

It is a lovely country though and we are happy to own so much land. The men are busy every day chopping down the

trees so we will be able to grow oats for the horses and feed for the cows too

Everyone is pretty well in the same position — no cash but cheerful and we do like to visit with them and get some advice about life here

There are no doctors close by but we do have a couple of women who are handy and will help in childbirth or minor problems It makes me rather nervous to think of having a baby out here but the Lord has helped us thus far and am confident He will in the future

Can you imagine Henk milking cows and me churning butter, baking bread and weeding the garden? The men here all had to make their own log homes and then not any of them had ever done that either It is amazing how people have adjusted but it is not easy.

The children love the freedom they are running wild here No one to contend with and they find their own fun They are barefoot so far but we will have to get some warmer footwear before winter, as we are told that it gets very cold and there is lots of snow which stays all winter — from November to April Can you imagine that? We can cut hay for the animals in the sloughs so we will have some food for the cattle

Those of us who can, walk to church down a trail through the bush It is quite a long way to go We cannot take the small ones so one or two of the older children or Henk, or I stay home We have church only in the afternoon since it is so far for most people to go

We will try our best out here but do miss you all so very much and our cozy country. I can hardly believe we are here

So far we have a couple of horses and a few cows and a wagon a sleigh, and plow. It's a start Our furniture is minimal and it's not so cozy in the house but we are looking to the future

Remember us in your prayers to Him who is ever faithful and in whom we trust

Your loving daughter
Reta

Neerlandia, Alberta
January 12, 1918

Dear Mother,

It has been a long time waiting on your letter but it finally came It takes a while to get out here — even if the letter is in Canada it takes a long time to get to Neerlandia How glad we were to hear from you all again!

We are all well although Ben has such a swollen throat with quinzy we thought he would choke but thank God it broke and he is on the mend again

It seems all my time is spent washing and drying clothes in this cold country. When we hang the clothes out they freeze solid but don't dry. we have clothes hanging all through the house all week

We got a small grinder and some wheat so the children grind it, and I make brown bread from it

It is a long ride to the store and when it's so cold one hardly dares venture out Even in the house the frost is on the blankets in the morning

Oh I should mention that before I can heat water to wash I have to melt a lot of snow for wash water Our well was not very deep and is quite low and the cattle need that now so we use snow for all our needs We have a large barrel near the door and keep filling it with snow and it slowly melts That doesn't make the house warmer either (the snow coming in)

Henk is cutting and sawing wood for the stoves every day. My, you can't imagine how cold it gets here!

When the weather is a bit warmer the children play in the snow. They don't have school out here during the winter because it is too cold to walk so far and gets dark early too

On Sundays we put hay in the sleigh and warm up some big stones and put them in the sleigh to keep our feet warm During the service many people put the stones on the long heater so they will be warm on the way home You will very likely laugh at our way of life, and sometimes we do too, but the reality is there and we strive to make the best of it

We are all looking to the future and will try to work hard to make a living here People are friendly and families often visit each other a whole day. The children think that is such fun and it is also good for us to exchange ideas and share our troubles

We hope you write soon

Your loving daughter
Reta

Neerlandia, Alberta
July 31 1919

Dear Mother,

How time flies! Now we are well into the summer We have built a better house and barn and also cleared some land for oats and wheat

We have a garden and so have fresh vegetables which helps so much to make the meals Also the cow freshened so we have milk and butter again

The men are very busy cutting hay with the scythe We hope to get a few more cows and two more horses to till the land

We are having another child Don't worry about me though as the mid wife is a very capable person People here speak highly of her It will be a few months yet and hope it is before the cold sets in

The doctor lives about 35 miles from here and is called for only in an emergency. There is only one phone in this area, so most people have a long way to go to call the doctor

It is amazing though that we who live here, have been spared many ailments that go around normally With the bad flu that was here in the late winter many were in bed for a few days but all were spared Isn't that amazing!

The summers are so beautiful here The moose are seen every once in awhile Soon we will try to shoot one and have meat for the winter We can hear so many birds the ducks and the geese at a distance and not to forget the frogs singing in the ponds or sloughs We still have lots of mosquitoes but are getting a bit immune to them In the summer as we walk to church we take branches from the trees to ward them off.

Money is so scarce here It is hard to find enough to buy stamps and put a nickel in the collection The barest necessities are brought in so if we're out of paper, ink, or pencils you just can't get them unless someone comes from Edmonton and knows you need it

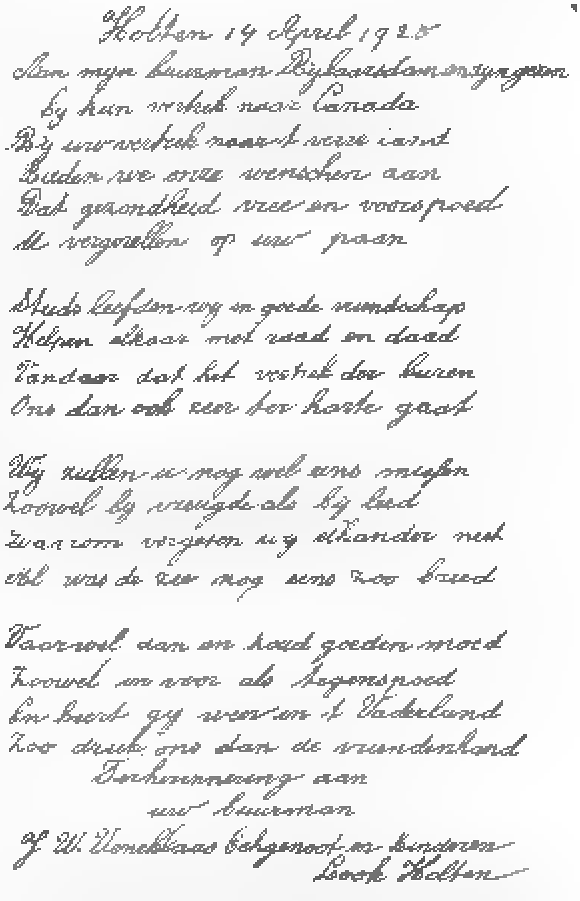
One highlight is the visit of the Rawleigh man Of course he has many goodies for baking and illness The children are very excited when he comes as we don't have many coming from the outside

We are fortunate to have sold a few muskrat and weasel furs so we can buy liniment, one bottle for rubbing on sore muscles, and one bottle to take internally when you have a stomach ache, a large box of salve which seems to be good for all ailments and a few small items Usually the kind man gives the children each a stick of gum and you can imagine how happy they are

It will be hard for you to realize that our cattle are not in pastures fenced in They can roam for several miles to find fodder Last week Ben came home at 10 00 a m with the cows to milk He left at 6 00 a m already. Out here each settler has bells on their cows Each farmer knows the sound of their bell, so can find them But when it's raining like it was this morning the cows stand still in some bushes and it is hard to find them

As you can see it is not the regular life we had in Holland We do miss you terribly and the coziness of the neighbors and friends But we are thankful we are all well and hope someday to see you again Please write soon we long for your letter and also the periodicals you send us

With love
Reta



Holten 14 April 1925
Aan mijn buurman Rijlaarsdam en zijn gezin
bij hun vertrek naar Canada
Bij uw vertrek naar 't verre land
Bieden we onze wenschen aan
Dat gezondheid, vree en voorspoed
U vergezellen op uw paan

Steeds leefden wij in goede vriendschap
Helpen elkaar met raad en daad
Vandaar dat het vertrek der buren
Ons dan ook zeer ter harte gaat

Wij zullen u nog wel eens missen
Zoowel bij vreugde als bij leed
Waarom vergeten wij elkander niet
Al was de zee nog eens zoo breed

Vaarwel dan en houd goeden moed
Zoowel in voor als tegenspoed
En keert gij weer in 't Vaderland
Zoo druk ons dan de vriendenhand
Herinnering aan
uw buurman
J. W. Uenklaas Echtgenoot en kinderen
Loock Holten

Friends were left behind when people emigrated from the Netherlands. A friend of the Rylaarsdams wrote in Bastiaantje's autograph album before they left.

ARIE'S CABIN

Arie's log cabin was 14 by 20 by 8-feet high made of logs. The roof was made of rails covered with a layer of wild hay. Over that was a layer of tar paper and over that dirt or sods. This was not always waterproof, but it was warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Arie had a stove and an airtight heater in the middle of the room, the stovepipe had an oil tin around it where it went through the roof. The cabin had only one room. The beds were at one end — bunks made of four boards and the spring was made of boards too! We had straw for a mattress and a couple of horse blankets for covers, but after a day's work in the bush at 50-below zero you did not need a featherbed in which to sleep.

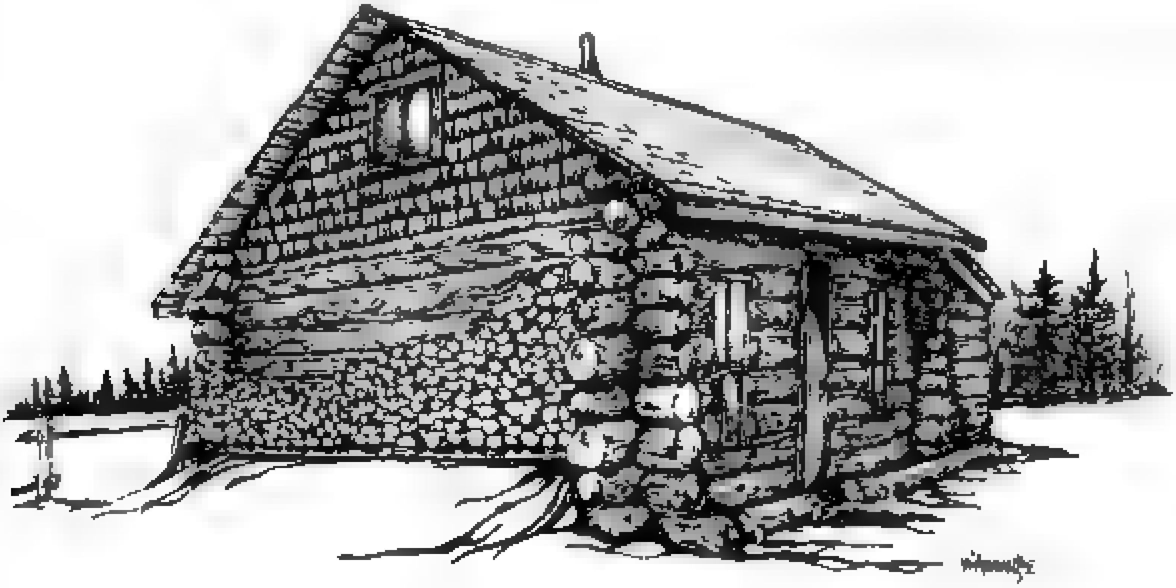
Ben Lievers

FLOORS

"We had just a lumber floor, with dirt right under the bed. But the Anemas had a painted floor and Messelinks also had a nice floor — it had been scrubbed white."

Gladys (Kippers) Strydhorst

Neighbours helped each other build houses. Klaas Kridde helping Henry Michael



FURNISHINGS

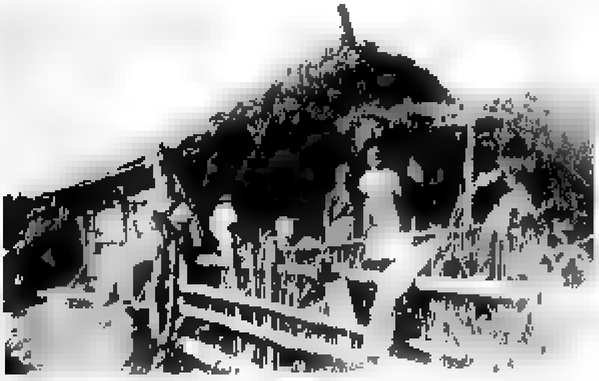
Ben Lievers made much of the early furniture used by the settlers. Our beds were iron with wire springs, the mattresses made of heavy ticking stuffed with straw.

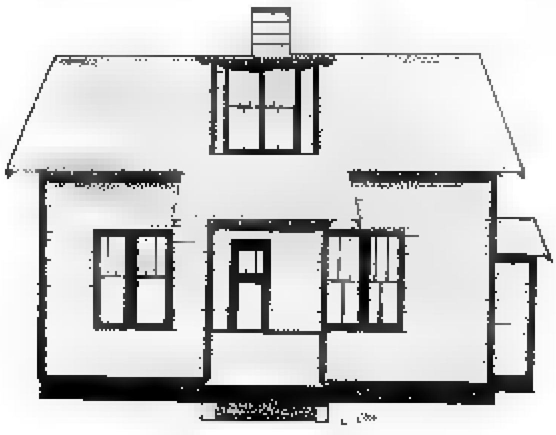
Our first sofa was a Winnipeg couch. This couch had a spring bottom with a double mattress on top, with a flounce hanging over the side. When it was pulled out it provided sleeping space for two, the double mattress becoming a single mattress.

Everything we purchased, with the exception of groceries, was obtained from the Eaton's or Simpson's catalogue.

My children have asked where we got enough money to buy food and clothing until such time as we were able to sell grain, eggs, and cream. I don't really know, but we always had enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a roof over our heads.

Susie Vanee





Anne Elgersma house.

BLESSING IN DISGUISE

The dugout cabin my dad made was really a blessing in disguise — we had no bedbugs. In his ignorance he had built the cabin of poplar logs so heavy we could lift them only four high. But bedbugs don't live in poplars — only in spruce. They're still around, you know. If you go to the bush and make a fire of spruce, you can smell them.

Gerri Bozak

Kippers' first house.

HAULING FIREWOOD

With empty sleighs the men would leave in the morning. A couple of axes and a crosscut saw were hooked to the back bunk. The driver would stand and balance himself on the front bunk and with the jingle of bells and the snort of horses they would be off on a trot. By the time the men arrived in the bush they were cold but when they began working they soon warmed up. All afternoon the men worked, getting the sleighs loaded with logs. By late afternoon they were ready to go.

The return trip took much longer. The horses would strain to get the load out of the bush and onto better trails. Once this was attained the progress was steady with the occasional stop for a rest. Those at home would be waiting with anticipation for their return. On cold winter evenings they could be heard long before they were seen. The creak and groan of the sleigh and the snorting of the horses, would mingle with the complaining squeal of cold metal dragging over snow-packed roads.

SILVERWARE

Mother wrapped the silverware in flannel and stuck it in between the logs so it wouldn't tarnish

Gerri Bozak

ECRU CURTAINS

Nearly everyone had these ecru lace curtains, and they would fade white unevenly in the sunlight To make them one colour we would soak them in coffee until the whole curtain was the same colour again

Minnie Plantinga

"Dooville", the Klaas Tuininga house Bertha Wierenga and Jennie Tuininga in front

Clarence Tuininga house.

LITTLE ENEMIES

Here are some of the drawbacks of homesteading in the bush country of Alberta First, no roads, second, too much bush and too many trees that had to be grubbed out by hand with an axe. Too much water in the summer and too much snow in the winter and too cold down to 50-below sometimes — and sometimes too hot in the summer and not to forget the mosquitoes and the pest they were to men and animals There were mosquitoes in the morning and in the evening but as soon as the sun came out they retired till night and the bull flies took over They liked sunshine and the blood of animals. If you were working with oxen you would have to go home and put them in the barn because otherwise they would put their tails in the air and would go with the implement, plow, or wagon anyway. These bull flies would bite and hold on till they were satisfied. I guess that is the reason they were named bull flies, they looked like a bulldog. If they once have taken a bite they held on to it but they seldom attacked men. They were about the size of a bee. Then we had what the Indians called no-see-ums — you could hardly see them because they were so small. They bit too and really were a pest. They would settle under you collar or under you cap and start to suck blood and the itch was awful. So was the swelling afterwards.

But I am glad to say I did not see a bull fly or a no-see-um for the last few years. The mosquitoes are still with us, but not as bad as in the first years. So are the rabbits but only a few, not in the millions.

Ben Lievers

MOSQUITOES

The mosquitoes were one plague and the rabbits another. But the rabbits we could eat, the mosquitoes ate us. "What are those mosquitoes good for?" someone asked. Don't you know? To keep the lazy fellow working — you could not lie down on your work to take a rest. If you could do your work with one hand the other was kept busy slapping the mosquitoes. And if you needed both hands for your work — for example cutting grass — you had to put an extra coat or shirt on, a screen over your head and leather gloves on your hands. But the worst of it was when you came home tired and went to bed. Then you would hear a "friend" on your ear and slap with your hand and miss, then you would hear "friend" on your other ear and maybe this time you did kill one. Somebody said ten would be out for the funeral! We did find out they did not like smoke — so we made a smoke fire in front of the house and, before we went to bed, a smoke fire in the stove in the house but I sometimes thought the cure was worse than the sickness — sore eyes — tearful eyes.

Ben Lievers

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

From the time I could get around by myself I was always interested in trapping. I started out snaring rabbits — some we fed to pigs, some we ate, and we even dried some skins and wrapped them around our feet for footwear. That was in 1919, I guess.

Then, later on when I was a little older, eighteen or nineteen, was my first time out hunting. John Terpsma was going to come with me but he never showed up. So on my own, I went across the lake and headed into the bush west of Baird Lake. It was all wild timber — there wasn't a trail anywhere. I wasn't in the bush too far when I saw a lot of tracks and I was puzzled which ones to follow. I stood there and here I heard a crashing through the bush and here came a moose. I lifted up my rifle but I shook so badly that I thought I'd never be able to shoot him. I leaned backwards and steadied myself against a tree. I fired two shots and then the moose was gone. But I had drawn blood. I could see by its crossing the windfalls that I had shot him somewhere up high. At another place in the snow, up high on the trees, I saw blood so I knew I'd shot it on the back somewhere. But it was getting dark and it was a little snowy, so I went home. On the way I had the mishap of falling with my horse and hurt my leg. I told my dad where I left the trail and he went back the next day. He followed the moose tracks for about a mile. Then he found the moose pretty well stiffened up and shot it. The next day we brought it home. You had to dress moose right away — otherwise it would have the red-willow taste.

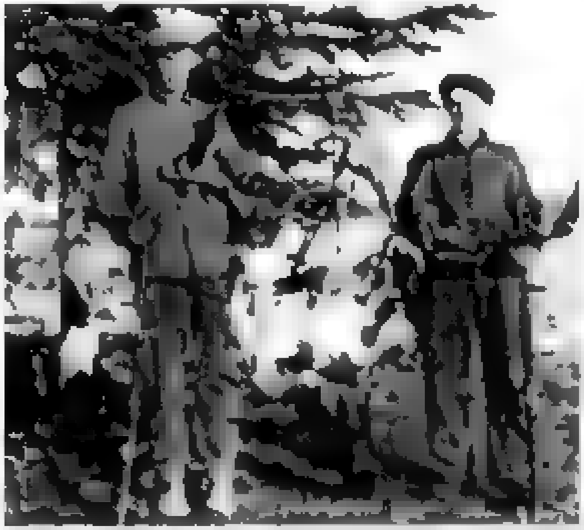
From there on I went hunting quite a lot — Bill Lievers and I went together. We had a trap line together too so we knew pretty well from day to day where the animals were. If anyone wanted an animal we could tell them about where they were. They were mostly moose and a few deer. Deer became more plentiful as time went on.

We also trapped together — muskrats. The season opened March 1 each year. We hired

Albert Tiemstra with the cutter to drive us around the lake. All we had to do was jump out, open the muskrat's semi-frozen grass and weed mound with an axe, and set our traps inside. Baird Lake was really a good place for rats. The first morning we had thirty-five muskrats. And we trapped weasels and the odd coyote.

Baird Lake and Lily Lake were our two main areas. We went to Shoal Lake once too. That's quite a stretch around the lake. There wasn't much snow then. There were lots of other people there too — on bicycles and everything — just to get their traps in. One year I got 200 rats which I sold at $2.05 a pelt.

We did a lot of shooting squirrels. We'd just go out in the spruce bush, shoot twenty-five to thirty squirrels (using a .22 rifle and .22 short bullets), and skin them. Prices were not that great — twenty-five to thirty cents a pelt. But that was not bad, better than sitting at home at least and besides, I liked it.



Neerlandia's crack shots. Bill Olthuis and Bill Lievers

One time I shot two deer with one bullet. There were a number of deer around. I took a shot at one and when I got there I saw a track with blood and then, I saw another track with blood too. I followed them a little ways and they both lay there. The bullet had gone right through the one deer into the other.

Different Bullets

We always used the soft-nosed bullet. When they hit they mushroomed immediately. It could be an indication of who really shot the animal. "I knew I hit him!" "I knew I hit him!" you could sometimes tell by the shape of the bullet whose gun it had come from. I had a 30-30 Marlin rifle and Bill Lievers had a 30-30 Winchester carbine. The soft-nosed bullet was better than the steel-nosed bullet because they were not so easily deflected by a twig.

Bill Olthuis

CATCHING FISH

In the early days there were lots of fish in the creeks during the spring run. The fish would swim upstream to Baird and Shoal Lakes. The settlers used a variety of methods of catching them. There were so many fish that the farmers would go to Shoal Creek with their pitchforks and fork the fish out of the water. Wilsons put a dam in the creek. It was constructed so that there was a small amount of water running over a slanted piece of the dam. It was possible to grab the fish as they swam up the incline. A popular method of catching fish was with a conical net. The nets were placed in the water with the mouth facing upstream and the narrow end downstream, so that it would be easy for the fish to swim in but difficult for them to find their way out.

RABBITS	Prime, 6c. **SQUIRREL, 10c and 15c. JACKS, 65c to 90c.**
MINK	No. 1 large, dark, $25.00; medium, $20.00; small, $15.00. No. 1 large, pale, $18.00; small, $10.00. Average lots, $14.00 to $18.00.
MUSKRATS	No. 1 Spring, $1.35; Winters, $1.10; Falls, 40c. Average, 90c to $1 10, B C Sections.
OTTER	No. 1 large, $30.00; medium, $35.00; small, $18.00. No. 1 large, pale, $23.00. Average lots, $26.50. Average, $26.00.
SKUNK	Good lots, $2.15.
WOLF	No. 1 large, $22.00; medium, $18.00; small, $12.00. No. 2 large, $15.00; medium, $10.00. Average lots, $15.00.
WOLVERINE	No. 1 large, $20.00; medium, $14.00; small, $8.00. Average lots, $12.00 to $14.50.

We strongly advise shipping all furs as soon as possible. Market can easily go 10 per cent. lower. Ship —

Ed Wagner, who owned a quarter just east of Bill Olthuis' land, had constructed a net of willow saplings (1927). It was composed of an outer cone of about three feet in length and about two feet in diameter at the wide end. Inside was a smaller cone of short willow sticks and ending in a narrow opening. Ed invited Bill and Ike Nanninga to come and get all the fish they wanted. One day Bill and Ike Nanninga went to the spot where Ed Wagner had his net in the creek. When they arrived the net was solidly packed with fish. "There wasn't room for one more fish," said Bill. Between the two of them, Bill and Ike had a hard time getting the net out of the water, it must have weighed about two or three hundred pounds. The fish were packed so tightly in the net that those in the centre were dead. Most of the fish were jacks and suckers and were up to twenty inches in length. The Nanninga and Olthuis families had a good fish fry that night.

A PLAGUE UPON MAN AND BEAST

Mosquitoes and bull flies were a curse for man and beast in the early days. There was not much land cleared of trees and bushes and these, together with tall grass, kept the water from draining away. If we got some nice warm weather these damp watery places made excellent breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

After sundown they would come out in droves, searching for some warm-blooded animal or human to feed on. They would attack our cattle in such numbers that the poor animals didn't know where to go to get away from them. They would run around brushing their sides and backs against trees and low-hanging branches, but they just could not get rid of the pests.

My dad would build a fire of dry wood, and when this was going good and hot he would pile wet straw over it to make a smudge. This thick smoke would spread out over a good part of the barnyard and would drive off the mosquitoes.

The cattle soon learned that they could get rid of the pests by standing in this smoke. However if they stayed near the smudge all night they didn't do any grazing, so the next morning after milking they hurried off to the pasture to fill their stomachs.

About ten in the morning, when the sun started getting warm, the bull flies started their attack. These were big flies about three-quarters of an inch long. They had black heads and wings and a dark brown abdomen. They seemed to chew through a cowhide in one bite. They always seemed to get me when I had both hands occupied — for example, when I was carrying a heavy object. They would land, bite and suck blood all in the same instant. After they had their fill of blood from a horse, cow, or person and withdrew their mouth from the skin, a trickle of blood would run from the hole in the skin left by the bite.

These bull flies usually appeared around the middle of June. In July they came out in full force, and in August, if we got a good rain and a few cloudy days, they eventually disappeared again. The trouble was that the bull flies attacked in the heat of the day in bright sunshine and the mosquitoes at night, so every summer for about a month the animals got very little time for peaceful grazing by day or night.

One day when the bull flies were really vicious the cows came home from the pasture about mid morning, running as hard as they could with their tails high in the air. They went into the corral, trying to find a shady spot or some place where they just might be able to get away from the vicious pests. One cow found a place in the fence between the corral and the house yard where she could squeeze through, and ran around the yard looking for a place to hide from the tormenting flies. Maybe the chicken-coop door would be open, but after a few trips around the building, no door opened up to her. The house door was closed too, but she kept running — maybe some door would open up.

The cow, still being worried by the flies, made a pass along the outhouse door to scrape off some flies and in the process the door came unlatched and swung open. On the next trip around she saw the open door and it looked like just the right-sized place to hide from the flies. She squeezed in as far as she could, flipped up her rear, and just managed to get in through the door.

The one-inch-thick floor boards were not strong enough to hold the cow, so they gave way and the cow sank down into the pit beneath the outhouse. So the outhouse was occupied that day by the cow, until my dad came home from the field with the horses.

After looking over the situation dad decided the only solution was to take out the side wall of the outhouse, put a chain around the cow's neck, and pull her out with a team of horses Lucky it was a dry cow so she didn't have to be milked that day. However, the wall of the outhouse did have to be nailed back on and the floor had to be replaced

George Anema

MEAT

The meat that was eaten was mainly what was available in the bush Moose and deer, rabbits and more rabbits, partridge, duck, and other game were available, but it was not till the second generation grew up that the ability to hunt for game was developed The homesteaders owe a lot to trappers, who would sometimes leave word that on such and such a location a moose or deer had been shot. If the settlers wanted meat they would go to the location and find a carcass waiting for them

DIARY OF A HOUSEWIFE IN THE EARLY 1930s

January 1 – Beginning of a new year, and what a cold day! Got up this morning to a frozen house The heater was almost out, and the water in the kettle had ice on it Took a while to get enough heat in the stove to boil water for tea and breakfast Children dress by the heater, don't seem bothered by the cold Charlie stayed home today, it being a holiday. No church this morning either, just too cold to go out. Father and boys made firewood in the afternoon — there's no end to that chore Had to make enough for a week, so we won't run out when I'm home alone with the children

January 2 — Charlie left for the bush this morning How I dread those lonely weeks, children are a comfort, and are a big help too already. Tried to milk the 2 cows again, but they don't seem to like me — the one scared me half to death when she switched her tail right in my face That was enough for me – boys took over and they are learning fast. At least they are getting milk out of them

Very uneventful day

January 6 — Saturday, cleaned the house as best I could, a customary thing to do before the Sabbath Charlie came home tonight, and that is the best part of Saturday. The children start looking for him already in the afternoon Windows are so frosted, they scratch frost off the glass, but they freeze up almost as fast

Charlie came home with a bag of the most necessary groceries There was also a letter from Holland, couldn't help crying as I read it. Why did we leave that beautiful country and all our relatives?

January 7 Charlie went to church this morning I in the afternoon Pretty nearly froze my legs walking home late in the afternoon, it was almost dark too. After a warm cup of tea, circulation came back and we spent a nice evening together

January 10 — Lots more snow today, and a cold north wind blowing it into drifts Had such a bad toothache today I would have walked to a dentist had there been one Will have to suffer through it, wrapped a warm cloth around my face — which gave some relief. Boys had to haul wood in the house for the fires Both heater and stove are kept red hot Am so scared of fires breaking out, can't sleep too well at nights when Charlie is gone Pray God will take care of us

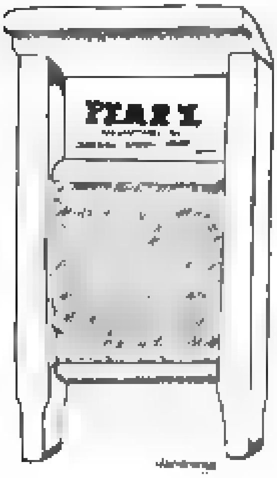
January 13 — Another Saturday has come and gone gave the floor a good scrubbing today, but what's the use with all the snow being tracked in and the piles of firewood around, it seems so hopeless But must not let my work go Charlie came home with the usual groceries, and what a pleasure to be able to talk things over with your partner again Tooth still bothering, no chance of going to church tomorrow

Wind has died down, just clear and cold

January 16 — Neighbour Bill came over today to see how we were making out He's a bachelor, has a girlfriend in Southern Alberta Wants to get married soon What a treat to talk to another adult After he left I felt like crying, but must keep my composure for the children's sake They know how I feel though, and try to cheer me up. Wrote a long letter to the folks in Holland, tell them all is well with us Try not to be too down when I write them, no use making them miserable they know of course this is a cold country, and not very hospitable

January 21 It's still clear and cold but days are getting longer. Charlie went to church this morning with the two boys They were wrapped up like mummys I went in the afternoon A minister from the U S was out today, what a treat to hear a minister preach again But he was so long I was worried not being able to walk home in daylight. Not much time to chat with my friends either Children had a good time playing with their father this afternoon He likes to romp with them on the floor Wish he could be home with us more, but we do need the money he makes in the bush

January 22 — One of my favorite days today, washday! How I dread that job Charlie hauled water in the house before he left, but it was really not enough Had to make it do tho', the well is not very deep, and doesn't hold much water Heating it on the stove takes such a long time and then rubbing all the clothes over the board — back was so sore I could hardly straighten up. Clothes hanging all over the house, what a sight Children play peek-a-boo between the



legs of the underwear. House steams up and more frost on the windows.

February 1 — Today was Charlie's birthday. celebrated it yesterday when he was home. Didn't have anything fancy to eat, but had a nice day.

There was a change in the weather today, the air was a bit milder, children went out to play in the snow. I had another one of those tedious wash days, but its over again for a week.

February 10 — What a day! After a week of rather mild weather, it suddenly turned stormy and cold. The wind blew in from the north making the snow pile up in big drifts around the house. Couldn't hardly make it to the barn to feed the animals. Boys especially had a hard time getting through the snow. Animals were very restless, don't seem too healthy either. Hay supply is getting kind of low, and they don't get enough to eat. Hope they make it through the winter. two cows are expected to bring a calf in the spring.

February 13 — The storm is over, but it has left huge drifts around the buildings. Charlie made it home safe and sound. It has been a very happy day. Along with the groceries there was a big parcel from the family in Holland. There was all kinds of warm clothing — sweaters, socks, underwear, dresses, and the best part of all — toys for the children. They were wild with excitement. Eyes were big as saucers as package after package was opened and admired. They should have seen that in Holland. With some alterations the dresses can be made to fit myself and the little girls. But what will people say when they see us with such fancy clothes? I don't hardly dare to wear them.

February 17 — There's a full moon tonight, the air is crisp and cold. Snow is sparkling with thousands of little stars. Looking through a peep hole in the frosty window the rabbits can be seen frolicking around the haystack. They don't realize there's snares set out for them. Boys are getting pretty smart at setting them, especially the youngest one Bert. He's becoming a real little hunter. Feel sorry for those little creatures, but they sure have supplied us with meat this winter.

February 18 — There was a good supply of meat again today. Almost every snare had a rabbit in it. Boys do the skinning, some were kind of poor but the majority were good and meaty. They taste much like chicken, and everyone enjoys a meal of fried rabbit. Bert also goes hunting for prairie chicken, Charlie has taught him how to use a .22. I don't like it, but he says he's careful. Today he came home with 2 prairie chickens. Was he proud!

February 23 — Bill, our neighbour, came over again today. He's such a likeable fellow. He's fixing up his little house, so he can bring his bride home in the near future. Children are afraid of him, especially little Tenie. He tried his best to make friends with her, but she stayed far enough away. Don't see people very often which makes them very shy. Did a lot of sewing by lamplight tonight, fixing up clothes received from the family in Holland for the girls. Want to keep it a surprise for them, but the poor light is hard on my eyes. They need some new clothes when they go to school in the spring.

February 26 — February is almost over, days are getting longer, but we're still in the grip of winter. Some say it will stay for another two months. Must not think of Holland where the tulips and crocuses will be coming up already. Charlie says he'll soon be staying home as the cows will be calving in March, and they will need extra care. That will be really nice. Children are remarkably healthy tho' in this Siberian country. Germs are all froze I think. My teeth give me a lot of trouble, I'm afraid they are badly deteriorated. If only I could have gone to a dentist, but alas! that's not possible.

March 10 — Charlie has been home the past week. What a relief! Now I don't have to look after those cows anymore. I was really worried about them staying alive. Maybe with some extra care they will come through this long winter. One of them is very close to calving, Charlie says it can be any day. Hay is getting very low, but some people can spare some they say. But how can we afford to pay them? Probably Charlie will work for it.

March 12 — Today the first cow gave birth to a calf, she had such a difficult time, and the calf is so weak, don't think it will stay alive very long. Charlie decided it should be brought in the house to warm up, then maybe it will have a chance to live. He put some straw in a corner and put the calf on it. It cries so pitifully, children are fascinated with the little fellow. How will we sleep tonight with a bawling calf? And what will it do to the house. It is so smelly already.

March 13 — Calf is still alive. Charlie has been carrying it back and forth to the mother to try and make it drink, but it's too weak to stand. Tried to feed it by hand *which didn't work either. Its crying is becoming less. don't think it will live through the night.*

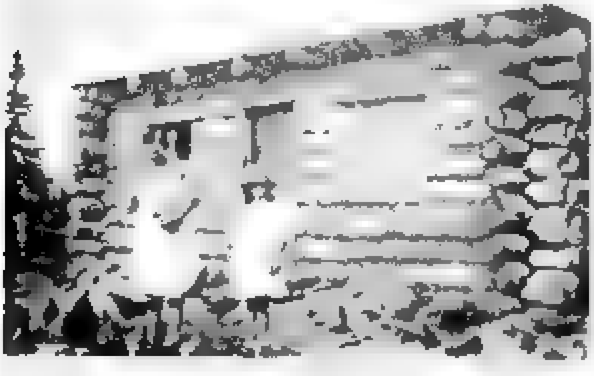
March 14 — Calf died during the night, Charlie carried it out before the children awoke, so they wouldn't see it. They of course inquired what had happened to it as it was not there anymore. How disappointed they were to find out it was gone forever. Cleaned the house as good as possible. but the smell stayed around.

March 20 — Went to visit one of my friends today. She lives about half a mile away. Had such a lot of things to talk about. Weather was sort of mild, it was a pleasure to get out for a change. When I came home Charlie was busy with the other cow, which was in the process of bringing forth a calf. Everything went quite well. so now we have 2 cows and one calf. Lots of milk to drink and make pudding with.

April 1 — I think winter is almost over, it was mild today, with bright sunshine. snow was melting somewhat near the house. Neighbours say it is too early yet for spring and we will get more snow.

Children are excited about going to school Monday. They are so tired of being cooped up in a small house for so long.

We're so thankful to have been spared from serious illness or accident. Winter has been long and harsh, but the end is in sight. Am looking forward to seeding vegetables and flowers.



Feeding the chickens was a daily chore.

THIS IS THE LIFE

Everyone seemed to be happy, busy clearing land, breaking, building houses and barns, fencing the land. there was much to do and little time to worry about anything. I can still hear one man's words, "This is the life," as he was wading around in the muskeg, cutting bush, and breaking the sod amongst millions of mosquitoes. He had been working by the hour between four walls, in a factory in the U S A. Here he was his own boss, out in the fresh air, and had his own business. He was poor in material things, but rich in spirit. It was a close community with togetherness. They needed each other to help build log houses and barns and also borrowed tools from each other. They could not make it alone.

Martin van der Heide

PA'S GLASSES

Albert Jan read his Bible after every meal and liked to ask questions to find out if you knew the Bible. He had an old *Staten Bijbel*, and after the meal would say to one of his children, "Give me my glasses and the Bible." Sometimes he would use the glasses and other times he would forget about them. One time his youngest girl broke a lens in it and she was afraid. "Now I will get it," she thought. After the meal the old man said, "Jenny, give me the Bible and the glasses." Jenny took the Bible and the glasses and waited for the storm. She had decided not to lie about it but to tell Pa she had broken them. The old man started to read and said, "This is funny. I can see better with one eye than the other." "Which one?" Jenny asked. "This one," and he poked his finger into his eye — everyone laughed except the old man. One of the children suggested, "Pa, break the other glass too. Maybe you could see better still." Jenny never heard of the broken glasses again from Pa.

Ben Lievers

SMUGGLER

One of the mail carriers, Pete, was a smuggler — that's why he was lame. He was shot in the leg and also in the head. His brother was killed. This was on the German border during the first world war.

* * *

TERRIBLE FRIGHT

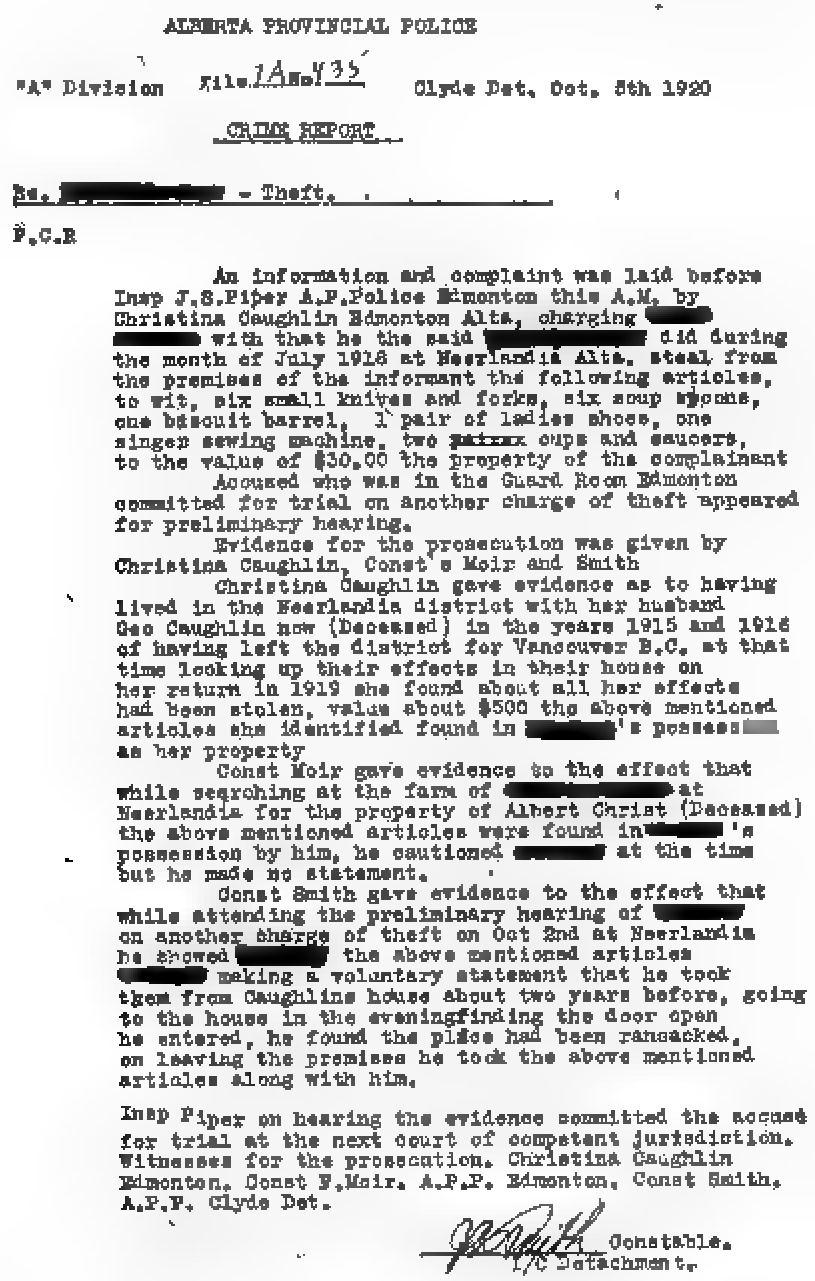
The chamber pot is reponsible for a terrible fright one lady had. The story goes like this —

In the pioneer days there were many bachelors, but not many girls to marry. In the early twenties, northwest of Edmonton, there lived a man by the name of Mound. Mr. Mound was a bachelor who had his eye on the sixteen-year-old daughter of his neighbours. The parents were not in favour of him marrying the girl because they thought their daughter was too young to marry This really enraged the suitor One day while the parents were gone he went over there and persuaded the girl and her fourteen-year-old brother to go with him. Then he killed them both.

Everyone was rather uneasy because he was rumoured to be in the area. At night some people had now and then seen lights in some of the empty houses of those who had gone to work in Edmonton for the winter

Night came and, in one of the pioneer homes, the chamber pot had not yet been emptied that day. The busy mother told one after another of her children to empty the pot but no one dared to go out in the dark for fear of Mr. Mound

Their mother scolded them, "Aw, what's the



ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE

"A" Division File.1A.No.435 Clyde Det. Oct. 8th 1920

CRIME REPORT

Re. [redacted] - Theft.

P.C.B

An information and complaint was laid before Insp J.S.Piper A.P.Police Edmonton this A.M. by Christina Caughlin Edmonton Alta, charging [redacted] with that he the said [redacted] did during the month of July 1918 at Neerlandia Alta. steal from the premises of the informant the following articles, to wit, six small knives and forks, six soup spoons, one biscuit barrel, 1 pair of ladies shoes, one singer sewing machine, two ~~[illegible]~~ cups and saucers, to the value of $30.00 the property of the complainant

Accused who was in the Guard Room Edmonton committed for trial on another charge of theft appeared for preliminary hearing.

Evidence for the prosecution was given by Christina Caughlin, Const's Moir and Smith

Christina Caughlin gave evidence as to having lived in the Neerlandia district with her husband Geo Caughlin now (Deceased) in the years 1915 and 1916 of having left the district for Vancouver B.C. at that time locking up their effects in their house on her return in 1919 she found about all her effects had been stolen, value about $500 the above mentioned articles she identified found in [redacted]'s possess[redacted] as her property

Const Moir gave evidence to the effect that while searching at the farm of [redacted] at Neerlandia for the property of Albert Christ (Deceased) the above mentioned articles were found in [redacted]'s possession by him, he cautioned [redacted] at the time but he made no statement.

Const Smith gave evidence to the effect that while attending the preliminary hearing of [redacted] on another charge of theft on Oct 2nd at Neerlandia he showed [redacted] the above mentioned articles [redacted] making a voluntary statement that he took them from Caughlins house about two years before, going to the house in the eveningfinding the door open he entered, he found the place had been ransacked, on leaving the premises he took the above mentioned articles along with him.

Insp Piper on hearing the evidence committed the accused for trial at the next court of competent jurisdiction. Witnesses for the prosecution. Christina Caughlin Edmonton. Const F.Moir. A.P.P. Edmonton. Const Smith. A.P.P. Clyde Det.

Constable.
I/C Detachment.

matter with you? I'll do it!" and seizing the pot she bravely marched out. In moments she was back, shaking like a leaf. As she had stepped out the door a dark shape loomed in front of her. Thinking it was the killer she dashed back into the house. To her great relief, it was a friend who had arrived unnoticed.

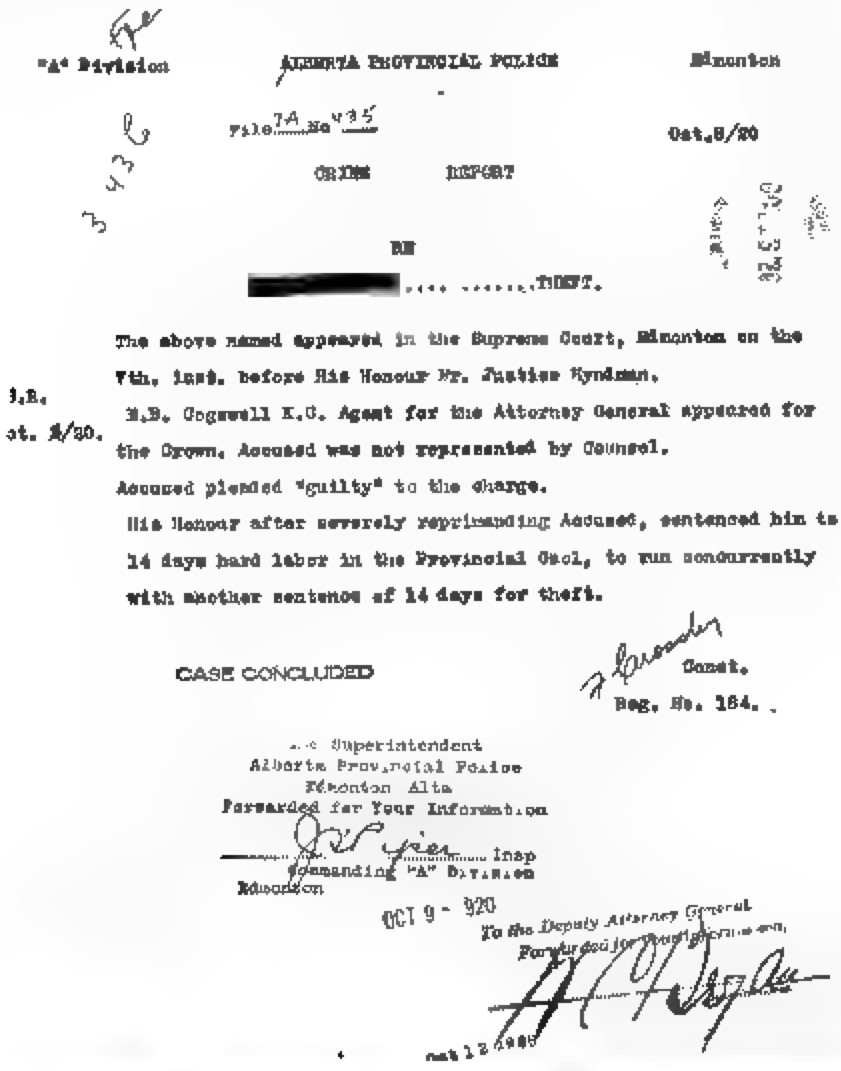
What about the lights? Later it was discovered that it was not the killer in the empty houses but a thief who was helping himself to their possessions while they were away.

LIGHTS IN THE NIGHT

My folks came here about seventy years ago. There wasn't much of anything here then — just a lot of trees, swamp, and so on. The people really had to depend on each other because it was pretty hard to travel to any place to get supplies or help. Most people were poor too; we were all in the same boat, but everybody would help you when there was need. Sometimes things got just too tough though and a family would pack it in and go to Edmonton for the winter to make some money. They would leave everything but the essentials behind. Sometimes newcomers would live in one of these houses till they had time to build a shack or a house of their own.

The doors of these houses were never locked. There were no such things as locks and anyhow, who would take anything? Or so we thought.

At night sometimes we would see a light in



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"A" Division ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE Edmonton

File 74 No 435

Oct.8/20

CRIME REPORT

RE

[redacted] ....THEFT.

J.B.
ct. 8/20.

The above named appeared in the Supreme Court, Edmonton on the 7th. inst. before His Honour Mr. Justice Hyndman.

H.B. Cogswell K.C. Agent for the Attorney General appeared for the Crown. Accused was not represented by Counsel.

Accused pleaded "guilty" to the charge.

His Honour after severely reprimanding Accused, sentenced him to 14 days hard labor in the Provincial Gaol, to run concurrently with another sentence of 14 days for theft.

CASE CONCLUDED

Const.
Reg. No. 164.

... Superintendent
Alberta Provincial Police
Edmonton Alta
Forwarded for Your Information

Insp
Commanding "A" Division
Edmonton

OCT 9 - 920

To the Deputy Attorney General,
Forwarded for investigation

Oct 12 1920

one house or another but we thought it was a murderer who was supposed to be somewhere north of Edmonton — and boy were we scared. Little did we know that one of our own community was looking through those houses and taking what he wanted. Human nature being what it is, the temptation to enter the empty houses was too much for one man.

When spring came and the families returned, they naturally missed some of their belongings but no one knew what had happened to them.

Of course this kind of activity couldn't be hidden for long and soon people began to realize who the guilty party was. If I remember correctly somebody alerted the authorities but before they could arrest him the thief escaped across the border into the U.S.A. To his wife was left the task of selling the land and holding a farm sale. At the sale people recognized some of the items they had "lost" earlier. *Schandalig!* When I was a kid I was excited over the idea that I had known a real live thief but now I just feel sorry for him and his poor wife, who had to face the music, so to speak.

MAKING A DEAL

"You know my dad had thirteen head of cattle and Brunner in Dusseldorf — Dad worked for him ... he'd come home Saturday nights on a horse, a beautiful horse, and that got Dad all up in the air. He wanted a team of horses in the worst way. So Brunner went along with him one time and they made a deal for Dad's cattle. There were about eight or nine head there. 'Well', he says to Dad, 'Haven't you got any more?'

'*Ja,* there's a couple out in the field yet.'

'Well, you had better get them too.' So he got them ... the whole works — thirteen head, for a team of horses and a wagon! So Dad went to pick up the team of horses. The wagon was so old it was all wired up with wire and rope. The one horse was so balky he got about one mile out and he wouldn't go anymore. So he tied the balky one behind and with the other one — he was so old he couldn't hardly go — he got home. But before he got home he had to go past Gelderman's. Gelderman had to have a look. He says to Dad,

'Case, *wat heb je daar? Komt het uit de Ark?* (What do you have there? Did it come out of the Ark?)' He says, 'I told you I'd come along and help you make a deal.' But Dad wouldn't have nothing of that.

"I make my own deals," he said. So that one horse, that balky one, he (Brunner) bought back later on. And the other one died after a few days already."

Gerrit Ingwersen

FIRES

1923-24 was a very dry year in northern Alberta. Everyone was warned to put out any fires which they had burning on their land. The farmers all had brushpiles burning on their land, of course, and to put these out was not only a big job but it also hampered their land clearing progress. So many of the farmers did not heed the warnings. Then a government fire ranger came to the area. Since Joe Holwerda was commissioner of oaths he was asked to accompany the ranger to the farmers who had fires burning on their property. A fine would be levied and, if it wasn't paid before a certain date, the authorities would come and pick up the farmers and they would have to serve a jail sentence for a few months.

So Joe Holwerda and the ranger made their rounds, levying many fines. The only farmer receiving no fine, but who also had fire burning on his place, was Joe Holwerda. Some farmers were allowed more time to pay than others, but none of the farmers planned to pay their fines. When due dates came along and no payments were made the authorities came and picked up three farmers. They stayed overnight in Westlock in a cold room which wasn't very good for the health of one old farmer. The next day, with no explanation, the authorities told the farmers they could go back home.

Later Joe Holwerda set up a type of court with a translator for some farmers and eventually many of the fines were paid.

Shortly after this was settled, a high gusty wind roared through the treetops during Sunday afternoon service, carrying sparks from Joe Holwerda's brushpile to his shack, burning it to smoldering cinders.

Norman Terpsma

VAN DER WOUDE

There is no question that Rev. Van Der Woude was a good spiritual leader, but for community life he was not the man that Neerlandia needed . He had no eye for expansion of the settlement To people that wanted to come to Neerlandia to live he advised, "Neerlandia is completely filled, the land that is still there should stay for the following generation " Later, though, it was found that to the north and west there was still a lot of good land. In general, the thought had always been that the land was not so good since it ran along the Athabasca River. The outcome, however, was that more rain fell there than in Neerlandia and therefore the crops were better.

In the area of the school Rev Van Der Woude also took a position that later led to many difficulties. Since he had attended a public school in the Netherlands, he considered the public school good enough for Neerlandia Towards the end of his years of service he had changed his standpoint somewhat but by then, however, it was too late.

Case Ingwersen (memoirs)

HEIL HITLER

"Kannegieters — we used to go there quite often on Sundays for coffee. They used to entertain us a lot. They were nice for young folks, really nice."

"I took Kannegieter along one time when we were logging up north, when we had our mill there He was going to the [Vega] store and I was going to the mill That's the time when the war broke out and he was pro-Nazi So we went in the wagon and he was standing there too. All of a sudden we passed Zittlau [of Vega] He says, 'Heil Hitler' to Zittlau I said,

'That's enough Get out of the wagon.' and I says, 'I'm not slowing down, you get out. And if you are not out in five minutes, I'm going to throw you out ' Boy, I tell you, that stirred some people "

Gerrit Ingwersen

THE GOOD OLD FLOUR SACK

Mothers made aprons, dresses, underwear, towels, sheets, and what-have-you from the good old flour sack I don't know how many of us would have been clothed without it The sacks were bleached and dyed before being cut and sewn. One day a young child came to school with a grayish-blue suit his mother had made from flour sacks for him. The color was by accident — one of the other children said, "Mother boiled the white clothes and a black felt cap was in the tub too, so the entire white wash turned grayish-blue."

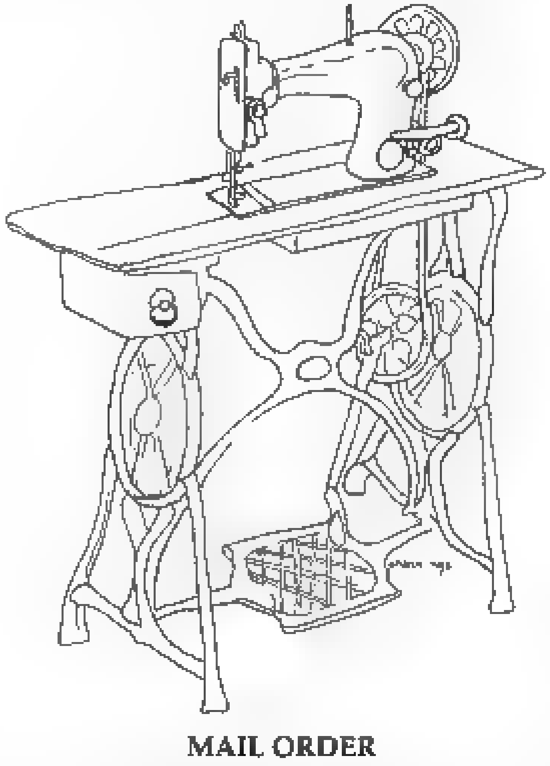
Carrie Olthuis

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT DRESS?

We all wore hand me-downs and made-overs Our mothers remodelled old clothes These garments were sometimes taken apart and turned inside out since the inside was, by then, better than the outside Many hours of work were done mending, patching, and making over by the dim light of a coal oil lamp and, later, the Aladdin lamp. With the large families of those days some women had to stay up until midnight on Saturdays so the socks and stockings would be clean and mended by Monday for school

The hand-me-downs we wore were handed down the line in the family until everyone from youngest to oldest had worn the garment or until it fell apart

Carrie Olthuis



MAIL ORDER

Things were hard to come by because for most of us money was scarce. When an order was sent to the catalogue only the most necessary items were ordered. After everything that was needed was on the list and the cost totaled, it was often found to be more than the family could afford. Painfully the list was gone over again to see which item could possibly be done without. One time shoes were ordered for me. I looked so forward to the arrival of the parcel. Finally it came and in it were my new shoes. Happily I tried them on. Alas, they were too small. What was I to do? If I admitted that they were too small they would either go to my younger sister or, more likely, be sent back and who knew when I would get another pair. Foolishly I pretended that they fit me well and wore them ... and suffered from bunions ever since as a result of those too-tight shoes.

Carrie Olthuis

NEW SHOES

In the winter people wore grit bags for footwear, which were quite warm and comfortable. One time the Kippers' boys had new ones on, which they wore to church. There was a big drum heater in the center of the church for heat. Well, the boys were cold, so they went close to the heater to warm up. Then the old man said, "Look out, boys. Don't burn your new shoes."

Joe Tuininga

BELLY BANDS

"The baby was bathed faithfully every morning no matter how cold it was. The oven door would be opened for heat and a towel laid in front. Everyone use cloth diapers, of course, and belly bands. The bands were made of double flannel and they were for keeping the navel in and strengthening the baby's back. The narrow band was put over the navel and kept very tight and firm. The diaper was put over the band. The bands were kept on for about a month."

Jennie Fisher
Lulla Fisher

FASHIONS

"The girls who worked in the city were the ones who usually had the latest fashions. I think the Terpsma girls were among the first to wear bob haircuts — that was around the early twenties. Soon all the girls wanted their hair cut. But most parents were against it; the Bible teaches that women should have long hair. I cut mine when I was fourteen and my mother cried. I had the style called the shingle bob. The hair was layered from the top, the sides were curled, and in front were bangs or you could use barrettes. Eventually, in the thirties, even many of the older women got short haircuts. Some, though, never did cut their hair.

Another fashion that caused a lot of parents to get upset was stockings. At first everyone wore heavy, well-knitted, black stockings. Later grey stockings came out and then, worst of all, stockings that looked just like bare legs — flesh-coloured stockings made of lisle. These stockings had a sheen to them and you could buy them in beige or grey. They cost about fifteen cents a pair. More than one girl was ordered to take the flesh-coloured stockings off after her father discovered her wearing them."

HATS TO SCHOOL

"How we envied the Ritsema girls — they wore hats not only to church but also to school. Some people even thought they were very extravagant doing that. The Ritsema children also wore shoes during the summer while many of the rest of us went barefoot."

SHOE PACS

Shoe pacs were similar to a low moccasin, only made of heavy cowhide, usually dark brown and smooth. Moccasins usually could be worn without low rubbers. They were more water-resistant but slippery.

Henry and Anna Michael with baby Bert.

Bill, Bennie. Front: Henry, James.

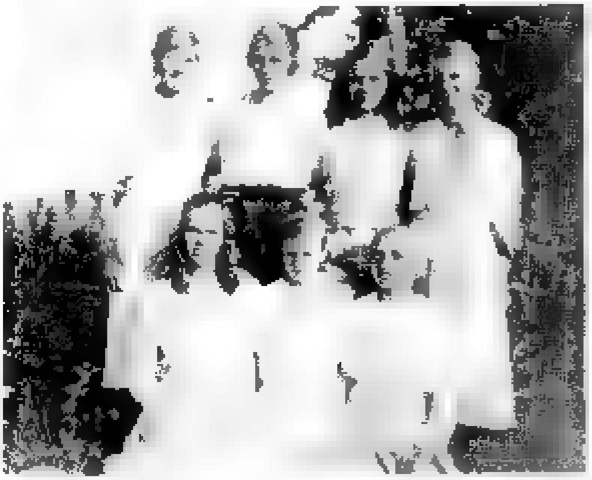
Bert and Anna Michael.

How do you like my winter coat? Lizzie Baron.

Dressed for winter, Tena Terpsma.

Sadie Ritsema.

Johanna and Margaret Messelink, early 1920s.

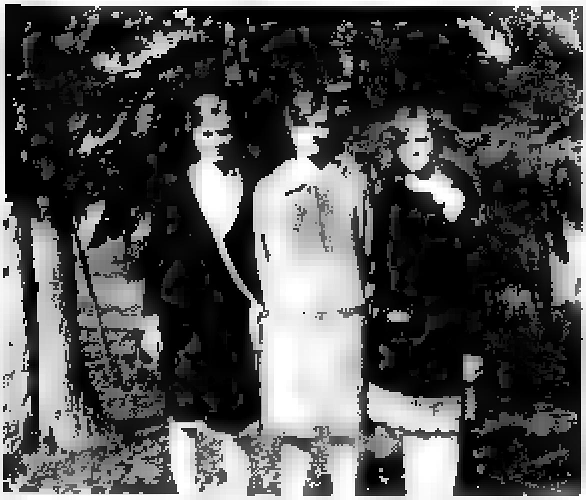


A Bevy of Beauties. Harda Lievers, Jennie Tuininga, Della Anema, Pauline Stunwold. Front: Tena Terpsma, Clara Ritsema, Gertie Tuininga. c. 1924.

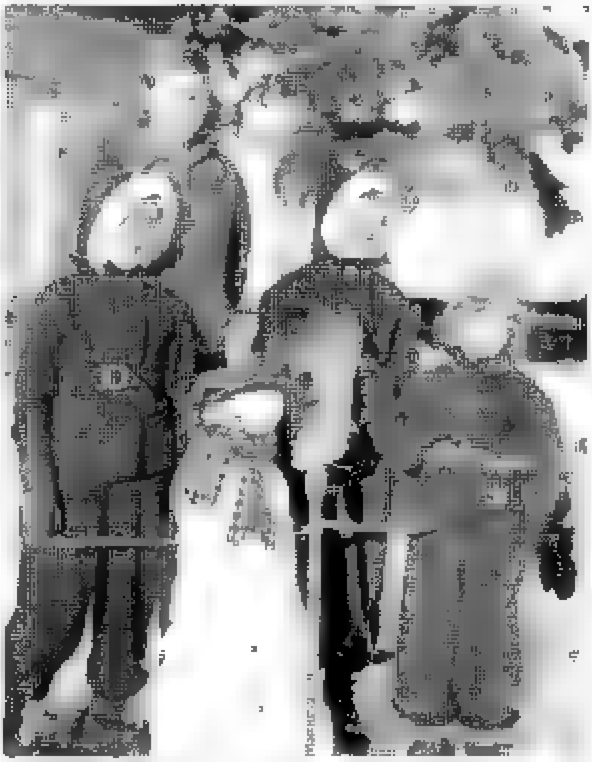
The Roll'em girls of June 1925. How disgraceful, showing your bare knees! Jennie Fisher second from right.

Neerlandia Girls. Kay Baker, Jennie Wierenga, Lula Sturwold, Annie Schoonekamp, Bertha Wierenga (?), Annie Fisher (?), Rulie Schoonekamp (?), Alice Kippers, 1935

A refreshing drink. Johanna Messelink, Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Gladys Kippers. Front: Annie Ingwersen, Susie Anema, Margaret Messelink



Sunday Best. Della, Tena, and Susie Anema, 1929.

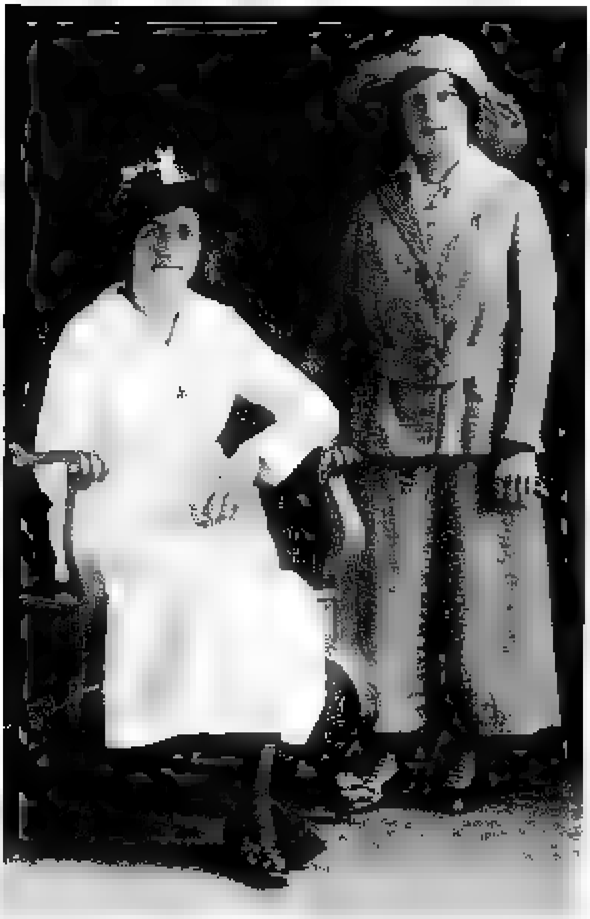


Snowsuits. Shirley Olthuis, Clara Oldegbers, Elsie and Joan Olthuis.

Dressed in style. Jennie Tuininga

Sunday clothes, Gladys Strydhorst, Rieka Lievers, Jennie Schoonekamp, Alice Brown, c. 1932

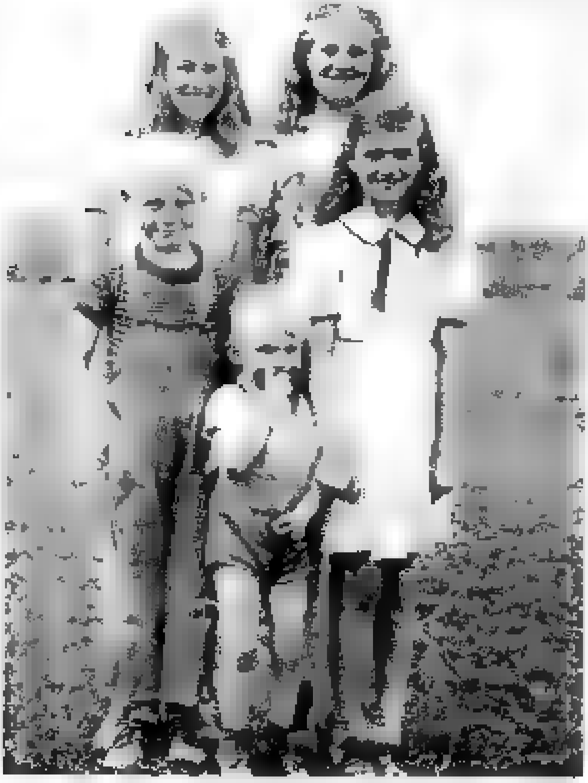
Modelling dresses made by Gladys. Gladys, Jennie, Alice Kippers.



The latest fashion. ? Hempel, Flora Terpsma.

The Masts often wore breeches. Corny Ingwersen, Carl Mast strolling down Jasper Avenue, mid 1930s

All ready for winter. Annie Emmerzael, Alice Kippers, Rulie Schoonekamp, Nettie Ingwersen, Helen Emmerzael, Annie Schoonekamp. Tenie Hiemstra, Grace Tuininga, Annie Anema.



What children wore at home. Shirley, Elsie. Front Jack, Clarence, Joan. c. 1948

The latest style thirty-five-cent straw hats. Rene Janssen, Helen Emmerzael, Cecil Tuininga, Annie Anema, Bertha Wierenga, Grace Tuininga.

POTATOES AS BIG AS MARBLES

"The weather in those days was colder than it is now. It could be sixty-five degrees below zero sometimes for two weeks at a time. I remember temperatures of sixty-eight below zero. It got so cold at times that the thermometers broke. We couldn't raise potatoes for the first years because it would freeze every month. The potatoes that would grow were no bigger than marbles. As soon as the land was cleared and the wind could get through the temperatures started changing."

Digging potatoes, Douwe Terpsma.

BEER

"An old settler, who lived close to school in the 1920s, used to make beer out of hops. It wasn't that strong — yellow water, really. After he'd give us some of it he would ask, *'Kan ik daar ook een stuiver voor hebben* (Could I have a *stuiver* for that)?'"

A QUICK SNACK

On bread baking day Mother would pinch off pieces of dough and twist them into doughnuts. She would fry them in the frying pan, browning them on both sides. As soon as they were removed from the pan, she would sprinkle them with sugar and we would gobble them up.

WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?

We ate everything we were given because it was all there was. There was no asking, "Do you like this?" or "What would you like me to make?" We usually had potatoes and other vegetables such as carrots or turnips, but often no meat. So did we put butter on the potatoes? No way! We made homesteader's gravy. Here's how.

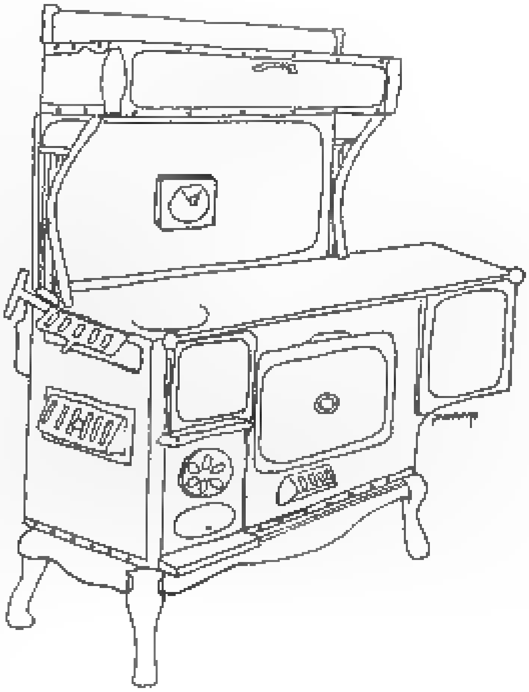
Put a heaping tablespoon of flour in the frying pan. Add a large piece of tallow, and salt and pepper to taste. Stir until brown, then pour in (while stirring) boiling water to make the right consistency. It was good.

For dessert we ate *brij* or *pap*. This is made by adding a cup of pearl barley or rice to a large pan of boiling milk. Mother always made the same amount of *brij* regardless of the amount of milk. She would just add water to make up the required volume.

Rice was a Sunday treat served with cinnamon, butter, and sugar or with sweetened, thickened cranberry juice.

Another Dutch food was a sticky flour, water, and salt dish called *postro*. To prepare this, place water in a pan and bring to a boil. Add salt and stir in flour until stiff. Serve with melted tallow and syrup.

To make *klont*, prepare a mixture of flour, baking powder, water or milk, and salt. Place in a bag and boil for three or four hours. Serve with butter and syrup. This dough may also be placed in a greased dish and baked in the oven and served in the same way.



BUTTER AND CHEESE

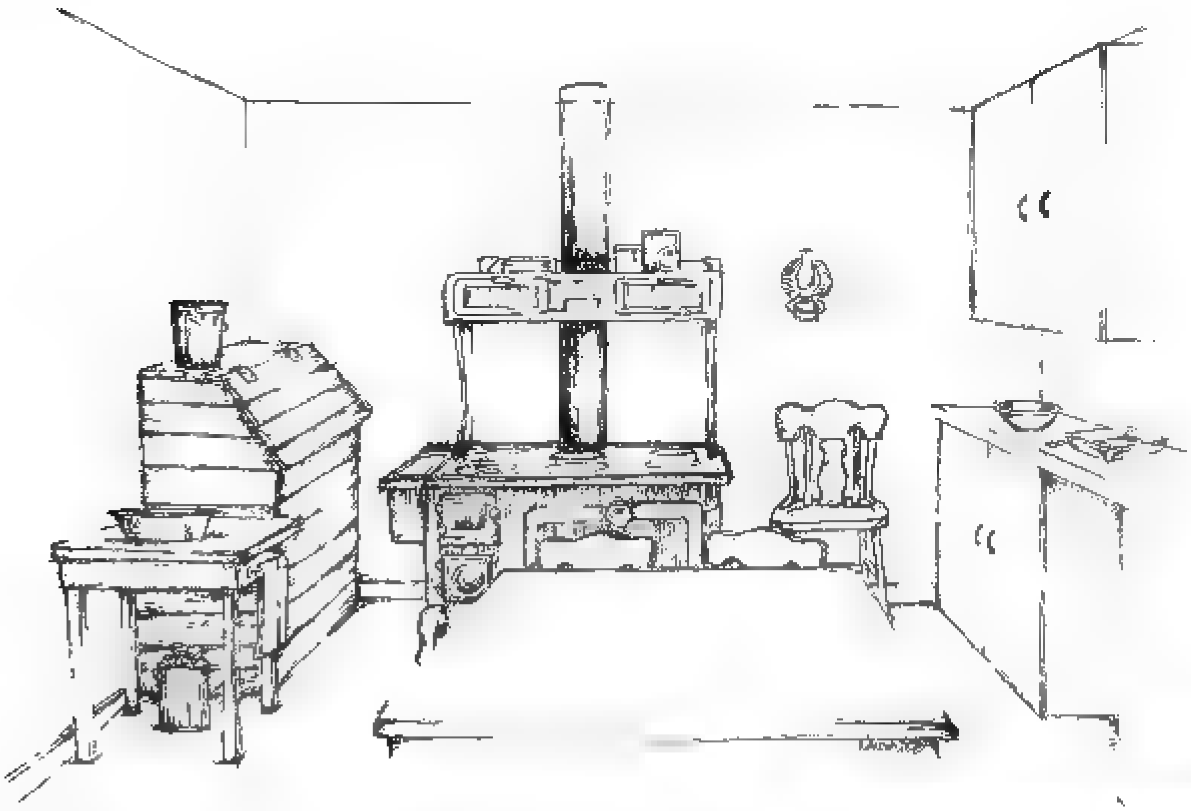
We always churned our own butter, but used it very sparingly because our income every week was a cream cheque and not very big. We also made our own cheese. We used Rennet tablets. We put them in warm milk and then the milk would separate from the whey. Then we would put it in a bag and put salt and colour in it and press to get all the whey out. We'd leave it stand till it was ready to eat, usually about a week.

Sadie Tiemstra

MAKING BUTTER

To make butter all we do is put some cream in a five-gallon can which has a lid on with a hole in it for a plunger, which you jerk up and down. This churning action separates the butter from the buttermilk if done long enough and with sufficient vigour. (The slower you go, the longer it takes.)

The buttermilk, though it has very little food value in it, is also salvaged. Some of it we make into a pudding commonly known as *Karnemelsepap*, which is eaten with a good



deal of syrup making it quite delicious. The rest of the buttermilk is fed to the pigs and they just love it

There was work to do. Butchering a hog.

BUTCHERING HOGS

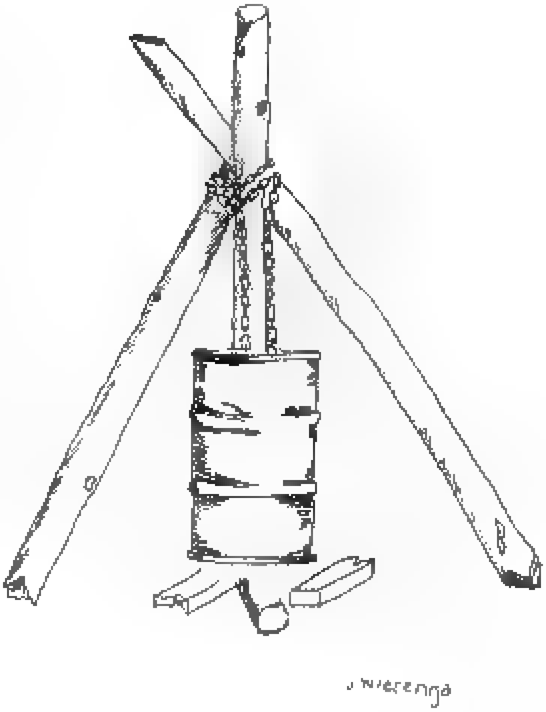
There were always some pigs butchered (booched) on the farm for the farmer's own use. The day usually started with the heating of a large drum of water over a wood fire. After the hog was killed and bled, the boiling water was used to scald loose the hair which was then scraped off. After butchering, the bacon slabs were placed in brine to be smoked later. Much of the meat was cut up and bottled, since the only freezer was the great outdoors. The head was sawn in half, cleaned and boiled for making headcheese. The excess fat was rendered into various grades of lard, depending from which part of the carcass the fat trimmings were taken

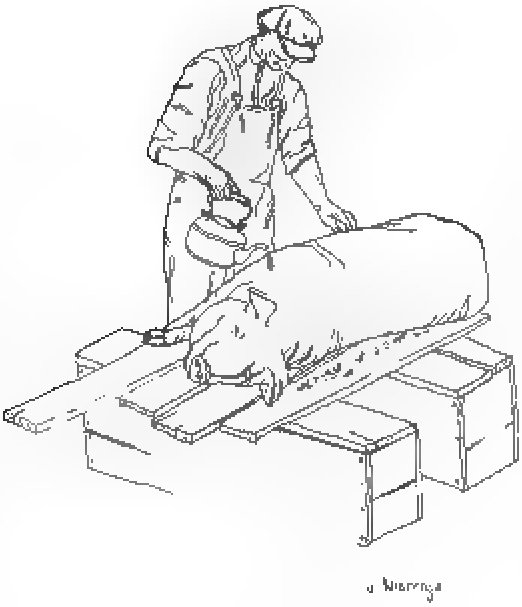
Andy Strydhorst

BACON

The bacon of fifty years ago was cured for preservation without refrigeration. The brine was prepared by dissolving salt in water until the density was such that a raw potato would float in the brine. Bacon slabs were taken, placed in the brine, and kept there for about three weeks, producing a bacon which would be much too salty by today's standards. After curing, the bacon was hung in the smokehouse and smoked for about seven days. Smoke was produced by placing sawdust on a slow burning fire. Although sawdust from hardwoods would have been desirable, the sawdust from the woodpile (white or black poplar) was normally used.

Andy Strydhorst





LARD

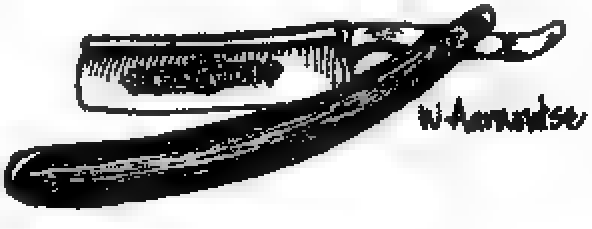
Rendering fat was done by grinding the fat, using a table-mounted hand-operated meat grinder and then heating it to a boil. The lard was then strained and allowed to cool. In the old days lard had many uses, from baking and soap making to sandwich spread. (It seems everyone had syrup and lard on their sandwiches to school.) The increased use of vegetable oils has greatly reduced the need for lard.

Andy Strydhorst

WATER SOFTENER

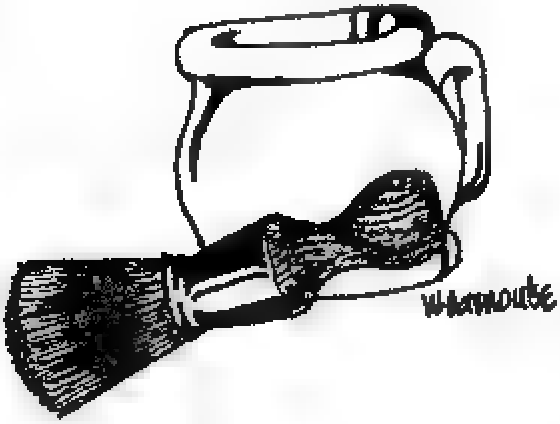
We had very shallow wells in those days They were all hand dug and the water was mostly very hard. My mom used to make us carry the barrel full of water on Saturday nights. Then she would empty all the wood ashes in from the heater and cook stove This made our water softer for doing the wash in

Sadie Tiemstra



WATER SUPPLY

— We melted snow
with raisins in it!
Boy did we haul a lot of snow in the house
For the wash



— One year we did it for four cows, two horses, and for our family. We melted it all.

— We had such a tank on the stove — a reservoir — and that would melt snow.

— And as soon as the snow was down a little ways again you would put more snow on top. It would take pails and pails of snow to get it full.

— We also had a boiler on all the time.

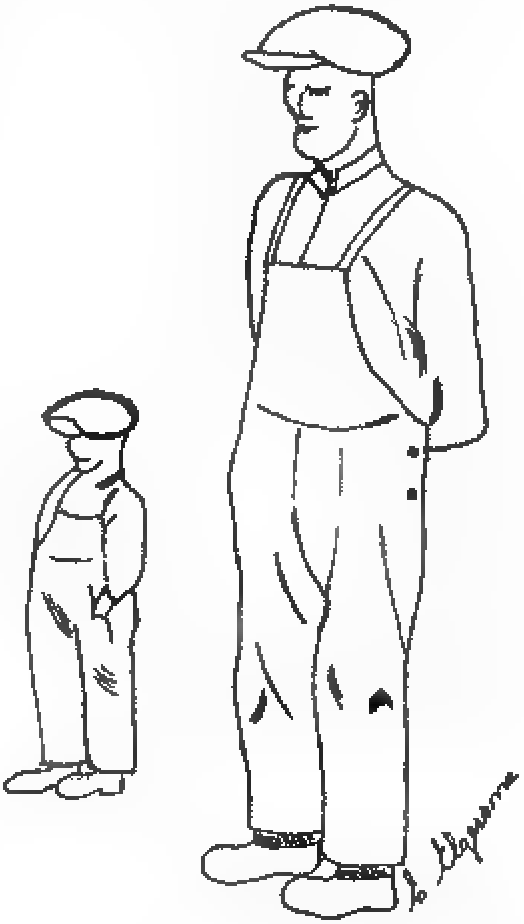
— Later John built a little thing of bricks and made a bricklike furnace outside. We set the tub on there — that really helped. Later when we had three children we finally drilled a well. And we were rich.

SATURDAY NIGHT BATH

— all in the same water
— if there was water
— in the bathtub standing by the stove
in front of the oven door

RAISING SUGAR BEETS

The Elzingas always had a large garden, and it always yielded abundantly. Having grown sugar beets in the "old country", they knew their value and therefore they had a good portion of their garden in sugar beets. During the winter evenings these sugar beets would be thoroughly cleaned and grated. This time-consuming work was done by Mabel and her father. A wash boiler-full was done at a time. Next



morning the grated sugar beets, with water added, were thoroughly boiled and then strained. This juice was again brought to a boil and simmered for a few hours until it had the consistency of syrup. It was good syrup and was used as a sweetener whenever possible.

Mabel Elgersma

COWS IN THE HOUSE

One Sunday when we came home from church, as we were crossing a neighbour's farmyard, we noticed that the front door of his house was open. After investigating, we found his cows standing in the bedroom — they had been through the whole house.

Once when someone left the cabin door open, a young calf came inside and climbed up the ladder to the loft. It fell through and ended up in the kitchen!

Martin van der Heide

CATTLE DROWNED

Since there were very few fences in the early days, many cattle grazed wild in the district. Toward fall these cattle would gravitate to the lakes. One fall in the mid-twenties was extremely dry and frosty, and the cattle were desperate for water. A large number of these cattle wandered on Shoal Lake ice until their weight was too much and the ice sank, drowning them. The wild coyotes, wolves, and smaller animals such as the weasel and mink had a feast. The loss of the cattle was a serious blow to their owners, but many of these furbearing animals were shot and trapped, giving some much-needed income to other homesteaders and trappers.

Cor Fisher

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

One of the first settlers went looking for his milk cows one morning. Because there were no fences, he got lost. Walking around most of the day he came to a dwelling. He was so agitated and scared he did not recognize his own home so he knocked on the door. His wife answered. Surprised, he asked, "Are you visiting here, *vrouw*?" The cows had come home by themselves with swollen udders before he did.

Cor Fisher

FAITHFUL BESS

A farmer hitched up his horses to the sleigh, got his wife and children all settled in the blankets and hay he had put there for them to sit in, and then they set off merrily to another farmer's place (a close friend of theirs). The purpose of the trip was to help the friend butcher a cow, and give the ladies a chance to visit for the day.

As the time approached to kill the animal, the first farmer, who owned the cow said, "I cannot shoot the cow, I feel like such a traitor to kill such a faithful cow."

"I can't either," said the other farmer, "I have never killed anything in my whole life and that innocent look the cow has makes me unable to hurt her." Both men lit their pipes and sat down on the milk stools to ponder. Finally the decision was made. They would blindfold the cow, and then shoot. A gunny sack was found and tied neatly around poor Bess' eyes and then bang the first farmer had shot and Bess was dead. The second farmer cut its throat, and both were proud of having thought of such an excellent idea.

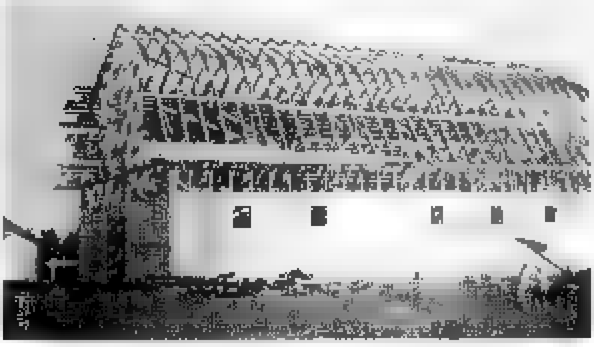
The women had a great day, and were proud of their able husbands. The children played well together and were proud of their heroic fathers.

The farmer again hitched up his team, loaded his wife and children, and headed home into the setting sun.

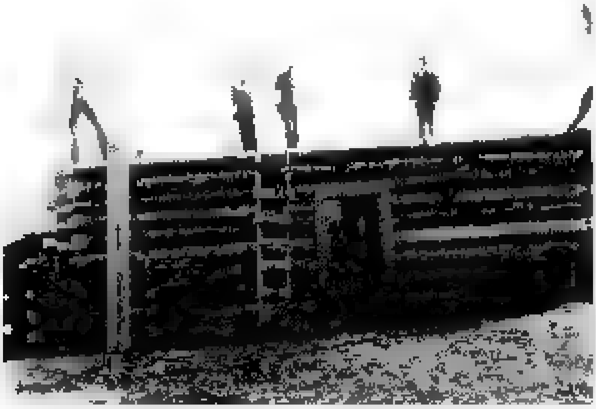
A WARM FIRE

"When we built the second church (1929) everybody had to help. Everything was done by hand. Anyhow, one farmer had a team of horses and he was hauling stones to the church, but the one horse was not too sure — every once in a while that horse wouldn't go anymore. And this happened again when the farmer was just about by the church with a wagonful of stones. He had another hundred feet to go and the horse would go no farther. He stopped right there. The farmer had a couple of bundles of straw with him which he fed to the horses. So he took some of that straw and lit it under the horse. As soon as it was hot enough the horse moved on. But just far enough so the centre of the wagon was over the fire. The fire burnt the centre out of that wagon, leaving all the stones on the ground there."

BARNS



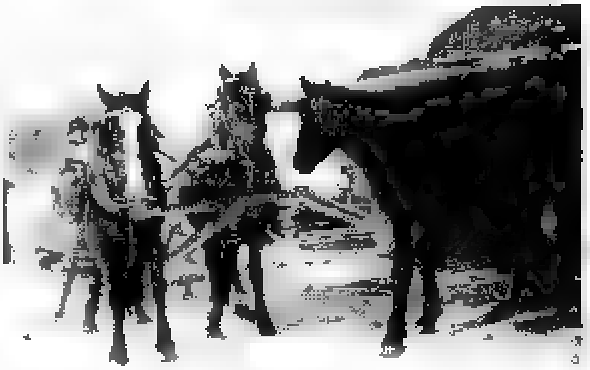
This barn built by Henry Kippers in late 1920s had stalls for ten horses and twenty-four cows.



Neighbours helped Henry Schoonekamp build a log barn, c 1934.

"Dit is onze stal geheel links *(This is our stable on the left)*", Jan Paas wrote.

HORSES



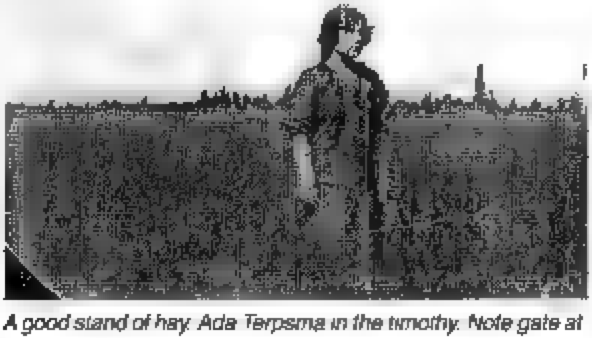
Everyone had horses the Barons

The Masts. 1927

Lula Krikke poses with a horse

And Grace Bos with a hardworking horse.

ON THE FARM



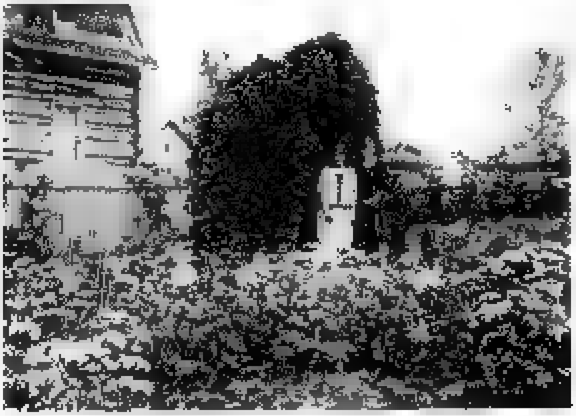
A good stand of hay. Ada Terpsma in the timothy. Note gate at right.

Baron homestead. Maggie and her children.

Gaele Baker's yard

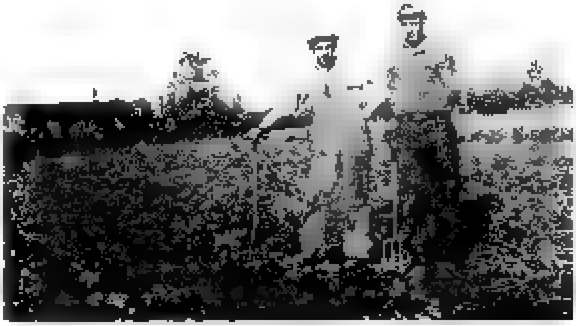
Supper time for the sow and her piglets 1924 Cor Hiemstra on the homestead

The chickens are fed by Ina Mast. 1928



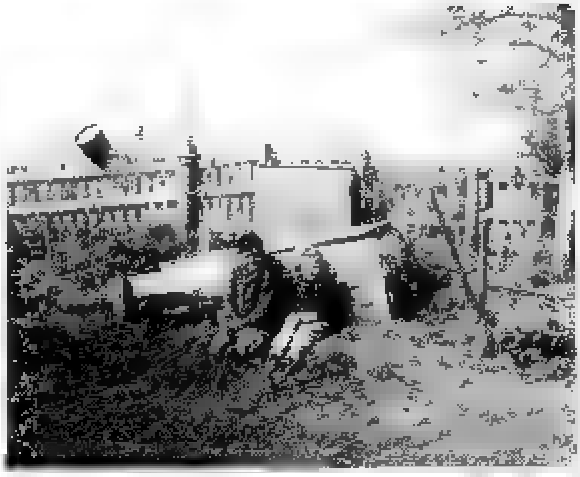
Admiring the Lievers flower garden

Lulla, Ralph, Betsy Bos admiring the chickens.



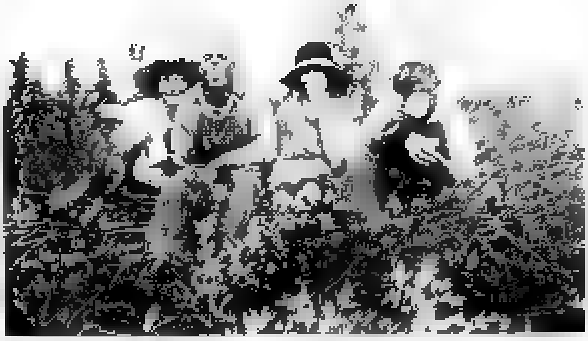
Digging potatoes. Oene and Peter Piers.

The Bill Bouwman farmyard, c. 1930



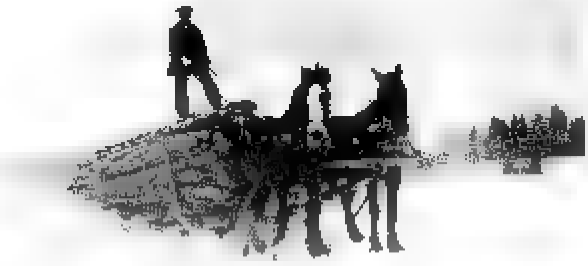
Dug well in background. Henry and Joanne Gelderman in front of a cold frame for growing vegetables c. 1945.

Harry Janssen sharpening fenceposts, 1948.

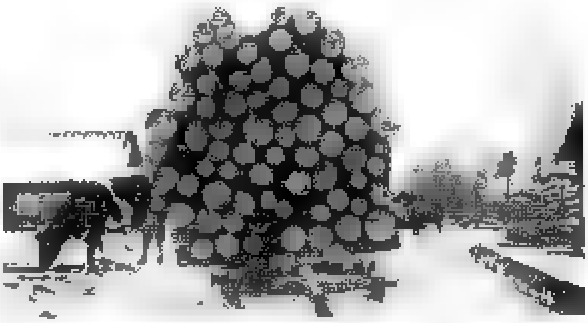


Time for lunch, on a brush pile. Lucy and John Visser, Tena Prins, Raymond Visser.

FIREWOOD



Hauling firewood was an important task. Hendrik Lievers, 1938.

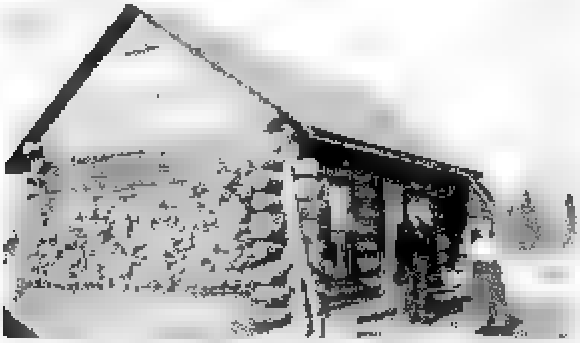


Load after load was hauled. This load contains about eight cords of wood.

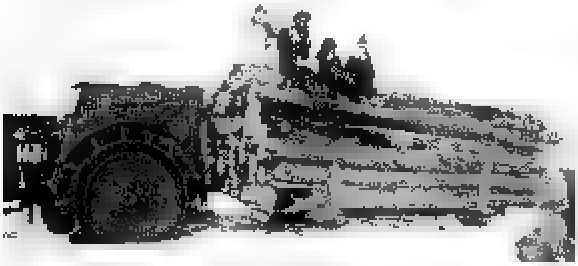
It had to be unloaded at home

Sawed into lengths

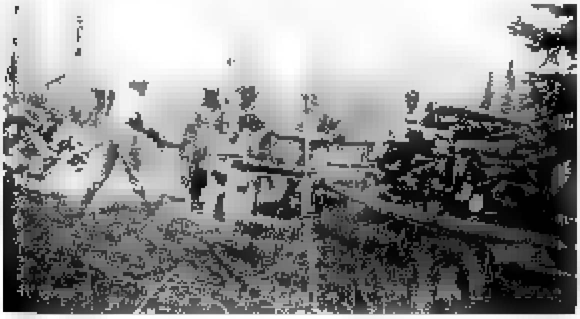
Chopped . Bill Krikke taking a break.



And stacked neatly for winter. The Hendricks by their cabin.

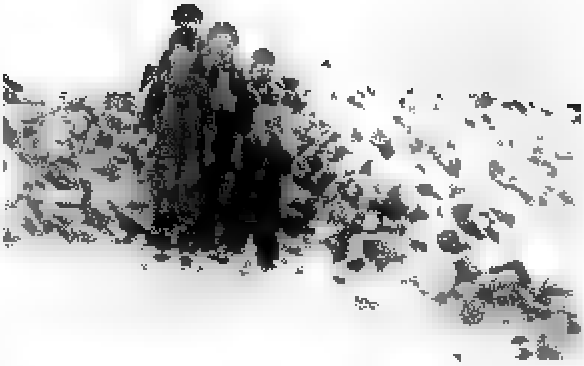


As time went on, tractors were used for hauling. Lambert Wierenga with John and Hilda Molodowich in 1945.



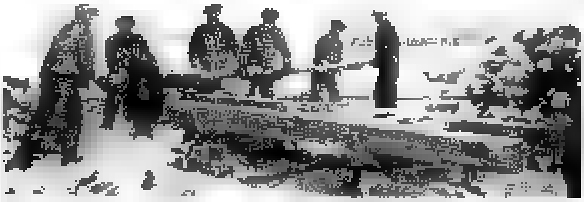
And sawing. John De Vries, Clarence Mast. Jake Schuurman, Pete Mast, Ed Lievers, 1947

And splitting. Bill Navis, 1956



Not everyone stacked the wood neatly. Sandra, Andrew, Winson, and Ann Elgersma.

Sawing. Jack Janssen, Willy Toebes, Jan Paas.



And sawing wood. Dave, Cecil, and Joe Tuininga, Charles Tiemstra, Bob Howey. Pete Tuininga, 1945

HEALTH CARE 1910-1927

When the railroad line came to Barrhead, the town started up with a doctor and nurse and other businesses started. Before this event, the sick had to travel by horse and wagon to Westlock, which would be thirty to forty miles one way and take one day to travel. So that meant the survival of the fittest. This was especially hard on newborn babies and their mothers, the chronically ill, and accident victims. Local midwives took care of births (which was convenient if no complications set in) plus the different diseases such as whooping cough, diphtheria, and influenza.

Cor Fisher

REMEDY FOR SORE THROAT

Make a salt solution. Dip a cloth in it. Wring it out. Wrap it around the throat. (Was not done in wintertime because it was too cold.)

MUSTARD PLASTERS FOR CHEST COLDS

Take equal parts dry mustard and flour and make a paste with water. Spread it on a couple layers of newspaper and cover with another layer. Leave on chest or back or both 15-20 minutes (or longer) but not too long because it will burn.

SICKNESS

There were several families who lost one or two babies on account of rickets because of a deficiency in the diet. One winter just about every family was sick in bed with the bad flu. This was in 1919. There was only one of my brothers and one of my sisters who didn't get the flu. Otherwise we all were sick for a whole week.

Sadie Tiemstra

BURNED

When Joey Krikke was a teenager she had to help Mother with the wash. Once she was taking this boiling water from the stove to dump in the tub and got it all over her foot; she was burned very badly. She did not go to a doctor. (This was hard in those days as the only way of traveling was horses.) Mother put dressings on it every day with Mecca ointment. It was months before it was healed. I think it was a good year for the Neerlandia Co-op as it took boxes and boxes of ointment.

Gladys Mast

VERREAU CUTS UP

About the year 1927 a young doctor by the name of Verreau came around with a petition for starting a practice in Barrhead. I am sure most people signed because we really needed a doctor closer in than Westlock. He started his practise in the building that Charlie Wood later used for a blacksmith shop. One of his early patients was Joe Tuininga, who had a ruptured appendix. For a while it looked like Joe wouldn't make it, but eventually he did. Verreau was so proud of him he called him his "Wonder Boy." Shortly after that he started taking everybody's appendix out. I guess there was good money in that and whenever anyone had anything wrong in the hospital you had your appendix taken out.

John Ingwersen

BIRTH AND DEATH

Fortunately, Neerlandia was a healthy community because the nearest doctor was in Westlock. Midwifery services were provided by Aaltje Baker and Petertje Schoonekamp. Neither of these ladies had any formal training. It is possible Petertje's mother, Johanna Oldegbers, had received midwifery training in the Netherlands.

In the case of death, a local carpenter made the coffin. The body was laid out in the living room for several days, then put on a wagon and taken to the church for the funeral service.

Susie Vanee

HAPPY NEW YEAR

When we were small children in the 1930s, a nickel was a highly-prized possession. We had a bachelor neighbour, Rienk de Jager, who lived one-half mile from our home. This neighbour had a nephew staying with him for a time. This nephew came from the Netherlands and missed his little sister and brother, whom he had left behind. As a result my brother and I often got a lot of attention from him.

One Old Year's Eve, he was down to visit and promised us that if we could wish him "Happy New Year" before he wished us this greeting, we would get a nickel.

Next morning was a mild January first and we left in the dawn, carefully walking along until we came to the barn where he was doing chores. We ran in, calling (in *Fries*): "Happy New Year!" To this day I am sure he had spotted us long before we got there, but he jumped, looking startled, and said, "You beat me." We each got a nickel. We felt like two little rich children marching home, and the great fun of having planned the surprise added to make this something never to be forgotten.

Grace Wierenga

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays at our house were always treated as special occasions, whether they were for the parents or children, the day did not go by unnoticed. The type of celebration differed though. For the children there was usually a homemade gift — perhaps clothing or toys, some treat in the form of cookies and candy, and a day you were treated as "special." Father made mention in his prayers of how thankful they were you had been spared for another year and that made us feel good, made us feel important.

When it came to Mother or Father's birthday the celebrations were a bit more elaborate. Father was a great one for festivities and he usually organized a special event when Mother's birthday rolled around. Days before already he would be planning how and what to do for her "special day." When the children were small, he no doubt handled things by himself, but as we got older we were included in the preparations. The main thing was to decide what gift she needed the most. It would be something that was necessary for the household. Sometimes it was a piece of furniture, or dishes, or some other kitchen utensils. Father would order it from the Co-op store and keep it hidden until the morning of her birthday. Early in the day it would be brought into the front room and covered with a cloth so she would not see it right off. Mother had orders the night before to remain in bed until she was called. We children had to arise a bit earlier than usual, so we would be all washed and dressed and lined up in the front room. Then Mother would be called, and seated in an easy chair. Upon a cue from Father we would all sing from the heart:

Dat 's Heren zegen op U daal',
Zijn gunst uit Zion U bestraal'
Hij schiep 't heelal, Zijn naam ter eer.
Looft, looft nu aller Heren Heer.
(Jehovah bless thee from above
From Zion in His boundless love
Our God, who heaven and earth did frame
Blest be His great and holy Name.)

When I was a little child, the chills would go up my spine when we sang that. It seemed so awesome. After the singing Mother would be kissed and hugged, and then the gift would be displayed. Mother was always very surprised and pleased, but somehow I used to have the feeling she knew a little more about it than she let on. When all the excitement was over it was time to get back to reality, and Mother would put on her apron and make breakfast, which for that special day was cornflakes, eggs, and bread. After that we left for school, Father went to work in the store, and Mother spent the day baking and cooking.

For an extra treat she usually baked cream puffs since there was always plenty of cream and eggs around. For supper there was chicken, potatoes, vegetables, and maybe, if she had the ingredients, a pie for dessert. After supper we played some games and sang songs, which in Father's opinion was the best way to celebrate any event.

These occasions were usually the same for Father's birthday, although it was hard for him to be the passive participant, he liked to do the organizing himself, so the event was never quite the same.

These birthday celebrations lasted many years — until the children left home, and then the tradition came to an end. But birthdays were not forgotten, we got together at the home of whomever had the honour of having a year extended to their life.

Johanna Visser

EASTER

As soon as Dad had a barn built we got a few chickens. Well, they didn't lay eggs in the winter, but would start before Easter. Every family would gather up as many eggs as they could. Then on Easter Sunday we could eat as many eggs as we wanted. We were anxious to meet everyone on Easter Sunday to see who had eaten the most eggs. Old Mrs. Nanninga had a large family, too, mostly boys. She would boil the eggs in the boiler. Those boys would eat a dozen apiece. What a treat!

Sadie Tiemstra

SMELLY THINGS

My brother Pete made $60.00 one spring trapping muskrats and selling the furs. So Pete bought himself a nice suit of clothes and was very proud of it. On Sundays after church, he always went to see his girlfriend. They lived about six miles from us. Coming home one night Pete met up with a skunk, and the skunk sprayed him. You can well imagine the smell. Well, the only thing my mom could do was bury his suit in the ground for awhile to get rid of the smell.

In our times we all wore painted straw hats to church and you could smell the paint. They were very heavy. One summer my sister Gertie and I each got a new hat — one of these heavy things. It was a hot Sunday when we wore them for the first time. Walking home from church, I got sick to my stomach just of the paint smell and the weight of the hat.

Sadie Tiemstra

MEMORIES OF A PIONEER GIRL

We left the Netherlands in 1912, the same year the *Titanic* sank. We sailed on an immigrant ship and from Halifax we travelled on an immigrant train with hard seats, which must have been very difficult for Mother with a wee baby and nine children. We landed in Edmonton. My father had been an engineer in a dairy and got a job as engineer in a box factory in Edmonton, where he would have to work six days a week including Sundays. Being a God-fearing man, he felt he could not work on Sunday and teach his children to "keep the Sabbath day holy", so he decided to move to Neerlandia.

We moved to Neerlandia in 1917. I, being only eight years old at that time, thought it was all very exciting, but when we landed in the bush in an old log house, I felt very lonely. I had loved Edmonton, they were just making wooden sidewalks and my friends and I would build little houses. I also loved school — learned the English language and to read and write in English, and I enjoyed drawing too. On the homestead I was very much afraid of wild animals, bugs, bears, etc. One day a bear walked over my path about ten feet ahead — I was all alone. In the fall, packs of coyotes or wolves would howl on our way to school; it would be very foggy, no houses around, and I was so afraid.

The first year on the homestead my brothers Jack (ten) and Pete (eleven) cleared an acre of land where Dad built a log cabin. (Dad was no builder, only an engineer.) It had a sod roof, which was not so great. It was one big room. Three-quarters of the floor was boarded, the rest was dirt on which were three beds where our parents and us girls slept. There was a partial ceiling like an attic where the boys slept. The house had two small windows which would freeze over in winter — it would be very gloomy. Dad and the boys soon built a larger house, also of logs, with three rooms downstairs, but it was still cold. If we had a very cold winter the frost would crack the stuffing between the logs. it would fall out, and we could see the moon shine on the snow like diamonds. We had only a heater downstairs. By 11 p.m. all the logs were burned up. It would get so terribly cold that even the cylinder records of our old Edison record player would break, we could hear them crack. One year all our potatoes froze in the cellar.

Our school was one big building. We had one teacher who taught all eight grades. It was very strict and no talking was allowed. We had school only for the summer months. We mostly went on bare feet as there were only paths through the muskeg, but we finally knew exactly where to walk. One summer when we had school in the log church we had an old retired minister who was supposed to teach us. He was very deaf and sat way back in the pulpit. We had lots of fun and would go from seat to seat and, of course, learned nothing. I did pass my grade eight government exams.

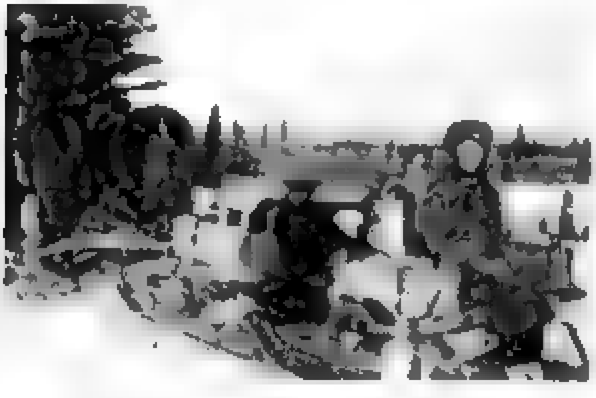
My brothers would trap muskrats in the winter. I would often go along on the traplines — how cold it would be! My brothers got quite a few, however, took them home, skinned them, dried the pelts, and then sold them. Of this money we could buy shoes and other necessities.

Then one winter the cold and frost started in September and lasted till May. No one had any hay or fodder left. We used to travel for miles for a load of straw, which had no food value. So nearly all our livestock died of starvation — another year of struggling. One very poor year Mother made us sort of moccasins out of old heavy coats. Sometimes she had no thread, so she took it out of other garments which took hours. Father was always a cheerful Christian, in spite of hard struggles, and taught us many hymns and Steven Foster songs such as "Old Black Joe" and "Put on your old Grey Bonnet".

One year Grace, my baby sister, got pneumonia. Mother and Dad had to take her by wagon through rough trails to Westlock. The hospital was just a house. Mother stayed with Grace as she was so sick and scared, so I had to stay home and keep the home fires burning. I did it cheerfully because I knew it had to be done, even though I loved school.

By that time I was about fourteen and was used to my surroundings and had school friends. I also loved going to church, which lasted two hours. We walked five miles to church so were quite ready to sit for a long time. I would go to my friends' for lunch.

Our Aunt lived about a mile down the road from us. I worked there from age twelve to seventeen and hated it at first; I would be tired from the daily long walk to school. However, she taught me much. My pay would be twenty-five cents from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I saved my money and bought a pair of shoes from Eaton's catalogue for $1.45. I also bought a couple of yards of chambray from which I made my own dresses. I would also save for a straw hat since everyone wore them to church.



On the sleigh. Tena Terpsma on Kippers' sleigh

The July first picnics were a highlight in our lives. Then we got ice cream — once a year. Another great day was our Christmas concert — a whole-day affair. We all went by bob sleigh, we were covered with blankets, with heated stones at our feet, and a milk can of chocolate milk tied to the back. Over every bump in the road some would spill out, we loved the chocolate icicles. I used to sing duets such as "The Holy City" and "Whispering Hope" with my girlfriend. Everyone seemed to like it and would ask us to do it again. Everyone would bring goodies — what a treat! There would be songs, dialogues, recitations, and so on — a joy amid all the hardships. As we grew up we would go walking to Bible Class on Saturday afternoons and to choir practice Thursday nights. I loved all that.

Gertie Muller

KLAAS AND JELLE

When the Klaas and Jelle Tuininga families couldn't get to church because the small bridge over the creek washed away, they would have a service at Jelle's, where a sermon would be read either by Jelle or Klaas. They always dressed up on Sunday whether they went to church or not and in the afternoon Sjoerdje read Bible stories to the children.

They and the neighbours all walked to church and Carrie can remember Joe Baker carrying baby Charlie all the way to be baptized.

MANNERS

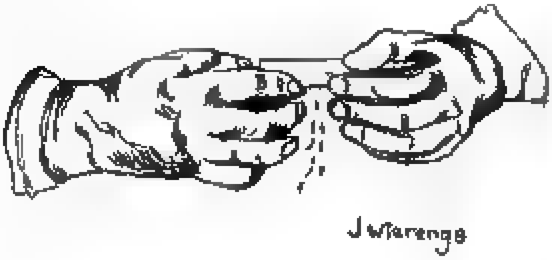
One time our school went on a track meet to Mellowdale. Sadie wanted to meet her friends at Anema's Corner, so she and I left home at 6:00 a.m. to enable us to walk the five miles in time to get a ride. There were a couple of wagons going and we rode with Joe Holwerda. We had twenty-five cents to spend for the day. Upon arriving, my sister promptly spent all the money for chocolate bars. I could hardly eat the last bit (very likely had five bars for the money) but the bad part of it was that when the ice cream was sold in the afternoon we didn't have any money!

On the return trip Katie Metzger rode along. Joe Holwerda left her off at the gate and she said, "Thanks for the ride," and Joe said, "You're welcome." I had never heard the expression before and never forgot it. No wonder Mr. van Ark was trying to teach us homesteaders some manners. We had to say, "No sir," "Yes sir," and "Mr. or Mrs. So and So" no first names.

Carrie Olthuis

OOPS! WAS THAT YOUR THUMB?

We had a very thrifty man in our district. In those days most men chewed plug tobacco and would treat one another. When it was his turn he would hold his thumb on the plug to mark the size of bite they could take.



KEEPING TIME

The Bakers had a mantel clock, but it would sometimes be stopped because it had not been wound or was dusty. If it was dusty, Aaltje would find a chicken feather that was not too coarse and, after dipping it in coal oil, would go along all the gears in the back to clean the clockwork. But once the clock was running again, there was no way of knowing what time it was. So Aaltje would often say to Minnie or George, "Run to the line a minute and see what time it is." The "line" was a three-wire fence that was near the house and ran north and south. They would estimate what time it was by checking the shadows made on the ground by the wires. When all three wires formed one shadow, it was exactly 12:30 p.m.

Minnie Plantinga

LEISURE

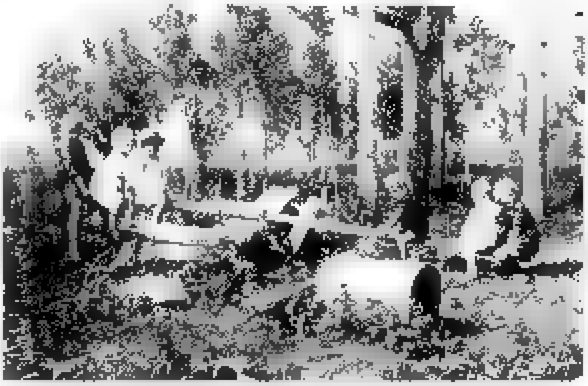
Joey and I had different likes and dislikes. Joey was a home-lover. I was an outdoors type. I liked roaming the bush looking for flowers, birds' nests, and berries. The only nests I destroyed were crows' nests. I could never get Joey to come along, but Lily came quite often.

We also liked trips to the sandhills to pick blueberries. We would start out at 4:00 a.m. with horses and wagon and get home around 6:00 p.m. with lots of berries. Everyone went except Mother. The Lievers family usually went with us.

We girls always had braids (or pigtails, some called them). One day Joey and myself took Lily behind the chicken house and Joey did a great job of bobbing her hair. We thought she looked real pretty. Apparently Mother didn't.

Gladys Mast

The Lievers children going for a sheep ride.



Fun is where you find it. Simon (left) and Grace, (right) Tuininga with nephews and nieces.

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

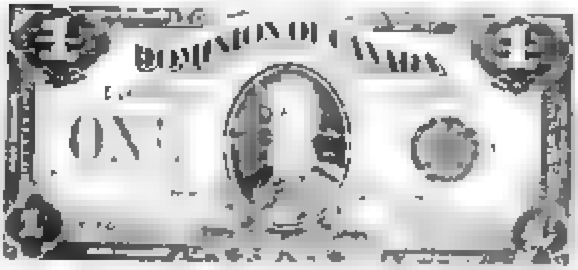
Good clean fun and recreation was also our lot. We did not have to spend large sums of money to entertain ourselves. On the first of July the whole congregation gathered around the church for a land-clearing bee, ending with a picnic and games for young and old.

Weddings were shared by all and anniversaries were always an occasion for rejoicing. The whole community would arrive at the home of the host, bringing food and music, enjoying each other's company and catching up on news.

Hardship and trials never dampened our sense of humour. Quite the contrary, they tightened the bonds of solidarity and loyalty we felt for one another. This attitude was encouraged by our church. Services were faithfully attended. Snow, rain, mud, or 40 to 50-degree-below weather would never be a deterrent. When a familiar face was missing, everybody sought the reason and offered any help needed. In the early period of the settlement this was the only social contact the settlers had. We were all happy to greet our neighbours and actually looked forward to these Sunday meetings, as not only did we get to hear what God had to say to us, but we were able to listen to all the happenings in the settlement for the past week, be it either good or ill.

All in all it was a good life. Poor, yes, if one considers material things only, but rich in many other ways. Our daily experiences and trials molded us into stronger men and women, physically as well as morally.

Tjibbe Reitsma



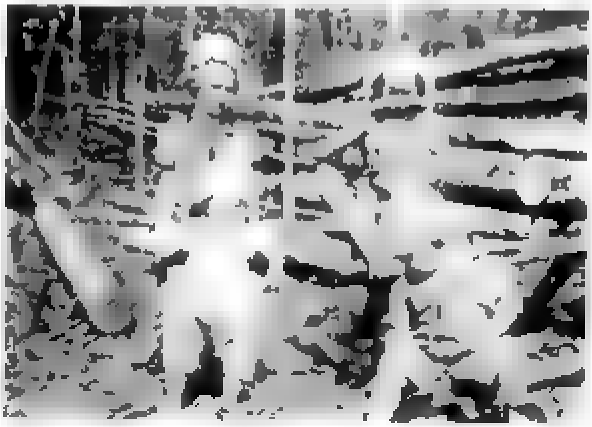
No one had much money, but a lot could be bought with a 1923 one dollar bill, known as a Horse Blanket

THE LITTLE BONES

"In the early days we ate a lot of rabbit meat, prairie chickens, and pancakes. We'd eat the breasts of the prairie chickens, and our toys were the little bones of the long back. They were trains. I can remember that. We used to string them and later on put them on the Christmas tree."

TOYS IN THE THIRTIES

"For toys we often used wooden spools. We also used to ride a stick for a horse or cut pictures out of the catalogue. Bow and arrows were made out of willow. Later we got some of those blocks with the alphabet on them."



Some of the Strydhorst children

FIRE!

Fire was a real danger in those early days. Everyone had stovepipes going right up and out of the roof. These would sometimes get red hot when the weather was real cold. I well remember the Schoonekamps, who lived north of us, having their house on fire from the stovepipes. This would happen quite often, and all the children would have to come to our place to sleep. I used to think that was exciting, as we would all lie awake and talk most of the night. Dad and my older brothers went to fight the fire, even Rev. Van Der Woude would sometimes help. In the morning we would hear all the details of how they finally got the fire out. It all had to be done by bucket and hauled out of a well! One family had a fire start under the roof and, no water being immediately available, someone took the slop pail, which was in every home in those days, and threw it at the fire to put it out. It seems in those days the Lord took special care and I do not know of any real bad fires until later when we had cars.

John Ingwersen

ADDED INCOME

A number of our younger married men and some single men went to help harvest in the southern prairies. They started stooking at the end of July or the beginning of August and worked till the threshing was completed. Most of these men would come home with $200.00 to $400.00 — a great help in paying for the winter's added expenses.

Cor Fisher

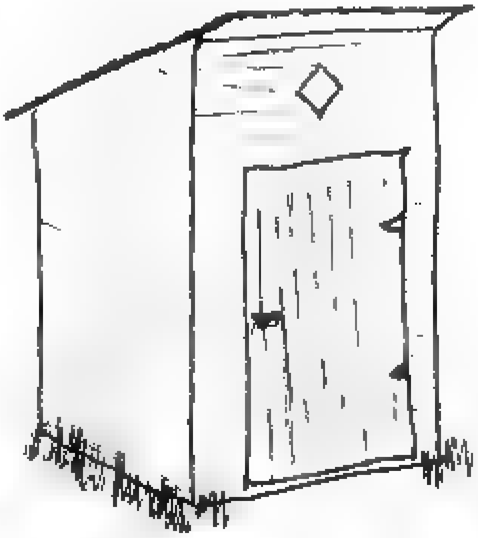
Harvesting in the Prairie, 1928. Two engineers, Ike Nanninga, Bill and John Olthuis, Henry Kippers in front.

TRAVELLING SALESMEN

One never knew when a travelling salesman would appear at the door. This could result in some embarrassing moments. One day I was doing my work cheerfully, singing as I did. Those were the days when we had no indoor plumbing, so the chamber pot was an essential item. Each day a trip had to be made to the outhouse to empty the pottie. On this day I was carrying it to the door — all the while singing lustily, "Good-night Irene, good-night Irene." As I stepped out the door I came face to face with the handsome Watkins dealer. I hastily set the pot down and invited him in. We both had a hearty laugh over it, but I bet he had a story to tell his friends that night.

A PIONEER OUTHOUSE

"Near our log house was an outhouse that had been put up by the previous homesteader, who was English. It was neatly built with peeled six-inch poplar poles — the only one like it in the settlement. The one thing it lacked was a door, and we children had to look in all directions before using it, as it faced the house and was in full view of any visitors approaching the house. Fortunately we didn't live along a main road. The outhouse never had a door for many years. Later we put a makeshift door of boards in front of it."

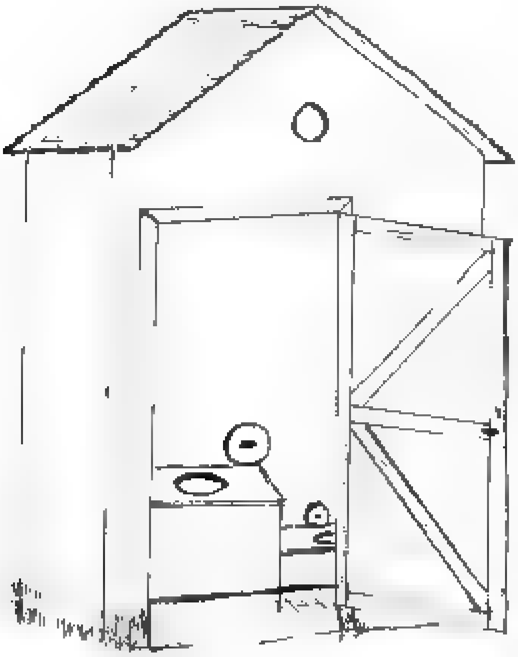


OUT TO THE OUTHOUSE

My dad had built a beautiful new outhouse. My three older sisters were quite grown-up, and my three younger sisters were growing up too, and you know how girls are: when one has to go, they all have to go, and one would get there first and that would leave at least two to fight about who was going to be next.

My parents had discussed this situation a few times, and the only reasonable solution seemed to be a two-seater outhouse. It was really quite a respectable structure, made of slabs.

Slabs are the outside cuts of a log when it is sawn into lumber. Every log sawn in a mill produces slabs. These were piled beside the mill and could be bought for two cents apiece. It was cheap material and was used for building fences, sheds, roofs on log barns, and outhouses. The first layer was put on with the bark to the inside, which gave it a rustic appearance and the second layer was put on with the bark to the outside which gave the appearance of a log building with the logs standing upright. The roof was made of the same material. The door was made of one-inch boards, as were the floor and the seats.



It seemed to me that for some people outhouses became a sort of status symbol, something like bathrooms are today. I remember that one family had a beautiful three-seater, like in the story of the three bears — a great big seat for father, a middle-sized seat for mother, and a wee, wee seat for baby. When I reflect on the size of mothers in those days, I think most of them used the great big seat too.

Our outhouse even had a knothole in the back wall that I could peak through but, as it didn't have a window and it was quite dark inside when the door was closed, I was always disappointed that I couldn't see much anyway.

For toilet paper there was always last year's Eaton's and Simpson's catalogues and last week's *Free Press Prairie Farmer* or the *Western Producer*.

A favourite trick on Halloween night was to move the outhouse back off the pit in the hope that someone would have to use it before morning light and walk into the pit in the dark. That was a real "dirty" trick and I never heard of anyone that did walk into it.

Outhouses also gave problems in the winter when the temperature dropped thirty to fifty below zero for extended periods of time, and this happened quite frequently. At these times the stools would freeze where they dropped and a frozen pole would grow up from the pit, and soon you would be sitting on a frozen dung pole. The only solution to that was to take an axe to the pole and chop it down. This procedure would have to continue until the spring thaw came, then it would all settle down to the bottom again.

George Anema

BAD BOER BOYS

Jack and George Boer (nephews of Dad) spent several summers at the farm. They were city boys, very much unaware of the life on the farm. Being young boys, they did not always go downstairs and outside to go to the outdoor toilet. They would just open the upstairs window and do their thing. This normally would not be a problem, but below the window were hung the milk-straining cloths. Dad had been puzzled for some time as to why those cloths were still wet in the morning. When Jack and George heard them talking about it, they realized what was happening but they did not tell.

They were concerned what the next cream grade would be. It turned out to be Grade "A", much to their relief.

Henry Gelderman

Saturday night bath, Jim and Roy in tub. Art clowning, 1962

FARM WIFE'S DAY, MAY 1947

Monday, 5:00 a.m. the alarm clock lets out a loud ring to awaken us to another busy day. We must be up at 5:00 a.m. because there is so much work to do. We have cows to milk and the separator to turn the milk through, then the milk is brought back to the calves who are so eagerly awaiting their warm fresh milk. Now the barrel must be filled with water for the cows from our hand-pumped well. The sun is shining brightly, and the birds are singing and making nests in the many trees surrounding our new home. It is a beautiful spring day.

It is now 7:00 a.m. and time for breakfast. How fortunate our firewood was dry, now the stove is hot, the kettle is full with boiling water, and we quickly have our breakfast ready. Our toast was slightly burnt this morning since the stove is hot. (Better next time, we hope.) Now it is 7:30 a.m. and Joe goes out to feed the four horses and pump water for them. He also feeds and brings water to the hogs and cleans the barn. It is wash day and I start hauling water to heat on the stove. How fortunate that the reservoir on the stove has hot water, so I can wash the dishes. Next I clean the separator which is very dirty because it was not washed on Sunday. I clean the milk pails and then run for more wood for the ever hungry stove. The wash water is warm, everything is going smoothly, already so much done and it's now 9:30 a.m. I haul the hot water to the washer, and run for more pails of cold water to rinse the clothes and extra water to boil the towels in. But alas! Try as I will I cannot start my gas washer. I run to Joe for help. I hesitate to ask him because he is busy sharpening his axe to chop trees down on a strip of land he hopes to farm the next year. He comes and tries his best. After a loud roar and a few sputters it is humming along nicely. It is ten minutes to ten so I quickly make a cup of coffee. The stove is still hot and the coffee is perking in no time.

I continue with my wash. It is a beautiful morning and soon the wash is blowing gently on the line, with the extra overalls hanging over a fence to dry.

It is already 11:30 a.m., how the morning has flown by! I must see what is left from Sunday to make a fast meal. There is not much left as we had company for supper on Sunday, but we will manage. I let out a shout to Joe, only to find that someone is out there helping him and will also come for dinner. We share our meal, I haven't much bread on hand as Tuesday is my bread-baking day. I am thoroughly frustrated that I did not have a good meal for my guest.

It is now 12:45; our dinner is finished, and I first go out to get more firewood and a pail of fresh water. I then drain the washer into pails and haul it outside, clean the washer, and put it away. Now I must bring the slop to the hogs as my pails are full. I will check the sitting hens and the one turkey who is also sitting. It is pleasant out there — the birds continue their busy chatter and the cows and calves are sleeping in the warm sunshine, but there is work to do so I better get back to the house

I now wash up my dinner dishes and sweep and dust mop the floors. Everything is dusty and the old dust mop needs plenty of shaking. Soon everything is looking nice It is 3 p.m My husband comes in to announce he can borrow a plow to get a small piece of land ready for our garden, if I help him, he will seed our potatoes. We work at this together and soon it is done It is 4:15 p.m and we have a cup of tea How great things are going today Joe says he will go back to clear more land until six o'clock, so I get more water to fill my reservoir and a few pails of fresh water to use for drinking and cooking. I then get more wood for the wood box to keep our stove content until next morning.

Now it is time for supper. The stove gets a few pieces of wood and it cooperates very well I open a jar of meat to get it frying so it will be browned just right. I open a jar of vegetables — after all, it is May and there are no fresh vegetables left. Then I run to the well to get the milk which has been hanging in there to keep from getting sour. I will make a pudding for supper. In a short time it is ready, and I again let out a shout — it's a good thing Joe is clearing so close to the house

We have our supper, then Joe goes out to milk the cows, and do the same chores as he did in the morning. Joe brings in the fresh milk, and I turn the separator for him and bring out the fresh milk to the calves I also shut the doors to the sitting hens and turkey

I gather my wash from the fence and clothesline, as the sky looks dark and I wouldn't want my wash wet again. I wash my supper dishes, sweep the floor, and then bring the cream to hang down the well

It is 9:00 p.m. We are both tired. I fill the lamp with coal oil and then make a cup of tea. It has been a busy day; it has been a beautiful day Very tired, we head for bed. The alarm clock is no respecter of persons and will awaken us at 5:00 a.m again

EMBARRASSING MOMENT

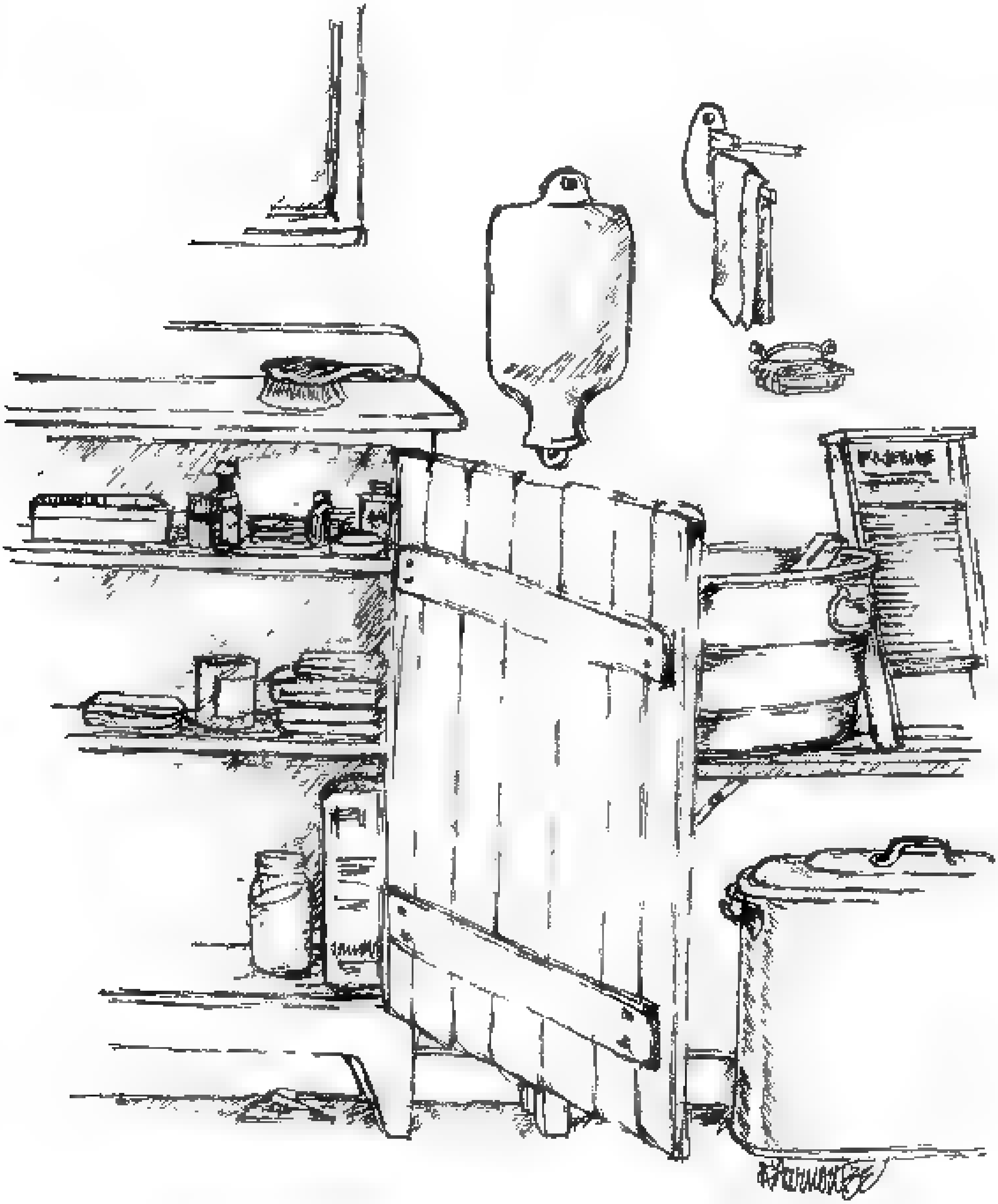
On winter washdays, clotheslines were strung across the rooms, and clothing was hung upon them to dry Sheets and towels and shirts and pants festooned the lines. Socks and stockings hung there too. Making one's way across a room was an awkward procedure and sometimes embarrassing as well. One man, late for Men's Society, flung his jacket on as he passed through the kitchen on his way to the door. He hated to be late and, to his great relief, reached the church just in time for the meeting Quickly he removed his jacket and sat down — only to be greeted by gales of laughter. Over his shoulder hung one of his wife's stockings — the result of his hasty passage through the kitchen.

WINTER FOR FARM WOMEN

*Winter for farm women was a cosy, but busy time Many hours were spent carding wool, until finally we would have enough to make quilts. Making wool-filled quilts was a big job as the houses were small and a form took up a great deal of room, but the results were worth it — having very warm quilts for the cold winter nights in our cold houses.

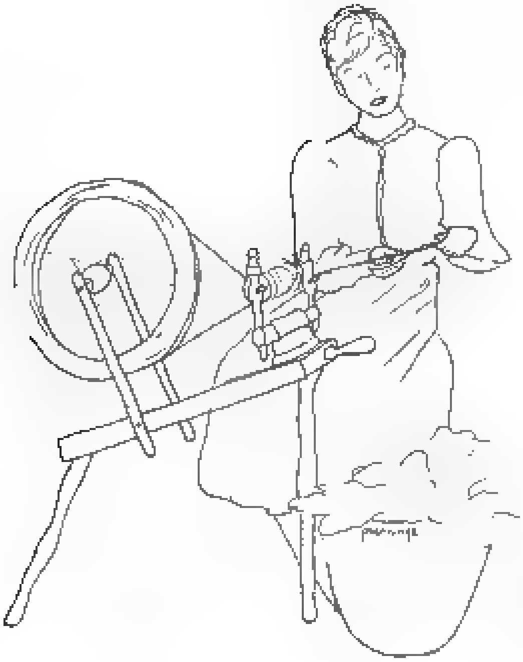
* Washing clothes was a big job. There was not much room to hang everything inside, so often the wash was hung outside to freeze and later taken in to dry inside. Families were often ducking under clothes in the kitchen and frontroom We had to melt snow for washing as many had hand-dug wells that did not have enough water, in the summer we used rainwater.

* We also canned meat in the winter, as that is when the butchering was done This usually included three days of cutting and boiling and grinding fat in preparation for rendering lard.



* We used potatoes to make our own starch. The potatoes would be peeled and grated, then put on cookie sheets. Then the next day the starch would be settled under the potatoes. We lifted the potatoes off and the starch was put on paper to dry. We used this starch for clothes and for thickening pudding. It was a brownish colour, but worked well.

* Women made mats out of leftover stockings, socks, or dresses. They often spent many



hours knitting or doing embroidery. Many homes had embroidered flour sacks, pillowcases, and aprons. These embroidered aprons were special, used only for Sundays.

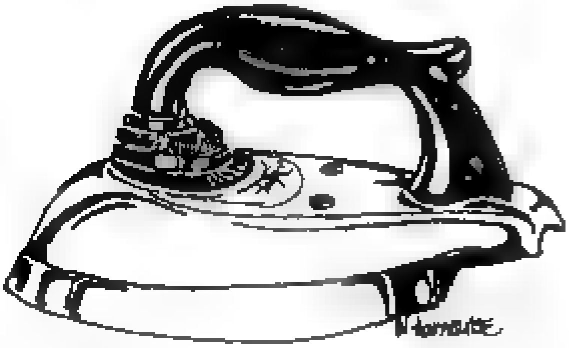
* Very few people had fresh eggs in the winter because the henhouses were cold and the chickens could barely survive, let alone produce eggs. There was a solution available called water glass. In the summer when eggs were plentiful we would have several crocks in which we would dilute water glass with water. Then each day we put fresh eggs in, until the solution got too thick to cover the eggs adequately. The crocks were put in the cellar, and in the winter these eggs were great for baking or making scrambled eggs. They were not good for boiling as the shells were softened from the storage.

* The evenings were cosy since no one went out because of the difficulty in getting to other places. Only the young people went to choir and Young People's societies, so the family was busy together reading, knitting, or playing checkers. Musical members of the family played the organ, mandolin, or mouth organ.

WASH DAY

I remember the days when I was a young girl, how wash day was one I never looked forward to. Monday morning started out with the task of going to the garage to get water for the wash. I never did master the art of starting the old pump engine with ease. On cold frosty mornings it was especially difficult. If you've ever started a gasoline pump engine you will know how hard this was for a young girl. To get the engine going I had to bend over and crank the engine with one hand while with the other hand I had to control the choke. The bit of holding my finger over the air intake or carburetor always gave me a scary feeling — as a result I always pulled my finger away too soon and this made the engine balk all the more. Once I did get the engine going there was the trick of pulling my hand back quickly, I often had sore knuckles from being hit by the handle on the flywheel.

Once I got the pump engine going there was the task of carrying pails of water to the house for the huge pile of washing which had to be washed. Carrying two buckets of water at a time without sloshing it over myself took some



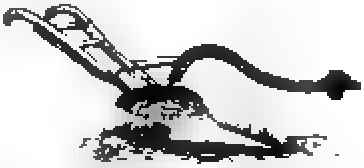
skill. I often had my skirt and shoes well-soaked with water by the time I was finished. If you've ever had a wet skirt slap around your legs with every step you take, you'll understand how unpleasant it is.

By the time the water was heated on the old wood stove it was time to challenge the old gas-motored washing machine. That motor, too, liked to put up a good fight before it would go. To get it going I needed to step down on a foot pedal, it took a strong leg and a lot of patience to coax it to start. By the time I finally got it going the room was filled with blue exhaust.

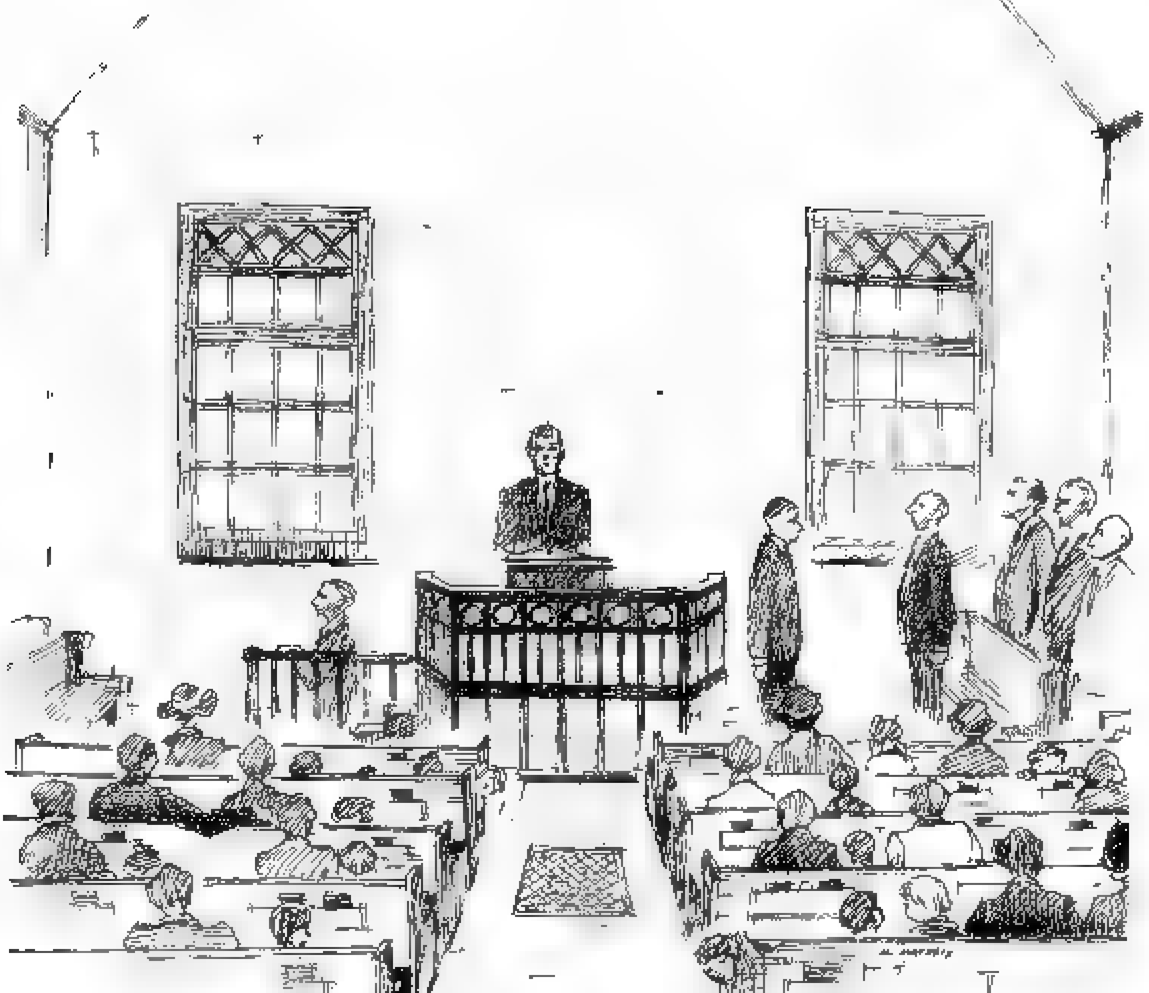
The old cook stove could only put out so much heat so we always washed with warm water and rinsed with cold. I still feel chilly when I think of putting my hands in that ice cold water — and Mom always insisted on rinsing twice. The last rinse had to have blueing in it — the stuff that looks like ink to make the white articles whiter. Putting articles through the wringer was another challenge. If perchance the article wasn't straight, a pocket or pillow case corner were good places to trap some water as they went through the wringer, it was no surprise to get showered with cold water when the pressure of going through the wringer squirted it out.

During cold winter months, if I wasn't cold enough after handling all the cold water and clothing, I still had to hang the wash on the line outside as it was thought that the frost would help whiten it some more and it would dry a bit. By nightfall it was time to haul in all those stiff boards. The unyielding sheets were just like handling sheets of plywood. Men's combination underwear became statues and were a chore to handle. If anyone happened to be in the way they just might get a good whack with one of those stiff legs. With fingers numb from the cold after prying off all those clothespins and getting the stiff clothes off the line, I would dash back to the warm house. Once the solid articles had softened up they were draped over doors, chairs, and clotheslines which were strung in parallel rows across the kitchen and living room, and the house became cool and damp. Although I would be chilled to the bone and weary from the day's work the little kids found it great fun to run up and down amongst the drying clothes. Occasionally one of the lines would come down with all the cool, damp wash. The rewarding part of wash day was those clean clothes and the fresh smell of the outdoors. Many a wash day today I am thankful to live in an age of automatic washers and dryers and always plenty of hot water.

Joan Bos



Pulpit and Pew



CHURCH

When the Dutch immigrants who were living in Edmonton in the early 1900s first decided to begin a farming community, it was a foregone conclusion that the community would be centered around a Reformed church The intent of those early pioneers was clear they wanted to start a community which would be exclusively Dutch and Reformed wherein they could live out their faith isolated from other Canadians and worldly influences. The institution which they established, the Christian Reformed Church of Neerlandia primarily served the people s need to worship God and to express their faith in the new circumstances in which they found themselves

The group of people who set out to accomplish this task were remarkably unified They came from many different walks of life, though most were poor; they came from areas of the old country with varying views of what it means to be Reformed, with a large group coming from the conservative, staunchly-Calvinist provinces in the north, a few of them were strong Kuyperians Each was fervent in his own Christian ideals and in spite of the different views, each was committed to establishing a strong church community

Throughout the community's history, immigrants from the Netherlands joined the community Each group had new ideas and experiences that were peculiar to them and also characteristic of changes which had occurred in the Dutch churches since the Neerlandia pioneers had left This introduction of fresh ideas began in the twenties after Dutch immigrants again came to Canada after World War I was over In 1928-29 a group of large families from the province of Groningen. people strongly committed to a traditional Reformed theology, came to Neerlandia and became a strong influence in the church After World War II, more immigrants arrived with their religious viewpoints. Through it all, the community struggled to maintain its original vision

There was a tendency among the pioneers toward a narrow view of Christianity, a view that considered ideas and practices which did not conform to the Reformed view of Christianity and which were not Dutch, as unacceptable and therefore to be avoided In order to be "in the world but not of the world" some thought it best to avoid the rest of "Canadian" society by keeping geographically and culturally separate from it People of other nationalities and religious backgrounds were at times made to feel that they were not welcome to settle in Neerlandia The notion that there was only one correct view made it difficult for people to accept differences in others, and at the same time to accept differences among themselves

Regardless of the prevailing view of the church in Neerlandia, there were those who challenged it. Thus in the twenties the "Lievers' group" left the church to form their own fellowship of believers, a group of people left the church in the fifties to start a Canadian Reformed congregation, and the AACS movement caused tension in the community in the sixties.

Besides the doctrinal differences which appeared among the members of the Neerlandia community there were other serious problems, especially severe economic hardship in the early years and the always painful problem of "wayward youth" Yet God, who placed a candlestick in the wilds of northern Alberta in 1912, has blessed the church through the years

* * *

Building the Church

Most of the people here belonged to the Christian Reformed Church and one or two had been elders in the Edmonton Church At first they read sermons when they came together in their homes on Sundays I, not being a member did and do not agree with all their teachings but attended the services up to the 20s because there was nothing else We did not always agree but worked together quite harmoniously building the log church at first and, after, helping build the better buildings. So when the log church was built, I did my part as a carpenter putting in the windows and doors, etc

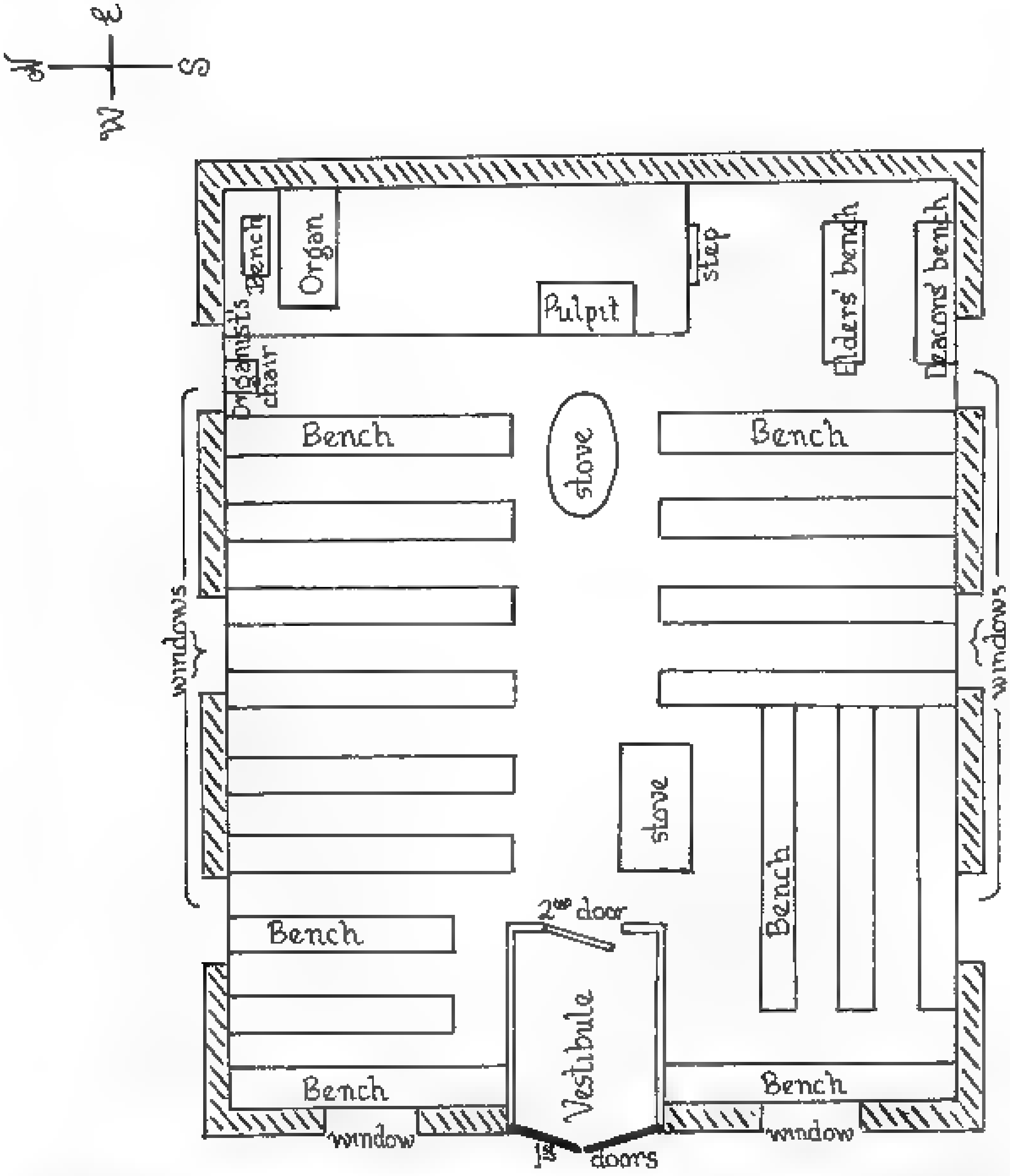
Ben Lievers Sr

* * *

Beginnings: A Log Church is Built and a Congregation is Organized

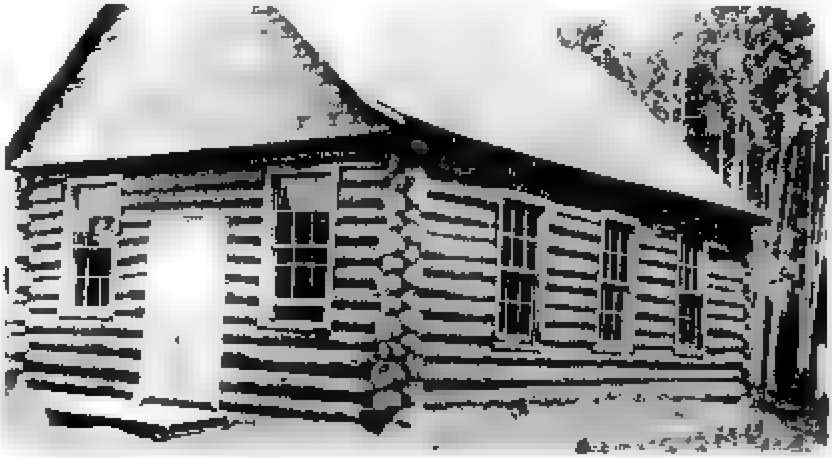
The pioneers who had started the community in the winter of 1911-1912 turned their attention to the matter of building a church in the winter of 1914-15. In the three-year interval most of them, who had their church memberships in the First Edmonton Christian Reformed Church, gathered together to worship in each other's homes. John Anema's cabin, near the centre of the settlement, seems to have been the place for worship most of the time In the winter of 1914-15, plans were drawn for the construction of a log church, and logs were cut from the Big Timber They were loaded on sleighs and hauled by oxen north to Anema's Corner and then one mile west to the location which had been chosen. A square piece of ground (ten acres) on the northwest corner of Rienk de Jager's quarter (SW 34-61-3-5) had been donated for church property A patent fee of ten dollars was paid to the provincial government.

Nearly all the men of the community helped with the building. Several good carpenters Ben Lievers Menne Nanninga, Popko Schuring, Jacob Visser were among them and they made sure the job was done right The logs were lifted into position and dovetailed together at the corners to keep them securely in place A block and tackle was used to raise the logs to the higher levels When all the logs were in place, diagonal braces were fastened across the top to keep the corners square The roof was made of pole rafters covered by one-inch lumber with cedar shingles over that (some of the old-timers say it was the only roof in Neerlandia at that time which did not leak!). There were three large windows on the longer north and south sides and two on the west side The doors which were on the west side sometimes did not shut very well and were, therefore, propped with a stick of wood Another homesteader, William Swaffield, neither Dutch nor Christian Reformed, also helped with



Floor plan of the log church. The building was about thirty by twenty-four feet and seated approximately 108 people. At first the only stove was the one at the back of the church, but later another stove was placed near the front. For baptisms, a bowl of water was brought in. For the celebration of the Lord's Supper, two long tables were placed at the front of the church. Each July First the church benches were used outside for the picnic.

the church building. He made a diamond-shaped decoration of cedar shingles on the west gable above the door. The cracks between the logs were chinked with moss to keep the wind out.



Log church built in 1915.

At first the inside of the church was just bare logs, but several years later they were covered with heavy blue building paper held in place with shingle nails and large tin washers. The ceiling was open to the roof. The building was about twenty-four by thirty feet and had a seating capacity of 150 people. There was a small podium at the front for the minister (or, as was more often the case, a reading elder). The building was heated with a large wood-burning stove near the back. Later another heater was added near the front of the building. The total cost was about two hundred dollars, one hundred of this was received from the CRC Church Help Fund.

With a church building nearly completed, the settlers made a request to Classis Pacific of the Christian Reformed Church that they be allowed to organize as a congregation of that denomination in Neerlandia. The request was granted, and Rev. Guikema of Everett, Washington, and Rev. Vriesman of Zillah, Washington, were appointed to assist the consistory of Edmonton Christian Reformed Church in the task of promoting and establishing a Christian Reformed Church in Neerlandia.

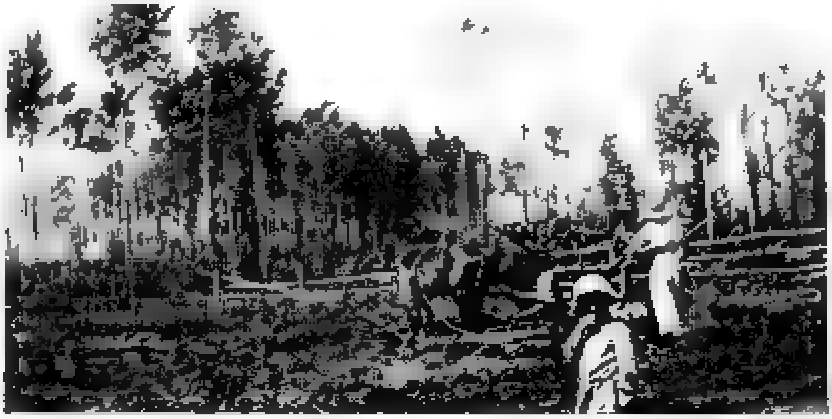
On May 1, 1915, the following memberships were transferred from Edmonton to Neerlandia

Jan and Froukje Anema with three children
Gaele and Catherina Baker with three children
Drikus and Johanna Huinink with two children
Cornelius and Hermina Ingwersen with four children
Hendrik and Mina Kannegieter
Rudolf and Geesje Kieneker with seven children
Henry and Jennigje Kippers with four children
Klaas Krikke
Albert and Everdina Mast with one child
Minke Mast with one child
Johan and Everdina Messelink with three children
Henry and Anna Michael
Albert Jan and Johanna Oldegbers with one child
Hendrik and Petertje Schoonekamp with two children
Popko and Jantje Schuring with two children

Douwe and Betje Terpsma with six children
Siebren and Willemke Tiemstra with three children
Hendrik van den Burg

Even though there were more settlers in Neerlandia, not all of them immediately requested membership transfers from Edmonton.

Clearing around church building, July 1



Discing the church grounds.

On Wednesday, June 2, 1915, the organizational meeting for the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church was held in the new log church which had recently been completed. It was pouring rain, but since there was no way of letting people know if the meeting was cancelled, it was held anyhow. In spite of the weather, nearly all of the congregation was present for the event. Rev. Tjeerd Jongbloed and deacon C. Quist had come from Edmonton the previous week to represent the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church for the occasion. Rev. Jongbloed chaired the meeting and Case Ingwersen was asked to take minutes. Rev. Jongbloed explained that the two ministers from Washington were unable to be present so he had been asked to take charge of the organizing ceremony. At the time it was organized the congregation was composed of seventeen families. There were thirty-five confessing members and forty-six baptized members, including Gerrit and Wilhelmina Nyland and their three children, Hermiena, William, and Fredrik, of Eastburg.

After Rev. Jongbloed declared the congregation organized, nomination of candidates for consistory took place. It was decided

to have three elders and two deacons. After nominations, there was a recess of one hour to give the candidates time to decide whether to allow their names to stand. The first consistory consisted of Gaele Baker, Case Ingwersen, and Popko Schuring as elders and Johan Messelink and Siebren Tiemstra as deacons.

The first consistory meeting was held immediately after the organizing ceremonies were over. Matters discussed at this meeting included the need for a communion set, a baptismal font, and an organ. It was decided not to get any of these immediately because there was no money. At this meeting Arie Emmerzael, who was from the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk* of Hillegom, the Netherlands, was accepted as a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The treasurer reported an income until that time of $278, which included $100 from the Church Help Fund. Expenses were $177.04, leaving a balance of $100.96.

The Formative Years 1915-1927

The new consistory immediately attended to the more administrative aspects of running a church. These included ordering a book of sermons (*Menigerlei Genade*) from the Netherlands for use in the reading services and a set of catechism books for the young people in the congregation. After about eight months, Hendrik Schoonekamp was hired as church custodian at $2.75 per month, replacing Rienk de Jager who had till that time done the job free of charge. The church yard and cemetery were fenced off by Jacob Visser and Willem de Groot for twenty-five dollars. The consistory put an advertisement in *De Wachter* for a used communion set and several months later a set was received from the Englewood Christian Reformed Church in New Jersey.

First congregation c. 1915.

There was much to be done, and the consistory had to set priorities for what to do with the available funds. When a complaint was heard about the poor singing during the services, the diagnosis was simple: there was no organ to lead the singing. Yet the consistory decided against purchasing an organ since there was not enough money. Efforts to obtain a student pastor through Classis (October 12, 1915) and to have a room built on to the church to be used as a classroom (December 8, 1916) also came to naught.

* * *

A Dirty Story

Once Mr. Tiemstra went to Dusseldorf to get a minister to preach on Sunday. In the fashion of the day, he used his team of oxen pulling a two-wheel cart. These carts, often homemade, were the only vehicles that could travel the rough trails we had instead of roads. Before leaving, these two oxen had their fill of June tender green grass and as a result their bowel movement was uncontrollable. On the way back, jogging at about two-and-a-half miles an hour, one of the oxen hit a pothole deeper than the others. Trying to get out of there, pulling and grunting, he lifted his tail and sprayed the dear minister, who was sitting directly behind him. The poor man was covered from head to toe with digested green grass.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *

In 1915, Albert Mast requested a plot in the cemetery for his infant child who had been buried on the Mast homestead. The consistory had to admit the cemetery was not ready yet. Shortly thereafter Popko Schuring drew up a cemetery plan to government specifications, and by 1919, plots could be reserved for one dollar each.

In 1918, improvements were made to the church property. Henry Michael was awarded a contract to haul four thousand board feet of lumber from a nearby mill for $10.60, and an eight-stall horse barn was built. The consistory decided to charge three dollars rent per year for each stall to cover the cost of construction.

The church showed gradual growth in its early history. Soon after it was organized more community members joined. In June 1915 the baptism papers of Jelle Holwerda and in November of the same year the membership papers of Hendrika Blom (de Groot), Johannes Gort, Hendrik Hiemstra, and William Oldegbers and the families of Fred Baron and Jacob Visser were transferred from the Edmonton church. Roelof Kooy and his family transferred fom the Monarch Christian Reformed Church in April 1916 and Willem and Manna van Ark were accepted as members from the Lutheran church in February 1917. In June 1917 C. K. Mast became the first young person in the congregation to make public profession of faith and in December 1917 Rienk de Jager, Joe Holwerda, and Tjibbe Reitsma did the same. Soon these occurrences were commonplace. By 1920, the church rolls had swelled to include twenty-seven families with 160 baptized and confessing members. By 1922 five more families had joined the fellowship and by the late twenties, over forty families were associated with the Neerlandia church.

Worship services were held once a Sunday until 1919, when it was decided to have two services during the summers. The services were usually well-attended in spite of the sorry condition of the trails. The consistory did receive occasional complaints: the poor singing, the tobacco chewing during the services (at least one member was known to have staked out his territory on the church floor!), and the late start of the worship services — they were supposed to begin at 11:00 a.m.

* * *

A Saloon

"The women sat in the front of the church with the children and the men sat in the back where there was a heater. If a father came alone, the children would sit with him. The men would stand during the long prayer.

Douwe and Betje Terpsma were the only couple that sat together until Bill Krikke and his wife came, they also sat together.

Old de Groot always sat alone in the same spot and he would spit the juice from his prumpje *on the floor or through the cracks between the logs.*

The men used to smoke like troopers in the old church before the service. A sign was put up 'Verzoeken niet te roken' *(Requested not to smoke) with little effect. Once when Kannegieter and Strydhorst came into the church at the same time, Kannegieter remarked,* 'Het ruikt hier wel een salon *(It smells like a saloon in here)'."*

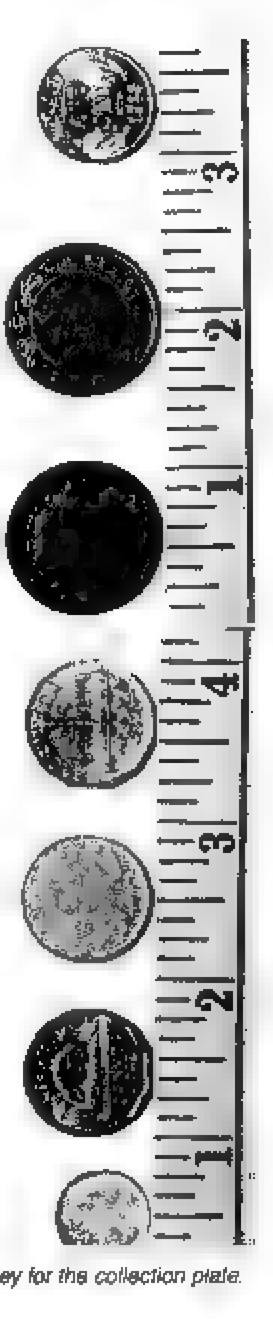
* * *

Dutch was the language of the church services, which were conducted by visiting ministers from Classis Pacific or, more often, by an elder reading the Dutch sermons received from the Netherlands. Communion was celebrated (a minister had to be present) — people sat at a table and passed around the cup of wine and the bread. While the church had no organ, *Psalmen* were sung with Albert Mast serving as *voorzanger*; there was a variety of *Psalmboeken* however. Collections for benevolence were held every Sunday, and the people gave what they could. Usually the total was one to two dollars each Sunday during the first few years.

In June 1916, the consistory decided that the oldest deacon and elder would retire. After that, consistory members were asked to serve three-year terms. However, when deacon Johan Messelink died the older deacon was asked to remain in office. The original consistory of three elders and two deacons was increased in number (November 1916) to include an extra elder, an arrangement which lasted for at least ten years. Consistory meetings were held on Sundays and, for many years, there was always a consistory meeting on Christmas day. In November 1921 the council decided to discontinue this practice.

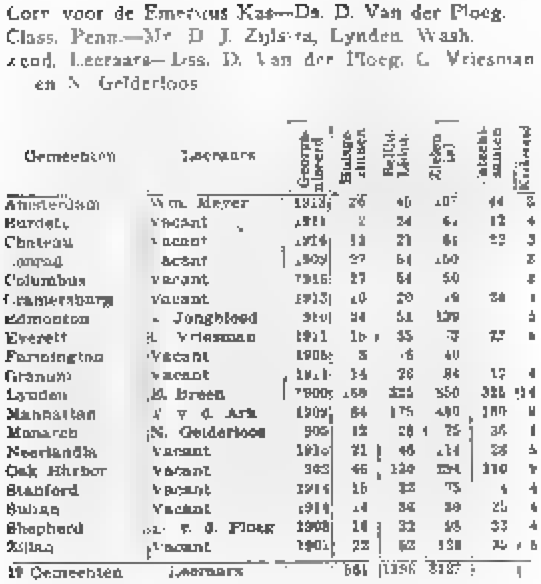
Consistory members took turns attending the Young People's Society meetings (though they did not lead the lessons) and also taught catechism classes to the youth. For those under fourteen, catechism was held on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 p.m. and for those over fourteen it was held from 2 to 3:00 p.m. This was begun in November 1915 and in June of the next year it was decided to teach the young children catechism at school from three to four o'clock on Friday afternoons. The regular duties of *huisbezoek* and reading sermons on Sunday mornings also took up much of the elders' time.

A highlight of the year was the annual congregational meeting, usually held in February. The first time it was held was January 25, 1917. Presumably only men were present, because at the next congregational meeting held February 9, 1918, women were invited to



Money for the collection plate.

"increase the *gezelligheid* through their presence." For a congregational meeting, members of the church assembled for a whole day. First the finances and goals of the church were discussed, then one or usually two essays were presented by various members and discussed at length. The essays had such inspirational titles as "Above the Stars" (Henry Kippers), "Our Love Response to God" (Douwe Terpsma), "Love Serves" (Tuininga), or "The Wellspring of Life" (Tuininga). The church seldom sent a delegate to the regular Classis meetings as was required, for lack of funds. They were usually held in Washington, but in 1917 Popko Schuring attended one such meeting held in Montana. In 1922 elder Jelle Tuininga also attended such a meeting.



Corr. voor de Emeritus Kas—Ds. D. Van der Ploeg.
Class. Penn.—Mr. D. J. Zylstra, Lynden, Wash.
[illegible] Leeraars—Dss. D. Van der Ploeg, G. Vriesman en N. Gelderloos

Gemeenten	Leeraars	Georganiseerd	Huisgezinnen	Belijd. Leden	Zielen	Catechisanten	Kerkeraad
Amsterdam	Wm. Meyer	1913	26	40	107	44	8
Burdett	Vacant	1911	2	34	6[illegible]	12	4
Chateau	Vacant	1914	11	21	66	22	3
Conrad	Vacant	1909	27	64	160		2
Columbus	Vacant	1916	27	64	50		2
Cramersburg	Vacant	1913	10	20	49	24	1
Edmonton	Jongbloed	1910	34	51	129		5
Everett	G. Vriesman	1911	16	35	73	27	4
Farmington	Vacant	1906	5	16	40		
Granum	Vacant	1911	14	26	84	17	4
Lynden	B. Breen	1900	160	325	550	325	14
Manhattan	J. v. d. Ark	1903	84	175	480	180	8
Monarch	N. Gelderloos	1905	12	28	75	36	4
Neerlandia	Vacant	1916	21	46	114	38	4
Oak Harbor	Vacant	1903	46	120	224	110	7
Stanford	Vacant	1916	15	32	75	4	4
[illegible]	Vacant	1914	14	34	59	25	4
Shepherd	D. v. d. Ploeg	1908	14	32	95	33	4
Zillah	Vacant	1901	22	62	130	30	6
19 Gemeenten	Leeraars		661	1196	3187		

Neerlandia church became a member of Classis Pacific. Page from Christian Reformed Church Yearbook, 1917

Growth in Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, 1915-1921

Year	Families	Confessing Members	Souls	Catechumens	Consistory
1915	17	35	81	24	5
1916	2[illegible]	46	[illegible]4	28	5
1917	30	50	158	38	6
1918	30	50	158	38	6
1919	30	61	153	30	6
1920	30	61	153	[illegible]3	6
1921	32	65	174	20	6

Information from the yearbooks of the Christian Reformed Church

* * *

A Gold Watch

"I remember going to Sunday school, Henry Kippers was our teacher. He had a gold watch, and he would pull it out and say, 'If one of you can learn Psalm 119 by heart, you can have this watch.'"

Treasures

On December 26 we always had our Christmas party. Then the children got bags of candy and some little gift like a book or a pair of mitts. When we went to Sunday school, if we knew our text and Psalm verse we would get a card with a Bible picture on it. We saved them until we had enough (about ten) to get a Dutch psalmbook or a Bible. We treasured that. We had Sunday school before the afternoon service.

Gladys Strydhorst

* * *

Sunday School was held for a time during the early years Some of the teachers were Siebren Tiemstra, Henry Kippers, Henry Michael, and Dina Messelink Rev Jongbloed often came to Neerlandia as a visiting preacher, celebrating the Lord's Supper with the people and catching up on baptisms In the July 14, 1915, issue of *De Wachter* he describes a journey to Neerlandia for the organizational meeting as follows

> "The train of the Canadian Northern R R. takes us to Clyde To our great surprise, after arriving there we hear the call, "Bus going west." That is an unexpected improvement. Now we will soon be there. although we did not fully trust that the roads. which are sometimes very poor, would be suitable for this new conveyance But we made use of it anyhow. The first twenty-seven miles was made in fairly good time but the driver would not go any further that evening . he would give it a try in the morning we made the last fourteen miles in five-and-a-half hours. We reached our destination with great difficulty, because the roads were poor The rains had just started The next morning on our way to church (it was Sunday, and we had three miles to go on very wet and muddy roads, well-supplied with stumps), deacon Quist remarked that to preach here required physical perseverance The worst was that we were so wet."

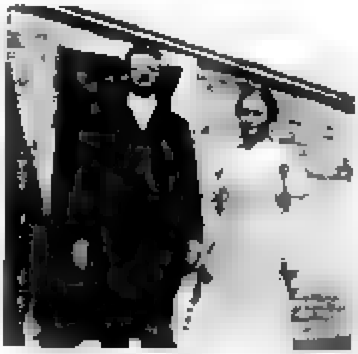
Rev. T. Jongbloed.

* * *

One day after classes some children espied
The church doors wide open, cows walking inside!
The janitor came and the mess he was shown,
Schoonekamp stared speechless, the cows were his own!

Ellen Matheis

* * *


Rev. Gelderloos and unidentified woman.

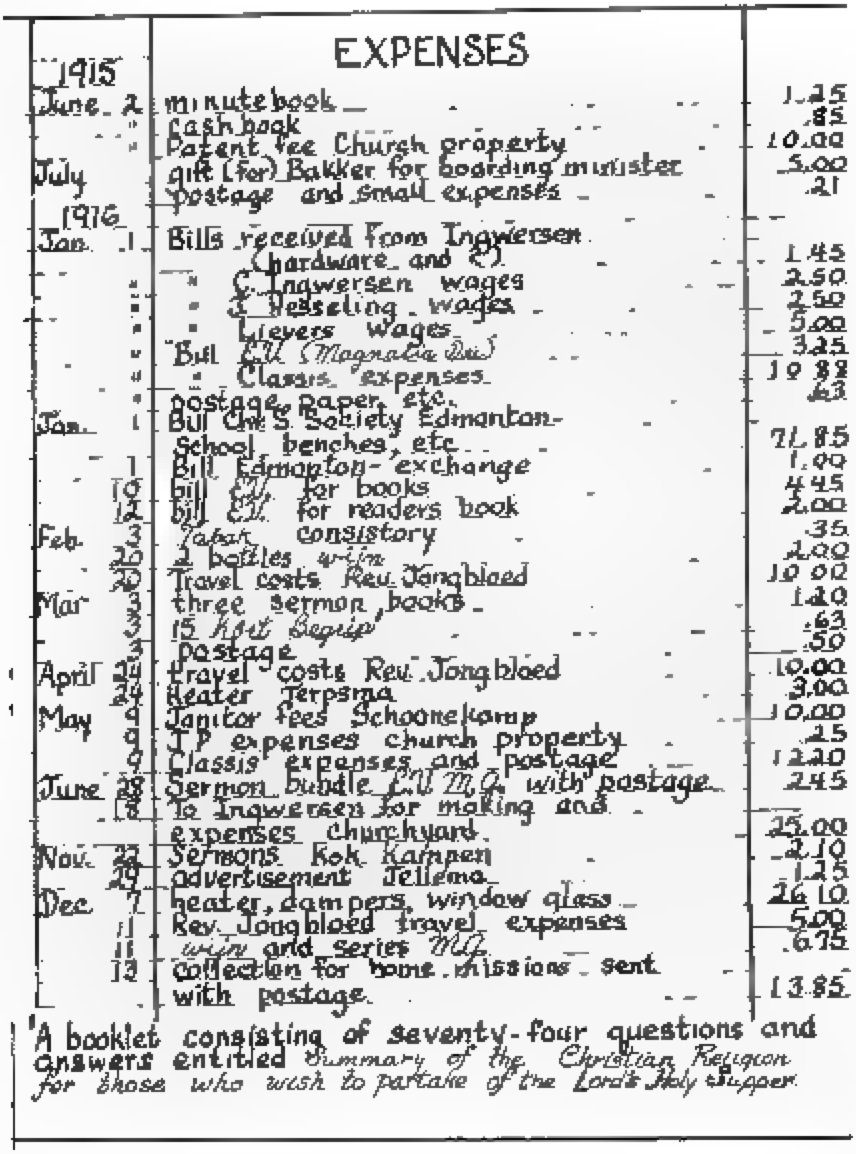
Rev. H. Ruys

Other ministers from Classis Pacific filled classical appointments in Neerlandia. These included Rev Vos and Rev N Gelderloos, the home missionary in the Nobleford area These men, in addition to conducting worship services each Sunday for about a month, were responsible to aid the consistory with family visiting Considering that over half of the Classis churches were vacant and that the ministers had to travel distances in excess of one thousand miles the service of these men was indeed admirable At one meeting of Classis Pacific Rev J. de Jong, upon hearing he had to preach three Sundays in Neerlandia asked "Where abouts is Neerlandia?" The reply was, "Do you see the Northern Lights? Beyond that lies Neerlandia."

When Jongbloed left Edmonton in 1919, the Neerlandia congregation lost its most frequent guest minister and the congregation considered the feasibility of calling their own pastor. The consistory did a cost analysis as follows

Parsonage (to be built)	$1200
Travel	$ 250
Salary	$1200
Miscellaneous Expenses	$ 400
Total	$3050

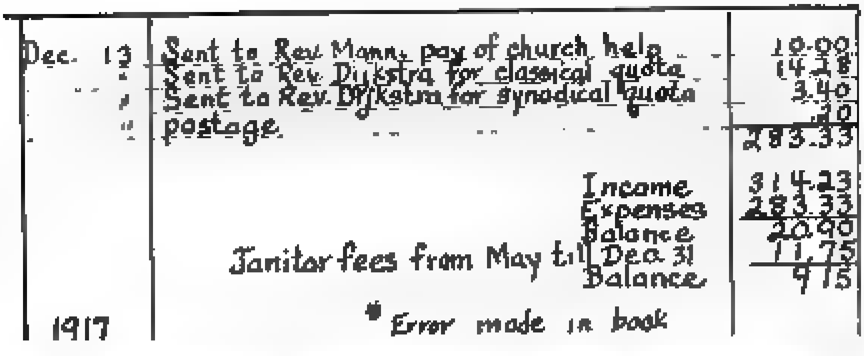
The conclusion was the same as before: "We can't afford it" When Rev. H Ruys came to Edmonton in 1920, his preaching duties were shared not only with the Neerlandia congregation, but also with a church in Edam, Saskatchewan He served the congregation until 1922 when he resigned from the ministry He was followed by



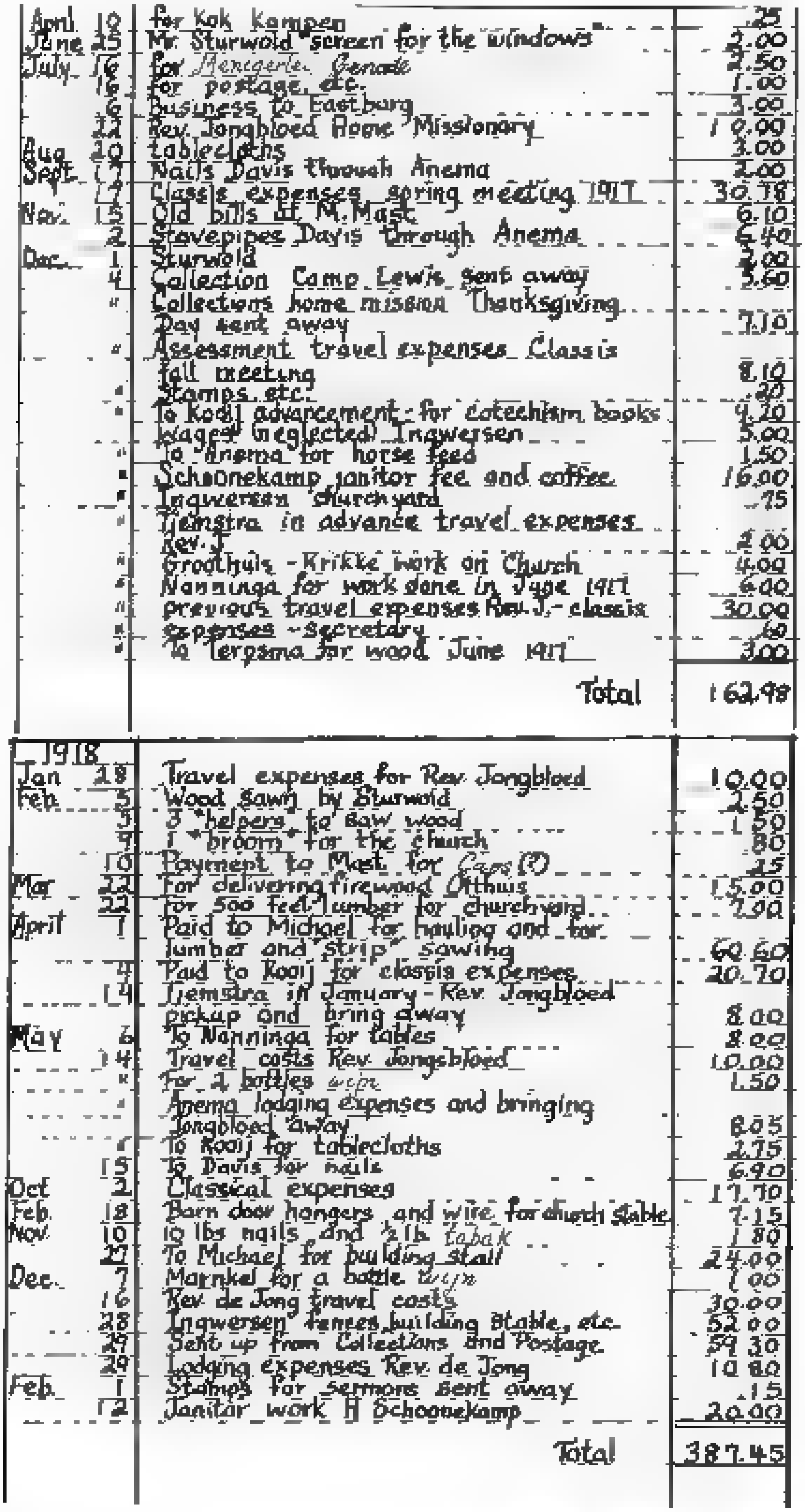
EXPENSES

1915		
June 2	minutebook	1.25
"	cash book	.85
"	Patent fee Church property	10.00
July	gift (for) Bakker for boarding minister	5.00
	postage and small expenses	.21
1916		
Jan. 1	Bills received from Ingwersen (hardware and c)	1.45
"	" C. Ingwersen wages	2.50
"	" J. Wesseling wages	2.50
"	" Lievers wages	5.00
"	Bill E.U. (Magnalia Dei)	3.25
"	" Classis expenses	19.88
"	postage, paper, etc.	.63
Jan. 1	Bill Chr. S. Society Edmonton- School benches, etc	71.85
1	Bill Edmonton- exchange	1.00
10	bill E.U. for books	4.45
12	bill E.U. for readers book	2.00
Feb. 3	Tabak consistory	.35
20	2 bottles wijn	2.00
20	Travel costs Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
Mar 3	three sermon books	1.20
3	15 Kort Begrip'	.63
3	postage	.50
April 24	travel costs Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
24	Heater Terpsma	3.00
May 9	Janitor fees Schoonekamp	10.00
9	J.P. expenses church property	.25
9	Classis expenses and postage	12.20
June 28	Sermon bundle E.U. M.Q. with postage	2.45
18	To Ingwersen for making and expenses churchyard	25.00
Nov. 22	Sermons Kok Kampen	2.10
29	advertisement Jellema	1.25
Dec 7	heater, dampers, window glass	26.10
11	Rev. Jongbloed travel expenses	5.00
11	wijn and series M.Q.	6.75
13	collection for home missions sent with postage	13.85

'A booklet consisting of seventy-four questions and answers entitled *Summary of the Christian Religion for those who wish to partake of the Lord's Holy Supper.*

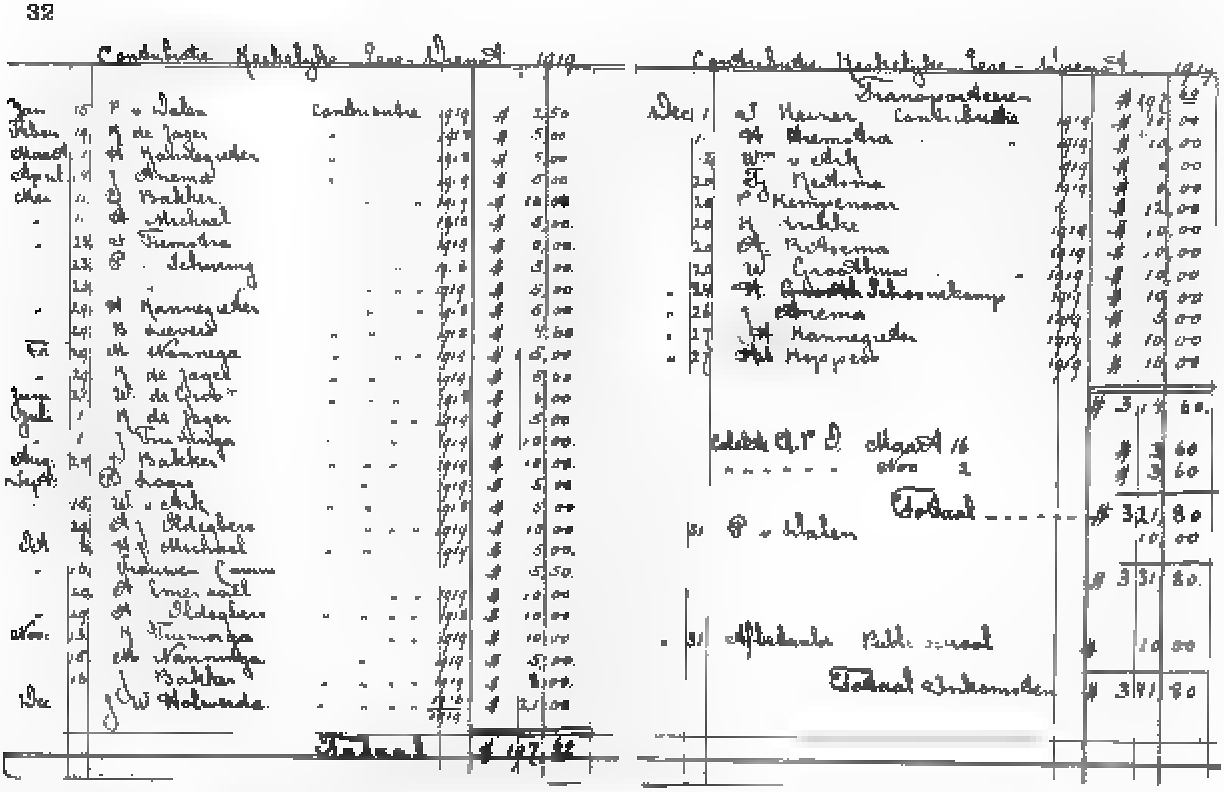


Dec. 13	Sent to Rev Mann, pay of church help	10.00
"	Sent to Rev. Dijkstra for classical quota	14.28
"	Sent to Rev. Dijkstra for synodical quota	3.40
"	postage	.20
		283.33
	Income	314.23
	Expenses	283.33
	Balance	20.90
	Janitor fees from May til Dec. 31	11.75
	Balance	9.15
1917	* Error made in book	



April	10	for Kok kampen	.25
June	25	Mr. Sturwold "screen for the windows"	2.00
July	16	for *Menigerle Genade*	2.50
	16	for postage, etc.	1.00
	6	Business to Eastburg	3.00
	22	Rev. Jongbloed Home Missionary	10.00
Aug	20	tablecloths	3.00
Sept.	17	Nails Davis through Anema	2.00
	17	Classis expenses spring meeting 1917	30.78
Nov.	15	Old bills at M. Mast	6.10
	2	Stovepipes Davis through Anema	6.40
Dec.	1	Sturwold	2.00
	4	Collection Camp Lewis sent away	3.60
	"	Collections home mission Thanksgiving Day sent away	7.10
	"	Assessment travel expenses Classis fall meeting	8.10
	"	Stamps etc.	.20
	"	To Kooij advancement: for catechism books	4.20
	"	Wages (neglected) Ingwersen	5.00
	"	To Anema for horse feed	1.50
	"	Schoonekamp janitor fee and coffee	16.00
	"	Ingwersen churchyard	.75
	"	Tjemstra in advance travel expenses Rev. J.	2.00
	"	Groothuis - Krikke work on Church	4.00
	"	Nanninga for work done in June 1917	6.00
	"	previous travel expenses Rev. J. - classis	30.00
	"	expenses - secretary	.60
	"	To Terpsma for wood June 1917	3.00
		Total	162.98

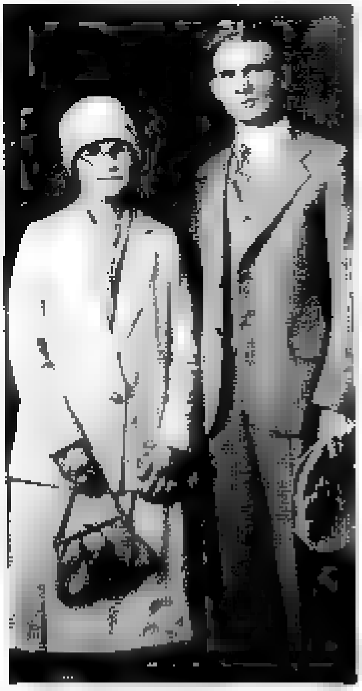
1918			
Jan	28	Travel expenses for Rev. Jongbloed	10.00
Feb	5	Wood sawn by Sturwold	2.50
	5	3 "helpers" to saw wood	1.50
	9	1 "broom" for the church	.80
	10	Payment to Mast for *Caps* (?)	.25
Mar	22	For delivering firewood Otthuis	15.00
	22	for 500 feet lumber for churchyard	7.00
April	1	Paid to Michael for hauling and for lumber and "strip" sawing	60.60
	4	Paid to Kooij for classis expenses	20.70
	14	Tjemstra in January - Rev. Jongbloed pickup and bring away	8.00
May	6	To Nanninga for tables	8.00
	14	Travel costs Rev. Jongsbloed	10.00
	"	For 2 bottles *wijn*	1.50
	"	Anema lodging expenses and bringing Jongbloed away	8.05
	"	To Kooij for tablecloths	2.75
	15	To Davis for nails	6.90
Oct	2	Classical expenses	17.70
Feb.	18	Barn door hangers and wire for church stable	7.15
Nov.	10	10 lbs nails and ½ lb *tabak*	1.80
	27	To Michael for building stall	24.00
Dec.	7	Marnkel for a bottle *wijn*	1.00
	16	Rev. de Jong travel costs	30.00
	28	Ingwersen fences, building stable, etc.	52.00
	29	Sent up from Collections and Postage	59.30
	29	Lodging expenses Rev. de Jong	10.80
Feb.	1	Stamps for sermons sent away	.15
	12	Janitor work H Schoonekamp	20.00
		Total	387.45



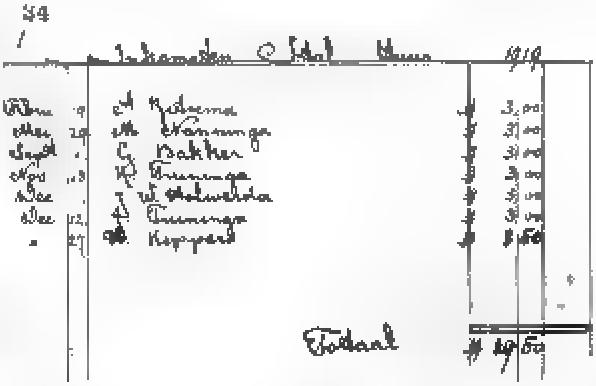
Page from the cash book of the church.

Rev. H. Van Der Woude and Rev. A. Selles, whose duties were split ⅔-⅓ between Edmonton and Neerlandia.

The Neerlandia church could not afford to support a minister. Income for the church was meagre, but a budget was always drawn up. Every family on the church's list was expected to give ten dollars per year to the church. This amount was often not collected. In 1920 there was some talk of increasing this amount to fifteen dollars but nothing came of it. The three-dollar rent for the horse stalls was seldom collected, and by 1925 no one had yet paid a one-dollar fee to reserve a graveyard plot. School furniture, which had been



Rev. and Mrs. Selles.



bought for the Christian School Society, was sold to the Public School Board, who were lax in paying their debt. An additional loan of one hundred dollars from the Church Help Fund came in 1915 but, four years later, only forty dollars had been repaid. The church's Benevolence Fund received donations: two from the Monarch Christian Reformed Church (fifteen dollars both times) and one from the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church (fifty dollars). Considering the financial circumstances of the settlers, though, this "poor fund" was probably taxed to the limit.

The situation was indeed bleak as the congregation met in 1918 for a special day of prayer because of the hard economic situation. Yet the people were committed to their ideals; through those early days of poverty, the settlers remained undaunted in their goal to establish a strong church community.

* * *

WRONG DAY 1

One time, we were working with about six men, cutting a road through the bush. It was a Saturday. Then along came a bachelor homesteader, all dressed up in his Sunday best. We asked him where he was going. He replied, "To church — it's Sunday isn't it?" He was only one day out.

Martin van der Heide

* * *

WRONG DAY 2

In the pioneer days, when no one had radios or any other means of communication, it was often difficult to keep the days apart, everyday having the same activities. Families with children going to school did not have nearly as much trouble keeping days straight as those living alone did.

One day my father was on his way to church when he decided to call in on Rienk de Jager, who lived alone a half mile from church. Much to father's surprise, Rienk was busy cooking erwtensoep *(His Saturday meal) and mending overalls. He always marked off the days on his calendar, but had forgotten to do so one day and now was one day out.*

Grace Wierenga

* * *

The budget contributions were collected by stewards who visited each home to solicit the member's donation. In 1923, an envelope system was tried whereby people could put their contribution toward the budget in the collection bag once a month. This system was soon abandoned, however. The steward system was reintroduced and continued well into the thirties. Although some people paid their budget dues by pledging labour, the many payments listed for such tasks as fencing, building pews, cutting firewood, and the like lead one to conclude that volunteer labour was not prevalent. One member settled his 'debt' with the church in a most unusual way: he told consistory that they could collect his unpaid quotas from a neighbour who owed him money.

As the budget was rarely met, the consistory attempted various means of raising money to meet expenses. Two plans in particular stand out. One was the so-called "Church Calves" plan, whereby members could designate a calf for the church, feed it to market weight, and give the money to the church. In the first year (1920), twenty-five calves were donated, but by year's end five had died and market conditions were so poor that the Church Calves Committee asked the members to keep them for another year. In the fall of 1922, the people were instructed to dehorn the calves to increase their market value. The first group of calves raised $134.32 for the church coffers.

In 1925, W. van Ark came up with an idea whereby people could pledge a part of their crop. People were asked to pledge one acre of grain per year to the church. The records show only one member who actually donated crop to the church — twelve dollars worth of wheat — and that seems to have been the end of the matter.

Despite these efforts, the church was not able to pay the Classical and Synodical quotas until the thirties. From time to time Neerlandia complained to Classis and Synod about the excessive amounts that were requested. In turn, complaints from Classis were received despairing of the small amounts received from Neerlandia. This was to be a point of contention later as these unpaid bills became the congregation's debt. In spite of these shortages, the congregation did send contributions to causes such as the sanatorium in Denver, Colorado, and a church building project in Sultan, Washington.

* * *

Another Sunday, a visiting minister from the United States was addressing the congregation. This man had the habit of walking to and fro on the pulpit platform as he was talking. The particular platform on which he stood was not very large, probably much smaller than what he had been used to. In any case, he was reading his text entitled: "When I have prepared a place for you, I will come". As he became deeper and deeper involved in his sermon, he was walking faster and faster. Repeating his text "I will come", he forgot the size of the platform, missed the edge, and landed into the laps of the congregation members sitting below him.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *

Expenditures for the church in the first ten years were minimal. *Wijn* for communion and *tabak* for consistory meetings were regular items listed in the cashbook in the early years. In 1919, Willem de Groot made six new church pews ($2.85 each) and Henry Kippers Sr. purchased a clock and a safe. In 1919, one hundred dollars was spent improving the church interior with double flooring and heavy paper on the walls to keep the heat. In 1923, a twelve-foot extension costing two hundred dollars was built on the southeast of the church to accomodate the society life that was by now flourishing. A regular expense was to reimburse elders who paid visits to the church's members in Eastburg. In addition to all this, the church's major expense was paying for classical appointments.

Note consistory room addition and stable behind the church.

the travel, wage, and room and board expense that went with the arrival of a guest minister.

Although finances were a heavy burden for the new congregation, there were other problems. There were men with strong personalities and when they differed as to what was acceptable as part of the Christian life and beliefs, disagreements could be sharp.

A contentious issue arose as a result of a sad situation. When Deacon J. Messelink had died in late 1916, he left behind a widow and four children. Economic conditions being what they were, Dina Messelink had a difficult time making ends meet. Nor was the consistory able to provide adequate relief. In March 1920 Dina Messelink, with the help of Joe Holwerda, sought government assistance, despite the fact that three months earlier consistory had ruled that the poor should not seek such help. When an inspector visited the Messelink home in April to determine her financial situation, the consistory decided to do all in their power to prevent her from receiving charity from the government. Feeling he was unable to do his task as deacon since the government was taking over his responsibilities, a deacon threatened to resign. It was decided to put the sister and brothers involved under church discipline if they continued their ways. Eventually the dispute was resolved and Mrs. Messelink continued to receive government aid.

At least two Eastburg families, the Nylands and the ter Horsts, had joined the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The elders made *huisbezoek* in Eastburg and also visited other Dutch families

* * *

Icicles on his Mustache

In the winter, the potbelly stove cheerfully spread warmth throughout the church welcoming the congregation for worship services. It was a long cold ride for many by horse and sleigh and when the men came in frost dusted their eyebrows and eyelashes. This brings to mind the memory of how us kids would eagerly await the arrival of Mr. H. Kippers Sr., because he would come into church with long icicles hanging on his mustache. He went straight to the stove and would lean over it and with two fingers pinch the icicles out of his mustache. They would fall to the stove and with a delightful sizzling noise, instantly melt away.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Sticky Benches

The janitor of the church thought it time to varnish the chairs in the front of church. These were used if the benches were full. The school teacher's boyfriend came to see her one weekend. The church was pretty full so he had to sit in one of the chairs in the front of church. When the service was over he stood up and the chair came along with him — the varnish was still sticky! Comical for the onlookers — embarrassing for him.

Norman Terpsma

such as the Hoogers. They also informed the members there when Lord's Supper would be celebrated so they could attend. In 1919 a complaint was received that the church was not doing enough for the Eastburg Reformed people, with the elders countering that the Eastburg families were becoming "too English." Some years later, the Nylands and ter Horsts moved to the States and the Eastburg connection was eventually severed.

Another issue which occupied the consistory through the years was a different view of baptism held by some community members, mainly the Lievers family. Ben Lievers had been in a Brethren fellowship in the Netherlands and was strongly influenced by the evangelistic zeal of a man named Johannes de Heer. Although Ben was never a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed church, his wife Alice was. Her views on infant baptism were not Reformed; the issue was an important one for the Neerlandia community. The church could live with these differences for some time — indeed, in the early years Ben attended and supported the church — but Alice Lievers eventually left the church. In the late twenties, after Loe Reyse, a member of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, joined the "Lievers group," they began holding fellowship services in their homes, organized a Sunday school, and invited evangelists to come to the community and speak.

* * *

Switching Shoes and Socks

One of the early settler families had to walk four or five miles to reach the church. The husband went to the morning service, while the wife stayed home with the children. At noon the wife would meet him halfway where they would change stockings or socks and shoes. Then she would go on to the afternoon service and he would go home to take care of the children.

Cor Fisher

* * *

From 1915-1927 the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church struggled against economic odds, against the inevitable internal problems and, though not documented, against the sin that is present in everyone's life. Yet all of the struggles must be seen not only in the light of the whole pioneer experience, but also in the light of the settlers' conviction that God was working all things for their good. It was that belief which moved the settlers into the second stage of their ecclesiastical history: The Van Der Woude Years.

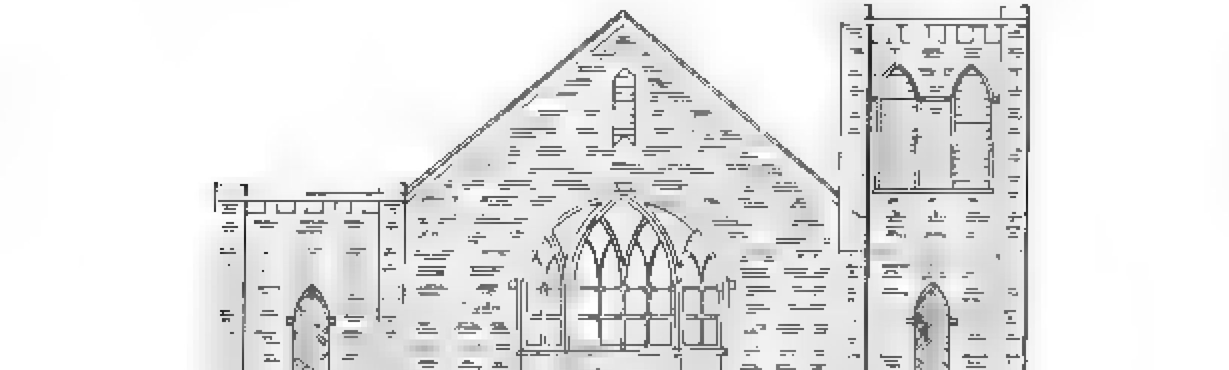
The Van Der Woude Years 1928-1941

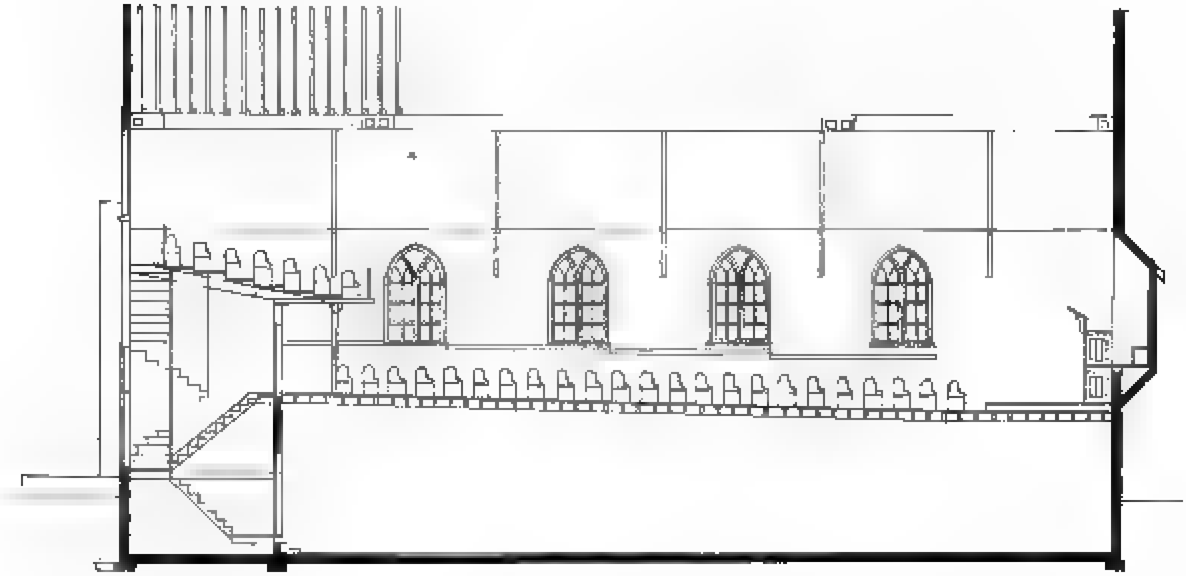
Not many years after its formation, the Neerlandia congregation realized the need of a new church building, but there were no funds available for this. In the mid-twenties, though, the Neerlandia church's financial position improved to some extent. Although the budget still stood at ten dollars per male member, the membership had almost doubled in the ten years since the church had been organized. Many members were contributing twice or even three times that amount yearly. By 1926 Neerlandia decided to build a new church and a parsonage, with the goal of calling their own minister Prior to this time they had been supporting a minister with the Edmonton congregation. Neerlandia was better able to meet its Synodical and Classical quotas, although there were still old debts. The consistory requested in 1926 that Classis write off the unpaid quotas. Neerlandia did not believe they could meet the obligations of Classis, the building program, and a minister s salary Since they had been without a minister of their own since their organization (eleven years ago) they thought the latter items were more important. Classis did not agree, but suggested that Neerlandia build the church and parsonage first, and then renew their request for permission to call a minister

Menne Nanninga drew up plans for the church. At the congregational meeting held in February 1926, it was decided to purchase lumber for the building project, and a committee was appointed to immediately begin acquiring sand and gravel The Young Men's Society took it upon themselves to supply the church with firewood for the coming year, since the older men would be busy with the building project

The ambitious building program was actually beyond Neerlandia s reach had it not been for a loan from the Church Help Fund Over $5000 in loans would eventually be received from Classis for the church and parsonage In addition, the consistory raised the yearly quota for members on its list from ten dollars to fifty dollars. From 1927 to 1929, the congregation was hard-pressed to meet this In 1929 the consistory apparently reduced the quota to thirty dol

Sawing wood for church and parsonage, c 1935.


Preliminary sketch of first lumber church, drawn by Menne Nanninga.



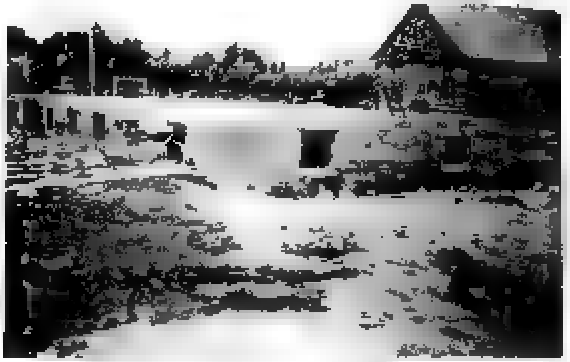
Preliminary sketch of interior of first lumber church drawn by Menne Nanninga.

lars, and this was expected to generate the money for the church's budget of $3400 ($1600 of which was to be set aside for a future minister's salary).

The church was convinced it needed its own minister and was willing to sacrifice for it. Rev. A. Seiles, writing in *The Banner* of February 1929 said, "A congregation which has been shepherdless for nearly fourteen years is in dire need of a pastor. There is no doubt in our mind that for that very reason, the servant of the Lord who will answer the call saying 'I am coming over to help you' will be very much appreciated." The parsonage and new church must be seen in this light, namely, as attractions for a pastor the church could call its own.

The parsonage was built first. Menne Nanninga and Jacob Olthuis directed the construction, much of which was done by volunteer labour. The parsonage was built east of the log church. It was about thirty-four by twenty-four feet in size, with a full basement, three bedrooms on the second storey, and a large living area on the main floor. By September of 1928 it was completed and two rooms were rented out to a teacher, Mr. Levy, for ten dollars per month.

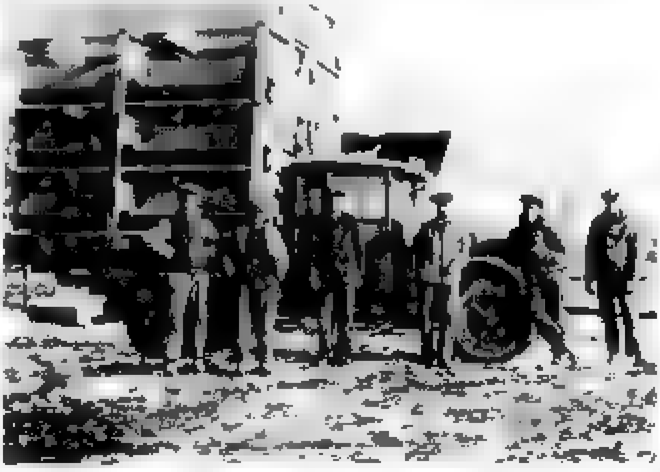
The lumber church, completed in 1929, was a big undertaking. Aside from a few men who were paid for the work they did on the project, (Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, Jerry Reitsma) nearly all the work was done on a volunteer basis by the congregation. The logs were hauled from the bush to lumber mills (bills were paid to Chileen, Fluet's, and Garneau) to be sawn into the appropriate dimensions, then brought to the site. Gravel, hard to come by in those days, was hauled in the winter of 1927-28 from the "island" in Shoal Lake, and supplemented with field stone from Neerlandia farms. At the site the larger stones were crushed with sledge



Building a new church. The foundation is laid.

The rafters are up.

The roof is on.



The benches arrive. George Toebes, Johannes Peters. Corny Ingwersen, Ike Nanninga. Billy Quick, Gerrit Ingwersen.

Dedication day.

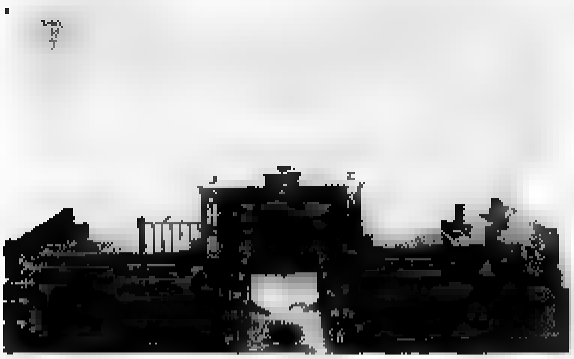
The consistory at the dedication of the church, Klaas Tuininga. Hendrik Schoonekamp, Jelle Tuininga, John Anema. Front Bill Krikke, Toney Sturwold, Rev. Bratt Rev. Mulder, Rev. Selles.

DEDICATION DAY

hammers and a crew of twenty-four worked all day mixing the cement with shovels and carrying it to the foundation forms. By the winter of 1928-29, the basement was complete and was used for regular worship services. Construction was continued on the upper floor. One generous Dutch plasterer, not a local, supplied plastering work for free, asking to be compensated only for his travelling costs. In May 1929, $1205.40 was owing on labour for carpentry work, but the consistory, always short of money, decided to pay at that time only those who needed it most.

The second church.

Contrasted with the old log church, the new church looked impressive. Rev. A. Selles wrote in the March 15, 1929, issue of *The Banner* of the new church, "It exhibits the splendid taste of an architect. And the brethren of Neerlandia may be proud of having a brother in their midst who is chiefly responsible for the planning and construction of these buildings. We admire his painstaking patience in using all the help available. It is nothing less than a



All is ready

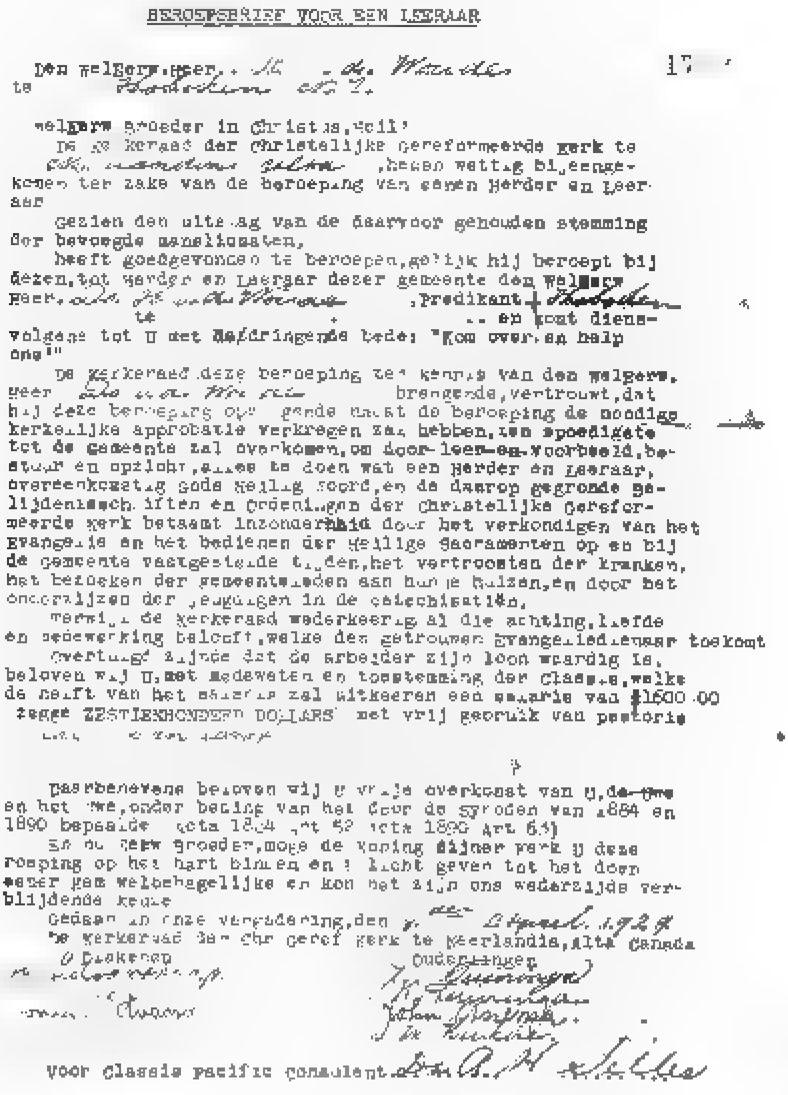
Rear view of church showing balcony. Joe and Gertie Olthuis being shown the church by Hendrik Schoonekamp.

giant's task to use the class of mechanics he used and still produce such splendid results."

The new church was dedicated on Monday, April 22, 1929. The old log church was torn down in the spring of 1929, even though some felt it should be preserved. The lumber from the roof was reused — Jerry Reitsma used some of it for building a coffin

The consistory wasted no time calling a minister once permission had been granted by Classis early in 1929 Three former guest ministers were placed on a trio for the congregation to decide on by ballot Revs Meykens, de Jong, and Van Der Woude In March of that year, Rev. Van Der Woude was given the call while he was serving a congregation in Hoboken, New Jersey He accepted, and was installed as Neerlandia's first full-time pastor on June 23, 1929

Rev. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Soon after he arrived (July 17, 1929) it was mentioned that his prayers were too long and



BEROEPSBRIEF VOOR EEN LEERAAR

Den WelEerw. Heer [illegible] de Woude 17
te Hoboken N.J.

WelEerw. Broeder in Christus, Heil!

De Kerkeraad der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk te [illegible], hebben wettig bijeengekomen ter zake van de beroeping van eenen Herder en Leeraar

gezien den uitslag van de daarvoor gehouden stemming der bevoegde manslidmaten,

heeft goedgevonden te beroepen, gelijk hij beroept bij dezen, tot Herder en Leeraar dezer gemeente den WelEerw. Heer [illegible], Predikant te Hoboken en komt dienvolgens tot U met den dringende bede: "Kom over en help ons!"

De Kerkeraad deze beroeping ter kennis van den WelEerw. Heer [illegible] brengende, vertrouwt, dat hij deze beroeping opvolgende nadat de beroeping de noodige kerkelijke approbatie verkregen zal hebben, ten spoedigste tot de gemeente zal overkomen, om door leer en voorbeeld, bestuur en opzicht, alles te doen wat een Herder en Leeraar, overeenkomstig Gods Heilig Woord, en de daarop gegronde belijdenisschriften en Ordeningen der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk betaamt inzonderheid door het verkondigen van het Evangelie en het bedienen der Heilige Sacramenten op en bij de gemeente vastgestelde tijden, het vertroosten der kranken, het bezoeken der gemeenteleden aan hunne huizen, en door het onderwijzen der jeugdigen in de catechisatiën,

Terwijl de Kerkeraad wederkeerig al die achting, liefde en medewerking belooft, welke den getrouwen Evangeliedienaar toekomt

Overtuigd zijnde dat de arbeider zijn loon waardig is, beloven wij U, met medeweten en toestemming der Classis, welke de helft van het salaris zal uitkeeren een salaris van $1600.00 zegge ZESTIENHONDERD DOLLARS met vrij gebruik van pastorie [illegible]

Daarbenevens beloven wij U vrije overkomst van U, de uwen en het uwe, onder bepaling van het door de Synoden van 1884 en 1890 bepaalde (Acta 1884 Art 52 Acta 1890 Art 63)

En nu, Eerw. Broeder, moge de Koning Zijner Kerk U deze roeping op het hart binden en U licht geven tot het doen eener Hem welbehagelijke en kon het zijn ons wederzijds verblijdende keuze

Gedaan in onze vergadering, den [illegible] April 1929

De Kerkeraad der Chr Geref Kerk te Neerlandia, Alta Canada

Diakenen

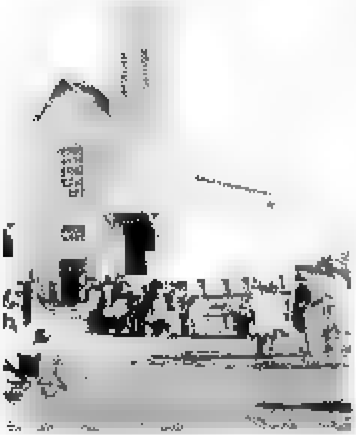
Ouderlingen

John [illegible]

Voor Classis Pacific consulent

Call letter sent to Rev Van Der Woude which includes an urgent request to "Come over and help us!" Besides his salary, the Rev is also promised to be supplied with firewood.

Rev. Harm Van Der Woude



The congregation after church.

he was requested to see if it might be possible to shorten them. To emphasize the point of his sermons, the Rev. would say, "Ik herhal het, ik herhaal het en ik zeg het nog eens weer (I repeat it. I repeat it, and I say it once again.)" Another quote he often warned the congregation with was "eensen worden geensen ('oncers' become 'none-cers')

* * *

Rev. H. Van Der Woude was a gifted speaker. Once in 1925 when he was visiting Neerlandia, some men were working at the log church. Mr. Reitsma said to him, "Did you know Mrs. Mast died?"

"No, I'd better prepare a sermon then," was the reply. He walked around the log church three times, came back and said, "I've got the sermon ready!"

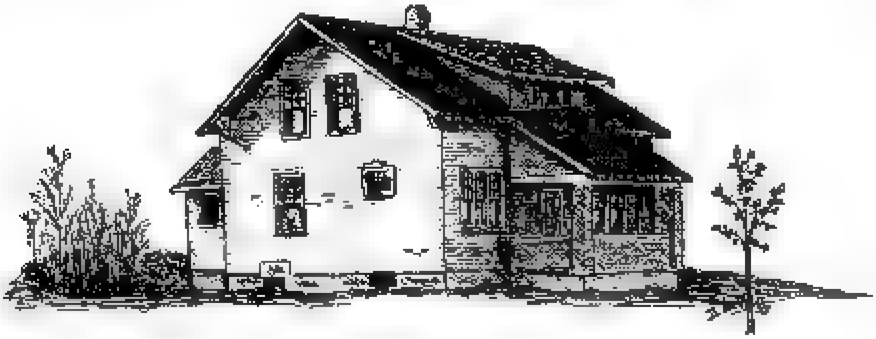
Jennie Reitsma

* * *

Rev. Van Der Woude showed a tendency to promote social and cultural isolation from the surrounding communities, as part of being "in the world but not of it." He is quoted as having said, "In isolation is our strength," from the Dutch theologian Groen Van Prinsterer.

Church life flourished in those years. The Men's and Ladies Societies, Young People's Society, Singing Society, and catechism classes served the peoples' social as well as spiritual needs. After a request by some members to start a Sunday School again (1930), the consistory ruled that if proper use was made of catechism classes, a Sunday School would be superfluous. The worship services changed very little, with occasional variations introduced such as having the consistory and other men stand during the prayers — it was considered more reverent, standing during certain songs, and organ playing before the worship service. The consistory had added two more members by 1938, and the *tabak* and *sigaren* expenses continued until at least 1936.

During those years there were a few minor disciplinary prob-



lems. In March 1929 complaints were received that the young people were fooling around during choir practice making singing impossible and on one occasion some of the young men returning from a day of hunting and trapping went directly to the church where a meeting was going to be held. While waiting there they amused themselves by shooting at a block of wood in the church basement. Brother Henry Kippers brought the matter to the consistory to ask if this could be discouraged or stopped.

* * *

Shiny Tie Clip

Young men were wearing tie and pins or tie clips at that time. Rev. H. Van Der Woude preached and tried to keep the attention of his audience, but one teenager thought to polish his clip up some. This caught the eye of the preacher. Pausing for a few seconds he said, "Als U klaar is dan kunnen wij verder." *(When you are ready then we will proceed.) After that we teenagers did not want the preacher's eye on us during the service.*

L. Nanninga

* * *

Economically the times were hard for the church during those Depression years. The essay topic for the 1931 congregational meeting was by Henry Kippers Sr., entitled, "The Current World Crisis and the Believer!" When Classis asked that the consistory fulfill its financial obligations re the Church Help Fund loan, the clerk wrote back saying that this was impossible in light of the circumstances. Rev. Van Der Woude was willing to take a $400 cut in pay in 1931. He said that since everyone else was receiving less it was only fair that

he should too. This seems to have been a loan from him, and his salary was increased again in 1938 to its previous level. The budget, which stood at almost $5200 ($40 per family) in 1930, was reduced to $2333 ($22 per family) in 1933. (The budgets included subsidies from Classis and collections.)

By 1935 the congregation had grown to more than fifty families, an indication not of immigrants coming in but of families growing up. The essay topics at congregational meetings often dealt with child-related subjects: Klaas Tuininga (1931) "The Worship of Children," Lammert Wierenga (1930) "Childrearing" or "Catching the Little Foxes." Though a few members left the church it was showing growth spiritually and numerically.

With some sadness Rev. Van Der Woude announced his retirement in 1941, being 65 years of age. As he left the Neerlandia congregation for his retirement elsewhere, receiving an honourable emeritus, he could look fondly at his work, the Lord's work, in that northern Alberta community. He had been a good preacher and had provided firm leadership, two things the Neerlandia church had appreciated and benefited from.

* * *

Faith

One day two of the younger girls from the Lammert Wierenga family were walking home from school through the forest and they suddenly heard crackling of twigs and then a short way ahead of them they could see something quite big and black. They were petrified. A bear!! The girls were so scared they sat down on the nearest stump and thought best to pray. They prayed "Here zegen deze spiese" (Lord, bless this food). They were young and only knew their mealtime prayer. Later someone asked, "Who were you girls praying for? The bear or for yourselves?" Anyway it turned out that it was not a bear but their own big black dog hunting around in the bush.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Besides teaching, the consistory soon required my services as organist in church twice a Sunday. As a token of appreciation I received an Encyclopedic Concordance Bible, beautifully inscribed by Mr. Ingwersen, which is still one of my prized possessions.

Grace Boer

* * *

1941 — to the present

In the forties the church grew numerically through natural increase as the first generation married and had children. Because of the isolationistic stance there were no members received from surrounding communities. In fact some of the children reached their teens without realizing there were Christians in other areas. One member did suggest engaging in mission outreach to the unchurched in the surrounding areas but this fell on deaf ears. Nevertheless the church building was soon too small for the congregation and expansion of the church or the construction of a new building was discussed (1944-1945). In the meantime the janitor was instructed to set out chairs to accommodate the congregation.

After Rev. Van Der Woude left, first Rev. Maynard Keuning (1942-46) and then Rev. John Rubingh served the Neerlandia congregation. Their pastorates were difficult ones for both the ministers and the congregation. Rev. Van Der Woude had been Neerlandia's first minister and had been like a father to the people. It was difficult for the congregation to adjust to anyone else. Everything the Revs. Keuning and Rubingh did was compared to the way Rev. Van Der Woude had done it. Their preaching was Reformed but they stood in the shadow of Van Der Woude.

Adding to the difficulty was the problem of transition from Dutch to English as the language of the church services. The suggestion to introduce an occasional English service had first been made in 1930. The request was renewed at the 1938 annual congregational meeting. Rev. Van Der Woude said at that time that, though he was not against it himself, he thought it inadvisable because the congregation was not ready for it. The congregation agreed.

Rev. M. Keuning.

Finally in the forties the transition began. The change to English was painful for some of the older people who had never learned English. They were concerned that if the services were conducted in English they would not receive the guidance, comfort and admonition of the sermons. On the other hand most of the younger people understood little if any of the Dutch. The conversion was made gradually. Then the church burned down and services were conducted in the store hall and in the school. Four services were held each week (because neither location could accommodate the whole congregation) — two in Dutch and two in English. That forestalled the problem for a while.

Rev. and Mrs. Rubingh, 1948.

* * *

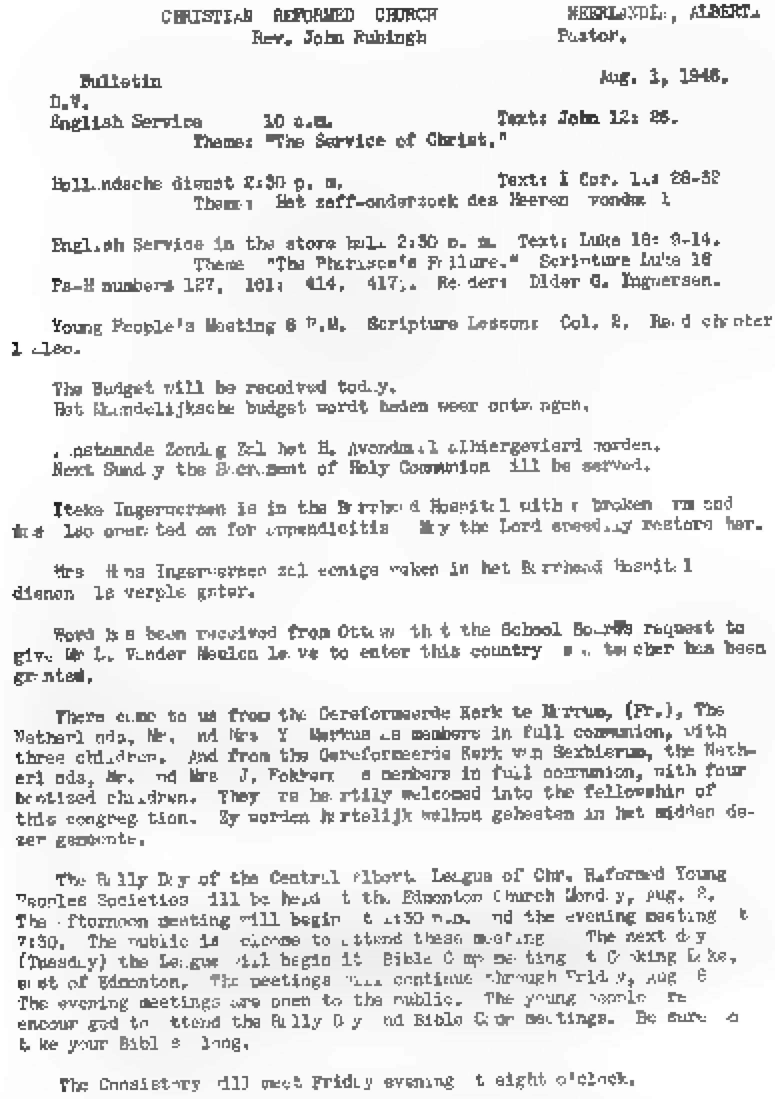
The First English Sermon

"I will never forget the first sermon that was to be read in English. One of the elders had to read it. It was Dutch upstairs and English in the basement. Anyhow, the elder was going to go down the stairs to the basement and his uncle bumped him so that he fell down the stairs. The uncle was so upset that there was going to be reading in English — that was of the devil. So he knocked him down the stairs and the elder was so upset he couldn't read. I had to read for him."

* * *

The Church Burns

When the church burnt down, it was around the middle of November. Rev. Rubingh had left only a few days earlier. Albert Mast, the janitor, had stoked up the furnace because there was to be Choral Society that evening. Around 7:00 p.m. Dick Froma came pedalling by on his bicycle on his way home from working at Henry Mast's. He noticed a strange light in the church basement and, on



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH NEERLANDIA, ALBERTA.
Rev. John Rubingh Pastor.

Bulletin Aug. 4, 1946.
D.V.
English Service 10 a.m. Text: John 12: 26.
Theme: "The Service of Christ."

Hollandsche dienst 2:30 p. m. Text: I Cor. 11: 28-32
Thema: Het zelf-onderzoek des Heeren Avondmaal

English Service in the store hall 2:30 p. m. Text: Luke 18: 9-14.
Theme "The Pharisee's Failure." Scripture Luke 18
Psalter numbers 127, 101; 414, 417;. Reader: Elder G. Ingwersen.

Young People's Meeting 8 P.M. Scripture Lesson: Col. 2. Read chapter 1 also.

The Budget will be received today.
Het Maandelijksche budget wordt heden weer ontvangen.

Aanstaande Zondag Zal het H. Avondmaal alhier gevierd worden.
Next Sunday the Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served.

Itske Ingerwersen is in the Barrhead Hospital with a broken arm and was also operated on for appendicitis. May the Lord speedily restore her.

Mrs. Hans Ingerwersen zal eenige weken in het Barrhead Hospital dienen als verpleegster.

Word has been received from Ottawa that the School Board's request to give Mr. L. Vander Meulen leave to enter this country as a teacher has been granted.

There came to us from the Gereformeerde Kerk te Marrum, (Fr.), The Netherlands, Mr. and Mrs. Y. Martens as members in full communion, with three children. And from the Gereformeerde Kerk van Sexbierum, the Netherlands, Mr. and Mrs. J. Fokkema as members in full communion, with four baptized children. They are heartily welcomed into the fellowship of this congregation. Zy worden hartelijk welkom geheeten in het midden dezer gemeente.

The Rally Day of the Central Alberta League of Chr. Reformed Young Peoples Societies will be held at the Edmonton Church Monday, Aug. 5. The afternoon meeting will begin at 2:30 p.m. and the evening meeting at 7:30. The public is welcome to attend these meetings. The next day (Tuesday) the League will begin its Bible Camp meeting at Cooking Lake, east of Edmonton. The meetings will continue through Friday, Aug. 9. The evening meetings are open to the public. The young people are encouraged to attend the Rally Day and Bible Camp meetings. Be sure to take your Bible along.

The Consistory will meet Friday evening at eight o'clock.

closer inspection, saw flames. He immediately went to the store to let store manager Frank Visser know, then rushed to C. K. Mast's. When the men got to the church, the whole basement was full of flames. Frank threw one or more fire extinguishers through a basement window, but that made no difference and the men soon realized that not much could be done to stop the fire, although they and others continued for a long time to haul water with buckets to douse the fire.

By then many people had come, including janitor Albert Mast. He had left his watch in the church — a keepsake from his father — and he wanted to get it. The bystanders tried to restrain him, but Albert insisted. He went inside and soon came out with the watch, suffering no more than singed hair and a scorched face.

Many of the people watching the burning church were crying.

but one old pioneer jokingly said that he was glad it was burning because the church had been too small anyhow (with the recent influx of immigrants the church building had been crowded).

Meanwhile, water was hauled from the store to keep the parsonage soaked down so it would not catch fire. The pump at the store could not keep up with the water that was needed, though, so some men came with a stoneboat loaded with containers of water. Later the garage and the store got hot as well. The Visser children were moved to Anema's place for safety. Water was also thrown on the garage and the store to keep them cool.

A firetruck had come from Barrhead, but by the time it came it was too late to do anything to the church building. Before midnight, the whole building had burnt down. All that was left standing above the smoldering ruins was the chimney, which still had smoke rising from the top like it often did. It reminded some young people of a popular song at the time, "The Smoke Goes Up the Chimney Just the Same."

The old organ and a few benches were the only things that had been rescued from the church. It was believed that overheating pipes in the furnace had been the cause of the fire.

* * *

The third church was built during a dry spring, with no rain till after the first of July. When rain finally came, everyone was so thankful that the boss gave the workers the day off.

* * *

The church had been destroyed by fire in November 1948. Only a few things were saved. Plans were soon prepared, again by Menne Nanninga, for another larger building and before long work began on it. The church members pledged either time, money, or loans to help finance the construction. Some of the Dutch immigrants who came to Neerlandia were hired to help as well. On June 28, 1950, the new building was dedicated. It was valued at ninety-six thousand dollars.

There were a few problems to solve regarding the church building and fixtures. The minutes of January 22, 1951 indicate a problem with the ventilation system. ". . . the automatic ventilation on the church will not work as it has been installed, ____ Sheet Metal Co. blames ____ Electric, and ____ Electric blames them, but they now both blame the architect, and consequent (sic) is that the church is the loser."

The young people, however, had quietened down from the days when the second building was constructed. Still, there was a complaint: ". . . some of the young people rubbed the dirt off their shoes on the walls in the basement."

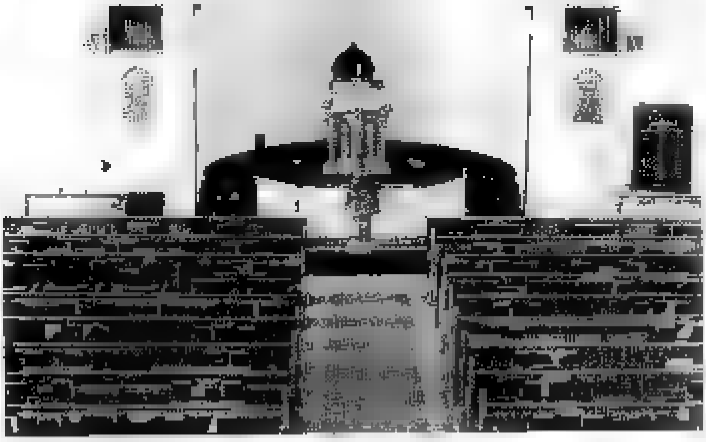
From 1948 to 1950 many Dutch immigrants came to Neerlandia and the Barrhead-Westlock area. As the nearest Christian Reformed Church, Neerlandia was responsible for the spiritual care of these immigrants. At first all the immigrants were brought to Neerlandia for Sunday church services. They were expected to pay two dollars per trip to the driver of the car that transported them. If

A NEW CHURCH

Construction progresses, 1949

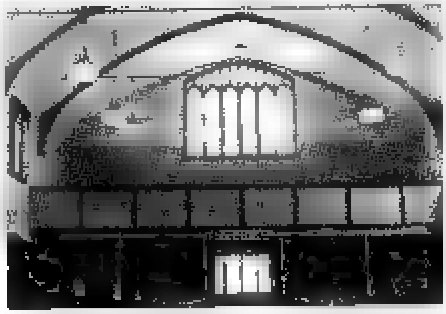
An imposing structure, outside

The third church under construction, 1949.



And in — the pulpit.

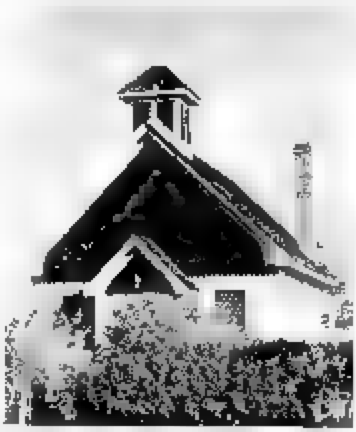
The church is dedicated, 1950.



The balcony, 1962

they were unable to pay, the money was taken from the church funds. Soon the Anglican church in Barrhead was rented and services were held there under the auspices of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. The elders from Neerlandia conducted the services but soon some of the immigrants were chosen to read the sermons. On October 19, 1950, the Christian Reformed Church in Barrhead was organized. At that time there were fifteen families, two single men, and forty-eight children. The Neerlandia congregation, which had changed to individual communion cups in 1949, donated the old communion set to the new congregation.

Neerlandia faced other problems. In 1950 a second church, the Canadian Reformed Church, was formed. This was a painful time for the community: strong emotions were generated, relationships severed, and families divided.


The Anglican church

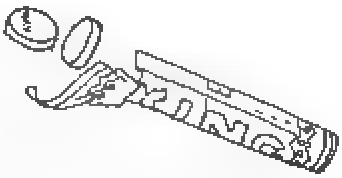
* * *

Sermon Shuffle

When the CRC lost its pastor and the church burned down, some of the congregation worshipped in the store hall, others in the school. Reading services were also conducted in Barrhead where the elders had to read. I remember having to read there one Sunday. I had forgotten my sermon but it did not dawn on me until I was halfway there. I had no choice but to go back to pick it up. In the meantime my brother-in-law had gone to my place, and Grace had asked him to bring me the sermon. We passed each other on the road, he going one way and I the other. When I finally reached Barrhead the sermon was already there. I was very upset and remember getting stuck in my prayer (which had to be done in Dutch). Those were the days! A new church was built and finally after three years the call was accepted by Rev. Mulder. That was a happy turn of events. I had been clerk those three years and had had my fill of writing ministers.

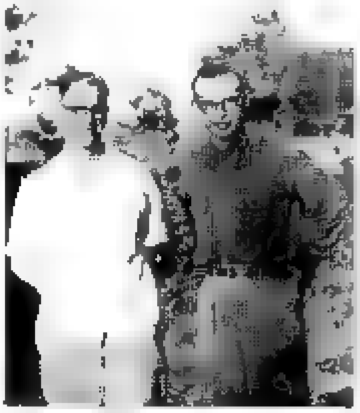
Gerrit Ingwersen

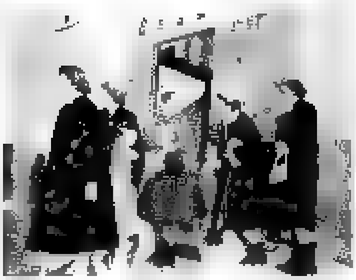
* * *



At the same time the church was without a minister. Though many of the leaders were well-read (some had always subscribed to the Dutch church papers and read the works of John Calvin, Herman Bavinck, Abraham Kuyper, and others, and knew and understood the basic confessions of the Christian faith as well as the established Church order), the burden of leadership was heavy on their shoulders at this time.

After Rev. Rubingh left, Neerlandia in 1948, call after call had been sent out but no minister accepted. The elders read the sermons, conducted family visitation, visited the sick, taught catechism and exercised church discipline year after weary year. Then in 1952 Rev. Lambertus Mulder accepted the call extended to him. Rev. and Mrs. Mulder were joyfully welcomed by the congregation and were soon busy. Rev. Mulder, an energetic man, would bound up the steps of the pulpit to deliver his sermons. He had a unique and interesting preaching style. No one fell asleep while he was preaching. The sermons were not only delivered with enthusiasm and seasoned with singular expressions, they also instructed, admonished and edified the listeners. Rev. Mulder was well able to


Rev. Mulder and Eugene Rubingh, 1954.



After a good sermon, February 1958.

deal with the factions within the congregation and the church thrived under his tireless leadership. However in 1957 he accepted a call to Fort William, Ontario, and the congregation sadly bade him farewell.

After the Mulders left Rev. Harry Van Dyken accepted the call extended to him. He served the Neerlandia congregation from 1957-62. Rev. Van Dyken was well-versed in the doctrines of the Christian faith and taught them from the pulpit and in catechism and doctrine classes. As part of his teachings on the Christian life he emphasized the sinfulness of man. He stressed the covenant relationship between God and His people. Under his tutelage the members learned what it means to be Reformed. Rev. Van Dyken was followed by Rev. Harold Hollander, who stayed in Neerlandia from 1962-66.

The Van Dykens. Back: Clifford, Marjorie, Arnold, Donald, Joanne, Curtis. Front: Harry, Gordon, Mary, Wilhelmine.

After Rev. Hollander left Neerlandia was vacant until 1970 when Rev. Van Drunen accepted the call to serve the congregation. Rev. Van Drunen was a compassionate man. When Martin and Wilma Wierenga's little daughter Bernice was terminally ill with a brain tumor, he frequently came to visit. On one occasion he took the fur cap he was wearing and cupping it in his hand held it out to her and said, "You are one of His (the Lord's) chicks."

During this period the ideas brought to Canada by the postwar immigrants became a source of friction in the congregation. Though the Kuyperians in the congregation had always promoted the idea that Christianity involved all areas of life, this was never widely accepted in Neerlandia. Immigrants and others formed the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (later called the AACS) based in Toronto. This association aggressively proclaimed the view that all of life is religion and that Christians must therefore show God's Lordship over every area of life.

When these ideas reached Neerlandia they were embraced by the descendants of the Kuyperians but resisted by others Tensions rose within the congregation. It was an unhappy time

Then in 1974 Rev Cornelius Vriend came to Neerlandia to take the place of Rev. Van Drunen, who had left in 1973 Through his ministry broken relationships were healed and there was a gradual reduction of the tension which marred congregational life

As time went by, more people accepted the idea that they should be Christianly engaged in all areas of life Many Neerlandians had always promoted Christian education. Now some became concerned about social issues, politics, and labour unions. With this came the realization that there should be co-operation with other Christians, and some supported such organizations as CLAC and CPJ.

The local CRC congregation had for many years supported missions endeavours in China, Africa, and other foreign fields In the 1940s the congregation joined the Edmonton CRC in a mission project in Jasper Place This work was discontinued in 1952. Since then there have been efforts at evangelism at Tawatinaw and the penitentiary at Fort Saskatchewan, but the location of Neerlandia, which was considered a boon when Neerlandia was founded, was a drawback in the mission efforts. The distance to both of these places made it difficult to establish and maintain contact with the people Both projects were discontinued

In 1979, acting on a proposal of the deacons, the congregation agreed to sponsor several Vietnamese refugee families, the so-called boat people The intention was to help as many people as possible leave the refugee camps and start life anew in Canada By 1984 six families had been sponsored

In 1984, as in 1915, the church is considered the centre of the community. From the church the members receive direction for their daily lives Through the years there have been gains and losses The church has grown numerically — from 17 to 130 families There has also been growth in insight as to what it means to live Christianly. On the other hand, some good practices have been discontinued. The once-thriving society life has diminished The annual congregational meeting has become strictly a business meeting. Nevertheless the purpose of the church remains the same: to promote the worship of Jesus Christ as Lord, and to instruct, admonish, and upbuild its members through the sacraments and proclamation of God's Word

The Societies in Neerlandia

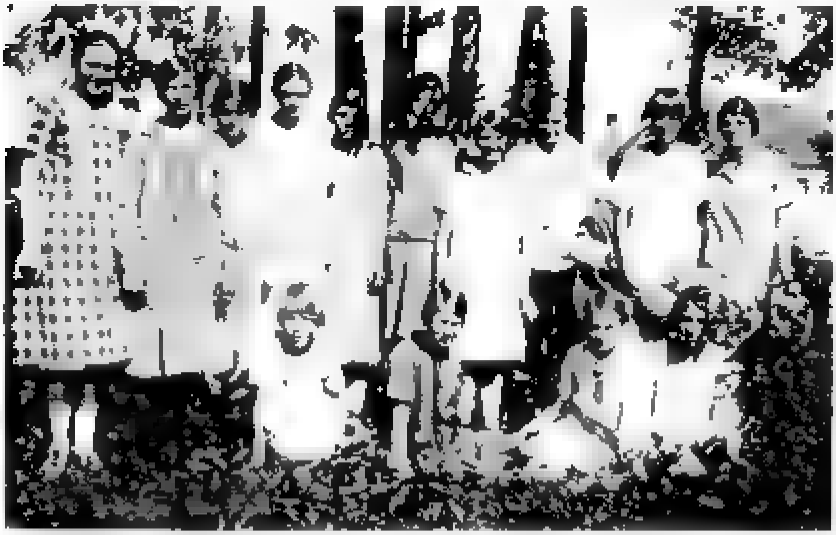
As soon as there were enough young folks in Neerlandia, society life began. A Young People's Society was organized in 1916. At first there were many more boys than girls since there were quite a few bachelors. This society met at the homes of some of the young married couples.

As the membership grew, meetings were held once a week (usually Thursday evenings) in the church during the winter months. The meeting was divided into two parts. The first hour was a Bible study lesson. The discussion was led by the president. The members were given assignments on turns. This meant they had to make an introduction (an essay to introduce the topic) on the part of Scripture they were to discuss the following week. This took a lot of study as they had to be prepared to answer the questions put to them. A short recess followed. After recess, for the second part of the evening, someone would present an essay or recitation. There was also a question box into which members could put a question. At the end of the meeting the questions were given out to be answered the following week.

A Men's Society was formed in the early twenties for the married men. These societies were similar to and patterned after the societies in the Netherlands. Church history was a common topic for after recess since much had happened in the Netherlands in the recent past. Christians had been given the freedom to have their own schools, a Christian party led by Abraham Kuyper had been elected to form the government, and there had been a division in the church as well.

One member of each society had to prepare an essay to be read and discussed at the yearly church meeting. These annual meetings lasted a whole day, so there was lots of time to do this. The Men's Society disbanded in 1973 because of poor attendance.

A Girls' Society was formed in 1926 by Bertha Tuininga at the request of Jennigje Kippers who felt the young girls should learn some handicrafts such as crocheting, knitting, embroidery, and



Sewing Club. Bertha Tuininga Gladys Kippers, Minnie Lievers, Johanna Messelink, Rieka Lievers, Eva Olthuis, Susie Anema, Carrie Olthuis, Lula Sturwold, Tena Anema. Seated: Margaret Sturwold, Annie Schoonekamp, Johanna Ingwersen, Alice Kippers, 1926.

sewing. It started with ten or twelve girls and, at first, was only for crafts but later Bible study was started. When Rev. H. Van Der Woude was pastor, he led the Bible discussion for several years. The young men met separately during those years.

The Girls' Society meetings were held every Wednesday afternoon year-round. The handicrafts the members made belonged to the society and goods for making them were bought with the dues paid at each meeting. Once a year a bazaar was held and the beautiful and useful items were sold by an auctioneer, usually Siebren Tiemstra, to the highest bidder. The money raised at this event was sent away for missionary work or other worthy causes. Sometimes the knitted or sewn garments were given to the poor. This society continued until some of the girls went elsewhere to work. The small group remaining then rejoined the young men in a Young People's Society formed of boys and girls fifteen years and older. They met Sunday evenings. After the opening of the meeting, the girls and boys would usually meet in separate rooms where one of the older members would direct the Bible study. Mrs. Rubingh, Mrs. Mulder, and Kay Baker were among those who helped the girls during those years. Until the 1960s the girls continued meeting during the week as well.

Rev. Rubingh, Rev. L. Mulder, and Rev. Van Dyken also led Young People's during their term of office here. Rev. and Mrs. Mulder were actively involved with the young people of the church on both societal and social levels. Merle Elzinga and John Visser Jr., who led them for three years when the church was vacant, guided the young people. There were others who also helped at various times — not for as long a time — but all helped to keep the society going.

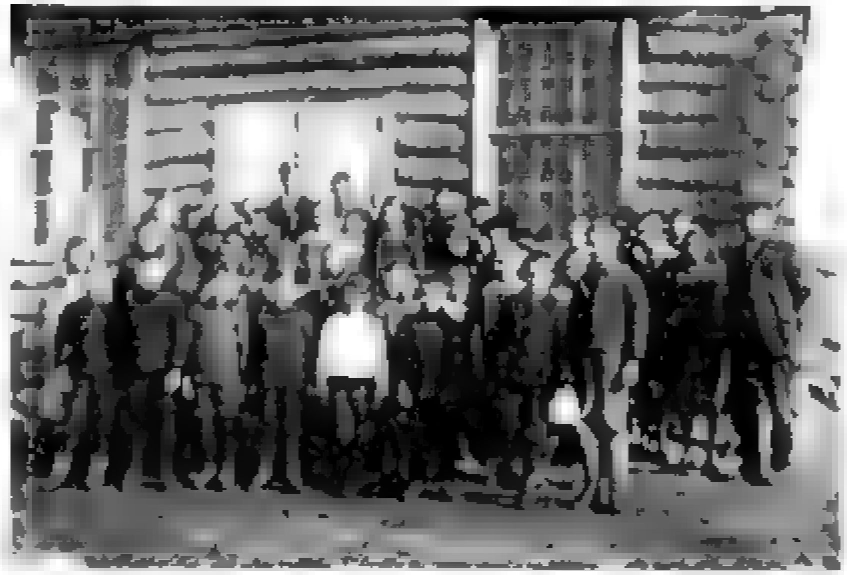
There was a social as well as a study aspect to the Young People's Society. At these meetings outings were planned. The young people had good times there and it was a good dating time. Most courtships in Neerlandia started out by dates after 'club', as they called it.

Girls' Society.
Back Alice Kippers, Catherine Baker, Nellie Ingwersen, Annie Fisher, Bertha Wierenga, Annie Schoonekamp, Jennie Kippers. Middle Mabel Elzinga. Sophie H. Wierenga. Front Della Peters, Gladys Wierenga. Rulie Schoonekamp, Grace Nanninga, Sophie A. Wierenga, c. 1937

The Girls' Society went to Edmonton to have this picture taken. Back Lena Baker, Lulie Bos, Jennie Wierenga. Jennie Hiemstra, Grace Tuininga, Catherine Hiemstra. Hilda Peters, Elie Wierenga.
Front Annie Anema. Bertha Wierenga, Bertha Gelderman, Rev. Van Der Woude, Frances Anema. Hilda Nanninga, Helen Emmerzael, 1942

Though there have been many changes, Young People's Society is still in existence. At first young people remained members until they married but later, as many people left Neerlandia for higher education or jobs, the society became composed of fifteen to nineteen-year-olds. The society is under the direction of youth elders. Young married couples give leadership to the fifteen to eighteen-year-olds who make up the society.

In the early twenties a Boys and Girls' Society was started and led by Clarence Tuininga. The members ranged in age from twelve to fifteen years. This society was held during the winter months on Saturday afternoons. Clarence would explain a passage of Scripture and ask questions about it. The after-recess topic was church history. This society lasted about six years.



Knappen en Meisjes Vereeniging (Boys and Girls Society). Back: ?, ?, Andy Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, Lucas Sturwold, Albert Tiemstra, Bill Lievers

Third Row: Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Johanna Messelink, Annie Ingwersen, Susie Anema, Tena Terpsma, Clara Ritsema, Gertie Tuininga, Della Anema, Pauline Sturwold, Sadie Tuininga, Norman Terpsma, Grada (Margaret) Messelink, Klaas Tuininga, leader

Second row: Gladys Kippers, Hanna Lievers, Johanna Ingwersen, Minnie Lievers, Rieka Lievers, Lily Messelink, Jennie and Annie Schoonekamp, Lula Sturwold, Gertie Ritsema

Front: Andrew Nanninga, Joe Tuininga, Cecil Tuininga, George Terpsma, Henry Ritsema, Harry Lievers, Peter Ritsema, John Kippers

Mrs. Rubingh at home in the parsonage, 1947

According to the CRC denominational yearbook, a singing society began in 1917 with Popko Schuring directing. The original purpose seems to have been to improve congregational singing during the services. As time went on the choral society moved toward the presentation of musical programs at Christmas and Easter both in Neerlandia and in hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions. Henry Michael directed a choral society in 1927. Several leaders have taken their turn at being director. Since about 1975 there have been two choral societies, the second one is composed of single young people.

Mrs. J. Rubingh formed a Ladies' Aid "Dorcas" in 1946 and led this society until Rev. J. Rubingh was called to serve elsewhere. The Dorcas society followed the same procedures as the Girls' Society — Bible Study before and handicrafts after recess — but later the after-recess program changed to include a reading, discussion of business concerning the society, and having tea served by two different women at each meeting. This society, though small in number (fourteen to twenty), continues to be active in the community. The women hold a bazaar each year, donating the goods and refresh-

Back: Ralph Bos, Arthur Reitsma, Ryer Krikke, Archie Howey, Bill Toebes, Clarence Tiemstra, Arie Krikke, Albert Krikke. Fourth Row: Norman Toebes, Henry Wierenga, Fred Toebes, Lambert A. Wierenga, Ralph Krikke, Cor Hiemstra, Martin Wierenga.

Third Row: Herman Gelderman, Ben Bouwman, Don Bruhjell, Eugene Rubingh, Arnold Hiemstra, Dewey Terpsma, George Anema, Jim Johnman, Pete Mast, Albert Tiemstra.

Second Row: Rev. Rubingh, Kobie Mast, Jennie Terpsma, Alice Mast, Margaret Bouwman, Jean Gelderman, Grace Bouwman, Thelma Sturwold, Sophie Anema, Rita Gelderman, Janet Sturwold, John Visser.

Front: Grace Tuininga, Liz Bos, Lena Baker, Gladys Krikke, Annie Anema, Mrs. Rubingh, Junne Elgersma, Lula Krikke, Cecelia Tiemstra, Wilma Visser, c. 1948.

Young People's Society.

Back: James Strydhorst, Henry, Peter, Ed, and Bert Piers, Clarence Tiemstra, John Piers, Bert Janssen, Wilbert Schuring, Bill Reitsma.

Fourth Row: Joe Mast, Raymond Mertus, Lambert Tuininga, Julius Boorsma, Jelle Tuininga, Henry Gelderman, Ken Tuininga, Jim Nanninga, George Visser, Ralph Bos.

Third Row: Manny Nanninga, Mrs. Mulder, Reta Tuininga, Shirley Ashley, Johanna Wierenga, Trynie Dieterman, Evelyn Tiemstra, Hetina Elgersma, Helena and Jean Fisher, Betsy Bos, Annie DeBoer, Elsie Olthuis, Stewart Plantinga, Simon De Groot.

Second Row: Bob Janssen, Ruth Tuininga, Shirley Olthuis, Henny Tuininga, Joyce Reitsma, Edith Tuininga, Ann Strydhorst, Joan Olthuis, Florence Baker, John Baker, Rev. Mulder.

Front Row: Annette Plantinga, Catherine Baker, Henry Nanninga, Klaas Tuininga, Jim Tuininga, Dave Tiemstra, Henry Strydhorst, Marvin Nanninga, George R. Visser, Sylvia Tuininga, Joe Plantinga.

ments and, of course, serving and cleaning up later. Quite a few donations are sent in by non-members too. With the proceeds of the sale the Society helps causes such as Rehoboth and The King's College, and helps to obtain items such as kitchen equipment for use in the church. In addition the women are faithful in visiting the Hillcrest Senior Citizens Home and the Barrhead Nursing Home every other week. They also visit the elderly and shut-ins of the community. Although they have had leadership from some of the ministers and their wives, the women have usually kept this society going by themselves. Through the years the members have changed, but the society remains faithful to the original purpose of Bible study and charitable work.

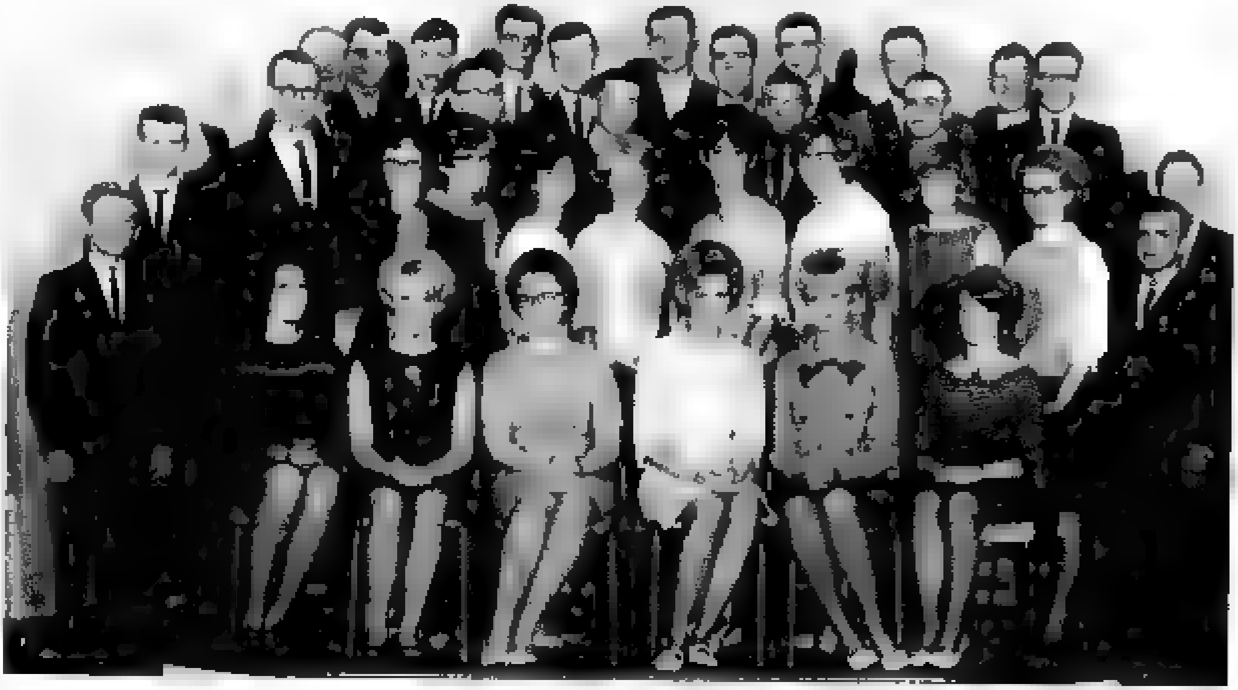
Young People's Society, 1957

Back Row: Henry Nanninga, Andrew Elgersma, Clifford Tuininga, Lambert Tuininga, George Strydhorst, Wilbert Schuring, Ken Piers, Jelle Tuininga, Peter Piers, Tony Fisher, Marvin Nanninga, Alvin Nanninga.

Third Row: Bert Piers, Ella Plantinga, Rose Mast, Betty Fisher, Lucille Tuininga, Hilda Piers, Reatta Nanninga, Marilyn Mast, Anne Tuininga, Joanne Gelderman, Edith Tuininga, Sandra Elgersma, Gilles Plantinga, Jack Olthuis.

Second Row: Arnold van Dyken, Raymond Merkus, Judy Fisher, Joanne van Dyken, Elsie Olthuis, Mrs. van Dyken, Henry Piers, Don van Dyken, Johanna Wierenga, Henry Gelderman.

Front: Jim Tuininga, Winnifried Ingwersen, Klaas Tuininga, Frank Visser, John Strydhorst, Henry Strydhorst, Cornelia Kippers.



Young People's Society.
Back: Henry J. Wierenga, Sidney Tuininga, Ray Stunwold, Henry Schuurman, Bill Kippers.
Third Row: Cor Strydhorst, Tom Stunwold, Fred Otthuis, Case van Beek, Gilbert Baker, Ken Styrdhorst.
Second Row: Jack Mast, Rev. Hollander, Mrs. Hollander, Judy Nanninga, Audrey Gelderman, Sharon Nanninga, Clariss Hollander, Edna Schuurman, Jennie Schuurman, Beverly Visser, Jake Strydhorst.
Front Row: Andrew Strydhorst, Sharon Hollander, Carol Schoonekamp, Shirley Wierenga, Alida Mast, Betty Visser, Darlene Wierenga, Gordon Tuininga, 1965-66.

Memories From A Preacher's Kid

In September of 1946, Rev. and Mrs. John Rubingh came to Neerlandia with their teen-age son, Eugene. The pioneer days were long ended but for this young transplanted Yankee, it would all be an unforgettable adventure. My diary for September 5 says simply, "Came to Neerlandia," but the reality was far more astonishing for this sheltered son of the pastorate. The road was incredibly bad (I have since traveled the mountains of Sierra Leone, and I still say the road to Neerlandia that year was terrible). Every two miles we stopped to scrape the mud from the windshield to see if there was any hope of making it. Mother trembled to think to which outpost of the earth she was being slithered by her foolhardy husband, though in the end she had as much pluck as he.

The days of that autumn are stark in my memory, for the timid city kid was being hammered into shape. The young people painted the basement of the church that fall, and some muscled young buck named Elgersma painted me with raucous glee. Mother took one look at me and said, "You're not going back there!" But I knew I had to go back, no matter what. *Dominee* descended from the study and agreed with me, and I went back and painted with all the rest. It had been like baptism, in a way. On December 22, I joined "Young People's". Neerlandia, at last, was truly home.

That winter was punctuated by savage bouts of a sport new to the city kid, a sport played with pucks and sticks. Roll upon roll of newspaper covered shin-bones, but they turned blue with bruises nonetheless. I became as mean as the next guy, and I was faster than Elgersma now and then. Sturwold was the goalie, I remember. He had always been the goalie, as far back as people could recall. There was an ageless quality about him, but he could move like lightning when the puck approached.

There is only one other entry in my diary that year. It reads, "Took out a girl for the first time. Her name is Jean Gelderman." Our young romance blossomed, and we both went to school in Grand Rapids eventually. Our shared dreams of missionary service took us both to Africa, but with different mates. Even today we speak together in the language of the Tiv of Nigeria to whom we recommended and proclaimed Jesus Christ.

Mr. Van Riper was our teacher, and many of us made life miserable for him, but I was his special nemesis. I do not write this with any pride, but surely Mr. Van Riper forms a chapter in the lives of so many of us, and we cannot let him pass unnoticed. Forever there rings in our ears the summons to punishment, "Go into the science room!" I wonder if Mr. Van Riper realized all along that we were just young jackrabbits growing up. Perhaps he went home at night and chuckled at our outrageous antics. I doubt it, but I hope so. Henry Piers and Jelle Tuininga and I were his triple trouble. Once every ten years or so we see each other, and our greeting is, "Go into the science room, you rascal!"

In the summers I worked for Corny Nanninga as carpenter's apprentice. I learned to lay shingles in a hurry, but I was a disaster with the cows and I think they chuckled when they saw me coming. Their coordination of kicking the half-full milk pail and flicking a tail in my face simultaneously was magnificent.

On slow days we "picked roots", and the evening skies were nearly always dotted with fires as new land was cleared and the brush piles burned away. The daring ones hired a bulldozer to come and clear brush for $14 an hour. Occasionally a bulldozer would sink into the muskeg.

In 1948, a momentous decision was made concerning the schooling of the youth. The high schoolers took most of their courses by correspondence, but it was decided that busing to Barrhead High School would be arranged. Would the preacher's kid go? On September 1, the yellow bus arrived and many of the covenant youth indeed went to Barrhead High, including the preacher's kid. I can still see concerned parents watching us go that morning. One father stood at the door of the bus and urged us not to step on board. But we went anyway.

So Neerlandia seeped into my bones. Preachers' kids in later life seldom know where they are from, for their parents put down stakes in so many places. But I am from Neerlandia, and I know it. Its images go with me everywhere: the columns of smoke rising straight into the sky from farmhouse chimneys on a still and bitterly cold winter morning, the sweep and crackle of the Northern lights across the canopy of sky, the lonely howl of a crazy coyote. I remember how we laughed at the story of the Ukrainian neighbor who said to John Gelderman, "You horse me, I post-fence you," and they had a deal.

But those images have not yet caught the heart of it In Neerlandia, in the 40's, the vision that drove the pioneers was still alive and vibrant The depth of their faith they translated into action, and built a community known all around as founded in the name of Christ the King. The steel of their commitment was still flowing into their sons and daughters. Their hope in the future was still invincible then. There still was sod unturned, land as uncleared as when their fathers first crossed the Pembina. With those strong links to the past, and with that optimism about the future, there was a strong sense of self-identity. People in Neerlandia knew who they were I could not have described it then, but I see it now they knew who they were At their hearts' core they were the people of God They had staked everything on that commitment. It had given them a past and a hope.

The decades have rolled on, and I am told that while the externals have changed, in its essences Neerlandia is still as it was then The steel is tempered now and the landscape a little softer, but in Neerlandia the sense of self-identity is yet clear the coming of the Kingdom of God drives them on. And that, at last, is the heart of it

Eugene Rubingh

Our Plight in Vacancy

Some three years ago, to the shock of us all,
There came from the east for our pastor, a call
To do home-mission work, an extension of church,
Which call he accepted, and left us in the lurch.

Then just two weeks later our old church burned down,
And only its ruins were left in our town.
Yes, it was insured, but not near high enough,
With the present-day prices we pay for new stuff.

But plans for a new church were very soon made,
Pledges accepted, which of course, would be paid
Our services now were held in the Hall,
But space there was lacking to seat them all

So our group was divided, some went to the school,
Half English, half Dutch was kept as the rule.
Thus now we all worshipped and each did his part,
Though divided in body we were still one at heart.

This meant that the elders four sermons must read,
Plus two more in Barrhead, where one had to lead
Besides this there were several classes to teach,
While none of the elders had learned how to preach.

Add all this together, there was work here to do,
And none was excused, for not even the flu.
Time marched on apace, and good sermons grew few
To read to the audience who sat in the pew

The calls we extended to men of sound mind.
Were politely acknowledged but firmly declined.

We called, yes we called, from the east to the west,
Some young and some old who had been through the test.

And so two years passed and no minister came,
And the answers we got were always the same
They took their full time, their reply mostly late
We acknowledge your call, yes, your need there is great.

"We hope very soon one will heed to your call,
But I must decline, just can't come, that is all"
The past it was gloomy, the future not bright,
But give up? — not we, we'll keep on with the fight!

So time went apace, our new church was complete,
With room in abundance, for each one a seat.
Although this new building was fair to behold,
It could not entice the right man to our fold.

Those men in "Jerusalem" all sit there so tight,
Although we prayed, wrote, and beseeched with our might
We called old and young, we called big and small,
Had a few more years gone by, we would have called them all.

But now at last we can rejoice, for one our call has heard
To lead us in God's pastures green, and preach to us His Word.

God grant him grace to labour here, and give him strength and life,
And happiness while here with us, both to him and his wife
And may we all with one accord remember them in prayer,
Rejoice with them when all is well, and in their burdens share

Now let us praise and bless our God for His great goodness wrought,
Who after all these years of wait, this man to us has brought.
O magnify His holy name, His mercy faileth never.
Pastors may come and they may go, but God's church goes on forever

Gerrit Ingwersen

Excerpts from poem read by Gerrit at the welcome party for Rev. L. Mulder, 1952.

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF NEERLANDIA

"The year 1948 saw the beginning of a new stream of immigrants to Neerlandia. Amongst these people were members of the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk* in the Netherlands, in Neerlandia they joined the Christian Reformed Church but that was not to last too long.

The Christian Reformed Church had correspondence with the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands and did not want to get involved in the trouble in the Netherlands, but they would not accept ministers from the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk* on their pulpits. Many in Neerlandia were well aware of recent developments in the Netherlands and, after talking to the new immigrants, some became very dissatisfied with the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church

A number of times Lammert Wierenga wrote in *De Wachter*, pointing to the struggle in the Netherlands against synodical hierarchy. Then protests went to the consistory and to classis, but to no avail. Eventually, in March, Lammert Wierenga, Ite Wierenga, and

Joshua Rowaan sent a letter to the General Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of 1950 requesting them to ask both church groups in the Netherlands to 'present their views as to the reason for separate church existence, and to ask one group why it had suspended and deposed, and the other why they liberated themselves' In the meantime, a number became members of the Canadian Reformed church in Edmonton, others wanted to wait for the answer of Synod A few days later the answer came Synod had decided not to accede to their request:

'Grounds.

A It is not in our province to sit in judgement over these churches

B. It is not our Christian duty to invite delegations from these churches for the purpose of settling these items.

C. The *"Gereformeerde Kerken onderhoudende Art 31 K O."* is in no way prevented from directing an invitation for correspondence to us.'

On August 1, 1950, they sent a letter and an Act of Liberation to all the members of the Christian Reformed Church, stating their reasons for liberating themselves In summary form, these reasons were (following the order of the grounds Synod gave).

A. The Christian Reformed Church, while saying that it does not want to judge events in Holland, by their decisions in fact implicitly condemn the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk*

B. The Christian Reformed Church, while claiming to be neutral, has already judged (as seen by its accepting Synodical ministers but denying *Vrijgemaakt* ones the right to speak) and has done so without hearing the arguements of the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk.*

C. The one-sided attitude of the Christian Reformed Church has prevented correspondence with the *Vrijgemaakt Kerk*

A Canadian Reformed Church was instituted in Neerlandia on August 6, 1950, under the leadership of elder A W De Leeuw of Edmonton. Andy Mulder, Hendrik Peters, and Ekke Wierenga were installed as elders and Gerrit Dam and Adrian Hamoen Sr. as deacons At that time there were about forty members A year later the membership had risen to sixty-eight

After two ministers had declined, the congregation of Neerlandia joyfully received word that Rev. H. Stel had accepted the call, and he was installed on November 25, 1951 At this time worship services were held in the school In the hamlet of Neerlandia a piece of property had been bought on which the first parsonage was situated. An old school building was bought in December 1954 and moved to the church property in 1955. The following year Rev. Stel accepted a call to Houston, and Neerlandia was once again without a minister

In 1961, the church in Barrhead was instituted and an agreement was made to call a minister together. In March 1966 the Rev. and Mrs. Pieffers came to Neerlandia, as emeritus minister he was able to serve Neerlandia for two years until he died in 1968.

Early in 1968, the congregation decided to build a new church building, and on December 5, 1969, the official opening was celebrated, although there was no minister. In 1971 Neerlandia called candidate C Van Dam, who accepted. In 1973 Rev. Van Dam accepted a call to Brampton and moved there the following year.[71]

After Rev Van Dam left, the congregation had its ups and downs in church membership numbers. Many ministers and candidates were called, but they all declined the calls. Classical preaching

Rev. and Mrs. Van Dam, 1976.

engagements were shared with Barrhead until Rev. Tiggelaar was installed as minister of Barrhead in December 1981, then he came to Neerlandia for a service two Sundays every month and also taught catechism at school.

On Christmas Day, 1982, the joyful news was received that the Rev. A. de Jager of Anna Paulowna-Enkhuizen, the Netherlands, had accepted a call to Neerlandia

At the present time (1984) membership of the church of Neerlandia stands at 227 members. Plans are underway for a new building since the church building is too small.

Lies Hamoen

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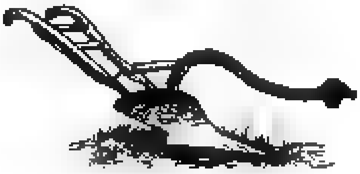
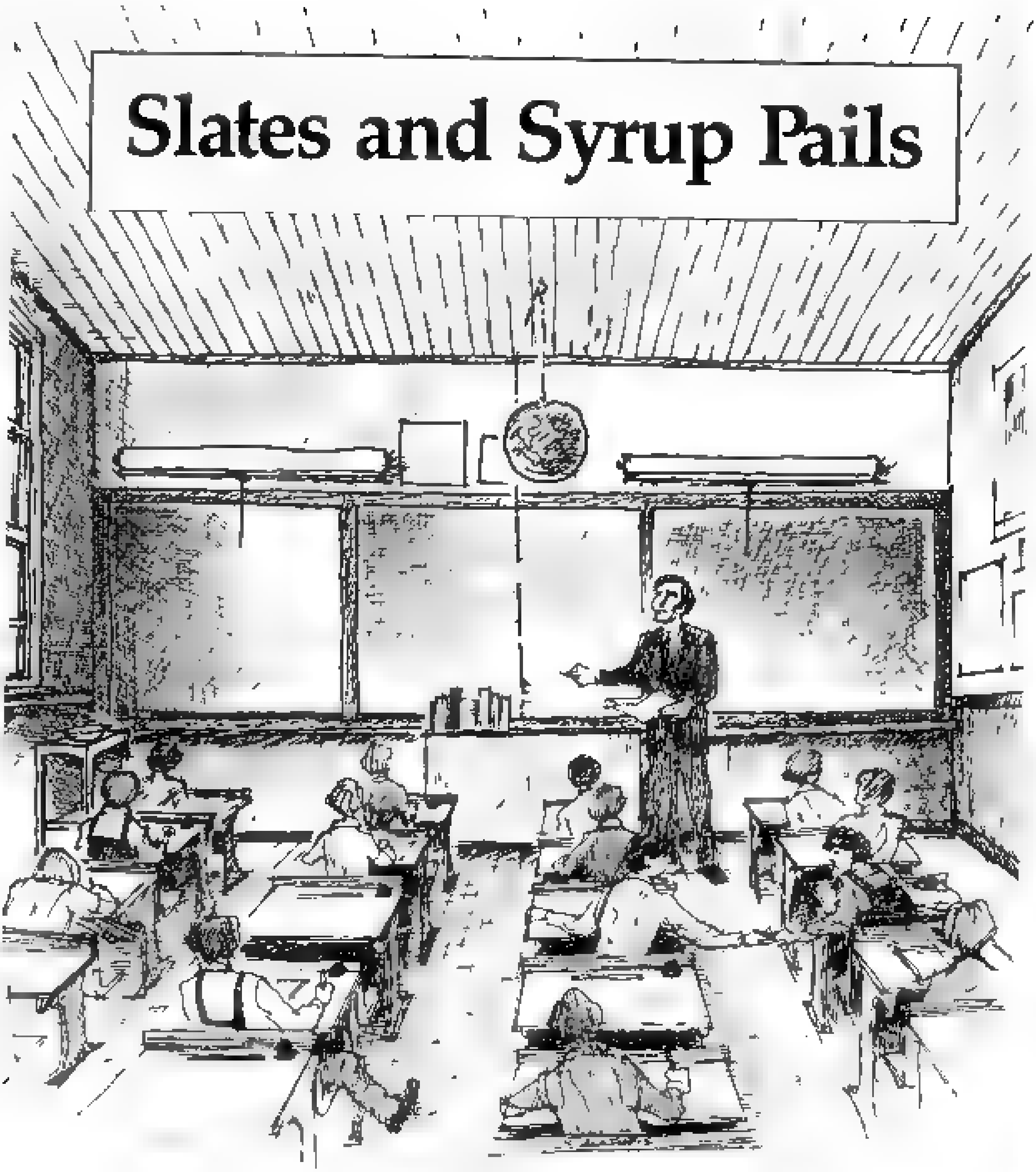
[1] J. Van Dam, "Neerlandia: 25 Years", *Clarion*, Vol. 24, No. 17, August 23, 1975.



Slates and Syrup Pails



EDUCATION

From the beginning of Dutch settlement in Neerlandia the people were anxious that their children receive a good formal education. In the Netherlands, independent Christian schools governed by a school society formed by parents were in existence since the mid-19th century. The people's motive in establishing such schools was grounded in their belief that parents are charged by God to bring up their children in a way that acknowledges that God is Lord of all of life. The men and women who came to Neerlandia in the early 20th century carried this idea with them. How clearly they understood just what Christian education entailed is not known. What is known is that in response to God their desire was to establish an independent Christian school.

By 1915 the few settlers in the wilderness had formed a Christian school society and were operating a school. Henry van den Burg, a settler from the U.S.A., agreed to teach the children although he had no teaching certificate. There was no school building so classes were held in the log church. On Sundays worship services were held there, but during the week the benches were pushed to one side and replaced with homemade desks. Henry van den Burg exchanged his teaching skills for the cutting of willow pickets for fence posts by students and parents. The pioneers were too poor to pay him, but this method of payment did not work either. One reason was that when the students came to work, Mr. van den Burg kindheartedly invited them into his house and visited with them instead of encouraging them to work. Secondly, he was heard to complain that, although he was getting his land cleared, he was getting no money and he had to eat too. In any event, he eventually returned to the U.S.A.

Meanwhile, the pioneers met to discuss ways and means of continuing Christian education. Some of the settlers were of the opinion that they were too poor to support a Christian school, while others thought it necessary to continue — in response to God's commands and in spite of the financial difficulties. Still others were not concerned. They thought the education provided by the public school system would be good enough. Back and forth the discussion went — in formal meetings and during social visits. Gradually the settlers made up their minds — one group of the opinion that a Christian school was impossible to maintain at that time and another promoting the idea of going ahead, while seeking financial assistance from the Christian Reformed churches in the U.S.A. This latter proposal was brought before a ratepayers' meeting where the proponents urged the others to trust the Lord for success in this matter. A vote was taken but the motion defeated. For now, until the financial picture brightened, there would be no independent Christian school in Neerlandia. Instead, a committee was formed with the intent of forming a public school district.

• • •

They never went ahead with a Christian school because the settlers felt there was not enough money. Caughlin, Wing, and Scott *were asked if they would object to our own school and they said, "Go ahead, we won't bother you."*

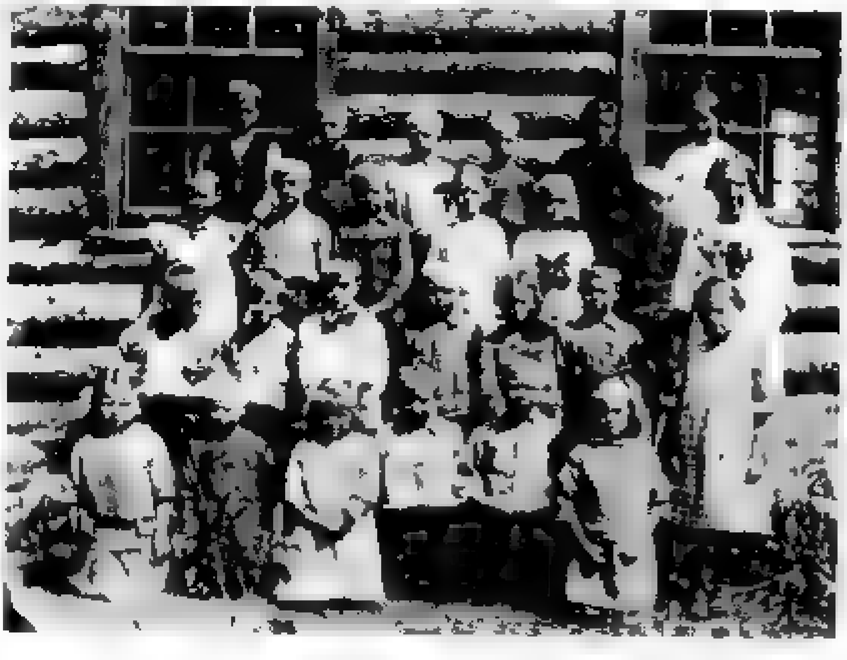
They had a meeting and Ingwersen, Kippers, A. Mast, Oldegbers, and Terpsma were in favour of their own school but were voted down. Those men thought they should write to sister congregations in the U.S.A. for financial aid.

Roelof Kooy said at this meeting, "Luiden wij hiermee de doodsklok over een Christlijke school in Neerlandia *(We hereby sound the death knell for a Christian school in Neerlandia)."*

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Before van den Burg left, he and the parents approached Helen Kooy, a settler's daughter, to take his place. She was hesitant to do this, being young and having had no training to teach. However, since most of the people had come directly from the Netherlands and spoke little or no English and she had received her education in Alberta, she felt obligated to take the job. Although she had no prescribed textbooks available to her, she taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and some geography. The children had slates and slate pencils to work with. For her efforts she received twenty-five dollars a month.



Miss Kooy and her class, 1916
Note Gerrit Kippers in front row. He was below school age but came that day to have his picture taken.

Back Row: Henry Kippers, John Olthuis, Andy Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, Jim Melsome, Ida Kooy.

Third Row: Della Anema, John Kippers, Lucas Sturwold, Pauline Sturwold, Tena Terpsma, Ike Nanninga, Helen Kooy (teacher).

Second Row: Corny Ingwersen, Gerrit Ingwersen, Norman Terpsma, Louis Nanninga, Gladys Kippers, Albert Tiemstra, Margaret Messelink.

Front Row: Hanna Lievers, Gerrit Kippers, Minnie Lievers, Fred Olthuis, Gerben Tiemstra, Susie Anema.

* * *

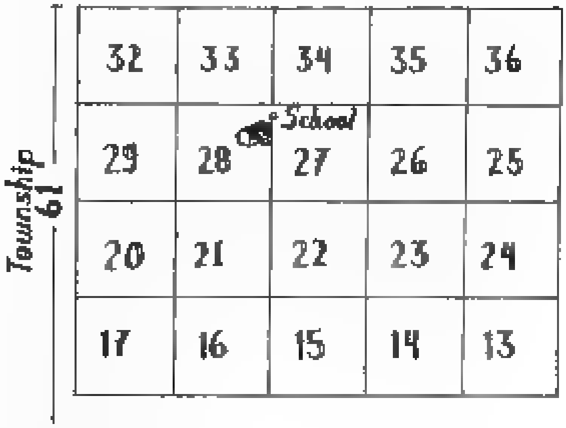
In her classroom Helen Kooy taught grades one through four. These included two rascally boys who, one afternoon when Miss Kooy stayed to put some work on the board for the next day, held the door shut to prevent her leaving. Fortunately Miss Kooy was wearing a hat with a long hat pin. Through a crack in the door, she poked one of the culprits, Andy Nanninga, with her hat pin. The other boy must have been Bill Olthuis, for shortly after that the Nanninga and Olthuis families received a visit because "the boys *were getting too big for their britches." In spite of mischievous boys, Helen Kooy enjoyed her work and taught for about two years. The parents were glad their children were receiving some education in the English language.*

* * *

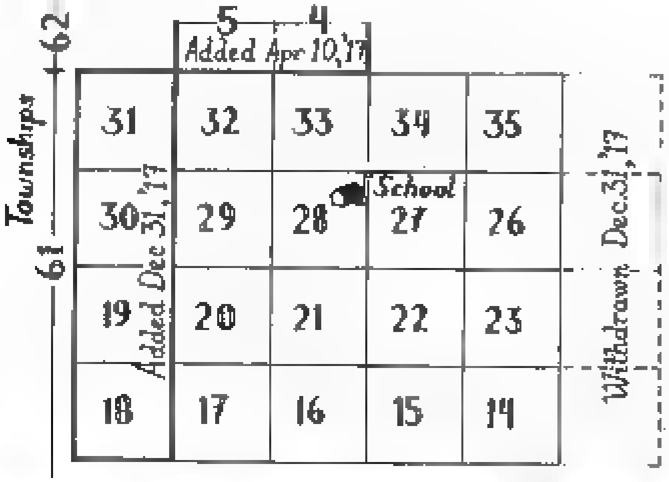
Though the attempt to establish a Christian school had been defeated, the efforts to provide Christian education had not stopped. The settlers hoped to staff a public school with Christian teachers. The committee formed earlier had contacted the Government requesting permission to form a school district. To be eligible for the formation of a school district, at least four adults and at least eight children between the ages of five and sixteen had to be

SHOAL CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT #3460

as of March 5, 1917



as of December 31, 1917

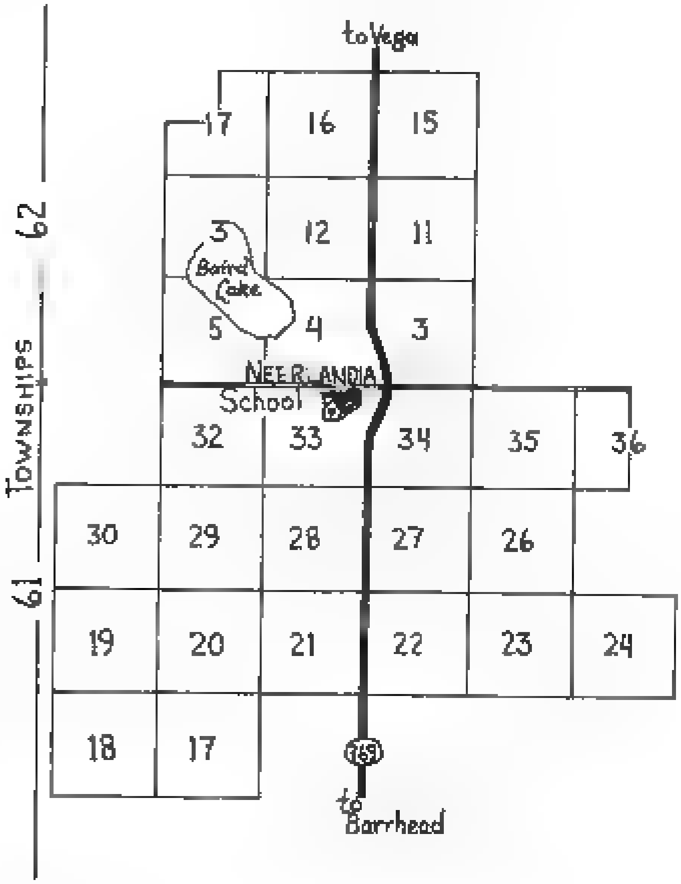


residing in the proposed area A petition could then be sent to the provincial government, which would respond by sending a copy of the School Ordinance specifying the steps to follow The first requirement was the selection of a school committee composed of three members. They in turn had to set up a public meeting at which residents would vote on setting up a school district in their area. The required procedure was duly followed in Neerlandia with the result that the Shoal Creek School District #3460 was formed March 5, 1917 The number indicates that this was the 3460th school district formed in Alberta. No records remain to indicate why the name Shoal Creek was chosen but presumably it was taken from the nearby creek of the same name

Though the Shoal Creek School District was a public organization, its members were Christians. This was demonstrated in the practice of opening each meeting by seeking God's help in prayer

NEERLANDIA SCHOOL DISTRICT # 3460

as of November 23, 1949



and closing by giving thanks to Him. This custom was so firmly entrenched that on occasion the minutes read "The meeting was opened in the usual way." The unusual was also noted in the minutes of Monday, April 14, 1924, when a special meeting was called because of a problem: "Meeting opened at 2 o'clock by the chairman without prayer."

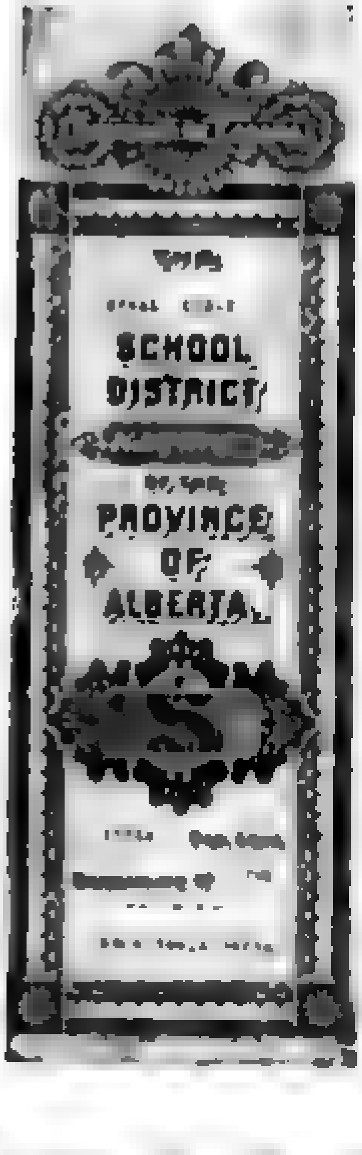
Initially the Shoal Creek School District was composed of twenty sections of 61-3-5, but already by April 10, 1917, the south halves of sections four and five in 62-3-5 were added. In all, the boundaries of this district were changed fourteen times. One of the reasons for some of the many changes was the arrival of settlers with school age children on land adjacent to the district. Because of the regulation that a school district was not to be more than five miles in either length or breadth, this sometimes necessitated the deletion of unoccupied lands at the same time.

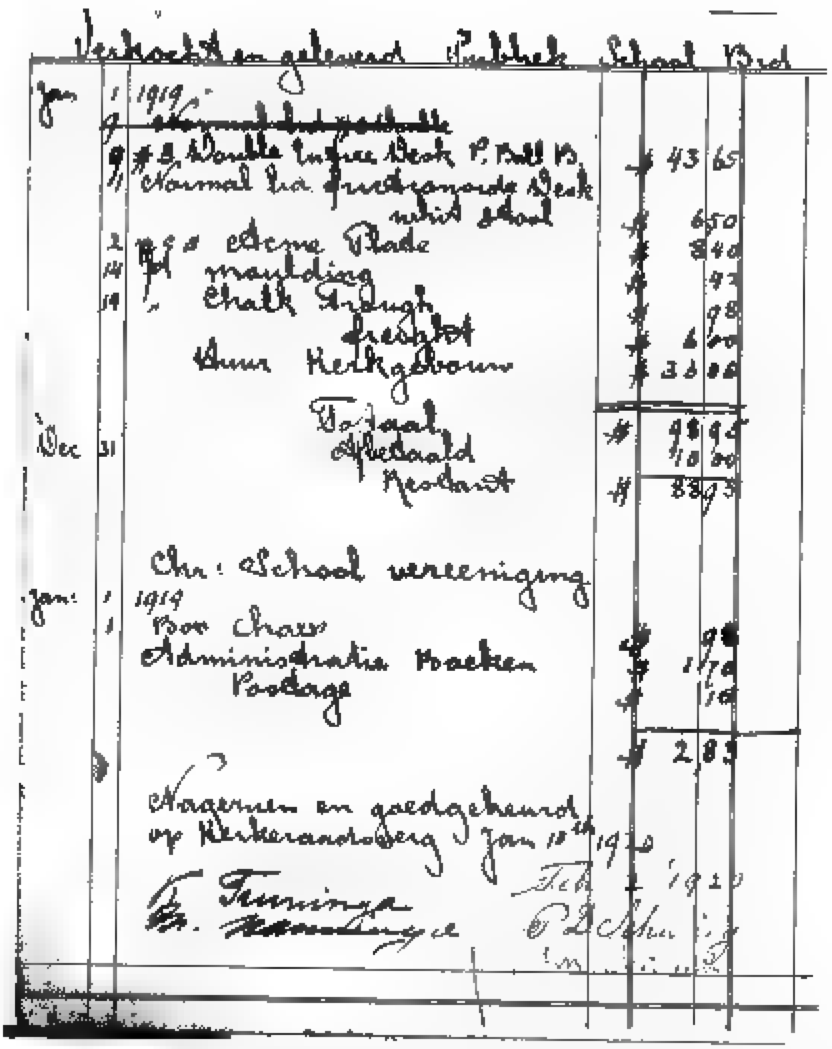
Another government requirement was the selection of a school site as near the centre of the district as possible so that no one would have to walk long distances. It was to be a dry, elevated rectangle of about one acre in area. The Shoal Creek district chose a two-acre corner of the NE 28-61-3-5, for which government approval was received on June 27, 1917.

One government regulation instructed the trustees to keep records and produce minute books, assessment rolls, and other records for inspection when required to do so. The Dutch settlers showed their respect for the government's authority by keeping the minutes in the English language in a time when their daily speech was still Dutch and their English self taught. The occasional awkward wording of a sentence testifies to the difficulty this gave them. In contrast, it should be noted that other purely local organizations recorded their minutes in the Dutch language. The Men's Society, for example, did this until November 1947.

With these preliminary steps accomplished, the school board could turn its attention to the erection of a school building. In their impoverished condition, the settlers were unable to finance this venture. The earliest surviving minutes, January 29, 1918, indicate a cash balance of twenty-six cents. The trustees, Cornelius Ingwersen, Ralph Kooy, and Siebren Iemstra, decided to apply for a debenture loan of one thousand dollars to be used for building the school. Schoolhouse Plan A6 was requested from the Department of Education, but when it arrived with a price tag of seventeen hundred dollars they decided instead to ask Menne Nanninga, a local carpenter, to draw up plans. By the time approval for the plans was received from Edmonton it was realized that the proposed building could not accommodate the forty pupils that there now were in Neerlandia. Menne Nanninga went back to the Public Utilities Commission for another debenture, this time for five hundred dollars because a bigger schoolhouse, of course, required greater funds.

When the second set of plans were approved, tenders were called for with Menne Nanninga's bid of $1415 being accepted. The one-room school was built with lumber from Cleme's Lumber Mill in Barrhead. The exterior was painted white and the roof green. Originally the trustees considered putting a four foot panel of





Verkochten en geleverd Publiek School Brd

Jan	1	1919			
	9	~~[illegible]~~			
	9	#8 Double Inface Desk P. Bill 13	$	43	65
	11	Normal Lia [illegible] Desk uit school	$	6	50
	2	[illegible] Acme Slade	$	8	40
	14	" moulding	$		47
	14	" Chalk Trough	$		98
		Freight	$	6	20
		Huur Kerkgebouw	$	36	00
		Totaal	$	98	94
Dec	31	Afbetaald		10	00
		Restant	$	88	93
		Chr: School vereeniging			
Jan:	1	1919			
	1	Box Chairs	$		95
		Administratie Kosten	$	1	79
		Postage	$		10
			$	2	85

Nagezien en goedgekeurd op Kerkeraadsvergadering Jan 10th 1920

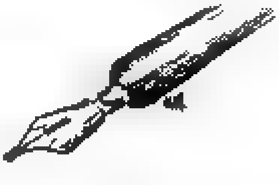
T. Tuininga

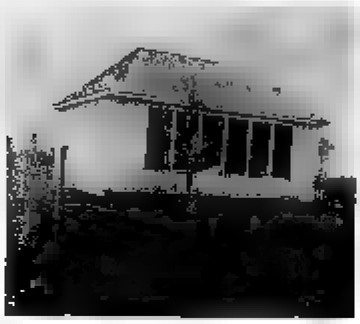
Feb 2 1920

beaverboard or other material around the lower interior walls, but the cost of from $31 to $92 for various materials was considered prohibitive so they settled for colouring the walls dark with kalsomine and staining the floors. By June 1919 the school building, with the exception of a heater, was ready.

During the building process the trustees had been anticipating a visit from the school inspector who, they hoped, would advise them on heating, obtaining a special grant, and other related matters. In September 1919 the long awaited visit took place with the inspector approving all that had been done. He did, however, recommend the following equipment:

a standing numeral frame
an 18" hanging globe
a map from N. America and Canada
2 visitor's chairs
a basin and towels
a thermometer
window shades




First Neerlandia school.

7 small-sized seats
penholders and busy work
a combined filter and fountain
a teacher's desk and chair

The board agreed to purchase all except the last two items which, they said, would be ordered when finances permitted.

At the same time, the trustees attempted to comply with the departmental regulations which stated that the grounds should be cleared of brush, levelled, and fenced The fence was to be made of two strands of smooth wire topped with one strand of barbed wire Arie Emmerzael and Popko Schuring submitted the only tender which was broken down as follows:

$48 20	for digging a well
$40.00	for clearing
$15.00	for fencing

The janitorial contract was awarded to Willem de Groot at a rate of $4.75 per month. For this salary he was expected to do the following

1. Sweep the floors every afternoon with the doors and windows open
2. In the morning, dust the benches and light the fire. (The room was expected to be ready one-half hour before schooltime)
3. Wash the blackboards every Saturday.
4. Wash the floors every fortnight
5. Clean the windows.

And so schooling under the conditions set out by the Department could begin.

* * *

Walking to school four miles every day,
Seldom would we get a ride — there just was no way
On the way to school with our neighbours we'd meet,
And all walk together which we thought a treat.
We named our junction Spruce Avenue you see,
Because there we assembled under a spruce tree
It must've been hard for my parents, I'm sure
But the memories that linger shall always endure.
As we walked to school and saw bird's nests with young,
The frogs in the ponds, the spider webs as they hung,
The berries we found and the falling drops of rain,
Those memories I'm sure will always remain.

— excerpt from a poem by Annie Visser

In 1923 the name of the Shoal Creek School District was officially changed to the Neerlandia School District #3460. The name change, initiated by Clarence Tuininga, was made because mail intended for the school district was being misdirected to the community of Shoal Creek

Financing the District

Finances. the catalyst by which a school system operates No matter how highly education is regarded, without money it is next to impossible to obtain For the pioneers in the Shoal Creek School

District, money was hard to come by But money was needed for a schoolhouse, a well school furnishings, salaries for teachers and janitors, firewood, and a host of other miscellaneous expenses. It was because of the lack of money that an independent Christian school had been foregone

To a duly constituted school district though, money was available from three sources debentures, grants, and taxes. Through the Public Utilities Commission, ten year debentures were available to schools for their initial building programs The Shoal Creek School District first applied for and received a one-thousand-dollar debenture When this was found to be insufficient, they applied for a second debenture, which was authorized in January 1919 at seven percent interest

The provisions of the School Grant Act of 1913 made additional money available For each day school was open the district received $1 10 For the first four years a school was in operation it received thirty cents a day Fifteen cents a day was available to schools that maintained a certain minimum standard in regard to grounds, buildings, equipment, government, and progress. In this last instance the government retained the right to provide a library of books instead of the money Finally, forty dollars per term was available to schools having at least six students above grade eight

Special grants were available in cases of need The school inspector on his first visit to Neerlandia on September 10, 1919, agreed to attempt to obtain a special grant of three hundred dollars for the district. The poor financial status of the community may be appreciated when one notes that special grants were requested also in 1920, 1921, and 1922

The third source of revenue was land taxes which, under governmental regulations. the School District could levy Because most of the people were poor, the taxes were initially set as low as possible, at a flat rate of five cents per acre with the proviso that this could be increased to six cents per acre if a teacher was hired (Minutes of May 26, 1918.)

A fourth minor source of revenue was fees paid by non-resident students. In 1928 the Bos and Hebering families paid four dollars per student, while the Elzingas paid a daily rate of two cents per day On January 16, 1929, the rate was set at $4 50 per school year or part thereof.

Almost at once the monies raised were found to be inadequate and the tax rate quickly rose By December 1, 1919 it was at the maximum allowed by the government. twelve cents per acre with a ten-percent discount for prompt payment. In 1920 and 1922 taxes were again raised but still expenses could not be met. As well. some residents were unable to pay their taxes. The school minutes record the frustrations of the trustees and ratepayers in dealing with the situation.

> "Some ratepayers who still are in arrears of taxes have to make payments otherwise get it by force." May 25, 1920

Regarding a letter from a resident who had left Neerlandia for southern Alberta, the minutes state "A letter was received from stating that he is unable and unwilling to pay his taxes" In this case the trustees found a solution

> "Decided if he don't (sic) pay to take hay from his land and sell it for taxes."

The financial status of the people had not improved by 1924, so at the annual meeting on January 5, at which thirty-one ratepayers were present, Henry Kippers Sr. moved that to avoid the increase in taxes. the school should be open for eight months only with the teachers engaged for such a term and not for a whole year. The ensuing discussion over the relative importance of education in a time of financial difficulty led to such a vigorous exchange of views that the chairman was obliged to close the meeting. Ten days later another meeting was called at which Henry Kippers Sr., Ben Lievers, and Jacob Olthuis, representing twenty-two ratepayers, presented a modified proposal to the board. They proposed that the principal be engaged for ten months at a salary of one thousand dollars, and another teacher for six months at a lower rate of pay. The trustees did not deal directly with the proposal but suggested that this group of ratepayers ask for financial aid if the ratepayers could not pay the higher taxes. The board decided to support this course of action. The delegation agreed to approach the Department but asked for a written statement that the board would make no unnecessary expenditures before the Department replied. This the board refused to do, stating that their word of honour should be good enough. No agreement was reached.

Nevertheless, the trustees were not heartless men. They, too, were pioneers, they, too, were short of money and they realized that there was a limit to what could be asked of the people. The minutes of February 12, 1924, state "The board decided that were (sic) those arrears were the result not of unwillingness but of financial distress not to take any drastic steps." Efforts were made to keep the taxes and expenditures as low as possible. When calling for tenders for

* * *

Sometimes during schooltime we would run out of water. Then Jim Ritsema and I would be sent to Emmerzael to get more. We would take the funny papers with us and sit down along the way to read them.

Wm. Olthuis

* * *

We had very little sports equipment at school. Van Ark tried to teach us business and to collect money for the needed equipment at the same time. I was the treasurer and we all had to collect money. Jim Ritsema and I went collecting together. We had one horse between the two of us and took turns riding it. We started out together — Jim riding and I walking. When Jim got a half mile down the road he dismounted, tied the horse, and continued on foot. When I reached the horse I untied it and rode for half a mile passing Jim in the process. We continued this way till we were finished and pleased with our ingenuity I might add. Finally everyone had given to me the money they had collected, and I reported to Mr. van Ark. With the money he bought sports equipment — a basketball for the girls and some baseball gloves for the boys.

Wm. Olthuis

* * *

Payments concerning Neerlandia School
authorized on June 5, 1919

Person	Service	Payment
M. Nanninga	balance contract (for building school)	349.50
M. Nanninga	extra work	6.00
J. Sturwold	cutting wood	6.00
J.W. Holwerda	cutting wood	4.80
K. Krikke	cutting wood	2.40
Dominion Fire	insurance	33.45
K. Tuininga	freight, Westlock	4.00
A. Emmerzael	cleared one acre	20.00
C. Ingwersen	painted floors	10.00
R. de Jager	caretaking	6.25
J.W. Holwerda	5 trips respecting School	5.00

Neerlandia School
Teachers Salaries and School Budget
1918-1931

Year	Salary	Details	Budget
			$
1918	$900		
1919	900	teacher aide ($2/day)	1800
1920	100	per month	2500
1921	1200 630	principal ($100/mo) teacher ($90/mo)	
1923	1200 1000	principal teacher (12 mos)	
1924	1000	per annum plus night School wages	3700
1925	1100	stipulated no sick pay	1900
1926	1100		
1927			2750
1929			3600
1930	1000		3326
1931	050 950	principal teacher	3100

fencing, maintenance, or other projects, if no tender was considered low enough the board attempted to have the work done more economically by day labour. On occasion they asked for volunteer labour.

A look at some budgets is quite instructive. During the 1919-1931 period the budgets ranged from $1800 to $3400. The largest single expenditure was for teachers' salaries. Another expenditure was the janitor's salary which went from $4.75 a month in 1919 to $10 per month in 1930. Some expenditures such as one of twenty-five cents to Andrew Nanninga for delivering books from Westlock were minimal. Fencing the school yard was paid at a rate of thirty cents per hour. In 1924 Pete Tuininga got a contract of $21 for supplying the school with fourteen cords of dry tamarack firewood. Not large amounts, but difficult to pay when tax revenue was inadequate.

* * *

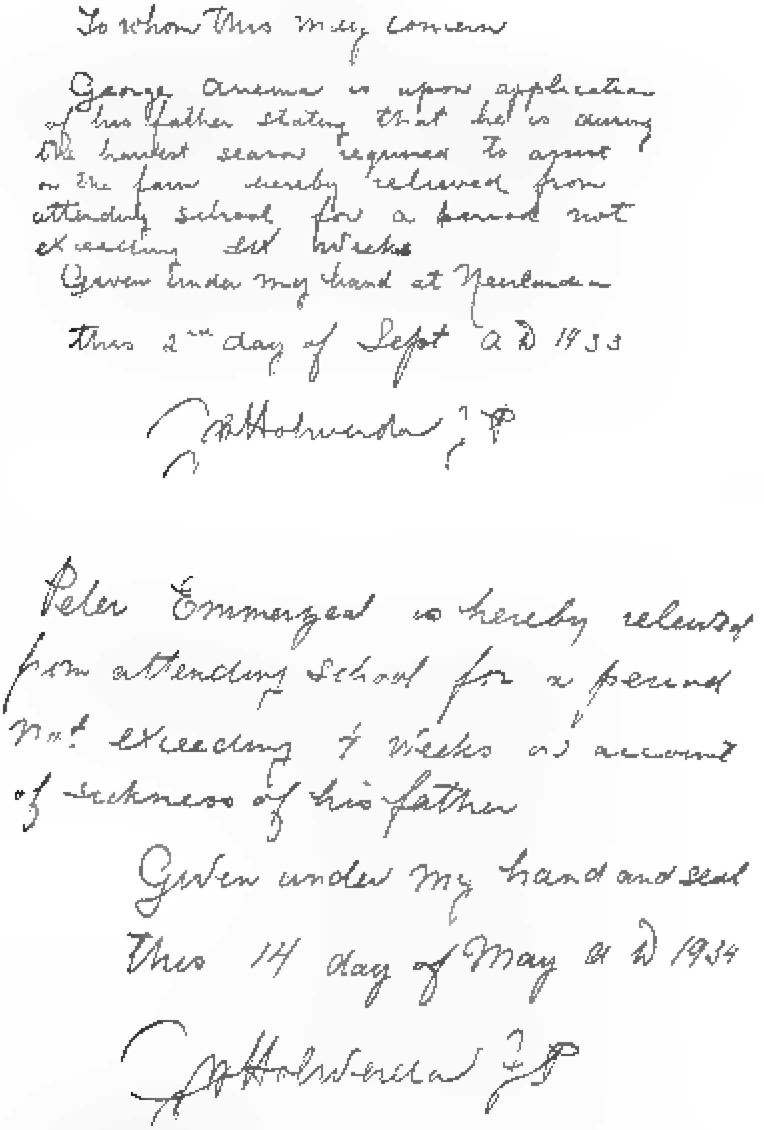
A Little Bird

Mr. McKitrick thought it was a good day to take the class on a nature walk. At the outset he instructed the students that as soon as they heard his whistle it was time to return to school. Taking advantage of a situation, brother George said, "Oh, there goes a rabbit," so all the boys ran into the bush supposedly after the rabbit, and weren't seen for the rest of the day.

The next day Mr. McKitrick asked, "Didn't you hear my whistle?" George said, "Ja, but we thought it was a little bird."

Alice Visser

* * *



To whom this may concern

George Anema is upon application of his father stating that he is during the harvest season required to assist on the farm hereby relieved from attending school for a period not exceeding six weeks
Given under my hand at Neerlandia

this 2nd day of Sept A D 1933

JHHolwerda J P

Peter Emmerzeal is hereby released from attending School for a period not exceeding 4 weeks on account of sickness of his father

Given under my hand and seal

This 14 day of May A D 1934

JHHolwerda J P

Children were often needed to help at home Joe Holwerda, in his capacity as Justice of the Peace, gave the necessary permission.

The concern over tax rates and collection of them continued to occupy the minds of both trustees and ratepayers. In 1922, by means of section 7 of the School Assessment Act, the government of Alberta changed from a flat rate per acre to an assessed value as basis for taxation The Neerlandia School District # 3460 considered various methods of valuation before settling on a sliding scale with the highest assessment on lands nearest the school This was never put into effect. Less than one month later, May 19, 1923, it was changed to a valuation, also on a sliding scale, according to the number of acres under cultivation with the highest being $600 for

160 acres This may have redistributed the tax load but made taxes no easier to collect.

* * *

One time, at recess, van Ark's oldest son William and I were having a shoving match and somehow we knocked over Mary Howey's desk. The ink spilled out of the inkwell all over her books and she began crying. Mr van Ark took his son over his knee and gave him a good spanking. Then William said to me, "My Dad is going to give you some of the same treatment," but he never did He sure had me scared for a while, though.

When McKitrick taught us we made trips into the bush, it was only boys, but there were a few who would not go with us. One of them had always been considered one of the gang, but when he would not go along we became rather cool towards him I suppose he noticed this too because one afternoon he got in behind Mac as he was walking towards the playground with a whole bunch of us boys, and gave him a swift kick in the rear. Immediately he blended in with the gang. Mac turned and said, "Who did that?" No one owned up and he could not find out Well that did it, our classmate was back in the good graces of the gang again

After about four months of Mac, the school board must have known about the problem of discipline in our school because they got us another teacher, a young man by the name of Dickson He was a big man and he was usually smiling He told us of the problem we had (which the board must have told him). So he laid down a few rules. "No one may leave his desk without permission, if you are asked a question you are to rise, no one is to talk to his neighbour during classes, if these rules are broken your name will go on the blackboard with a stripe behind it, if you have three stripes you will see me after school, and the reason for seeing me will be this gentle persuader." He proceeded to haul out the strap, which looked very impressive. After being used to no discipline, how can you change so quickly? Well, the result was lots of strapping, but eventually we fell in line, except for Slim He was not going to buckle under after all the freedom he had had Sometime he would get the strap every day, but it had no effect on him We used to wait outside to see how he would be after his ordeal and he would just laugh Everytime you got the strap it would double, I think Slim got up to ninety straps on each hand. His hands were swollen so badly that we all felt sorry for him, but his spirit would not break. Eventually he quit school. Anyhow, the system worked. We almost all became good kids again and even graduated to the next class in June

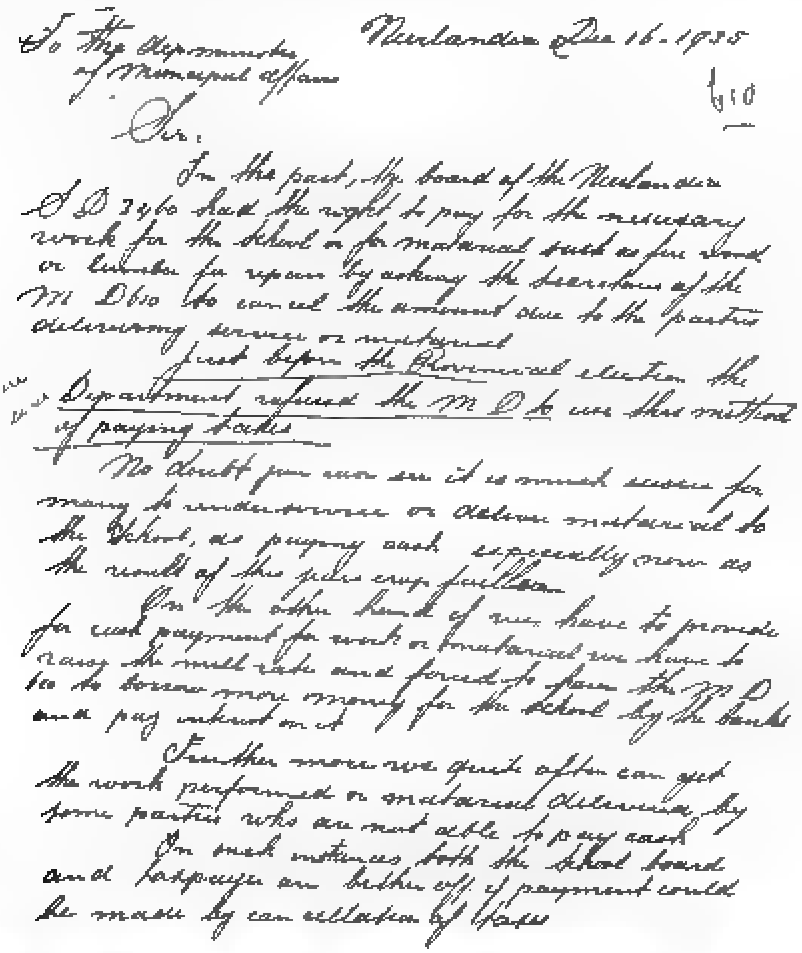
John Ingwersen

* * *

When it was found impossible to collect some taxes, the school board approached Municipal Affairs with a view to having the land titles taken from these people so the land could be sold for taxes Most often, but not always, these were cases of someone who had simply left Neerlandia and his land, leaving his taxes unpaid An interesting sidelight involves the Justice of the Peace, who was also in arrears of taxes. He asked the school board to pay him in cash for his work as Justice of the Peace in transferring of titles of others

instead of deducting it from his tax debt. Of course the board did not agree. He subsequently paid his tax in full, albeit in installments. The collection of tax arrears was an unpleasant task for the trustees of the school district. Unknown to them, the end of this task was at hand.

In 1928 the Shoal Creek Municipality was formed with Neerlandia School District #3460 falling within its boundaries. The school district now requisitioned the municipality for the money it needed. Using that figure the municipality determined the mill rate for the Neerlandia district, collected the taxes, and turned the money over to the school board. On occasion, when the taxes were not collected on time, the school district was compelled to take out a loan to meet expenses until the money came in. With the onset of the Depression, it became increasingly difficult to collect taxes, not only in the Shoal Creek Municipality, but all over Alberta. To facilitate tax collection, the UFA government passed the Tax and Rate Collection Act in 1931. With that act, all responsibility and authority for taxes passed from the school districts to the municipalities, no doubt producing a sigh of relief on the part of many trustees. That, however, signalled the beginning of the end for the autonomy of the school districts.



To The Department
of Municipal affairs

Neerlandia Dec 16-1935

610

Sir:

In the past, the board of the Neerlandia S D 3460 had the right to pay for the necessary work for the school or for material such as fire wood or lumber for repairs by asking the secretary of the M D 610 to cancel the amount due to the parties delivering service or material

Just before the Provincial election the Department refused the M D to use this method of paying taxes

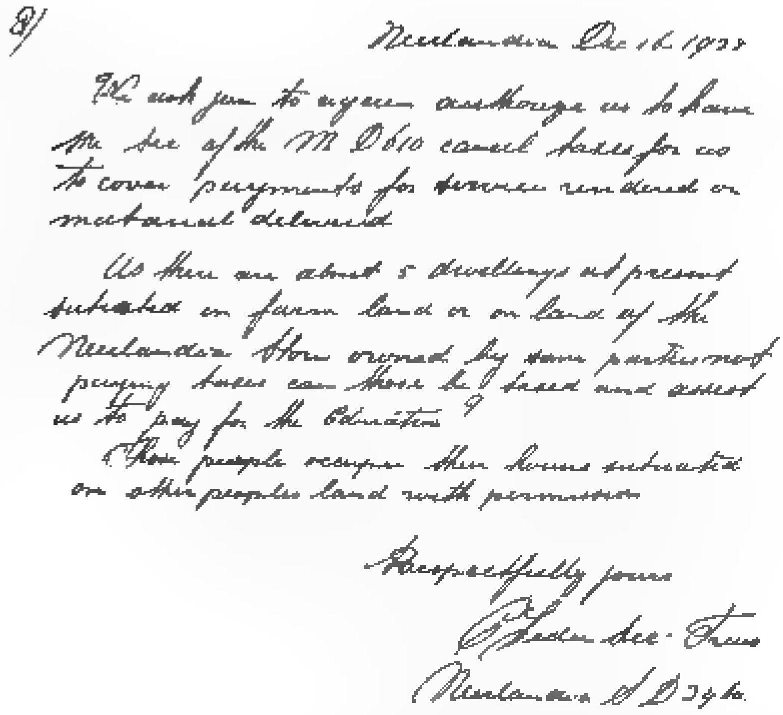
[illegible]

No doubt you can see it is much easier for many to render service or deliver material to the School, as paying cash especially now as the result of this years crop failure

On the other hand if we have to provide for cash payment for work or material we have to raise the mill rate and forced to have the M D to borrow more money for the school by the banks and pay interest on it

Further more we quite often can get the work performed or material delivered by some parties who are not able to pay cash

In such instances both the school board and taxpayer are better off if payment could be made by cancellation of taxes



8/

Neerlandia Dec 16 1933

We ask you to again authorize us to have the Sec of the M D 610 cancel taxes for us to cover payments for service rendered or material delivered

As there are about 5 dwellings at present situated on farm land or on land of the Neerlandia Store owned by some parties not paying taxes can these be taxed and assist us to pay for the education?

These people occupy their homes situated on other peoples land with permission

Respectfully yours
P. Feder Sec-Treas
Neerlandia S D 346

In 1936 the Social Credit government enacted legislation making provision for large administrative units for schools. In 1938 the province of Alberta was divided into several large divisions. On January 3, 1939, the Neerlandia School District #3460 was included in the Pembina School Division #37 and Subdivision #5. Trustees were elected from each area included in the new Division. Carl K. Mast was elected as representative from Neerlandia, a position

which he held until his death in 1957. In 1947 the Pembina School Division was divided into two: the Westlock School Division #37 and the Barrhead School Division #59. On January 1, 1948, the Neerlandia School District was included in the Barrhead School Division. From the time of the large divisions the local board began to function largely as an advisory board. Through the years, changes occurred not only in the administrative set-up but in other areas as well.

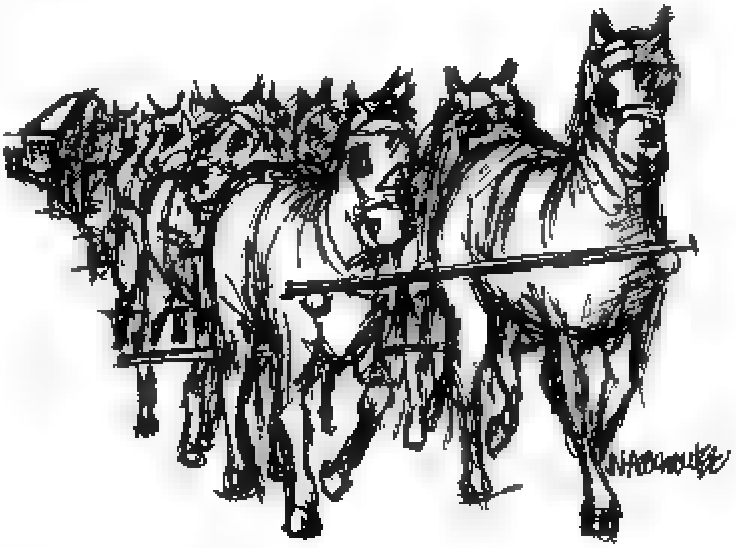
The School Building and Grounds

The school building completed in 1919 served the community for several years with only minor renovations and repairs. From time to time the floor was re-oiled, painting was done, and improvements were made in an effort to make the building warmer. Students of those days remember being unable to hold a pencil in their numbed fingers. They also suffered from icy toes because the floor was cold. In an effort to improve heat circulation, a sheet of galvanized iron was placed around the stove. As well, a bank of dirt contained by logs was erected around the exterior base of the school. At that time the school was in operation from March or April to November or December with vacation during the coldest part of the year.

The biggest change to the interior of the school in the first year of its existence resulted from the influx of new settlers and from the productivity of the settlers in their response to God's command to "be fruitful and multiply". In 1920 the little school was bulging at the seams, and an addition was in order. To have good quality education the trustees felt that it would be best to have two teachers. On January 9, 1920, after considering the alternatives, the trustees, Joe Holwerda, Klaas Tuininga (father of thirteen children), and William van Ark concluded that finances would not permit the building of an addition as well as the hiring of a second teacher. In an interesting bit of logic they decided instead to partition the existing room by means of four double swinging doors.

Complying with the School Act's requirements regarding the condition in which the grounds be maintained also presented some difficulties. The job was let by tender, as were most matters the school district dealt with, but the man who received the contract was so lax in fulfilling his duties that when the job was not yet finished by March 1921, the board threatened to do the work themselves and charge it to the procrastinating gentleman. As it turned out, the job never was completed because on May 12, 1921, a group of ratepayers petitioned the board to move the school near the church and closer to the centre of the community.

William van Ark, then secretary-treasurer, offered a two-acre corner of his quarter (SE 33-61 3-5) directly west of the church. On December 11, 1922, at a ratepayers meeting, a decision was made by a vote of thirteen to one in favour of moving the school. Twelve of those men then agreed to volunteer their services, while the board promised to try to get the ratepayers who were not present to do the same because, the board stated, they did not have the nerve to raise the taxes to cover the cost of moving. Preparations were made and then one day in early spring, 1923, fifteen teams of horses were



hitched to the school in a long line and, under the direction of the teamsters, began the three-quarter-mile trip north. Unfortunately, it was difficult to coordinate the teams to all pull at once, and after the school was moved a short way the teamsters gave up. They did manage to pull it partway off the road so traffic could pass by. And there, on the side of the road, school was conducted for about two months. It was a miserable, muddy "school ground" the children had and it was difficult for them to clamber up to get in the doorway. How happy they were when Oscar Bonstrom was hired on April 19, 1924, to move the school with a stationary engine called a donkey. Horses moved the donkey into place, the donkey winched the school ahead, then the horses moved the donkey again. This procedure was repeated until the school building arrived at the new site. Once again the work of clearing and fencing the school yard commenced. A new well was dug and a new flagpole erected. But some of the same problems resurfaced — the major one being lack of space.

By September 1926 the board of trustees, then composed of Henry Kippers, Tjibbe Reitsma, and Henry Hiemstra decided the time was ripe to build an addition. Mr. Corman, head inspector of schools in Alberta and present at a ratepayers meeting, explained the benefits in grants and education which would accrue from better facilities. The ratepayers agreed by a vote of twenty-one out of twenty-four.

As before, Menne Nanninga drew up the plans for the construction. Because this was not their initial building program, debentures were not available to the district. In order to finance the construction, taxes were raised fifteen dollars per quarter section and the work was done by day labour. Menne Nanninga, as foreman, received sixty cents per hour. For some unspecified reason there was a difference in the hourly rate other workers received — some were paid forty-five cents and the rest received only thirty-

School parked on side of road, 1923.

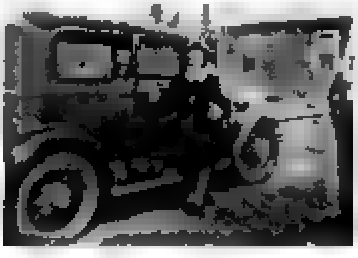
Children sitting on donkey machine behind fence.

five cents. Ratepayers who were in arrears of taxes donated labour or hauled materials, thus reducing their tax debt and enabling the school to be built with a smaller cash outlay. In this cooperative manner the addition of one room was made to one end of the school.

The school was banked up to conserve heat. Two-room school c. 1926.

Upon its completion, the two-room school with its separate cloakrooms for girls and boys, and the large round heater in each room, was ready to enclose girls and boys for many more years of education. Each room had four multipaned windows, which on occasion fell victim to various student-aimed projectiles. Generally grades one through four were in the "little" room, while grades five through eight were in the "big" room. The division of grades between the rooms varied from year to year according to enrolment. Even with the two-room school, enrolments of 35-45 students per room were common.

Back: Annie Tuininga, Margaret Sturwold, Rulie Schoonekamp, Carrie Mast, Carrie Olthuis, Rika van Ark, Annie Lievers, Alice Kippers, Johanna Ingwersen, Alice Olthuis.
Middle: Nettie Ingwersen, Rieka Lievers, Johanna Messelink, Jennie Schoonekamp, Eva Olthuis, Lily Messelink.
Front: Harry Lievers, Bert Michael, George Terpsma, Bill B. Lievers, Simon Fisher, Andrew Nanninga, Ryer Kriks, Ab Messelink, Cor Fisher, Cecil Tuininga.


School nurse, Miss Meyer

* * *

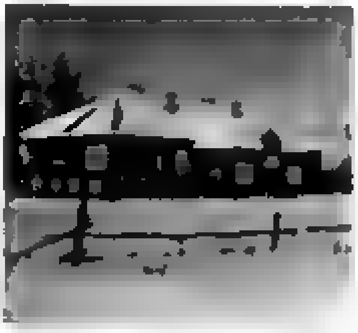
One incident I recall happened in or about 1930. Brother George Olthuis was tall and skinny and each year seemed to grow another few inches. Each time he was weighed by the school nurse, he brought home a note saying he was quite underweight. After a few years of this and probably getting teased a bit about it, he decided he'd had enough. Next time the school nurse came back, George filled both his pockets with rocks — that should take care of *it! But when he stepped on the scale he was told he was thirty pounds underweight! I guess he gave up as he's still nicknamed "Slim."*

Alice Visser

* * *

The population of Neerlandia kept growing at such a rate that by September 14, 1929, the inspector complained of overcrowding, and on January 15, 1930, two representatives of the Department of Education, Mr. Gorman and Mr. Le Blanc, attempted to persuade the ratepayers to provide facilities for three rooms and three teachers. As this was during the Great Depression, the ratepayers, while realizing the urgent need of better teaching and better facilities, felt it would be irresponsible to attempt to build at this time. The thrifty and responsible Dutch were loath to engage in a building program for which they were not sure they could pay.

It was not until 1944, during World War II, that the third room became a reality. Then it was not just an addition, but the construction of a brand-new three-room school with a full basement providing a wall of cubby holes for cups and towels. The basement was divided in half by the furnace room, one-half for each sex and each containing a water crock with tap, washbasins, and coat hooks. Upstairs, in addition to the classrooms, were a library and a "science" room but no staff room. To facilitate the construction, many ratepayers contributed one hundred dollars each.

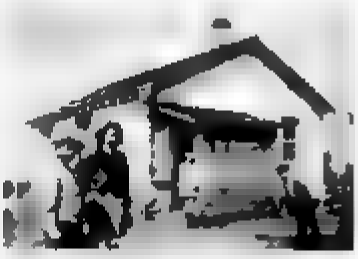


Three-room school, c. 1944

By now, of course, with the increase of centralization of authority, the Neerlandia School District was no longer managing its own affairs. According to the 1937 School Act they no longer had authority for finances or building. Article 248(c) stated that the Board of Trustees of a district included in a division was to have the care and management of the property, and the right to make representation to the divisional board for repair and maintenance of the facilities. The local board was required to make provision for drinking water, fuel, and toilets at the expense of the division. The latter duty was carefully spelled out. Separate privies were to be erected for boys and girls, they were to be at the rear of the schoolhouse, at least ten feet apart, and with their entrances facing in opposite directions or otherwise effectually screened from each other.

A few other duties, supervisory or advisory in tenor, followed. On hearing these new regulations, one man declared himself uninterested in serving on the board of trustees if his main responsibility was for outhouses.

Relationships between the Neerlandia School District and other governing bodies had always been amicable. Under the new system these larger bodies continued to be responsive to the wishes of the district.

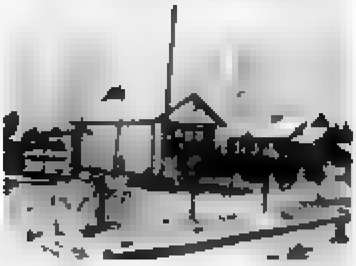


One of the "little schools"

Building improvements continued, albeit not always in direct correlation with the increasing enrollments. How could the Barrhead School Division foresee the influx of Dutch immigrants which would swell the ranks of school children? Some of Henry Peters' twelve children, the Groothof boys in short pants (unheard-of in Neerlandia), the Van Hemerts, the Kikkstras, the Hessels, and others came, speaking not a word of English, and filled desks in the already-crowded rooms.

Furthermore, in keeping with the Division's policy of centralization, Shoal Creek and later Grandale school (1952) had been closed, with some students going to Barrhead and others to Neerlandia. The students kept coming until there was simply no more room. Tina Abday spoke of 50-60 students in her classroom at that time. Finally two small schools no longer in use in Vega and Shoal Creek were moved into Neerlandia. Magdalena Baker wrote about one of them.

> My classroom was a small school that had been brought in. It stood on some large logs. Once again there stood an enormous black stove. That stove never seemed to be in a state of being just warm. It was either very cold or very hot. As it stood quite close to the one-and-only exit it could become quite a hazard. Perhaps the students of that time remember the emergency measures we employed should the stove explode!


Moving one of the small schools away, 1950s.

Finally renovations and additions were in order again. During construction in 1953, some classes were conducted in the church basement. After what seemed like a long time, the last board had been sawed, the last nail hammered, and the last lick of paint dry. What a joy! Not only were there now six classrooms, but also a staff room and, best of all, indoor washrooms with flush toilets and hot and cold running water. Not only were these facilities more comfortable and more sanitary, but they also had a beneficial effect on the students' I.Q. rating. (One question on an I.Q. test then in use showed a faucet upside down. The child was expected to indicate whether or not this was correct. Prior to the new addition many Neerlandia children had never seen such a faucet.)

Since that time further additions and renovations have been made. The construction of a gym in 1956 enabled a better physical education program to be undertaken and gave the children a place to play during inclement weather.

On January 1, 1959, the Barrhead School Division #59 and the Municipal District of Barrhead #106 merged to form the County of Barrhead #11. Under its auspices two more rooms and later a portable classroom were added. As of 1984 plans are underway once again to improve and enlarge the eduational facilities at Neerlandia.

Janitors — Faithful Servants

In dealing with education in Neerlandia, one must not forget one very important group of people — the janitors. These hard-working people have provided a comfortable atmosphere for education. To them falls the often thankless responsibility of keeping the building clean and warm. In the early years this meant rising early in the morning to get a fire going in the big round heaters. After the school day was over, cleaning began. If it had been a rainy day, there was sometimes so much mud that the janitors would have to shovel the dirt outside before sweeping and or scrubbing the floors.

The school building was used for other purposes besides education. The school board meetings were held there. On occasion someone would come to the community and request the use of the building. Jim Scott of the Latter Day Saints was one such visitor in 1921. He was given permission, with the understanding that he pay

for the extra janitorial work that had to be done. Various societies also held their meetings in the school. One teacher complained to the board that the building was left in disorder following these meetings. The leaders of the societies were admonished to leave the building in good condition, but the teacher and janitor were to be held responsible for any damage that resulted from leaving the doors unlocked.

Many people held the unenviable position of janitor over the years. Willem de Groot was the first janitor. During his tenure it was decided to have the students dust the desks, rather than giving him a raise. That practice does not seem to have lasted very long. In 1925 Dina Messelink became janitor, with her wages to be deducted from her tax arrears. She refused to light the stove in the winter months so, in 1926, the job was given jointly to her and Henry Schoonekamp at ten dollars per month. In 1929 the Anemas became janitors. Susie wrote, "Della and I were the school janitors for some years. We would arrive early in the winter [morning] to start the heater, using kindling cut the night before, and shavings which we brought from home each morning."

It took a lot of firewood to keep the school warm. Tine Abday with her class, 1950.

The Henry Bouwman family also served as janitors. They too found it to be a lot of work. Jenny wrote about some of the tasks that had to be done:

"Wood was piled to the ceiling in the cloakroom every evening. Sometimes the blackboards had to be wiped and each day the floor had to be swept. On rainy days there was so much mud that the janitors had to shovel it out of the door. Three times a year — at Christmas, Easter, and in the summer — the whole school was scrubbed down. The floors had to be mopped and then oiled with linseed oil to keep down the dust. Each day, two pailfuls of water had to be carried from the store and poured into a big crock. (It had a tap on the bottom, but there was also a dipper because the tap was too slow to allow everyone time to get a drink when they came off the playground. Every child had his own white enamel cup which was hung on the coat nail in the cloakroom.) If the water ran out during the day the principal would send one of the boys to the store to fetch another pail of water."

When the three-room school was built in the 1940s, the work load was increased. The cleaning took so long that on short winter days Meindert Boorsma had to go around with a lantern in order to complete his daily work. In recognition of the difficulties this created, the local school board asked that electricity be installed in the school. The task of stoking the wood and coal-burning furnaces of the three-room school also fell to Meindert Boorsma. It is too bad that he was not permitted to experience the pleasure of the easier task of caring for the school when the oil furnace was installed. Instead Carl P. Mast and Jim Merkus were hired at that time.

As of 1969 Joan and Ralph Bos have been the janitors of Neerlandia school. Though their equipment includes some electrical tools such as a vacuum cleaner, the bulk of the work must still be done by manual labour.

The Struggle For Christian Education

"Even though Neerlandia is called a public school it is a Christian school for many reasons. First of all the students have believing parents who want their kids to have a Christ-centered education. Second, the teachers are all Christians, and third, everything is taught from a Christian perspective. We believe and are taught that God created and upholds the universe and not that man is the king of creation. Man's task is to take care of the world and that task has been given to him by God. These are some of the ways Christian schools differ from public ones. Also we are taught Bible Study which is absent in public schools. Neerlandia can be called a Christian Public School."

Gloria Strydhorst
Grade Nine 1980

The heartfelt desire on the part of the pioneers to obey the Lord in the matter of providing Christian training in the area of education is a theme woven through the history of education in Neerlandia. Not everyone agreed with this need and not everyone was agreed on how this could best be achieved, but the struggle continued.

In setting up the Shoal Creek School District rather than an independent Christian school one of the deciding factors, no doubt, was the trustees' awareness of the powers vested in them. By virtue of the School Ordinance Act they were enabled to engage teachers of their choice, provided the teachers were qualified, and to dismiss them if they proved unsatisfactory. To the trustees, the source of money for operating the district and the particular type of classroom building used were not crucial matters. But who was to teach their children? That was the heart of the matter. Education is only as good as the teacher who stands in front of the class. With the power to control that aspect of education, most of the pioneers were satisfied for the time being. A Christian School Association had been formed but remained in existence only until 1919, when it turned its affairs over to Shoal Creek School District #3460.

From the outset, the trustees attempted to obtain Christian teachers. Although exactly what was expected of the teacher in regard to Christian education was not spelled out in the minutes of the meetings, the desire is recorded repeatedly:

> "The board decided to place an ad in de Wachter and the Calvinist for the purpose of getting a teacher of Reformed religion." July 16, 1918.
>
> "(The chairman, J. W Holwerda) advised to see Mr. Mullet, if he can supply us with a teacher of Christian faith." February 1, 1919
>
> "Decided to advertise as soon as possible in the Christian Journal." March 13, 1920.
>
> "Trustee Klaas Tuininga deemed it advisable to write the Department of Education . to give the department a clear idea of what kind of a teacher is wanted in this settlement and why. The Chairman (J. W Holwerda) claimed the officials at the Department knew all this."
>
> "The board agreed that a teacher who professes to be a Christian must be secured," March 17 1921
>
> " to advise the Department to send a Christian teacher (Protestant) as no other need apply." April 18, 1921

The concern for Christian teaching was sometimes expressed in a negative way. On January 1, 1926,

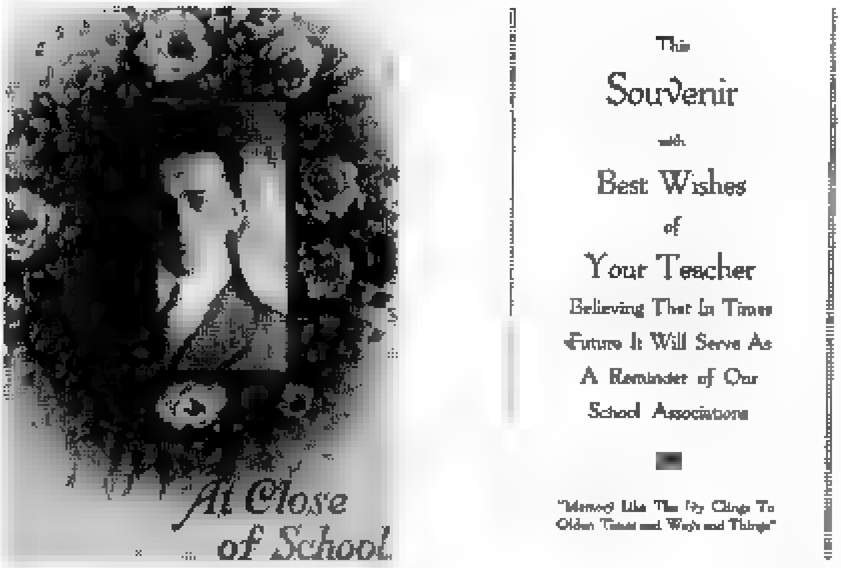
> "Mr. Kippers pointed out to the board that he would like to see a better education along Christian lines, than what was given by The board as a whole was of the same opinion."

At times the board involved itself more closely with what was being done For example the minutes of November 27, 1931, read in part as follows.

> "Chairman was instructed to visit the school and see if the (Christmas) program would be carried out as much as possible according to our Christian point of view"

The efforts to acquire Christian teachers did not always meet with success. To obtain even minimally-qualified teachers was difficult. In the years from 1905, when Alberta became a province, to the 1920s, there was a shortage of teachers. During that time three types of certificates were available to teachers, the majority of those issued being second-class certificates which required the candidate to have passed grade 11 and to have had four months of professional training. Because of the influx of settlers into the new province, the number of teachers could not keep up with the growing number of students The government, therefore, instituted a policy of issuing provisional certificates (permits) to allow a person without any professional training to manage a classroom for a limited period of time. So great was the need from 1914-1918, when many men were serving in the armed forces, that 3434 permits were issued, an average of 687 per year. To this problem was added the fact that Neerlandia was ninety-five miles from Edmonton over rutted roads and trails, through swamps and across rivers, and one can appreciate the difficulty of getting teachers to come.

There were severe problems in staffing the school. After Helen Kooy left trustees attempted to get a teacher from the neighbourhood. J. A. Heath, a retired Baptist minister who had filed in the area, agreed to teach He began teaching on October 16, 1918, but by November 13 of the same year there was such widespread dissatisfaction with his teaching that a special meeting was called to discuss the matter In view of the fact that he was ineligible for a permit, the



At Close of School

This
Souvenir
with
Best Wishes
of
Your Teacher
Believing That In Times
Future It Will Serve As
A Reminder of Our
School Associations

"Memory Like The Ivy Clings To
Olden Times and Ways and Things"

Presented to
Tena Terpsma
Grade Five
Shoal Creek School
By Simon Keyzer Teacher
December 1921

A souvenir from the teacher.

chairman and secretary were "invited" to tell him to stop teaching immediately.

In the meantime the board had been corresponding with Simon Keyzer who was studying for the ministry in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Though he had indicated that he intended to complete this training, he came to Neerlandia in June 1919 and stayed until the end of August 1921. For thirteen months he taught as a permit teacher, but then he obtained his certificate. His strong point, according to former students, was music.

> One writes, "We sang at the start of the day, before recess, after lunch, after recess and before going home. Our reading, writing, and arithmetic suffered badly but we sang well."
>
> Another said, "He taught us our hymns – there's something to be said for that."

As was often the case in those days, finances and overcrowding were a problem. In September 1919, with ten more pupils enrolling, it was impossible for one teacher to handle the teaching load. But the weak financial position of the community made it impossible to hire another teacher. Once again, compromise was required. Jenny Tuininga, a local girl, was hired as an assistant at the rate of two dollars per day.

Financial disputes also had a way of intruding into school affairs, although it is often difficult to determine whether the disputes were the cause or result of dissatisfaction. By way of example, Simon Keyzer first expressed himself as so satisfied with his position that in May 1920 he asked the board to build him a house, suggesting that he intended to take up permanent residence. Yet by September 1921, he had left Neerlandia following a dispute over wages and a complaint about not receiving the support of the parents.

* * *

You Can't Get Blood From a Stone

When Mr van Ark was teaching here the school was right across the road from Willem de Groot's place The teacher told us older boys we had to dig trees out of the bush and plant them around the school during noon hour We didn't fancy this idea too much, since noon time was our only time to play. But we dug some trees out anyhow and put them in a wheelbarrow. Then we decided to pretend that the wheelbarrow was too heavy for us to move

Van Ark said that Bill Olthuis and I had to go to Mr. de Groot's and get a piece of rope to tie to the front of the wheelbarrow, then some boys could pull and some could push At least this stalled things for a little time. So off went Bill and I to de Groot's place.

I said to Bill, "You do the talking because he doesn't understand English and you speak the same dialect of Dutch as he does." So when we got there Bill did the talking De Groot looked none too pleased when we asked him for a piece of rope He said, "Ik heb even min touw als een kikvors veren heft" *(I have no more rope than a frog has feathers). So we left with no rope, but we did end up planting the trees.*

Norman Terpsma

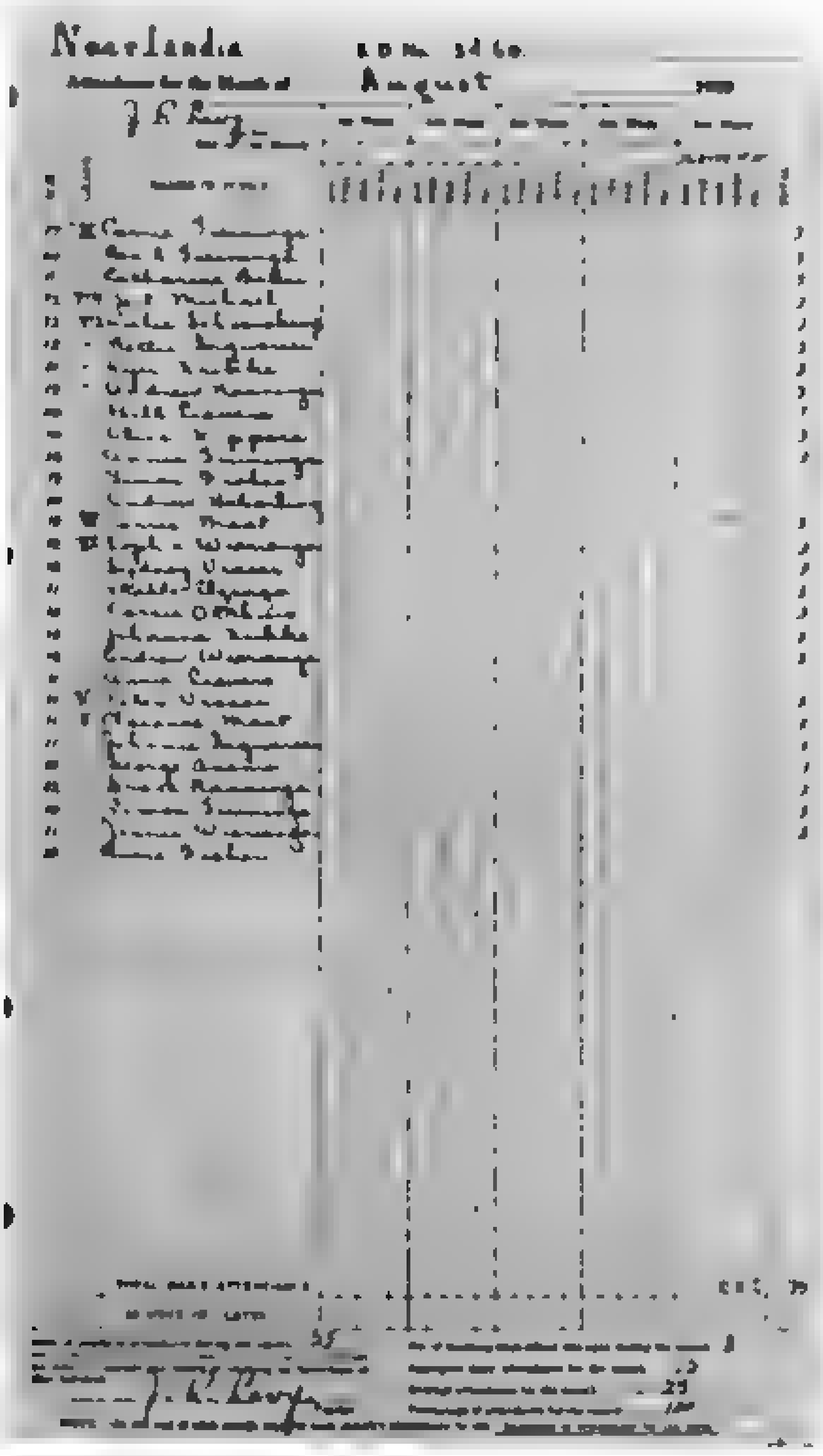
* * *

The struggle to get Christian teachers continued. William van Ark, a settler and member of the board of trustees, had been instructing some of the boys in night classes under one provision of the School Act. He enjoyed this task so, with the encouragement of some of the parents, he decided to become a teacher. On April 11, 1921, the board passed a resolution to request the Department of Education to give him a permit This was done, Mr. van Ark began to teach and to prepare for certification By March 30, 1923, the board made the following resolution.

> "And whereas Mr. Van Ark according to the inspector('s) report will be a very capable teacher fully qualified be it therefore resolved to engage Mr. Van Ark as principal teacher for said School District from first of May to the 31st of December for a salary of $1200."

Once again the Neerlandia students had a qualified Christian teacher, until he left in 1925

During this time the school operated sometimes with one teacher and sometimes with two. Another Neerlandian, Carl K. Mast, decided to pursue teaching as a career and in December 1921 asked the school board's cooperation in getting a permit Because he had not completed grade eleven, the board, in keeping with its policy of providing quality education, denied his request Undaunted, he enrolled in Alberta College. Meanwhile, with World War I over, men were returning to the teaching force and, with the shortage of other jobs, more males were attracted to teaching as a career As a result, the number of permits given dropped from 455 in 1920 to 65 in 1925, and only 5 in 1929 It was with sadness therefore, that Carl K. Mast reported to the board on April 16, 1923, that because of the great number of qualified teachers, he was unable to obtain a permit This did not end his involvement with



Neerlandia

August

Page from earliest available register

education though, as he became a school trustee with the Pembina School Division in 1939

During Carl Mast's efforts, William van Ark continued teaching. In 1923 he was joined by Thelma Hare, who is fondly remembered by her students. She was followed in rapid succession by James Levy, Miss Spaulding, Mr. Patullo, Jack Tracy, and Jean Carlyle

Teaching in an immigrant community of predominantly Dutch people was difficult for many of the teachers. When the teacher was someone like Thelma Hare or James Levy, who were fellow Christians, the differences were easily overcome. Jean (Rae) Winkelaar wrote, "Born in Scotland and of Presbyterian parents I readily identified with the Dutch Calvinists of the Christian Reformed Church." For others the strong religious orientation of the community increased their sense of isolation. Jack Tracy and Jean Carlyle walked the fifteen miles to Barrhead at least once (one-and-a-half miles of it over the bare corduroy) simply to see a movie

As the Depression deepened it became easier to obtain teachers, even in Neerlandia. On one occasion 200 applications were received in response to an advertisement. The time of a rapid turnover of teachers was drawing to a close. In 1931 the school board was fortunate in securing the services of Aubrey Ashley, who came from Collington, Alberta, with his wife and young son. This debonair young Englishman came into a farming community of Dutch Calvinists, many of whom spoke only broken English. He remained a highly-respected teacher of the senior grades until the end of the 1944-45 school term. After resigning, he stayed on in the community as bookkeeper for the Neerlandia Co-op store

Other teachers came and went during Aubrey Ashley's tenure, but in 1942 one came who would remain for many years, Clara Visser. Like Aubrey Ashley, she was a Christian, but unlike him she was affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church

Sports day, Mr. Ashley in foreground. c. 1945.

* * *

What I Did During My Summer Holidays (1945)

Every night I would get the cows . . . I had to drive tractor everyday. John Mast

I picked berries . . . Last week Jennie and Anna and James and I stooked 12 acres of barley. It took us a day and a half to do it. Henry Strydhorst

On my holiday I was at Peter's place. I played guitar. Betty Terpsma

My cousin Sunny came from Edmonton. We sure did have a lot of fun . . . We went to the lake to pick low bush cranberries. Kenneth Tuininga

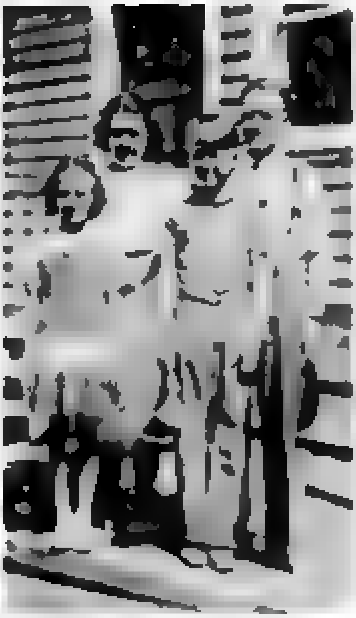
I had to help my dad work the field for a week. I had to get the cows every night on horseback. Henry Hiemstra

I went away for two weeks. I helped my dad dig holes for the barn. I drove tractor in front of the binder. Henry Gelderman

I was to the camp for a week. Tenie Jorritsma

I had a lot of fun riding horseback to the store. I had to help my dad milk cows. Lambert Tuininga

I went to Edmonton on my holidays and I had a good time with



Audrey, Rose, Roy, John Van Riper 1947

my friend and his motorcycle riding along the river edge for fifty miles. Ted Reitsma

I helped my mother because she is not feeling good. Henriette Kippers

In my holidays I went to town. I played with my cousins. Later on the last of the holidays I went on the tractor to cut. That took the rest of the holidays. Elsie Olthuis

* * *

William Doschiwnek (Dawson) and John Van Riper followed Aubrey Ashley as principal but both left after short terms. In the fall of 1948 Irene Fowler of Mellowdale became principal. She gave good service and was highly respected by parents and students alike but the parents' desire for teachers of religious persuasion who gave specific Christian instruction led to her resignation as a teacher in Neerlandia in 1958.

During Mrs. Fowler's term as principal, Ruth Schoenrock joined her on staff during the spring of 1949. She came knowing little of Neerlandia but soon found that she and the Neerlandians had the Christian faith in common. It is impossible to say that she stayed in Neerlandia for that reason, because she fell in love with and married a local man, Jack Janssen. She soon became an integral part of the school system and later became vice-principal of the school.

Irene Fowler.

The search for Christian teachers continued. When World War II was over the Dutch people were eager to leave their war-torn country. They were a new source of teachers. The first to come was Tena Bouma. In the Netherlands she had met and fallen in love with a young Canadian soldier, Steve Abday. When she came to his home in Saskatchewan she felt lost and lonely. Having heard of Neerlandia, she persuaded her fiance to visit the community with her. Here she found compatibility based on ethnicity and faith. When her father wrote, "We see strongly God's hand leading you there," she was convinced. Following their marriage in Saskatchewan, Steve and Tena Abday moved to Neerlandia where she taught grade one from 1947 until her retirement in 1979.

Soon after Tena Abday's employment as teacher, the local board entered into correspondence with Louis F. Vander Meulen of the Netherlands, with the intention of procuring him as teacher. Since the Divisional board was reluctant to have two Dutch immigrant teachers on staff, the local board drew up the following petition on July 30, 1948, to present to Barrhead School Division #59.

> "Whereas the importance of religious instruction in school is being stressed today by leading educators and whereas the teacher shortage in Alberta is more acute than ever, particularly those teachers who are willing and able to give religious instruction, and whereas the School Board of the School District of Neerlandia has sponsored Mr. L. Vander Meulen with the purpose of having him come to Neerlandia to teach in our school. Therefore the board of the Neerlandia school district nominates Mr. L. Vander Meulen of Rijswijk, the Netherlands, to become a teacher in the Neerlandia School and petitions you as board of the School Division to engage Mr. Van Der Meulen as a teacher for said school, under a letter of authority, and according to subsection 2 of section 274 of the Alberta School Act."

The division acceded to this request with the result that Mr.

Vander Meulen emigrated from the Netherlands and taught in Neerlandia for four years

The divisional board cooperated with the Neerlandia School District in the hiring of teachers Nevertheless, according to the School Act the district had power only to nominate a teacher They could not hire With the prosperity which came following World War II, there would seem to have been minimal financial difficulties in the community Given the above, one must ask why an independent school was not established at this time

The question is one which has occupied Neerlandians over the years. In the years immediately following the formation of the Pembina School Division #37 and the sharp curtailment of the district board s powers, the people were well aware of the fact that they no longer had any way of controlling the type of teachers hired Therefore on April 15, 1942, the Christian School Association, which sometime during the years had been reestablished, held a reorganizational meeting with Rev M Keuning elected chairman and Henry Kippers secretary As the divisional board was at that time considering building a three-room school in Neerlandia (with volunteer help of the ratepayers) it seemed an opportune time to start a Christian school instead Enthusiasm was high and a decision to build a school was made At a meeting in May 1942, $550 was collected toward the estimated construction cost of $4000 and a subscription list begun By June plans were made to try to have the foundation finished before harvest It seemed that there would be no stopping the project this time But it was not to be.

Ruth Schoenrock, Jack Janssen, 1950.

Although finances apparently were no problem, there seems to have been a shortage of teachers At a general meeting of the Christian School Association, Klaas Tuininga Sr cautioned the members that just having a school building which belonged to them would not ensure Christian instruction and, further, that there was a concern as to the status of students from a Christian school in regard to departmental exams What would happen, he wondered, if the students did not answer questions on evolution in accordance with the theory of evolution Mr. Tuininga advised a delay in building plans until these matters could be further investigated He then made a motion, seconded by Tjibbe Reitsma, instructing the board to "find out everything possible so that we can have a school for Christian education " This motion was carried by a margin of twenty-nine to three In the meantime meetings were held with Rev Bratt, Mr. McNally, deputy minister of education, and others. Mr McNally stated that there was no way to opt out of the divisional system, and that they could build their own school in addition to the public school if they were willing to pay for both Finally, he promised to help them if they remained in the public system by making it possible for non-resident Christian Reformed children to attend the public school in Neerlandia

Over the next few months, as in 1915, these ideas were surely the subject of many discussions in social visits and public meetings Some quotes from the minutes follow

> June 15, 1942 — "Talked about an apparent change of heart of some members."

February 24, 1943 — "The feeling by some of our members to make the Publiek (sic) school the best we can."

No one seems to know exactly what happened after this. A sum of $4085 had been collected for the Christian school and it appears that this may have been turned over to the Pembina School Division for building the three-room public school. It is known that ratepayers contributed to this building. The decision seems to have been once again to settle for a pubuc school.

This was not by any means the end of the effort to obtain Christian education, nor was it the end of efforts to establish a Christian day school. When one reads the minutes of the local Neerlandia School District board and of the Christian School Association, one is impressed with the tremendous amount of time and effort devoted to these issues.

One must realize that although upwards of ninety percent of the residents were members of the Christian Reformed Church, not everyone was equally committed to the ideal of Christian education and, as indicated above, there were varying ways of interpreting God's will for this aspect of their lives. In this community, where the majority of people hold strong convictions, it is inevitable that controversies arise. Although — and this must be stressed — relations were mostly harmonious, disputes, when they did erupt, could be acrimonious. There are reports of table-pounding demonstrations and tears at ratepayers meetings. In the 1950s one school board member resigned because of his lack of faith in the divisional trustee and the vacilating actions of his fellow board members in regard to the trustee.

Many school-related disagreements centered around teachers. Sometimes petty jealousy over a teacher's financial status or personal style set off a chain reaction which led to the teacher's resignation, but more important controversies focused on one's ability to teach competently and/or Christianly.

When the School District lost its autonomy and no longer able to control its own affairs, the ratepayers were not always pleased with the teachers placed in the school. It was usually not their ability to teach that was doubted, but their commitment to the Reformed faith that was questioned. That this was so can be seen by the fact that children were expected to respect the teachers, no matter what the parents thought of their religious persuasion. The children, though, often realized their parents' attitude and conducted themselves accordingly. This can be seen in one incident that occurred in the 1920s. A parent complained to the board about the type of education one teacher was giving. Apparently his children were aware of his dissatisfaction because he received advice from the board to admonish his children to obey and respect the teacher. Interestingly though, the complaint must have been justified because at the next meeting the teacher was asked to resign, and he did so.

Twenty years later a similar problem arose and the minister of the Christian Reformed Church spoke to the students about their lack of respect for the teacher. In that case, too, the issue was not the teachers as persons but as capable of giving the desired kind of education.

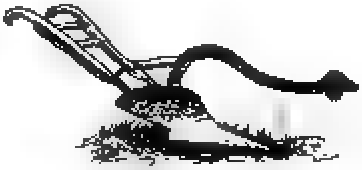
Being a member of the Christian Reformed Church was an asset in seeking a position as a teacher in Neerlandia. Votes recorded on two occasions in the minutes of the local board regarding which teachers would be recommended to the Barrhead School Division indicate most votes going to the two teachers who were members of the Christian Reformed Church, with the third teacher, also a Christian but of a different denomination, being rated third.

Even when the teachers were all of the same faith, the board supervised their teaching by means of board member visits to the classroom. Records of such visits usually speak favourably of what was observed, with special mention of discipline and the teaching or singing of songs or hymns and closing the day with prayer.

Unavoidably, hard feelings resulted from misunderstandings between teachers who were not of the Christian faith and the community leaders. Such teachers could not understand why they were not acceptable to the community, and on occasion were deeply hurt by the efforts to replace them with those who would teach Christianly. If only they could have been made to understand .

In the matter of hiring teachers, the County of Barrhead No. 11 always co-operated with the local Christian school board. Though the local board could act only in an advisory capacity it was granted the right to advertise for, interview, and recommend candidates for vacancies in the Neerlandia school. Though the final decision remained with the Superintendent of Schools, the recommendations of the local board have invariably been implemented.

The Alberta School Curriculum is taught in the Neerlandia school, but the perspective of the courses is Christian. Through the years, parents and teachers gained insight into the meaning of Christian education. Every subject is permeated with the knowledge that God is Lord of life, and each is studied in view of its relationship to the God-given norms and laws which hold for creation. In short, the desire of Neerlandia's pioneers has been fulfilled beyond their imaginings. Neerlandia school provides Christian education under the auspices of the public school system.



FOOTNOTES

John C. Charyk, *The Little White School House*, p. 3

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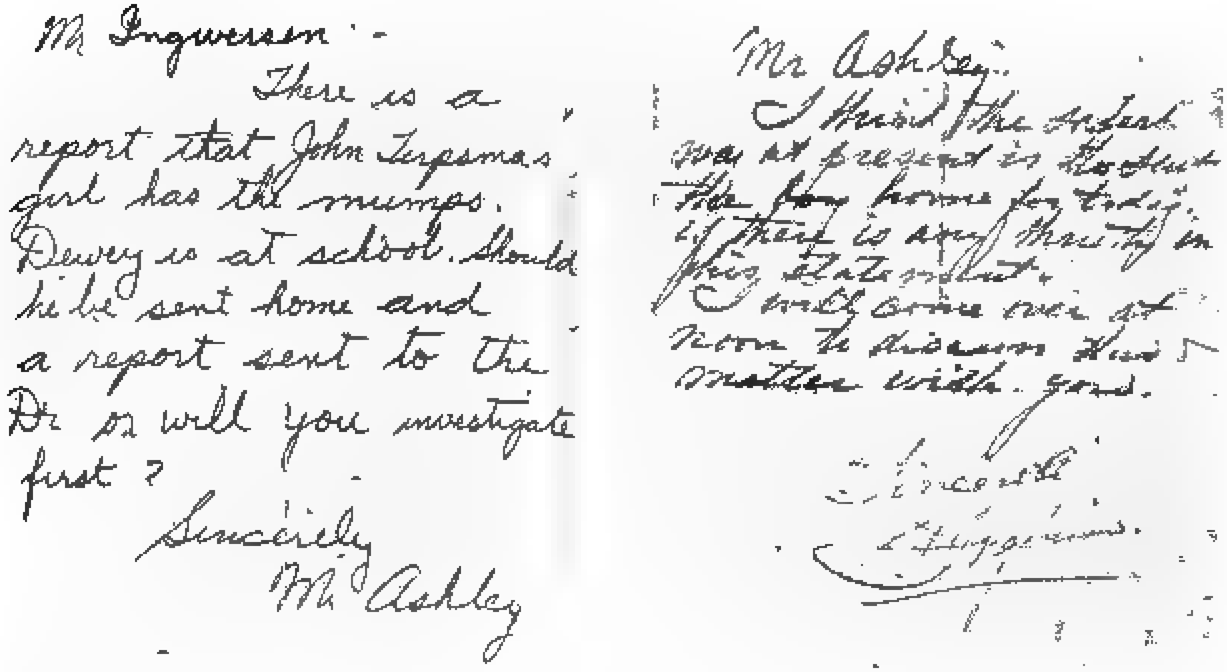


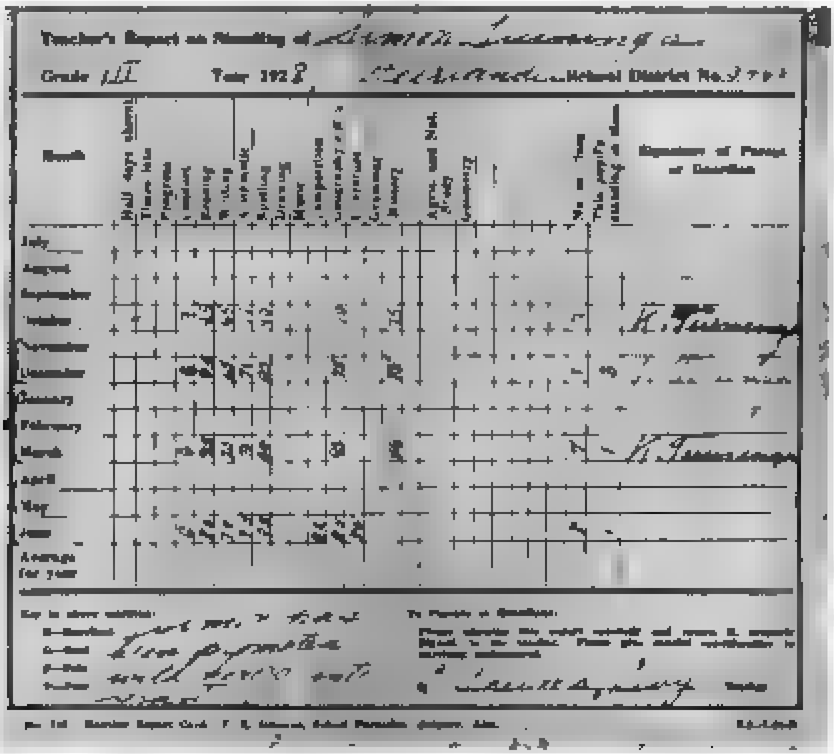
Mr Ingwersen:-
There is a report that John Terpsma's girl has the mumps. Dewey is at school. Should he be sent home and a report sent to the Dr or will you investigate first?
Sincerely
Mr Ashley

Mr Ashley:
I heard the [illegible] was at present in the [illegible] [illegible] boy home for today, if there is any thing in this statement.
I will come over at noon to discuss this matter with you.
Sincerely

The local school board was expected to solve all sorts of problems.

Reminiscences of Neerlandia 1923

When I graduated from the Edmonton Normal School (Highlands) in the spring of 1923, Dr. Donalda Dickie, one of the professors, asked me if I would accept the position as a primary teacher in the Neerlandia School (grades one to four). Bill van Ark was the principal (grades five to eight). It was with delight that I accepted this position. I travelled from Edmonton to Neerlandia by truck over very bad roads. The truck driver stopped at various places to deliver freight. My boarding place was with Bill and Manna van Ark and their two lovely children, Wim and Zus



Teacher's Report on Standing of

Grade III Year 1928 School District No.

July

August

September

October

November

December

January

February

March

April

May

June

Average for year

When school opened on May 1, 1923, the two rooms were filled with children. My room was filled to capacity with about thirty-five students and a large stove. The settlement was young then (I think about ten years old). The new little beginners couldn't speak English, having always spoken in Dutch at home. However, all the children were as eager to learn as I was to teach them. We got busy and worked. There was no fooling around and I don't recall any disciplinary problems. They were well-behaved children and had been told by their parents "to do as teacher said." One little beginner stands out vividly in my mind. He was George Olthuis, a small, slender child, bewildered by where he was. To top everything off, there was no desk for him. Well, we improvised a desk which we hoped was comfortable and all summer long we took care of George.

There was no teacher's desk so the school board had one made for me. Ben Lievers did the work. I remember it being piled high

The school children, 1929. 1 Robert Howey 2. Margaret Sturwold 3. Annie Schoonekamp 4 Bert Michael 5 Johanna Ingwersen 6. Cor Fisher 7 Katherine Baker 8. Lucy Visser 9 Andrew Heberling 10. Sid Visser 11 Peter Visser 12. Cecil Tuininga 13. Nettie Ingwersen 14 Annie Tuininga 15. Rulie Schoonekamp

16. Jennie A. Wierenga 17 Kay Wierenga 18. Jo Messelink 19. Gladys A. Wierenga 20. Tena Peters 21 Grace Nanninga 22 Sophie H. Wierenga 23. Emma Tiemstra 24 Carrie Mast 25. Annie Lievers 26. Mabel Elzinga 27 Sophie A. Wierenga 28. Carrie Olthuis 29 Johanna Krikke 30 Eva Olthuis 31 Harry H. Lievers 32 Bill B. Lievers 33. Simon Fisher 34. Andrew Nanninga 35 Ryer Krikke 36. Thelma Levy 37 James Levy 38. Mr. Maxwell of Three Hills Bible Institute

39 Alice Kippers 40. Jennie Kippers 41 Clara Visser 42 Helen Emmerzael 43 Della Peters 44. Minnie Mast 45 Annie Anema 46. Sena Geiderman 47 Sadie Reitsma 48. Alice Lievers 49 Henry A. Wierenga 50 Jim Lievers 51 Joe H. Wierenga 52 John Peters 53. John H Lievers.

54 Henry B Lievers 55. Cor Nanninga 56. Annie Emmerzael 57 John H Wierenga 58. George Anema 59. Jake Sturwold 60 Clarence Mast 61 Simon Tuininga 62 Cor H. Hiemstra 63. John Ingwersen 64. Charles Baker 65. Joe A. Wierenga (?) 66 Bert Nanninga 67 Lambert A. Wierenga 68. Bertha Howey 69 Doris Wilson

70 Gerrit Geiderman 71 Grace Tuininga 72 Peter Mast 73. Gladys Krikke 74 Archie Howey 75. Clara Krikke

with wild strawberries, which the children had picked for me during the noon hour Always there were wild flowers, from marsh marigolds in the spring to asters and goldenrod in the fall.

I must tell you that this was a summer school. That is, the children attended school from May to the end of October or until the weather got too cold This was because they didn't have proper winter clothing and the roads weren't passable during the winter.

Times were hard but it was a beautiful summer Neerlandia was a quiet, pleasant place The summer passed all too quickly. In the fall many of the children contracted whooping cough Dr Miber from Westlock closed the school until the sickness had passed over. When we tried to open the school again, cold weather had set in I never did get the children all together again to say good-bye I was sorry about this. The Board paid me every cent of my wages, most of it in cream cheques.

So ended the days at my first school. One's first school, like one's first love, lives on in one's memory as a very happy time

Thelma (Hare) Levy

Teaching Fifty Years Ago

I find it hard to realize that it is over fifty years ago that I lived and taught school in Neerlandia During my stay, the road from Barrhead to Neerlandia was a dirt road — dusty when dry and very muddy when wet In many spots the road was reinforced in the low spots with logs; these corduroy spots made a car trip a bone-shaking experience. In fact, such was my introduction to Neerlandia in 1930 as I travelled by truck from Edmonton for many an hour to be interviewed by the school trustees, Tjibbe Reitsma, Joe Baker, and Simon Tiemstra.

I replaced Mrs. Levy, who was resigning to have her second child. There being no teacherage I was obliged to seek a boarding place. I asked Mrs. Schoonekamp if I could board at their home. After a little hesitation she agreed. This was indeed fortunate for me as she proved to be a second mother to me; before long I was accepted as one of the family.

Jean Rae 1931

Being city-bred and having just graduated from teachers' college, the responsibility for forty to fifty children was indeed a challenge. I was, however, young and full of energy. I tried my best and can still boast that my first Inspector's report was most favourable.

The two-room school was crowded. A big potbellied stove in each room kept out the cold, the water bucket and community dipper provided water, toilets were outside. The setting may sound primitive, but the children seemed to be happy, healthy, and full of good spirit. They were eager to learn. I especially remember one of my really bright grade one pupils, now Dr. Henry Bouwman, Orthopedic Surgeon of the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. About twenty of my students were beginners and some were obliged to walk more than two miles to school. Nevertheless, attendance was excellent.

The Depression was upon us so we were obliged to use slates for the lower grades. My salary was one thousand dollars per year, figured at five dollars a day for two hundred teaching days. The board gave me a raise of fifty cents a day for my second year. Everything depended on the crops as to whether there was enough money to pay the teacher. But I usually received my full pay on time.

Our means of transportation and communication with the outside world were the post office and the telephone, which were located in the store, and Billy Quick's truck. The twice-weekly arrival of the truck was quite an event. Many articles not available at the local store were ordered, to be brought out by truck. One day one of my grade one pupils, upon hearing the truck arrive, jumped up from her desk, looked out of the window, and joyfully announced in a loud clear voice, "Oh, there's Billy Quick's truck with my new shoes!" and headed for the door. None of the other pupils seemed to think this strange. In the interest of discipline, I restrained my amusement and followed in hot pursuit to return her to her desk.

After two years I left the teaching profession to marry William Winkelaar, the second son of a Dutch-Canadian family in Edmonton. In retrospect, even after more than fifty years of married life, I still have nostalgic thoughts and memories of my Dutch-Canadian pupils and their parents, and of the warm and friendly Schoonekamp family in their log home and the way they made me feel at home.

Jean (Rae) Winklelaar

My Neerlandia Years

My teaching career began in 1941 when my application to teach at the Grandale school was accepted by the Westlock School Division. I had just completed one year of training at the Edmonton Normal School. Grandale school was located on the NW 6-62-3-5, just one mile east of Louis and Tena Nanninga's home, where I boarded for the year.

Grandale was a typical one-room country school. But this one was quite new and provided ample space for the nineteen children who were enrolled. Although it stood by itself and was somewhat isolated, it holds many fond memories for me. With only nineteen children, thirteen of whom were in the primary grades, the class was like a large family. The six older children proved to be a great help as I struggled with the "Enterprise System" of the day. This was an integrated approach where the learning skills are taught through working on a project. In particular I remember the "Three Bears House" which we made of poles we hauled from the woods, and its furniture which we made mostly from apple boxes. I must confess that my only grade eight student didn't always get her share of my time. Fortunately she was a capable student.

Clara's first class. Grades 1-4

Back Row: Lambert Tuininga, Dave Tiemstra, Bert Piers, Peter Piers, Bert Elgersma, Jennie Terpsma, Clara Visser (teacher), Cecelia Tiemstra, Bill Reitsma, Ed Jorritsma, John Mast, Wilfred Holwerda, Henry Strydhorst

Third Row: ?, Ken Ashley, Henry Hiemstra, Genevieve Keuning, Ted Reitsma, Henry Piers, Rita Koning, Gilbert Hiemstra, Stewart Plantinga, George Visser.

Second Row: Joe Plantinga (?), Jelle Tuininga, Henry Tuininga, Elsie Olthuis, Alice Boorsma, Florence Baker (?), Dick Wierenga (?), Anne Reitsma, Betty Terpsma, Johanna Wierenga, Katie Boorsma, Jennie Strydhorst

Front Row: Henry Gelderman, Tena Terpsma, Alice Krikke, Hilda Elgersma, Sylvia Tuininga, Shirley Olthuis, Mathilda Elgersma, Anna Strydhorst, Gladys Krikke, Tenie Jorritsma, Ben Krikke

1942. The following year I applied for the Neerlandia School because their present teacher was planning to go back to the city. So it was that in August I made my home with the Simon Groot family.

A greater challenge awaited me that September. Instead of nineteen children there were forty-nine. Four were transferred back to Grandale in November, but the room was still overcrowded. Children seated in double desks lined the room from wall to wall. The centre rows were a bit shorter to make room for the potbellied stove and the drinking fountain with its array of enamelled and tin cups. In winter additional space was needed to store a day's supply of firewood. The two small cloakrooms were already overcrowded with syrup or lard tins serving as lunch buckets, coats, toques, scarves, and rubbers. Needless to say, aisle space was limited and the children didn't move out of their desks except for recess and noontime breaks.

Space was limited and educational aids were few — the trusty blackboard, the hectograph, a few maps, and the abacus — but the children did learn, thanks to the curiosity and energy of youth. The day started with devotions, a Bible story, and singing, and then the children worked at arithmetic. The after-recess period was the time I set aside for them to acquire their reading and language skills. To attend to all four grades in the allotted time was difficult. The afternoons were used for science and Enterprise and its activities. Mr. Ashley, who taught the upper grades, exchanged rooms with me two periods of each week. He would teach Science to the children of the primary room while I tried to help the older children appreciate art and music.

Thanks to the dedication of the parents, the children attended school regularly. To some of them it meant walking four to five miles, often in the mud or cold. But I do remember one day in the winter of 1942 when a blizzard blocked the tree-lined roads and only six neighbourhood children weathered the storm instead of the usual forty-five. It was a day we enjoyed, playing games, drawing pictures, and telling stories around the heater. I might add, however, that no one ventured to the outer edges of the room, where the frigid air preserved the cold white snow which stuck to our boots.

1943: The second year was much like the first, although the enrollment was down to forty. Mr. Ashley now taught grade four, and thirteen children occupied the grade one section of the room.

Since I was a product of that period of time, teaching in the old school did not bother me — in fact, I was enjoying it — but when the scrapers, hammers, and saws disturbed the quiet of the classroom that year, it was welcome news: a new school was on the way.

1944: The next September the new three-room school was complete. The student population was now distributed over three rooms. What a treat! I taught only thirty-two children and two grades, which was still a fair amount by today's standards, but quite a change from the two previous years. The three intermediate, grades three, four, and five, were taught by Miss Robb, and Mr. Ashley taught the upper grades and held the principalship.

The classroom took on a new appearance. The double desks were replaced by small tables and chairs which were accessible from all sides. Extra space at the back provided room for activities and quiet games. This proved especially helpful when winter cold forced the children to remain indoors during noontime break. No longer did the classroom serve as a storage area. Lunch boxes, extra winter clothing, and the drinking fountain were moved to the basement. The potbellied stove with its wood supply was replaced by the central heating system which provided more uniform heat. No longer did the children sitting near the outer edges of the room exchange places with those near the heater. Adequate blackboard and bulletin board space lined all but the window side of the room. It was quite a change!

From 1945 to 1948 the local school board provided either hot chocolate or soup to supplement the children's lunches. An old stove was purchased and housed in the basement and the board provided the funds to purchase the ingredients. Various families contributed soup bones to make the soup more nourishing. The goodies were prepared by the women teachers and the janitor, Mr. Boorsma, did his best to have the stove piping hot.

The three-room school continued to be my place of employment the next four years. The enrollment in my class varied from thirty-three to forty-six students. This very high teacher-pupil ratio made it impossible to provide the special help so sorely needed by the children who had difficulty learning.

Finding a place to stay was not easy for a country teacher. I, too, experienced that problem. As mentioned earlier, Simon and Carrie Groot offered me a home when I first came to Neerlandia, but in April they left for Edmonton and I had to search for a new place to live. The Schoonekamps kindly took me in, and I lived with them two years, after which I stayed in the teacherage with another teacher, Alberta Robb. The next year I lived with John and Rose Ingwersen, but soon I had to move because my room was needed for the family. My stay with the Schoonekamps eventually led to marriage with their son Albert (which, incidentally, solved my housing problem!) I taught one year after our wedding, then stayed home with my family for four years.

1952: When I returned things were quite different. Little schoolhouses had been moved in from the surrounding areas. With centralization the one-room schools had become a thing of the past. Even though the number of teachers on staff also increased, two grades continued to share one classroom and the enrollment per room was still in the thirties. My experience up to this time had been in the primary grades, but upon my return I taught various combinations of grades six through eight. It was a time of adjusting to different levels and sometimes having both upper-elementary and junior high.

There were times of stress through the years: children whom I was unable to help, differences of opinion with other teachers, being frustrated with my own abilities. But I also have many pleasurable memories of the years I taught in Neerlandia. The rapport with the children and fellow staff members, the class outings, the field trips, the programs shared with the community, the staff socials, and the conventions all contributed to making life interesting and worthwhile.

* * *

One day as I prepared to have the children read "The Three Bears," I asked, "What do you think might be in the bowls?" I chuckled when one little boy quickly thrust up his hand and called out, "Brij!"

* * *

When the school first began serving soup to the children at noon, tables were built in the basement with the intention to have the children eat there. Unfortunately for the school board, this idea proved impractical and the students ate in their classrooms. Determined not to let the tables go to waste, an undaunted Mr. Ashley commandeered them for table tennis matches. It is understood that his classes became quite adept at the sport and even a few other teachers developed clever backhands and nasty serves!

* * *

Clara (Visser) Schoonekamp

A Job in Neerlandia

When the letter came from Neerlandia offering me a position teaching grades three, four, and five, I thought about it for a long time. Then Clara Visser and her father came to see me and tell me something about the community . . . If Clara was teaching grades one and two there, I would have someone with whom to share common problems and pleasures. I had found a one-room school lonesome in that respect. So in the fall of 1944 I came to Neerlandia by a Fisher truck and boarded happily with Anne and Carl Mast and their little daughter Marilyn. Next year Clara and I shared the teacherage and had many hilarious housekeeping experiences such as the chimney catching fire. Without Clara I would never have felt so at home there.

I cannot find words to say how much I enjoyed the community. The school board, the parents, and the principal Mr. Ashley were all supportive. The Young People's Society always had some activity going, and Clara and I were invited to the homes of all our pupils. Most of all I remember how hard the children worked and how much I loved them.

One event sticks in my mind particularly. We went on a field trip and three boys caught a ride in a truck and came back to school half an hour after the others were dismissed. I was relieved to see them, but hurt that they had done such a thing. They stood in a row in front of my desk and before I could speak, said they were sorry. I said, "What do you think you deserve as punishment?" Henry Hiemstra said solemnly, "We deserve the strap." The two others agreed. My heart sank at the idea of them getting the strap, so I said, "Go tell Mr. Ashley what you've told me." This was the only time I had sent pupils to Mr. Ashley, and I waited, hoping they wouldn't get the strap. They did get a strap, however, and I flinched as I heard it, although it was only one on each hand and not too hard. I still admire those little boys for coming into the school and facing their punishment.

Katie, Alice, Tinie, Bert, Wilfred, Mathilda, Jenny, Anna, Kenneth, Sylvia, Shirley, Elsie, Henrietta, Lambert, John, Henry, Jelle, Betty, Stewart, and the others whose faces I remember but whose names escape me, wherever you are now, thank you for being my pupils and giving me such a happy two years.

Alberta (Robb) Cole

Clara Visser, Wasel Doschiwnek, Alberta Robb, c. 1945

A Backward Look

April 25, 1949 — I remember the day vividly! I was greeted by thirty-four excited pupils as I walked into a little one-room school to begin my first day of teaching. Only two days before I had written my final exam at the U of A, and now ready to start my teaching career, I faced a grade three and four class. I looked at the kids and wondered how I would ever remember those strange names: Nanninga, Wierenga, Tiemstra . . . Now, so many years later I look back and think of all the changes that have taken place in the field of education.

A severe teacher shortage prevailed at the time, so it was a matter of superintendents offering jobs rather than prospective teachers answering numerous applications, hoping that one would be accepted. Many of us began teaching with one year of university training, but even then there were schools short of staff, so sometimes high school students acted as supervisors while the kids worked at correspondence courses.

My first school, the old Shoal Creek School that had been moved to Neerlandia Centre, had a big coal-eating monster at the back, a washbasin, and the bare essentials for teaching. Many a cold winter day we huddled around the heater as we shovelled in more coal . . . fingers too cold to write . . . an excellent time for storytelling and oral quizzes and games. Every school yard had several little outbuildings (no washrooms, you know) which provided great excuses for walks in the summer when students became bored, but weren't very convenient in the bitter cold weather. A short distance from the little school stood the big three-room school where Mrs. Fowler, Mr. VanderMeulen, and Mrs. Abday taught the other grades. Since there was no staffroom, we seldom got together, and morning coffee was unheard of.

A regular bus ran from Vega through Neerlandia to Barrhead, while a converted truck driven by Albert Tiemstra transported kids to the south and east. The wooden seats got mighty hard and I am sure the airtight heater used in the winter months would not pass today's safety standards! Busses were often late due to muddy roads in summer and spring and snow in the winter, and some springs they were banned for weeks and education practically came to a standstill.

We had few books to help us teach, paper and art supplies were almost nonexistent, and certainly we had no filmstrip projectors or any of the other numerous machines we take for granted today. Teaching was very much a time of listen and copy rather than research. Because the classroom teacher taught all subjects, regardless of training or ability, music was often no more than singing and physical education was simply games — whenever weather permitted, since there was no gym.

However, I enjoyed the challenge of teaching when I first started and I still do today. It has been a rewarding experience to see a succession of students pass through my classes while instructional innovations have come and gone, but I have no desire to return to "the little white schoolhouse".

Ruth Janssen

Teaching in Neerlandia

I was born in Neerlandia in 1923 on a farm at least three-and-a-half miles from the church and school. I began my school years in Neerlandia. At that time the school consisted of two rooms. There were no lights in the school and it always seemed dark on short winter days The rooms were heated by two large black stoves, which required constant effort to keep going

In 1951 I was able to come back and begin my teaching career Additional small schools had been brought in, this was the beginning of centralization of school districts Big yellow buses became a part of everyday life, as children came to school from quite a distance

To add to the excitement of schooling, I spent a bit of time working on a rhythm band with the children It required a great deal of patience, persistence, and long-suffering, but we did succeed in playing for concerts. Christmas concerts were important to the community

The noon hour lunchtime conversations were inspiring and profound "Mother's homemade bread is at least seven times better than the hopeless store bread " "Don t complain about your food!" "Eat what your mother feeds you " "That tractor of ours has a lot more power than those hopeless little John Deere tractors."

All those little people have grown up. I see that they have done well for themselves. With God at the centre of their lives they will continue to be a blessing to their church and community I am thankful to those students for being a part of my teaching career

Magdelena Baker

Teaching in 1923

A school day started at 9·00 a m. First recess was from 10:30-10·45 a.m. Noon hour was from 12·00-1·00 p.m. Last recess was from 2.15-2 30 p.m Dismissal was at 3 30 p.m During lunch hour and often at recess, games were supervised by the teacher in the yard.

School was always opened with the Lord's Prayer. saluting the flag, and singing a song or two

We had very few teaching aids, but we did have a good curriculum to guide us and to know what we should expect from each child at the end of his grade

The three "R's", of course, were stressed. Oral reading, writing, and arithmetic were carefully taught every day to every child and all work was corrected by the teacher, then the child corrected his mistakes. There were no workbooks.

History, geography, and agriculture were important subjects. Great care was given to mapmaking with surface features and printing clearly shown

English composition — stressing paragraph structure and choice of words was given much attention Formal grammar was taught Writing was stressed The teacher illustrated on the blackboard and the children carefully followed instructions. There was no printing in any grade, cursive style was taught from the beginning. Grade one wrote in full space Penmanship was marked for legibility, line qualities, and freedom of movement.

Elementary science was also taught. Children gathered, mounted, and named plant collections They learned to recognize birds and to write a life history of a robin, sparrow, hawk, or other bird.

The teacherage, 1950.

Olive Young with Ken, Harold, and Shirley Ashley.

Health was taught, stressing the foods that were good for them. Some anatomy was taught.

Physical exercises were taught whenever possible. This was usually a short relaxing break from schoolwork during the day, the windows would be opened and everyone refreshed with some exercise.

There were good textbooks. The readers were lovely and had beautiful stories and pictures. The children loved the readers — they had such a variety of stories, often with a moral. First there were the *Alexandra* readers and later came *Highroads to Reading* and others.

The teachers — Rita Speers, Alice Brown, c. 1938.

We used the blackboard for everything. At the end of the school day or before school began in the morning, seatwork was put on the board. While I taught grade one mathematics, grades two, three, and four did seat work. Then I went from grade to grade checking for difficulties or teaching something new. Everything was corrected and explained. At first children used slates, but soon scribblers and pencils came into use.

We used pictures a great deal. I had a large collection cut from magazines, mounted and named. We made our own flash cards. We had a hectograph (our own) to make seat work. This hectograph could only be used once in every twenty-four hours because it took a while for the inked words to sink in.

Teachers worked every minute of the day, including noon hour — there were no coffee breaks. The minimum salary was $840.00 a year, although if I remember correctly, I was paid on the basis of one thousand dollars per year in Neerlandia. We were dedicated to our profession, and I think I can safely say we produced good students.

Thelma (Hare) Levy

Shirley Otthuis, Tine Abday, Eleanor Bauer. Front: Irene Fowler, Clara Schoonekamp, Lena Baker, 1953.

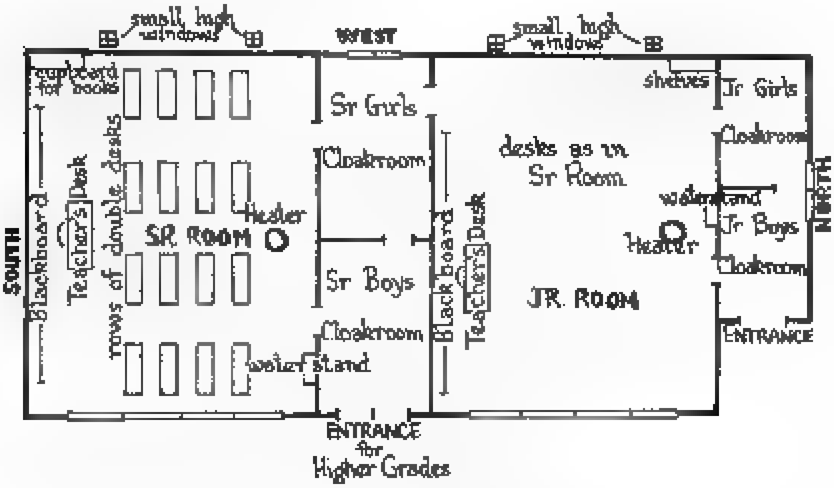
Hectograph

The one aid we did have was a hectograph — a primitive duplicator. Each teacher purchased her own. It was a shallow pan very like a cookie sheet with a lid. In fact some teachers purchased cookie sheets to use as hectographs. We would fill both top and bottom with a gelatin-like substance which could be purchased in cans or made from a recipe. With a special indelible pencil we would write or draw on a sheet of paper. The surface of the hectograph would be moistened and the paper pressed print-side down on it. After a few moments the original would be removed. One by one students' books or sheets of paper would be carefully smoothed over the surface to receive the impression. One could make about twenty-five fairly good copies in this way. Any additional copies were quite faint. It took about twenty-four hours for the ink to settle to the bottom of the pan. After repeated use the pad would become saturated with ink and we would have to make a new one.

Memories of School Days

After a breakfast of wheat porridge, milk, and bread or fried potatoes and milk, we left with our lunch in either a lard or syrup pail to our little white school. We lived less than a mile from school, so for us it was not an ordeal as it was for some who had to walk five miles in bitter cold or pouring rain

We found the walk fun in the early spring after a thaw there were the beautiful snowdrifts, in the summer the soft earth was just perfect for our bare feet as were the puddles after a rain, in the autumn the lovely scenery delighted even a child's heart The winter was worse since so many did not have warm clothes, especially footwear Many a tear was shed because of aching cold feet or frostbitten hands



Our schoolhouse was divided into two parts. Grades one to five were taught by a lady teacher and grades five to eight by the principal. The rooms were divided by a hall which again was divided by the girls' and boys' cloakroom In the cloakroom closest to the door we usually had a wood box and a water pail with a dipper from which everyone sick or healthy, dirty or clean drank

The grade one to five room also had a cloakroom, a wood box, and a water pail and dipper. It was the janitor's job to get a clean pail of water every morning, but the boys in grade seven and eight got fresh water if the pail would be emptied during the day

The school was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Regardless of how we fed the stove it usually took until noon to get every corner of the room warm in winter. We usually brought our lunch pails into the schoolroom and put them next to the stove, as the majority of lunches were frozen on the way to school I don't think the lineup of syrup and lard pails added to the beauty of the school, but no one had anything nicer so this was just a part of our school life.

In the summer we were already very warm by noon and were allowed to go outside to eat our lunch We then sat on the north side of the school or on the north side of the huge woodpile, which was all split ready for winter.

Lunches were poor in those days. We always had homemade bread, homemade butter, and homemade cheese That cheese was much like the cottage cheese of today We sometimes had syrup. One girl always had a better lunch than the rest of us since her mother was quite artistic and knew how to make pretty things. Sometimes she would have cupcakes or fancy buns Her sandwiches would be daintily cut and everything was wrapped separately I think her lunch was often the envy of the class. Once one mother had gone to the city and come home with some peanut butter. For a few days that lunch was the envy of the room Sometimes the lunch pails, when opened, had a sour smell This meant that the bread had not risen properly and it was sour All these things fit into the pattern of our school days. At harvesttime we all had treats, usually half an apple until the box of apples was gone Sometimes Mother would buy bologna for bread if the threshers were at our house, and then we would have it to school too

Our lady teacher, Miss Brown, taught us many songs and poems Some such as "Good Morning to You" and "I Am a Gay Little Eskimo" remain in my memory to this day Since she had grade one students, much time was spent on music and poetry, much to my delight But if you didn't like singing or poems it was very boring.

Miss Brown wore very high heels and when she went home for lunch we would take turns to try them on or walk around in them I am quite sure she must have known, but never mentioned it

The principal, Mr Ashley, taught grades five to eight We had great respect for him and were afraid of him as he had the final word on punishment - the Strap. Although I personally never had it, I was afraid Then there were other ways of punishment which were to be avoided, not because they were painful but because they were humiliating. Standing in front of the class in the corner for ten minutes, I found, hurt as much as the strap since it hurt the pride of a young child When I was in grade one my coat fell down when I was hanging it up and I said a bad word. Mrs. Levy marched me to the principal and made me sit next to his desk during noon hour while all the others were out playing Since I was terrified of Mr Ashley, this was a punishment I never forgot.

Another punishment was writing lines — sometimes one hundred lines, sometimes more, depending on how severe the misdeed was. Usually we had to write, "I must behave in school " or "I must obey my teacher." This also was done at noon when everyone was having a great time outside Punishment is always hard even if deserved — and as a child you feel like a prisoner with all the others enjoying freedom

One time when we were quite young but felt we should be acting like grown-ups. several of us took face powder to school Little did our childish minds realize that the teacher could see or smell the powder on us. My parents were told, and when I arrived home I got punished I still don't know why as surely a little powder would brighten up the drab room and add a sweet smell to an otherwise-musty room At that time free samples of powder could be obtained by filling in coupons in farm papers These was sent out by Ponds, Lady Ester, and Woodbury I think some of these samples were taken to school

Another punishment I still remember is when I was a little girl and got five cents to buy a scribbler. While in the store, I saw some mouth-watering candy. I had already bought the scribbler but, yielding to temptation, I returned the scribbler and bought the candy. Little did I realize that the clerk, Annie Ingwersen, knew there was something wrong, since no one bought five-cent candy except on picnics. She told my father and when I came home — already feeling guilty — I was severely punished. The shame of what I had done hurt more than the punishment I received. I also knew, small as I was, that I had hurt my parents because I did need the scribbler and had to have another five cents which they could not afford.

Once we had an English lady for a teacher. She was from England, I think, because she spoke with an English accent. She taught us how to embroider and make very fine stitches. Whoever made the best job got a five-cent chocolate bar. We all worked hard at it; what a surprise to find out that I had won! I was twelve years old then and that chocolate bar was like receiving a terrific prize.

Our noon hours were fun. In summer we did a lot of skipping and I am often surprised how sixty years later children are still singing the same skipping songs we did. The older grades played baseball. Sometimes we played Anti-I-Over — that was always fun. I think it might have broken a window once in a while, although I can't remember. The smaller children often played Mother May I or Run Sheep Run or Pom-Pom-Pull Away. The latter was rough, especially if the one at the end was small.

In the winter we played football, although I think it is now called soccer. This was for boys and girls and was fun, although it was rough. Often in the month of June the boys were busy doing high jump or broad jump, practicing for the picnic. When we were in grade seven or eight, we had an outing with our teacher Mr. Ashley. One of the older boys took a team of horses and a wagon. We went to Shoal Lake on the NW 9-61-3-5. We all brought our own lunches. We played ball and ran some races. Picnics like that were seldom had, and I still like to think of that day.

One of the days I always thought great was when the weather was very cold and only ten or twelve pupils came. We would have games during our extended noon hours and would be free to go home at three o'clock.

The rules at school were strict. One rule was that we were not allowed to stand up. When Mr. Maykut moved his sheep in the summer pasture, he would slowly walk them from his place in Mellowdale to a pasture in Vega. Our teacher would allow us to leave our work and watch this. It was interesting since he had a large flock of sheep and led them carefully past the school.

Another fun thing of my school life was Valentine's Day. The making of the valentines was more fun than the receiving, as many hours were spent trying to find pictures out of catalogues or wallpaper samples. They were pasted on thin cardboard and given to whomever you wanted to.

Times were poor and we were all pretty well restricted to one dress for Sunday and one for school. What a thrill to get a new cotton dress in the spring and a new flannel dress in the fall! Anyone having more than one dress usually had hand-me-downs

Sadie Reitsma made this valentine for Grace Tunings, c. 1934

from their older sisters. It is hard to believe that all the girls wore dresses. Many must have been torn in sports or while climbing fences.

This is the way I remember school days. We were not protected like the children are now, being picked up by bus and going into a warm school. We did not have beautiful sports equipment or lovely clothes. We did not have the modern lunches, which would have made our mouths water. But we did have fun and felt secure in our way of life. Our parents were home when we came home from school, and were there to listen to our problems. We had playtime and worktime at school and home. So it is with pleasant memories that I can look at my days in the little white schoolhouse.

Grace Wierenga

* * *

Education: Before and After School

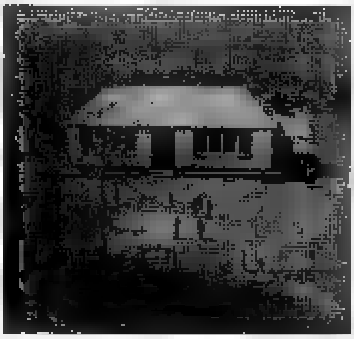
My formal schooling began in 1934 at the old two-room school in Neerlandia. I can still picture my teacher sitting at her desk with glasses perched on the end of her nose and looking at us over the top of her glasses with eyes that could see right through us.

I have many fond memories of my school years, and the education I received in those years has certainly served me well in later life. We walked to and from school every day and that extended our education beyond regular school hours by two or three hours each day. On the way to and from school we studied frogs and tadpoles, bees and wasps, hawks and owls, and whatever animals and birds were around in the various seasons of the year.

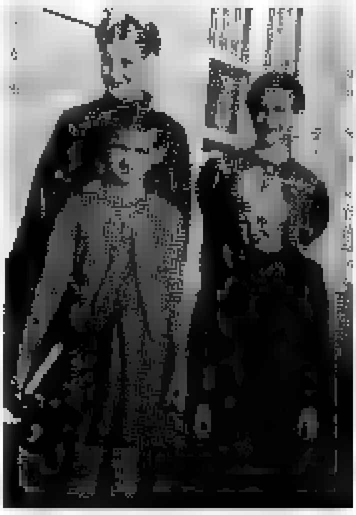
We also received many lessons in human behaviour or misbehaviour. I vividly recall one lesson I received from Ruby, our neighbour girl, who was six years older than I was. Ruby had two sisters: Thelma, who was my age, and Janet, who was one year younger. We always walked to school together carrying our lunches in lard pails or syrup pails. One day Thelma came to school with a brand-new, brightly-painted, square lunch kit of which she was very proud. On the way home, as a prank and maybe even from a bit of jealousy, I took Thelma's new lunch kit and threw it as far as I could into three feet of snow along the road. When Ruby caught me I received the worst beating I had ever had, and went the rest of the way home with several painful lumps on my head, and with a very sore tailbone from a sharp boot in the rear. When I got home I didn't even get one bit of sympathy and got sent right back to the neighbours to apologize before supper. That really hurt, and I never forgot that lesson.

Fred Toebes

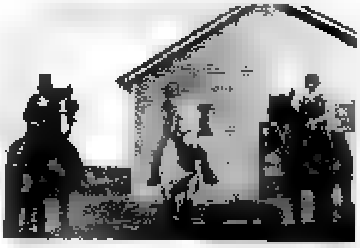
* * *



The school.



Some walked. Elsie, Shirley, Joan, and Jack Olthuis.



Horseback was a common form of transportation. Annie Schoonekamp, Jean Rae, Jennie Schoonekamp.

EDUCATION: AS THE KIDS SAW IT

* * *

School lunches
Four slices of steamed cracked wheat bread
Butter or bacon fat
Fillings:
— smoked moose meat (real good)
— fried thick-sliced bacon (real good)
— fresh raspberries (soggy)

Winter lunches were better as we could have roast meat sandwiches. Keeping meat in summertime was impossible. We sometimes ground the wheat in a coffee grinder. It took a long time to grind enough flour to make two loaves of bread about 20" long. It was baked slowly in a long roasting pan with a greased board in the centre. It took about three hours to bake (real good).

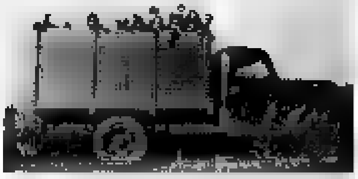
Gerri Bozak

* * *

With Mr Fisher's arrival, the real learning began. He felt our education had been sadly lacking up to that time and introduced us to history, geography, and grammer. He would knock on our heads and say, "You Dutch cheeses," indicating we were not too bright.

Susie Vanee

* * *



Some took the bus. Albert Tiemstra drove the first "school bus" 1950.

Here comes the bus. Everdina Nanninga.

Others went by plane. Albert and Thelma Mast, Fred Dolka, 1971

We went to school until we were either fifteen or had passed grade eight and I now graduated into the working world.

Susie Vanee

* * *

My mother felt we should learn to read and write Dutch so she held classes for Margaret, Johanna and Lily Messelink, Della, Tena, and myself in our home

Susie Vanee

* * *

The hall window in the school used to have about a hundred bull flies buzzing around on it One day I took a straw from the broom and strung about twenty bull flies on it and let them go outside, and they buzzed away like an airplane. When I turned around, I saw that Mr Ashley, the teacher, had been watching me, and he didn't think it was a very nice way to treat bull flies I thought the only good bull fly was a dead one

George Anema

* * *

When Simon Fisher and Andrew Heberling were schoolboys, they had some traps set on the way to school for squirrels and weasels. One morning they found a skunk in one Being a little green about skunks, they killed it with a stick Then they took off for school and got there a little late. "Get out of here," roared the teacher, "and don't come back till you smell better" They got a holiday out of it at least

Cor Fisher

* * *

Noon hours were always the highlight of each day, but they also provided some frustrations. No one was allowed out of the school until twenty minutes after twelve. We could very easily eat our lunch in five to ten minutes and get out to play, but this was not to be. You see, our teacher had this (to us) very unreasonable rule Each bit of food had to be chewed at least twenty times. And this is what he did, with the regularity of a Holstein cow chewing its cud It made no difference if we were done eating in five minutes we had to sit there for the twenty minutes anyhow. So even if we never did learn this slow methodical chewing, after watching it for five years we at least knew how it should be done.

Fred Toebes

* * *

After school there was the two-mile walk home. This could be a long hard walk in winter, especially if a north wind was blowing, but it could also be a lot of fun In the spring of the year, when the snow was melting, the ditches along the road would fill up with water and then freeze over during the nights. This would provide beautiful, long sheets of smooth ice slides, and we made use of every one along the way I remember one time in particular. We had an exceptionally long slide just about a half a mile from school It gave us entertainment for almost a whole week One afternoon my brother Norman and his friend Ralph decided to cut a hole in the

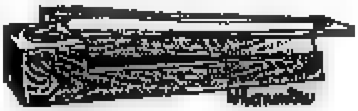
middle of our slide and cover it over with snow. About fifteen minutes later Cor Leder came along. He slid neatly into the hole and two-and-a-half feet of water. That was the end of our slide for that year.

Fred Ioebes

* * *

Walking Home From School

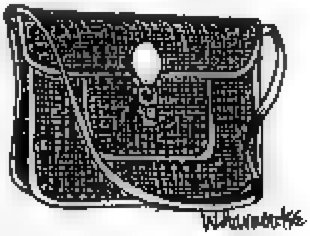
Kids miss a lot riding those smelly school buses. They are so shut-off from nature. Sure, it's fast and efficient, a lot warmer in winter and cooler in summer, but still they miss a lot.



We saw little piles of wild rose hip skins where some chipmunk had sat on an old stump or fallen tree to eat them. And we often watched these bright-eyed little creatures nibbling at their food or flicking their tails and scampering away.

Burning nettles were the test of every child's bravery. Dare to grab it firmly and avoid a burn, or tentatively touch it and feel as if your hand was on fire. Is that true? It passed for gospel when we were kids.

We learned about the plants. Snake berries were poisonous, as was purple pea vine. The white pea vine was okay, though, and we ate it every spring. In fall we imitated the chipmunks and gathered rose hips. The difference was that we ate the skins and only the skins.



We walked home in groups. Usually we walked companionably but sometimes we got into mischief. When Simon Groot sold his house to Frank Kowalchuk, a few of us entered the house after school was out and tore wallpaper off the walls. Little vandals at work. Sometimes we had disagreements with the Terpsma kids and then we had to watch out because they had the most formidable weapons school kids possessed — lard or syrup lunch pails. They could pack a terrific wallop. We poor Olthuis girls had only cloth schoolbags with which to retaliate.

You've heard of motorcycle gangs — well, we had the Nanninga bicycle gang. The Nanninga boys and George Visser could make life miserable for us by parking their bikes across the road and refusing to let us pass. Florence Baker loved to visit her Aunt Tenie, but dreaded these confrontations so sometimes she would cut across the fields to avoid them. Not learning from our own experiences, we would pick on someone even more defenceless. How cruel one can be!

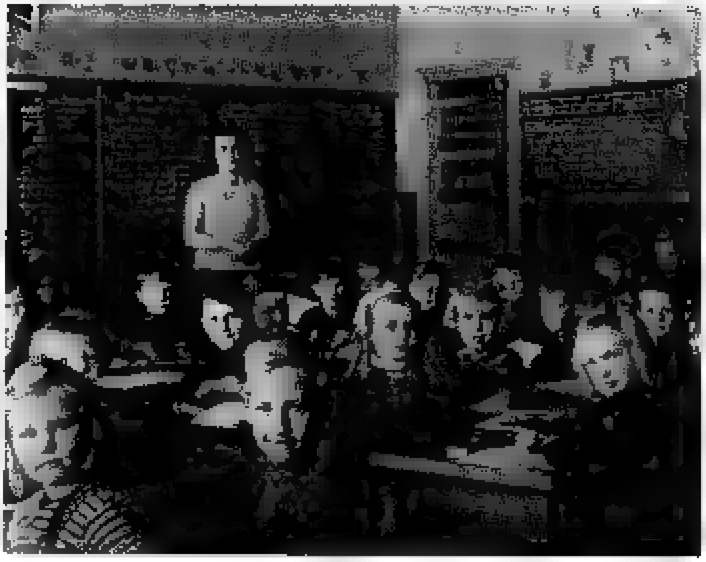
Another thing kids miss today is walking home on the snowdrifts. The roads are wider today and it seems there is less snow, but in our day it was often possible to walk most of the way home on the drifts. After a blizzard we would carefully test the drifts before committing ourselves to the heady experience of walking on top of the world. Sadly, being the heaviest of the group, I experienced this glorious feeling less often than the others. I would take a few steps on the firmest drifts, then fall through and have to flounder back to the road. On one occasion my brother Jack, about six years old, fell through to his armpits. My sisters and I tried to dig him out, but we were not making much headway when the Terpsma contingent appeared. Here was salvation, we thought. But it must have been one of our feuding periods because they refused to help. After they passed, we continued hopelessly digging amid tears, and finally freed him.

Another great pastime, when walking to and from school, was to kick a horse turd all the way to school. When we got to school we would carefully nudge it up against the school wall for safe-keeping till it could be kicked home again once the school day was over. How can riding a bus compare with this?

AT SCHOOL

Come and play house! Some of the 1949 grade 3 and 4 class.

There was the teeter-totter. Front: Jennie Terpsma, Alice Boorsma, Florence Baker. Betty Terpsma (?), Tenie Jorritsma, Alice Krikke. Back. Cecelia Tiemstra, Shirley Olthuis, Mathilda Elgersma, Tena Terpsma (?), Katie Boorsma, Rita Koning, Jennie Strydhorst. Elsie Olthuis, Gladys Krikke, Anna Strydhorst 1942-43.



Of course there was work too. Clara Visser with class, 1945.

Harold Ashley, Janet Sturwold, Lula Krikke.

And sports days. Thelma Sturwold at bat.

And school picnics.

Back: Ans Krikke, Harry Reitsma, Ben Bouwman, Cor Hiemstra, Annie Leder, Hilda Peters, Kobie Mast.

Third: Fred Tansowny, Walter Tansowny, Harold Ashley, Gerrit Lievers.

Second: Clarence Tiemstra, Bert Leder, Arthur Reitsma, Arnold Hiemstra, Albert Tiemstra, Fred Toebes, Katie Dieleman, Tena Koning, Jurina Elgersma, Betty Koning.

Front: Sophie Ansma, Thelma Sturwold, Lula Krikke, Gertie Hiemstra, Jane Dieleman, Janet Sturwold, Violet Tillotson, Alice Mast, Hazel Tansowny.

SCHOOL CLASSES

Back Row: Joe Tuininga, Mary Hervey, Lula Sturwold, Johanna Messelink, Rieka Lievers, Annie Ingwersen, Margaret (Grada) Messelink, Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Eva Olthuis, Lily Messelink, Susie Anema.

Third Row: Jennie Schoonekamp, Alice Kippers, Annie Schoonekamp, ?, George Kippers, George Olthuis, Cecil Tuininga, George Terpsma, Annie Tuininga, John Lievers, Johanna Ingwersen

Second Row: ?, Grace Nanninga, Harry Lievers, Henry Lievers (?), Bill Lievers, Albert Messelink, Ryer Krikke, Rulie Schoonekamp, Minnie Lievers, Annie Tuininga

Front: Nettie Ingwersen, Annie Lievers, Jennie Kippers, George Anema, John Ingwersen, Johanna Krikke, Carrie Olthuis, Corry Nanninga, Ethel Howey, c. 1922

Back Row: Margaret Bouwman, Cecelia Tiemstra, Gertrude Hiemstra

Middle: Jean Gelderman, Grace Bouwman, Grace Tuininga, Thelma Sturwold, Herma Nanninga, Janet Sturwold, Alice Mast

Standing Front: Henny Tuininga, Sylvia Tuininga, Shirley Olthuis, Anna Reitsma, Dixie Wieringa, Alice Krikke, Katie Boorsma, Jennie Strydhorst

Seated Back: Peter Piers, Gilbert Hiemstra.

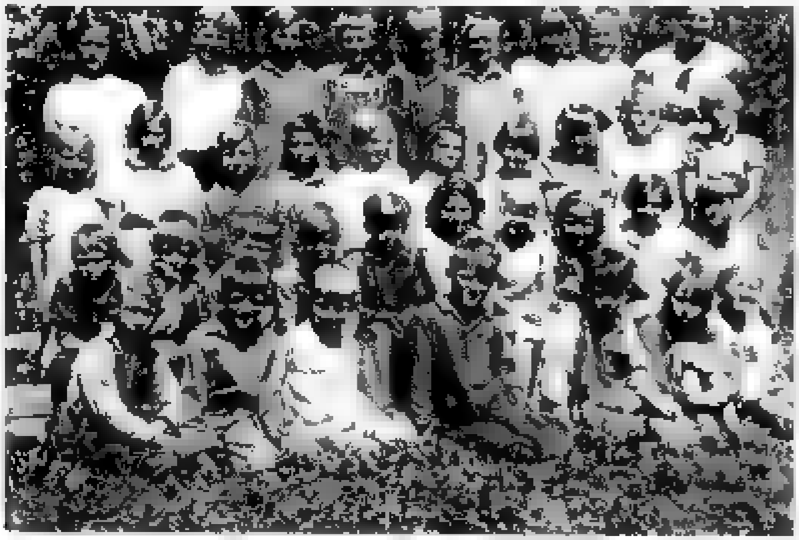
Seated Front: Dave Tiemstra, Clarence Tiemstra, Stewart Plantinga, Ed Jorritsma, Bill Reitsma, Bert Piers, 1946-47

Back: Julius Boorsma, Herman Wegner, John Bouwman, Shirley Ashley, Joan Olthuis, Ed Piers, Henry Nanninga, Simon Tiemstra

Third: Betty Oldegbers, Reta Tuininga, Judy Fisher, Susan Tiemstra, Jean Kippers, Alice Strydhorst, Margaret Wegner, Marjorie and Elsie Ingwersen, John Baker, Jim Nanninga.

Second: Jack Olthuis, George Visser, Elsie Courtepatte, Tena Kippers, Jean Fisher, Katie Terpsma, John Molodowich, Bertha Strydhorst, Minnie Krikke.

Seated: Gladys Wieringa, Lydia Dotziaf, Edith Tuininga, Hilda Molodowich, Beatrice Tuininga, Alvin Nanninga, Gilbert Baker, Gilles Plantinga, Tony Fisher.



Back Hilda Peters, John Lievers, Harry Reitsma, Cor Hiemstra, Norman Toebes, Arie Krikke, Annie Leder, Tena Koning, Grace Boer.

Third Row Fred Tansowny, Fred Toebes, Jurina Elgersma, Rita Gelderman, Katie Dieleman, Elizabeth Koning, Thelma Sturwold.

Second Row: Dewey Terpsma Albert Krikke, Ed Jorritsma, Jim Jorritsma, Walter Tansowny, Violet Tillotson, Janet Sturwold (?), Hazel Tansowny, Gertrude Hiemstra, Jane Dieleman.

Front Arnold Hiemstra Art Reitsma, Bert Leder Martin Wierenga Gerrit Lievers, Jennie Terpsma, ? Alice Mast

Back. Dan Johnman, Jim Nanninga, George R. Visser, Simon Tiemstra, Jack Olthuis. Julius Boorsma.

Middle. Bertha Strydhorst, Lydia Dotzlaf, Alice Strydhorst, Jean Fisher, Alie Dieterman.

Front Minnie Krikke, Lula Krikke. Reta Tuininga, Judy Fisher, Shirley Ashley. 1954-55.

Grades Three and Four

Back Evert Hessels John Strydhorst, Gilbert Baker, Andrew Elgersma, George Strydhorst, Sam Dotzlaf. Ernest Tiemstra

Third Row: Calvin Visser, Henry Kippers, Alvin Nanninga, Tony Fisher, Gilles Plantinga, John Baker, Ken Piers, Ruth Schoenrock (teacher).

Second Row: Joanne Gelderman, Betty Fisher, Ella Plantinga, Patsy Boorsma, Marilyn Mast, Nettie Rowaan, Johanna Peters, Winnifred Ingwersen

Front Clifford Tuininga, Dorothy Baker. Anne Tuininga. Grace Mae Fowler Tena Kippers, Sandra Elgersma, Rinie Krikke, Adrian Hamoen. 1950-51.

The Teachers' Strike of October 1, 1971

The collective agreement between the teachers and the boards of the North Central Alberta School Authorities Association (NCASAA) had expired August 31, 1970, and one year later no settlement had been reached The various stages of the bargaining process produced no positive results, and a strike date was set for Friday, October 8, 1971 The Neerlandia school was included in this bargaining unit but five of the eight teachers believed that a strike was unwarranted, that it was detrimental to the well-being of the students in the school, and that a settlement should be sought through binding arbitration. The withholding of services should be considered only in extreme circumstances, not simply to gain a few economic benefits.

The board of the Neerlandia Christian School Society, in consultation with the school staff, discussed ways of keeping the Neerlandia school operating during the proposed strike period In order for this to occur, the County of Barrhead school committee would have to grant permission for the school to operate

A delegation of parents met with the county board in early October 1971 requesting that the Neerlandia school be kept open and that it would be operated with five of the eight teachers along with one substitute At a special meeting on October 8, the County School Committee gave authorization for the Neerlandia school to open its doors on Tuesday, October 12.

The teachers who chose to teach during the strike were well aware of the possible consequences. An Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) delegation consisting of Richard Staples from Westlock and ATA district representative, Irl Miller, met with the five Neerlandia teachers Considerable pressure was put on them to not teach the following morning The teachers were warned that charges of unprofessional conduct would be laid against them and they would be termed as "scabs", which the ATA delegation considered likely to be detrimental to the well-being of the students in the Neerlandia school The teachers, however, stuck to their position

On Friday, October 15, Joe Berlando, Coordinator of Teacher Welfare for the ATA, met with the six teachers (including the substitute) and indicated that he was investigating the alleged strike-breaking activity of the teachers, and would be reporting to the ATA Discipline Committee. In accordance with Joe Berlando's recommendation, the Provincial Executive Council directed that a hearing of the Discipline Committee be held

The formal charges of unprofessional conduct were received by the six teachers by double registered mail and read as follows: "It is alleged that you have been guilty of unprofessional conduct in that you taught school despite the fact that the bargaining unit of which you were then a member was conducting a legal strike " The teachers were requested to appear before the ATA Discipline Committee December 4, 1971

In the meantime, the teachers and the local Christian School Board had engaged the services of lawyer Ben VandenBrink

The discipline hearing began on the morning of December 4, at the ATA headquarters in Edmonton Several ATA witnesses testified that the teachers had indeed been teaching during the strike

The cross examination by lawyer VandenBrink proved interesting in that all the witnesses had difficulty in relating how teaching during a strike was in fact unprofessional conduct Mr VandenBrink eventually introduced as evidence a clause contained in the memorandum of agreement, signed by board and teacher representatives on October 22, 1971, ending the strike, which stated that "no punitive action would be taken by either party against any person for conduct or statements made during the strike " The hearing was adjourned for lunch at this point

Immediately after the hearing reconvened in the afternoon, the ATA lawyer, Donald Boyer, stated that in view of the clause contained in the memorandum of agreement the ATA was withdrawing the charges of unprofessional conduct, and the hearing was adjourned The ATA had unwittingly contracted itself out of the right to discipline Although the teachers were happy that the charges of unprofessional conduct were dropped, they did believe that there would have been advantages to having a decision rendered on whether the ATA's disciplinary powers did in fact extend to its trade union activities. Later, a brief was prepared by the teachers and presented to the Alberta government requesting extensive revisions to the Teaching Profession Act to prevent a recurrence of the events surrounding the strike of October 1971 No action was forthcoming.

The teachers received moral and financial support from the community All legal expenses were paid by the Neerlandia community under the auspices of the Christian School Society.

COVENANT CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL

On January 7, 1972, the Canadian Reformed Church began operating a Saturday school. Under the guidance of Rev. C Van Dam, the minister at that time, a Saturday School Society had been set up. For three hours every Saturday morning the students were taught Bible study, church history, and catechism, but the parents thought this was not enough, the children should be taught according to God's Word in all subjects, science as well as social studies, Bibly study as well as world history, and they believed this was not being done in the public school

On March 4, 1975, the Rev. M. C. Werkman was requested by the consistory of Neerlandia to speak on the topic, "Why Reformed Education?" At that time a school society was set up and given the mandate to look into ways and means of opening a day school. A board consisting of Case Hamoen, Lies Hamoen, Wilfred Holwerda, Pete Werkman, and Bert Wierenga was elected

The Society was incorporated on April 30, 1975, and was registered as a Charitable Organization on May 1, 1975 In April 1975 a building committee was appointed to look into the acquisition of land and cost of a building. In June 1976 an education committee was appointed and met with some teachers who were on holidays in the area to find out more about educational matters.

Meanwhile, the Building Committee was looking for building sites, but due to government policy on prime agricultural land the first application was turned down, as was the appeal to that decision. The Board then approached Norman Terpsma for a piece of property on the NW 36-61-3-5 and an application was sent to have this property subdivided.

Building had already begun. The framework of the school was being built in the shop on the Case Hamoen farm. Even Ekke Wierenga, with his wooden leg and all, came out to nail frames and rafters together — he could stay in one spot for that. At the annual meeting in January 1977, a group of young men were appointed to repair and varnish the secondhand desks which had been purchased. This was done in a barn on the Adrian Hamoen place and, due to Fred Breukelman's vocal contributions (either in Dutch, English, or Afrikaans), there was never a dull moment.

On June 10, 1977, word was received that the subdivision of the property was approved. Work on the property started the next day. Old buildings had to be removed and brush cleared away. After eight days of work the foundation and walls were erected and the roof was on in another four days. Every day ten to thirteen volunteers came to work from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The building consisted of three classrooms, a library, staff room, supply room, principal's office, and washrooms. A secondhand school bus was also bought.

In March 1977 the board appointed two teachers, J. J. Hoekstra, to be principal and teach grades five to nine, and A. Janssen, to teach grades one to four. By September 1, almost everything was ready. There was only one problem — no doors. They were on the way somewhere between Vancouver and Edmonton. After waiting a few days (the original starting date had been set for September 6) makeshift outside doors were constructed and school opened on September 12. The lack of inside doors did not dampen the enthusiasm of teachers or students.

Thirty-six students registered that first day. They came from Neerlandia, Barrhead, and Linaria. Letters of authority were received for the teachers from J. Koziak, Minister of Education, early in October. Thus the school was officially recognized as a category one school. The official opening of the school was held November 18, 1977. It was an evening filled with songs and praise to God who had made this event possible. Representatives of the Barrhead County Council and of the Canadian Reformed churches in Barrhead and Edmonton were present.

In 1979 the teachers in the school did not get letters of authority because they were not Alberta certified. The school was then put in category four. In 1978 grade ten had been added to the curriculum, grade eleven was added in 1980, and grade twelve in 1981.

By 1978 the school building was not big enough. A building fund was set up and the building committee received the mandate to look into the building of a gym, one classroom, and one science and multipurpose room. As with the original building, this addition was built by volunteer labour. It was completed early in 1980 after problems with the accoustics in the gym were rectified, and it became a much-used facility.

Typing classes were started in February 1979, taught by Lies Hamoen. A library committee was set up and does the work of a librarian. The school has offered a number of options, including

photo chemistry, Dutch, woodworking, and needlework. Some of these courses are taught by teachers, while others are taught by volunteers from the society. The janitorial and secretarial work is also done by volunteers. Two buses driven by volunteer drivers are on the road each school day.

The school is funded entirely by the members of the school society and donators. Every year the school board, when preparing the budget, sets up the fees which are required to run the school. These fees are in three categories: families with children attending school; families with children not attending school, pensioners and singles. Fund-raising activities by groups in the society are for items that are not budgeted for, such as audio-visual, science, and sports equipment.

Peter Van Assen and Sharon Viersen were the first grade twelve graduates of the school, graduating in June 1982.

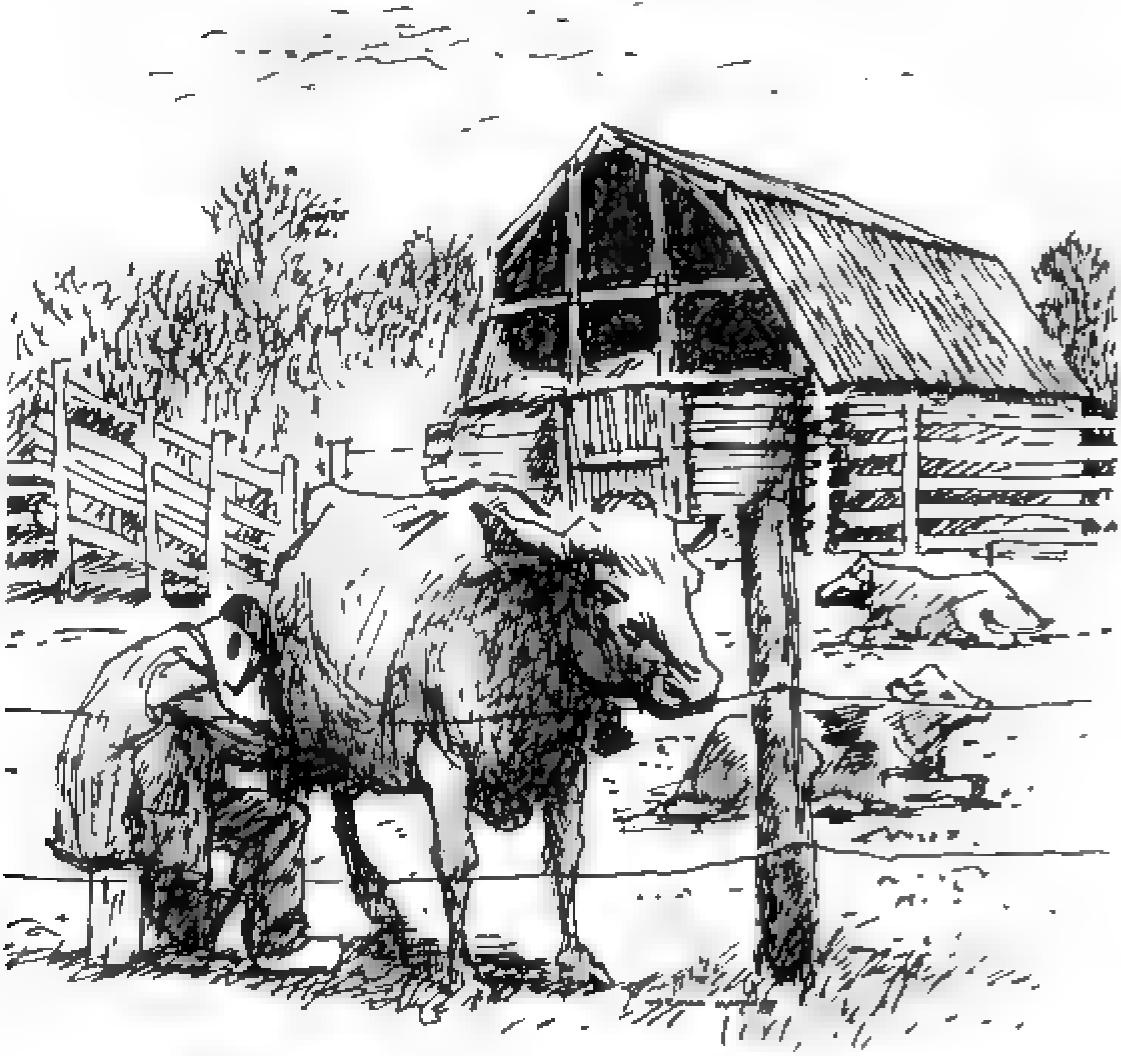
Lies Hamoen

Back: Rita Speers, Elsie Ashley. Middle: Harold Ashley, Tena Koning. Front: Bert Leder, Ken Ashley, Betty Koning. c. 1936.

Unknown to his mother, Ted Reitsma invited some friends to come home with him after school to celebrate his birthday. Henny Tuininga, Arthur Reitsma, Sylvia Tuininga, Grace P. Tuininga, Ted, Joyce, and Bill Reitsma, Henry Hiemstra, 1941

Marilyn Mast, Doreen Vanee, Dorothy Baker. (Note C.K.'s oil shed and Rev. Van Der Woude's barn in background.)

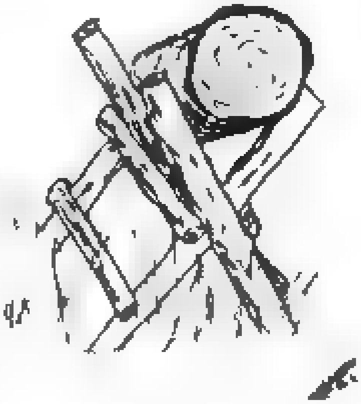
From Forest to Furrow



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1915

I awoke with a start this morning — the sun was coming through the small window in the bedroom and shining right in my face. I wondered what time it was. Did I sleep in? Looking at the pillow beside me, I noticed my wife, Janna, was already up. Now that was a switch! I usually was the first one up and would put a fire in the stove and go out after the cow before Janna made breakfast. Now I quickly got up and reached for my pants, which was usually by the side of my bed somewhere, but I couldn't find it. Just then Janna came in with my pants in her hand.

"Here," she said, "I had to patch them again. Thought I'd do it before you put them on with holes in both knees." Ach ja! That pants was getting so thin — there's hardly room for another patch. Anyway, they did feel better with those holes covered. I tied them up with my favourite cord — I took that along from Holland. Farmers there all use them, they are simple to use and cheap. Here men use belts to hold their pants up, but why buy a belt when a cord will serve the purpose? By the time I got ready, my wife was busy making breakfast. I looked at the clock: already 6:30! Half an hour late, and that in the springtime! Janna told me I'd better go out and get old Bessie tied up, by then breakfast would be ready and she'd have the children up. So, I went out. The air was just like velvet, I took a deep breath of it. Ah! A day like this is worth all the struggles of a cold winter. The crows were cawing, already vying for nests in the big spruce trees behind the barn. Robins were singing their hearts out. All nature seems to be in harmony on such a beautiful spring day.



I went looking for old Bessie. I knew she wouldn't be too far away, as her calf was tied up in the barn and she liked to stay nearby. But where was she today? I called, but no answer. Following the path to the bush, I saw signs of the earth reawakening all around — little sprigs of grass and flowers were poking through the ground. So, that was it — Bessie was probably in the meadow, looking for grass. Sure enough, as I came through the opening in the bush, there she was, with her head to the ground, pulling up the small blades of grass. Seeing me come, she made a soft mooing sound and was quite willing to be led home. I tied her up in the barn and went home for breakfast. The wife and kids were waiting for me; at least, I thought they were all there, but looking around the table, I noticed one empty place. Sure enough, it was Jan again.

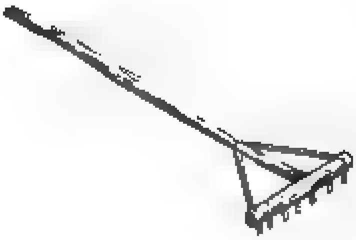
"Ja," my wife said, "I called him a dozen times, but he just sleeps on, he seems to need a lot of sleep." What nonsense, I thought, on a day like this who wants to sleep? But I had no time to waste today, it was already seven o'clock and I had a lot of work to do. So I told Janna, "We better get started with breakfast and when he hears the rattling of dishes he'll soon be here, because next to sleeping he likes eating." After saying grace, we had our wheat porridge. It was thick and coarse, but tasted good with syrup and rich milk on it. There was also an egg for each and homemade bread. As I expected, halfway the meal, who should come down but Jan. The girls started a chorus of, "Here comes the sleepyhead." He, being the only boy, is constantly being teased by his sisters.

After things quieted down and breakfast was finished, I decided to get to work. There was plenty to do. First, there was the cow to milk — she just freshened a few weeks ago and gives a pailful of milk everyday. I gave her some chopped grain and a good forkful of hay. While she was munching away, I got my stool and pail and soon the streams of milk filled the pail. Half of the milk I poured into a pail for the calf, which the children have named Blackie. She is a beautiful little heifer calf, black as night, just like her mother. She slurped the pail empty in no time, switching her little tail and bunting the pail at the same time. The rest of the milk I took home and, after straining it, I lowered it with a rope down the well, where it could cool off.

When the cream has risen to the top, Janna skims some of the thick cream off, to be collected till there is enough for churning. That, of course, is women's work and my wife and our eldest daughter, Betje, do that work. They also look after the chickens, of which we have a dozen. Since the days started lengthening, the chickens all are laying but the eggs are not always easy to find. Some are laid in the manger of the barn, but some hens go further afield and make nests in the bush. Betje is keeping a close watch on them. She picks some eggs up, but leaves others for the hens to sit on — she is looking forward to an increase in the chicken population.

After I let Bessie out of the barn, I went looking for Tom, the ox. He is a rather temperamental creature; some days he is a steady worker, then again, he can be so lazy that I need a good whip to get him started. I hoped he would be willing to work today since I wanted to pull some stumps out of the small piece of clearing I had ready. Having caught up with him standing in the bush, I had a feeling this was not his day to work. He eyed me with half-closed eyes as if to say, "Oh, no, you're not going to make me work today!" Using a little switch, I managed to get him moving.

After reaching the barn, I gave him some hay and got the harness on him. Taking a good thick rope along, I led him to the clearing. I tied the rope around a tree stump, hoping it would hold, and then tied the other end to the harness of the ox. While I was doing this, Tom was standing there with eyes half closed and I had a feeling this was going to be a bad day. Anyway, I gave him a flick with the lines but he hardly opened his eyes.



"So," I thought, "You're not going to cooperate with me. We'll see about that." Looking around I found a good strong willow stick and gave him a good smack on the rump. He lifted his head and switched his tail.

"Now," I thought, "he's at least partly awake, I'll give him a few more of those." That did it, he moved a few feet forward but, feeling the fixed object behind him, he stopped, and I could get no more out of him. I got angrier and angrier, using the stick on his thick hide continually. This finally got him mad too and, as if awakened from a dream, he took off with a leap. The rope around the stump broke and, when he found out there was nothing to pull, he took off to the bush. I was left standing with a broken rope and a stump still solid in the ground. Looking up at the sun, I noticed it was almost in the middle of the sky, so it had to be close to twelve o'clock. "Better go home for dinner," I thought. After finding old Tom and tying him to a tree, I left for home Somehow I had no appreciation anymore for the beautiful spring day, and all on account of that miserable ox.

Dinner was as good as ready so, when I told Janna my troubles, she said, "We d better have something to eat and talk about it then " We had potatoes fried in tallow They are good, but you have to eat them fast or the fat will harden and then the potatoes are hard to swallow. There was also homemade brown bread and, for dessert, *soep n brij* Janna makes this from fresh buttermilk boiled with flour, and we eat it with a little syrup. It is delicious! During dinner we discussed what to do.

"First thing," I said "We need a chain, so that when Tom decides to move he will at least have to take the stump with him " I knew one of our neighbours had a chain, so decided to go and see if I could borrow it I had about half a mile to walk, and when I got there Gerrit was having problems of his own One of his cows was in the process of calving and was having a very hard time Having had some experience with these situations, I stayed and together we managed to deliver the cow of its calf. It had taken quite a while Gerrit thanked me for my help and said he would come and help me with my stumps after he had straightened things out in the barn.

I sure hoped I could get those stumps out today It was getting time to get the land ready to seed some oats. After arriving back at the clearing, I tied the chain around the stump, got the ox, and once again got the two tied together hoping I could get some action this time Tom seemed a little more awake, so I gave him a few flicks with the lines, but there still was no movement.

"Well," I thought, "So you're going to continue to be stubborn I'll fix you " Getting the stick, I really laid it on him, and finally he started to pull But the stump was so solid in the ground it just wouldn't budge Just then Gerrit came His idea was to chop at the roots while the ox was pulling. He said, "You take the lines and get the ox pulling, and I'll chop at the roots." So together we went to work. Not having to watch the stump, I could concentrate on Tom With a lot of encouragement, he put all his strength into the job Hoorah! The first stump came out' When man and animal work together like that, it is a beautiful thing After a few hours we had pulled out quite a few stumps By this time we were both tired out, so decided to quit. Tom had even worked up some sweat and deserved a little petting. He closed his eyes, as if to say "Just let me go to sleep again " Gerrit and I chatted for a little while — we both decided oxen were really quite valuable animals, they have strength and, when they have a mind to, can sure get some heavy work done I thanked Gerrit profusely, without him I would probably still be working on the first stump. I asked him in for a cup of tea, but he said he had work to do at home So he left and I took Tom home, took off his harness and let him go — an ox can browse around for feed, they like to eat the wild grass growing in the bush

I was rather thirsty myself, so went to the house for a cup of tea The kids were home from school, the girls were helping Janna with supper and Jan was getting wood for the stove After tea I went looking for Bessie, she was in the meadow again, but quite willing to go home Coming into the barn she went straight for her calf, Blackie, and nuzzled her. Having tied Bessie up, I though I'd better clean the barn. It wasn't too dirty as the only animals we have are Tom, Bessie, and her calf, but I like to keep things clean. After that I went home for supper. Janna had prepared a big dish of brown beans with some fried salt pork. With it we had the usual home-made bread and plenty of freshly churned butter. It was a hearty meal and satisfied even the most hungry eater which, of course, was Jan. We had our usual devotions, giving thanks for all the good things we had again received.

After supper Betje went out to milk the cow; she can do it as good as me. The other girls had to wash dishes. Jan went outside to play and get away from his teasing sisters. I told Janna to come outside with me and enjoy the beautiful evening. I got a few blocks to sit on, took out my favourite plug and together we talked about our life in Canada. She wasn't so sure it was all that good, but I said, "Wait a few years and you'll see fields of golden grain blowing in the breeze. I hope to have a few acres already this year."

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1920

It is early morning, the sun is shining, and we are awakened to the singing of the robins. We arise and get dressed. I still wear my winter underwear because even though it is May, the air is cool due to the snow still lying in the thick bush surrounding our home.

We awaken our family and get ready for breakfast. This morning we are eager for our breakfast as Martin brought us whole milk to put on our wheat porridge. Our milk cow died during the winter and my wife, Tena, cooked the porridge very thin, so we could do without milk.

Now that our family is up, we gather around our table and give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessings we have received. We are poverty-stricken, but have all been kept alive, we have survived the harsh winter and we look forward to the beautiful season of May.

After our breakfast we read Psalm 107. "Give thanks to God for He is good, and his love endures forever."

Why are we so thankful? Because we have come through a winter that was the worst in history. When the snow fell on October 9 we were not too concerned. Harm Jan came over to our place, and he said, "Don't get so excited. Indian summer has to come yet. We have a whole month to dig potatoes and pick up our hay."

Next day it was still snowing, and we got our potatoes dug and hauled into our cellar. It was already very cold. Our oldest son shovelled mud against our house to bank it up so our potatoes would not freeze. Maybe Harm was right — Indian summer would come — but we were happy our potatoes were inside.

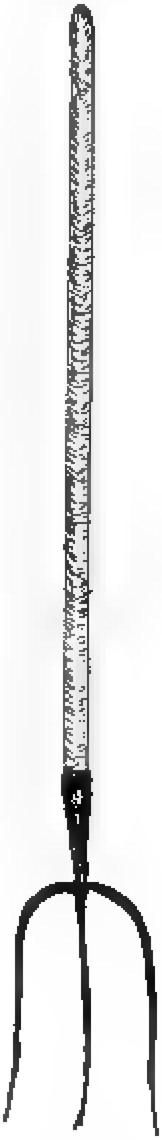
The next day a roaring blizzard came and the snow drifted into every open crack of the barn and even around the windows of our house. We were not ready for this and our house was cold. My oldest boy, Klaas, and I went to feed our animals and tried to shove manure and straw into the open cracks in the logs. We still thought this winter weather would be over in a few days, but we were wrong.

Next day the sun shone, but it was so very cold. Klaas and I drove down to see Harm. He also has a large family and now all his potatoes were frozen in the ground.

Harm, however, had raised five acres of oats that past summer, so he had feed for his horses and cattle. We only had grain from two acres and it was poor oats because it froze before it was ripe. Harm thought maybe we could trade some potatoes for some oats. We thought this a great idea and told him we would come the next day with the potatoes.

We had taken a loan from the government to buy cattle and were anxious to keep them well-fed because all the heifers were to calve in January and then we would have milk and cream to use and to ship.

Our plans for next day were stopped as a storm came again and temperatures dropped to twenty-five degrees below Fahrenheit. We waited out the storm and went to Harm's a few days later. The trails were plugged, but with great coaxing and much effort our horses got through. It was so cold. When we got there we noticed Harm did not have enough firewood left, so with his team and ours



we got a few loads for him. Poor Harm, who waited so faithfully on Indian summer which never came.

As I mentioned, we were not ready for this sudden onslaught of winter and in October our eight children were already housebound in our small log house. Our neighbour's dear wife, Anna, who often drops in, could not come until a trail was made for the horses and sleigh.

We soon realized we would not have enough feed for the winter, and in January, we knew we were in trouble — our feed was as good as gone. Martin, who has been in Canada longer than we, said there was a man living about ten miles away who had straw we could get. We set off early one morning and, although the temperature was only one below zero, the deep snow made the going slow. Besides, my horses were hungry too, even though I had let them outside quite often so they could dig up some dry grass and fill their stomachs. The ten-mile trip took a lot of energy and took us a long time. However, when we got there we found more farmers loading and each one of us got barely a sleigh box of straw. By the time we arrived home it was late. We are hungry, tired, and very concerned.

My wife was kept very busy keeping the house warm and cooking for the children. With all the trails plugged, we ran short of many food items. Martin's wife, who has no family, brought a few things to eat. What an excitement she caused for our eight housebound children. She also told us that some people were eating rabbits but, since we had been city dwellers in the Netherlands, we had never killed rabbits — didn't know much about them. Harm came by one day and said all one had to do was snare them, and they were delicious — much like chicken. We got wire to make snares and quite soon got our reward and got our rabbits in the oven. They were delicious!

"How God provides for us," Tena said. Little did we realize that the rabbits were going to keep many of us alive for that winter.

We ran out of flour, and had to wait until someone went to the store. In the meantime we made do with our potatoes and rabbits.

I would walk outside and hear my poor cows bawling and I did not know what to do. Martin came by and said some farmers were cutting twigs that were tender and feeding them to their cattle. He said he would come and together we would get some for ours and his. Two of our cattle had already died and more were too weak to stand.

Next day we set out and got a sleigh load of twigs, but the weaker cattle would not touch them. I melted snow in an old tub and carried warm water to the cows. They drank well, trying to fill their empty stomachs.

Our children got out of sorts, they wanted to play outside. But the snow was deep and it remained cold. My oldest son went with me and we cut little poplar trees and sawed them into different size blocks and, since I couldn't work outside, I made a little wagon and blocks for them to play with. It was good to see how happy they were with their new toys.

February came and the days were getting longer. We were told we could get some straw from a farmer's barn roof. We started off and found the trip very difficult, because the horses were so weak

We got some old black straw, which my starved cattle would not even look at. Three more cattle died that day

As we were coming home we noticed a wind change. The wind turned to the west and was almost warm Our hearts leaped in joy The temperature was rising, would spring come as early as winter did? Maybe this straw would keep our cows alive and maybe our milk cows would again produce

Next morning the snow was melting and began dripping off the roof. What an excitement! The four oldest children ran out to play Tena felt relieved of her busy task and everyone was full of hope The next day was still warmer. Harm dropped in he was all smiles he said, "What a country, winter in October and spring in February " This was only our second winter here, so I agreed that this was great. Harm helped us cut more firewood, and he took a sleigh load home. His cattle were starving too, but he did not have as many so his feed lasted some longer The fourth day was still warm, but on the fifth morning we woke up to a roaring blizzard, by night it was again very cold and by morning it was thirty below zero A crust had formed on the melted snow and the horses' legs bled as they tried to get through the trails. We wrapped old sacks tightly around their legs to protect them

During those mild days Martin had made a trip to the post office and store He brought us some flour, tea, and sugar. There was also mail from our old home in the Netherlands Those letters always make Tena cry as they remind her that we will never see those relatives again At times like this we are homesick for the old country and our past life there. In March and April the weather varied from cold to warm and more cattle died at every farm.

My heart ached for our little eleven-year-old girl, who wanted so badly to go to school I would see her sifting some chop to get a little flour for bread But even if she had bread for a school lunch, there was no way for her to get there because of the lack of footwear and warm clothing. I often got a feeling of despair but Tena said, "The Lord who brought us safely over the ocean will provide for us As He has in the past, so He will continue to do " How thankful I am for my wife, who has such a deep-rooted faith

Now, finally, May is here, but the ground remains cold and the grass is slow in coming I do not have any chores to do as the few cows I have left are outside and, being new here, I do not have hogs or chickens. Klaas and I hope to get more land cleared and our garden ploughed

The sadness of the harsh winter is past, our children can go back to school, and our little ones can run around outside Tena can hang out the wash, giving more room in our little house

After breakfast, Klaas gets the axes sharpened and we start out to clear more land We find we do not have the energy we need to work as we want to The long winter had its effects on our strength We are, however, busy at our work when Martin drives up. Martin needs some help — he has more land under cultivation and ploughing has to be done and grain has to be put through the fanning mill We agree that Klaas will help and in return Martin will come with his horses after the spring planting to pull stumps and perhaps plough a small strip for me

I continue to work until noon and am anxious to have my noon meal.

Our neighbour lady, Anna, came while I was in the bush, and brought a small variety of food. Her oldest son has come home from the lumber camp and had bought food before coming home. Martin also has brought more fresh milk. Truly we are feasting today.

The sun seems warmer after dinner, and I head out to cut more trees. Our little ones are enjoying themselves and the older ones are helping Tena prepare a place for a garden. Martin has potatoes and peas and carrot seed for us to plant. We are excited about the coming summer. Our four older children can now go to school and are radiantly happy to be free to enjoy a normal life again.

We bought a cow which will have a calf in June, so we will have our own milk. We do not have to pay for the cow until harvest. Martin said we could buy a few hens from him, so after supper I will go with the family to get the hens as Tena and the children are eager to get out for a drive.

Surely, God has provided for us, and now we look forward with new hope to the coming year of 1920.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1930

Ah! What a glorious time of year. Even through this little bedroom window the smell of spring is reaching me. My heart fills with thankfulness and praise to our Heavenly Father for bringing us into this land.

I jump out of bed — I must have overslept. It is already 5:30 a.m. I look out and notice a heavy mist has settled over the land, this will make it hard to find my cows.

I put on my cotton shirt and bib overalls. How happy I am that this year we could afford to buy underwear. It sure beats what I had last year — made out of flour sacks. It was hard to get clean and not comfortable to wear. This way Mina too has it easier and can help me outside doing chores. I pull on my wool socks and get my low rubbers. Oh, how I envy Klaas! He has rubber boots up to the ankle. They are all laced tight so he does not get his rubbers full of loose soil at the first step in the field. Oh well, maybe next year I can get a pair too. I put on my grey checked cap. It's dirty and sweaty and looks more black than grey. I get my jacket — maybe I'll need it, maybe I won't — but it's misty and the bush will be wet.

I start out to find my cows. I have them in a ten-acre field of bush. I again envy Klaas, he keeps his in a corral at night and feeds them hay he has left from last year.

My, it is quiet out for early May. Not even a bird is singing. It is so misty they are quietly waiting for the sun to warm things up. I find the trail my cows use morning and night and start walking, but there is no cow in sight and no noise to be heard. I wonder where old Roan is, she is always faithful in coming home at this time of day. I walk and walk and wonder if the fence is broken somewhere. I follow the fence to look at the places where it is most likely to be broken but everything seems fine. The mist is lifting now and the sun is shining, that means I should be busy milking now and here I am, without a cow in sight. Thoroughly frustrated, I walk back home. I hope Mina has the porridge ready as I am hungry and tired, and wet from the wet grass and bush. I get close to home and what do I see but my three cows quietly chewing their cud in the barnyard! I feel foolish, why didn't I think of that before? I get the milk pails and tie up the cows by the fence. If I had grain to feed like Klaas does, they would come to the fence and let me tie them up easily. I tie up old Black's legs as she has a great habit of kicking the pail over. Klaas has a chain with clamps on, it is called an anti-cow-kicker.

The sun is getting hot already by the time I am done milking. I carry the milk to the house to put through the separator. We are fortunate we have a DeLaval cream separator; it turns fairly easily, so Mina can turn it while I eat breakfast.

The aroma of the rolled oats porridge is delicious. We often have crushed wheat porridge, but this is a treat. Mina has boiled me an egg, since our chickens are starting to lay again after their long winter's rest. We only have ten chickens and they didn't do too well as I didn't have a warm place for them in the winter. Klaas said he made a small henhouse which he insulated with straw and his chickens were laying in March already. I have much to learn in this new land.

My breakfast was great — we can afford molasses this year. The storekeeper said it is called "Black Strap" molasses. It is not as refined as some others, but Mina puts it in our wheat bread and it is great. No doubt about it, we have progressed since last year.

Mina has the separating done and I bring out the skim milk to the calves and my little piglets, and whatever I have left I give to the sow.

My two horses, Maude and Prince, have been tied to the fence for the night. I now take them to the trough for a drink. Poor old Maude has such sore shoulders, rubbed sore from the harness. How I wish I could get a sweat pad for her, but I can't get one this year — can't afford it. Klaas is such a thoughtful friend, he gave me some Man and Beast Salve. It heals and soothes. This, though, is a nasty sore place and should have a good rest away from the rubbing of the harness but, since I have no choice, I rub it gently and harness up my two horses to my one-bottom plough. Since I am so late this morning, I tell Mina I will not be needing a coffee break as I would like to get at least two acres ploughed and ready for seeding.

Klaas has four horses and a two-bottom plough with a seat on it, but I still have to walk behind mine. Maybe in the future I can have that too. I feel sorry for Jan — he just came here and has only the two oxen that he paid five dollars apiece for. They are so slow, but they are steady. Jan says he hopes to go working in a lumber camp this fall and maybe get some horses too. He says he is hoping to get a better house too but right now he is so very poor.

The ploughing is going quite well and the first half acre is turned — beautiful dark soil in this country. I turn to see Mina waving. That means it is noon already. I unhitch my horses and give them another drink. I must unharness Maude because she is hurting again and this will give her a break.

Mina has a great dinner. She has found a patch of pigweeds and boiled them for dinner. She has fried a few potatoes and another egg — I am getting spoiled. We have a glass of milk and then I again go to my ploughing.

We walk along, everything going fine, until all of a sudden we hit heavy roots from a stump. I urge my horses to pull, but by doing so they break a doubletree. When I heard the crack, I knew I was in trouble. I head for home. How fortunate that last winter I had made a few doubletrees out of birch wood. It does not take long before I'm back in the field. I am angry that I was so careless with that stump so I take my axe and vigorously chop all the roots away. That took much longer than I had thought. As I look up I see my dear wife coming with tea — I cannot believe it is four o'clock already, I had so much wanted to get a few acres ploughed. We stop to have tea and also to remove the collar on Maude. She is so sore again and is wet with sweat.

After our little break we march along again and things are going great. Mina said she would get the cows for me so I can plough until six o'clock.

The furrows are falling into place nicely now and I still hope to get my two acres ploughed. But now my poor horses can go no farther, they have used up all their energy. They are wet with sweat again and I lead them to the trough, unharness them, and rub them

down with a brush. How I wish I could give them a generous helping of oats for all their hard work.

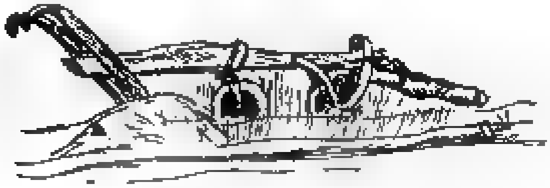
Mina has the cows home and supper all made. I quickly tie the cows to the rail fence to be sure they won't go away while we have supper. Mina says our supper will be pancakes again. I don't mind as I am hungry and now that we have a few eggs the pancakes are actually quite tasty. We also have stewed rhubarb from our own plants, so our supper is great.

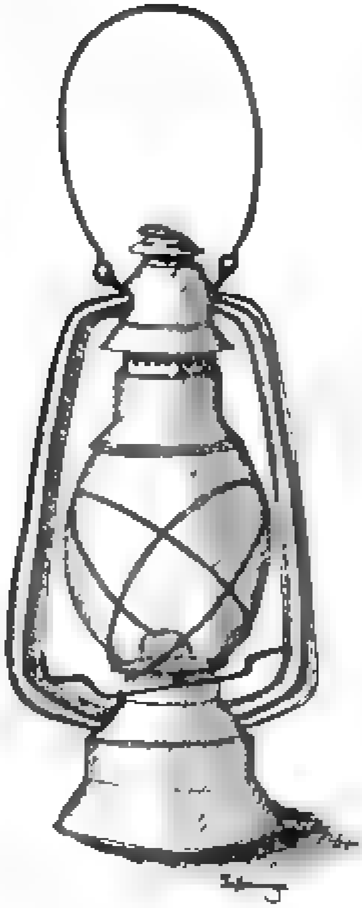
I first wash up, as I am sweaty and dusty. We had rain last week and I can wash in rainwater. We do have a well but the water is hard, so every bit of rainwater is used for our washing.

We relax after supper for about half an hour and then go out to milk the cows. Because of improper pasture and hay, the cows have not produced as they could — with summer coming this will improve. We are only getting a three-dollar weekly cream cheque, and with summer coming it will be hard to get a good grade since we have to haul it five miles before it gets to the truck that will take it to town. However, it's a way to make a living and so I cheerfully head out to milk. Again I give the skim milk to the calves and piglets. Tonight I have only a pail-and-a-half so don't have enough for the sow. With skim milk and green grass the piglets should do quite well. Even though it's late, I still go for water from the well to fill the trough for my animals so I can get an earlier start tomorrow morning.

Mina has her work done too, so we go for a walk along the bush, looking for small spruce — they are the best trees to make rails for a holding pen for the cattle. We enjoy our walk since there are still no mosquitoes or flies and the air is so warm.

The sun is setting now. It has been a busy day. We are tired, but as we approach our little home, our little log barn, and our contented animals, we feel rich and dream about the future, which looks hopeful to a young married couple in a new land.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1941

Is it really five o'clock already? — seems like I just fell asleep. Oh well, I better get up because I have to bring cream and eggs to Neerlandia, and Fisher likes to leave for Edmonton by 8:30 a.m.

It is a beautiful spring day in April 1941. The temperature has been well above average for the past few weeks. The trees are budding, the grass is green, flowers are beginning to blossom, and all in all it's great to be alive and well living in Neerlandia. The sun shines beautifully here, and one would like to believe that the whole world is as bright as it looks here today.

However, such is not the case, and we hear regularly about casualties in war as Hilter and his cohorts attempt to conquer the world. While the sound of bombs and guns are heard elsewhere we go about our work without any great problems, in fact we even get a better price for our products now than we have for a good many years.

* * *

Boy, oh boy! Here I'm all dressed in my bib overalls and these new ones fit just great! These are sure an improvement over my old ones — these overalls have the suspenders buttoned on the back too, not only on the bib. It's much handier that way if *"je moet uit de broek"* (you have to make a trip to the outhouse). Now that the yard has dried up I can also wear leather work shoes instead of my laced rubber boots. I sure am happy to leave those liniment-smelling boots off my feet — I always keep a bottle of Sloan's liniment on the shelf by my cream separator — it's the greatest stuff invented for rheumatism — and two weeks ago I knocked the bottle off the shelf. It landed on top of the separator and broke, and a good deal of the contents ended up inside my unlaced left boot. I felt awful about the liniment but it's no use crying over spilt milk. Anyway, seeing there were still several wet spots on my new breaking I kept my rubber boots on and went root picking until noon. By the time I came home for dinner it felt as if that foot was on fire. Upon removing my boot, I discovered that there was a mass of blisters covering my entire foot and they totally filled all space between my toes — that's all behind me now and as of today I have one foot with baby skin and I'm happy to be able to wear any shoe at all.

It is now 5:10 in the morning, looks like another lovely spring day but it is getting dry. I sure hope it rains soon lest we get any more fires like the one last week that burned a couple of Albert's bins full of barley. Whoever lit that fire should surely go to Albert and at least pay him some for this loss. I saw yesterday that Albert's wheat is coming up nicely in the rows — looks real good too and it's only the 29th of April. This could be a good year if only it rains soon.

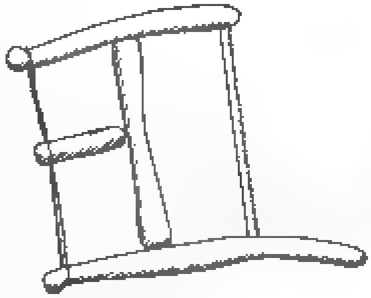
Now it's almost 5:30; my horses are fed, currycombed, and brushed so I better get on with my chores — milk my four cows, separate the cream from the milk, feed the calves and that sow with her ten piglets. She is some mean old brute, that sow, she would have torn me to bits if she could have gotten over the fence when I gave her baby pigs iron last Saturday. The children and I had caught all the piglets, put them in a wooden box, and then ran for the fence. I gave each little one a bit of powdered iron on its tongue. The piglets were all squealing and the sow was in a frenzy, snorting angrily along the fence.

It's time to get milking or I'll be late for breakfast — "Hey! Whatever happened here? I heard about the cow that jumped over the moon, but I see you couldn't even clear a two-wire fence without tearing a teat half off. Hold it! Hold it! If you had jumped like this when you broke out of the pasture you wouldn't have a scratch."

Here we are, chores all done and I see Hendrika has breakfast on the table; today it's rolled oats and wheat-chop porridge, not the most delicious but is sure sticks to the ribs. I'm glad to have a little bit of cream to pour on this cereal — this way it tastes not too bad. I light up my pipe, but all I have left to smoke are these stalks I ground up Saturday. Good thing I'm going to the store today — these stalks crackle so and the smell is fearful!

I see it's already quarter to seven so I'd better get the horses harnessed and be going as I have quite a few stops to make on the way to Neerlandia. This cream and egg pick up is a bit unhandy in the spring, but with a growing family a little extra cash is appreciated. After all, Fisher pays well at fifteen cents for a five-gallon can of cream, twenty-five cents for an eight-gallon can, and ten cents for each fifteen-dozen crate of eggs. My "run" is a bit longer now than it was a few weeks ago because spring is here — grass is growing, chickens are laying again, and the cows are producing more too. All in all it's a worthwhile run now to Neerlandia. Last week I made almost seven dollars, and that's pretty good money — I have to go to the store for groceries once a week anyway.

Last week Toney Sturwold had a case of eggs and he told me his chickens were "laying like sixty." I asked him, "How many chickens do you have?" He replied, "Forty." I said, "Then they sure are doing good when forty chickens lay like sixty!"

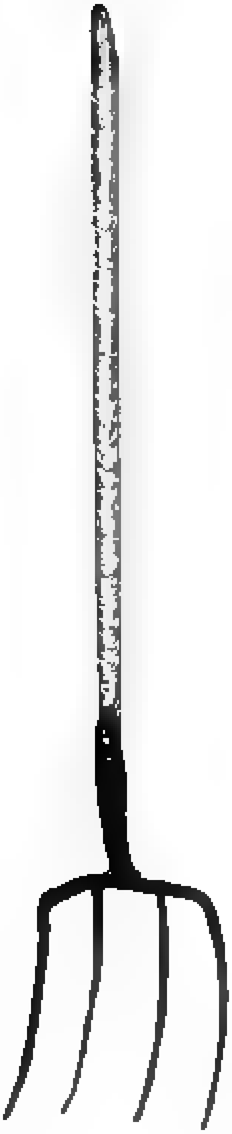


Bucksaw

I arrive at the store at 8:15 a.m. and transfer the cream and eggs onto Dick Fisher's truck. I see John de Vries already has his wagon empty. John also has a cream haul but he is always earlier because he usually takes pigs along at the same time. He put a lid on his wagon box so he can take six to eight pigs in the box and the cream and eggs on top. John is here about seven o'clock because Art Fisher leaves for Edmonton with his load of hogs by 7:30 a.m. and with Art that means no later than 7:30 a.m.

Before proceeding to pick up my groceries this morning, I bring two plowshares to Walter's Blacksmith Shop to have them sharpened. Sharpening costs fifty cents a share, which is cheap considering how much better a "pounded out" one plows than a new one does. Walter informs me that he can do my shares immediately, so they will be ready in about thirty minutes.

When I come into the store there are no customers ahead of me, so I hand my grocery list to the clerk behind the counter. While my order is being filled I stand around the wood stove with some other farmers who are engaged in a lively conversation about the latest happenings in the war. The discussions lately are always about the war: any more young men called up? anyone reported missing in action? We hear a lot about Hitler and his big plans and



many people are more than just a little concerned about the outcome of this one.

My groceries are ready now so before leaving I pay for them with the cream cheque. Now it's back to Walter's to pick up my plowshares which, though still quite hot, are ready to go — as usual, a beautiful job of sharpening.

I arrive home at ten o'clock so this morning I have my coffee in the house before going to the field to do some plowing. Usually a few of the children bring me coffee in the field, and then while I have my lunch the horses also have a short rest.

Plowing is my favourite field work, especially now that I have a sulky plow — three wheels and a seat for the driver. My, how my feet used to hurt when I plowed all day with my walking plow, which I still used last year. The amount I get plowed in a day remains the same, for this plow is also sixteen inches wide. It takes a pretty good day to plow three acres, but it is much easier now. Most of the farmers in this area are using tractors now and, according to Albert, those little ones with the rubber tires are not very expensive either. Albert claims that he got his Farmall tractor just in time because now they're quite scarce and, besides, the manufacturers are going back to steel wheels because the rubber is needed for the war. I often wonder what it will be like when this war is over. I'm afraid we don't have much to look forward to if Germany wins.

Seeing I didn't start plowing until 10:30 this morning I'll keep going until one o'clock before going in for dinner. Usually I start at seven a.m. and then go for dinner at twelve o'clock. That's one disadvantage with horses — if you want to work later in the afternoon you have to have your noon break a bit later as well, and I want to go until about seven o'clock tonight.

It must be nearly one o'clock, for I hear Hendrika calling me for dinner. I unhitch the horses from the plow, take them to the water trough, and, when they're done drinking, give them some hay and oats which they can eat while I too am eating. After dinner and a fifteen-minute nap it's back to the field.

Here we are, back in the field at two o'clock and the bull flies are just about driving my horses crazy. If it isn't the mosquitoes, it's those bull flies and there is not much you can do about them either. At least with the mosquitoes you can build a smudge at the end of the field and allow the horses to stand in the smoke for a little while after every round if necessary. If those bull flies get any worse I'll have to stop for a few hours and then make up for lost time by working later tonight. That's one thing about a tractor — at least the mosquitoes and bull flies won't bother it, unless one of these days they get so bad they puncture a tire!

It must be about four o'clock now for I see the children are bringing me my tea and some sandwiches. We always have home-baked bread with butter and cheese Hendrika makes herself. After I finish my lunch I go back to plowing for a few hours and about 6:30 p.m. I unhook the horses from the plow and hitch them to the harrows. Every day before we quit for supper, the plowing must be harrowed so that it won't dry out too badly before seeding. Harrowing goes much faster than plowing because now we cover a thirteen-foot-wide strip instead of sixteen inches like with the plow.

However, I still have to walk behind my harrows, but then, that's only a few miles when you do some every day. It would sure be nice to have a harrow cart but a new one costs over twenty dollars so I'll just have to wait with buying a luxury item like that till I have more money.

I get home for supper at seven o'clock, but before eating I unharness and water my horses. After the horses are watered I turn them loose in the pasture. The first thing they do is roll on their backs in a nice dusty spot near the yard to clean the sweat and grime off their bodies. After spending some time rolling back and forth they give themselves a good shaking before they go out to graze.

We eat supper together as a family, and tonight we have potatoes with meat and gravy and also some brown beans which we grew in the garden last year. That's one thing about living on a farm, you don't have to buy many groceries if you grow a good-sized garden. For meat we always butcher an old cow in the early part of the winter and we bottle a good supply for the next summer. We put about half the meat in an old granary behind the house where it stays frozen until spring. Whatever we don't have eaten by the time the spring thaw comes is also bottled so that it doesn't spoil. I hear some of the more well-to-do farmers in Neerlandia now butcher either a steer or a heifer to eat, but I suppose for the next few years at least we'll butcher a cow. That old three-teater and the other old red one that has an occasional mastitis problem are not such good milkers so we will probably eat them in the next two years.

It's almost eight o'clock by the time we finish supper — at suppertime we do not rush, we always read the Bible and have time to discuss what we read — but with the long daylight we have now I decide to pick some roots on the breaking that I seeded last week. After the breaking is seeded it's a good idea to repick roots as there are always some sticking up and after drying out all summer they are rather hard on the binder knives.

I come back home at about 9:30 p.m., so I can relax and have a cup of coffee before going to bed at ten o'clock — it's 5:00 a.m. before you know it.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1950

"This is the day the Lord has made Let us rejoice and be glad in it " Six o clock and time to get out of bed This is Monday morning There is a lot to do outside but the company last night stayed late, so an extra few winks of sleep feels good

Gertie was out of bed before me — a few minutes or so She had to check the yeast for the bread dough Last night she set a cake of yeast in some water to get it started The cookstove was too warm overnight so the yeast rose too fast and is all over the counter Gertie calmly cleans it all up and proceeds to light the wood stove again as there is no fire left in it from last night As soon as the fire crackles in the stove she puts on a kettle of water to make some tea — she enjoys her cup of tea before she begins making the bread She'll mix the yeast with flour and other ingredients to make a batch of dough, let it rise, then add more flour and let that mixture rise again It should be ready to bake by about teatime this afternoon Gertie wants to have some water hauled to the house from the well so that it can warm up to wash clothes The only running water we have is when we run with the pails of water, we carry it all to the house and barns too We do not have electricity as yet because Calgary Power is too costly Our old light plant does not want to run any more either so we will just make do with what we have

It is now 6:15 a m. I will go out to do some chores before breakfast. Gertie has her tea first but I will settle for a chew of Copenhagen First that pump engine must be started to pump water I am happy to have a gas motor to use on the pump. This is easier than pumping water by hand It really does feel good to be alive this early in the morning as the sun is shining and the birds are singing all around Even the crows sound all right this morning with their caw-caws.

The cows are not by the barn yet so they must be out in the pasture somewhere, maybe in the bush Oh well! First the pigs should be fed — we have some fatteners in the barn so I will give them some barley chop and water. Later they can have some skim milk I'll feed the chickens in the barn right away too. They are laying a lot of eggs and it does pay to feed them on time every day We had a good enterprise going for a number of years as we were in R.O.P It was a good business for a few years but last fall we had pullorum in the flock of chickens The government inspectors re-tested two times and we still had pullorum so we cannot ship any hatching eggs from this flock Now we take the eggs to Roy Joyce's grading station in Barrhead but he pays a lot less money for the eggs. We have a difficult time to make the payments with so much less income

My thoughts had better go back to my work again We still have some sows and a boar in the pig pasture I carry some oats chop and water for them Here they come running to meet me They sleep in the straw stack which is just as warm as any barn In the cold weather in wintertime we feed them later in the day and only once a day so that the feed and water will not freeze up in the trough I see the two litters of young ones that were born in the straw stack away back in the tunnels the pigs made We didn't see them till last week I'm pleased that even the small ones were healthy-looking pigs too

I think there are a couple more litters in the stack yet. Old Grouchy looks as if she is nursing piglets but it's more than I'd dare to crawl into the stack to find out. She'd take a bite out of me in no time flat.

With the pigs fed I'd better call the boys, John and Albert, to help milk our six cows before breakfast. The cows are coming down the alley from the pasture now so they realize it is milking time too. We have to be finished milking by 7:30 to have breakfast before the children go to school. Milking can be fun but some cows are tough and John and Albert argue over who gets to milk the easy ones.

Each of us sits on a stool made from a block of wood with a board nailed to one end. Sitting on the board, with the pail between our knees, we squeeze with our hands until the cow is dry. Bessie will not cooperate too well so we tie up her hind legs with a rope. Sometimes we use anti-cow kickers — a device made from a sort of chain with two clamps on the end to put over the cow's legs. A few years ago I had a jersey cow who had the habit of lying with her tail in the gutter. John and Albert would not milk her so I had to. One time I got so mad at the cow for switching with that dirty tail that I bit her tail good and hard. She nearly went through the wall that time. By the way, I bit the tail on a fairly clean spot. I'm sure the boys laughed inwardly — they dare not laugh out loud when I am angry.

Now that the cows are milked they are turned out to the pasture again for the day. John gives the small calves whole milk and Albert goes to the cream separator with the rest. He turns this by hand. When he is finished I put the cream into a small pail to be hung in a hole by the well. We let the cream cool in this hole for half a day before adding it to the rest of the cream in the five-gallon can. John gives the skim milk to the pigs while I wash the pails and hang them on a rack to dry. George Terpsma comes by to pick up our cream in the cans and bring them to the Centre — every Monday morning Dick Fisher hauls cream to the NADP in Edmonton. I sure wish we would get a bigger cream cheque, but we lost two heifers last summer from bloat. The cattle broke through the fence a few times and ate too much sweet clover. We were growing the sweet clover for hay to feed the cows in the winter. I'm glad it is spring because there are just a few bundles of clover left in the hay loft.

The chores are done and it is breakfast time. This morning we have a bowl of cream of wheat porridge. Some mornings Gerbe makes oatmeal or sunny boy or wheat. Since we keep chickens we will have a boiled egg. Sometimes Gerbe fries an egg and I eat it with a slice of bread. Two cups of tea with the food complete the breakfast. As always, we pray before and after the meal and read a portion of Scripture after the meal.

Now the school-age children must rush off to school with their books and lunch buckets. As it is Monday I must take the cream cans to the road before the truck comes by and I have to haul more wash water to the house. We do this with two sixteen-quart milk pails but it seems like a lot of water is used to just wash clothes. As soon as the square tubs are full I take the motor off the well and put it on the washing machine. This little motor has to run a lot, especially on Mondays. Oh well! as long as it keeps it up it will be all right.

John, who quit school, is helping me this year, he is putting gas

in the Oliver tractor to get it ready for field work. That old tractor is not always to be trusted either, it likes to backfire when you crank it over with the hand crank to get it going. Someone will for sure break an arm doing it some day. John says the gas tank on the tractor is only half full so I will have to go to Barrhead to get a forty-five gallon barrel filled with gas — that should keep the tractor going for a week or so. I have to go to Barrhead for other business anyway and I'll pick up the egg cheque to pay for the gas. John can start discing anyway. I want to get that twenty-acre field ready because we should seed the wheat in it. It is 2 22 wheat and should grow good on that summer fallow. We need some wheat to feed the chickens next winter. That field is on the other quarter of land we own out east — seven miles from home. It sure is a long drive everytime with that old tractor but if it stays dry it won't be too bad. There are two bad mud holes on that road — one close by here at Norman Terpsma's. The bush is so heavy on the sides of the road that when it gets wet it seems to take forever to dry. Maybe someday the municipality will clear the bush and give us a good road too. I am sick of those mud holes.

With the tractor and disc gone I make sure the egg boxes are filled, load them on the one-ton Fargo, and set out for the trip to Barrhead. The road to Barrhead is pretty good — at least it has gravel on it. I have to be home by eleven o'clock to gather chicken eggs. If they are left in the nests too long the chickens will break them and eat some. If I hurry, then the old Oliver tractor will not have to wait for gas either. That seed wheat really should be seeded yet today. Talking to some neighbours, it seems like most of the wheat has been seeded already, but then a lot are good farmers and have better equipment to work with. You know — some are even talking about combines. They say it will be so much easier as all you have to do is sit on the tractor all day. You will not have to stook or pitch bundles into the threshing machine anymore. This does not look good to me as that grain will rot for sure lying on the ground — at least if it rains, and it always seems to rain sometime in the fall. As long as the grain is in bundles it will stay good until it is dry and can be threshed. Those straw piles, too, are real good to have for the pigs and cows. The pigs can sleep in the straw stack all winter and the cows sure like to eat from the pile. No, we better keep the binder and threshing machine yet. It does mean more work but then work never killed anyone . .

Well I made good time on that trip. Maybe I should go to the east quarter now. Uh-oh — the missus is hollering. She needs some help to get the gas motor running again on that clothes washer. She is not too happy either as she says it is nearly dinnertime and she does not have any clothes on the line yet. She says, "What will women like Sophie or Bertha or Trientje think? Those Wierenga women seem to start at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning and have clothes on the line already at 6:00 a.m." We have to start that machine again — probably has a dirty spark plug or is out of gas. While I struggle with the motor Gertie makes dinner. We take a few tubs off the cook stove so she can put some pans on to warm up some soup and rice. We have some old bread to eat with soup for dinner. A cup of cold milk from the pail in the hole by the well sure is good and the rice with wild cranberry sauce makes a good dessert. With the machine going again and dinner eaten I have to take the seed wheat on the Fargo and go east to see how things are going.

The tractor is still going and the discing nearly finished so I fill the seed drill with wheat, grease it, and get it ready to go. John can eat some lunch while I fill the tractor with gas and check the oil and other things. With that done he can seed the wheat yet today even if it does get late. I go home to fan some oats for seeding. By the time I get home the wash should be done so the little gas motor can be used on the fanning mill. That sure beats turning the mill by hand and besides, it goes faster. As I drive on the yard I realize it is 3:30 p.m. and time for a cup of tea. We generally have coffee at ten o'clock in the morning, but 3:30 every afternoon is teatime. Now that we have had our tea break I take the motor to the fanning mill. We do the fanning in a corner of the chop granary. After the oats are shovelled onto the truck from the oats granary I am ready to go. The kids should be home from school soon and a couple of them can take the oats a pail at a time and put it in the fanning mill. The clean oats goes on one pile and the screenings on another by the crusher to be crushed for feed. The kids sure are slow getting home but sometimes they make little boats and like to have races with them in the ditch. There is still a little water running in it since it trickles out of the bush for quite a while. Ah, here they come. Once I get them started fanning I get the rest of the eggs. The eggs take quite a bit of time to clean because the litter is rather dirty. We clean the chicken coop out quite often but with no heat in it it cakes up really quickly again. The chickens get manure caked on their toes and take it into the nests. Once I have the eggs gathered I spend some time with the jackknife cleaning and trimming the chickens' toenails. The eggs grade poorly when they are dirty so we make them as clean as we can to get Grade A for most of them. Grade A eggs are only twenty-nine cents a dozen, but the B's are a lot less yet at eighteen cents a dozen. Next I give the chickens some scratch grain. I'll give them some laying mash in the morning. For the fourth time today I fill the water pails. That's not such a big job because I put a forty-five-gallon barrel on a stoneboat, filled it with water, and took it to the barn so we do not have to carry water so far.

With these chores done we have to stop the fanning mill too and go in for supper. For supper we have cooked potatoes and some canned beans and carrots. Gertie canned them in bottles last summer. We also have meat that has been warmed up. This comes from a bottle too. Gertie usually cans in two-quart bottles because we have a large family. We also have some of that good cold milk from the pail in the hole by the well. For dessert we have what we call *paarltje brij* — pearl barley, currants, raisins, and water all boiled together with jello added. It is a special treat for Sundays but there is some left from yesterday. I am happy about that because I really like it. During the week we have *brij* every day. Gertie makes it by boiling rice in milk, sometimes in buttermilk. We put some brown sugar over it and it is real good too. We have *brij* quite often as we churn our own butter from some of our cream. One thing the kids like to do is mix cocoa with brown sugar and some thick cream — a delicacy for them. We have canned fruit too with some meals —

every summer we pick strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons and blueberries to can in one quart bottles. These berries all grow wild and have a special good flavour to them.

With supper completed we get the cows from the pasture. It is milking time again. The cows have to be milked twice a day and it is better to space the time between milkings equal to get the most milk from the cows. After milking we give them some sweet clover bundles because there is not much grass growing in the pasture yet. The milk is put through the cream separator and the squealing pigs get some more skim milk along with barley chop. We grow mostly barley as do most farmers in Neerlandia. The fields have too much wild oats in them so Olli barley as well as some other early varieties are grown too, in hopes that it will be ripe before the wild oats are. We have no way of controlling wild oats other than summer fallow to grow them out. The wheat and oats are grown on the cleaner fields such as new breaking or summer fallow.

With the chores done, we relax and have a cup of tea before going to bed for the night. It has been another busy day so the bed will feel good.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER, 1984

At six o'clock Tuesday morning John wakes to the shrill ringing of his alarm clock. He quickly shuts the clock off so Anne can stay sleeping. He dresses into patched blue jeans and shirt and, looking out of the window, hopes it will be a beautiful spring day. There is lots of work planned for today. Chores first. John puts on a G.W.G. coverall and steps into a pair of size 9 acid-resistant black boots and heads for the barn.

Before reaching the barn John gives one holler for the cow, who soon is in the barn ready to be milked by hand while she munches on her ground barley chop. She is the only cow on the farm.

The electric mill is now started to grind the daily feed for the feeder hogs. The electric mill is a four-compartment Farmmatic. It has a five horsepower electric motor which grinds the barley that is then mixed with soya and minerals to get a 16 to 16.5 percent protein diet for the feeder hogs. The feed gets tested regularly — yesterday a sample came back testing 16.4 percent protein. The ground barley is augered into cement self-feeders which John purchased at a local dealer.

Inside, the hogs are in confined pens with a slatted floor on one end where the hog manure can fall through into a holding pit below. The barn is vented by fans which drive the air from one side of the barn and force it out on the other side. Someday John hopes to have a naturally-vented barn which has no need of electric fans.

John now steps into his farrowing barn where his dry sows are also kept. With the pull of three levers he feeds his seventy-five dry sows ... also stopping their squealing. While waiting for the pails of chop to fill he scrapes the manure from behind his dry sows. They are also standing on slatted floors. When the pails are filled John feeds the nursing sows with a 17 percent ration which he grinds with a ninety horsepower tractor on a mixer mill. The ration is made from barley, soya, and pre-mix which has selenium added because this is a deficient area. This reminds John that he has to phone another salesman who is trying to sell a new premix, claiming it will change the herd's whole production performance.

As John enters the farrowing room he sees that three sows have farrowed during the night, so he goes to the boiler room and gets the side cutter, selenium, and disinfectant. He cuts the little pigs' teeth and gives each .25 cc of selenium. In two days the piglets will receive 2 cc of injectable iron, have their tails cut off, and be castrated. In a week they will get a second shot of iron and 2 cc of B.B.P., a vaccine for atrophic rhinitis. To give the little pigs extra heat John plugs in a heat lamp hanging from the ceiling. The piglets are easy to catch because they are in a farrowing crate which has a confined area of forty square feet. The sows are standing on plastic slats which clean easily and are quite strong. When John cleans the farrowing rooms, he washes with a Hotsy pressure washer, using eighty-degree Fahrenheit water.

Now the weaner room takers John's attention. He flips the switch which puts power to the one-quarter horsepower motor mounted on a three-and-a-half inch auger. The auger comes from a hopper bin holding bulk pig starter. This pig starter, delivered from the local feed mill, has eighteen percent protein.

John glances at his digital watch It's 7 15 a m Time for breakfast The family is up and everyone is gathered around the table John leads in prayer asking God s grace for the coming day Breakfast is Sunnyboy porridge, milk, toast, and an orange The talk today centers around the track meet which will be held in Fort Assiniboine Bible reading this morning is from Genesis, each reading a few verses The youngest girl finishes the devotions with a word of prayer and everyone goes on their way.

John is planning to seed the back quarter, so Anne will bring dinner there He steps into his 555 Versatile which is standing by the five-hundred gallon fuel tank It's ready to go because it was fueled up last night while it was idling to cool the engine down The Versatile is a 180 horsepower, four-wheel-drive tractor with air conditioning, heater, AM FM radio, and tape deck John hooks onto the 37 ½-foot Morris Vibrashank and notices a leaking hydraulic line In his garage he finds a wrench and tries to tighten the line but sees that it has a tiny pinhole leak so he removes it and jumps into his 1978 Ford half-ton, heading for the Service Centre There are several people ahead of him so it will be ready at 11:30 a.m. — no earlier. Henk will give Anne a call when it's ready

At home John starts working the garden so Anne can plant some early potatoes with the kids when they return from school John uses a B 6100 Kabota with a rotary tiler that is used to work the soil This unit has six grease fittings which need a multipurpose grease The Kabota has a diesel engine with a pre-heater which must be held on for twenty to thirty seconds to heat the firing chamber so the engine will start After the garden is worked John relaxes a bit with a cup of coffee and freshly-baked muffins. Henk calls — the line is ready The last of the coffee is gulped down and the line is soon replaced

The tractor is started with the flip of a switch and it s off to the field John forgot to take a cassette tape along so he will listen to the "Bill and Bill Show" this morning The weather forecast is for rain tomorrow so John hopes to get as much done today as possible He is working on a 120-acre piece which will take five hours to complete John s brother calls over the high frequency two-way radio to tell John that he will be coming for the Versatile at about 3 30 p m , so John must push it He is cultivating the land about three-and-a-half inches deep, incorporating the Avadex into the soil Avadex, a wild oats herbicide, was put on yesterday with the granular Avadex applicator rented from the Neerlandia Co-op.

Anne comes to the field with lunch and afternoon tea. She stops to eat a quick lunch with John and says her mom is coming out from Edmonton on the bus so she ll go to Barrhead Is anything needed? No — he kisses her goodbye and continues with his vibrashanking. At 2:00 p.m Dr. Paterson is on the radio and the topic for today is "How does smoking affect your mental and physical health?"

At 3 30 p.m the 120 acres are done and John's brother is there to trade the seed drill and tractor for the vibrashank and Versatile Now John goes to the Neerlandia Compound to pick up some granular 11-48-00 fertilizer, which is loaded in the fertilizer box on his truck. The fertilizer will be applied at sixty pounds per acre —

one week ago anhydrous ammonia was applied at the rate of eighty pounds of actual Nitrogen per acre Next the seed grain is augered into the truck. In the field the fertilizer and seed grain is put into the drill with hydraulically-run drill fills John is seeding Leduc barley at one and one-half bushels per acre with a twenty-four-foot double-disc press drill pulled at 6.5 mph with a 140 horsepower tractor. Seeding started at 5:00 p.m

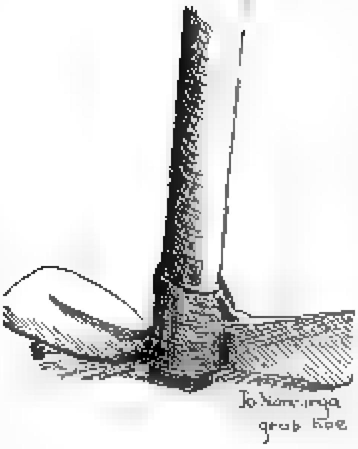
Supper is brought out to the field at 6:30 p.m. The whole family, even Oma, enjoys "eating out" After the lawn chairs are set out and grace is said, they eat a supper of lasagne, salad, and buns, and yogurt for dessert. John is happy that the chores were done and that their oldest daughter (who picked the shortest straw) has milked the cow The kids were still excited that Neerlandia won a trophy at the track meet Before the supper dishes are packed up and everyone is back in the car, John is already busy seeding.

At 11:00 p.m. the piece is seeded and John is very tired and looking forward to bed A quick bath is taken and the day is ended with a prayer of thanks and also a promise to Anne that tomorrow will not be as long.

Hans Ingwersen, Herman Gelderman, Garrit Ingwersen, Albert Tiemstra, John Ingwersen, Pete Emmerzael, Dewey Terpsma, Norman Tensen.

AGRICULTURE

1912-1919



The pioneers who arrived in Neerlandia in the second decade of the twentieth century hoped to make a better life for themselves and their children. They were willing to forego material comforts to be their own boss and to provide for their children a more satisfying life than they themselves had experienced thus far. It mattered not that it would be a struggle. They believed it would be worth it and so they set about farming.

Farming in the wilderness was a difficult task. The first concern was to find grass and water. In the summer water was easily obtained, especially on the edge of the sloughs. A hole would be dug and it would soon fill with water. The homesteaders preferred land that had a large slough or open area where grass could be cut and where the oxen could graze. One of the first things they did was build a barn for their cattle. Another important task was the clearing of a small area of land on which to grow a garden. Axes and oxen were used to remove the trees and the ground was spaded with a grub hoe. When the soil was ready, the women and children planted the garden. To protect the gardens from rabbits and cattle, fences were made of many saplings set upright, and as close together as possible.

* * *

Muskeg Holes

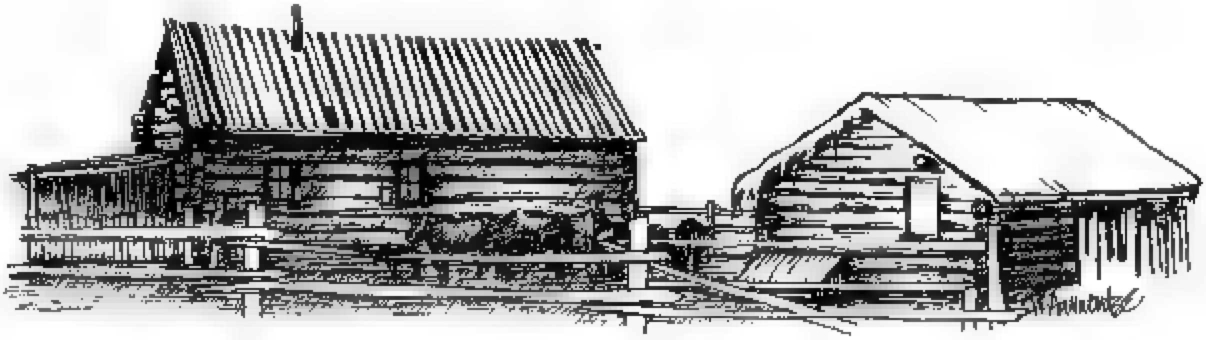
Muskeg holes were used during the winter. To make a muskeg hole the farmer would dig a hole in the peatmoss in the fall. The holes had to be fixed up before winter. First poles were put across the top of the hole, then moss was put on top so it would not freeze. Then it was fenced off so the cattle could not trample the hole. After water had been taken out of the hole, some would gradually seep in again — some holes filled a lot faster than others. Sometimes the holes caved in and sometimes they went dry. The holes were also used if it got too dry in the summer.

When I was at home it was my job to take the cattle to the muskeg holes. For a trough we used a wooden vinegar barrel that had been cut in half. I carried the half barrel over my head while holding a pail in the crutch of my arm. I would take a rope along too. Our muskeg holes were about one-half mile away from our yard. When I got there, I would put the barrel outside the fence, haul up the water using the rope and pail, and pour it into the barrel.

In the winter of 1929 all three muskeg holes we had there went dry. Gerrit Ingwersen told me to ask his dad if I could use their hole, which I did and which he allowed. Ingwersen's hole was fancier than ours. It was a square hole with a bale of straw over it. I used that muskeg hole all winter.

Norman Terpsma

* * *



The Dutch settlers worked hard to provide feed for their animals. At the end of June they would help each other cut the grass which grew along creeks or near lakes. With a scythe they would attempt to maintain an easy rhythm so they would not tire easily. This was a skill that carpenters, army captains, and others had not acquired in the old country. No doubt they were glad to stop from time to time to sharpen the scythe with a whetstone.

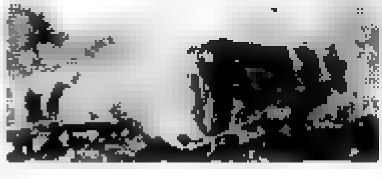
Haying

In the summer, hay had to be made. There were meadows here and there along the creeks and lakes. One had to ask the government for permission and, for a small amount of money, you could harvest it. Mowing machines could not be used (neither did we own one) because there were many branches and so forth lying in the grass. I cut some hay with a scythe, like we used to do in Friesland, but here the ground was not smooth, it was rough and full of brush. On one patch we mowed the grass was up to a man's height. It took us a long time to put up a small stack of hay, but time was cheap in those days.

Martin van der Heide

The main job, however, was to clear the land. Often the whole family would be involved in this back-breaking work and neighbours helped each other too. All the trees had to be cut down by axe. First brush and small trees were cut down at ground level and piled up to dry. Then the larger trees were chopped down — usually four or five feet above the ground. The roots at the base of the tree were cut, and then the stump was pulled out by oxen. A block and tackle was sometimes used for very large trees. If time was not important the homesteader would simply cut the roots on one side of large trees and wait for a strong wind to blow them down. These large trees were cut into smaller sections and pulled by oxen to the piles in preparation for burning.

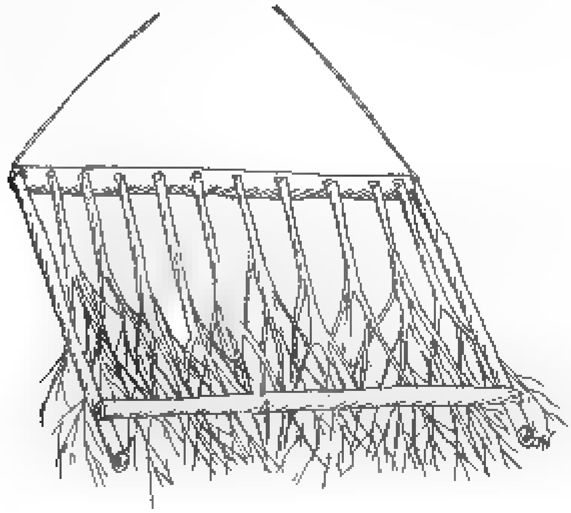
After the piles of wood were burned, the stumps and roots that



Working with a breaking plow. Hendrik Schoonekamp.

were still in the ground had to be pulled out. This was sometimes done with a root hook — a C-shaped piece of iron that was hooked onto a stump and pulled by oxen. Finally the land was ready for breaking. Some of the first breaking was done with a walking plow pulled by two oxen. Once the land was plowed the remaining roots were picked, piled, and burned. Finally the land was harrowed in preparation for seeding.

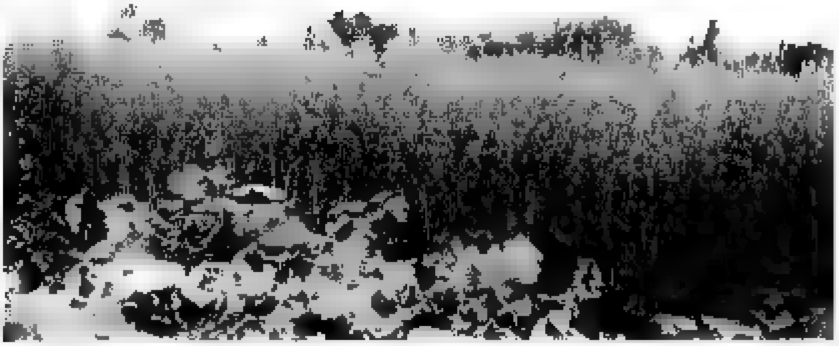
Since the homesteaders had little money or equipment they made harrows by attaching willow brush to a pole and dragging this over the land. Seed obtained from other established farmers to the south was broadcast by hand and worked into the ground using the harrow. Some very small parcels of land were ready for seeding by 1913. Oats was planted, since it provided feed for the oxen and could be used as green feed if a frost came before it was ripe. In the early years frost occurred almost every month, but once the land was opened up the frost-free period became longer.



Homemade willow-branch harrows. One man stood on the cross member to apply pressure to the springy brush. A horse or an ox pulled the contraption across the field.

Since clearing was difficult work most pioneers cleared the lightly-wooded areas first and left the heavy bush till the last. The result was a network of small cleared patches scattered throughout a quarter. The homesteader cut trails through the bush to get to his cleared patches and bring his grain home. The grain was cut with a scythe. Some scythes were fitted with a cradle that gathered the grain into bunches. Each bunch was then tied together with stalks of grain to form a bundle. When dry, the grain was threshed with a flail.

Oxen were the main source of power for the farming operation



A good crop of oats.

The ox was considered reliable but slow. Good oxen were powerful animals and, if a homesteader was patient, they would work well. During the hot weather when the flies were out, however, it was not unusual for the oxen to head for water and stay there, ignoring the rage of the owner.

* * *

Rienk's oxen

I borrowed Rienk's oxen once to haul some hay. As I was going along I met a neighbor. He said, "I thought that is Rienk's oxen team coming and it is really moving — how is that? The driver has no stick and is standing on the wagon, how is that possible? Oh now I see." I was standing with my one foot on the hay fork so that if the oxen were too slow they would come in contact with the tines of the fork and this was the reason they were travelling faster than ever before.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Cows were milked outdoors.

Progress was slow. Many of the pioneers were not farmers and even those who were found it difficult to provide for their families in the wilderness. Many of the men went out working — to the prairies for the harvest, to the logging camps, the coal mines, or to Edmonton during the winter months. While the men were away the women and children did the chores. They would feed and water the cattle. The animals were led or driven to a creek, slough, or lake and a hole would be chopped in the ice. Most homesteaders had a cow that needed milking and this also was part of the chores that had to be done.

When the men returned they often found that things had changed on the homestead. On at least one occasion a baby had died while the father was away. The women, especially, were homesick for their homes across the sea. But they did not go back. For some there was no choice but they trusted that God, with whose guidance they had made the decision to move, would care for them in the new land. The early settlers helped each other — though some were not very ambitious and others not very likeable — out of need and out of a sense of Christian community.

These settlers were resourceful people who produced their

Henry Kippers admires his purebred Ayrshire cow bought through the Cow Bill.

own food by growing many vegetables and keeping livestock for butter, meat, and eggs. They supplemented their diet with wild berries and game. Since many of the farmers had virtually no cash, they obtained supplies by trading farm produce for them.

Most of the cattle and horses roamed freely. At first settlers had to fence their crops to keep the animals out, but later the animals were fenced in. Barbed wire was used where long fences were needed.

The Government of Alberta enacted legislation to help the people flocking to the province and Neerlandia pioneers were helped thereby. On April 5, 1917, the Provincial Government of Alberta passed the Cow Bill or Cow Bell Bill which enabled homesteaders to borrow a maximum of five hundred dollars for the purpose of buying cattle or improving existing herds. Ten percent of the money could be used to purchase a purebred bull. The five-hundred-dollar limit was set because the bill was intended to help the poor. The government hoped that if a man had livestock he would stay on the land all year round and build up his farm. The intention was to enable farmers to get money without borrowing from a banker. One government official said, "The farmer doesn't have to pawn his watch and mortgage his wife in order to get money."

To get his loan, five people had to form an association, making each person responsible for the others. Some Neerlandia farmers borrowed the money but because of their lack of experience with livestock, they made some bad purchases and found themselves owing five hundred dollars and having little to show for it. Some farmers had no idea how much feed a cow needed and did not put up enough hay. During the severe winter of 1919, the hay was soon gone and the animals began to suffer from "manger fever". Some of the pioneers helped each other to locate and haul hay for their starving herds. Others saw the opportunity to make money by selling their surplus, resulting in some bitterness. When spring finally arrived the animals were skin and bones. They went to the edges of the sloughs where the first green grass was growing. Because of their weakened condition, they were unable to pull themselves out of the mud and died. Some of the homesteaders lost most of their herds that year.

* * *

Is it a heifer or - - ?

Another humorous tale circulated around the villages when a new settler took home the cattle he had purchased and called his wife to look at his "nice heifer". After looking it over, puzzled, she asked: "Well dear, if this is a heifer, how come she urinated from underneath?" Investigation confirmed he had bought a steer and not a heifer as he first believed.

Tjibbe Reitsma

* * *

The Cow Bill never became very popular and by March 1921 it was suspended. The outstanding loans were later forgiven and this became a source of hard feelings among farmers. Those who had worked hard, scrimped, and saved in order to pay back the loan did not appreciate the fact that other farmers were later forgiven their debt

The government, though, continued its efforts to help the settlers and placed two purebred bulls at farms in the district. The homesteaders would bring their animals to be bred and, in this way, improve their own herds.

* * *

In connection with the government effort, the Neerlandia Agricultural Society was set up. The main function of this society was to hold a yearly fair where the homesteaders could enter displays of handicrafts, vegetables, grain, and livestock. These displays were set up in the log church. In 1918 Ben Lievers wrote Jacob Olthuis that ripe tomatoes were exhibited at the fair. Usually the Department of Agriculture showed a purebred bull and/or a team of good horses at this time to make the pioneers aware of the quality of animals available. The society was officially retired in 1937 due to lack of activity.

* * *

The provincial government also passed a bill to lend seed grain to the farmers. In addition, a district agriculturalist had an office in Westlock. During these years Neerlandia was part of an improvement district so few taxes had to be paid. The federal income tax act came into effect in 1919, but had little effect on the Neerlandia farmers because most did not have any taxable income.

Prize-winning cabbages for the fair — 21 and 22 pounds — held by Ida and Bertha Kampnar, 1918.

* * *

Winter of 1919

Livestock suffered not only during that winter but also some years when the meagre supply of cattle feed was inadequate. If because of the cold and/or lack of food, cows were found laying down and unable to get up on their own, a crude tripod was placed over them with a makeshift block and tackle to hoist the animal into a standing position. Then the problem was to get the beast moving towards water or whatever food was available. Most often an animal could be encouraged to use its own strength by lifting its tail, slapping, and patting it, and generally prodding it to put forth greater effort, and thus getting it on the move again. This was vital for its very life.

Carrie Groot

* * *

1920-1929

When the winter of 1919-1920 ended, many farmers, especially the recent arrivals, were in desperate straits. Others such as the Anemas, Nanningas, and Tiemstras had been better prepared for the winter. They had been in Neerlandia for a number of years and knew better how to manage the land and the animals. Secondly, they were farmers and knew enough to keep a few pigs to provide meat and fat. In spite of their difficulties they believed that there was a good future in Neerlandia. They entered the twenties with determination and hope and, little by little, things did improve

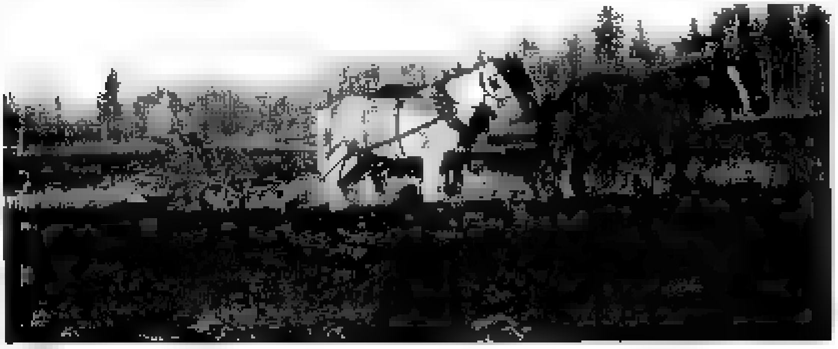
Before 1920, a livestock dealer had already travelled around the area buying the pioneers' oxen. The pioneers bought horses to replace them and used them for farming and transportation. Even though some tractors made an appearance as early as 1925, most fieldwork was done by horses.

To operate a productive farm with horses meant working long hours, and careful treatment of the animals was essential. If a horse was treated well it would be able to do a lot of work. To have a well-matched, healthy team became the goal of every homesteader. These horses were not merely beasts of burden, but were considered almost part of the family.

The horse was faster than the ox. When eight horses were connected to a breaking plow, three to four acres could be broken in one day. The plows had a steel beam, but farmers soon found that a specially-built breaking plow with a large, solid oak beam was stronger and more flexible. This plow was also a single-bottom plow meaning it had only one share, but the addition of a coulter enabled it to do a much better job. It was not necessary to remove all the stumps and roots before breaking, as the coulter could cut through most of them. This meant that root picking was done after the breaking and not before, as was the case with the walking plow and oxen.

Breaking with horses. Andy and Ike Nanninga.

By the early 1920s many farmers had several acres under cultivation. This too needed preparation and other implements



Plowing on the Case Ingwersen farm.

were used. A farmer could plow about three acres a day with two horses pulling a walking plow. Later a gangplow, which had two bottoms, became popular. It was pulled by four or five horses and had a seat for the farmer. Other implements such as discs, drills, binders, and harrows were added. As cultivated acreage increased more grain was produced and the farmer began to market some. Teams of horses hauled grain into Westlock — the land was beginning to provide a good living.

The Olthuis barn in winter

The 1920s were a period of growth in different areas. Better barns were built and more milk cows were obtained. The cream was put in cans and shipped to market. Because skim milk was a valuable source of food for hogs, farmers began to keep more hogs.

Hog farming in the early 1920s was rather limited and only a sow or two was kept in the barn with the cows. Later, as straw stacks became common, the farmer kept several sows and a number of feeders confined by a fence. The straw stacks provided shelter for them.

Another small source of income was eggs. The chickens that were kept scrounged for themselves. During the winter they would sit huddled together for warmth in the barn. When spring arrived the chickens looked for nesting spots. Some were left to produce chicks, but if this could be delayed for a while, some eggs could be gathered and sold or traded for supplies.

There were, however, still many problems such as frost, wet weather, and insects. Sloughs, potholes, and low areas were commonplace and the wet conditions resulted in hordes of mosquitoes which were such terrible pests that many farmers kept smudges going most of the summer in barnyards and near the house in an effort to keep them away. Homemade remedies such as salves, oils, and protective coverings were also used in an attempt to find relief from mosquitoes. The insects were also a problem for the livestock. When a farmer was breaking land, he was forced to keep up a steady pace because if he stopped the horses would step over the traces while trying to rid themselves of the insects.

* * *

The Plague of Insects

Most years during the warm summer the insect plague was almost unbearable, especially in wet weather. In wet years mos-

quitoes, sand flies, bull flies, and blackflies were the worst. At night we had to keep smudges. Some of these mosquitoes carried encephalitis (sleeping sickness), a disease of the brain. Many horses died from his dread disease. The diseased animals lay around listlessly. For the horses we had ear covers made of cloth and nose baskets made of wire screen. For ourselves we had twenty-pound sugar bags with eyeholes, covering our head and neck. For the hands we wore gloves. So it was no picnic for the men either.

Cor Fisher

* * *

Rabbits, Rabbits, Rabbits

Rabbits, rabbits, rabbits and more. Every seven years or so the rabbit population would explode to astronomical proportions. Come fall and winter they would eat small evergreen brush, grain, left out haystacks. Seen some stacks 16′ wide and 30-40-50 feet long chewed in from all sides till they tipped over and if the farmer did not get the rest out that would be destroyed also. In the spring of those years they would get a disease called tularaemia, a disease of small animals (possibly man if they were bitten by diseased mosquitoes) which would wipe them practically out. If we saw a rabbit the next summer it would be almost a miracle so deadly was this disease. The first symptoms of this was blood blisters on the ears. The last time we had an epidemic like the one described was in the early forties. Before that it was every so many years almost like clock work seven years or eight.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Fire could also be a problem. It was necessary to burn trees and muck land (peat soil) but sometimes it burned too deep and caused land loss. One particularly dry year (1924) a lot of topsoil was lost because of fire.

There was plenty of work for the farmers, too. Since livestock were kept indoors during the winter, barns needed cleaning. At times the horses were kept in cold shelters where the manure would freeze and build up behind them. In some of these shelters there was little room between the roof and the horses' backs by the time spring arrived. In the cow barns, however, the manure had to be removed at least every other day. Sometimes it was forked out of the door or window and left on a pile till summer. The best solution, if the weather was not too cold, was to spread it on the fields immediately.

To move the manure the farmers used a stoneboat. Later, a wheelbarrow was also used to move manure out of the barn, either onto a pile or onto the stoneboat. In the late twenties, manure spreaders began to lighten the job.

* * *

Not only was the stoneboat used to clean barns or move loads around, but it was also used for transportation. With two horses in front, it was kind of a poor-man's sleigh. As it did not have a tongue or pole to control it, the driver had to be careful not to stop the horses too fast lest the stoneboat slide into the back of the horses' legs. In the summer, when a stoneboat did not slide so easily, a *farmer would sometimes cool a frisky team down by hooking it to the stoneboat and going to a soft field. He would give the team free rein and encourage the horses to gallop. It did not take long before they were well-behaved.*

This same method would sometimes be used to break a horse to the harness. This important job was often done in the spring. Two or three-year-old horses were usually the ones trained. The first step was to halter-break the animals. A collar would be put on and the young horse would be teamed with a well-broken and reliable horse. Unless the horse was particularly rebellious, it soon learned what was expected of it.

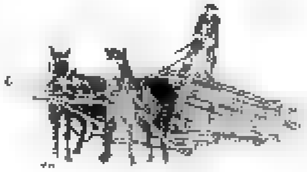
* * *

The construction of fences required a lot of work and farmers, to their dismay, found that fence posts made of spruce or poplar soon rotted away. Tamarack was found to be much better and hauling tamarack fence posts and firewood from the low areas became a winter project.

When it was necessary to go to the bush, a few farmers would get together early in the morning, each with his team of horses and a bob sleigh. They would take along their lunch since they would be away the whole day.

Straight trees, about four to six inches in diameter, were cut down with a crosscut saw. They were then limbed, topped, and cut into twelve to fourteen-foot lengths. The posts were loaded with the bottom end of the tree to the front and the thin end to the back of the sleigh. If the load was large it was bound together by a chain wrapped loosely around the logs. A dip was left in the centre of the load and after the chain was in place more posts were placed on top of the chain to tighten it.

Gradually mechanization took place. Tractors were first used in Neerlandia about the mid-twenties. By about 1925 Raymond Baker bought a tractor and Simon Tiemstra bought one shortly afterward. Raymond Baker's was a one-cylinder 15-25 horsepower International Titan, powered by distillate, a fuel with an octane rating between gas and diesel. These first tractors were used only for stationary power, because they were too difficult to handle in the field.



About the same time, Simon Tiemstra and Klaas Tuininga Sr. purchased a portable threshing machine with a ten horsepower stationary gas motor and ten-inch cylinder. Before this time the grain had been put in stacks and stored until November or December, when a thresher from another community would come.

When Tiemstra and Tuininga arrived at a farm, threshing began. One man threw a bundle from the stack onto the platform where another cut the twine and fed the machine half a bundle at a time. The straw came out on a conveyor at the other end and another man stacked it using a fork. The grain came out of a spout and was bagged and carried to a shed or granary where it was stored. The men charged a fee for each sack of grain threshed.

* * *

Coffee Grinder

Siebren Tiemstra and Pete Tuininga went threshing throughout Neerlandia. They charged by the bag. There were two bag sizes — the two-and-a-half bushel Canadian and the three bushel American. They charged for threshing by the Canadian bag. One man had sewn six inches on the top of each of his bags to make them bigger and thereby get more grain threshed for less. When Tiemstra and Tuininga objected, he said that his bags were standard size. Everyone was upset but the threshing went on. In the course of the work, as one of the men, Jacob Olthuis, was carrying a full bag of grain on his back, the bottom of the bag fell out and the grain scattered on the ground. No one felt sorry for the farmer — they thought he deserved it. From then on Tiemstra and Tuininga brought their own bags.

Siebren and Pete would stay overnight at the home of the farmer for whom they were threshing. Most had no extra beds to offer, so the two men experienced a variety of sleeping accommodations. At Bill Krikke's they were given two big wool bags filled with straw. Little Siebren Tiemstra took a run and jumped on the bag intended for his mattress. While Pete looked on in amazement, Simon said, "It will be impossible for me to stay on top of it unless I make a dent in it first," and he ran and jumped again.

Sigurd Tofte, a bachelor, spread bundles on the floor for them to sleep on. Siebren got a bundle with a rosebush in it. "I'll have a sore rear end all winter," he moaned.

Flies were a great pest in the pioneer days. At one home the threshing crew were presented with a molded pudding. As the flies settled on it like a blanket, the host said, "If you don't eat quick, the flies will get it."

* * *

Any grain used for feed had to be crushed. Klaas Tuininga and Menne Nanninga were among the first to own crushers. The crushers were powered by two horses walking round and round. Farmers hauled their grain to the crushers.

Starting in 1928, McCormick Deering 15-30s came into the area. They were a big improvement over the Titan and used gas as their fuel. These machines were on steel wheels, providing a rough ride. With the coming of these tractors a new era in the breaking of land arrived. Tractors were heavy and had the momentum to pull the plow through the stumps. If the breaker did get stuck in a stump it was possible to back out and take another run at it. (When using horses, if a breaker got stuck in a stump it was necessary to unhook the horses, hitch them to the back of the breaker and pull the breaker back.) Breaking could be a bone-jarring job, and the operator had to be ready for sudden stops. Often several runs would be required before the stump was split. Not all farmers had these heavy tractors so the Nanningas and others did a lot of custom breaking.

When land was being cleared, a stump often remained that was too big or too difficult to pull out. When that happened farmers

Plowing on the Hendrik Wierenga farm. Lambert, Clarence, Johanna, Temie, Joe, Hendrik.

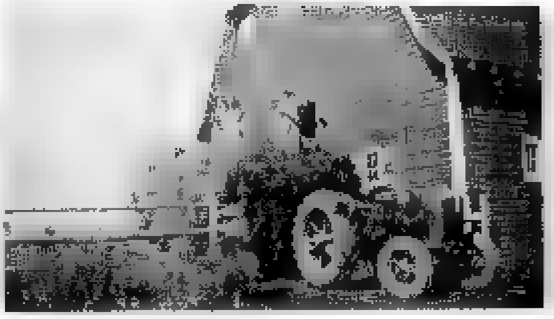
sometimes resorted to the use of dynamite or stumping powder. The powder would be tamped well under the stump and a fuse inserted. Then one would light the fuse and run. If done properly the stump would split and pieces would fly into the air. One farmer made a practice of doing this on the first of July. He thought picnics were a waste of time and with every boom he could prove he was working.

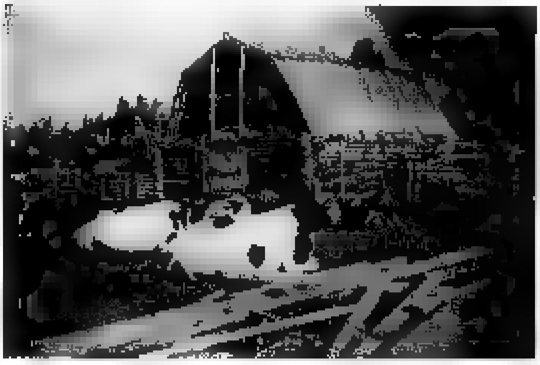
With the construction of the Pembina Valley Railway to Barrhead in 1927, the farmers no longer had to deliver grain to Westlock. Along with the railway came the elevators, and the Alberta Wheat Pool opened in Barrhead in 1928. Many farmers joined the Pool because they hoped through co-operation to gain some strength in the marketplace. Others were afraid of the power of the large co-operatives. Though Neerlandia farmers had always worked together, usually harmoniously, many of them were not certain that membership in co-operatives such as the Pool was compatible with their Christian principles. The concept of pools, co-operatives, and unions was a hotly-debated issue whenever farmers got together.

There were trucking services to Neerlandia by this time, so when a farmer had livestock to ship he would sometimes haul them by wagon or drive them to a central location where the animals would be loaded on a truck for shipment to Edmonton.

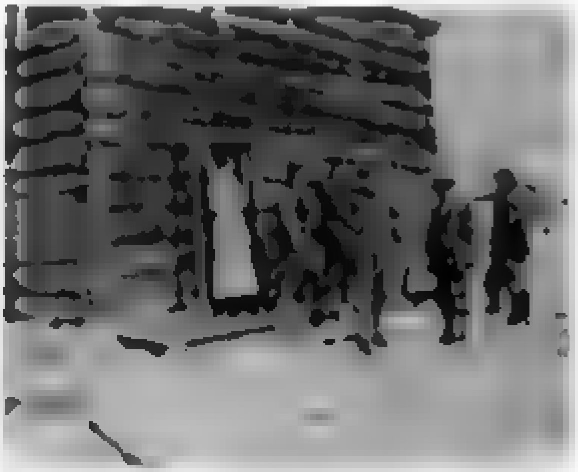
The years 1920-1930 were a time of growth. Prices for grain and livestock were such that the Neerlandia farmer was making financial progress. It seemed that the pioneers were justified in their choice of a new home. Life was becoming easier. Mechanization made it possible to crop land more quickly and thus allowed more time for family life.

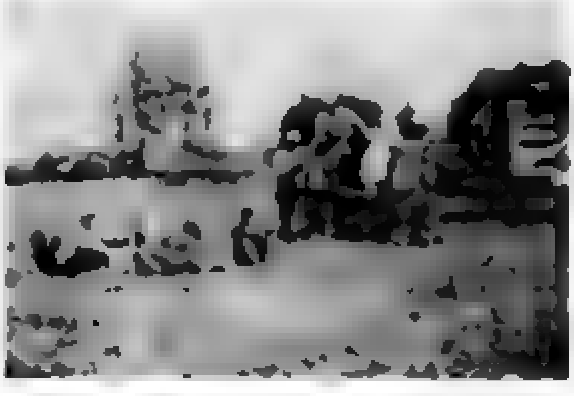
FARM SCENES



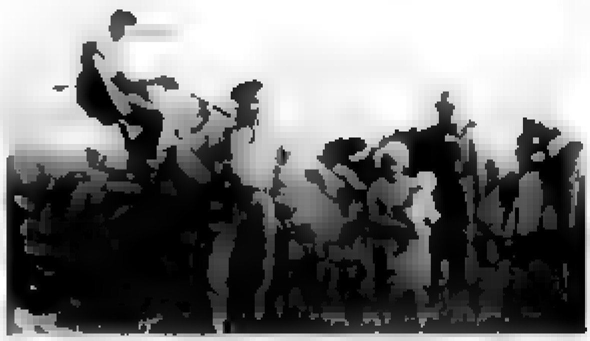


FOOD: AN IMPORTANT PART OF FARM LIFE





CUTTING



Grain was cut using a horsedrawn binder. George Anema, John Peters Sr. Frances and John Anema, c. 1933.

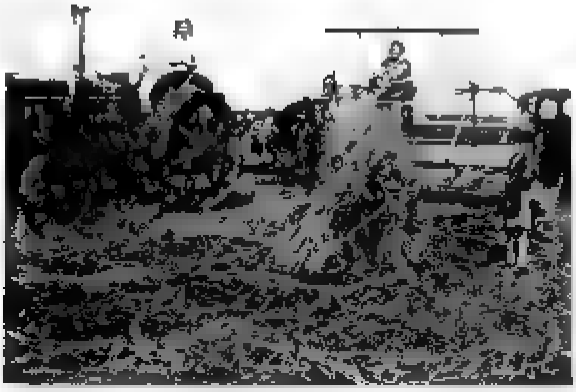
Four horses were hitched to the binder. An early snowfall has flattened this crop.

The binder put the grain into bundles. John and John Peters Sr. c. 1937

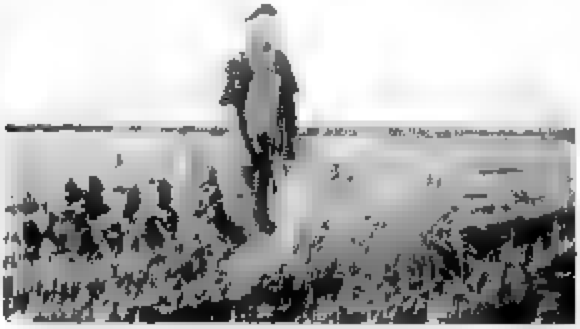
A whip on the end of a long bamboo handle stood upright within easy reach of the driver. Peter Kampner Sr., c. 1920

After cutting, the grain had to be stooked. Della and Susie Anema spent many hours stooking.

Later tractors replaced the horses. The Roseman brothers, Ko on binder, Joe and Klaas on tractor.



Ina Mast operated the binder while Henry (not shown) drove the tractor. Rose on the tractor, 1940



Stooking still had to be done by hand. Albert Elgersma with Andrew, Ann, Winson, and Sandra.

1930-1939

The economic crash of 1930 marked the beginning of the Depression and brought to a temporary halt any economic advance that Neerlandia was experiencing. During the Depression, those farmers who owned tractors could not afford to buy fuel for them so they were parked and horses were used instead. Prices for farm produce dropped drastically. As a result of this situation, the financial position of the farmers became desperate. They were even in danger of losing their land because of unpaid land taxes.

During the early 1930s, farming methods remained fairly stable but in the late thirties farming began to change for the better. Improved crop yields resulted when farmers began rotating their cereal crops with legume crops. Since manure was the only fertilizer, raising legume crops and summer fallowing were the only other ways to increase the nitrogen level in the soil. Another major breakthrough at this time was the drilling of deep water wells complete with, in some cases, a windmill to pump the water. Hand-dug wells were becoming less dependable because the water table was getting lower.

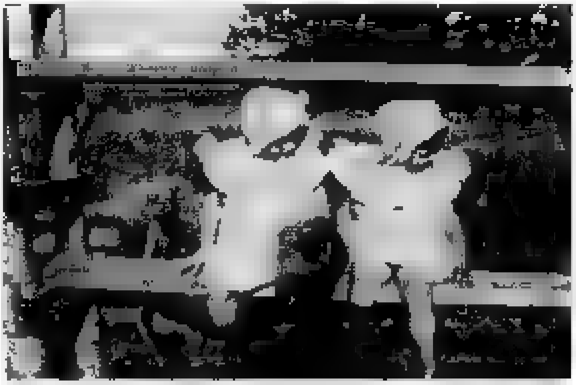
Machinery too was improving. Rubber tires for tractors became available about 1938-39. Although fields were still rough, rubber tires made fieldwork a little less bone-jarring. Frame buildings began to replace log structures during this time as well. Although frame buildings had been built earlier, they now began to be the norm instead of the exception.

Though farming practices were slowly improving, prices remained low and other setbacks occurred as well. Hail and early frost damaged crops. In 1935 an early frost devastated the crops. Farmers did not carry crop insurance so this was a tremendous loss. In this instance the provincial government decided to lend its support by supplying seed grain for the next spring. This was appreciated, but some weeds, such as Ontario mustard, were introduced with the seed. By the time farmers knew what these weeds were they could

CONSTRUCTION

Granary.

Sheep shed with slab roof.



Note gate.

Geldermen's horse barn.

Note stationary engine – moved by horses to do threshing in early days.

not eradicate them from the land. For years farmers tried to control them by handpicking, but it proved to be a losing battle. Since these weed seeds can lie dormant for many years, control by cultivation was impossible. Wild oats was becoming a problem since it too had delayed germination.

Other problem weeds were sow thistle and Canada thistle. They tended to grow in patches and farmers tried to control them by summer fallowing, by handpicking and by cutting down any patches in the crops with a scythe. A common chore for children was picking weeds in the crops.

Despite all of these setbacks and difficulties, as the 1930s came to an end, farmers in Neerlandia were thankful they were able to survive. Though money was scarce they always had food on the table. Even the economic situation was improving slowly by the end of this period. Tractors were again coming out of hiding. Several makes and models were available, but the John Deere D and the Oliver 80 were most popular in Neerlandia. Heated debates over the relative merits of the various tractors and even pulling contests were held once farmers started to buy these machines.

* * *

Harvesttime Down on the Farm

Harvesttime was a very special time on the farm — the season when farmers would take in the crop which they planted in the spring and which through the blessing of the Lord produced forty, sixty, or one hundred fold. The first homesteaders used a scythe and flail for harvesting, but after some years binders and threshing machines were used.

Cutting

The first binders to arrive in Neerlandia were rather small (having a 6 to 8-foot cutting bar), were ground driven, and had to be pulled by horses. The most amazing thing about these machines, however, was that they could tie the bundles (sheaves) automatically by using twine and a complicated little gadget called a knotter. What an amazing little mechanism if it worked properly, but what a pain in the neck if it would get out of adjustment. These binders also had a bundle carrier which could carry five to eight bundles, and then these bundles could all be dumped together. This allowed the farmer to pile the bundles in rows, which made it much easier for the stookers and later for picking up for threshing.

Being ground driven means the binder was operated via a chain from the bull wheel (large wheel with cleats) and thus turned only when the binder was pulled forward. As soon as the binder stopped moving forward the whole business would stop operating. If the binder was plugged or needed adjustment the farmer could operate the machine for a bit by hand via a crank — far from ideal but certainly better than nothing. If the crop was standing upright everything usually went reasonably well, but watch out if the crop was badly lodged (flat). Then you could sometimes see a "cloud of blue smoke" rising from the farmer-operator. The knife would plug up, the canvasses would stop, and the bundles looked like balls of hay! Sometimes a whole field would be cut from one direction if the

crop was all lying in one direction. This made it somewhat easier to pick up and cut, but it took a long time to finish a field.

Some years later tractors were used to pull the binder. This meant steadier power, but it also meant the need for two people — one to operate the binder and one to drive the tractor. Many times the tractor driver would be a son or daughter from eight years old up. These first tractors were not equipped with a power take-off so the binder still had to be ground driven. But about 1940 many of the tractors came equipped with a power take-off (PTO) although it was not "live". This means that the PTO did not have a clutch of its own but was driven by the main clutch that operated the tractor. This was, however, a great improvement as the binder could now be operated while stationary. If the binder would plug up while cutting, the tractor driver would disengage the clutch, take the tractor out of gear, and engage the clutch again to operate the binder. When the problem was rectified, he would disengage the clutch once more, put the tractor back in gear, engage the clutch, and get under way again. In the late forties and early fifties tractors started coming out with "live" PTO or a separate clutch so the binder could be operated while the main tractor clutch was disengaged. This eliminated a lot of clutching and shifting and made for a much smoother operation.

Stooking

Cutting the crop was only the first step in the harvest operation. The next big job was stooking. And what a job it was! This was performed either by the older sons of the family or by someone hired to do the job. Stooking involved setting the bundles or sheaves upright so the grain heads would be up and away from the ground to help the grain to dry. A stook was made up of six to nine bundles — six bundles for oats and barley and usually eight or nine for wheat. The stooker would take a bundle in each hand and set them up against each other in the form of an inverted V. He would repeat the procedure putting two bundles on one side of the original ones and then two on the other side. This way they would hold each other up. One bundle would sometimes be placed on each side of the stook and some farmers would also place one bundle flat on top of this. This was to help shed any rain that might fall and would also keep wheat from bleaching in the sun. The redder the colour of wheat, the better grade the farmer would get for it. Many of the bundles were very heavy, making for hard work. Then, to make things worse, sometimes the bundles were very messy and even tied together when the crop was badly lodged. Usually one would start stooking at seven in the morning and go to late in the day. Most mornings the bundles would be soaking wet due to heavy dew from the night before, so the stooker would be soaked until the sun dried the bundles and his pants. The first few days of stooking often meant very sore fingers, especially when stooking wheat or crops infested with Canadian thistles or hemp nettle. But by the end of the first week the fingers were well calloused and the arm muscles hard as nails.

Threshing

When all the stooking was done, the task of threshing could begin. This was indeed the highlight of the harvest operation. How every young lad of that day looked forward to the day when the thresher and wagons came rolling down the road to harvest their family's crop. How every woman and young teenaged girl must have looked against the awesome task of maintaining the household and feeding a crew of hungry men. A threshing crew was generally made up of four to eight farmers living fairly close together who owned a threshing machine together and helped each other thresh their crops.

Basically, what was needed was one threshing machine and one fairly large tractor with a pulley. A belt about one hundred feet long was placed around the pulley of the tractor and the other end around a pulley on the thresher. The tractor was then backed up to tighten the belt and then the pulley was engaged to operate the threshing machine. What a thrill to see and hear all those belts and pulleys, shafts and chains whir and roar and chatter and clang — a very impressive sight! The threshing machine would be placed in the centre of the field to be threshed where the farmers had beforehand placed one or more granaries. (Threshing was also done on the farmyard to provide a straw stack for winter protection and bedding for the livestock.) Also needed to run the whole operation was one man who ran the threshing machine and made sure everything kept running in tip-top shape. Then there were from four to eight teamsters — men with a wagon or hayrack and a team of horses. The teamsters hauled the bundles from the field to the machines. They had to load the bundles by hand using a pitchfork to throw bundles on the hayrack. It would take a fair bit of skill to build a decent load that would remain in place all the way to the machine. Many was the time that part of the load would slide off before it ever reached the machine. When this happened you could usually see the other men laughing with glee at the poor guy's misfortune, but this was mostly done in fun.

Then there were the times that someone's horses would take fright at something or other and you would have a runaway. What an excitement that would create!! One fall, my brother Jelle Tuininga had a runaway with his team when threshing for Harry Janssen. The horses headed straight for a new fence Harry had just put up, going straight ahead at full tilt. When they got close to the fence they tried to turn but, alas, it was too late. One horse jumped the fence and down the fence line they tore, one horse on each side of the fence snapping off the fence posts with the neck yoke and the wire catching underneath the wagon. What a mess!!! Harry was not impressed when he saw his new fence and who can blame him?

There were usually one or two field pitchers whose task it was to help the teamsters load their wagons. These men did not have a team of their own, they would just go from one wagon to the next helping pitch bundles.

When the wagons were full the teamsters would head for the thresher to unload the bundles into the ever-hungry jaws of the machine. Here there was usually one or two spike pitchers who would help the teamster unload his wagon. The bundles would be tossed onto the feeder — heads first — and a chain would carry them into the machine. The grain would then be separated from the straw which was blown into a pile while the grain was elevated and dumped into a granary

When the granary started to get full someone was needed in the bin to keep the grain spout clear and to make sure the bin would be filled as full as possible The granary man would usually be a son or daughter of the farmer at whose place they were at the time Being granary man had to be the worst job there was, especially when the bin was getting full. Here you were trapped in, seemingly forgotten by everyone, and the grain just kept steadily coming down the spout. All you needed was a bit of claustrophobia as I had, and you soon got the feeling that this was it — you were a goner. But somehow or other, at the last moment, you always managed to get someone's attention by hollering as loud as you could or else by pushing the spout out of the granary. This soon brought results The spout would then go into another granary which meant you had a few hours of respite Being granary man did have its compensation because you could be where the action was and, best of all, you could stay home from school If you happened to be threshing at your place on a Saturday — well, that was worse than the plague!

Threshing started at 7:00 a.m. on the dot — at least *not* later. The dew never bothered as there was enough dry grain inside the bundles to compensate for that. Threshing would continue until 12:00 noon, when everything was shut down for one hour for dinner. At 1:00 p.m. sharp you were at it again until 7:00 p.m , at which time you would shut down for the day Most farmers had a fair amount of chores to do and, if you didn't have any kids to do them, it meant doing them in the morning before you started threshing and in the evening after you quit. This would mean getting out of bed at 4.30-5:00 a m , doing your chores and feeding the horses, eating a quick breakfast, and then heading for the field At night you would eat supper and do your chores again Usually it was at least 10:00 p.m before you were done. By the time you hit the pillow you were out like a light, but the morning bell came all too quickly I'm sure most young guys on the crew prayed for a day of rain at one time or other

In spite of the long days and hard work, threshing always was an enjoyable time There was always time to play a trick or two on each other, and the fellowship and working together was something to be treasured

The Homemaker

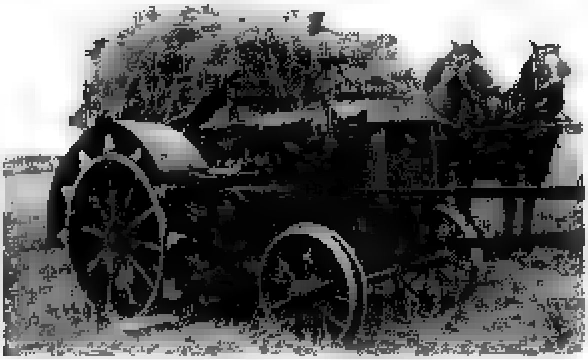
The task of the women at harvesttime was also a very busy one and probably not appreciated enough. Imagine her having to feed an army of hungry men besides taking care of her own family and doing the hundreds of other tasks she was expected to perform. The men's day was long and hard, but the women's was just as long or maybe longer. She had to have a good breakfast ready for her husband and sons by 6:15 a m. If there were children she had to get them ready for school and attend to infants or small children. By 9:00 a.m she had to have lunch and coffee ready and in the field by 9:30 a m. This lunch and coffee wasn't just a snack, every man would eat three or four double sandwiches of homemade bread as well as cake and cookies. She would then rush back home to get

THRESHING

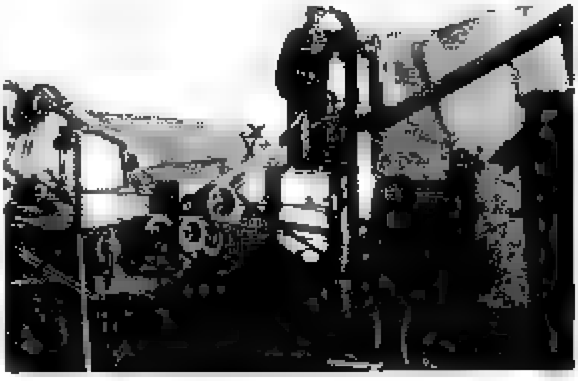
Ready to start. Ingwersen — Anema crew.

Loading in the field, c. 1954. Note field pitcher who went from man to man helping load the racks.

Straw came out of the blower to form a straw pile. Grain came out of another pipe and went into a granary.



Some farmers had matched teams of horses. This team belonged to Joe Bruk who threshed with the Heberlings.

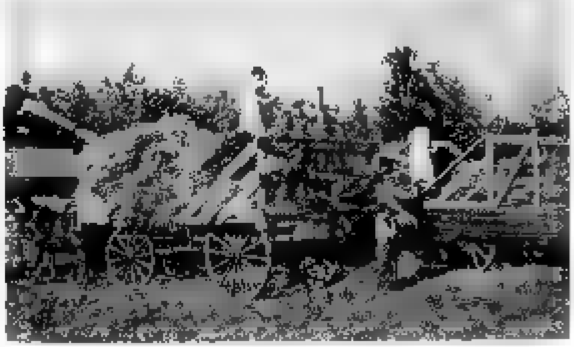


Belts and pulleys, chains and cog wheels. What a racket! Henry Peters smiles amid the noise.

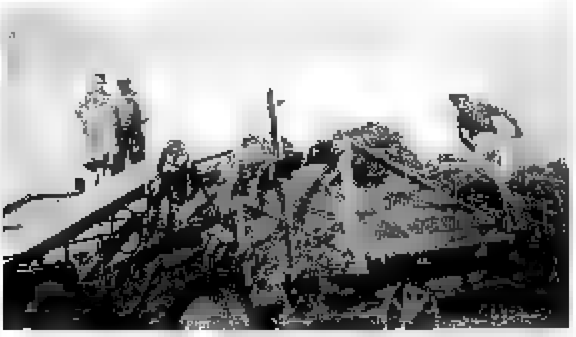
The belt had to be lined up with the tractor. John Roth pitching bundles.

Time out for lunch. Threshing at Albert Mast's farm.

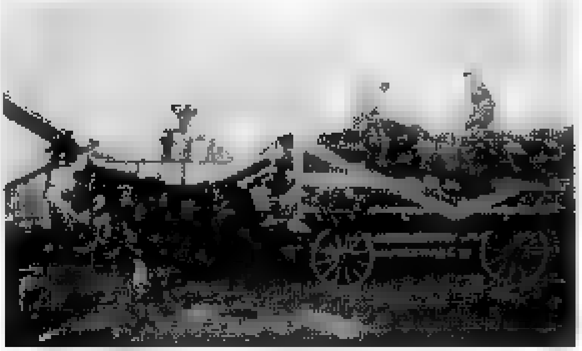
Do you want some lunch? Still at the Masts'



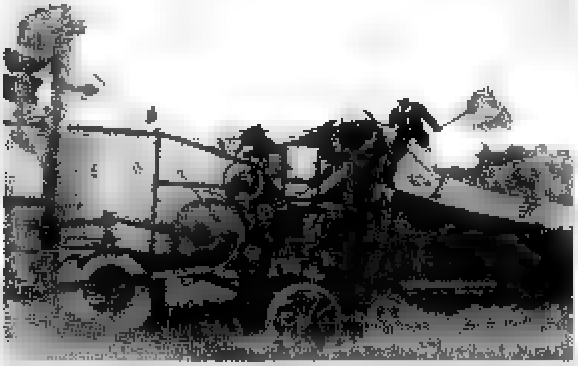
The women try their hand at pitching bundles while the men eat. Bert Elgersma on the ground.



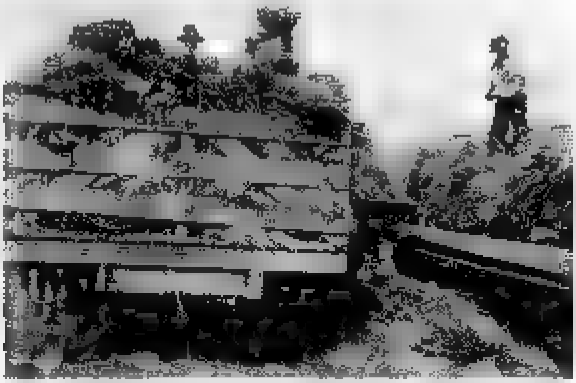
Trientje and Clarence Tuininga surveying the harvest scene, Jim on rack.



Threshing took place on every farm. This is at the Nanningas' in the early 1940s.



Pete Mast is working hard to keep the threshing machine busy.



It was easier to have a rack on each side of the feeder.

Time to celebrate: the harvest is in the bin, c. 1937. Is that beer they're drinking? Bill Olthuis, Bill Bajema, Albert Elgersma, Andrew Wierenga, ?, George Olthuis, Lucas Sturwold. Seated: Cecil Tuininga, Raymond Visser, Jake Sturwold.

dinner ready by 12:00 noon. By this time the men were starving again and were looking forward to a feast. And feast it usually was, with spuds, meat, and vegetables, enough to feed an army! For good measure each man would devour about half a pie for dessert. The lady of the house would have to clean up and wash all the dirty dishes, prepare another good lunch and tea by 3:30 p.m., then rush home and prepare supper for her family while baking bread, pies, and cakes for the next day. How they managed to get everything done and usually right on time is something to be marvelled at.

Lambert Tuininga

* * *

Threshing

The second year of our threshing syndicate, John Ingwersen, Albert Schoonekamp, and I decided that only work and the same old topics of discussion at the supper table made the evenings rather dull. We thought this could be improved a lot by the addition of a keg of beer. We promptly ordered an eight-gallon wooden keg with Dick Fisher, the truck driver, and this was available at Dick's place on his return trip from Edmonton. The price was eight dollars and the keg had to be returned when empty. The rest of the crew soon had the suspicion that we had something other than coffee to drink before we came in for supper, so they were informed about the keg. They offered to chip in on the price provided they could also help to consume the contents. I have to admit that when the keg was tapped before supper it opened up entirely different and very interesting topics for discussion at the supper table, and it did not diminish the appetite for food in the least.

I also have to admit that when we tapped the keg again after supper it led to expressions of wit and strength that would never have entered our minds if we had been completely sober.

This one day we had been threshing at Gerrit Ingwersen's place, and John had made sure the keg had come along. Gerrit had room in his barn for several teams of horses, so they were stabled and fed before we had our supper. After supper we tapped the keg, and made our way to the barn to hitch our teams to the wagons and go home for the night.

In the barn some interesting and big discussions developed. As we talked about feats of strength and endurance we had accomplished in days gone by, I backed my rear between the hind legs of our horse Mae. In a hunched position I got my back under her hind quarters, put my arms around her legs, and as I raised my back I lifted her hind end up so her hind feet were off the barn floor. Mae was a 1500-pound horse, and I was quite proud of the feat of power I had displayed, so I confronted John with what I had done.

Now you have to know that John Ingwersen could not be outdone by anyone, in any way, under any circumstance, and he was ready to prove it anytime. He said, "Oh, lift the hind end of a horse, that's nothing. I can lift a whole horse." Everybody immediately said, "Well, this we'll have to see."

John got under their horse Charlie on his hands and feet. Charlie weighed in excess of 1200 pounds, and I didn't believe he *could do it John heaved up his back, Charlie gave a grunt and his back feet left the barn floor.*

We told John, "You only lifted his back end," so he moved over a bit to the front of the horse, and heaved up again. And, lo and behold, all four of Charlie's feet left the barn floor John had done the impossible again.

George Anema

* * *

Turkey In The Straw

How many of you remember straw stacks? They were wonderful places to play. When threshing was finished we couldn't wait to climb the straw stack and slide down Dad always strictly warned us not to play on the stacks till they were three days old That would give them a chance to settle and be safer for us.

One time though, the temptation was too great Shirl, Joan, Jack, and I climbed up and slid down a fresh stack To our horror, when we reached the bottom Jack was nowhere to be seen. Frantically we dug in the area we had last seen him Finally he emerged crying wide open mouth full of straw. What a relief to find he was still alive! We learned the value of obeying Dad's rules that day. But naturally we breathed not a word of this event to him.

Elsie Navis

* * *

1940-1949

The men who farmed Neerlandia in the forties took seriously God's command to till the ground They believed that in response to God they had to prepare the land well, keep it weed free, and produce good crops and herds They worked hard to achieve this end. Changes on the agricultural scene in the 1940s enabled them to succeed The financial return to farmers increased drastically as a result of the wartime demand for farm produce

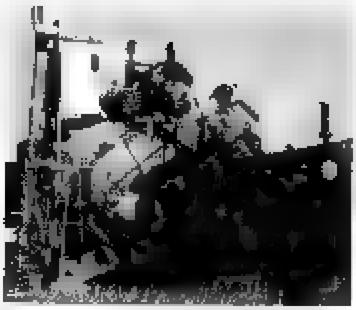
Nevertheless, the local people had many shortages to cope with. It was difficult to get new tractors and farm machinery in the early forties because the manufacture of instruments of war had a higher priority than the manufacture of farm machinery The metal shortages were also evident in the fact that barbed wire at this time was much thinner and more difficult to work with. It was especially troublesome to reuse because it could not be rolled up easily Gasoline was also rationed, although there was always a good supply for agricultural purposes. During this time farmers had their own fanning mills to remove weed seeds from the grain. Seed grain was treated with formaldehyde in an effort to control smut.

The major change in farming practices was the use of the Caterpillar tractor for clearing land. These large machines eliminated much of the back-breaking work and enabled larger areas of land to be opened up for farming in much less time. The sight of these monsters slicing their way through the bush with trees falling like tenpins before them was a major event for everyone The roar of their motors would carry for miles and people would soon know who was clearing more land Along with the Cats came bigger breaking plows and heavier disks, and the country soon opened up. Fires were everywhere and smoke was thick as farmers burned

the windrows to get more land into production and take advantage of the better prices for grain and livestock. For those who had been unable to pay their way during the Depression, this was a wonderful time.

As early as 1940 tractors with lights and starters became available. By 1946 the first tractors with hydraulics were for sale. These features made tractors easier to handle, more versatile, and useful for longer hours.

Combines too were becoming more popular in the 1940s, making the cutting and harvesting of grain faster and easier. No longer did long hours have to be spent stooking, loading, and hauling the grain to the threshing machine. The combine brought with it a new set of problems, however. Fields were often too rough for effective combining. The many roots on recently-cleared land were often picked up with the swath and caused breakdowns. Most of the combines were pull-type and often got stuck in the soft spots. Once the grain was swathed it took a long time to dry because fields were small and often sheltered by bush. Then too, combines left the straw in the field and this posed another problem because most of the other field machinery was not capable of working the straw into the ground. To overcome this problem many farmers burned the straw. Farmers at this time either did not know that burning robbed the soil of much-needed nutrients and fibre or they simply accepted the lesser of the two evils. Nevertheless, combines were seen as an improvement over the cutting, stooking, and threshing method and more farmers purchased them.



Combining on the Albert Tiemstra farm.

With the end of the war and the stabilizing of prices, the 1940s was one of the better periods for agriculture. It was in these years that Neerlandia farmers became more prosperous and well-established.

* * *

Unemployed

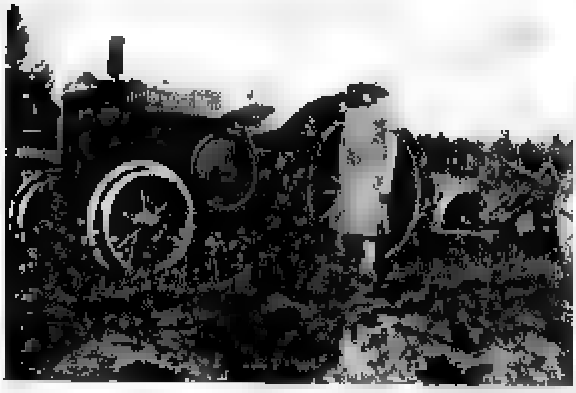
The thanks the faithful horse received. During the latter years of the war many farmers with tractors let their horses run wild and they began breaking into granaries. One horse was so smart he would back up to a full granary and let fly with his hoofs, knocking a hole into the granary. The grain would pour out in the deep snow. Then about fifteen or twenty horses would come to feed and trample the grain into the snow. Many of the horses would get to water and the grain in the stomach would start swelling — bursting the stomach. With a little imagination, you can understand the terrible pain the animals suffered. Some of these animals were shot for their own good because they became pests: the unemployed without work, a life of boredom. No fault of their own, but of the times and the system, plus the refusal to start from the bottom and work up to become efficient workers.

Cor Fisher

* * *

STEEL-WHEELED TRACTORS

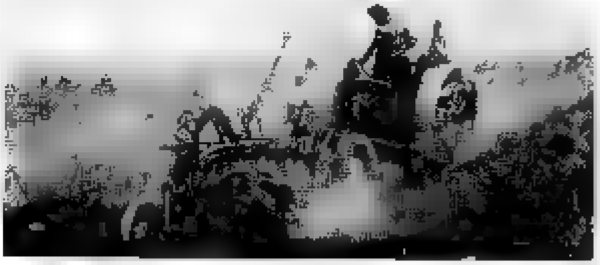
A furrow laid bare. Garrit Kippers.



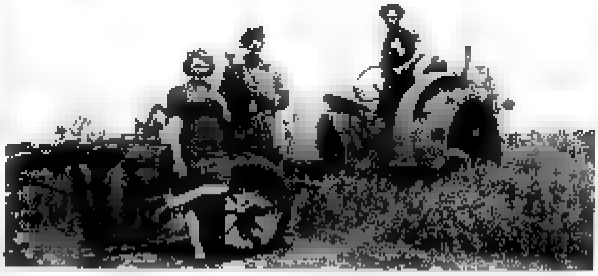
Ina Mast and the John Deere — note flywheel used to start tractor.

Clarence Mast posing with his Oliver 80, 1938. Note the crank for starting the tractor.

Andy Nanninga and Clarence Rowaan clearing land. 1944



Lambert H. Wierenga breaking, 1944.



Steel-wheeled tractors were still in use in the 1950s. Henry, Henry and Art Peters, Lambert H. Wierenga on tractor.

Crushing grain. Hilje, John, Joe Wierenga, 1937

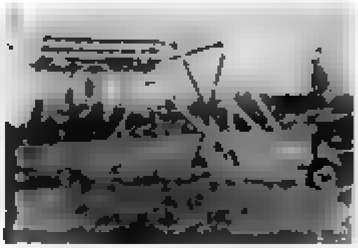
1950-1984

The beginning of this period brought many changes to the agricultural scene. The more important changes were the coming of electricity to the farms, the development and use of fertilizer and herbicides, the use of supplements for feeding livestock, and the improvements to tractors and machinery.

The first of these changes was the coming of rural electrification in 1951. Although some of the settlers had previously had access to electricity through gas-powered generators or wind chargers, the coming of rural electrification made electrical power available to almost all the farmers. This event had tremendous implications and it opened up new horizons in all aspects of the people's lives. There was better light to work by in the house and in the barn. Electrical power could be used for ventilating barns by the use of fans and aid in feeding animals by the use of augers and electric motors. Pressurized water systems which included underground water lines became possible. The life of the farm wife was also made much easier with electric stoves, refrigerators, and other appliances.

The use of chemical fertilizers such as 16-20-0 and 11-48-0 in granular form began in the early fifties. Crop yields showed an immediate increase and this resulted in larger financial returns per acre of land seeded. Farmers also became more aware of and more concerned about weeds in their fields. Many farmers invested in blanket mills to remove the wild oats from the seed grain. Broadleaf weeds were controlled more effectively through the use of weed sprays but wild oats continued to be a problem. It was also about this time that concentrates began to be used in livestock feeds resulting in healthier and faster-growing animals.

Farm machinery was also improving at this time. In the mid-fifties the handling of hay was revolutionized by the square baler. All hay had been handled loose but now it could be baled and stacked. The bales were handled by hand at first, but later stookers were invented along with front-end loaders on the tractors. Because hay could be hauled much easier and efficiently, more hay could be put up and more cattle could be kept.


A hay sweep.

Before balers came out, farmers continued to thresh some of their grain because they needed straw stacks for cattle feed and bedding. They would thresh as much as they needed to provide the necessary straw stacks and combine the rest. This also solved the earlier problem of leaving the straw in the field. The work load was very heavy because often each farmer was on his own. There were no longer any threshing crews, the threshing had to be done by the resources of each farm family.

With a baler the farmer could gather the straw from behind the combine. As a result the use of threshing machines gradually declined. Nevertheless, some farmers continued using them because they worried about the grain not drying in the swath. However, as the work load increased, the job of stooking became less and less attractive. By 1960 almost everyone had switched to using the combine. Harvesting was done more efficiently but the camaraderie and co-operation among farmers in threshing was lost.

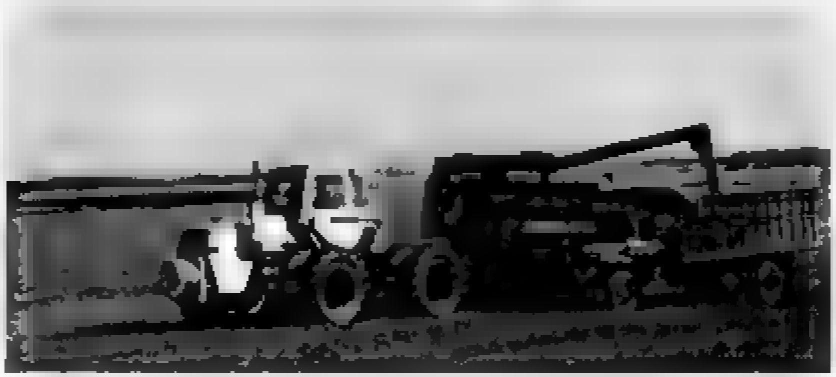
During the sixties farming continued to change in the Neerlandia area. Commodity prices continued to climb fairly steadily even though they fluctuated up and down. Probably the most striking development during these years was the growth of automation. Self propelled swathers and combines could be seen everywhere. Grain augers, trucks with hoists, automatic bale wagons, and grinder-mixers greatly improved farming methods and eliminated much of the manual labour.

With all these improvements, farmers would handle more land; farms were becoming bigger as farmers with small holdings sold out to others who increased theirs. Livestock herds were increasing in size as well, and bigger barns were being built. This led to the start of liquid-manure handling systems.

Fertilizers and chemicals were more widely used, resulting in larger crop yields than ever before. (There was, however, some concern about the long term effect of these chemicals.) In addition, soil testing was starting to become popular and this provided the farmers with valuable information which helped them decide how much and what kind of fertilizer or chemical to use. There was a larger variety of crops grown. Canola (originally called rapeseed), flax, peas, and beans were occasionally grown in addition to the usual barley, wheat, and oat crops.

Steady growth continued to be the dominant trend in the seventies. Tractors with dual wheels became common and soon even air-conditioned cabs were standard equipment. Four-wheel-drive tractors began to replace the two-wheel-drive models and this enabled farmers to work more of their own land. Machinery size increased in order to keep up with the larger tractors, and farmers were able to farm more land with less manpower. Round balers began to replace square balers and electric mills began to replace the grinder-mixers. Dugouts began to be used for livestock water supply, and improvements were being made in animal nutrition. Large strides were being made in animal genetics, resulting in faster-growing animals with better feed-conversion ratios.

Self-propelled swather.



Combining, 1983.

Farmers began to specialize at this time. Whereas farms had consisted of a few chickens, pigs, and cows, and a few acres of land, they now began to concentrate on raising only one kind of livestock. Some fairly large dairy operations came into existence as well as farms that specialized in laying hens, broilers, or feeder cattle. Some farms concentrated on raising cereal and cash crops. Quite a few of the farmers in the Neerlandia area went into the hog industry and hog barns began to be built all over the countryside The Neerlandia area has become one of the most intensive hog-raising areas in the province of Alberta. Some farmers still do mixed farming — a combination of hogs, cattle and grain.

Due to the complexity of farming, farm organizations came into existence. The National Farmers Union had been in existence for many years but few Neerlandia farmers joined More felt comfortable with Unifarm when it was formed and some joined it

The Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta had its beginning in Neerlandia in 1971, and a provincial organization was formed in 1974. The purpose of this organization is to present a Christian position in regard to agricultural issues and to attempt to apply the biblical principles of stewardship and justice to farming Many Neerlandia farmers joined this organization Their intent was to farm in accord with the land — that is, in a way that conserves the environment while producing food and maintaining an economically feasible unit

Neerlandia continued to grow in size as many farmers bought land in surrounding districts. Bumper crops, good markets, and good prices all combined to contribute to the increasing prosperity of the Neerlandia community Inflation began to be a major concern but the way to beat that, it seemed, was to borrow money and build barns or buy land More land was also being cleared and the low lands were being drained

By the 1980s farmers were able to operate farms many times the size of their forefathers' farms. The pioneers faced the problems of survival in a new land and the development of the land for agricultural purposes, their descendants have to face such questions as whether bigger is necessarily better, what place the use of chemicals has in farming, and what should be made of technological developments.

Cattle

When I was just a lad . .

Most of the pioneer families brought a cow and sometimes a calf along to their homesteads. The cow would be a source of milk for the family and the calf would eventually become another milk cow, a bull, or an ox In the end, all cattle would grace the table as roasts or some other form of beef unless, of course, they met an untimely death

The kind of cattle the pioneers brought were mostly a red mongrel species. They were tall and gangly, with long thin horns Their front quarters were usually heavy and the back quarters light Among the pioneers it was common to hear someone comment, "That one is so skinny you can hang your hat on her hipbone " The cattle would roam free since there were no fences. They would search for grazing areas and feed on the wild native grasses along the sloughs. It was poor quality, but it was feed A farmer's few cattle would usually stay together One of them had a cowbell and their owner would have to recognize the sound of the cowbell in order to find them and bring them home

Bringing the cows home was often girls' work. The girls would have to go through the bush, looking here and there while following the cow trails One time two Tuininga sisters had a long hunt, and by the time they found their herd, it was dark When they got them home, the one sister laughed and asked the other, "How are you going to milk that one? It's only got one teat!" They had brought home a steer!

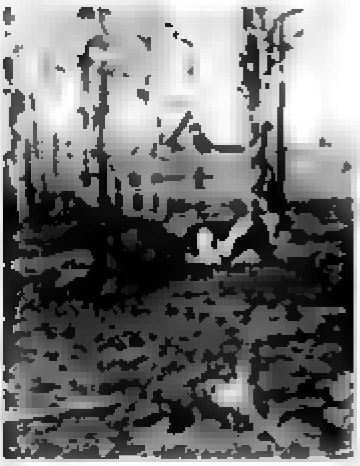
It became even more difficult to find the cows when it rained All one could hear was the rain falling. While getting soaked to the skin, one would strain to hear a cowbell and all one could hear was the sound of the rain (You would continue to listen till ah yes, you could hear something! You heard not only one bell, but many bells in all directions!) Meanwhile, the cows would be standing still under the trees, trying to stay out of the rain.

In wintertime, the animals were sheltered in small log barns They were fed mostly native hay which the farmer had managed to stack during the summer and some grain too, if it was available. But grain was scarce, as the land first had to be cleared, broken, and seeded before the pioneers reaped any harvest.

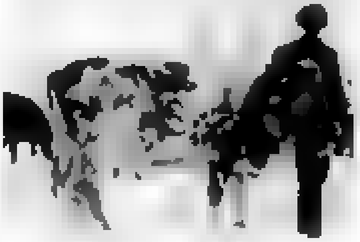
Many oxen, too, were brought to this country. They were used for breaking new land and for pulling wagons or plows. These creatures were known for their speed or rather, lack of it. Jan Oldegbers would say that one had to put a stake in the ground every once in a while to see if the plow and oxen had moved Working with oxen took real patience and many a pioneer understood the saying, "If you have driven oxen seven years without ever getting mad at them, you've earned heaven." But there was still the cautious farmer who warned his son who was behind the ox and plow, "Easy, Lucas, Easy Lucas."

A few years have gone by . .

As a farmer could afford it he would increase his herd; sometimes it would be only another scrubby runt. But one had to know



Contented cows.



John Gelderman and his favourite cow.

what he was buying. One young homesteader came home with a fine looking new cow. Only a few days later, the tail fell off — the cow had a fake tail! Since the tail was an absolute necessity in this mosquito and fly infested country, the seller had taken the necessary means to procure a sale. (It was not uncommon for animals to have small ears and tails since they froze off, the winters being what they were.) From that time on, the young fellow pulled each cow's tail before he would buy one.

There were also times, though, that the farmer wished his cow did not have a tail. A cow would swing her tail while being milked, slapping the milker's face or wrapping it around his neck. If the tail was dirty — well, the farmer just braced himself against the cow's flank, closed his eyes, and milked as quickly as he could.

In 1917, the government loaned two bulls to Neerlandia homesteaders, an arrangement to help the settlers improve their cattle. The bulls were a dual purpose red Shorthorn. (Dual purpose breeds are suitable for using as beef or dairy cattle). A bull was loaned to a syndicate of five or more farmers. One was stationed at Gaele Baker's, the other at another central place in the settlement. The farmers would bring their cows to the bull and pay the holding farmer a dollar per service to go toward the feeding and care of the bull.

In 1918, a number of Neerlandia farmers made use of the Cow Bill to increase their cattle herd. The cows had to be branded so the government could claim them if payment was not made. Henry Kippers Sr. increased the number of his cows by five with the aid of the Cow Bill. He had to walk them home from Pibroch and arrived home well into the night. His wife Jennigje woke up when she heard the noise. In her long nightgown and slippers she opened the door of the log house to investigate. Upon doing so, she scared one of the cows so badly that it ran away into the night. Henry was able to get the cow home again, but was never able to milk her or get her into calf and she was the only registered Ayrshire of the lot!

Then the long hard winter of 1919 set in. Snow came the 12th of October that year and stayed well into the next May. It was cold and feed was short. Many of the cattle died of *lepel ziekte* (empty spoon disease). What feed was available was selling at astronomical prices — forty dollars for a rackful of hay (a rack was a box 7' by 14' by 3').

Now years have gone by,
I've got my own little boy.

In the 1920s the farmers' herds increased slowly. So did the number of acres cleared, which enabled the farmer to grow more tame hay and grain for winter feed. More wells were dug so in the winter the milk cows, at least, could be watered more easily and more often.

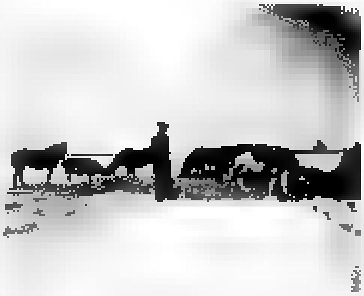
More people, too, came into the area. Among them was Wijnzen Elzinga, who came in 1928. He was a dairy farmer from the Netherlands and one of the first to start specialized farming in this area. He began with five Holstein cows and to increase and improve his herd bought good Holstein bull calves from a dairy farmer near Edmonton.

Dairy cattle such as Holsteins are tall with very little meat

They are heavier in the hind quarters than in the front and are used for production of milk (although they would still grace the farmer's table when their usefulness as milk producers was over).

Farmers did not take their sick cows to a veterinarian — it was too far and they also could not affort it. If cows got bloated, some farmers would treat them with coal oil: a bottleful was given internally. The milk from the cow's next milking, though, could not be used since it tasted like coal oil. Serious cases of bloat were treated by puncturing the cow's stomach with a trocar.

During the thirties farmland continued to be cleared, but most of it was used for growing grain, and farmers did not have much tame pasture. Cows grazed in the bush pastures or along sloughs, but sometimes there was not much grass to be found. One farmer would sometimes remark to another that he wondered whether a neighbour's cattle were lying down because they were resting after having had their fill of grass or if they had become tired looking for it!



Feeding time, 1940s.

More years have gone by,
My son has his own little boy

Although mixed farming had been the norm, towards the late forties a slow trend towards specialization developed. There had been many changes in animal, crop, and manure handling. Some farmers were no longer dependant on the cream cheque to make ends meet. Farmers realized that there were advantages to having only one or two types of farming

Henry Mast was probably the first to specialize in purebred Herefords, a type of beef cattle. Beef cattle are chunky and square-looking, with their weight spread evenly between the front and back quarters, mostly along the backbone. Henry began with a herd of about twelve cows with calves in 1945 and had increased it to about one hundred head two years later when, due to health reasons, he had to sell. The Masts exhibited their cattle and sold breeding stock. In the summer, the cattle were pastured and brought home for the night. In the winter, they were fed hay, grain, and chop.

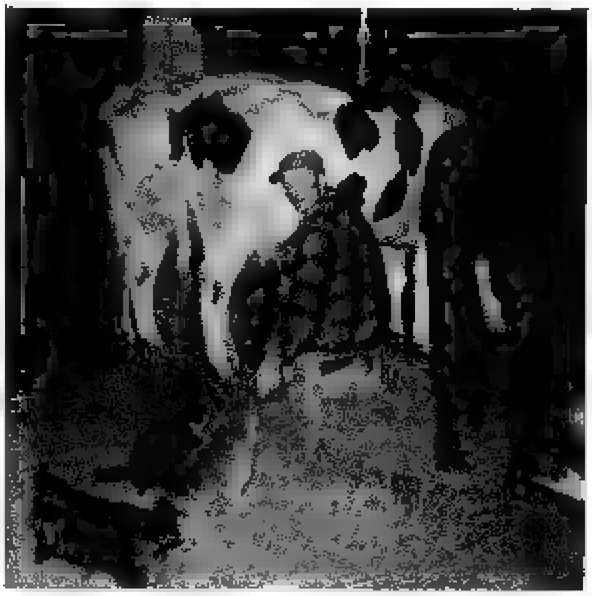
Herefords

Henry Mast and his prize-winning Herefords.

Artificial Insemination (A.I.) — the Bull on Wheels — was introduced in 1957, resulting in a radical change in animal husbandry. The Vega Artificial Insemination Breeding Association, a cooperative of the surrounding farmers, was established at that time. Each member paid a ten-dollar membership fee. Albert Janssen was hired as A.I. technician. A farmer could now have his cows bred to select bulls to improve his herd in one or more specified areas. The first year mostly dairy cows were serviced. In 1961, Bob Janssen took over from his father and became the A.I. technician. In 1963, the cooperative was dissolved and Bob set up the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association. At that time, seventy-five percent of all the A.I. service was performed on dairy cows. This changed the following year, when semen from exotic European breeds became available, although semen from the Netherlands could not be imported until about 1980 as the Dutch cattle had hoof-and-mouth disease.

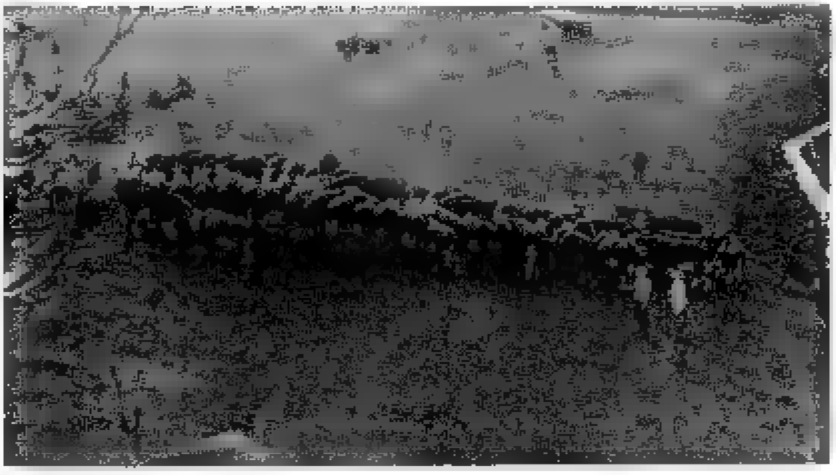
But Neerlandia farmers were a progressive group. They saw the advantages of doing their own A.I. They were always around the animals and thus could inseminate their cows at the optimal times rather than waiting for the A.I. technician who might not be available. After 1976, when the Barrhead Animal Breeders Association was dissolved, most farmers either kept a bull or did their own A.I.

A recent advancement in the cattle industry is embryo transplanting (ET). Embryos from one or two select cows are transplanted non-surgically into recipient cows. Case Van Beek began using this method in 1982 to improve his Simmental herd, averaging ten live offspring per select cow. At first he rented Barrhead Veterinary Clinic for the transplanting (done by an ET technician), but now select cows plus several recipients are taken to Nanton, For the dairy farmers, a major change occurred after the creamery in Barrhead was overhauled around 1967 to include the processing of skim milk powder as well as butter. Except for those living along the mail route (their cream was picked up by the mailman and delivered to Barrhead), the cream was still being shipped in cans to Edmonton by truck. With the conversion of the Barrhead NADP plant, however, farmers could start shipping fluid milk. Many did not do so immediately, however, since it took a large initial investment to convert to a fluid milk operation. Art Peters was one of the first in the area to ship fluid milk (1968-69). After converting to fluid milk, the dairyman no longer had the skim milk by-product from separating the cream, so he could phase out his hogs and specialize in dairy farming.



Over the past years, the average dairy cow's milk production has increased considerably due to better feeding and careful breeding. In 1940, a cow's average production per lactation would be 8,000 pounds milk and 280 pounds butterfat. By 1960 it rose to 10,000 pounds milk and 360 pounds butterfat. By the 1980s, it increased to 14,000 pounds milk and 540 pounds butterfat. Among Neerlandia farmers, the Frisian Holstein is the most popular milk cow.

The beef industry initially included primarily Herefords and Black Angus, now some farmers have Charolais and Simmental (maternal breeds). The calves of the former are smaller and weaned at 400 to 450 pounds, the latter are larger and weaned at 700 to 800



Cattle-feeding time on the L. H. Wierenga farm.

pounds because the cows are also good milk producers. Holstein steers are also raised for beef, mainly by the dairymen.

Neerlandia farmers who keep cattle have specialized into dairy or beef. The beef farmers generally have mixed farms, raising grain and hogs besides, whereas fluid milk is the main source of income for dairy farmers. Today, only a few farmers keep an individual cow to serve as the family's source of milk.

The Pound

Pound, an official government means to deal with stray animals, a fenced-off area on a Pound Keeper's property where stray animals were brought when they had been making a nuisance of themselves by going onto prohibited property.

During the pioneer years, livestock were free to roam the bush or follow the creeks to find grazing areas to their liking. But, unknown to the livestock owners, the Domestic Animals Act of 1920 and 1923 changed that. The Act required municipalities to have by-laws prohibiting animals from running at large. It seems, however, that the Neerlandia area had no such restrictions until 1929.

In November 1929, when Neerlandia was part of the M.D. of Shoal Creek, the Domestic Animals Act was passed by the Council as a by-law and Councillor Joseph Baker appointed Henry Kippers Sr. as Pound Keeper on the NE 10-62-3-5. As a result of the by-law, Neerlandia animals were now restricted. Most male animals were not to run at large or to enter another person's property. Where the property was surrounded by a lawful fence, no animal was to trespass and if other than the owner's animals were found within that fenced-off area, these animals could be brought to the nearest Pound.

The fence, however, had to meet certain regulations. For example, if made with rails or boards it could not be more than eighteen inches from the ground, it had to have posts not more than twelve feet apart; and the number of rails or boards could not be less than four. A wire fence had to have at least three strands on posts not more than sixteen-and-one-half feet apart. There were more regulations the fence had to be eight feet away from grain crops and twenty feet away from haystacks. There were a few variations but the message was clear — make a good fence!

There was also a provision for the protection of animals from dogs. If a dog was off its owner's property and was "pursuing, worrying or destroying cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, or poultry," it could be killed.

After an animal was impounded, the owner could redeem the animal by paying the Pound Keeper for expenses. The amounts that could be charged had been stipulated in 1923 as follows (they were revised from time to time):

For capturing a male animal and bringing it to the Pound	$2.00
To the Pound Keeper for each day that he kept a	
Stallion, bull, jack, or boar	$1.00
Ram or he goat	$ .35
Horse, mule, donkey, cattle, or swine	$ .50
Sheep or goat	$ .20
Goose	$ .10
Other expenses	
For notifying owner	$ .50
For giving notice to the Department in Edmonton	$ .25
For each mile travelled	$ .10
For all notices	$1.00

The maximum to be charged for one animal was twenty dollars except in the case of male animals.

Failure to comply with the ordinance by unlawfully taking animals from the Pound could result in a maximum fine of one-hundred dollars. If a male animal had been removed, there was the possibility of a thirty-day imprisonment instead of the fine.

In August 1933, when Joseph Holwerda was councillor, Chris Leder was appointed Pound Keeper on the SE 4-62 3-5. As Chris Leder discovered, being a Pound Keeper was fraught with problems. He wrote the following letter on September 3, 1936, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs:

> Sir
>
> On August 31, 1936, a bull was delivered to the pound kept by me and as the owner was unknown to the party delivering the said bull I posted a notice as required by the Domestic Animals Act. The next day the owner asked me how he could redeem his bull as he had no money. I advised him the only way according to the act was by getting two sureties as provided in the Sect. 31 of the Domestic Animals Act.
>
> The owner of the bull went to the party who delivered the said bull to the pound and secured a written statement that he would not claim the $5.00 allowed under the Act. As I was not at home being away stooking at a neighbors place he gave this statement to my wife and took possession of his bull without permission and without paying the fees due.
>
> Please advise me on a few questions.
>
> Can I or any pound keeper release any animals impounded without receiving the fees due as set forth in the Domestic Animals Act?
>
> If a pound keeper releases any animals without receiving the fees due, will he commit a breach of the Domestic Animals Act and is he liable to be prosecuted for such action?
>
> If any person takes possession of any animal or animals impounded without permission of the pound keeper and without making payment of the fees due is he committing an act against the Domestic Animals Act and is he liable to be prosecuted?

Should a pound keeper take action in a case like this or could he let the matter go?

Are there any amendments made to the Act after 1932? If so would you supply me with a copy of the amendments and oblige me

Respectfully yours,
C. Leder pound keeper
Neerlandia
Municipal District 610

It is not known what reply Chris Leder received.

In June 1946, Henry Kippers Jr. was appointed by Fred Casavant as Pound Keeper on the NW 16-62-3-5 and remained such until 1955, when Neerlandia became part of the M.D. of Barrhead. In 1956, Joe Tuininga was appointed Pound Keeper by Bill Olthuis. The Pound was then located on the SE 28-61-3-5.

One of the animals brought to that Pound, a 600-pound Hereford steer, was never redeemed. After Joe posted a number of advertisements and a period of time had elapsed, the animal was sold. With the funds, expenses against the animal were paid and the balance was given to the general fund of the Barrhead municipality, since the owner remained anonymous.

Joe remained Pound Keeper until May 1976, when the Alberta government passed a new Stray Animals Act, which made provisions for an inspector to be in charge of stray animals within each County.

* * *

Loose Cattle

The neighbour's cattle would be in my crop every day — I had warned him and even milked his cows, but his boys never cared. So finally I got fed up with it. I walked the cows (about forty of them) to the Pound at Chris Leder's, but the bull refused to go so we put him in a wagon and brought him there. My neighbour was furious — he figured I would get the money he had to pay to get them back. I don't know how he finally did get the cattle back.

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Stuck in the Muck

One thing most homesteaders looked for when they settled this area was the availability of a good water source for their livestock. A creek or small lake served this purpose. Having a small lake or body of water on your land, however, could create some problems since your cattle could get stuck or even drown in them. This problem still exists to a small degree to this day. Most of the local lakes have muskeg all around the edges with virtually no bottom to it. Horses usually were smart enough to stay away from the soft ground but cows seemed to want to see how close they could get. The danger was usually the greatest in the spring since the cattle were longing for some green grass, and the first green shoots usually emerge around the lakes. The cattle would keep going closer to the water's edge as they looked for those new shoots, and then they would break through the frost and down they went. They usually managed to keep their heads above the water but if they remained in the cold water too long they would die of pneumonia.

Mostly, however, there was no way they could get out themselves so they needed help. A horse was quickly harnessed and backed as close to the cow as possible. A chain was then tied around the neck of the submerged cow and to the singletree attached to the harness on the horse. The horse would drag the animal until she was once again safe on firm ground. Planks were often needed for farmers to walk on so they could get close enough to the animal to get a chain on it. The reason you attached the chain to the animal's neck was that this usually was the only part of her body that was above the water. Their necks are pretty tough though and I can't ever recall hurting the animal this way. I can recall one spring when in the 1950s six of our milk cows failed to come home for milking. As there was a lot of bush around yet at that time, we spent a considerable time looking for them. I happened to walk close to the lake, located on the Gordon Tuininga farm now, and there were the six heads sticking out of the water. Boy, did Topsy have to do some pulling that day. If my memory is correct all six cows survived this ordeal without any adverse effects. After that we generally tried to keep our cattle away from the lake until all the frost was completely out of the ground.

Lambert Tuininga

Horses

After using oxen for the first five years, many of the pioneers changed to horses. Some of the early settlers had horses called cayuses which were wild horses that came from the U.S.A. They were generally small, standing thirteen to fourteen hands high, although some were taller. Ike Nanninga and Bill Olthuis often broke horses for others in the area. The horses were used for transportation as well as for fieldwork in summer and to haul firewood in winter. They were thin and always looked tired. In the summer when they could graze, they would put on some weight. In the summer the farmers would cut the little bit of hay that grew and the oats they raised for green feed. The green grain would be cut and stooked, then left to dry. Later it was stacked and the whole bundle was fed to the livestock.

Some suggest that the early settlers bought light horses, weighing around twelve hundred pounds because "the ground was so soft and wet. In the early days, heavier ones would get bogged down in it. After another five or six years the surroundings got more solid, and the farmers figured they should have heavier horses." In any case, in the early twenties, a man called 'Texas' Johnson, who travelled around with a Belgian stallion, brought it to Neerlandia to breed the mares. From this cross between the light mares and the heavier stallion, they raised some fine workhorses, bigger and sturdier than the mares they were from.

Ray Wharton of Shoal Creek had a registered Percheron stallion and for some years his hired hand, Mr. Jardine, "peddled his stud" — he travelled through the district with Wharton's stallion once every week for a few months, stopping at farms to see if the farmers wanted any mares bred to his horse. The fee was two dollars at the time of service, and five dollars when the mare showed signs of being in foal The Anemas raised three colts on their farm that were sired by this stallion

There was also a big roan Belgian standing at stud in the Hoffman's livery barn in Barrhead for a few years. This horse weighed more than a ton

In 1936 the farmers of Neerlandia again thought it was time to improve their horse population They formed an association and got a subsidy under a livestock improvement plan John Anema was elected to house and care for the stallion for three years and then the animal would belong to him The farmers bought a jet black Percheron stallion for six hundred dollars. He was a well-built three-year-old, but not a proven breeder The farmers came to look at him one afternoon when he was brought to Neerlandia One of them, a Groninger, after he had looked the horse over carefully said, (What is his name?) *"Wat is seen noom?"* Someone said, "Roy" This man knew but a few words in the English language so he did not understand it He said, (He had better not be lazy) *"Hij mot naait looi sain."* When he heard the man say, "Roy," it had sounded to him like "looi", which in *Gronings* means lazy The men that heard him had a good laugh over it.

The farmers kept the horse for two seasons but were disappointed with the results. They got only a few colts from this stallion. After trying him out for two seasons, the farmers thought it best to sell the horse. It was later seen that the horse was not at fault. It was lack of exercise that made him perform so poorly A farmer living east of Neerlandia bought him for very little money. He put a harness on the stallion and worked him along with his other horses in the field The result was that before long he got a normal crop of colts sired by the stallion

Since horses do not have a strong constitution, they suffered a variety of ailments A horse that had been overworked or galloped for too long could become wind-broken. A wind-broken horse's breathing could be heard a long way off and it could work for only short periods of time

To overfeed a horse with too much grain, especially when it was not working, could cause it to founder. A horse that was foundered walked stiffly on its front legs and was considered worthless. The stiff walk resulted from the horse trying to protect the swollen, tender underside (frog) of its hooves. Although a hardworking horse needed good feeding to be able to keep its condition, a farmer had to be careful not to feed too much grain to his horses

* * *

If a farmer found his horse had gotten into the granary and overeaten, the suggested cure was to stand the horse in cold water. If the water was deep enough to cover its belly, the fermentation of the grain was supposedly slowed down

* * *

Stall leg, a condition that caused the back legs to swell while standing in the stalls after work, affected some horses This was not a serious ailment and would clear up after exercise Colic was also a common ailment, when a horse was restless and seemed to try to kick its belly the Dr. Bell's bottle would be taken out to treat it

After working in cold weather, a horse would be either brought into the barn or covered with a blanket If a horse was let out of the barn to drink in cold weather, the farmer had to be careful it did not get a chill. Furthermore, a horse had to be left to cool off after working hard before it was allowed to drink If one was not careful a horse could develop pneumonia

Botflies were also a problem and many horses were lost because of botfly infestation. Since there was no veterinarian in the district, livestock diseases usually could not be treated very effectively. Some of the homesteaders, however, were handy with animals and often their home remedies were successful Albert Jan Oldegbers had some experience in raising livestock and he often provided his neighbours with help in treating their sick animals Besides the ever-present Dr. Bell's (a liquid that was administered orally), farmers kept an assortment of salves and ointments which were rubbed on the sores that often developed from the chafing of harness or saddle

The care of a horse's feet was also important Hooves needed to be trimmed to prevent them from breaking. During the winter, horses were sometimes fitted with shoes. Shoes provided stability in icy conditions and enabled horses to pull four or five times as heavy a load Nevertheless, shoeing horses was not commonly done in Neerlandia A horse that was used during the winter would sometimes develop a limp because a piece of ice had formed under the hoof. Chipping this off would soon correct the problem

The grooming of a horse was another part of its care. Many farmers brushed the animal periodically with a currycomb. The mane and tail were trimmed to the length preferred by the owner.

To get a horse ready to work in the field took time First a collar was put around its neck A poorly-fitting collar would chafe the horse's shoulders, resulting in sore spots. A harness was then thrown onto the horse and buckled in place. Next a bridle was put on, first a bit was put into the horse's mouth and then straps were put over its head and ears (some horse's ears were touchy). An important part of the bridle was the blinders, which prevented a horse from seeing what was going on beside it and getting spooked

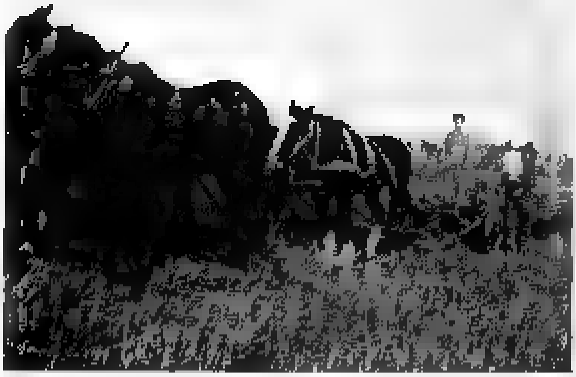
The reins, which were attached to the harness, were snapped onto the bit ring enabling the farmer to control the horse while sitting on his vehicle or equipment. When more than one horse was used the process of connecting them by reins became more complicated. Many farmers used up to eight horses at a time, and controlling them required skill.

When harnessing was completed it was time to hook the team(s) to the implement or wagon to be used Most implements had a pole (tongue) that went between the team of horses The horses were connected to each other with a neck yoke to which the tongue was tied By this means a wagon or implement could be backed up. The horses were attached to the implement with traces that were hooked to a singletree, a doubletree, or an evener When all this was accomplished the farmer would gather the reins in his hands and say "Giddy up!"

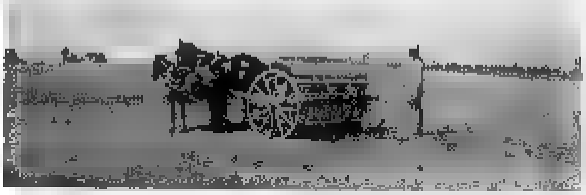
Today there are three groups of horses — draft, saddle, and pony. Draft horses are heavy muscular animals, developed for doing heavy work. Saddle horses are lighter than draft horses and used for lighter work where the horse must move quickly, and for pleasure riding. Ponies are the smallest and are generally ridden by children.

Work horses are no longer used in Neerlandia. The only horses kept are ponies and saddle horses, and these are used solely for recreational riding — a far cry from the pioneer days!

HORSES ON THE FARM



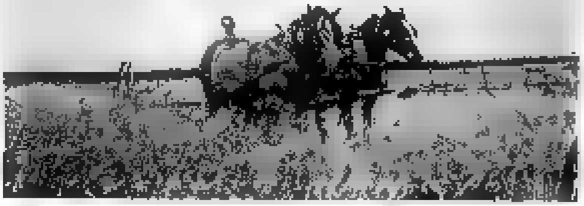
Horses were used for plowing, 1937



Seeding. Hendrik Jan ter Horst.

Pete Kooy cutting hay with mower. Ben Lievers with scythe. 1920s.

Harrowing. Hendrik Kannegieter, 1930s.



Mowing grass. Hendrik Kannegieter.

Raking hay. Henry Michael, 1920s.

Taking hay bundles to the stack, 1950s.

Hogs

Remember the days when newborn piglets were brought to the house in a box (perhaps an old egg crate) and placed by the cook stove to dry off and warm up? And remember how the runt of the litter was taken over by the children to be nursed on a baby bottle? Or perhaps you remember that ornery sow that would not budge until the family dog sank his teeth into her rump and the time your dad had to spend sewing her up again And remember how, after spending all that time and energy to lock her up, you would find the gate to her pen ripped apart and the old girl in the straw stack with her new litter? Those were the good old days

This Little Piggie Stayed Home

During the first years of the settlement, no one in Neerlandia kept a hog. It seems that around 1917 a few farmers such as Willem de Groot, Rienk de Jager, and John Terpsma began raising hogs John had a sizeable herd of six The pigs were probably fed crushed wheat or barley, along with the contents of the household slop pail Around 1920, when farmers began shipping cream, the pigs were fed any extra skimmilk that was available In fact, during the twenties, nearly every farmer began raising hogs, since the arrangement worked very well for anyone who shipped cream

These first hogs were likely mixtures of the red Duroc or mainly-black Berkshire breeds, called lard-type hogs because they have such a large amount of fat They were usually very heavy, and, since they had short legs, their bodies were close to the ground These kind of hogs were favoured by the pioneers because the fat would be used for cooking and baking. The fat off the intestines and the stomach was used for making soap and some women also used the rind in soap-making At least once a year, usually in the fall, one of the oldest sows was butchered for the family's use.

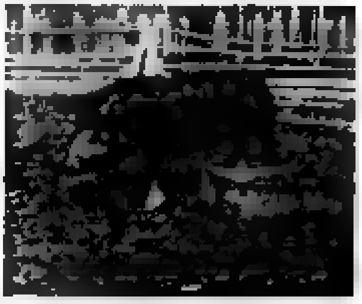
* * *

Bad Day for Hogs

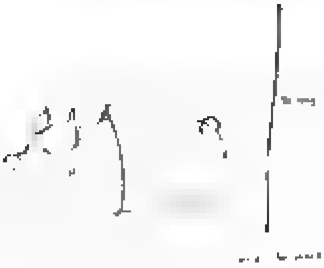
One Neerlandia pioneer was fixing his fence so that his pigs would not get into the garden Soon, though, a pig jumped over the fence "Guess I'll put another rail on," thought the young farmer

After doing that he went into the house, but when he came out again he saw another pig, a sow, trying to jump the fence The farmer, being rather hot-tempered, thought, "I'll fix him!" He took a hammer and hit the pig on the head, but unfortunately killed the pig, so had to butcher it right away Then, while he went to haul water for the rest of the butchering, another pig ate the spleen that was on the ground and choked on it So that farmer lost two pigs that day as a result of his hot temper.

* * *



The two or three sows every farmer owned were usually penned up in a pig pasture enclosed by a rail fence Only a few farmers could afford to keep a boar, so the sows had to be herded or brought to the nearest boar for breeding Henry Kippers Sr owned a purebred white boar. Sows farrowed usually only one litter a year When the farmer saw the sow picking up gabfuls of straw, he knew she was building a nest, preparing for little ones Straw stacks also provided a good shelter for the farrowing sows. What excitement when the sows farrowed one never knew what the piglets would look like and they were always varied in appearance — some had a combination of three different colours on their skin. Litter size varied greatly due to the uncertain farrowing conditions, but a litter of eight or ten was considered very good



Thus Little Piggie Went to Market .

When trucking began out of Neerlandia during the twenties, farmers began shipping hogs to Edmonton Hogs, though, were still only a sideline for Neerlandia farmers, who were shipping mainly cream These hogs were raised for meat, so over the years a leaner animal was developed. Crossbred pigs of the red Tamworth and white Yorkshire breeds were raised as well Both of these are bacon-type hogs since they have more meat than fat on them At one time during those years, the packing plants discouraged farmers from raising mixed breeds because they wanted no hogs with black hair, claiming that black hairs were rooted too deep in the pig's skin

To judge whether hogs were ready for market, many farmers simply eyeballed the hogs. Others used a string that was forty-three inches long to measure the hogs behind their front legs. If the string fit exactly around the pig's body, it was ready for market and shipped One farmer is reported to have had a hole in the barn wall that he used to judge the hogs if they went through the hole, they were too small to ship. One farmer had a gate just the right size for a market hog to squeeze through, any smaller hogs were not ready for market

* * *

Bird Diet

During the 1920s the Tuininga boys caught crows and threw the carcasses into the pig pasture for the pigs to chew on. (The crows' feet were brought to school where the boys were paid a few cents per pair) The pigs got used to eating the crows and soon started attacking the chickens running loose in the pen — they had developed a taste for birds.

* * *

When it was not possible to have grain crushed, it was boiled for the pigs For many years, no minerals were given to the pigs (being outside they got the necessary minerals by rooting in the dirt), but farmers gradually began using additives. One of the first, called tankage, was a forerunner of hog concentrates It began to be produced during the forties (and it stank worse than the pigs). It was sprinkled on the chop, usually with a tobacco tin Raw cod liver oil was given to weaners and to sows due to farrow Reduced iron, a powder, was given to baby pigs when the sow and young were kept indoors or if the piglets looked a bit pale

Even though the pigs kept outside were hardier, they were still subject to some diseases They could contract a type of pneumonia known as "the thumps" and also suffered from erysipelas and atrophic rhinitis Many sows had litters afflicted with smeddies. Besides this, the magpies could make a mess of some razor-backed sows who were weak and skinny from having raised large litters. And on rare occasions a bear would kill a pig.

This Little Piggie is Pampered

By the 1980s there were many changes in hog production specialization had developed Beginning during the sixties, many Neerlandia farmers began raising hogs on a larger scale Barns were built and the hogs were moved indoors. Today many hog barns have been built using the latest technology and with all available labour-saving devices. As the hogs were moved indoors, manure handling progressed from shovel to barn cleaner, to in-ground pits, to lagoons (The smell went from bad to worse but that's progress) Another result of being kept confined is the chance of disease spreading more rapidly among the hogs.

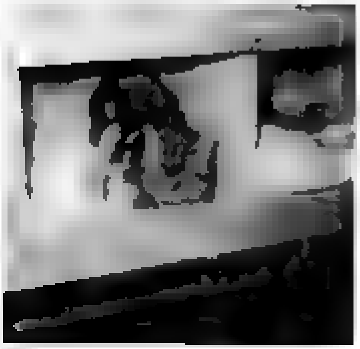
As a result of the latest technology, electric mills have become quite common, grinding and mixing grains and minerals to achieve the proper feed based on feed analysis and computer printouts The result has been the production of a top grade hog Several of the area s farmers have been in the top twenty in the provincial grading while others have entered winning carcasses in the Barrhead Fair

A large number of local hog farmers specialize in finishing hogs, while about one-quarter operate farrow-to-finish operations. The farmers raise crossbred hogs of mainly the Hampshire, Lacombe, Landrace, and Yorkshire breeds. An average hog farmer ships about 1500 finishing hogs a year Besides raising grain hog farming has become a main enterprise of most farmers in Neerlandia.

Poultry

The poultry business in this area started in 1912 when the Oldegbers and the Terpsmas brought a few chickens with them to Neerlandia. There were probably hundreds of wild prairie chickens and ruffed grouse in the bush but domestic birds were few in number In the winter the early settlers kept their few birds in log barns with the cows and horses. The birds would roost on partitions between the animals overnight During the day they would scratch through the straw to pick up whatever grain they could find, and water would be given to them in a pan. The hens laid no eggs all winter. Only after the snow was gone, the yard had started to dry, and the longer sunlight hours had stimulated them, would the hens lay eggs. The first eggs they laid were better-tasting, it seemed, after all the long winter months with no eggs. These birds were dual-purpose, good for both meat and egg-laying.

In the early 1930s Peter Tuininga spotted some beautiful Barred Rocks in the Barrhead area. He convinced the owner to sell him two broody hens and twenty-four eggs. He took them home and, to his surprise, the hens sat well and hatched twenty of the eggs. His flock, one of two flocks north of Edmonton, grew in size. In 1933 he had one hundred of the birds pullorum blood-tested so he could ship hatching eggs from them in the spring of 1934. When the poultry inspector came to collect blood samples, he would cut a blood vessel in one wing of each chicken and when the blood came out he would catch it in a tube. When the job was done he would take the samples back to Edmonton. From there the samples would be sent to Quebec to be tested. One problem was that this work was done late in the year and occasionally the blood would freeze, so the inspector would have to come back for more samples.



Nest Mates

Peter Tuininga decided to try hatching too, so he purchased a one-hundred-egg Buckeye incubator in 1937. In 1938-1939 he added a five-hundred-egg Buckeye incubator. This all seemed to go well, so he went into ROP (Record of Performance) with his poultry in 1940. When he went into ROP he changed breeds to New Hampshire, a reddish bird that laid more eggs than Barred Rock though both were dual-purpose birds. By this time there were other farmers raising poultry. Many other breeds of chickens were sold by Edmonton hatcheries by this time. Some of the breeds were Black Australorp, Black Minorcas, White Leghorn, Barred Plymouth Rock, White Rock, Bantam, and Light Sussex. When the commercial farm and hatchery operations began in the forties there was a gradual change to cross-breeds and soon there were at least as many cross-breeds as pure strains.

In the mid-forties Charles Tiemstra went into ROP with New Hampshires. This meant a lot of work. The chicks were started in brooder houses about 12 by 16 feet in size. In each brooder house a kerosene brooder was used to keep the chicks warm. There were small feed trays and one-gallon water jars to provide food and water. The chicks usually hatched in March and stayed in the brooder houses until the ground was dry and it was warm enough outside to let them out in a fenced pasture.

In late fall government officials would come and spend a day or two going through the entire flock. Each bird was handled individually and had to be nearly perfect. If it had a crooked leg or wing, a wrong colour feather (such as white or black), a slightly crooked beak or breast bone, a side spring on the comb, or any other abnormality, the bird was culled to be used for meat purposes. While the birds were being culled, the approved birds were put on a table, twelve at a time, fastened by wings and legs, and tested for pullorum. The birds that did not have pullorum and were approved as layers for the coming year were banded with a silver leg band. Culled birds were usually banded with a green band. The cockerels would have their combs and wattles cut off as well This operation, done with sharp scissors, did not bother the birds and even increased their performance during winter months since often a bird's comb or wattle would freeze in the cool laying house. The spare cockerels were sold to other hatching egg flocks. Heat was not used in these years to keep the barns warm In the late thirties and early forties artificial light (usually in the form of a coal oil lantern hung from the ceiling) was used for a few hours in the evening just to give the birds a longer day and stimulate egg production

The birds that were on the ROP program were handled with more care and attention because they were worth more money The nests used were trap nests that closed when a hen went into it Nests were checked every half hour to let out the birds who had laid an egg. Eggs were numbered and recorded on charts in the egg room Better-performing birds had many of their offspring kept for the following year The purpose of ROP was to produce birds of better meat quality and birds that laid more eggs in a year.

In the forties and fifties a lot of pullorum was found in some areas of Alberta All birds to be used for hatchery egg supply had to be blood tested and banded The poultry inspectors who came to Neerlandia spent two weeks in the area each time since there were many hatching-egg flocks there (Most flocks were small from one hundred to four hundred birds) By 1975 this blood test was discontinued because the county was declared pullorum-free Gradually the number of poultry farms decreased, although the size of the flocks increased

By the 1980s flock size has increased greatly Barns are warmed by natural gas or coal units. Neerlandia has several white egg producers with all birds in cages two producers hatching eggs for broiler type birds, two broiler producers, one roaster producer, and a started pullet operator

Which mother would you prefer — the goose or the bantam?

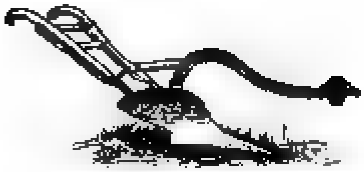
White egg producers keep flocks of 5000-10,000 White Leghorns The chickens are kept in wire or plastic cages which hold from three to six birds each

A bin near the barn holds ten to twenty tons of feed — mostly wheat and supplements and an auger brings it from the bin into the feeders in the barn which are regulated by clocks. When a feeder is full, an electric eye above it shuts it off Each cage has a nipple drinker to supply water.

A bird lays approximately twenty dozen eggs in twelve months They get about thirteen to sixteen hours of light a day and since there are no windows in the barns the farmer can control light for better production Eggs are collected twice a day The eggs roll onto a belt, and a motor by the header pulls the eggs to the front of the row The header has a finger which takes the eggs to the center of the egg table where they are packed into crates.

There is a plastic belt under each row of chickens which collects droppings, the belt is rolled twice a week for cleaning The droppings go into a pit under the floor at the end of the barn, and the pit is emptied every two-and-one-half to three months There is less work involved in this operation than when the farmers had only one thousand birds but had to feed them by hand and clean the droppings out with a fork.

All segments of the poultry industry are controlled by provincial marketing boards and only farmers who have a quota can keep flocks. Imported heavy-cross birds are used for the broiler trade, although there are still some light-heavy crosses (dual-purpose birds) in the country. Besides these domestic birds there are some wild prairie chickens and ruffed grouse and many Hungarian partridges in the area.



Trails and Travel

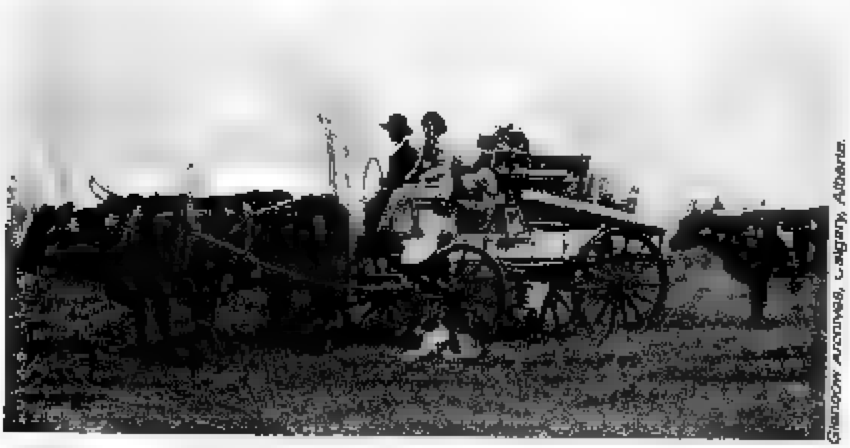
TRANSPORTATION

Dutch Settlement

"Before families from the Netherlands established the farming settlement of Neerlandia in 1912, the area was an isolated wilderness. Transportation routes were poor and water saturated the uncleared land. These harsh realities did not prevent the Dutch settlers from recognizing the potential of the area. Their devotion to Christian values and belief in the Calvinist work ethic contributed to the success of the agricultural industry in the district. Today, model farms and a strong Dutch-Canadian community are the results of their efforts."

If one is travelling west down Highway 18, about six miles past Freedom, he is likely to miss this sign marking an historic site. Another half-mile farther west is a sign indicating that the approach road to Neerlandia, Secondary Highway #769 N., is coming up on the right. Within fifteen minutes, having driven on smooth pavement through rolling countryside, the traveller will have reached the Dutch settlement, an effortless and pleasant drive making it difficult to imagine that at one time coming to Neerlandia was an arduous journey.

Homesteaders.

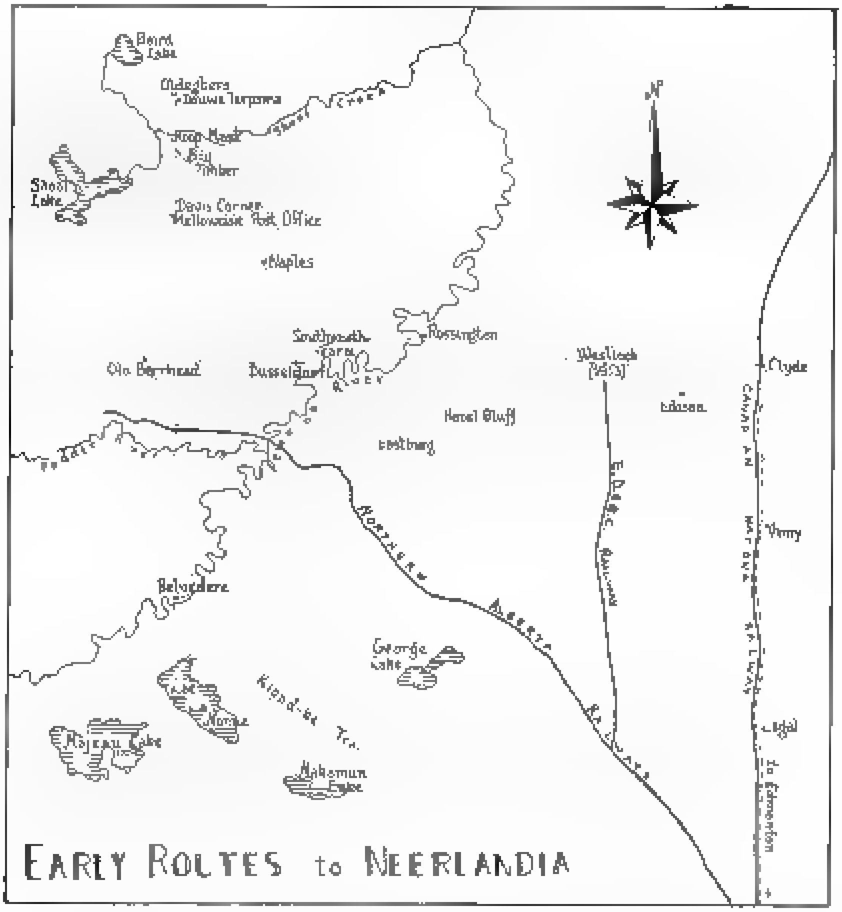


Glenbow Archives, Calgary, Alberta.

During the spring of 1912 three Dutch immigrant families left Edmonton for Township 62, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian. They were Jan and Johanna Oldegbers with their son John, Koop P. and Minke Mast with their son Henry, and Douwe and Beltje Terpsma with five of their children, Florence, Ada, Arthur, Tena, and Norman. It took them approximately two to three weeks to cover the distance of ninety miles. There were many reasons why this journey took so long to complete. First of all, the means of transportation necessitated a slow pace. The families travelled with ox-drawn wagons and the men were inexperienced in handling or driving these animals. The oxen were bought in anticipation of the trip as the people, while they were in the city, went about on foot.

The Jan Oldegbers family and the Koop P. Mast family travelled together to their homesteads. At first John Anema and Simon Tiemstra accompanied them with horse teams. However, it soon

proved impossible to use the horses as they sank into the mud up to their bellies. The two men left the group and returned to Edmonton with the horses. Jan then purchased an ox and a bull to pull his wagon and the group travelled on with two ox-drawn wagons It is believed that they followed the Klondike Trail from Edmonton in a northwesterly direction through Belvedere and continued on the Trail in a northerly direction until they reached Township 60, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian Upon leaving the Klondike Trail they would have gone in a northeasterly direction, probably entering Township 61 through Section 3. This assumption as to their route is based on the likelihood that they travelled basically the same route as the surveyor of Township 62, Allan Findlay, in 1910 He reports going north on a road from the Mellowdale Post Office, which was located at the NE 22-60-3-5. It followed, this road would run into the trail beside which these first three families had their cabins



Douwe Terpsma and his family took a different route to their homestead They took the St. Albert Trail north from Edmonton and then continued on the main road north all the way to Clyde They were only as far as Morinville, however, when they encountered muddy roads. After reaching Clyde they headed west over rough roads and trails through Edison, Rossington, and Dusseldorf. A short distance from Dusseldorf they headed north through the Naples district and then, going cross-country in a northwesterly direction, entered Township 61 through the Big Timber southeast of 14-61-3-5.

The trip for all three families was a nightmare. The trails were winding, going through bush country with sloughs and creeks with no bridges, and on the trail itself were mud holes and fallen trees. Traveling as they did in the spring, the way was more difficult as they had to go through or around the mud holes, sloughs, and creeks rather than pass over them with a sleigh, as was possible in the winter season. Undoubtedly rainy conditions and spring run-off made crossing the Pembina River a hazardous undertaking. All the obstacles encountered meant time spent in unloading the wagons, pulling them through the soupy mud holes or creeks, and then reloading them again. It has been recounted that the Oldegbers group used logging chains and both teams to get a single wagon at a time through the sloughs. Often furniture or trunks would be left behind at a farm or in a shack along the way and most of these possessions were never retrieved.

Stuck on the trail.

B5460/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

In order to lighten the load the women and children, who may initially have had the privilege of riding on the wagons, would have had to walk through the difficult places. Imagine the women holding their skirts up in a vain attempt to keep them from getting soaked and caked with mud. Shoes and stockings were doubtless soggy and wet and, because of this, perhaps the children were allowed to go barefoot at times. In addition the swarms of mosquitoes and other insects made things miserable for man and beast. No regular stopping places are mentioned in connection with those who made this first trip to Neerlandia. It can be presumed that they slept either outside, perhaps under the wagons and maybe the women and children in them, or in empty and abandoned barns or cabins. It is also likely that some help in the way of food and supplies for them and their teams was given by farmers along the way. These families, being faithful to their Christian tradition, did not travel on Sunday, their day of rest. One can easily understand why under these circumstances it was a two to three-week journey from Edmonton to bring them to their homestead quarters in Township 61. Imagine too the condition of these people upon their arrival at their cabins — a weary group with soiled clothing and flesh, whose harder tasks were yet ahead.

The settlers who came later drove horse or ox-drawn wagons and chose to follow the same route as the Terpsmas to come to their homesteads. Due to the experiences of the first families they decided to avoid travelling in the spring. They went through the small towns of St. Albert, Morinville, and Clyde reportedly on "fairly good" clay roads. From Clyde they headed west on a graded road journeying through bush country with fewer settlements. The further west they went the poorer the road conditions became. The first day from Edmonton it was possible to do thirty miles but each day following their mileage would decrease. The distance that could be covered depended a lot on the weather. For example, if it rained on the way, they would take shelter in any building they could find until the sun shone again. Approximately nine miles from Clyde was the town of Westlock and about ten miles farther west was a small town called Rossington. At Rossington the Pembina River had to be crossed. From 1912 to 1916 this was done by riding across on a current-driven ferry. In 1916 a wooden-decked bridge with a steel-structured overhead was built between sections 4 and 9 of Township 60, Range 1, West of the 5th Meridian. This fifteen-foot-wide bridge was built low and was often within inches of being under water during spring run-off. In the winter, if the snow was melted off the bridge, the deck had to be packed with snow before it was crossed. If there was more than one sleigh and team waiting to go across, the teams would be doubled up to pull each sleigh over individually.

After crossing the Pembina, the road followed just north of the course of the river for about six miles to the settlement of Dusseldorf. Until the late 1920s there were a couple of stopping places here used not only on the settlers' first trip to their homesteads, but also on subsequent trips to Westlock and Edmonton. The stopping place most often frequented by the Dutch settlers was the Richard Southworth farm (SE 3-60-2-5). The road went right through their farm, the barn being on one side and the house on the other side. The trip from Edmonton to Dusseldorf could be accomplished in good weather with a team of horses in three or four long days.

Richard Southworth farmyard

* * *

Dolly (Southworth) Fountain was a teenager at the time when the first Dutch settlers went through in 1911 and 1912. Her family provided the landseekers with lodging and also prepared meals for them. Dolly Fountain recalls that some returned with their families a few weeks later and again stayed at their place. Mr. Southworth, who was "religious too", enjoyed the stays of the Dutch and viewed them as nice, good-living people. Dolly remembers a Mr. Mast *holding a worship service in Dutch in their home one Sunday and also times when Dick Baker would play piano during his stays. Elsie (Munsterman) Thompson, whose parents also had a stopping place in Dusseldorf, recalls a Willem de Groot who walked to their place from Clyde with a grandfather clock tied to his back*

* * *

When the train went through to Clyde in 1912 and to Westlock in 1913, many of those who came to Neerlandia could take this faster means of transportation The trip to Clyde from Edmonton took about three-and-a-half hours and from there those bound west could take Marshall's Stage This stage, capable of carrying six to eight passengers and their luggage, was a democrat pulled by a team of mules or horses Around 1915 Marshall also began using a truck with two double seats and a van compartment in the back for the luggage In the winter a covered sled was used for transporting the passengers. Initially the stage went as far as Dusseldorf, where the driver and passengers would spend the night at one of the stopping places. The next morning the driver would return to Westlock Those going to Neerlandia had to walk the remaining fifteen to sixteen miles, carrying whatever luggage they might have

* * *

A Trip To Edmonton

I stayed at home for awhile after George was born (1915) to help Mother, but I had to be back at my job in the city by the fourth of November I had to walk to Dusseldorf to catch the stage I left during the day but I got lost in the Naples area I finally found the right road again, but by then it was late at night My hands were freezing cold and icicles were hanging from my skirt I finally got to a stopping place in Dusseldorf at 2 00 in the morning There was a girl downstairs in the kitchen talking to a policeman. She motioned me upstairs where there was a room with a stovepipe coming through the floor from downstairs. I was so cold I stood beside the stovepipe and wrapped my skirt around it to warm up. I had nothing to eat and didn't sleep much At four or five o'clock I heard the bells of Marshall's stage Charlie Marshall and Johnny Finch were driving the sleigh with mules. It was too cold to sit on the sleigh so I walked behind it to keep warm At Rossington a horse team was waiting on the other side of the river We had to go across by boat, which had to break ice as it went. With the other sleigh we travelled to Clyde, where I caught the train to Edmonton A minister on the train shared his lunch with me

Florence (Terpsma) Baker

* * *

The last part of the trip, which took a day to complete, was the most difficult as the countryside was now covered with timber and the trail was rough, it went around big trees and through sloughs, mud holes, and creeks Ben Lievers relates that they measured the depth of the mud with a long stick to see if it would be safe for the horses to get through Some settlers may have followed a road which went west all the way to Old Barrhead, where the stage route also later ended. Most of them however, seem to have taken a trail northward about one-and-one-half miles west of Dusseldorf. This trail went north to Naples and then in a northwesterly direction to Simon Tiemstra's farm at the NW 14-61-3-5. If they did follow the road to Old Barrhead they would have gone north from there four to six miles, cut east for one mile, and then gone north again at either the Mellowdale Post Office (NE 22-60-3-5) or, after 1914, at the Davis Corner (SE 3-61-3-5). This trail was described by the surveyor Allan Findlay in 1910 as "boggy in a couple of places and somewhat blocked up by windfalls."

No matter where Township 61 was entered, it was acknowledged that the entrance to Neerlandia was the location of Simon Tiemstra's farm. From Tiemstra's north for a distance of approximately three miles the trail was referred to as Jasper Avenue. This was a tongue-in-cheek parallel to one of the main roads in Edmonton. Most of the early settlers lived along this trail and it was the only way into Neerlandia for about sixteen years. It was the heart of the Dutch settlement and so the name proved appropriate. Jasper Avenue was a straight narrow trail with bush on either side and had the inevitable mud holes. The mud holes were quite a nuisance as they could not be gone around and so everyone went through them or tried to. If it rained for a couple of days no one could get through on the trail. When the trail was wet, after a rain or in the spring, it would often happen that the wagons would sink axle deep in the mud. Due to such early road conditions, a team of oxen was preferable to a team of horses. The oxen were better equipped physically to go through soft muddy spots because of their cloven hooves. A horse's hoof, when sank into the wet ground, caused a suction action which made it very difficult for the horse to pull it back out. On the other hand, when an ox sank into the ground it was able to pull itself out. It was physically able and strong enough to, but the question would often be: Did it want to? Simon Tiemstra had to deal with this temperament of the oxen one day. He was on Jasper Avenue about one-and-one-half miles north of his place when his team of oxen, which were hitched to a wagon, got stuck in a mud hole. He used his whip with little effect, as the oxen laid down in the mud hole and would not get up. In his frustration he said: "The evil one is in the oxen and before he gets out of the oxen and into me I will go home." He then walked home and had lunch. After the meal was over his wife suggested that he should go back and get the oxen off the trail. When he returned to the mud hole the oxen had, of their own volition, gotten out of their predicament and were grazing beside the road. Another homesteader commented: "One thing I learned is that an ox will not back up." However, this was probably due to the fact that an oxen team was not fitted with a breeching harness as was a horse team.

Approximately one mile north of Tiemstra's, Shoal Creek flowed through, cutting across Jasper Avenue. At first there were two flattened logs laid across the banks at the edge of the creek for those crossing on foot. During spring run-off the water level would rise and stream over these logs. Another problem when fording the creek were its steep banks. Often the oxen had to be coaxed into entering the water. Once through the teamster would have to goad them into scrambling up the opposite bank. Some people would get off their wagons, ford across on foot, and then the oxen and wagon would struggle across without the additional load. A few settlers would choose to remain on board the wagon while it crossed. Ben Lievers recalled his family's first crossing of Shoal Creek. Alice Lievers was sitting on the wagon with her baby and asked "Where is the bridge?"

"There!" replied Lievers and pointed to a log laying across. "We have to go through the creek."

"Oh, let me off!" she replied.

"Can you walk over that log with your baby on your arm?"

"No! No!"

"Then sit tight and hold on!"

Fortunately they went through without any mishap. Later the creek banks were sloped and a timber bridge was put in. This bridge consisted of two logs about ten feet apart laid across from bank to bank with additional logs fastened on top of them. Often the creek would flood in the spring and be completely impassable.

* * *

Shoes, Boots, and Rubbers

In the pioneer days of Neerlandia, the winters were usually cold with lots of snow. Homes having only one-board floors were cold so most housewives wore felt shoes. In the fall the children got warm footwear, usually moccasins with low rubbers to cover them. If the snow was dry only moccasins were worn — generally with two pairs of socks or stockings and felt insoles in them. But if it was mild weather rubbers were worn over them. Many also wore felt shoes with low rubbers over them. Sometimes shoe pacs were worn. They were of a harder leather and since they had a double sole sewn on the bottom could be worn without rubbers. Rubber boots were usually worn in the spring (and all winter by some people), but were not warm.

Later felt socks with low rubbers came into use and also buckled and lined cloth overshoes to wear over dress shoes. Some people wore several pairs of socks and only low rubbers with felt soles in them.

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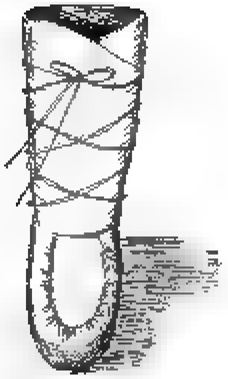
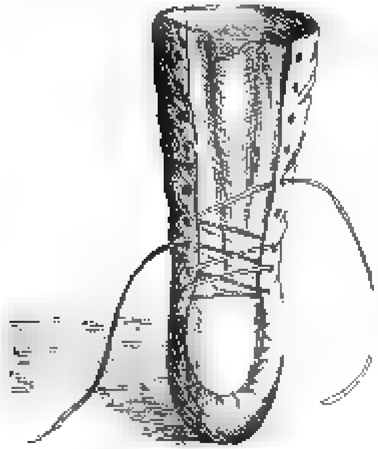
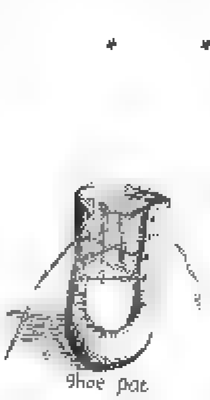


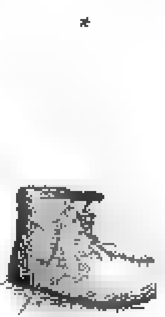
fold-over moccasin



moccasin



shoe pac



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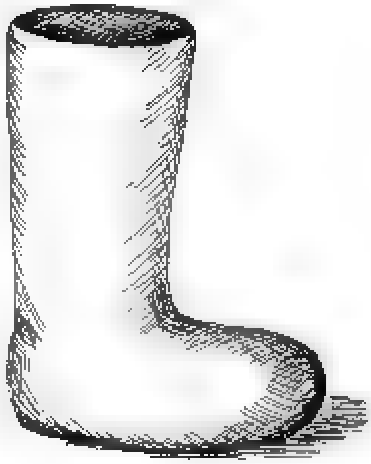
Footwear

In the early years of the settlement many families could not afford footwear for all family members year-round. Out of necessity the children went barefoot from summer until the first frost. The children who had to travel daily to school on foot would often get blisters on their feet. The footwear available was made of leather, canvas, felt, or rubber. Sunday shoes were a real luxury and these black patent leather shoes worn by the girls were generally received through boxes of goods from the Red Cross or The Salvation Army. Wooden shoes, which were worn in the homeland of the Netherlands, were uncommon as the proper type of wood for their construction was not available in the area.

* * *

gum boot


felt boot

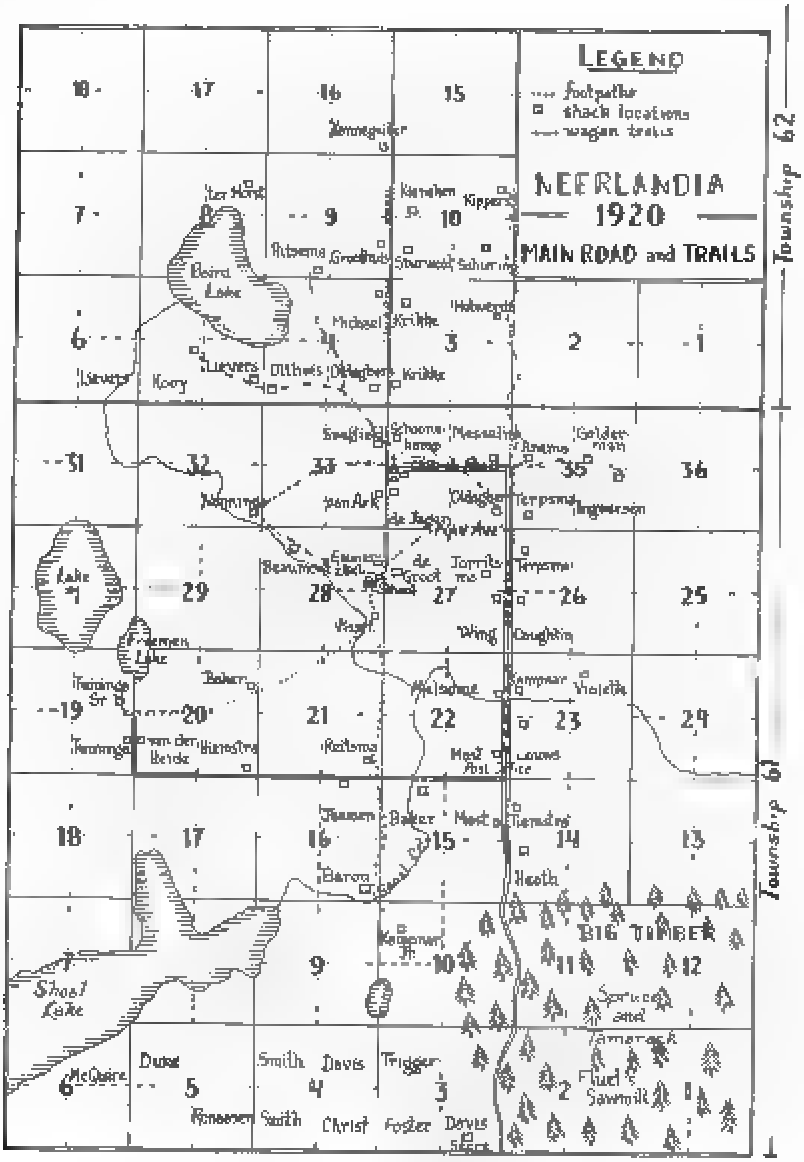
over boot

felt boot

Wooden Shoe

rubber

The original surveys of the land show road allowances every mile north and south and every two miles east and west. A road allowance was sixty-six feet in width but Jasper Avenue and the other early roads were only about twenty feet wide, with about ten feet of dirt down the centre. These roads or trails were meant for one-way traffic. Through the joint efforts of the settlers a roadway would first be cleared of bush with axes, then the stumps would be grubbed, and finally the trees would be burned off. Roots at the base of the trees would be removed, but their lateral roots and also those from trees beside the roadway would be left and occasionally cause problems. The roots would become exposed on the roadway when ruts formed around them, causing the wagons to jolt when passing



over the top of them Due to the hard work involved in making a rough road and the other tasks the homesteaders had to accomplish to even survive, there were only a few main roads. Jasper Avenue went north from Tiemstra's about three miles to the northeast corner of SE 34-61-3-5. The road then went west for a mile to the northwest corner of SW 34-61 This was called the Church Road, since the church was built on the northwest of SW 34-61 in 1915. This road west was a forced road in that it was not on the surveyed road allowance It was decided not to put the road through on the allowance one-half mile north because of the muskeg on the NW 34-61

There was also a short trail from the church to the NE 28-61, when the school was built there in 1918. There was a wagon trail which entered Township 62 at the southwest of section 3, but this was not a main road until much later. East of Section 34 there was a trail chopped out in a fashion typical of other minor trails wherever the bush was lightest This was a winding trail which led to the John Gelderman (NE 35-61) and Case Ingwersen (SE 35-61) farms One more main trail came from the west along sections 15, 16, and 17 of Township 61, and connected with Jasper Ave. at the northeast corner of Koop Mast's quarter (NE 15-61). These were the main routes travelled by the homesteaders, because they were the only ones generally passable They were used to go to the store at Davis' Corner and later to the Co-op store, to church, to school, and to visit one another. The roads were also the settlers' line of communication, as all messages had to be given in person.

Other ways through the Townships were merely rough trails which cut across quarters and would be cut through wherever the clearing would be easiest with little attention paid to road allowances. A good example of this was a trail which cut across the Jan Oldegbers' farm. This trail exited his bush at the northwest corner and went into the NW of 34 at the southeast corner. The trail ended at his married daughter's farm the Schoonekamps'. Other trails were actually only footpaths followed by school children and used by all when the main roads were impassable by wagon There was one footpath given the name of Pine Avenue which went west from Jasper Avenue along the southern edge of 34-61 to the school at the NE 28-61.

* * *

A good illustration of what could happen when one did not follow a trail and attempted to take a shortcut occurred in the early twenties Henry Kannegieter decided to cut through the muskeg south of section 35-61-3-5. He was on foot and before long found himself stuck in the bog He became frightened and start yelling for help. Fortunately Jan Oldegbers was haying in the area and heard Henry's cries. Upon his rescue Henry expressed his fear that he had imagined himself stuck for good and that he would never see "my Mina", his wife, again

* * *

When the Church Road was built one-half of a mile south of the surveyed road allowance, Rients de Jager and Jan Oldegbers each donated four acres of their land for the roadway. It initially went as *far as Jasper Avenue but later farmers further to the east wanted the road to continue to their farms. To keep the road straight, the farmers on the south side of the road would have to give up some of their land. So Joe Holwerda came to Douwe Terpsma and asked if he would give the four acres needed to build the road. Douwe was willing, but he already had two acres cleared there and a fence up along the boundary of his quarter. Joe said they would give him two wires back for a new fence. Since Jan Anema would have the benefit of keeping Terpsma's original fence, he agreed to place a rail along the top of the new fence. The rail was needed so moose would see it and jump over the fence instead of through it. The road was put through to John Gelderman's homestead (NE 35-61-3-5), but the new fence never had more than two wires.*

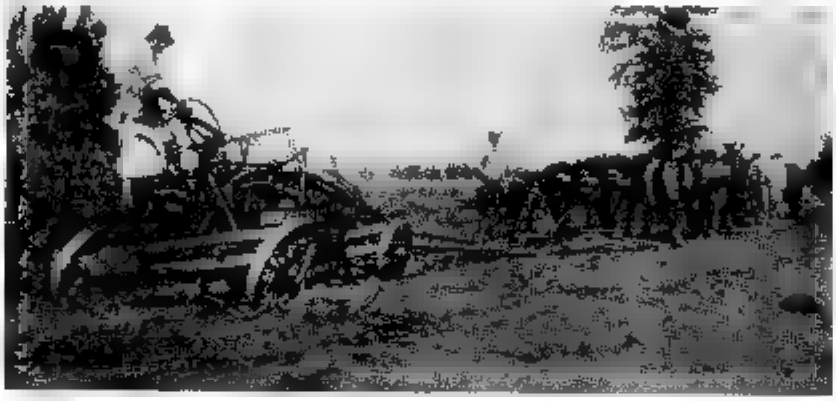
* * *

Until 1928 Neerlandia was under the jurisdiction of Local Improvement District (L.I.D.) of Shoal Creek #610. Road foremen would be appointed by the provincial government for the various areas within the L.I.D. In Neerlandia Joe Holwerda became the first road foreman and he was responsible for looking after road improvements. The L.I.D. would supply the equipment needed and initially this was a horse-drawn grader and a scraper. Grading in the settlement began around 1918 and the Church Road and Jasper Avenue were the first roads worked on. First of all a furrow would be plowed about fourteen feet from the centre on each side of the roadway, creating a v-shaped ditch. The grader would then bring the dirt up to the centre of the road and level it. This extra dirt down the centre and the furrows on each side of the road would serve to give the road some elevation.

Generally three men and three teams of horses would be hired for the grading job. Two four-horse teams, handled by one or two drivers, would pull the grader on the straight pull and a two-horse team with one teamster would be on the side hitch. Before the use of leaning wheels on graders, the graders had a tendency to go out of line as the blade would pull the hind end of the grader over. The team on the side hitch, which was hooked toward the back of the grader, had to compensate for this by pulling in the opposite direction. These horses had to walk a bit sideways whenever the side draft became too strong and if the same team did this job for more than a few days the hair would wear off their legs and open sores would develop. The man driving the side hitch team had to walk all day whereas the driver (or drivers) of the straight pull teams would be able to sit or stand on the grader. Joe Holwerda stood on the grader and operated the two fair-sized wheels, which controlled the depth and slant of the blade, also known as the moldboard.

* * *

The story is told that Arthur Terpsma was driving his father's team on the side hitch for one whole week. When Douwe saw what his horses' legs looked like he said: "No more — or not again until the sores are healed." This of course caused a standstill until Jacob Olthuis agreed to drive the side hitch team. After a week he too thought it should be someone else's turn. The next morning, an *hour earlier than regular starting time Jacob hitched his team to the straight pull and sat down on the seat and waited patiently When John Anema, who usually drove a straight pull team, arrived he was quite surprised to see Jacob sitting in his seat. Soon anger overtook the feelings of surprise and it took Holwerda about an hour to straighten things out and begin the grading*



Leaning wheel grader. Sophie Anema, Joe Holwerda on grader, c. 1931.

* * *

Often a scraper, which was similar in appearance to a big scoop shovel with two handles and pulled by two horses, would be used to fill the road holes. This scraper with two handles was called a slip and could move one-half of a yard of dirt at a time A scraper with a single handle and pulled by four horses was called a fresno. Dirt would be scraped into the bucket from the ditch or a field and dumped into the hole

Leaning wheel grader.

A road drag was used periodically to smooth the ruts created by wet conditions. A drag was made of timbers and had a blade attached to it The blade could be angled a bit with levers The grader, which was shared with other areas in the district, was not always available and the road drag was used as a substitute It could be operated by one man with a team of horses, which made it easier

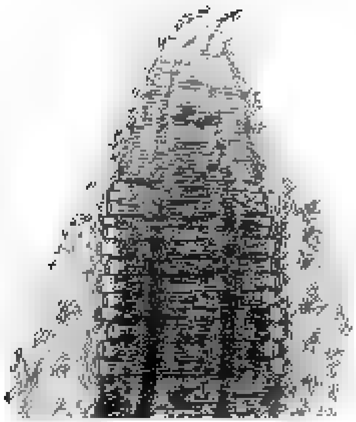
and more convenient to use than a grader when the need arose. Many different men operated the drag, as maintaining the roads was a community effort. The men and horses who worked on the roads were paid by the province's Public Works Department.

Grading was done when the roads were dry; the grader was not used to push snow. In the winter some people would make their own snowplows or the snow would just be packed down with use. Due to all the bush, drifting was not a problem. In relation to road conditions the presence of frost for six months of the year was a blessing, as it eliminated the problem of travelling through mud. In spite of these early efforts toward road improvement, the going was still rough and slow. A good illustration of this was the fact that it would take the Tiemstras an hour-and-a-half to get to church from their home — a distance of three-and-one-half miles.

State of roads early spring.

B690/E. Brown/Provincial Archives of Alberta

A lot of the roads or trails went through muskeg and swampy ground with poor drainage. Corduroy roads were constructed in these areas. During the winter sixteen to eighteen-foot poplar or tamarack logs, four to ten inches in diameter, were cut and hauled to the road site. They were laid side by side crosswise on the road and the following summer the logs would be covered with dirt using the scraper. These corduroy roads would be about sixteen feet wide so that two wagons could pass each other.



At first the corduroy made a firm roadbed, looked quite impressive, and could hold heavy vehicles. But the ground all around was usually wet in the spring and summer due to the continuous problem of poor drainage and heavy bush, and even the v-shaped ditches would be filled with water. With such conditions it was natural that the logs on the road would gush up and down when the wagons and horses would go over them. The corduroy was not bad when crossed on foot, but was hard on horses and also on the passengers in the wagons. Riding on the corduroy could be likened to being in a churn, and if the wagon hit a big pole a passenger could be bumped right off the wagon. Women who were pregnant es-

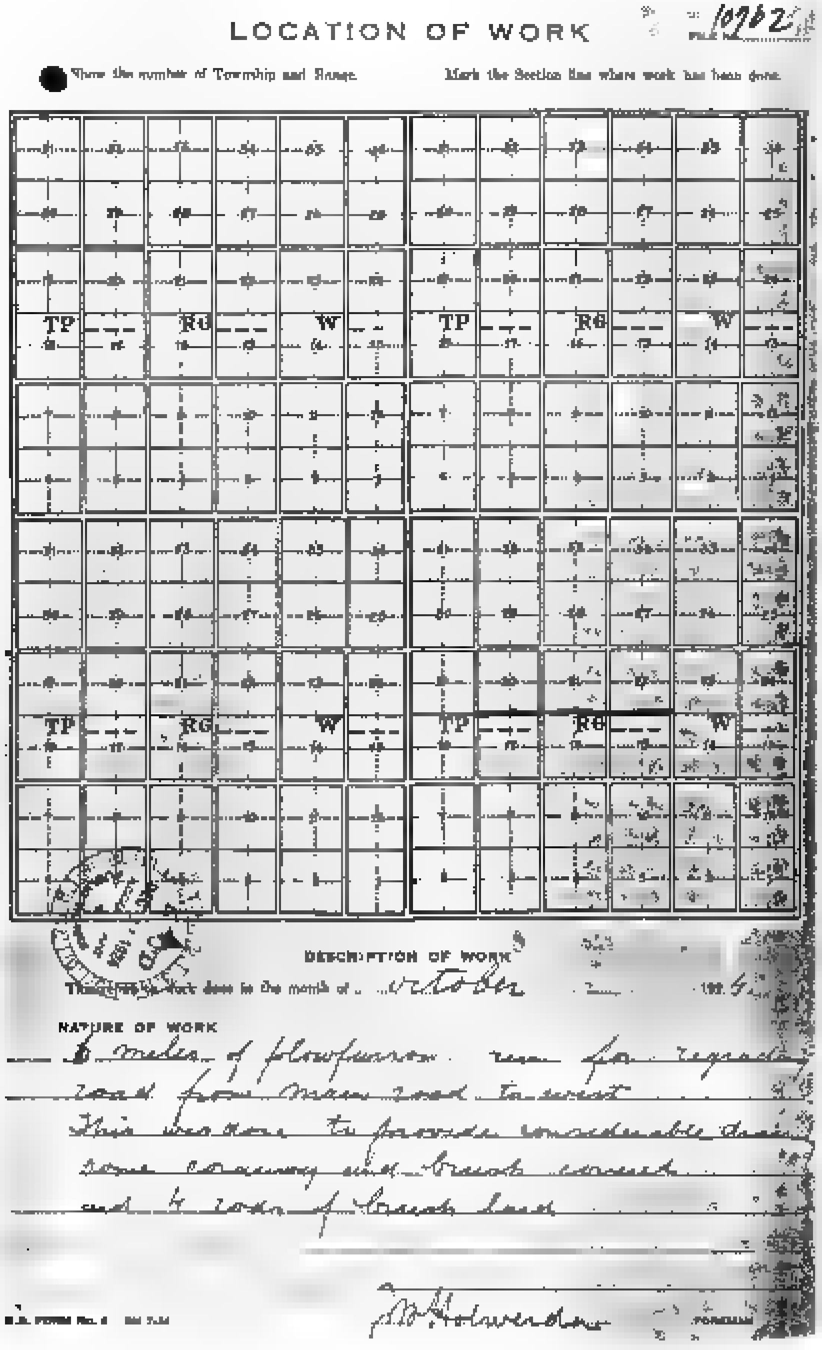
pecially felt the discomfort of being jostled and bumped about while riding on these roads, and would often remain home towards the end of their terms

After several years some of the logs would rot, causing a hole in the corduroy When a wagon wheel sank into one of these holes it would be firmly stuck and the corduroy would have to be repaired. There was one stretch of corduroy, along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 to the southeast of 21-61-2-5, which was not covered with dirt and for years was left bare This was due to the lack of government funds for road improvements Because of general hard times. many found it difficult to pay their taxes. As a result some farmers paid their land taxes by deducting their road work hours from their tax bill

Corduroy roads.

A4808/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Joe Holwerda would call meetings during L I D. years to hear suggestions for road improvements for the upcoming year The farmers would then lobby for the roads which they thought important At one such meeting it was pointed out that the above-mentioned stretch of corduroy should be covered Holwerda said: "Yes, that corduroy should be covered this year" Ben Lievers reportedly responded by saying; "A child knows that, but will it be covered?" It was no doubt difficult for Holwerda to decide what was always the fair thing to do for all concerned. Being a bachelor, it was known that Holwerda enjoyed visiting those farmers who had daughters. It was a fact that a lot of work was done on the east-west road which ran north of sections fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen in Township 61. This road led to the farm of Klaas Tuininga, who had seven daughters.



LOCATION OF WORK

10262

Show the number of Township and Range. Mark the Section line where work has been done.

TP RG W TP RG W

TP RG W TP RG W

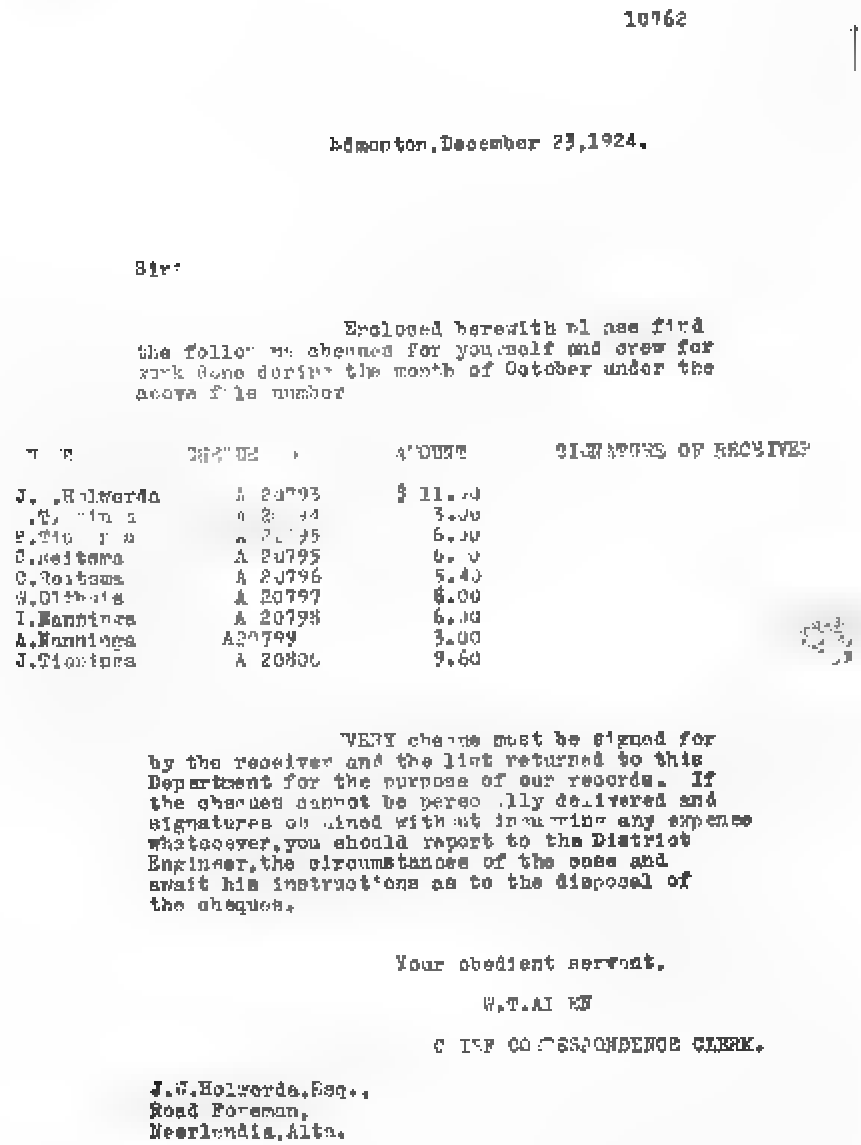
DESCRIPTION OF WORK

[illegible] work done in the month of October 193 4

NATURE OF WORK

6 miles of plowfurrow run for regrading road from main road to west. This was done to provide considerable drain some clearing with brush covered and 4 rods of brush laid

J. W. Holwerda FOREMAN



10762

Edmonton, December 23, 1924.

Sir:

Enclosed herewith please find the following cheques for yourself and crew for work done during the month of October under the above file number

NAME	CHEQUE NO.	AMOUNT	SIGNATURE OF RECEIVER
J. [illegible] Holwerda	A 20793	$ 11.[illegible]	
[illegible]	A 2[illegible]94	3.00	
P.Tie[illegible]	A 20795	6.00	
C.Reitsma	A 20795	6.00	
C.Reitsma	A 20796	5.40	
W.Olthuis	A 20797	6.00	
I.Banninga	A 20798	6.00	
A.Nanninga	A20799	3.00	
J.Tiemstra	A 20800	9.60	

EVERY cheque must be signed for by the receiver and the list returned to this Department for the purpose of our records. If the cheques cannot be personally delivered and signatures obtained without incurring any expense whatsoever, you should report to the District Engineer, the circumstances of the case and await his instructions as to the disposal of the cheques.

Your obedient servant,

W.T.AI[illegible]EN

CHIEF CORRESPONDENCE CLERK.

J.W.Holwerda, Esq.,
Road Foreman,
Neerlandia, Alta.

* * *

Pay List

Edmonton, August 19th, 1926.

Sir

I am enclosing cheques for yourself and crew covering work done during the month of June 21st. to July 17th under the above file numbers.

Name	Cheque No.	Amount	Signature of Receiver
J. W Holwerda	57447	$104.00	
J. Olthuis	57448	10.80	
W. Olthuis	57449	50.80	
W. Lievers	57450	25.65	
B. Lievers	57451	24.75	

V. Vrikke (sic)	57452	14.85
A. Nanninga	57453	33.70
H. Schoonekamp	57454	19.80
A. Emmerzael	57455	34.65
L. Sturwold	57456	29.70
C. O. Anderson	57457	14.85
O. Bonstrom	57458	14.85
J. Brand	57459	8.10
J. Howey	57460	27.40
J. W. Gelderman	57461	11.00
E. Reitsma	57462	16.00
S. Howey	57463	19.80
G. Tiemstra	57464	19.80
A. Tiemstra	57465	9.60
J. Reitsma	57466	11.40
H. Hiemstra	57467	22.05
H. Kippers	57468	21.60
W. Olthuis	57469	33.60
C. Ingwerson (sic)	57470	2.50

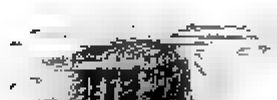
Every cheque should be signed for by the receiver and the list returned to this Department for the purpose of our records If however, any of the above cheques cannot be personally delivered within ten days, and without entailing extra expense the cheques should be returned to this Department along with the list.

Your obedient servant,
W. T. Aiken
Chief Correspondence Clerk.

J. W. Holwerda, Esq.,
Road Foreman,
Neerlandia, Alberta.

* * *

Another method of solving the problem of washouts in the low areas was the construction of culverts made of tamarack First the men hired for the job would go to the bush to cut down the logs needed and drag them with horses to the roadside Then they would dig a square trench across the road. Next, the two sides of the trench would be lined with logs which were nailed together and then braced. Crosspieces were attached to the top which would be covered again with logs Finally a slip pulled by two horses was used to cover the logs with dirt The culverts would be of varying sizes depending on the size of the washout. These culverts would sometimes be of little help. They froze up tight during the winter, and then during the spring break-up the water would run across the road on either side of the culverts rather than through them. These places caused a problem for anyone travelling with a loaded wagon because the wagon was bound to get stuck against the culverts.



Pole culvert.

By about 1920 the majority of the settlers had switched from oxen to the use of horses for work and travel. They were ridden bareback or with a saddle, and pulled the various wagons Around 1918 a livestock dealer travelled through the area and bought up some of the oxen for the slaughterhouse The settlers in turn bought horses Case Ingwersen sold all his cows in trade for a narrow-rimmed wagon and a team of horses. This was considered an improvement since horses have a higher level of intelligence than oxen and moved along at a faster pace As with the oxen however, the Dutchmen were inexperienced in handling the horses. At the time there was a higher demand than supply of good farm-raised horses. As a result a lot of horses would be shipped in from the prairies and border towns such as Coutts and Sweetgrass and then would be sold at local auctions The men from Neerlandia generally bought their horses at auctions in Barrhead or Westlock.

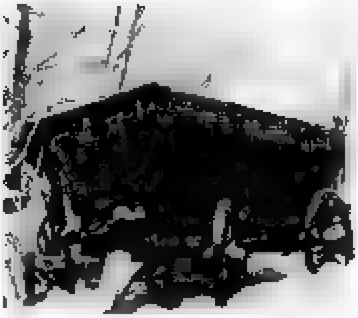
* * *

Some Horse!

Bill Olthuis, in a conversation with Albert M Mast Sr., suggested that one horse was able to maneuver better than another in muddy conditions. Albert agreed, "You know that white mare I had? That horse could walk through a plate of soup without touching the bottom."

* * *

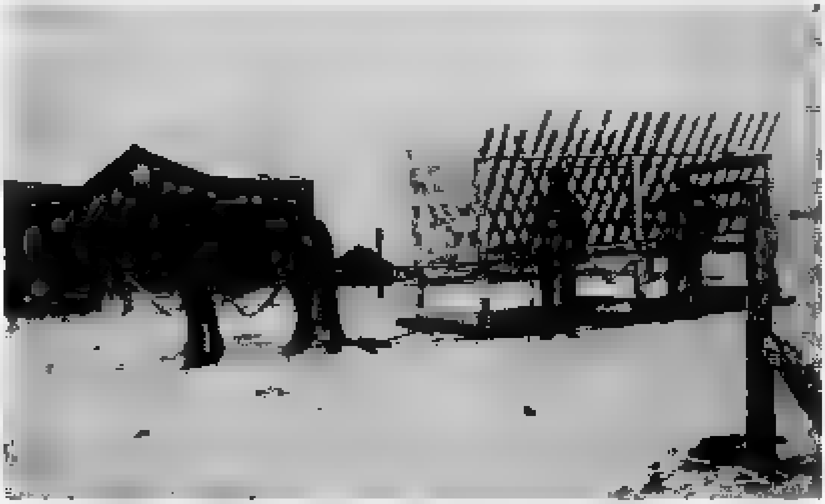
The horses bought at the auction sales were generally smaller than a farm-raised horse, were quite young, and were not broken to any type of work. A horse that appeared quiet at a sale often would later prove to be quite frisky Some of these horses broke very well and others gave their owners more pain and grief then they were worth They would kick and bite, and strike out with their front hooves so fast that a person would find it difficult to get out of the way on time One man had his pipe knocked from his mouth by a flying front hoof. Henry Michael reportedly harnessed his horses through a barn window for fear of getting kicked and Ben Lievers would call on his neighbour Jacob Olthuis to harness his green-broke team. Some individuals no doubt felt that the earlier major means of transportation, shank's mare that is, on foot, had its advantages In all fairness to the horses, it should be noted that a balky horse's behavior may have been a reaction to an irritation which the farmer was unaware of because of his inexperience. Perhaps it was a collar that did not fit properly or the horse had sore shoulders and was required to pull a load which was too heavy for him. Flying insects also troubled the horses. In bright weather and in the mornings the sandflies would be quite bothersome In the evenings and in cloudy weather it would be the mosquitoes. If it was a sunny day the bull flies would appear. Bill Olthuis recalls that one night his horses walked around his cabin all night They wanted to come in to escape the mosquitoes Sometimes horses would seek refuge in abandoned buildings to get away from the flies Once it happened that two of Dave Tuininga's horses wandered onto Oene Piers' land (SE 28-61-3-5) and into an empty house there The door shut behind them and they could not get out. A few days later they were found dead by Oene. At other times a horse would be found alive in an abandoned house After tramping around inside for a while it would weaken the floor and fall through into the dirt cellar. When found such a horse would be helped out and the owner would be relieved to have his horse back safe and sound In spite of such occurrences and other mentioned problems, horses were invaluable to the settlers. They played a major



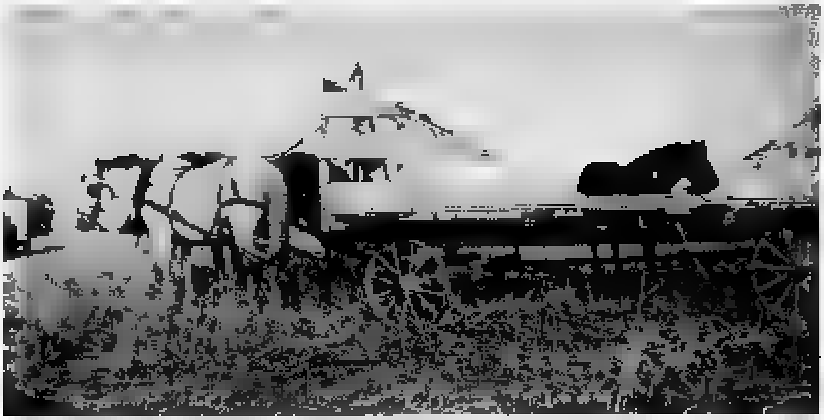
Grain wagon.

role in the development of Neerlandia. Their endless work helped to build the roads and clear the land. In addition they hauled feed and firewood, skidded logs and brought them to the mill, and transported the grain and produce to market.

There were a variety of horse-drawn vehicles used in Neerlandia from about 1918 until the early 1950s. The most frequently utilized was the farm wagon. Primarily it was used for hauling feed, produce, grain, and whatever else a farmer needed brought from one place to another. If the wagon was employed to haul grain, extra boards would be fastened to the top of the wagon box. This six to twelve-inch extension would enable the box to hold about sixty-four bushels of grain. The entire wagon box could be removed and a purchased grain tank, which had sides that flared at the top over the



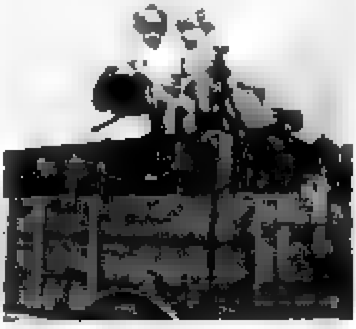
Hay rack.



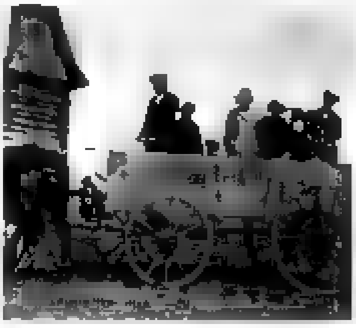
Bundle rack.

wagon's wheels, could be placed on the frame. If the grain was hauled in the winter, which was the easiest time to travel, the grain tank was placed on a bobsleigh and was pulled by a team of two or four horses. The grain tank could hold up to one hundred and fifty bushels of grain, which would be hauled to Westlock or, in later years, to Barrhead. The local farmers reportedly were a bit envious of Chris Voight, a Mellowdale farmer, who in 1924 had a huge grain tank capable of holding approximately two hundred and fifty bushels. During harvest the wagon box was removed and the wagon fitted with a hayrack onto which the bundles would be pitched. The wagon frame could also be fitted with a flat rack. The wagon's seat was built in such a way that its right side had a bit of a spring to it and did not jar as much when the wagon would bump along. Sometimes the wagon's single front seat had a regular spring beneath it. The seat could hold three people and if there were more in the family they sat in the box behind.

Eventually a few families acquired buggies or democrats to ride in. A buggy had a frame on springs and had a single seat. A democrat had a frame on springs but had a longer box than a buggy and had two seats. The rear seat could be removed, leaving a larger space in the back for carrying more people or other things. The Klaas Tuininga family had a large democrat, like a stagecoach, which had three seats on it. None of the buggies or democrats used in Neerlandia were covered and so the settlers had to protect themselves from the elements in whatever way they could.



Wagon seat

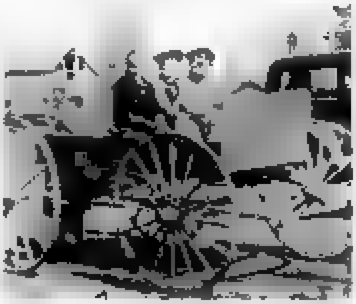


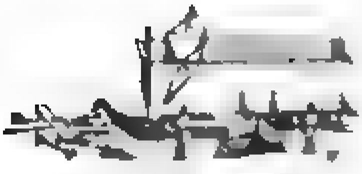
Going to church by wagon. Lievers family, Henry and Gladys Strydhorst, 1930.

Democrat. Schoonekamps ready to leave.

Buggy.

In the winter the wagon box was removed from its wheeled frame and was placed on runners for going through the snow. These sleighs, which had four runners, were called bobsleighs and had all the uses of the farm wagon. Cutters, which were about half of the size of a bobsleigh, were also used. Whereas bobsleighs were bought, cutters were often homemade. Lightly-built cutters were drawn by one horse and larger and heavier sleighs were drawn by two horses. The advantage of a cutter over a bobsleigh was that it was small and cozy with a high back and front to break the cold winds. In the winter many people would put a large stone in the oven of the wood stove on Saturday night in anticipation of going to church on Sunday. By Sunday morning the stone would be quite hot and would then be wrapped in a blanket and placed in the cutter. The family would wrap a large blanket around themselves and the stone. They would be kept fairly comfortable with the heat from the stone, even in very cold weather.





A large barn had been built on the church property with about thirty double stalls. The horses were tied in the barn during the service. Although the barn was cold, the animals were sheltered from the biting cold winds. On very cold days the horses did not like to stand waiting very long. After being in the barn for an hour and a half they were anxious to get going and would be fidgety. If one happened to have a team with a reputation for running away they had to be held with a tight rein on those cold days.

Cutter

Reka Lever's cutter

Many of the horses were green-broke. When these animals were hitched together as a team, they had to be watched very closely or they would go on a runaway. Horses can be spooked very easily and things such as birds, little rodents, and certain noises might also send them on a runaway. A quiet ride could quickly turn into a frightening experience. The wagon would creak and crack as it was bumped over the rough roads and the driver and passenger had to hang on tightly. A runaway team would race on with their heads held high until they either ran out of wind or ran off the road and become stuck in a fence or in trees beside the road. Then, after stopping and coming to their senses, they would behave as though nothing had happened. By the time the horses had stopped, however, the harness and whatever they were hitched to would likely be tattered or in pieces. Occasionally a brave person would stop a runaway team by jumping up, grabbing the bridle, and pulling down one of the horses' heads until the team slowed down and stopped. One horse on a runaway reared up and snagged himself on a wagon which was traveling in front of him. The horse received a large hole in its chest from this accident and died from its injury. The children were also aware of the dangers of a runaway. George Anema recalls that several times when he was a child on his way to school, a runaway team would be seen coming down the road at full speed. The children would yell "Runaway!" to warn other children on the road. They would all scurry to safety some distance from the roadside. Locally the most well known runaway occurred along Jasper Avenue one hot July day in 1924. Case Ingwersen was on his way south to get the mail. Suddenly his horses bolted and went through the ditch beside the road and he fell out of the wagon. As he fell his legs got caught in the spokes of one of the wagon wheels and were broken.

* * *

What Horse?

In the early thirties, one recent immigrant who had a large family and no transportation to go to church came to Dad. He borrowed a horse so that his whole family could go to church. That way the old lady could also go to church because she couldn't walk that far. When springtime came Dad said, "You better get that horse, we need it again."

So I went down to his place and said, "Ik kom het peerd ophalen *(I come to pick up the horse.)"*

*"*Wat,*" he said, "*Peerd? Ik heb hem al lang op. *(What horse? I finished (eating) him a long time ago.)"*

I said, "What?"

"Ja," *he said,* "Wel, ik had geen gebruik voor hem meer. *(Well, I didn't need him anymore.)"*

I can tell you I was really angry but Dad said, "No, never mind. We don't know nothing about it. Let it go." Then I thought I would ask about the cutter, because I had built that myself.

"We used that for firewood," was the reply.

Sometime later he came over and asked, "Heb je ook nog stro? *(Do you still have straw?)"*

Dad said, "Wel, je hoef toch geen hooi voor een dooi paard. *(You certainly don't need hay for a dead horse.)"*

"Nee," *he said,* "Maar wel voor een levenden koe. *(No, but you do for a live cow.)"*

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Runaway Horses

In the early days in Neerlandia, the people would ride to church in a buggy or cutter. One Sunday after church, my dad hitched his horses to the cutter. This cutter had two seats. George, my youngest brother, was with Dad in the front seat. Mrs. A. Wierenga quite often rode with us. So Mother Terpsma and Mrs. Wierenga were in the back seat. They had gone but a short distance, when Gerben and Trientje Tiemstra caught up to them also travelling in a cutter. They had a sleigh bell on the harness of the horse. This bell seemed to frighten my dad's horses and they took off in high speed. The idea of getting out of the cutter as quick as they could seemed to strike both ladies at the same time — both of them rolled out of the sleigh — one on either side. When Gerben saw this he stopped until my dad could control his horses.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Another Runaway Team

Ekke Wierenga and his sisters went blueberry picking years ago. When they got close to the Athabasca River going down a hill, the horses bolted. Wierenga said to his sisters, "Remain seated, I will control them when we get down the hill." But one of his sisters, Johanna, doubted this and feared they might land in the river so she jumped overboard and while she was doing this her dress hooked on a nail. This ripped her dress from top to bottom. After having this pinned up, they went berry picking.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

A well-trained horse or team of horses hitched to a cutter or sleigh needed very little attention. They would jog along at a steady pace and if they met another sleigh they would pass of their own accord and then go back into the traffic lane. Often a team would be given free rein, enabling the driver to cover himself with his blanket. The horses would stop when they reached home. On one cold night Norman Terpsma gave his team free rein as he snuggled down in his blanket for a sleep. Norman awoke with a start to find himself on a neighbour's yard. The horses had lost their direction

and had wandered onto the neighbour's yard Unfamiliar with the grounds, they had brushed into the side of the neighbour's barn causing the wagon to jar against it

* * *

In the late twenties several men, travelling by car, went to a horse auction at a stockyard on 116th Street in Edmonton This sale was larger than the ones they usually attended in Barrhead and Westlock. The horses came from southern Alberta and most were unbroken About twenty horses of varying sizes, ages, and colours were bought by men from Neerlandia and neighbouring areas John Kippers, Ike Nanninga, and Bill Olthuis volunteered to drive the horses home The three men each picked a likely-looking horse to ride. Bill first chose a nice-looking gray, but it proved to be unbroken and he soon chose another As soon as they were ready to go the horses were turned loose That was fun! The horses scattered in all directions with Bill, Ike, and John in pursuit Some of them got into farmer Janssen's stooks (where the municipal airport now is). Eventually the horses were all rounded up and headed out of the city Men and horses were accompanied by Jack Tuininga and Joe Holwerda, who went by car. Along the way, one of the horses went down a side road, and Joe and Jack went after it with the car and brought it back. Outside the city, the likelihood of the horses wandering away was minimized since the roads were fenced in, so Jack and Joe motored home Travelling down the roads and trails with the horses was not a problem because traffic was light At night the men would stop at a farmer's place After they had given the horses oats bought from the farmer and had watered them, the men would bed down outside with the horses. The trip home took three days with stops to deliver horses at Lunnford, Barrhead, Mellowdale, and Naples

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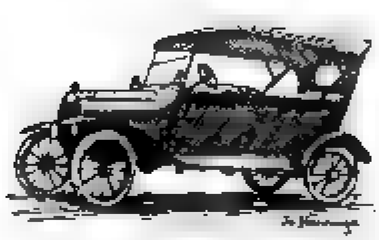
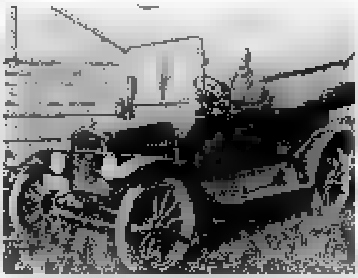


In the early twenties, a few cars were bought by the residents of Neerlandia One of the first cars was bought in 1923 by John Terpsma This car, as did the other early cars, served a good purpose in emergencies. John's car was used to take Ingwersen to the hospital after his runaway accident When some people saw the first cars they reportedly said "We are not up to that here yet We better stay with horse and buggy for awhile " There were many reasons why the majority of Neerlandians did not own a car for another two decades A primary factor was the condition of the roads Although the roads had been improved somewhat by grading, and better timber bridges had been built over Shoal Creek on Jasper Avenue and on the road going west from Koop Mast's place, the cars and trucks ran into constant difficulties The main road problems were the mud holes and the general wet conditions in the spring and summer. Due to poor drainage and low spots, the ditches would fill with water. There was no way that a car or truck could get through these places without being pulled by a team of horses The general impassability of roads in spring and summer was experienced by John Olthuis, who ran a freight hauling truck from 1923-24. His brother Bill would have to go with his team and pull John's truck through a mud hole just south of Jasper Avenue. Bill would then go cross-country and pull John through another mud hole just west of Naples Road on Highway 18. This was typical of conditions that existed for almost twenty more years. Fred Toebes, whose parents homesteaded the NW 10-62-3-5, recalls living alongside the main road from Neerlandia to Vega in the early 1930s. "The road at that time was no more than a dirt trail, which had been plowed up and levelled a bit by using a drag pulled by horses. This road served very well for horse-drawn traffic, but when the first cars and trucks came into the country these dirt roads presented many problems. I remember well one really bad mud hole just a little north of our gate, in which every vehicle would get stuck. Whenever I heard a car or truck coming down the road I would run to this mud hole and hide in the bush and watch all the action. With poles cut from the roadside trees and with much pushing and prying, the vehicles would be freed and on their way. I would then return home and wait for the next vehicle to come along. From some of these encounters, I picked up a whole new vocabulary which I was forbidden to use, even on the dog."



Hendrik and Willemina ter Horst.

ACAB3/Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Scenes like this were common in wet weather, 1930s. Note ear bonnets worn by the horses to give them some protection from the sandflies which would swarm in and around their ears. The coverings were sewn from flour sacks and enclosed each ear in a cloth sheath.

Due to the combination of rough roads and the poor quality of the tires, which tended to bruise easily, there were many flat tires. Fortunately the first cars were provided with tire repair kits. Other needed repairs were usually makeshift and reflected the ingenuity of the car owner. Other deterrents to buying a car were the cost factor and the unavailability of fuel. Some of the first car owners would try to run their cars on coal oil when they could not get gas. When the Depression years came all these problems were accentuated. Few could afford to run their cars and some would set them on blocks in their yard.

Joe Baker, Ed Visser, c. 1926.

As in earlier hard times, many found it difficult to pay their taxes. With a decrease in revenue the Municipal District of Shoal Creek #610, which had been formed in 1928, could not afford all the road improvements needed. Even the councillors, who were responsible for road conditions, had a cut in pay. However, soon after the election of the first councillor for the Neerlandia area, Joseph Baker, the M.D. purchased a horse-drawn grader solely for use in his division. This grader proved to be a wise investment as it was put to good public and private use for over twenty-five years.

Leaning wheel grader pulled by tractor, 1944.

By 1924 the Co-op store had moved to the southwest of the NW 34-61-3-5, directly across from the church and kitty corner to the school, and this area became known as the Centre of Neerlandia. The Centre was the new heart of the community but Jasper Avenue, one mile to the east, had continued to serve as the main route into and out of Neerlandia. This was because of the obstacle of the bare corduroy which went south along the southeast of 28-61-3-5 and the existence of a small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. The people who lived south and southwest had to go east to Jasper Avenue and then west again a mile on the Church Road to reach the Centre. To travel to Barrhead everyone had to go south on Jasper Avenue up to Davis' Corner, then west for one mile, and link up with the road running south through Mellowdale to Old Barrhead corner. Two major road projects, which provided a direct north-south road from Neerlandia to Old Barrhead, were undertaken during the early years of M.D. #610. The bare corduroy south of the Centre was covered sometime around 1928 and a corduroy-based road was built in 1930 around the lake. Since travel was slow the new main road meant considerable savings in travel time. It became known as the Neerlandia Road.

* * *

Was the Sermon Just Too Long?

In those days nobody seemed to know anything about antifreeze. In the winter when it was cold we used to put hot water in *the radiator to get it started and keep it from freezing When we'd get to church, we would throw a blanket over the radiator to keep it warm a little longer. Halfway through the sermon the minister used to give up a number of the psalms to sing so everybody who had a car outside could go out to run their cars awhile to warm them up. Otherwise the car would be frozen by the time we d come out after the sermon. I think we did that for a few years until there were some brands of antifreeze coming on the market No more missing part of the sermon then*

Sadie Tiemstra

* * *

Van Der Woude's Car

"Van Der Woude had a used car, an Essex, and it was using quite a bit of oil. Pete Louws, a bachelor who lived close by [Siebren] Tiemstra's had a mechanical mind And he says to Van Der Woude, 'I'll overhaul that car for you ' So he did and brought it back and Van Der Woude paid him. And that very afternoon he says to me

'Gerrit' he says, 'You want to come along with me? We are going for a ride — I want to try out the car.' I says,

'Okay, sure.'

'We'll go around the block,' he says, 'All the way to Raymond Baker, Tiemstra, Anema, and back to the store ' So okay, fine. 'You drive', he says to me And I had never driven a car. 'Makes no difference,' he says, 'You drive' So I got in there We started out — it was in the wintertime and in low gear we moved along And as soon as I shifted into second it stalled. Sounded like the motor. 'Heh', he says, 'That must be some overhauling that die Pete gedaan heeft! Anyhow, we'll keep going." We kept going and we never got into second gear. So I says to him,

'How are we ever going to get up the hill by Shoal Creek there once we get down over that bridge?'

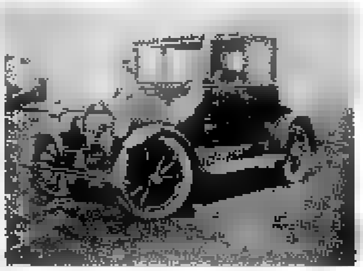
'I don't know,' he says. 'I don't know. Maybe we'll have to get someone to pull us up.' Anyhow. we got down there We tried to get up the hill. No way, low gear, we stalled So finally I says to him,

'What is this here, sitting there, that little stick sitting right here?'

'Oh,' he says, 'That's emergency brake. Is it on?' I say,

'I don't know'. So he pushed on it and ja, back it come and away we went up the hill. Like nobody's business. We had him in high gear — we had to open the windows already for the smell in the car."

Gerrit Ingwersen



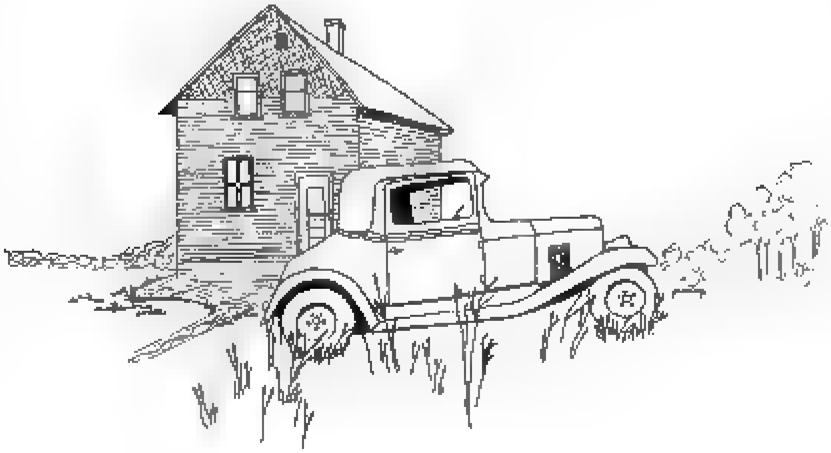
Dominee in his car.

* * *

In the early 1940s, Gerrit Kippers owned a 1940 De Soto car It ran well, but it had one bad habit. The roads were rough and bumpy and the muffler would break off close to the carburetor and then a fire would start Clara and the girls would jump out while Gerrit threw sand on the fire to extinguish the flames. That did the trick, but then the sand would have to be cleaned off again before they could proceed

* * *

In the late thirties a few families acquired cars but the road conditions and the cost and maintenance of the cars were still a problem. After World War II, a lot of improvements and developments occurred. In February 1943 the Municipal District of Westlock #562 was formed and Neerlandia was included in this new district. A motorized grader owned by this municipality was used occasionally to grade the main roads in Neerlandia. Steel-wheeled tractors came into use and doubtless dug up the roads with their steel lugs, undoing the work of the grader. Cars, which had been scarce during the war, became available for purchase and, as well, more people were able to afford them. Gas could now be conveniently procured by the barrel in Neerlandia at C. K. Mast's.



1934 coupe.

The majority of post-war Dutch immigrants, however, still relied on horse and wagon for their transportation. The horses would shy away from approaching cars or would jump sideways when passed. Norman Terpsma experienced this one winter day. He was bringing John Roth, who lived at the SW 15-61-3-5, home on the sleigh when a car passed them on the main road. It had snowed a lot the day before and the road had since been plowed out, leaving the surface quite slippery. As the car passed it spooked one of the horses and away they went, as fast as the horses could carry them. Since the road was slippery there was no way Norman could rein them in to a stop. He pulled on one line and drove the horses into the loose snow at the edge of the road. One horse fell in the process, causing the snaps to break and also the yoke. The horse which had caused the runaway pulled the sleigh on top of the fallen animal. The bobsleigh came to a stop on top of the fallen horse. This horse struggled underneath the sleigh causing Norman and John to bob up and down in the box. Norman got out of the box and managed to catch the runaway horse by its bridle. After some maneuvering he was able to get the runaway horse to pull the sleigh off the fallen animal. To his surprise the horse under the sleigh was all right. John, a bit shaken by the harrowing experience, kept saying "Crazy horses! Crazy horses!" Fortunately they did make it safely home.

In 1944 the Neerlandia Co-op had made a request to the provincial government for eleven and one half miles of gravel from Old Barrhead corner to the store. Some years later pit run, which was coarse sand mixed with stone, was obtained from natural sand pits located in northeast Neerlandia and put on the main road. The sand pits were in section 1 of 62-3-5 and sections 6 and 7 of 62-2-5. The cost of the application of the pit run was to be shared three ways. The provincial government was to pay one-third, the municipal district one-third, and the farmers one third. The farmers were to pay on a sliding scale in relation to their proximity to the road. The store contributed twenty five dollars towards the cost in 1949 but it is not known if the other monies were collected from the farmers. Only the main road received this special treatment and it was a significant first attempt at making an all-weather road.

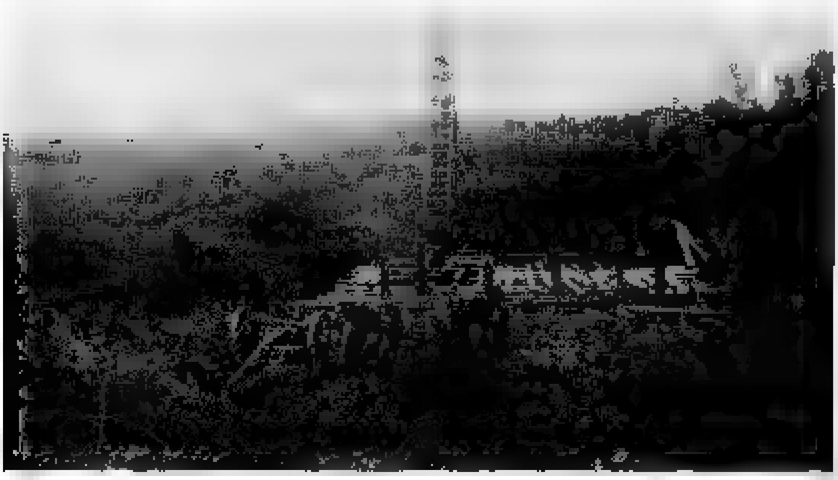
To protect this road surface and other roads in the area, road bans came into effect by a municipal act. Bans were placed on trucks and tractors when road conditions were such that the weight would damage the road surfaces. During the bans farmers would haul their produce by wagons, which were not affected by the bans, or by half-loaded half-ton trucks to Old Barrhead. The freight trucks would meet them at Old Barrhead corner and haul the produce to market.

* * *

On the way home the gravelled roads were rough and the mud roads were muddy. I helped the truck driver to unload freight and put his chains on when he hit the mud holes.

Ted Reitsma
Grade 5

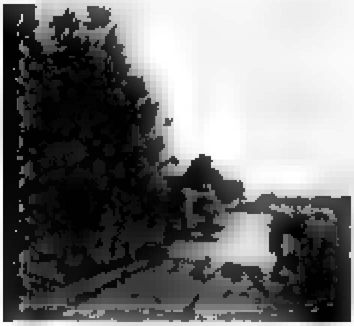
* * *



Bridge being built over Shoal Creek, c. 1928.

Progress could also be seen in the construction of bridges crossing Shoal Creek. The creek at the SE 16-61-3-5 had a wooden bridge which had been constructed in 1928. This bridge eventually rotted and was replaced by a cement culvert. In the spring of 1948 the creek flooded and this culvert was washed away. A rowboat had

to be used to take the people across the creek. On the south side they would be met by Art or Dick Fisher who would then take them to Barrhead by car. Rae Visser and Eve Emmerzael were taken to Barrhead hospital in this way when their babies were due. The roadway was repaired and another cement culvert was put in. In 1955 a permanent steel culvert replaced the cement one and effectively eliminated the problem of road washout at this location. On the road formerly known as Jasper Avenue, the bridge crossing Shoal Creek was upgraded in the early sixties. The old bridge was replaced by a twenty-two-foot wide treated timber bridge with a prestressed concrete top. At the same time the slope of the hill was cut down and the road was built up to improve the grade.


Herman Gelderman on road north of his farm, spring 1950s.

In 1955 the Municipal District of Barrhead #106 was formed and the new councillors tried to impress upon the provincial government the need for improved roads. There were roughly twelve miles of gravelled road and only three graders for the whole district at the time. In the spring of 1955 one visitor to Neerlandia counted sixteen places (from Old Barrhead to Neerlandia) where the water ran over the road. In April 1955 it was decided by the municipality to supply culverts for farmers' driveways at fifty percent of cost. The culverts and also the brushing, which was done on the road allowances, undoubtedly improved drainage. However, travellers still became stuck in mud holes on the roads and visits had to be cut short when it started to rain so that the people could make it home before the roads became impassable. In time each councillor received a motorized grader for his area and provincial road grants were given for major road work.

* * *

Councillors

Joseph Baker was the first elected councillor for Neerlandia. He represented Division 4 in the Municipal District of Shoal Creek #610 which had been formed in January 1928. He was one of the six original councillors for this District. Joseph Holwerda was elected for three consecutive two-year terms, beginning in 1930. His last term was not completed as he died in 1935. Toney Sturwold filled the vacancy on the District Council and was elected in 1936 for a three-year term. Sturwold was re-elected in 1939 and completed his term of office in 1942.

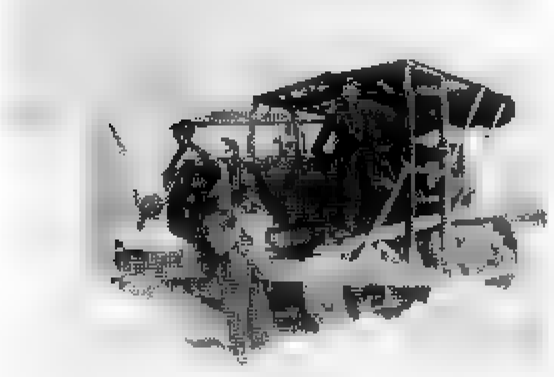
In 1943 the Municipal District of Westlock #562, comprised of seven divisions, came into being and Shoal Creek #610 was incorporated into this new District. Fred Casavant represented Neerlandia as part of the Shoal Creek area and was elected for two consecutive three-year terms. He served from 1943 until his death in 1949. On April 14, 1945, during Casavant's first term, the Municipal District of Westlock #562 was renumbered to M.D. #92. Fred Madson succeeded Casavant on the Council for District #92 and actively served from 1949-1952.

In 1955, through an order-in-council by the Provincial Government, the Municipal District of Barrhead #106 was formed. The new District consisted of five divisions. William Olthuis was elected to serve Neerlandia and surrounding areas as representative for Division 3 on the first Council. Olthuis served on Municipal Council until the formation of the County of Barrhead #11 in January

1959. Under the County form of government there were seven divisions instead of the former five. From 1959-80 Olthuis continued to represent the Neerlandia and Vega communities as a County Councillor for Division 7. After twenty-five years of service William Olthuis retired and Albert Elgersma was elected to the Council. Elgersma is presently serving his second term as Councillor for Division 7.

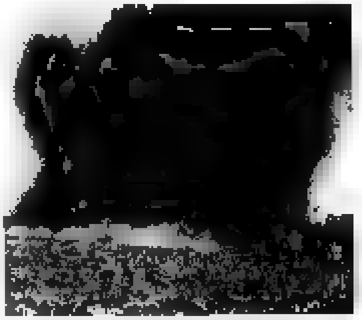
* * *

The Neerlandia Road from Mellowdale north to the hamlet was surveyed in 1956 for widening to a total width of eighty-two-and-one-half feet, as measured between property line boundaries. Around 1958 Bill Olthuis, the councillor for the Neerlandia and Vega areas, proposed the building of a road on the road allowance through the small lake at the SE 9-61-3-5. With a view to future road development, it was decided that it would be a waste of money to further improve the road around the lake since eventually the main road would be straightened. The first step in this project was to blast one-quarter of a mile west of the road allowance in the northwest corner of the lake so that the lake would drain into Shoal Lake. Dynamite sticks were placed fifteen inches apart in a single row for about one-quarter of a mile. The end stick, which had a fuse placed in it, was detonated. As a result of the ground's vibration, the whole area blew up at once, producing a sheet of black dirt. The water eventually drained out of the lake and that winter a roadway was laid by putting down a base of over 87,000 log feet for a distance of one-quarter of a mile. The black poplar logs used in building the base had been banned for plywood use and the municipality was able to purchase the culled logs at a nominal cost. The Spady brothers, who had supplied the logs, brought them to the road site. The logs were laid on the ice, then covered with dirt that winter and with an additional eighteen inches of dirt the following summer. Enough dirt was built up around the logs to insure that their ends



Snowplowing, 1948.

Homemade snowplow.



Blowout of the silt at the northwest corner of the small lake.

would be covered to prevent them from rotting. At first a four-foot wooden culvert was placed underneath the roadbed because there was concern that if a steel one was put in right away it might sink into the mud. The roadbed remained firm and was later gravelled.

Former road around lake, looking south.

Former road around lake looking east from new highway (Neerlandia Road).

As time passed, surrounding roads in the community were gradually built up, soft places were filled in, and ditches were sloped and deepened. In addition road allowances and forced roads were straightened out. These roads, when first built, had followed routes which curved around sloughs and over high ground. Additional roads, which were not surveyed road allowances, were opened up. This was done to eliminate the inconvenience for some farmers who had to travel quite a distance out of their way on existing roads to get to their homes. Due to increased traffic, some of the roads were widened to make an average top of twenty-four feet. By the mid-fifties cars and trucks were the primary modes of transportation. A few of the young people also began to acquire their own vehicles and one could then find more than one car on a

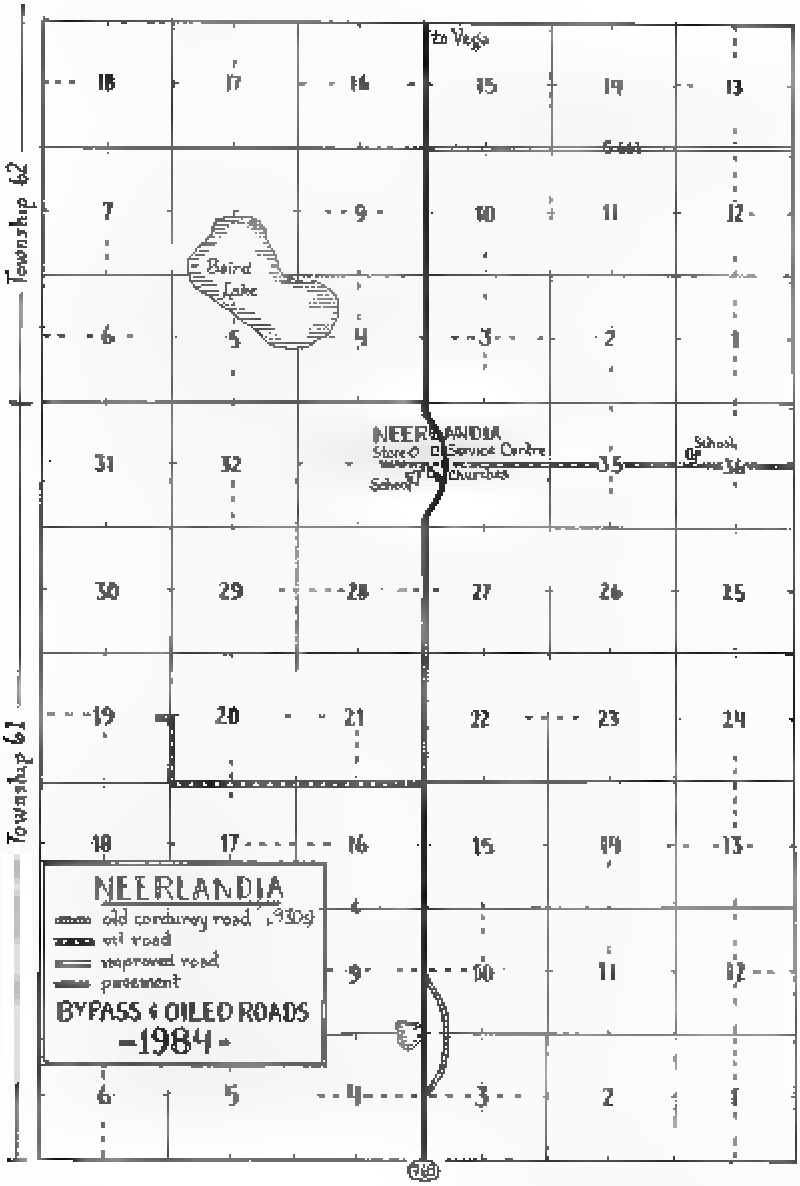
farmer's yard Trucks were no longer used solely for freight but also for harvesting and for hauling of grain and livestock in and out of the community Purple gas, which initially was much cheaper than orange gas, was used for farm vehicles and kept down the costs of running the trucks Road traffic was also increased by the use of buses to transport the children to and from school By 1957 provisions had been made by the municipality for the upgrading and maintaining of bus routes.

Prior to the road widening and straightening program, electrical power had been put in to Neerlandia In 1955 the municipality passed a motion that power poles should be placed eighteen-and-one-half feet inside the property lines on all district roads However, since most of the power poles had already been erected before this motion came into effect and due to the prohibitive costs of moving the poles, many were left in their original location A good illustration of this, showing how a road was straightened and the poles left in position, can still be seen at the northwest of the SW 33-61 3-5

Ditches were changed from the early V-shaped ditches to ones of considerably more width and with flattened-out bottoms, which inhibited soil erosion and improved drainage The ditches were also back sloped for safety reasons The normal maintenance of patrolling by grader, snowplowing, and patch work took place every year. As well there were construction and gravelling projects funded by government road grants and local taxes. These projects and general maintenance were the responsibility of the County of Barrhead #11, which was formed in January 1959 The work in Neerlandia was proposed and, after given approval by County Council, overseen by the county councillor for Division 7, Bill Olthuis. The changes and improvements of the roads were accomplished by ever-changing and efficient motorized equipment

Gravel was hauled from the gravel pit in Vega and applied to various dirt roads in Neerlandia in a welcome attempt at making the majority of roads passable in all weather There were comments made that the gravel was applied as with a salt shaker. Valid complaints of a serious nature were received in relation to the traffic produced by the gravel trucks hauling the gravel from Vega to various locations throughout the county The trucks raised a lot of dust and were also viewed as dangerous when they passed through the Centre For these reasons and also because of the general increase in car and truck traffic on the main roads, two major road projects were undertaken.

The first project took place in 1969. The County, under a Dust Control Program, experimented with applying bunker oil onto the surface of the main road running south from Neerlandia. The cost involved was minimal Approximately 3500 gallons of bunker oil per mile was applied at a delivered price of ten to eleven cents per gallon The results were favourable in terms of dust control and gradually more roads were covered In 1984, however, only two roads are still treated with oil They are the road running east from the hamlet to the SE 36-61-3-5 and the road running west from the main road along sections 16 and 17-61-3-5 The primary reason for the discontinuation of oiling is the expense, as bunker oil now sells

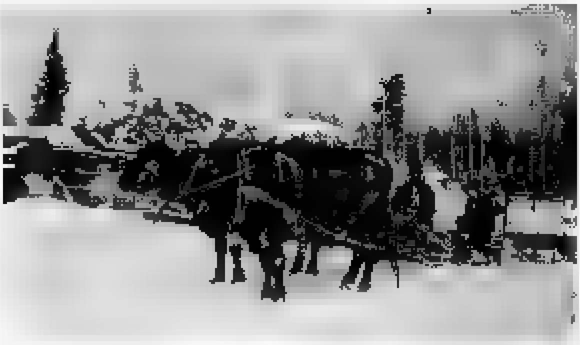


for $1 80 per gallon. Since oiled roads need to be re-oiled every two years, the cost weighed against the benefits is too great.

The second major road project was undertaken in 1972-75 The main road running from Old Barrhead north to the post office in Vega was built up and widened to a total width of 132 feet with a twenty-six-foot wide top. In addition a bypass was built around the hamlet of Neerlandia To accommodate these improvements it was necessary to purchase additional right-of-ways for the roadway At first the idea of a bypass for the hamlet seemed ridiculous to some people. The reasons for its construction were valid, however. The main concern was safety The bypass would decrease the flow of traffic through the Centre and particularly beside the school grounds. The roadway was built in three phases from 1972-75. The road was also covered in three stages, first it was gravelled, then oiled, and finally, in 1976, paved. The Neerlandia Road was and is now officially known as Secondary Road #769. It continues to provide a smooth all-weather route, free of dust and mud holes, into and out of Neerlandia. This project had been anticipated in 1966 as part of the proposed provincial secondary road system. Another secondary road is in the process of being built through the area. This is Secondary Road #661 which runs east from the Athabasca River, south through Vega, east along sections 15, 14, and 13 in Township 62-3-5, then continues east through the province.

The progress and development of the roads and transportation in Neerlandia has followed the general progression of the community as a whole. Initially one found a pioneer settlement, where trails or roads were the vital link in communication and transportation for the few settlers who travelled on foot or by horse or ox-drawn wagon. In the present, one sees an agricultural-based community with increasing mobility and diversity. The roads serve the needs of its residents to travel by car, pickup truck, farm truck, or with farm machinery within the community, to transport farm products outside of the area, and to pursue other interests and jobs outside of Neerlandia.

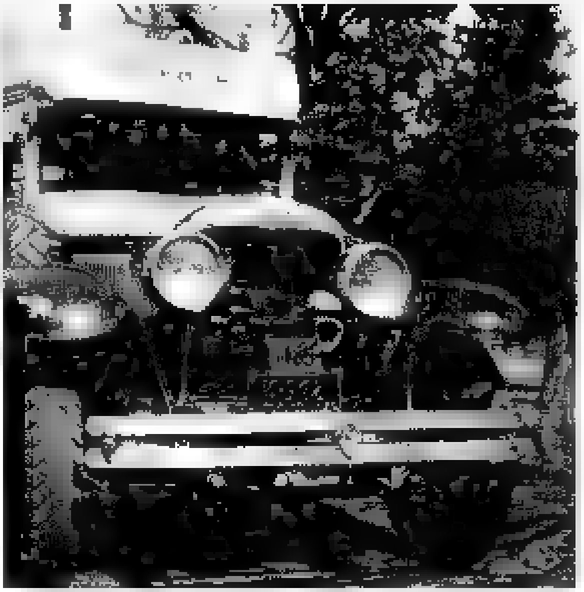
OXEN TO AIRCRAFT



Ready to leave with Flip and Pete. Wouter Groothuis with his son Dick who would say, "Flip is mine oss."

Horses used by the Ben Lievers family.

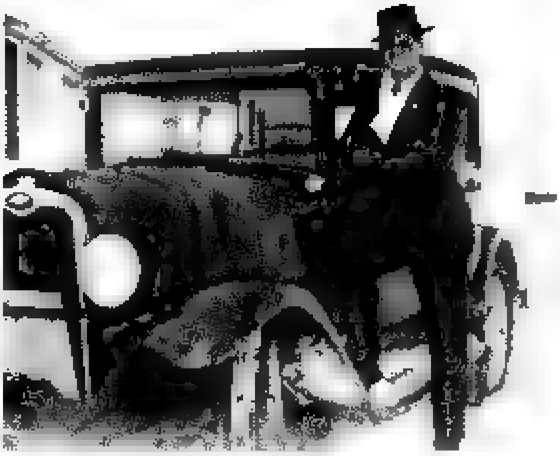
Riding home from field.



Billy Quick's bus.

Heading for Peace River Country, 1936. Hendrik Lievers family.

1928 Model A Ford. Clarence Mast holding Alida, 1947



Chevy. Joe A. Wierenga's first car, 1947

C K. Mast, Marilyn, and the car.

1950 Chevrolet car. Sophie and Darlene Wierenga, 1952.

Jack Janssen and his airplane. 1965

Co-operation and Enterprise

NEERLANDIA COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION INC.

THE NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Since 1912 when the first families arrived in Neerlandia, the very poor conditions they found themselves in made it necessary for them to help one another. They co-operated in the building of their cabins, a place of worship, and a school, as well as in the clearing and breaking of land. So it was not strange that they decided to co-operate in establishing a store to supply the articles needed in daily living.

At first the basic necessities of life were obtained in Westlock, Dusseldorf, or in the Davis store in Mellowdale. From 1914 on, Albert Mast Sr. provided some very basic supplies as well. A private store was operated by Peter Kampnar from 1917 till the opening of the settlers' co-operative store. Ted Reitsma wrote,

"Getting some groceries in 1913-14 was another heavy chore, as the nearest store was in Mellowdale. For some this was a round trip of more than twenty miles. This was mostly done on foot or with oxen, and was more than a day's journey. Many of the first settlers carried eighty pounds on their backs, plodding along bush trails, and fording creeks. This situation improved, when in 1915 Mr. A. Mast opened a store serving the settlers for a couple of years. When he closed Mr. Kampnar opened a store on the north bank of Shoal Creek. This store operated until 1920 when the settlers started their own co-op store."

* * *

The first years the store was seven miles to the south and it was a problem to get in the supplies because Westlock, the nearest railway station, was thirty-five miles away. Sometimes we were weeks without coal oil for our lamps or without sugar, etc.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Bull Fur

Many Dutch pioneers bought their groceries at the Davis store in Mellowdale. They could also bring cream, which Davis shipped to Swift's in Westlock. Fur dealers would come to Davis' store once or twice a year, so pelts could be brought there too. Notices were often put up in the store, and one Dutch settler posted the following sign: "BULL FUR FOR SALE"

* * *

Some of the settlers said that if Kampnar had kept his prices at a reasonable level no thought of starting a co-op would have occurred. This assessment of the situation is probably not fair to Peter Kampnar. Though the evidence suggests that the prices were on the high side, it must also be stated that many of the settlers did not pay their bills, forcing him to charge more to be able to stay in business. It appears that in most cases the settlers were too poor to pay him. For the first ten years there was in most instances simply no money. Eventually Pete Kampnar found it impossible to continue and closed his doors.

In the meantime a group of Neerlandians met with the intent of starting a co-op store. It is difficult to establish the exact date that the Neerlandia Co-op began. The incorporation document states

June 31. 1922, but other evidence indicates that the Co-op was actually in operation before that date Ted Reitsma, a former president, is quoted above as stating that the store began in 1920. Clarence Tuininga, another former president, stated in a taped interview, "The Co-op was incorporated in 1922 but, really, it started a year or two before that " In addition, according to oral tradition, the first year's receipts were three hundred dollars The documents show the receipts for 1922 to be $1392.16. Furthermore, the Neerlandia Co-op was a cream-testing station for the Enterprise Dairy which was in operation only from 1918 to May 6, 1922. If the store had not been in operation before its incorporation date (July 31, 1922), this would not have been possible Final confirmation comes from the original share book. The first entry was made on May 20, 1921 Several other entries were made on June 12, 1921. One must conclude then that the Co-op was in the planning stages in 1920, in business in 1921, and incorporated in 1922.

First store.

* * *

Memorandum of Association

We, G Baker, A. Ritsema, K. Krikke, H. Lievers, M. Nanninga, P D Schuring, H Hiemstra, K. Tuininga, J. W Gelderman, J. Tuininga, J. W Holwerda, D Terpsma, S. Iofte, O. Bonstrom, C. Ingwersen, J. Anema, W Krikke, H. J. Kannegieter, R. de Jager, Mrs E Messelink, W Groothuis, B. Lievers, T. Sturwold, J. Olthuis, P Louws, S. Tiemstra, W. van Ark, Mrs. C. P Mast, H. Michaels and J. Oldegbers do hereby express our desire to form an Association under the provisions of the Co-operative Associations Act

The corporate name of the association to be: The Neerlandia Co-operative Association Limited and the objects for which the association is formed are:

(a) To deal in hardware, twine, lumber, building materials, coal, machinery, and generally any and all commodities required or used by farmers,

(b) To carry on the business of marketing and selling livestock and farm produce of any description;

(c) To engage in the business of general Merchant;

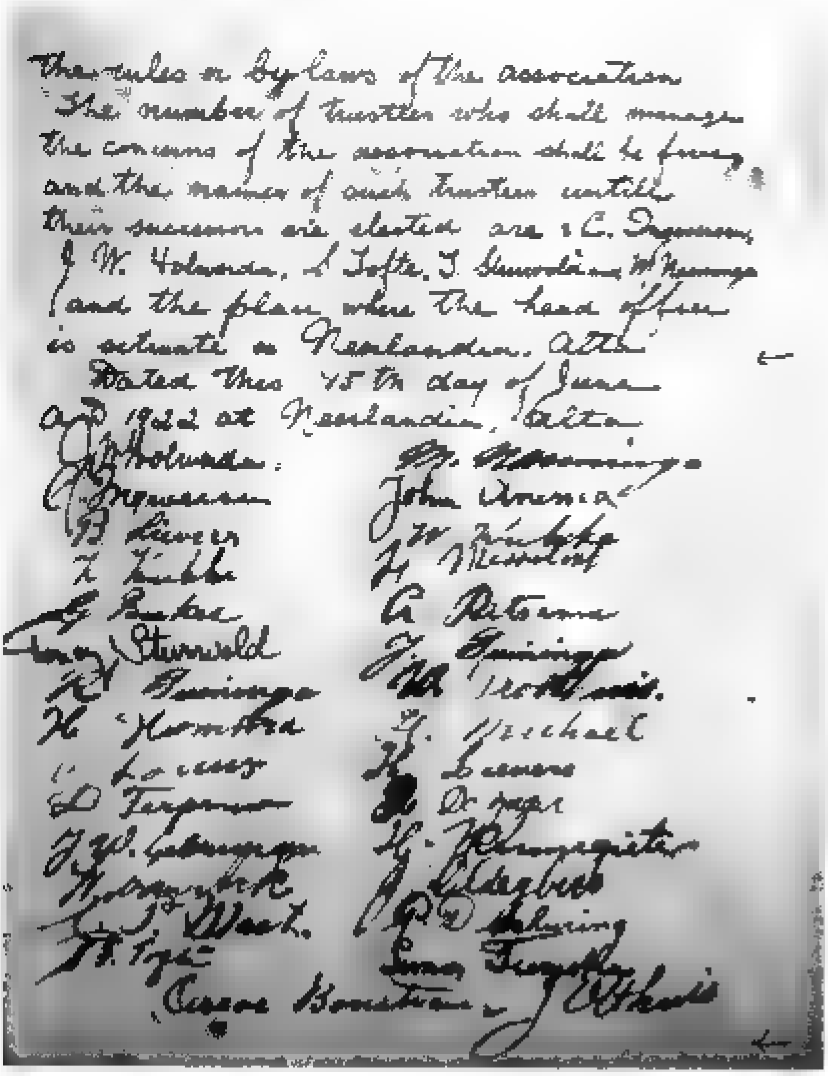
(d) To act as agents for any persons, firms or corporations engaged in the business of fire, life or hail insurance, or the business of loans and investments,

(e) To hold, buy, sell or otherwise deal in real estate or other property,

(f) To carry on any other co-operative business or businesses which may seem to the association convenient to be carried on in connection with the above, or calculated directly, or indirectly, to render profitable or enhance the value of the association's property or rights for the time being;

(g) Generally do such acts and deeds, including the borrowing of money from any person, firm or corporation, with or without giving security therefor (sic), as shall be necessary for the carrying on of the business of the association. The number of shares is to be unlimited and the capital is to consist of shares of twenty five dollars ($25.00) each or of such other amount as shall from time to time be determined by the rules or by-laws of the association

The number of trustees who shall manage the concerns of the association shall be five and the names of such trustees until their



the rules or by laws of the association
The number of trustees who shall manage
the concerns of the association shall be five
and the names of such trustees until
their successors are elected are: C. Ingeman,
J. W. Holwerda, L. Tofte, T. [illegible], W. Manninga
and the place where the head office
is situate is Neerlandia, Alta.
Dated this 15th day of June
AD 1922 at Neerlandia, Alta.

J. W. Holwerda.
John [illegible]
Stienwald
Michael

(Signatures)

successors are elected are: C. Ingwersen, J. W. Holwerda, S. Tofte, T. Sturwold and M. Nanninga and the place where the head office is situated is Neerlandia, Alta.

Dated this 15th day of June A.D. 1922 at Neerlandia, Alta.

* * *

The store began on a very small scale and yet, some funds were needed. These funds were received from two sources: the pioneers themselves, and a man named Sigurd Tofte who was not a Dutchman. He was, however, one of the first pioneers to settle in the nearby community of Vega. He was an astute business man who was known as "the banker of Vega". He was also involved with the Neerlandia community because of his interest in the co-operative movement. He has the honour of owning share No. 1 and occupies the first page in the share book.

The share book is large and each shareholder is allotted one page, on which is recorded his ownership. The people whose names are recorded at this early date obviously had made a decision to begin a co-operative store. They had come to a position where words have been translated into action. They had purchased a book, elected a secretary, and most importantly, put money on the line.

The entry of May 20, 1921, is a loan from Sigurd Tofte for $100.00. This was a tremendous amount of money, and it became the foundation for the start of the store. Twenty-four others joined him with the purchase of shares. A minimum of $5.00 per person was required, with a full share to have a value of $25.00. Many entries took a couple of payments before a total of exactly $5.00 was attained and, then, it would be several years before the total of $25.00 was reached.

For instance, Klaas Krikke began by paying $2.59 in June 1921. In July he added $0.80, in August $0.77, and by September 1, he was able to put another $0.84 towards his account giving him the required equity of $5.00. He made six more payments, before his share was paid in full on November 26, 1924.

Of the twenty-five people who are listed in the share book, nineteen were able to pay the required $5.00 before the end of 1921. Three people had contributed $10.00 each. Eight more members joined in 1922, giving a total membership of thirty-three persons. The provisional board consisted of Joe Holwerda, Case Ingwersen, Menne Nanninga, Toney Sturwold, and Sigurd Tofte. Joe Holwerda sent the information to the registrar of companies.

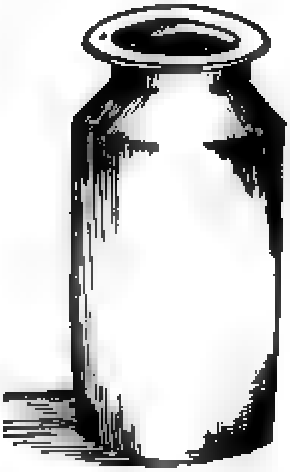
Throughout the early years Tofte continued to lend money to the association, by the end of 1927 he had lent $1450.00. The indebtedness of the association to him never went higher than a few hundred dollars, however, as they paid him back on a regular basis. Though Tofte was the first and largest source of funds, two others from Vega also lent money during the first eight years of the store. Oscar Bonstrom lent the association $100.00 and Charlie Anderson lent the association $450.00.

The first store was a 12 by 14-foot log building located on the NE 34-61-3-5, the Messelink homestead. The intent of the shareholders

was to have a store that would be open one day a week. Case Ingwersen wrote that there were no applications for secretary-manager of the store so he was talked into accepting this position since it was felt he had the most experience. At about the same time the Co-op received an unexpected bonus when the government made a policy that allowed for the testing of cream in small communities. Case Ingwersen went to Edmonton to learn how to test cream and had to pass an exam to obtain a license. According to the 1921 annual report of the Dairy Commissioner of Alberta, 334 licenses were issued to operators of cream stations, of which Neerlandia was one.

Items such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco were sold in the store. On the wall opposite the door were some shelves on which were such items as tallow and kerosene. By a small window next to the door was a small table and on it was the Babcock cream tester.

Westlock Creamery.



At nine o'clock each Monday morning the farmers would arrive by horse and wagon with cans of cream. A full can weighed eighty pounds, but most cans were not full. From each can a sample was taken and put in a numbered test tube. It took time to test the cream since it had to be heated to 140 degrees. In the interval the customers could be served. Once their needs were met it was time to test the cream for fat content by adding acid to the warm cream and spinning it in a centrifuge. Four settlers took turns hauling the cream to Westlock and from there it was hauled to Edmonton by train. The payment for the cream was made by cheque, but whether the dairy made them out to the Co-op or to the producer is not known.

* * *

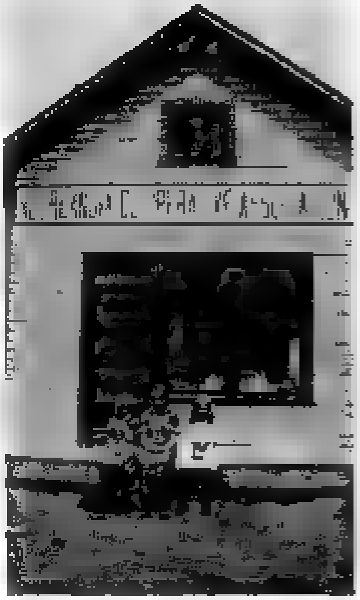
No Money — No Bread

Once a young boy came to the store and stood in line at the counter. "Who's next?" asked the manager. The young boy asked for two loaves of bread. The manager had instructions from the board that if an account ran so high and was not paid then any purchases *had to be paid for with cash. The manager said to the boy, "Heb je geld?" (Have you money?) "No," said the boy. "Dan, geen brood!" (Then no bread!) said the manager, "Who's next?"*

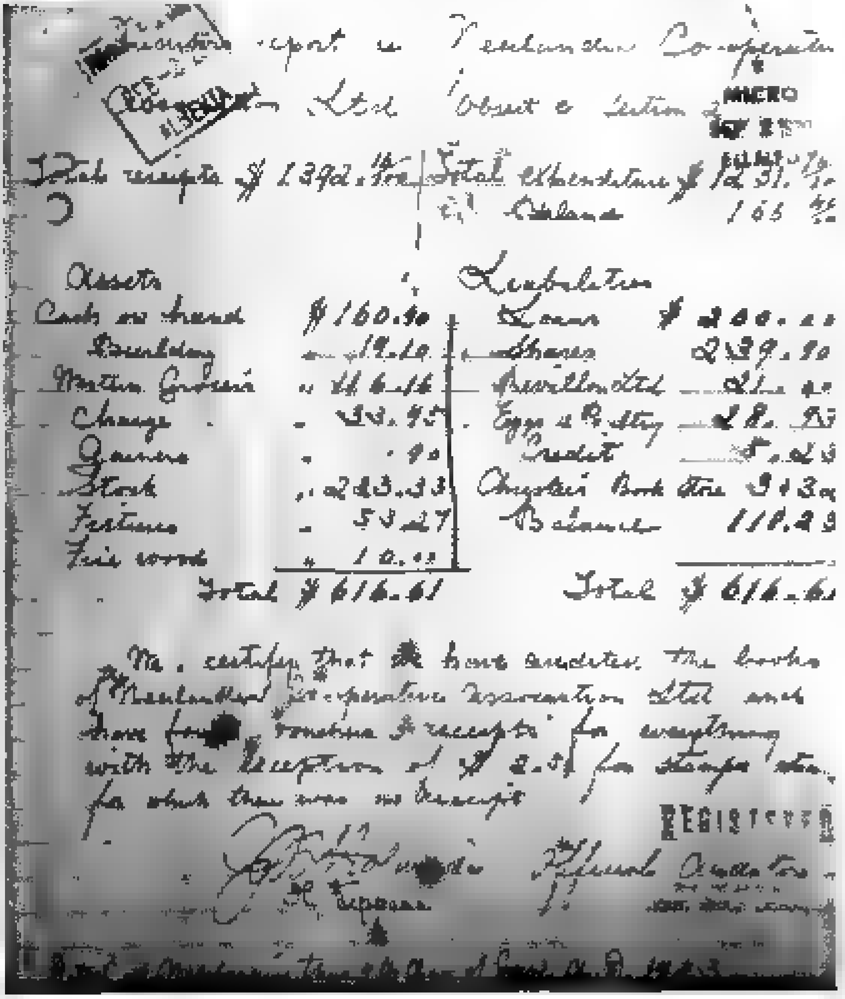
* * *

In order to be a viable operation it was necessary, at first, to sell only for cash. Ingwersen wrote, "The storekeeper had to be hardened to deal with the poor housewife as orders were orders and he could not give credit. She sometimes went crying to Mrs. Messelink complaining about the fellow who refused to sell her supplies."

Quite soon after the store began, it became necessary to open on Friday as well as Monday. With this encouragement it was time to go on to a bigger store. Ingwersen wrote, "The second year of the co-operative it was decided to start a real store and to go into business 100%. The fall of 1922 a lumber store was built where the church . . . (was) . . . already standing. Now the romance of the first years was gone, the cream testing was terminated and all cream was sent directly to Edmonton." The association bought two acres of the NW 34-61-3-5 and constructed the new building there.



Ingwersen girls on the stoep.



Auditors report on Neerlandia Co-operative [illegible] Ltd [illegible]

Total receipts $1392.40 | Total Expenditure $1231.10
Balance 165.[illegible]

Assets		Liabilities	
Cash on hand	$160.90	Loans	$200.00
Building	19.10	Shares	239.90
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Ltd	[illegible]
Change	[illegible]	Eggs & Poultry	[illegible]
[illegible]	.90	Credit	[illegible]
Stock	283.33	Chrysler's Book Store	[illegible]
Fixtures	53.27	Balance	111.29
Fire wood	10.[illegible]		
Total	$616.61	Total	$616.61

We certify that we have audited the books of Neerlandia Co-operative Association Ltd and have found vouchers & receipts for everything with the exception of $2.50 for stamps etc. for which there was no receipt.

REGISTERED

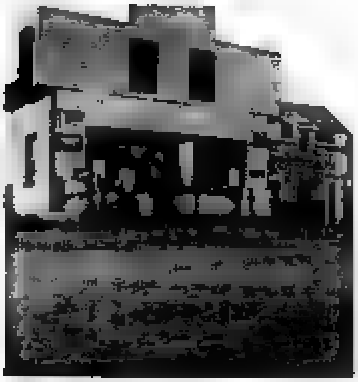
Auditors

Auditor's report

The financial statement of 1922 listed the receipts as $1392.16. The next year, 1923 business increased dramatically to $6433 30, an indication the association had "start(ed) a real store and go(ne) into business 100% " In 1922 the value of the building was listed at $19 10. In 1923 the building's stated value was $25.00 and not until 1924 was it listed at $500 00.

Only one person looked after the store till 1932, though from time to time some part-time help was required Case Ingwersen's daughter Anne began by helping in 1926.

The store was expected to be opened whenever a customer called This could be any time of the day or night, and if Ingwersen was not there they would go to his house to get him. The store handled all items needed by the settlers in those early years Some of the items such as molasses, which came in a barrel, would be sold by bulk. Flour came in one-hundred pound bags. All items were on shelves behind a counter. Customers would give a list of items needed to the manager or clerk who would fill the order Sometimes goods would be in short supply so the manager would tell the customer that he could have only a limited number of the item, and that he had to leave some for others A large heater that required constant stoking supplied the heat in the winter and men gathered around it to visit



As business increased it was necessary to expand the store building.

Store and Case Ingwersen residence.

* * *

Next Week — Next Week

Mr. Ingwersen, manager of the Co-op store in the late 1920s. stood behind the counter serving the farmers. A couple of gentlemen had been standing in line waiting and when their turn came they asked for certain merchandise they needed If it was not in stock, which happened quite frequently, Mr. Ingwersen would reply, "Not in stock. Next week!" One of these gentleman said he worked in Portland, Oregon, U S.A and he said the birds would sit in the trees and sing 'Next week, next week ' The manager replied, "Zoo, zingen die het ook?" (So, do they sing that too?) A chorus of laughter erupted from the other gentleman and other onlookers.

* * *

NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD.

Ingwersen resigned as manager of the store in 1933 He had given twelve years of service and said his desire was to go back to his original intention, which was to farm. He also said the constant pressure of dealing with the public was wearing him down

The board was often made up of strong-willed people who, with the best of intentions, were determined to get their way. Thus controversy occurred within the board. Because people were so poor they watched every penny Serving people under these circumstances was sometimes difficult The weights were not always believed to be true nor the figures correct. At some point the change to giving credit had been made and collecting bills was also difficult These same circumstances contributed to the tension between board and manager

In the early years there was a five-member board who represented the shareholders. They were chosen at an annual meeting which was held in March The store's financial year was from January through December. At the annual meeting of March 6, 1940, the members decided to increase the board members from five to seven Originally the tenure of office was two years but, at the annual meeting held March 22, 1947, it was changed to three years. Joe Holwerda was the official auditor and he was assisted on alternate years by William van Ark and Henry Kippers Sr.

There were two full-time people working in the store in 1933. This was the manager and one clerk. The only records close to that date list one full-time employee in 1931 and two in 1934. During the later years of Ingwersen, part-time help was used.

Jan Koning became manager of the Co-op in 1933. A second full-time employee, Loe Reyse, had been hired as clerk in 1932. Jan Koning's wife helped in the store as well.

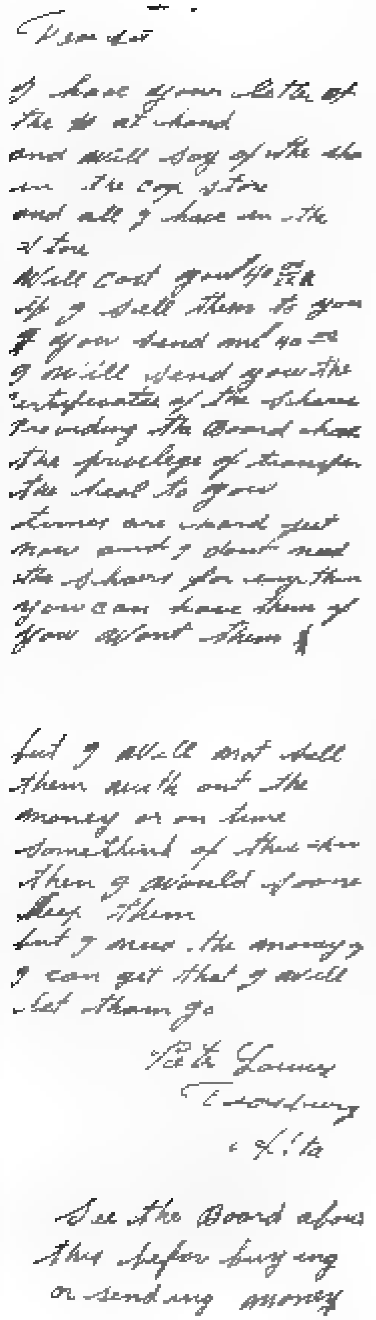
Though the men who ran the store were called managers, it is doubtful whether they were thought of as such. Most of the business at a board meeting was completed without the manager's attendance. Often a manager was called into a meeting and told who his clerks were and what to charge for the products.

In 1952 the board relaxed its control somewhat when a motion was made to the effect that the manager would have to see only the president and two others on the board if he needed to make a minor decision! Two months later they gave the manager the right to hire and fire his own clerks. Ironically, at the very next meeting, the board itself fired a clerk!

* * *

In the early years people bought shares to become members. Later people began transferring shares to help others become members. Many of the later immigrants were helped by Co-op members who transferred a $25 share to them as a gift.

The ability of the Co-op to pay dividends was sometimes questioned. As a result, some sold their shares at less than their face value. The following correspondence is an indication of this. (P Louws' share value at the time was $55.94).



Dear Sir

I have your letter of
the [illegible] at hand
and will say of the sh
in the coop store
and all I have in the
store
Will cost you 40.00
if I sell them to you
If you send me 40.00
I will send you the
certificates of the shares
providing the Board allows
the privilege of transfer
the deal to you
times are hard just
now and I don't need
the shares for anything
you can have them if
you want them

but I will not sell
them with out the
money or on time
something of this kind
then I would of course
keep them
but I need the money if
I can get that I will
let them go

Pete Louws
Didsbury
Alta

See the Board about
this before buying
or sending money

March 17

Mr. P. Louws
Didsbury, Alberta

Dear Sir,

Mr. R. J. de Vries handed us your letter to him of February 13 in which you state that you are willing to sell to him your full interest in our Association, for the amount of $40 cash.

We decided at our last Board meeting to allow you to transfer these shares.

Mr. R. J. de Vries deposited money in the store and on receipt of your shares we will send you our cheque of $40.

Kindly sign the shares for transfer. Hoping this will be satisfactory.

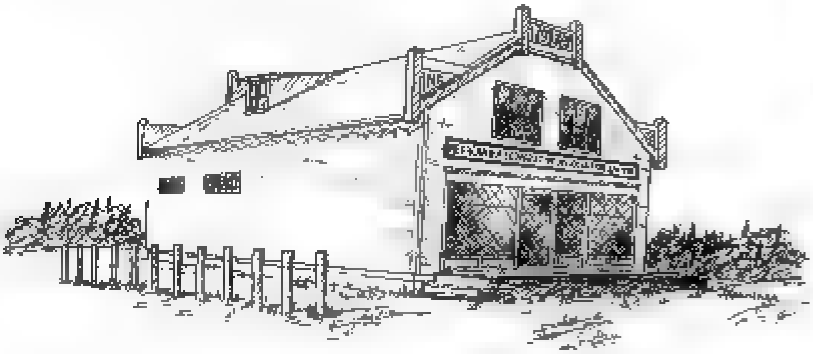
Yours truly,

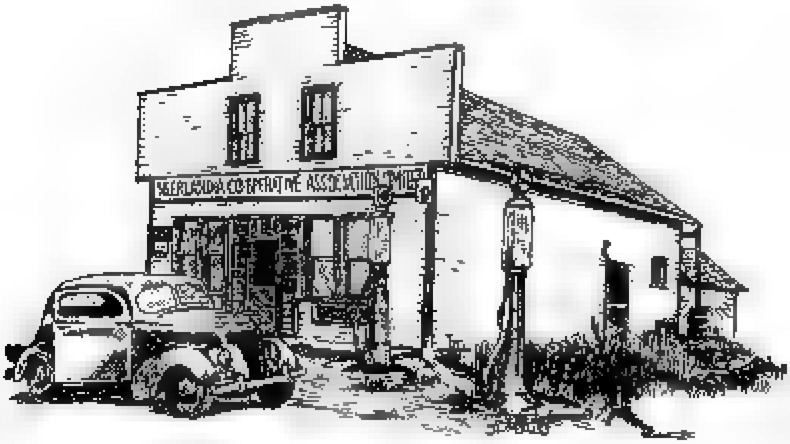
* * *

In 1938, while Koning was manager and during the Depression, a larger store was built. The Co-operative Association purchased one-and-one-half acres of land on the NE 33-61-3-5 from William Swaffield. This move indicated the confidence of the settlers in the Co-op. In a time when the world's economy was in a state of turmoil, the decision to forge ahead was made

Almost ready for use.

Already in 1934 a building fund was established One third of the dividends allotted to each member from the profit on his purchases was put aside annually. After three years the fund totalled $1,241 01 The amount of each contribution was recorded and credited to the member's share record in 1938. Additional funds were raised by borrowing from many of the members. Even a few suppliers lent money to the Co-op during this period The building project was begun in 1937 and completed in 1938.





The total cost of the store was $12,073 25. It was a magnificent structure It was well built under the supervision of Jerry Reitsma and Menne Nanninga. The roof was sturdily built with many braces and rafters. Not only did this store have a much larger floor area than the old one, it also boasted a community hall on the second floor. In 1939 an additional $302 05 was spent on such items as finishing the hall, changing the fire escape, and levelling the ground in front of the store. For many years the store hall served as the gathering place for many functions, including the annual store meetings, wedding receptions, bazaars, educational films, and even moving pictures sponsored by machinery dealers After the church building had burned down in 1948, worship services were also held in the hall. Chairs provided seating on the front part of the hall, but the back had two rows of bleachers. The high back rows were the favourite benches of the young men in the community.

* * *

Those that remember those days also remember the murals that decorated the hall. Drawn with colour pencil on tentest panels by Annie Nanninga, they depicted community life — people walking down the road, trucks in front of the store, and church and school activities. In 1984 one panel of this mural has survived in rather poor shape.

* * *

An awning kept the sun out.

Additional fixtures were purchased in 1940 at a cost of $546.33. One major item was a McKaskey register, a sort of filing cabinet designed to hold bills. A National cash register was purchased the next year and supplemented rather than replaced the McKaskey. Other fixtures purchased included a safe, three scales, an adding machine, a typewriter, and a duplicating machine. In addition to these items, filing cabinets, chairs, tables, and various other items were purchased. Five Coleman lamps were purchased for light. The store had become a modern and up-to-date business.

Neerlandia Cooperative Association
Business Turnover and Profit

Year	Business Turnover	Profit
1922	1,392.16	16040
1923	6,436.30	237.66
1924	9,303.63	40.87
1925	13,229.68	131.03
1926	15,39558	281.71
1927	21,099.92	90768
1928	24,750.89	719.56
1929	30,79543	217.31
1934	27,685.98	510.02
1937	46,19981	1,909.56
1941	60,290.94	1,855.07
1945	8574296	106083

* * *

At the present time only one type of share is held by the members. When the Co-op began, the intent was to have shares of twenty-five dollar amounts and each share was kept separate since they were accumulated through dividends on the shareholder's purchases. Here are some letters indicating what happened when the records became confused.

Mr. H Kippers Sr

I believe I sent to you 1 share No 143 to be transferred from L. Nanninga to C. Nanninga.

Mrs. G. Nanninga said that she wants a new M Nanninga's share made out in G. Nanninga's name, instead of in M. Nanninga's. But M Nanninga is not getting any new shares. he has more than 6.

If M Nanninga wants to transfer a share to G. Nanninga. he will have to bring a share in and ask the Board G Nanninga should be a shareholder, if possible Hilda says she will bring one of her father's shares to you to-morrow.

J. Johnman had 1 share when he left, and this share was claimed by P Johnman during Jim's absence The Board decided to allow P Johnman to be the shareholder, as it had been made out in P Johnman's name originally.

P Johnman had the share transferred to J. van Ee on December 19, 1940 J. Johnman always was the shareholder Ingwersen put down P Johnman, but this was an error Now the question arises, Jim Johnman is the shareholder, but how about Jan van Ee Van Ee now has $39 69. Jim Johnman still has his share Van Ee has a share too.

Mrs. D Baker
Edmonton
12028 96 street

March 12. 1945

Dear Madam,

I discovered that Mr. D Terpsma had already sent in his Ordinary Share No 8 and his Redeemable shares A and B. Sorry if I put you to extra trouble

Our enclosed cheque pays for	1 ordinary share $		25.—
	I Redeemable share A		12.69
	I Redeemable share B		17 25
	Interest on 1 share 1944		1.25
			$56.19
Mr D Terpsma still holds	1 Redeemable share C	9.67	
	1 Redeemable share D	8.37	
	1 Redeemable share E	.10	
		$18.14	
and the balance on his ordinary shares is		8.37	
		$26.51	

The Redeemable shares C D and E are not redeemed yet. On the next Board meeting I intend to ask the Board of directors, whether the $8.37 balance on Ordinary shares can be paid out

Yours truly
J. Koning

* * *

After twelve years of faithful service, Jan Koning left for Houston, B.C., in 1945. He had purchased his own store there The board then hired H. J. Ten Hove as the manager and Aubrey Ashley as full-time bookkeeper — a task he had been doing on a part-time basis since 1942. H J. Ten Hove resigned after three months because his ideas about operating the business did not coincide with the board's ideas.

Frank Visser was hired as manager in 1945. Aubrey Ashley took over this position in 1950, and he also retained the job as book-

What can I do for you? Hattina Elgersma ready to serve, mid-1950s.

keeper He had a good relationship with the board, his views on financial matters concurred with theirs

* * *

Aubrey had been asking the board for a raise for some time and it had been tabled each time Finally the board decided to raise his salary by $150 00 per year When he was informed of the decision Aubrey replied that $10 00 per month was sufficient As the minutes put it "The board quite willingly agreed to this."

* * *

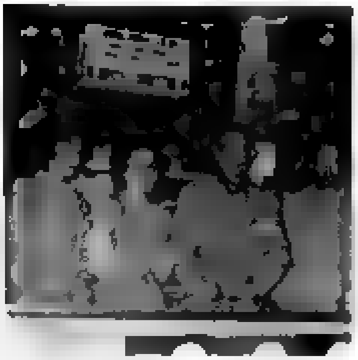
In 1955 Bart Vander Wal was given the responsibility of manager and bookkeeper. In September 1960 Mike Vanderkeemel replaced him in the same role but he remained for less than three years The role of manager and bookkeeper was again separated in April 1963 when Gerhard Beyers was hired as manager and John De Gier was hired as bookkeeper.

* * *

The store was closed on Wednesday afternoons. John Tensen visited the Vanderkeemels on this summer afternoon in 1962

The Customer is Always Right

The customer is always right . well, almost always. A few years ago a local farmer bought a pair of workshoes at the store He had previously bought the same kind and now wanted a pair just like them. However, in a couple of months he returned to the store complaining that the shoes he had purchased were already showing signs of wear, and demanded his money back Well, the customer is always right, so although the manager found it difficult to believe that the shoes could look so old in such a short time, he refunded the money. Not long afterwards the farmer again came to the store and asked to speak with the manager. He shamefacedly confessed that he had been in the wrong in regard to the shoes His wife had discovered the new shows, still in the box in which they had been purchased. The farmer then remembered that he had decided not to wear them for a while because it was early spring and the ground was still wet and muddy Later he had forgotten that decision and noticed only how badly worn his shoes were — he had returned his old pair of shoes!



Alidia Mast, Shirley Wieranga, Gerhard Beyers, John De Grer, 1960s.

The 1940s, and especially the early part of that decade, marked the growth of not only the store but also the community The association through the board made decisions that had impact on the community at large The Credit Union idea was first raised by Chris Leder in a letter to the board in 1940 His idea was to have the store sell for cash only, and to begin a Credit Union which would lend to its members the money needed to pay the store This idea was received favourably and in May 1941 the board asked the Department of Co-operative Affairs for a speaker to give them information on how to set up a Credit Union In 1942 the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union was established A concrete vault was constructed to serve the needs of both businesses

During the 1940s the store was offered a Cockshutt machinery dealership. They in turn offered it to Simon Groot, but he was not interested either. They did not offer it to C. K. Mast because he was in competition with the store.

When Simon Groot, who had been operating a garage, left the community he suggested that a Co-op garage be formed. By fall 1944 the association decided to start a garage. A separate board of directors was elected. Shares were sold at $200.00 each. One could become a supporter by paying $100.00. With a loan from the Credit Union, there were enough funds to erect a building and begin operations. The bookkeeper of the store kept the books for the garage but it was to have its own manager. Ed Visser was hired as manager — mechanic and, in 1947, the garage opened for business. The business was not a success and in 1949 it was closed down and the building sold.

The Co-op was concerned about the appearance of the hamlet and from time to time appointed committees to look after this. At one meeting Chris Leder, board president, reported that he had ordered 750 trees from Indian Head, Saskatchewan, and that he would use these to landscape the church and the store property.

The Co-op's involvement in the life of the community was expressed when the question of providing recreation for the youth was discussed at a board meeting in 1944. At the next meeting, Jan Koning suggested starting a skating rink, and a committee was formed to arrange for its construction. The minutes read: "Our manager asks if it is possible to build a skating rink for our boys and girls and turn this over to a sports organization as a present from the store." The site was leveled in the fall of 1944 and a rink built on the store property. It was dismantled in 1950 when a rink was built on the school grounds. The store board continued its interest in recreation for the young people through grants to the sports committee and contributions to the buying of hockey equipment.

The board's involvement with the community's growth and activities is exemplified by its purchase of an electric light plant. Although initially the consistory of the CRC met with the board to consider joint ownership, the Co-op became the sole owner. The lights went on in October 1944. Other customers were allowed to connect to the power at a cost of $5.00 per light for homes and the garage. How long a period the $5.00 covered is not known. There was a rate for the church based on usage.

In 1948 the board decided to have the hamlet surveyed. The store sent bills for part of the surveying costs to Peter Tuininga, John Anema, Henry Bouwman, Menne Nanninga, Carl K. Mast, and John Molodowich. The Co-op owned 2.5 acres on the store site (NE 33-61-3-5) and sold small parcels of land to Jan Anema and Henry Kippers Sr. for their retirement homes. However, in 1944 Joe Baker asked the board for land on which to build a restaurant and pool room. He was refused but was allowed to buy one-third acre for residence only.

Since the store owned the hall, what took place there was under their supervision. Because of the beliefs of the community, dances were not even considered. At times the showing of moving pictures was banned as not being in the best interest of the young people. At another time they were allowed, but following a complaint were allowed only under supervision. The minutes of Janu-

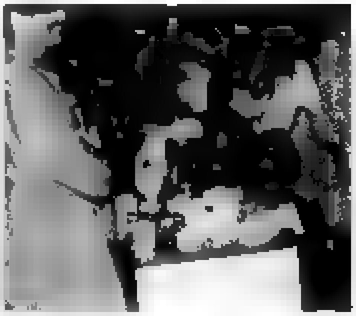
ary 1944 record the following: "Mr. ___ asks the board to close our hall for moving pictures as the lady in charge is used improper length and pictures are not for our children a proper education." (It appears the reference is to the length of dress.) This request to close the hall was granted but later some exceptions were made. For some years educational films and some machinery dealers' presentations were shown. "John Deere Days" shown by Carl K. Mast was allowed but in some years only the promotional film was shown — the comedies were prohibited.

Another issue the Co-op faced was the question of membership in the Alberta Co-operative Wholesale Association (ACWA) and the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA). It is not known when the Co-op became a member of the ACWA but the first available minutes, 1940, indicate membership at that time. The ACWA was strongly supported by most members, and even credited with helping the cause of farmers in their struggle for fair prices. Some members, however, were concerned that "the objectives and principles of the ACWA are not compatible with their beliefs." This question was debated over the years but motions to discontinue membership were defeated and the board continued to send delegates to the conventions of the ACWA, though at times it protested some of its views. At one time the board sent a resolution to the convention that "no taking of the Lord's name in vain by the delegates shall take place." In 1954 those who wanted to discontinue membership in the ACWA gained some support after a poem published in the *Co-op Chatter* was deemed to be blasphemy. The board sent a letter of protest to the ACWA. This culminated in a decision of the 1955 shareholders to withdraw membership from the ACWA and not to join the UFA. Before this the store had been buying from the UFA but sharing in only a limited way with its profits. This same arrangement developed with the ACWA in 1955. This association became the Federated Co-operative Association and in November 1972 the Neerlandia Co-op, by board decision, again became a member in full.

Other moral issues were also dealt with by the board. The manager was asked if the store had sold playing cards. He answered that if it had been selling them in the past it certainly would not do so in the future. Some stealing had also happened and it was the opinion of the manager that it happened mostly on Friday nights. A glass cover was put over the hardware counter to control this.

Another issue related to the original desire to have a separate community. In 1940 a request of a young man from outside the community to start a barbershop in a room in the store was refused. The board stated that "If one of our own young men would start a barber shop this would be approved." Drs. Kier and Boorman were granted use of a room at the store in 1948 and they used it for a couple of years "to provide a service to the community." The question of membership was another such issue. In 1971 it was decided that anyone who subscribed to the principles of the Neerlandia Co-op and who was financially reliable could become a member. As a result of this decision the Co-op received many new members, and expansion of the Co-op facilities became necessary. People had come to believe the Co-op was a well-run business and they desired to be a part of it. In fact the board had to deal with membership applications from as far away as Westlock. The question of membership was resolved in 1974, when trading boundaries were established — membership was limited to that area. The board felt a responsibility to the entire area north to the river and this was included in the trading area. The concept of a trading area seems to have worked well, and some expansion of the boundaries has been made since 1974.

To sell for cash or to grant credit caused with discussion over the years as well. With the establishment of the Credit Union a monthly limit of $10.00 credit was set. This was not satisfactory to some, and when the 1948 annual meeting decided to continue issuing credit, one of the board members resigned. He said he could not work in harmony with the board as long as the Co-op continued on a credit basis. Finally, in 1954, the decision was made to sell on a cash basis, and bills were to be paid every two weeks. Though the decision had been made, evidence suggests it never was put into effect. The 1955 annual meeting rescinded this motion as unworkable and credit for sixty days and later for thirty days became the policy of the store.

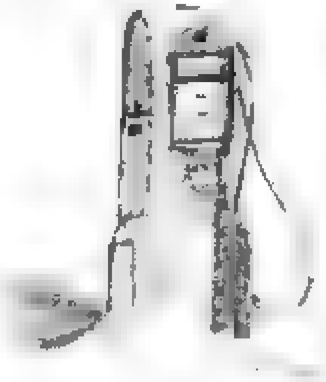


Serving a customer. Wilhelmien Beyers being helped by Henny Tuininga and Bill De Boer

Self-service was introduced in 1956. This was a major change not only for the clerks but also for the customers. It was hard for some men, who were used to handing a list to the clerks, to look for items themselves. Not a few would look at the clerk for sympathy and con them into finding the groceries. With self service, writing the groceries on bills also ended and the clerks had to learn to operate a cash register.

The years from 1963 to 1985 have been years of growth for the Neerlandia Co-operative Association. In 1966 modernization of the store took place with the installation of a new floor, new fixtures, and doors.

Then in 1973 a meeting of the shareholders was called to discuss the branching out into other areas of endeavour. This meeting approved the installation of anhydrous ammonia equipment and as a result land was purchased (a portion of SW 34-61-3-5) and tanks were installed.



In another special meeting the shareholders agreed to again attempt the operation of a Co-op garage, but this time with the same board of directors as governed the store. The site of the original garage was repurchased and a new building was constructed. On April 10, 1976, the Co-op Service Centre was officially opened with Sy Vander-Molen as manager and Fred Toebes as mechanic foreman. Successive managers were Larry Nanninga and Romke Stel. In 1982 Henk Navis became manager and Fred continues as head mechanic.

In April 28, 1979, further expansion of the Co-op took place with the opening of the fertilizer blending plant on the site of the anhydrous ammonia facility. The store was now able to offer expanded services in all types of fertilizer blends.

Yet another shareholders' meeting in 1983 gave approval to an addition to the store building. Rather than build a new store the decision was made to retain the old structure because of its soundness and historical significance The addition doubled the floor space, enabling the Co-op to offer its customers a wide variety of products. As one visitor said, the Neerlandia Co-op is "the Safeway of the north."

The "Safeway of the North", 1984

By 1984 the membership of the association had increased from the original 25 to 316 The number of employees had grown from one to sixteen and total sales had increased from three hundred to over five million in 1984 If the trademark of the Co-op has been its policy of granting credit, the payment of dividends is its benchmark of success. For years it has declared dividends on the purchases made by its members and these dividends have been applied to the members' shares They have not remained only as shares however; from 1973 to 1983 $830,195.66 has been returned to the shareholders

Throughout the years many people have been involved in the Neerlandia Co-op as staff members or as board members With the customers they have contributed to the welfare and success of the Neerlandia Co-operative Association.

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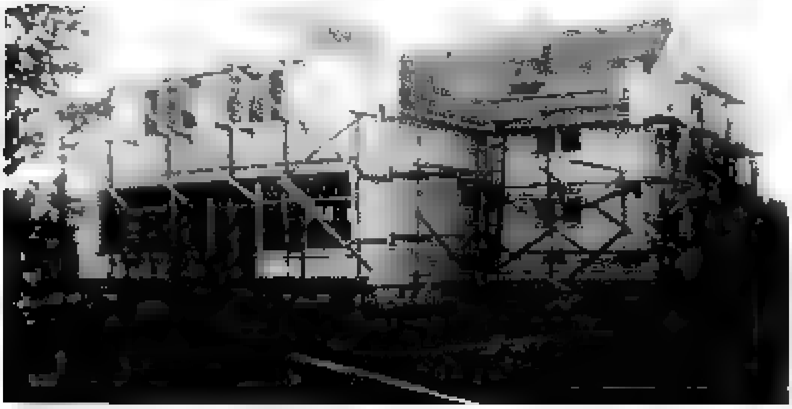
Tuininga, Clarence, personal interview, c. 1975-76, with Grace De Gier, Rose De Groot, and Ann Den Otter



Life as a Female Clerk at the Neerlandia Co-op 1946-49

The clerks at Neerlandia Co-op these days probably think they have it pretty good as they go parading down the vast aisles or standing at the till with ample room around them as they perform their duties We likewise felt like "Queens of our Domain" in a much smaller store with less frills — and getting a much smaller wage, at that.

We girls wore knee-length smocks over our dresses — pants were unheard of back then. I worked first with Grace Tuininga and later with Lula Krikke Frank Visser was the manager and Mr. Ashley (our favourite old teacher) did the bookkeeping and ran the Post Office

Our day would start by helping Mr. Ashley count out and record the cash needed for the day The last jobs of the day would be to sweep the rough wooden floor and again count the day's money, hoping it would balance — it usually did, but there were times when we would have to stay overtime and rack our brains over all the bills and find the mistake Of course, we would rather count the money than push the broom handle, so we usually took turns at these jobs.

The drygoods section was on the south side of the store, with an aisle between the shelves against the wall and the two counters One counter was marked for measuring out yardgoods – flannelette, sheeting, featherticking, cottons, etc. These counters had heavy glass on top and we could display such things as bone china cups and saucers and ornaments underneath There were sets of dishes displayed in the window. Drygoods on the shelves consisted of such items as men's bib overalls, Stanfield's all-wool drop-seat underwear, Penman's fleece-lined underwear, shirts, felt shoes, felt socks, woollen socks, rubbers, mitts and pullovers, tweed caps, toques, sewing and embroidery thread, women's undershirts, bloomers and panties, skeins of knitting and darning wool, and much more

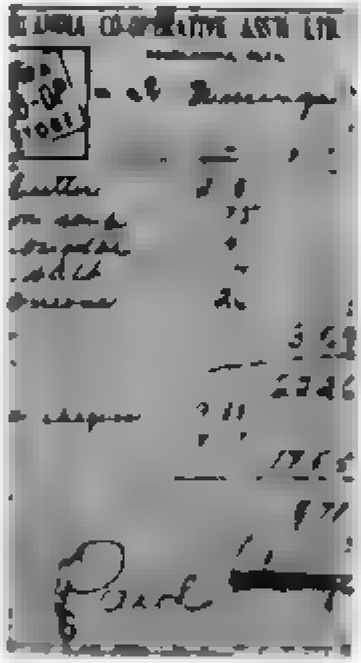
The hardware section was on the west side and included such supplies as milk pails, copper wash boilers, galvanized washtubs, stovepipes, airtight heaters, hand saws, axes, shovels, manure forks, kegs of nails, bolts, replacement handles, and lanterns.

The groceries were kept on the north side, stacked on high, medium, and low shelves against the wall. Again, there was quite a wide aisle and one short counter on which the meat slicer stood, and there was a roll of brown wrapping paper at the end On the long counter was the McKaskey (where all the bills were kept), the cash register, a scale, and another roll of brown paper at the end String hung from the ceiling on a big roll that unravelled as you pulled it On this counter most of our work was done There were two wooden stepladders readily available behind the counter for us to use, a high one and a low one depending on which shelf the needed groceries were on and also depending on the length of the clerk's legs We had a great time when the toilet paper would come cascading off the highest shelf while we were using a long-handled hook to get one roll down It was our job to keep the shelves filled and groceries and drygoods ordered

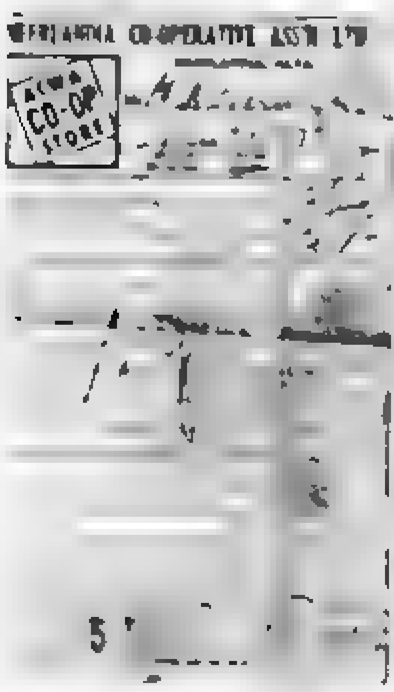
There were three or four large drawers underneath the grocery shelves which housed all kinds of goodies, such as a good supply of candy and chocolate bars as well as pot and pearl barley, rice, and prunes which we had packaged. (One day Lula discovered a big batch of some cheap wartime candy stuck in one of those drawers and we had a few laughs over that one.)

Behind the counter there was a small shelf which displayed an assortment of bars, suckers, licorice, cigarettes, and oh yes, Daily Double and White Owl cigars. Mr. H. Kippers Sr. never forgot his weekly supply of White Owls and the aroma in the Credit Union office in his home was proof of that. Nor did Mr. J. Peters Sr. ever quit using his good old faithful snuff — or Mr. J. Anema chew anything but Big Ben plugs. (And that tobacco juice was good for just about anything. Once, as a kid, I got stung by a bee while berry-picking and he applied some of his famous *pruimpje* sap on it. I must say that I was not as thrilled by it as he was.)

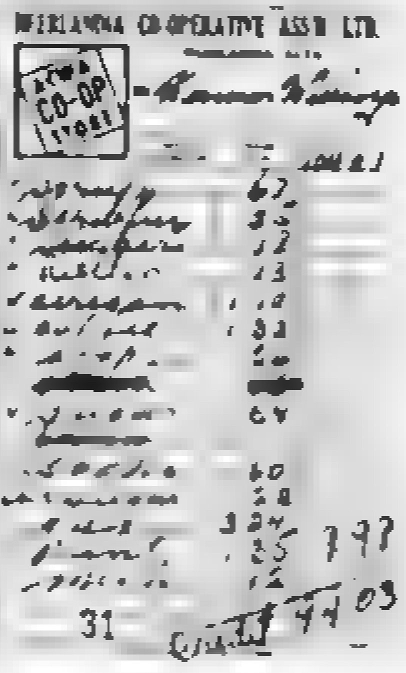
Customers would come in with their lists and either hand them to us or read them off, and we would write each item down on a duplicate bill (several bill books were kept on the counter) and then proceed to flit here and there picking up the needed supplies, whether it be groceries, dry goods or hardware. We also needed a good memory, since the groceries weren't individually priced. The bills were all added up by hand, yet few mistakes seemed to be made. Most people charged their bills and usually left their cream cheques for payment. Each person's bills were placed separately in a big metal McKaskey system held by a spring clip on several metal sheets. About once a week, one of us girls would take all the bills into the office, go through each one and check for mistakes. (There was no John De Geer to do the job at that time.) We were privileged to use the adding machine for this job only, so of course we all enjoyed "doing the bills."



NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASS'N LTD.



NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASS'N LTD.



NEERLANDIA CO-OPERATIVE ASS'N LTD.

Saturday was the regular shopping day for many; the men would come to the store and visit with one another after handing over their lists to the clerks to fill out. Their weekly mail would also be picked up at this time.

There was one old bachelor in particular that would have practically the same order every time and you could almost write it down from memory before he could read it off: one pound Blue Ribbon Tea, one pound butter, bread, two cans of beef noodle soup, two cans of Alpha milk, one pound lard, a can of Old Chum tobacco, cigarette papers, and coal oil when needed.

Most of the groceries were bought in bulk — rice, tapioca, pot and pearl barley, brown beans, peas, peanuts, raisins, currants, dates, dried fruit, and peppermints. It all had to be packaged by hand into one or two-pound paper bags, labelled, and priced. Coconut came in large square tins, coffee in big bottles, tea in three-pound tins.

Blackstrap molasses was bought in a big container and we would pour it into quart jars and sell it that way. In winter it would be cold and stiff and pour "as slow as molasses in January," so we would warm it up on the heat register. (Little Frankie Visser, the manager's son, would also seek refuge at the register to warm up after playing outdoors and he would love to lick that molasses. We had a lot of fun with him and he would make our day when he would sneak into the store and visit with us for a few minutes. Frankie knew that he was not allowed to be in the store and one time, when he did get caught, his Dad hauled him out by the scruff of the neck. Little did his Dad know that we had been the ones urging him on to come into the store in the first place.)

That one large heat register measured about two-and-one-half feet square and two feet high and was meant to warm up the whole store, nevertheless the store was often very cold. We made many trips to that register to warm our beet-red hands after pumping gas or doing other outdoor chores. We would pull the chain and the old furnace in the cellar would just burn a little harder. It was also a good place to sit while putting the burrs on bolts. (The burrs and bolts would then be put in separate compartments in a big high bin.)

In those days everyone used coal oil or high-test gasoline in their lamps and lanterns, and these were a usual item on the list. The one or two-gallon cans would have to be filled in the shed outdoors. It would really "make our day" when, at about ten to six in the dead of winter — we were already envisioning warm thoughts of home — someone would come in with their little can and we had to trudge out in the snow and cold to fill it and "cheerfully" hand it to our customer with a frozen smile on our face.

Vinegar came in wooden barrels and people would bring their own containers to be filled. Wood alcohol also came in bulk.

Almost everyone bought flour (usually Robin Hood) in one-hundred-pound cotton bags which were stored in the warehouse. When the men were not around, the two of us would heave it onto the cart (perhaps the same cart is still being used in the feed shed) or if there happened to be only one of us around at the time, we would push, pull, or drag it onto the cart by ourselves, unless we could find a willing customer to help. We would wheel it through the store, onto the porch, and the same procedure would take place to get it into the vehicle. Sometimes mice would get at the flour bags and chew a few holes in them. We did some fancy repair work on them with needle and thread, hoping the customers would not notice.

We also did our share of handling one-hundred-pound bags of feed at the feed shed. Occasionally we would help unload the freight when the truck came in.

During the war, certain items were hard to get. Laundry soap was one of them, and if we would get a case or two of it (usually Oxydol) we would keep it under the counter and deal it out as fairly as we could. Another such item was currants, which we packaged into paper bags. They also went under the counter. We sold them sparingly, until they got infested with worms and we could not sell them at all!

Everyone still had ration books because of war shortages and a certain amount of coupons could be used each week for such items as sugar, jam, butter, and also gas. Some of the customers would leave their books in the store for convenience and we were once accused of stealing someone's coupons because he wanted more sugar than he could get.

There was a gas pump in front of the store which was hand-pumped with a lever and could hold ten gallons of gas in a glass container marked in gallons, half gallons, and quarter gallons. It was usually pumped full after every customer, so it would be ready for the next one. Serving gas was a nice break from our indoor work, especially in summer. There was also a gas and oil shed across the road to the east and farmers would get their gas in forty-five-gallon barrels. We girls would often have to help get the gas for the customers (where were those guys when we needed them?). Of course, when certain customers came, we were only too willing to go out there! First the barrel was weighed on a platform scale, then pumped full with a back-and-forth lever, then weighed again — a certain amount of pounds equalled forty-five gallons. The customers would come with one to five barrels at a time, so that meant a lot of pumping.

Sophie Aneme and one of the special customers, Lambert Wierenga.

We had one tiny sink (located in the southwest corner of the Post Office) where we could wash our hands. Since neither of us had running water at home, taps were a great novelty for us. One day Lula was fooling around at the sink and, instead of shutting the tap off, she opened it full blast. It forcefully spit back at her and she stood there dripping wet — amid peals of laughter from me, of course.

The manager's family shared their large two-door fridge with the store. Every Saturday it was cleaned out and if the bologna, sausage, or wieners became a bit sticky, we wiped them with a cloth dipped in vinegar so they would maybe last a few days longer.

On Monday mornings the store yard was the centre of activity and we had to open one-half hour earlier (eight o'clock). It was cream-hauling morning. Farmers were hired by Dick Fisher to pick up cream along their way to the store, where it would be unloaded onto Fisher's truck and hauled to Edmonton. They got paid twenty-five cents for each can of cream, and we were given a list as to how many cans each hauler had so we could credit it to their account.

Since we had no spacious, modern, indoor bathroom, we would sometimes have to "get away from it all" where the double outhouse (situated slightly to the southwest behind the old feed shed) left an indelible mark on mind and body, especially when hoarfrost gathered thick and picturesque around the seat in winter.

My biggest paycheck was sixty-five dollars per month. I started with bare minimum wages and was asked to give back ten dollars per month out of my meagre earnings. To the best of my knowledge, I was the only one who had to do this. Then one of the board members promised me that I would get a bonus when I quit, but I never saw that either. But in spite of all the disappointments, I still survived. I must say we got along really well and had many good times together — plus many hours of hard work, though we are none the worse for it.

Sophie (Anema) Wierenga

BUSINESS ENDEAVOURS

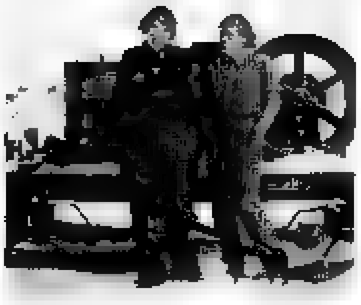
In the earliest times of the community it was difficult for anyone to survive on his own. No one who came had all the necessary tools, equipment, and ability to do all the work that was needed in a farming community.

Through the years there were many people who supplied a service for the settlers. The first years there was little or no charge for such services. The people helped each other, each doing the task(s) for which he had the necessary tools or skills.

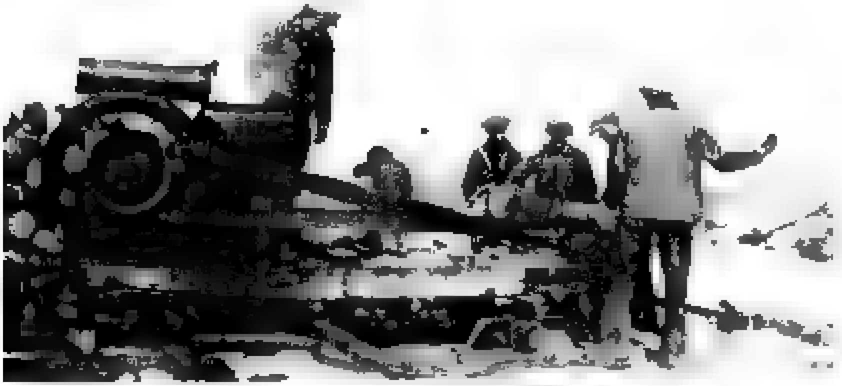
Some farmers owned either a horse or tractor-drawn breaker and did custom breaking for farmers at up to eight dollars per acre.

Henry Mast owned a small horse-drawn binder and went from farm to farm cutting grain.

Toney Sturwold was mechanically inclined and used his abilities to help others. Grain had to be ground up for livestock feed. Toney owned a buzz saw for sawing firewood, and a small grain crusher which he mounted on a wagon in summer and a sleigh in winter. These units were powered by a small four-horsepower engine. Toney went to the farms, first grinding some clean wheat to be used for porridge, brown bread, or muffins. He then ground grain for the livestock. This grinding took a long time. Only a few bags of grain could be crushed in one day. If there was wood to be sawed, this was also done. Sometime later Toney purchased a larger seven-horsepower engine and a larger crusher was added. In the late 1930s he went around with a still-larger crusher and tractor. This crusher would be mounted in the farmer's granary and powered by belt and pulley from the tractor. Toney's sons, Lucas and Jake, helped with this work. Toney also did some blacksmithing. For much of his work people paid him cash or did some clearing for him on his quarter. After Toney retired from farming, he took up painting farm buildings. He went to the farms by bicycle, braving the gravel thrown by speeding cars, and carrying the paint on his bicycle carrier.

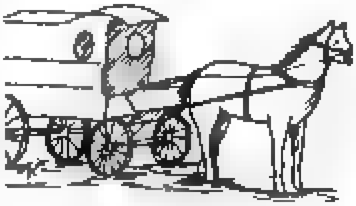

Lula and Margaret Sturwold in front of Toney's portable grain crusher.

Arie Emmerzael supplemented his farm income by becoming a



Saw mounted in sleigh sawing firewood, 1941

travelling salesman. He travelled the countryside in an old bread delivery wagon purchased in Edmonton. He sold religious books, cards, Bibles, calendars, commentaries, and other materials purchased from the Baker Book House in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Other products he sold, which many farmers thought were quite good, were the Dr. Bell's Wonder Medicine line of veterinary supplies. He also sold battery-operated electric fencers. Arie travelled around the Barrhead-Westlock area selling his goods. Each trip lasted about two weeks depending on the route he took.



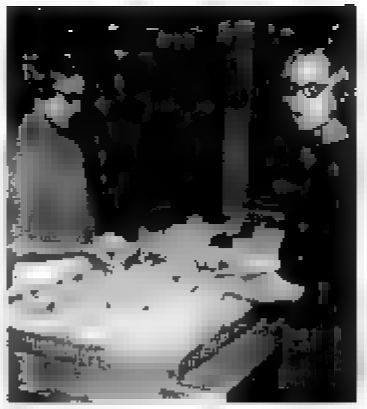
John Roth, a tinsmith by trade, installed many gravity coal furnaces in the area. These were central heating furnaces. many people claim that they provided a more comfortable heat than gas furnaces do. John also installed eavestroughs on houses and farm buildings.

George Toebes was an all-round handyman. His particular skill was in the area of plumbing.

There were several carpenters in the area. Henry Bouwman, Ben Lievers, Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, and Popko Schuring. These men, and others in later years, built nearly all the houses, schools, stores, and garages in the community. The early carpenter did all his work using hand tools. Menne Nanninga had training in architecture in the Netherlands. He was seventy years old when he designed the Christian Reformed Church erected in 1949.

Beginning in 1945, Peter Tuininga operated a hatchery in Neerlandia for a number of years. For about two years he operated a ROP (Record of Production) hatchery. Later he started the Barrhead Electric Hatchery. In 1955 he sold the business to Albert Tiemstra. Albert moved to Mellowdale in 1964 and operated the hatchery there until 1975. Gerrit Gelderman operated a ROP hatchery for a few years but quit because it was so much work. Peter Tuininga and Albert Tiemstra sold a variety of egg-type and dual-purpose chickens. Gerrit Gelderman sold only the New Hampshire, a dual-purpose breed.

Jim Jorritsma went around the community with his John Deere tractor and did field weed-spraying. Jim sprayed several thousand acres a year for more than twelve years. He would start early in the morning and work until late in the evening. Jim was an interesting



Liz and Sharon Tiemstra taking off a hatch of chicks, 1970 person to have around, he had an amusing comment on everything

Henry Peters Sr. was an electrician, who had learned this trade in the Netherlands. He came to Neerlandia about the time that the rural power came in (1951). Henry had no problem finding work with all the wiring that had to be done at that time

C. K. Mast

Carl Mast was a successful Neerlandia businessman. In 1938 he became a sub-agent for Oliver farm equipment. In 1940 he had his own Oliver agency. In one short period of time he had sold six Oliver tractors at a price of $1140.00 each. Shortly after that he also obtained the John Deere agency. The John Deere Company was not pleased with him having two agencies so he was asked to drop one or the other. Carl continued with the John Deere. He sold a lot of equipment, the model "D" tractor being his biggest seller, and kept a good stock of parts on hand. He seldom took trade-ins during the earlier years, but in the 1950s, as the farmers' equipment line increased, he began to take some trade-ins

Carl was an agent for auto and fire insurance and sold hunting and fishing licenses. He was an agent for B A Petroleum products. The sale of B A products was in direct competition with the Neerlandia Co-op, which sold UFA products. The Co-op board was not pleased, but Carl felt he had the right to sell the B A products if he so desired. Carl also sold a line of paint and binder twine

Carl's success was, in part, due to his sociability with people and his ability to know what was needed by the people of the community. Carl's wife, Ann, was always ready to help him with his business.

After Carl's death in 1956, Ann sold the John Deere agency to Neerlandia Motors. She continued to sell the B A products for a time and the auto and fire insurance until she sold out and went to Edmonton

* * *

C.K. and the Combine

On the farm, combines were taking the place of the old threshing machines. Many people were using the small one-man pull-type combine with its own engine. One farmer was determined to get one, but there was such a big demand that they were soon sold out. There was, however, still one available in Neerlandia. The farmer was not too keen on getting that one, but he had no choice and the deal was made. It operated beautifully that fall, but the next fall the farmer could not get that engine started no matter what he did. Finally the only thing left to do was bring it back to the dealer. Well, it so happened that the dealer also sold gas and tractor fuel and I happened to be picking up a few barrels when the farmer was bringing his complaint. Carl K. Mast, the dealer, said, "Gerrit, do you know how to start this engine?" "Well," I said from the top of my head, "I know one thing, you need gas in the tank." I didn't have to say another word. There had been quite an argument going on by the looks on their faces. Now the farmer's face just changed from red to white. Carl got a little gas, poured it in the tank, turned *the crank a few times, and that motor ran like nothing had ever been wrong. (Remember Albert?)*

Gerrit Ingwersen

* * *

Blacksmithing

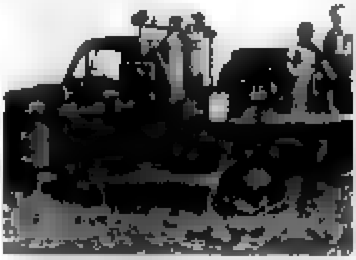
The trade of the blacksmith was used early in the history of the community. A blacksmith's equipment consisted mainly of a forge, an open firebox fueled by coal, a hand-operated blower to fan the flame to produce the heat needed for the job that had to be done; a heavy hammer to pound out the hot metal, and an anvil.

Plowshares were pounded out — a process whereby the cutting edge of the plowshare that had become dull was heated to a bright red heat and then hammered on the anvil to a sharper, thinner cutting edge. The share then had to be tempered by heat and water to the right hardness — not so soft that it would bend and not so hard that it would break or crack. Much the same process was done with the coulter, i.e. the upright cutting edge of the plow or breaker. If the farmer had a bent piece of equipment such as a beam from his plow or breaker, it could be heated and straightened out.

Although there were others who did blacksmithing, Toney Sturwold, Simon Groot, and Walter Wargacki were the main ones. In the early 1940s Walter Wargacki opened a blacksmith shop as his sole business. Walter set up a shop and living quarters on a small parcel of land on the northwest corner of SE 34-61-3-5. In 1943 he moved his business to a lot in the hamlet. Besides the blacksmith work, Walter did weldings and brazing with his oxygen-acetylene unit. He could also weld two pieces of metal together by heating them, applying a type of flux, and then pounding them together. Walter said that the fire had to get so hot for certain metals that it was hard to stand near it. He said that the tempering of metal was one of the trickiest parts of the job. He charged thirty-five cents for sharpening a plowshare. He paid one dollar for a one-hundred-pound bag of coal. Walter quit blacksmithing in 1946.

Neerlandia Welding and Repair

Ed Visser started work in Neerlandia as a mechanic and welder. He had received training in gas engines and tractor repair at Washington State College. In Cleveland, Ohio, he took training in arc and gas welding. He started working as a hired mechanic for the Neerlandia Co-op garage in 1946.


Neerlandia Welding, 1954

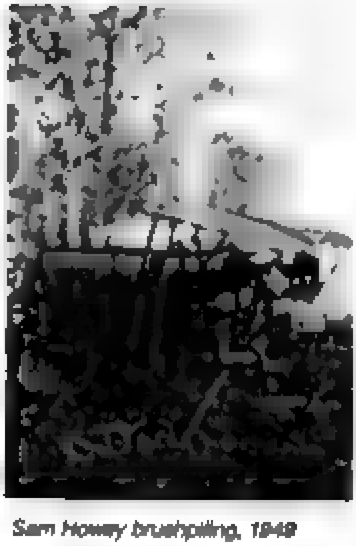
In the fall of 1949 Ed went to work on his own, specializing in welding. He owned a welding truck that was used at the shop, on the farms, in the fields, and on oil well sites. He first worked on his own at the Anne Elgersma farm. Later he built a cement block building across the road on his own property. This building became the home of Neerlandia Welding and Repair. In 1950 Ed took home courses to upgrade his training in motor mechanics and advanced welding.

Before electricity came to the community, all the welding was done by a motor-driven welding unit mounted on the truck. The coming of electricity was a most welcome event. It made all his power tools more usable. He could now weld without having to first start the engine. The noise made by the motor operating inside the building was also eliminated.

Ed was an agent for a variety of agricultural products — Jamesway manure handling equipment, Robin loaders and augers, and Powerchoring products. He had on hand hydraulic systems and parts, sprayer parts, bearings, and many other small items needed for the farm and home.

Ed's customers were always his concern. He was good-natured and would help them any time of day or night — even during mealtimes — working long hours and taking very few holidays. He did not charge much for his work and people often had to remind him to make out their bills so he could be paid.

In 1970 Ed expanded his business into a limited company with his son Allan as partner. He continued his business until he became ill. In February 1971 he passed away. Allan continued to operate the shop for a couple of years.

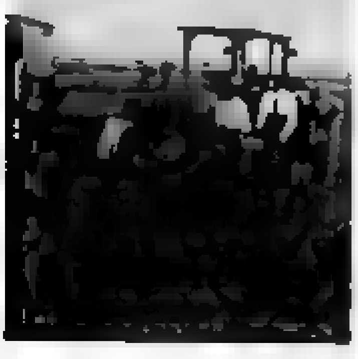


Sam Howey brushpiling, 1949

Land Clearing

Clearing land that was covered with bush was a difficult job. With oxen, horses, and the small steel-wheeled tractor equipment of the early days the opening of the land took a long time. Some of the early pioneers did some custom work, mainly to help out their neighbours. John Olthuis had the first tracked vehicle in Neerlandia. In 1922 he bought a 1520 Caterpillar tractor which could pull a three-bottom plow or a twenty-two inch breaker. It had more traction and could work wetter land than the steel-wheeled tractors of the day. He charged eight dollars an acre for breaking.

After World War I Caterpillar tractors became available. John Molodowich was the first to purchase a Cat and started to clear the land. People were amazed at how much could be done by a Cat in an hour's time. This machine could clear more land in a day than the earlier methods could achieve in months. One of John's first drivers was Sam Howey. Sam later purchased a Cat and went into business on his own. Sam was a big, strong, likeable man who enjoyed helping people. It is said that he could lift a forty-five gallon drum of diesel fuel off the ground and onto a truck. If his small four-wheel-drive jeep had tipped on one of the rough trails to the clearing site he could set it upright again. Sam had a large brush cutter mounted in front of his Cat to cut trees down. He would exchange the cutter for a piler to push the trees into row. When these windrows were dry they could be set on fire to be cleaned up. In the meantime the farmer or Sam, who also owned a two-bottomed breaking plow, could break the land between the windrows.



Two-bottom breaking plow, 1946

In 1947 Bill Olthuis, John Ingwersen, and Jack Tuininga purchased a D8 Caterpillar tractor from John Molodowich. Their charge was fourteen dollars per hour working time. They did not charge for the time they were broken down, stuck, or eating lunch. They worked with a fourteen-foot brush cutter and piler. They could cut three acres per hour and pile one acre per hour. In the summer they would work around the clock. During the winter they did some snow clearing on the roads when the roads became impassable because of snow drifts. Louis Nanninga bought out John Ingwersen, and George Anema was also a part-owner for a time. When

Jack Tuininga moved to Edmonton, Bill Olthuis bought out his share. Bill and Louis were then the sole owners. Later Bill bought out Louis' share and in 1964 Bill traded in the Cat at Dick Fisher's Massey-Ferguson dealership for some new equipment.

Moisture and wet land were always a problem. The water in the land was higher at this time and only the high land was cleared at first. The low land was never worked on until the more recent years, when water runs were cleaned out and straightened to allow the water to run away faster.

After the Cat had cleared the land of trees, the soil had to be turned over. This made room for people who owned breakers to do some custom work. Many people provided this service for the farmers.

As time went on and the land became more open, the need for the big Caterpillar tractors decreased. There is still some work done by Cats today but in a much different way. Instead of just clearing bush, the Cats make dugouts for farm water supply, level land, and clean up farmyards.

Brushcutter.

Service Garages

As the community expanded, the age of the horse and horse-drawn equipment came to an end. The era of simple machines and vehicles was also ending. In the early years repairs could be done by the farmer himself or by a handyman. Two handymen in the area were Lucas Sturwold and Peter Louws. These men had a good general knowledge of machines and engines and were able to help with the repair work.

As time went on almost all the fieldwork was done by tractor and many people owned cars. The need for specialized knowledge in the repair of vehicles and small engines grew. From 1940 on several men attempted to provide that service. All of them set up operations on the same site — the southwest corner of NW 34-61-3-5. All of them found it difficult to become financially successful. This difficulty increased when the garage was jointly owned. One of the reasons was the lack of enough machinery in the area to provide the garage with steady work. Another reason was the inability of the owners to accept trade-ins. They were operating with a limited trading area and a machine taken in trade could not be resold very easily. The first man to open a garage in Neerlandia was Simon Groot.

Simon Groot, a trained mechanic, came to Neerlandia in the fall of 1939. He was not only a mechanic but also an experienced blacksmith and acetylene gas welder. When he came to Neerlandia he took with him all the tools and equipment necessary for the work of his trade. Simon rented and set up his "Shop", as it was called, in the old Neerlandia Co-op store building and house.

Simon Groot's garage and house.

Before Simon could start up his business, he had the chore of remodelling the old store into a useable and efficient garage. He built benches and put in new doors, including a large door which would permit the entry of cars and other types of farm machinery needing repairs. One area was set aside for the blacksmith work, because a large vent had to be installed in order to exhaust the fumes coming off the forge In February 1940 Simon opened his shop for business.

Simon was a real handyman. He repaired cars when they needed fixing, he repaired many different farm machines, and he could also repair any home and yard tools. His talents included such things as soldering a kettle or getting a lamp back into operation.

Along with the work he did in the shop, he went out on many service calls He went out to the farm or field and did the repairs on the spot, since many farmers did not have any tools or the know-how to do the repairs themselves

Simon charged whatever he felt was fair for the job done Much of the work done was charged out at less than one dollar. In April 1943 Simon closed his "Shop" and moved to Edmonton.

When Simon Groot left, the garage building was sold to John Gelderman who dismantled it for lumber, and the house on the same property was sold to Frank Kowalchuk, he in time sold it and it was moved to the Two Mile Corner. The absence of a service garage concerned the farmers, so in 1947 a garage was started under the auspices of the Neerlandia Co-op. A new building had been constructed to house the business. This garage was not successful so the doors were closed in 1949

Louis Nanninga, Bill Olthuis, and Jack Tuininga bought the building in 1949 and the next year sold it to Henry Dieterman and Romke Stel Stel later became sole owner and operated under the name Neerlandia Motors. Neerlandia Motors was sub-agent for the Oliver Farm Machinery Company and Ford Motor Company and in 1957 obtained the John Deere agency At this time Simon Tuininga was part-owner of the garage Since he was also a farmer and livestock dealer, they could take farm produce in payment.

The garage changed hands again, in 1959, when the building was sold to Gerrit Gelderman and Fred Toebes. They also purchased the land on which the building stood. The two men continued with the John Deere agency and sold small items as well. Fred, who had previously owned a garage in Vega, had the opportunity to repurchase it and in 1961 he returned to Vega. Gerrit continued to operate the garage until 1967 when he closed the doors and moved to Abbotsford, B C After a short closed-down period, the garage was reopened by Egbert Wever. Henry Meetsma purchased the garage from Gerrit and after renovating it, opened as Meetsma Motors in 1969

* * *

Meetsma Motors was opened for business on September 7, 1969 The Meetsmas liked their daily contact with the customers and the general spirit of goodwill The business they received from the Co-op was also a great help. They improved the appearance of the buildings somewhat, but it was a losing battle, although the installation of natural gas in the fall of 1972 had been a great improvement. The original structure with the arched roof was well built and sturdy, but the annexes were forever leaking. At their age, though, the Meetsmas could not invest in new construction. Besides, the work was getting too much for Henry because there was usually too much work for one man, yet not enough for two.

Meanwhile, the Neerlandia Co-op was planning expansion. They proposed to buy Meetsma's lot for the building of a complete service centre. The deal they made was satisfactory to both parties. In the fall of 1975, the Co-op started building behind the old garage, while Henry kept on working through the winter. When the Co-op Service Centre opened, he closed his shop on April 1, 1976. During those seven years the price of gas had gone up from 38 cents per gallon to 94 cents. When the price went over the fifty-cent mark, Henry Meetsma had to change the head on the pump.

On the last Saturday in March 1976, the Meetsmas held an auction. It was a cold snowy day, yet people came from far and wide. In a few hours nothing was left but the shell of the building. Later, Wilfred Holwerda wrecked it and moved the arch to his farm for a cattle shed, the house followed and was demoted to a chicken house. One day Henry and Grace Meetsma came back and looked at the house while it was sitting on skids. The garage was already gone. Their little grandson tugged at Grace's arm and said "Don't cry Grandma, you got another house in Calgary." Little did he know that apart from their private feeling of something in their lives that had come to an end, there was the fact that Neerlandia would never be the same again. A landmark was gone. The new building may be sound and functional, but to the Meetsmas it will never fit in like the old garage and the little house did.

Grace Meetsma

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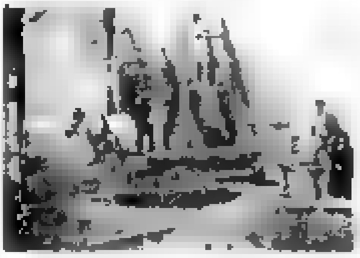
Meetsma Motors.

In 1975 the Neerlandia Co-op bought the land and buildings from Meetsma Motors and erected a new building on the site. The Co-op Service Centre opened in 1976. With the large amount of machinery in the community by this time, its mechanics are kept busy with repair work. In addition it sells a wide variety of small items needed on the farms in the area.

Well Drilling

Our pioneers came to a land that had lots of water. All the low lands and creeks had water that could be used for animals, but was not suitable for domestic use. During the long winters the ponds and creeks were frozen, making it necessary to find an alternate source of water for home use and for the animals.

The first attempt to get water was to dig a well by hand. With pick and shovel settlers would dig a hole about four feet square in the hard ground, going down until water was found or to a maximum depth of about twenty-five feet. Two people were needed to dig a well, one to do the actual digging and the other to pull up the dirt in a pail. Once the hole was dug, cribbing was put in to line the hole to keep it from caving in. The water was drawn up with a special pail and rope or with a pulley attached to a frame above the well, making the rope easier to pull. Many of these wells were dug · some were satisfactory and others were not. This type of well



Boring a well

supplied only a small amount of water for only a few animals and the home. These wells also served as a cooler for cream and perishable produce. This method of storage kept the items free from flies and rodents and, in the winter, free of frost. A problem with these wells was the accumulation of methane gas. This gas could kill someone quickly if they entered the well.

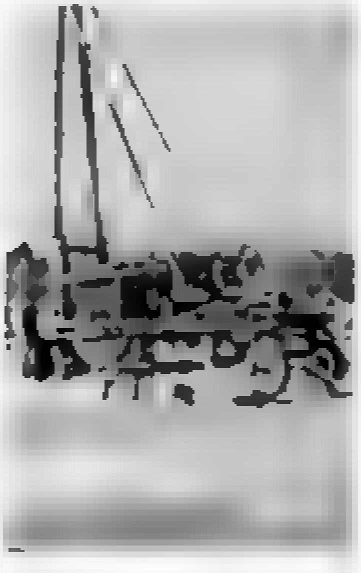
Bob Hodge later came into the area and bored wells. He used a "fence-post auger" type digger to bore holes of twenty-four inches in diameter for the top section of the hole and eighteen inches for the deeper section. The rig was powered by horses walking around the well, propelling the digging mechanism. These wells also did not provide an adequate supply of water. They were dug to a maximum depth of fifty feet. Because the well hole was round, specially cut two by six lumber (with bevelled edges) had to be purchased to make cribbing to fit the hole.

Well drilling outfit

Success in obtaining a good supply of water was finally attained by the punching or drilling method. The drilling rig could punch a rod and bit down through the different layers of soil to the water bearing sandstone. The hole was drilled until a sandstone layer with a good water supply was reached from one to six hundred feet. A two-inch casing was put in the hole. The water was brought to the surface by means of a cylinder, pump rods, and a plugger. A pump jack run by a motor operated the mechanism.

Peter Wyngaarden from the Westlock area drilled the first wells in the district. He drilled wells for John Schuring, Louis Nanninga, Ike Nanninga, and others in the area.

Peter Wyngaarden sold his rig to Bill Olthuis and Jack Tuininga in 1939. They drilled numerous wells. The well that took them the shortest time was one they punched for Frank Kowalchuk — it took one day to complete. The longest time they spent drilling a well was one month at Robert Krikke's place (the well was 465 feet deep). Charges for drilling at this time were seventy-five dollars for the first 150 feet and seventy-five cents for each additional foot. Casing for the well was forty cents per foot, pump rods twenty-two cents per foot, and a cylinder was twelve dollars. In 1943 Bill sold his rig to Clarence Wierenga, who dug many wells in the Neerlandia district. He also drilled in Shoal Creek, Mellowdale, Barrhead, and Fort Assiniboine, and he even drilled one well in Swan Hills. Clarence sold the rig in 1945. He continued drilling with a rig he constructed himself.



Well drilling on Lucas [illegible] farm [illegible]

Some of the problems that a well driller faced were the rocks which would have to be drilled through. Sometimes the well drillers would lose something in a well. For example, a drill rod would break or else something was accidentally dropped into the well. Whatever the case, these items would have to be fished out and this would take a long time.

Times changed and rotary drilling rigs came into the country. Two-inch wells were no longer drilled because they took a long time to dig, and they did not always supply a sufficient amount of water for the larger farms. Most of the two-inch wells are, however, still going strong and supplying a good amount of water. A rotary drilling rig can finish a well much quicker and, by making a hole four to eight inches in diameter, supply a much greater amount of water

* * *

The Wiscarson boys had a well-boring machine This machine had an auger two feet in diameter and about three feet in length It had two bevelled cutting edges on the bottom This machine was powered by a horse that walked around and around turning the auger. The bevelled cutting edges would bite into the ground, and fill the auger with dirt When it was full it was winched up with the machine as the horse pulled it around When it was winched up above the platform of the machine it was hooked to a swinging arm and swung out to the side Then the auger could open on a hinge, the dirt would fall out, and the auger would go back into the well to be filled again This auger could bite through quite hard soil and even sandstone but if it hit solid rock, that was it A small stone could sometimes be blasted out of the way with dynamite, but if it was too big to blast, that was the depth of your well. If you were lucky you had a well and if not you had a dry hole

My dad hired Charlie Wiscarson to drill a well near the house for one dollar a foot. He went down sixty feet and hit a rock. It yielded hardly enough water for house use, so the cattle still had to be taken to the muskeg to be watered

Some years later Bob Hodge was drilling or boring wells with the same kind of machine My dad thought he should again try his luck for a good well Bob Hodge said he could tell where there was a good underground stream by using a divining rod He would use a crotch from a willow branch He would hold the two ends of the crotch or the Y, one in each hand, and point the single end of the crotch ahead of him as he walked around the yard When the single end of the crotch would turn down, that was where the well had to be dug He produced only enough water for house use

We had a natural drain or slough running through our farm from one side to the other about a quarter of a mile from home My dad had dug two shallow wells in this slough, and they gave sufficient water for the summer and early fall months Around Christmas time they were usually dry Then a well was dug in the muskeg half a mile from home This supply usually lasted until the end of January Then we had to go three quarters of a mile away to where a creek ran through the far end of our grazing lease, there we had dug a shallow well This one usually held out until spring breakup. I have taken the cows out for water through drifting snow on a thirty-below-zero day, and when they got there they were so cold and miserable, they didn't feel like drinking the icy water, and would turn around and go back home without taking any We had to haul the water for our pigs too My dad had three forty five gallon wooden vinegar barrels, and put them on a stoneboat The water for the pigs was hauled from the slough a quarter of a mile from home He would have to do this every day or every other day all year long, depending on the number of pigs he had.

In cold weather the water barrels would get coated inside with ice, even though they were kept in the barn As the house was the only warm place on the farm, about once a week the water barrels would have to be rolled into the kitchen for de-icing, always under protest from my mother.

In 1938 Pete Wyngaarden started drilling wells. He had a machine that punched a two-inch hole, and was able to punch through layers of rock. He could drill to a depth of five hundred feet or more, and he always found a good stream of water. He was a bachelor and an alcoholic. He would work for a few days, and say he had to get his bit sharpened and needed a few dollars. Then he would go off to the Westlock hotel. After three or four days, when the money was gone and he had sobered up, he would be back punching down the well again.

My dad managed to scrape some money together and hired Pete to drill a well for us. He struck water at 160 feet deep, and this time it was a good well. A two-inch galvanized steel pipe was pounded into the hole for casing, and a brass sleeve cylinder was secured inside the pipe below the water level. A wooden pump rod was used to lift the water from the cylinder to the top of the pump. Wood was used for this because it was light material and had a tendency to float in the water for easier pumping. This cylinder, however, was very small, and took twelve strokes of the pump to get a gallon pail, or a good hour of pumping to water the cattle.

The following year we bought a secondhand one-horsepower Stoner gasoline engine and a pump jack. That was a great event. The engine didn't care how long it had to pump, and I could do other chores while it was pumping.

On the first Sunday after we had bought the engine my dad and I went out to do the chores, and I was ready to start the engine, but my dad said: "Wait a minute — today is Sunday. Do you think that thing should run on Sunday?"

"Well," I said, "do you think the Lord would rather see me pump water for an hour on Sunday than that engine?" It took my dad a few minutes to get all this progress worked out in his mind. After a while he said "Yes, I guess you are right, you better start the engine."

George Anema

The Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union

In 1942 the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union was formed. Although the community was growing, times were hard and people had difficulty paying their bills. Credit was hard to get from businesses who were themselves struggling to make ends meet. Many farmers could not borrow any money.

A decision of the Provincial Government that required a business to go on cash basis only, for the protection of the businessman, made it difficult for many people to make purchases. It was a result of this decision that the Neerlandia Co-op, on a proposal by Chris Leder, decided to set up a Credit Union.

A committee was organized to study the benefits and problems of such an organization. After meetings and reports they decided to go on with the project. Members could buy a share and invest their savings in the Credit Union and in return receive a dividend on their money and borrow at a reduced rate of interest. The Credit

Union would be a benefit to those who could not normally borrow money at a chartered bank. They could borrow here because the local board would know their situation and their ability to pay back and, in most cases, would lend them the money.

In August 1942 the Supplemental By-laws of the Neerlandia Savings and Credit Union were signed. Later that year the Credit Union opened for business in an office in the store with Henry Kippers Sr. as the manager and treasurer.

The Credit Union was set up with a board of directors of five elected members. Out of the board were chosen three credit committee members whose responsibility it was to approve or reject a loan application. They also checked out the security given for the loan. There were three elected supervisory committee members who checked the work of the treasurer, checked the loan applications, and made reports to be sent to the Department of Trade and Industry. The treasurer was responsible for all the daily business transactions of the Credit Union. He made out loan applications, managed the Credit Union, looked after the books, and made out the monthly and final statements.

If someone wished to become a member he had to pay a twenty-five cents entrance fee and buy a five-dollar share that could be paid for in instalments of one dollar. The member received a passbook in which all his transactions were recorded. Many young people and children became members. They brought their money, often rolls of pennies that had been saved up over the years, to Mr. Kippers.

There soon was enough money in the Credit Union to enable a member to borrow a small amount to pay off one or more of his bills. To borrow money a member filled out an application form at the treasurer's office and found someone to co-sign his loan — in case he did not pay it back. He then went to two members of the credit committee for their approval and signature. Finally he returned to the treasurer and received the money requested. Very few applications were refused through the years. Losses from someone not able to pay back a loan were almost nonexistent. There were some members that had co-signed so many notes that they later wondered how they could have been so brave in taking the risk they did.

Henry Kippers was the first treasurer and an ardent supporter. He served fom 1942-1963, working in his home at the Corner. Carol Reitsma was the treasurer from 1962-1970. Hilda Fisher took over from Carol until early 1980. Debbie Wierenga then held the position until the Credit Union was closed in March 1981.

The closure of the Credit Union was difficult to accept, but it had served its purpose and the time had come for it to close. The Credit Union was not large enough to provide the service needed for an expanding community. Checking services could not be made available. Not enough people supported the Credit Union to make it possible to provide the larger loans required. Some people were reluctant to support it because they felt that it was not private — due to the fact that the board of directors were all local people. In effect the Credit Union did not keep pace with the increased financial needs of the community.

When the Credit Union disbanded, the member accounts and the assets were transferred to the Barrhead Savings and Credit Union

Neerlandia Egg Grading Station

Chickens were one of the first animals to be raised on the farms. As years went by, farmers began to raise more chickens and many more eggs were sold to the egg grading stations. At this time chickens had the run of the farm, eating what they could find and thereby producing a dark-yolked egg Light-yolked eggs were preferred by the consumer, so these producers did not receive top grade and top price for their eggs. By the 1950s however, many of the farmers in the area were starting to raise chickens in large numbers and housing them in barns, thereby producing eggs with a lighter yolk.

Local farmers who housed their birds felt that they were not getting a fair price for their eggs. The grading stations to whom they sold the eggs claimed it was on account of the dark-yolked eggs.

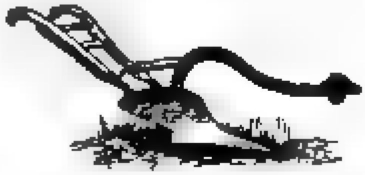
Albert Elgersma proposed to other farmers that he would establish an egg grading station in Neerlandia if they would patronize his business. To this they readily agreed In 1958 he rented the vacant parts shop from Ann Mast and equipment was purchased, graders were trained, and the doors opened for business The eggs were graded and shipped to Edmonton Produce Random checks on grading accuracy were done by the plant in Edmonton

Not long after the business started, farmers received a three-cent a dozen premium for grade A eggs because they were shipping light-yolked eggs In comparison to what the egg prices were at the time, this was considered a good premium This welcome bonus proved that their idea to start a grading station was a good one

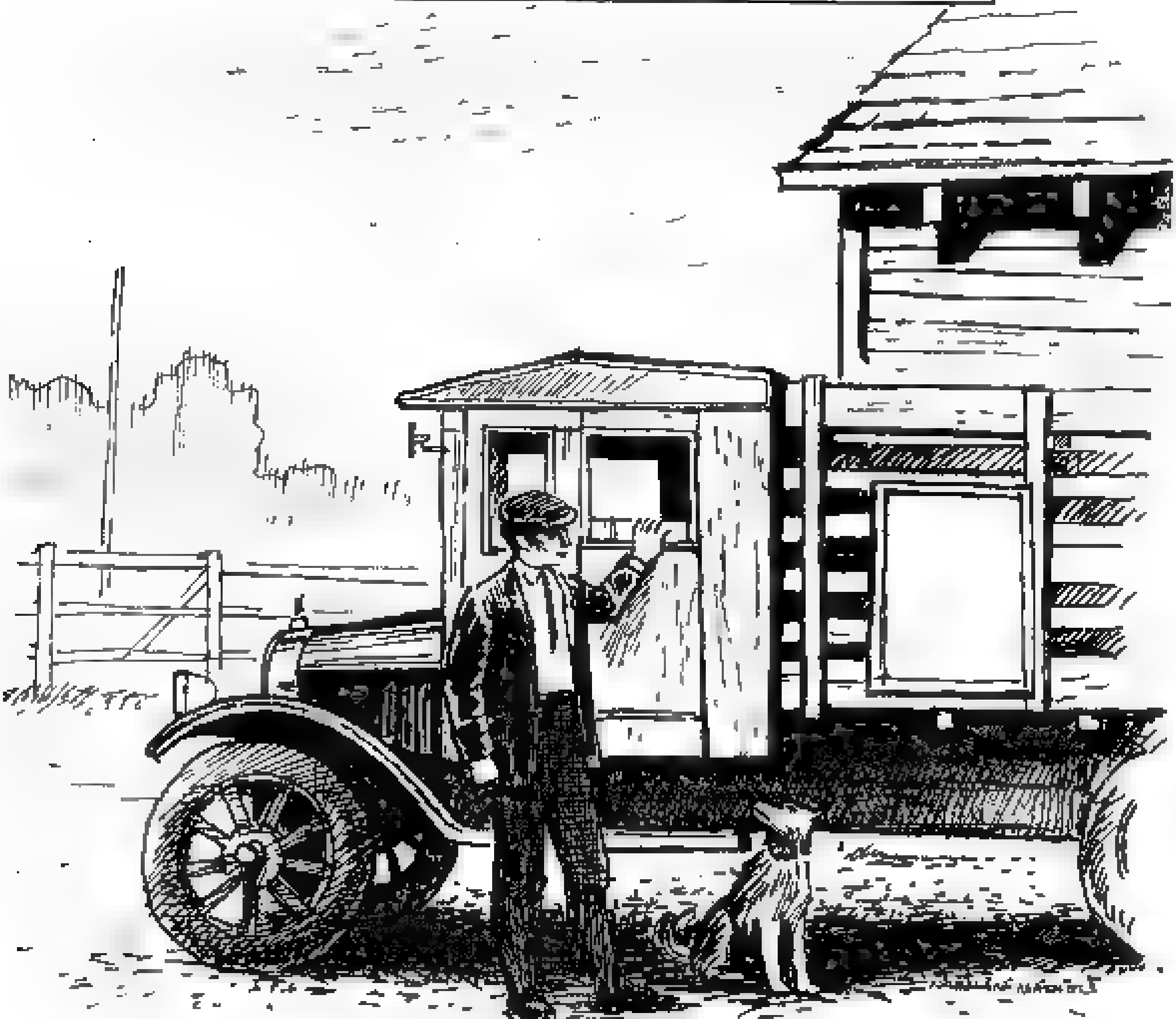
Henry Piers and Andrew Elgersma had gone to Edmonton to be trained as graders Henry Piers was the first operator and Winnifred Ingwersen was his assistant The grader's job was to candle eggs by holding an egg in front of a strong light to determine whether the yolk was light or dark, whether there were blood spots in the egg, and whether there were cracks in the shell.

Prices for eggs were "A" large — 25 to 26 cents per dozen, "A" medium — 18 to 20 cents, small — 10 cents, and cracks — 6 to 8 cents.

Albert Elgersma sold his business to Ike and Manny Nanninga in 1959 Manny operated it for five years but closed it down in 1964 Local graders were shutting down at this time because the Safeway Company trucks of Edmonton were coming to the district and picking up the eggs from the yard of larger farms This simpler procedure enticed farmers to patronize Safeway with the result that the local egg grading station was no longer financially feasible



The Freight Haul



FREIGHT-HAULING

When the first settlers came to Townships 61 and 62 in 1912, the freight went all one way — north. Whatever the settlers thought they would need within the next year was carried with them. If they ran out of anything or had forgotten anything, their only hope was that someone could lend the needed item until it became possible to get to a store. There was no freight whatever going out of the area because scarcely an acre of ground was under cultivation and there was not an animal for sale, the eggs laid by the few hens on the homesteads were eaten by the family or put under a hen to hatch.

Whenever anyone went to the store at Mellowdale or, more rarely, to Dusseldorf, Westlock, or Clyde, he would carry lists of items needed by other members of the community. The estimated amount of money was given to the traveller so he would be able to purchase the items. If the cost was less or greater than the money given, an adjustment would be made upon his return.

After a few years farmers were producing enough eggs, cream, and butter to enable them to sell or trade some of the produce. Because so few farmers had horses, the trip to market was often made on foot with the produce carried in a sack slung over the man's shoulder. On his return trip he carried, in the same fashion, the goods that he had bought. Most of the items carried in this way were groceries or small items needed on the farm. But sometimes the farmer returned home with a struggling pig in the sack. Albert Mast Sr., who had a small store, carried some of the stock for his store in this labourious way.

* * *

Pigs

(1917?) Douwe and John went to Rossington and bought two weaner pigs, maybe forty or fifty pounds. They each carried a pig in a bag slung over their shoulder. They had no grain to feed the hogs yet in those years, so fed them potato peels and rabbit meat.

Norman Terpsma

* * *

Gradually, as more settlers came to Neerlandia and as more land was cleared, the amount of freight going out of the area increased to the point that it became necessary to make regular trips to Westlock to deliver cream. The Dutch settlers set up a schedule whereby each week one producer took his turn delivering the cream. Then indeed, he became an errand boy for the whole community as everyone gave him their *briefjes* and money. This practice lasted until the Neerlandia Co-op was established in 1920-1922.

Arie Emmerzael, Henry Kannegieter, Ben Lievers, and Albert Ritsema were then hired by the Co-op to haul supplies by wagon from Westlock to Neerlandia once a month. They went in turn each week, leaving Neerlandia one day with cream and eggs and returning the next with supplies for the Co-op.

* * *

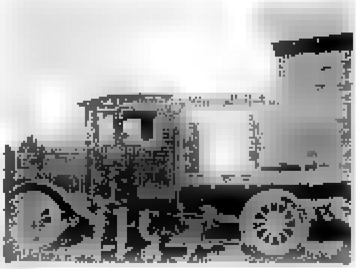
Teamster

So we bought some cows from a neighbour who was moving out and started to ship cream. At first we shipped it to Mellowdale and delivered it by turns. Then, in the 1920s, we started the Co-op store in a little log cabin, so we could deliver our cream there. Three or four men, who each had a wagon, were hired to deliver it to Westlock once a week. I was one of them and at first I made a trip once in every four weeks. Then some teamsters resigned, so I made the trip every other week. We took the eggs and cream from the store in the morning and travelled that day to Westlock, so that we could be at the station at eight o'clock the following morning to get the cream on the train to Edmonton. During the day we sold the eggs in the store. We had lots of other business to do as well: a money order to Eaton's, taxes to pay, an order from the drug store, repairs for machinery, anything our neighbours had asked, we tried to do. Another had twelve dozen eggs and a list for groceries enclosed to buy in exchange for these eggs. I sometimes had a job to read their orders. They were not in German or Dutch — it was supposed to be English. (I puzzled more than once over those notes and did not always get the right thing.) I once got an order for a repair for machinery and the number was not known nor the name and he gave the size this way — "about as big around as your wife's sewing thimble." I did not fulfill this order. I told him I did not have a thimble with me so could not measure the size. After the trip, when I came home and delivered all my orders, I did not always have the correct money. One time I would be over and the next time I would be short. Once I had some money orders for the Post Office and the girl in the office said, "Leave your letters here and I will do it during the day and you pay me tonight." I paid her and the next time I came there she said, "How did you come out with your money?" I had three dollars over and she was three dollars short. So I handed her the three dollars, but not long after this it was the other way around — I was short and she handed me the money. The storekeepers were very glad to do business with us. It amounted to quite an amount sometimes and we received ten percent on all that we bought.

Ben Lievers

* * *

During the 1920s several men began to haul freight from Neerlandia. Dave Tuininga, who started the Neerlandia Truck Service, may have been the first one to truck for Neerlandia. He was given the contract to haul freight for the Neerlandia Co-op. On the trip into the city he carried livestock. On the return trip, in addition to supplies for the Co-op, he carried parcels ordered for individuals from Ramsey's Mail Order Store (located in the Tegler Building and later sold to T. Eaton Company). Dave sold his truck to Lorne Frizzell and Norman Lord because the carbon monoxide fumes bothered him and because he suffered from a bad hernia. Henry Mast and John Olthuis both trucked as well.



Dave called himself Tumega. he thought it would be easier for his non-Dutch customers to pronounce.

For all of them it was a difficult job. The roads were often impassable and the amount of freight available for hauling was

Henry and Ina Mast with the Speedwagon, 1926.

The Olthuis truck with Rienk de Jager, Sadie Tuininga, and two boys.

small. The truckers seldom had a full load to haul — perhaps a dozen cans of cream or the same number of hogs If there were cattle to haul, they would simply be combined with a load of hogs with no partitions to separate or protect the animals from each other The trucks themselves were small. John Olthuis drove a 1922 Ford one-ton truck which his father had purchased for $1200 00 On a good week he would have a full load of about twenty hogs, picked up in ones or twos at the farms On arrival in Edmonton he would go to either Burns or Gainer's because there he could make the best deal for his clients. Gas was not available in Neerlandia John Olthuis purchased gas and had his truck serviced at Smith's Garage in Westlock.

In September or October 1923 the contract for hauling the Co-op's freight was awarded to John at ninety cents per hundredweight He charged one dollar per hundredweight for livestock hauling. In addition to freight, John carried passengers for a round-trip fee of three dollars. Two passengers could ride in the cab with the driver; any others would have to ride on the back. One man who started out from Neerlandia with John could not stand the rough ride and got off in Clyde to go the rest of the way by train. John's most memorable trip carrying passengers was when he took Minke Mast to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. This old lady was so sick that a cot was placed on the back of the truck for her to lie on. Her son Henry accompanied her. By the time they reached Westlock it was raining and the roads were bad. John drove the truck into a garage and left it there overnight — Minke remained in her cot on the truck. The next day they continued the trip.

All the truckers experienced bad road conditions. When Dave Tuininga was trucking, the truckers from the surrounding areas would travel together to help each other through the worst spots. Sometimes they had to travel through the fields because the roads were blocked. If Dave was travelling alone he would sometimes have to unload everything to enable him to get out of a mud hole, and then reload it all again. Once he had to do this with a load of barbed wire. Other times he would be unable to get the truck out of the hole and have to stay at the nearest farmhouse until he could get help. The years John Olthuis trucked were the worst. There was so much snow during the winter of 1924-25 that the roads became impassable for a motorized vehicle. John had to use a team of horses and a sleigh, while his truck sat uselessly at home. When he reached Southworth's he would leave his team there and continue on with a team hired from them. He went only as far as Westlock because the winter freight contained only cream — no hogs. When spring came the roads were still impassable because of the melting snow so John did not resume trucking.

Lorne Frizzell and Norman Lord, whose main business was in Barrhead, also trucked for Neerlandia. They had the Neerlandia Co-op contract for two years. Once a week they would haul cream and eggs for the store to Westlock. They would haul livestock (at ninety cents per hundredweight) and groceries whenever this was necessary. Lorne Frizzell enjoyed the wine made by some of his customers. Even after they no longer had the store contract, the two men continued to have customers in Neerlandia until they quit trucking in 1929.

Trucking was not a profitable occupation in the twenties. There was little livestock shipped in the winter. Most farmers had no means of raising hogs over winter. Surplus animals were usually sold to a livestock dealer that came around every fall. In addition to the poor condition of the roads and the small volume of freight, the time it took to get anywhere contributed to the problem. A trip to Edmonton, in a truck whose top speed was sixteen miles per hour, took six to eight hours. This meant that a trucker had to spend money to stay overnight in Edmonton. When John Olthuis was trucking he stayed at the Acme Rooming House, where he paid fifty cents a night for a room and from eleven to thirty-five cents for a meal.

Despite the odds, Pete Tuininga decided to give trucking a try in 1926. He bought a truck from Harry Collette in Westlock and trucked from Neerlandia to Edmonton for about six months. This turned out to be another winter with a lot of snow. The roads were often drifted in, necessitating travel over the fields. On one occasion Pete and drivers from the surrounding districts got together to open up the road to Edmonton. It took them two days and the resulting track over road and through field was so rough that several trucks got broken springs

Giving trucking a try, Pete and Tena Tuininga.

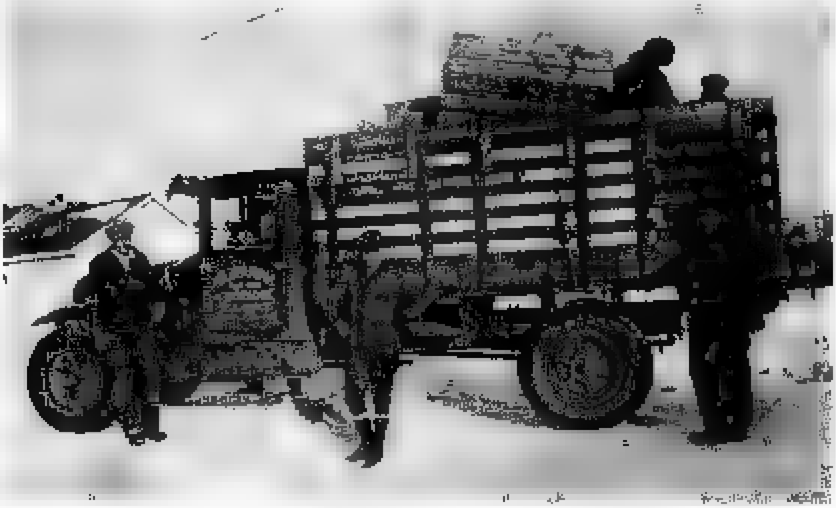
At that time the road from Neerlandia to Barrhead had bush on both sides and did not drift in. One of Pete's customers could not understand why the truck service was so slow and why, sometimes, the truck did not run at all. Pete invited him to go along on a trip. When they reached one of the rough spots the poor passenger bounced up and down like a cork. His head hit the ceiling of the cab — a wooden frame thinly covered with cloth and not at all gentle on a bobbing head. "*Dit is wat!*" (This is terrible!) exclaimed the shaken [illegible].

Pete Tuininga sold his truck in 1927 to Kees Stoové who, after trucking for a short time, sold the business to Billy Quick. Billy Quick was based in Edmonton. He would leave from there on Mondays with groceries and other supplies, stopping at Westlock, Rossington, Freedom, Naples, and Mellowdale before reaching Neerlandia. On Tuesdays he would return to Edmonton carrying cream in five and eight-gallon cans. Some of the cream went to the Burn's Creamery in Westlock and the rest to the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool in Edmonton. On Thursdays Billy returned the empty cans to the farmers at their gates. He also hauled hogs and cattle, most of which went to Gainer's packing plant in South Edmonton. Some of the farmers brought their stock to the Centre but many of the animals were picked up on the farms one pig here, two or three there. The pigs were usually kept in a pig yard and had to be chased until they were caught. Then, because there were no loading chutes, the pigs had to be lifted onto the truck.

Billy Quick with his truck in Edmonton.

While in Neerlandia Billy stayed at the Schoonekamp home Rulie (Schoonekamp) Nanninga remembers:

> "Mr. Quick was a small man, probably about five feet eight inches tall, and not heavy-built. He had a quiet, soft voice. When he came to our place it was often late in the evening. We would make supper for him and his helper. He had a garage built on our yard and in it he placed a cot on which he slept. There was a wood heater in the garage and, when the weather was cold, we would start a fire in it in the afternoon so it would be warm when Billy arrived. Billy ate with the family, paying twenty-five cents a meal. Billy carried the cream cheques and money in a leather pouch secured to his belt."

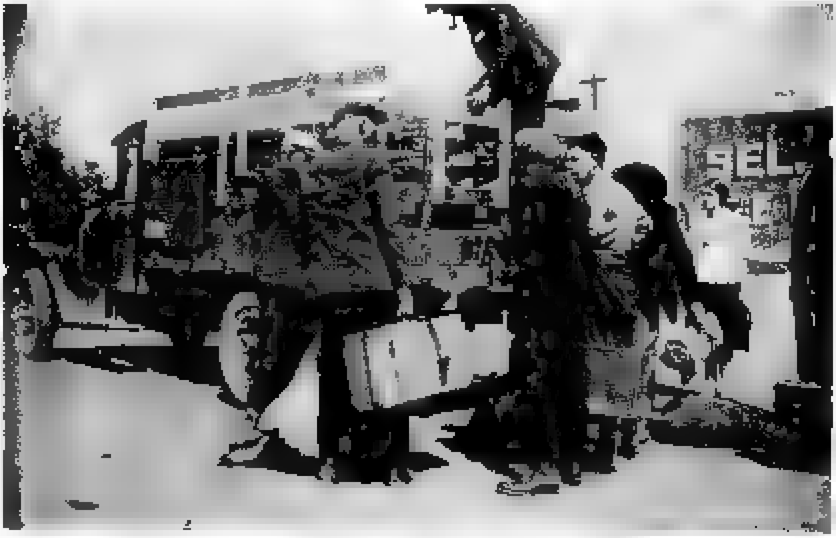


Loe Reyse, Charlie and Billy Quick.

The truck often functioned as a bus, carrying passengers to and from Edmonton for a small fee. When the Elzinga family came from the Netherlands, they came to Neerlandia with Billy Quick. A trip by truck took a long time. Anna (Elzinga) Schuring remembers:

> "We left Edmonton right after breakfast. Mother and Mabel sat in the front with Mr. Quick. The rest of us rode on the back, sitting on cream cans or standing because you know what happens when you sit on cream cans. We stopped many times along the way — St. Albert, Morinville and I don't know where all. Every

> time the truck stopped we stood up to stretch our legs and my brother Pete would ask Mother, 'Are you learning any English yet?' At 8:00 p.m. we finally arrived at Simon Tiemstra's place. Mrs. Tiemstra told us we didn't have far to go anymore — only four miles — but there were many stops to drop off cream cans. I don't know what time we arrived at Schoonekamp's. By then time had no meaning for us anymore."



Neerlandia farmers heading for the Harvest.

The amount of freight being hauled in and out of Neerlandia increased steadily since there were not only more people living in the area, but more land was under cultivation and numbers of cattle and hogs were increasing. Road conditions were also improving. Billy Quick first hired John Elzinga, then Lodewijk Reyse, and finally Dick Fisher to help him. Billy's son Charley also helped. He was one of the drivers when, with two trucks, they took the Lammert Wierenga family to Neerlandia. Nevertheless, during Billy's career the Depression began. Many of his freight charges were paid in chicken, vegetables, or jars of fresh cream. Because the prices for hogs and cattle were so low, he often hauled them for next to nothing, thereby making next to nothing on a round-trip.

Because of ill health, Billy Quick sold his business to Dick Fisher. Dick had driven for Billy from 1932 to 1934. Then he bought a used Reo truck and went into business for himself. When he bought Billy's business he hired his brother Art to drive for him. In 1936 Dick took his brother Art in as a partner; they named the business Fisher Brothers' Trucking.

The Fisher brothers began trucking in an advantageous time. Taking over Billy Quick's business meant that the Fishers also got the contract for the Co-op's freight. This contract was important to a trucker because it meant that he was guaranteed return freight. In addition, by the mid-thirties, the Alberta Livestock Co-op (ALC) established a monopoly in the area. With the co-operation of the local truckers the area was divided into the following zones: Branden got Vega, Weisgerber — Bloomsbury, Properzi — Naples, and Fishers — Neerlandia. This arrangement was a benefit to the truckers because then they were assured of hauling livestock for

Fisher Bros. truck with Co-op clerks Lula (and Art) Fisher, Rulle Schoonekamp, Sadie Reitsma, 1939.

ALC members. The increased need for farm produce during World War II was a benefit as well. It not only meant increased freight but it also enabled them to get a badly-needed truck. In 1944 the Fishers were unable to buy a truck since there were none available. But because of the wartime demand for dairy products, the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool obtained a special permit for them to buy an army truck (in the traditional army-green colour).

The roads were not always in good enough condition for the larger trucks the Fishers now owned so, often, a one-ton truck was used to pick up the stock and take it to the main road, where it was transferred to one of the larger trucks. Several farmers were hired by the Fishers to haul cream from every corner of Neerlandia and deliver it, every Monday morning, to a Fisher Brothers' truck which would be parked on the side of the road between the store and the school. One by one the men on the cream haul would arrive in their wagons or trucks, back up to the big truck, and transfer their loads.

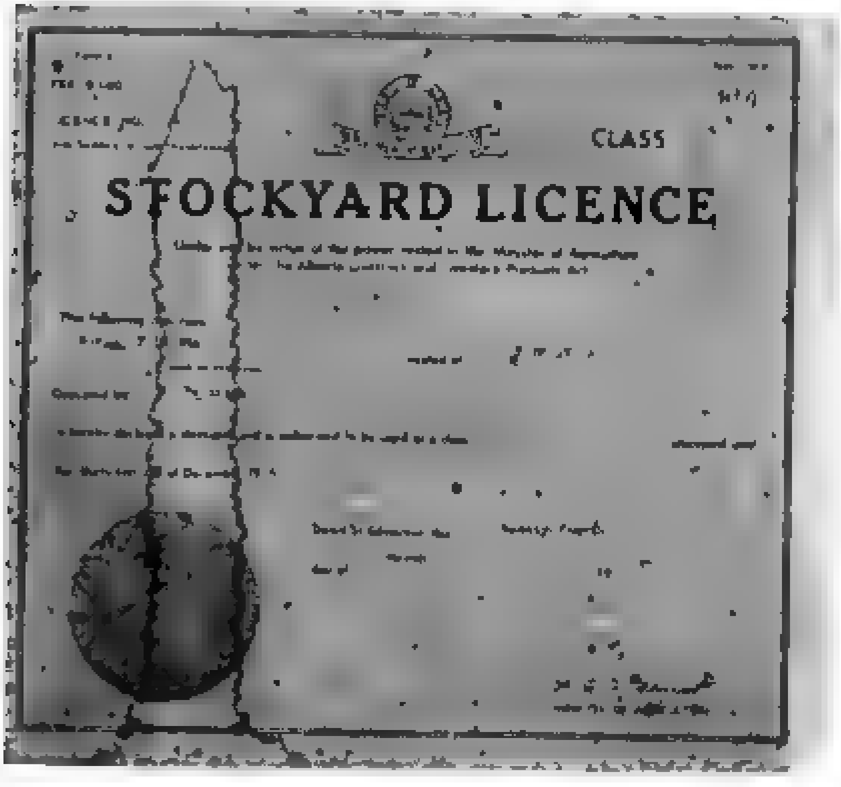
The Fisher brothers divided the work: Art hauled livestock and Dick hauled eggs and cream. Dick also hauled the store freight and one load of hogs a week. They both hauled grain. In addition Art and Dick usually employed one spare driver. Because depot fees were high the Fishers went from place to place in Edmonton picking up freight. Perishable items were picked up at the United Truck Depot. This method of handling freight took a lot of time, so the Fishers would stay overnight at the New Edmonton Hotel where they had a standing reservation. The Fisher brothers received the produce cheques at the packing plant and cashed them at an Edmonton bank. They would then deduct the freight charges and, upon their return home, give the remaining cash to the producers. Payment for cream was often placed in the cream cans and given to the farmers in this way.

One of the problems the truckers faced was the livestock smell, which tended to permeate the groceries. To minimize the problem, the trucks were washed after unloading the livestock at the packing plant.

The Fishers continued the practice of carrying passengers back and forth to the city, but made no charge for this service. Many people in Neerlandia remember being guests of the Fishers on a trip to the city. Art and Dick also advanced money to farmers on expected freight. Another service the Fishers provided was buying liquor for those who desired it. The nearest liquor store was in Westlock, and that was a long way to go for a case of beer. Art obtained liquor order forms from the Alberta Liquor Control Board. Whenever anyone wanted liquor, he would fill out a form which would enable Art to buy the desired beverage. He charged a handling fee of twenty-five cents for a case of beer or a bottle of other liquor. On occasion this service was rendered without the benefit of forms.

Fisher Brothers' Trucking was a successful business for many years. The volume of produce freighted out of Neerlandia increased dramatically as land was being cleared with Caterpillar tractors and as farmers were increasing their herds. Roads were steadily being improved. The road to Edmonton was first gravelled and then paving began. This made for less wear and tear on the trucks.

All the freight that went into and out of Neerlandia went on a Fisher Brothers' truck, because they were the only truckers in Neerlandia. The first one to successfully challenge the monopoly was Simon Tuininga. In 1950 he bought a used two-ton truck and began trucking. The ALC monopoly made it difficult for him to make a living at it. At first he hauled whatever he could get — horses for slaughter to Alaska Processors in Edmonton, scrap iron



CLASS

STOCKYARD LICENCE

which he bought and sold, injured animals, and coal. He also took out a Livestock Buyer's License. Gradually he built up a clientele. Swine herds were still relatively small, so he sometimes had to go to fifteen or twenty farms to get a full load — about sixty five hogs. Then, in 1955, the Neerlandia Co-op awarded the freight contract to Simon Tuininga and he was on his way. Simon enjoyed trucking, getting the most pleasure out of dickering at the Buying Station to get the best price for his clients.

Art and Dick dissolved their partnership in 1955, though both kept on trucking. Dick bought the Vega Mercantile and moved to Vega. His son, Bill, began driving for him. Bill had gone to business college for a short time, but came home to make trucking his career because his father became ill and was unable to handle the business on his own. In 1970 Dick sold the business to Bill.

Art had already sold his business to Ted Reitsma in May 1958. The business consisted of two trucks — a 1957 three-ton and a 1947 one-and a-half ton. Ted hauled livestock and grain but no eggs or cream. During the winter months, Ted's return freight was usually coal. All the coal had to be shovelled off the truck. In summer, building materials formed the bulk of his return freight.

Trucking was not without its hazards. In the 1950s and 1960s the truckers were loading hogs and chickens on an upper deck to increase the carrying capacity of their trucks. While this increased the efficiency of the operation, it also increased the risks because the centre of gravity was raised, making the trucks less stable. Hitting drifts, turning too abruptly, or going into a skid often meant overturning the truck. One was almost guaranteed of upsetting the truck if it went in the ditch. Sometimes mechanical failures contributed to problem. In 1956 Bill Fisher was heading for Edmonton with a full load of pigs, cattle, and chickens. When he approached the turn at Old Barrhead his brakes failed. He could not make the corner, and over he went. Simon Fisher came along and helped him to recapture and reload the animals. He was unable to recover six crates of chickens and two pigs. When he returned from Edmonton he found one of the pigs in the caragana hedge which was along the road, but the other was nowhere to be seen. Bill knew the pigs had gone into a nearby farmer's yard but since they (the Morrows) were on holidays he was unable to seek their help in locating them. When they came home they found the pig for Bill. It was alive and well in the potato bin in their basement.

Horses are difficult to haul, since with their weight they can easily cause a truck to overturn. On one trip when Simon Tuininga was hauling a load of horses a brake line broke just as he was approaching a paving crew near Morinville. As soon as he realized that he was unable to stop he leaned on his horn and put his lights on. The paving crew jumped out of the way, hollering at him as he sped past. Simon managed to get through the construction area without mishap and, as soon as he could slow down, he stopped at Morinville to get his brake line fixed and to allow his racing heart to return to normal.

Loading hogs which were raised outdoors could be hazardous too. Bites from pigs, outraged with the treatment they were receiving, were common. Even the electric prod was not always a help.

Sometimes a trucker slipped in a muddy yard and received a jolt from the end of the prod intended for the hog. By the 1960s hogs were being housed in barns and, because of better loading facilities and less space for the hog to maneuver, loading hogs was less of a chore. But "stubborn as a pig" has not lost its meaning and bites are not a thing of the past.

In 1966, Case Van Beek and Clifford Tuininga bought Neerlandia Trucking and renamed it Neerlandia Transport. In 1969 Clifford sold his share to Case. Case was trucking in a period of many changes.

There were several improvements. Highway 18 was paved and the road north to Neerlandia was a good gravel road. Hoists and augers were introduced to make loading and unloading grain easier. It was now possible to get aluminum-bottomed trucks. Before this it was necessary to put a layer of cardboard on the floor before loading groceries. Often a layer of bagged concentrate was put down first. Groceries such as bags of flour could never be put directly on the floor. Now with aluminum floors the trucks could be thoroughly cleaned. Nevertheless, trucking in the sixties was a real challenge due to the variety of goods that had to be brought in by truck. Loads included groceries, livestock, grain, fertilizer, plywood, and furniture. Few farmers kept sows so Case would buy from 250 to 400 feeder pigs at the Edmonton Stockyards each week to fill the barns. In the fall, feeder calves were also purchased at the stockyards for farmers who wanted to fatten cattle.

The peak period for the cream haul was from 1955 to 1960. In 1960 about three hundred cans of cream (half of them five-gallon and half eight-gallon cans) were shipped but thereafter it gradually declined. The opening of the fluid milk plant in Barrhead was the death knell for the cream haul and, when Bill Fisher sold his truck in 1980, it was discontinued completely.

By 1980 all the trucking firms had again changed hands. In 1970 Ted Reitsma sold to Joe Fisher, who renamed the business Joe Fisher Trucking. Neerlandia Transport was sold to Claus Langeveld in 1978. Bill Fisher sold the Fisher Truck Service to Donald Hiemstra in 1980. Don renamed the firm Graydon Trucking Limited. The big change in trucking from 1970 to 1980 was the use of tandem trucks with longer boxes. In the eighties the change was made to tractor-trailer units.

Freight rates through the years have not changed greatly. From 1935 to 1970 the rate for hogs remained sixty cents per hundredweight for live hogs and eighty cents dressed weight. The price for cattle remained at sixty cents per hundredweight. In the 1980s the rate first went up to $1.10 and later to $1.40 per hundredweight for hogs. Among the factors that made it possible for the truckers to maintain the same rate for so long, the main ones are the increased amount of freight and the improved roads and equipment. It is now possible to make the trip to Edmonton in two hours, driving over paved roads the entire distance and carrying, not twelve, twenty, sixty-five or even eighty, but two hundred hogs.

Communications

Map showing location of Post Office, 1917

COMMUNICATIONS

Post Office

"We were fortunate to have mail service" was a comment often made by early settlers in reference to the first postal service that was provided to Neerlandia.

Even though use of the post office was infrequent, it was the only link with friends and relatives in Edmonton and the Netherlands. Since radios did not come to the community until several years later, the only news received about world events had to arrive by mail.

The first post office became part of the Albert Minne Mast home, which was located on their farm at the SE 22-61-3-5, in 1913. Clarence can still recall weekly trips his dad made to James Fowler's in Mellowdale in pursuit of the mail. He commented that "there were some strange fellows around in those days too, you know, so Dad carried a revolver supplied to him by the RCMP." Apparently he was willing to use it to protect the Royal Mail if the need arose.

A round-trip to the Fowlers' from Masts' took a complete day by horse and upon Albert Mast's return the mail bags' contents were dumped on the house floor for sorting. This required that letters and parcels for settlers living near the Masts' home or to the west to the Tuiningas were kept back for these families. The remaining mail was placed in the sacks again and Simon Tiemstra then carried the mail on to the Albert Jan Oldegbers home located on the SE 34-61-3-5, where once again the sorting process was repeated. This time the people north and east of Oldegbers could obtain their mail here. The remaining mail was then brought to Henry Schoonekamp's farm on the NW 34-61-3-5, where the farmers living north and west of Neerlandia expected to find their mail. When it came to posting mail, however, this could be done only at the Albert Mast residence, since here was the official post office. The Schoonekamp and Oldegbers homes were used only as sorting points.

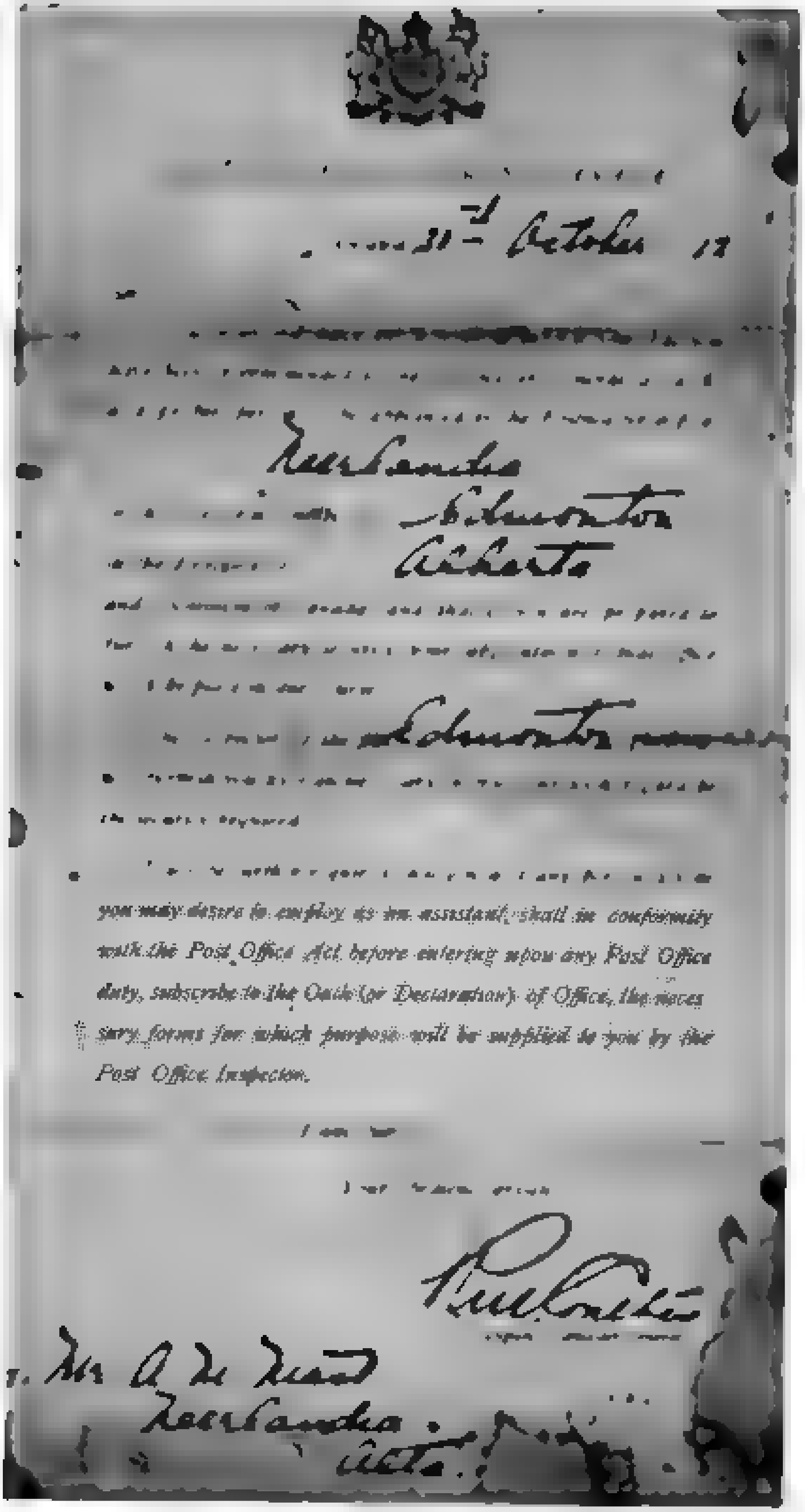
Mail days were special not only because of the mail, but also because they provided an opportunity for people to catch up on all the local news. Often the mail and the news it contained was six weeks old, it was still received with much anticipation. The families would gather around the heater in the evening to listen to Mom and Dad read the news from the distant relatives. To the recipients it did not matter how old the postmark was — it was a contact with those they loved. Not all mail was welcome, however, since there were those envelopes edged in black which carried a single message — a death announcement.

Most mail arrived in reasonable time but some of the letters proved rather elusive. Apparently, when the early homes were built, green lumber had been used and, as floors dried out, the cracks between the floorboards became larger. No matter how careful the sorters were, a letter managed to escape to the cellar to be found a day or many days later.

Mail

• • •

Our mail came in once a week, mostly on horseback. The



31st October 12

Neerlandia

Edmonton

Alberta

Edmonton

you may desire to employ as an assistant, shall in conformity with the Post Office Act, before entering upon any Post Office duty, subscribe to the Oath (or Declaration) of Office, the necessary forms for which purpose will be supplied to you by the Post Office Inspector.

I am, Sir,

Mr A. de Haan
Neerlandia
Alta.

Neerlandia Post Office was in a log cabin at the south end of the settlement, four miles south of our homestead. We took turns getting it; I one week and someone further on the next. This is how it was done: I would get it one week for the neighbours west of the Post Office and deliver it to a farmhouse for the north part of the settlement. One from the north would take it from there and deliver it around to his neighbours or to a central farm where they could get it. That way we only had to go every third or fourth week to the Post Office for mail.

Ben Lievers

* * *

In 1923 the Mast family moved to Edmonton. This resulted in the Neerlandia Post Office being moved to the local store on the NW 34-61-3-5. This proved to be a convenience for the settlers, since the weekly mail trip could be combined with shopping for groceries and farm supplies. From then on the post office became an intergral part of the local store. At that time there were forty-two names on the mailing list.

Ordinarily the store manager would have assumed postmaster duties, but one requirement for the position was Canadian citizenship. Case Ingwersen, who was not yet a citizen, could not hold the position. Instead William van Ark, a local schoolteacher, became

postal agent Apparently by the ninth of April 1925, Case Ingwersen received his citizenship papers and took over the post office duties

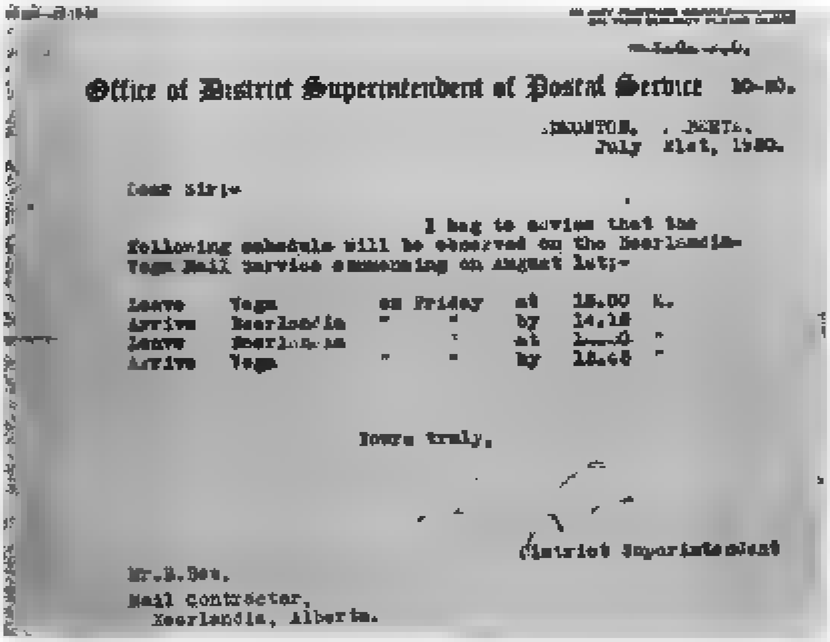
Case Ingwersen on the mail route.

Case Ingwersen was not only store manager and postal agent; he also carried mail for a number of years Hauling mail had its share of hardships — particularly for Ingwersen How the runaway began is not known It may have been the team was anxious to complete the weekly mail trip through the muddy trail or, more likely, they were spooked Whatever the cause of the runaway, the result was that Case was thrown from his wagon and suffered broken bones which gave him a limp for life

Though the post office was now in the store, the visiting with friends continued. While they waited for their mail, men, women, and children chatted with those they met there A major change in the mail route occurred in 1927, when Barrhead became a town and mail was brought directly into town by rail instead of being distributed out of Westlock. At the same time the post office at Fowler's was closed, and Mellowdale's post office was moved to their community store, located on the NE 21-60-3-5 After this Case Ingwersen fetched the mail from the Mellowdale store and Bert Bos brought the mail from Neerlandia to Vega In 1932 this mail route from Barrhead through Mellowdale and Neerlandia and on to Vega began to be operated by one person.

First of these mail carriers was Leo Stoik, who carried mail by horse for four years until 1936 During this time Case Ingwersen retired as postal agent and on April 7, 1934, Jan Koning assumed the position.

When Pete Hoofdakker assumed the responsibility of mail carrier he added a bit more speed to the service, since he used a Massey-Harris tractor instead of horses On occasion the RCMP would venture out to Neerlandia to uphold law and order. Part of their job was to check the mechanical condition of vehicles and, since Pete used a tractor on the road, it had to be checked The incident goes something like this. On being stopped by the RCMP,



Office of District Superintendent of Postal Service

Edmonton, Alta.
July 21st, 1930.

Dear Sir:-

I beg to advise that the following schedule will be observed on the Neerlandia-Vega Mail Service commencing on August 1st;-

Leave Vega on Friday at 13.00 h.
Arrive Neerlandia " " by 14.15
Leave Neerlandia " " at [illegible] "
Arrive Vega " " by 16.45 "

Yours truly,

District Superintendent

Mr. B. Bos,
Mail Contractor,
Neerlandia, Alberta.

For this service Bertus Bos was paid $85.00 per annum.

Pete's reply was, "You can't stop the Royal Mail." "We only want to check your brakes," said the RCMP. This seemed a reasonable request, so Pete invited the officer aboard his tractor and said he would comply with the request. When, after going some distance, Pete did not apply the brakes, the RCMP wanted to know why. Pete replied, "I am waiting for the order to stop." So the officer said, "Stop." It was the word the mail carrier was waiting for and, without hesitation, he hit the brakes. The tractor stopped but the police officer did not. He ended up straddled across the tractor hood.

• • •

A Trip to Remember

When I was eight years old and my brother Norman was ten years old, we had the excitement of a trip to Barrhead with the mail carrier Mr. Pete Hoofdakker. He was using an old Dodge car that was cut down and remodeled to form a small truck. With this he hauled mail and cream cans to Barrhead once a week from Vega, Neerlandia, and Mellowdale.

By the time he arrived at our place Mr. Hoofdakker already had two other passengers in the front seat so we had to ride in the back with the mail and cream cans. After our last stop at Mellowdale, the canvas tarp was put over and tied down because it started to rain. The roads in 1936 being what they were, it took quite some time to get from Mellowdale to Barrhead. On top of this, the tied-down tarp trapped a good portion of smoky exhaust fumes, so by the time we got to the creamery in Barrhead my brother and I were awfully sick.

After unloading at the creamery we were dropped off at the livery barn where we spent the afternoon lying on a pile of hay and

wondering if we had been left there for good Finally, in the late afternoon, Mr. Hootdakker returned for us, bringing with him six of the best-tasting doughnuts we had ever had, fresh from the bakery. Then we got back into the truck and went to the post office to pick up the mail bags. The train had come in late so the mail was not all sorted yet and we had to wait till our mail bags were ready Finally, by late evening, we started for home

The rain had stopped but the roads were terrible After going about two miles, the truck was stalled with a dead battery. After getting a push start from another vehicle we turned around and headed back into town for generator repairs. After these repairs we proceeded on our trip home without any further problems. We arrived home late that night, tired and hungry but happy with the experiences we had that day The things that really made an impression was seeing the creamery, the grain elevators, and my first-ever steam train. All in all, a very good day.

Fred Toebes

* * *

Progress was again evident when Leroy Erikson became the next mailman, he used a closed-in truck which kept the mail dry and clean. He was employed for approximately two terms from 1938 to 1942 How long Ephraim Wagner was employed as mail carrier is not known for sure, but it was probably until 1952, since William Tansowny began carrying mail on the same route in 1952. Bill said that in 1967 the Mellowdale Post Office closed down and the rural route boxes came into existence His route was then changed, adding a circuit through Shoal Creek and Linaria Bill carried mail for a total of seventeen years. In 1979 Bill retired and Leo Reich was hired for the job

* * *

For a number of years the mail was brought in by horse and buggy. The carriers usually lived in Vega and picked up the outgoing mail at noon and took it to the post office in Barrhead On their return trip they were to arrive approximately 6:30 p.m to 7:00 p.m One of these carriers would sometimes have a little too much to drink and he arrived anywhere between 7:30 p.m. and midnight He often had great difficulty standing up on his feet when he arrived Jan Koning was not at all pleased with this kind of service. People were greatly frustrated by this also. They would come for the mail from all directions on bike or walking or by horse and wagon and many times had to return the next day as it had been too late to sort the mail. The carrier was graciously replaced by a reliable man with a truck. It was a good time for socializing when people gathered together waiting for the mail to come in.

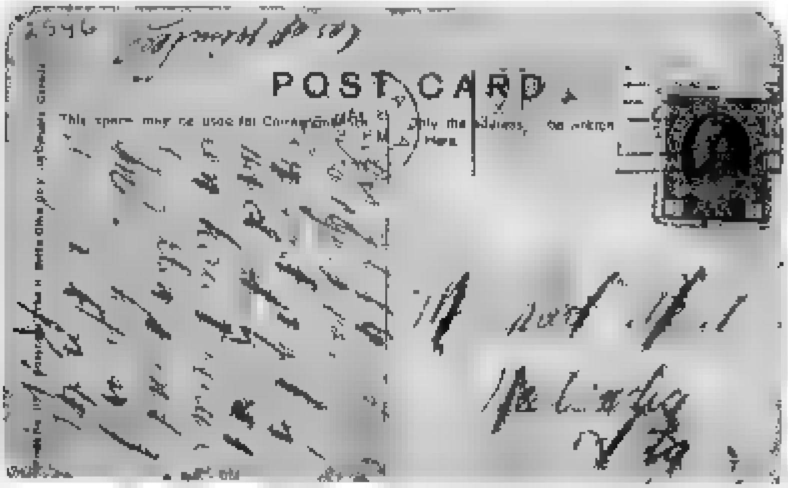
* * *

It became evident in 1953 that the store manager had become too busy with business affairs of the Co-op and post office so on January 1, 1954, the post office duties were given to the bookkeeper, Aubrey Ashley. Apparently during this period individual lock boxes were installed in the post office. There was no longer any need to wait for the mail. Just insert the key in the slot, turn it, and remove the mail from the box. Many still continued the practice of standing around and talking to friends when they got the mail. When Aubrey Ashley retired as postal agent in May 1957, Oene Piers, a local farmer, was assigned the responsibility of postal agent. Bart Vander Wal, the new bookkeeper, was unable to qualify for the position because he was not a Canadian citizen.

On November 1, 1965, John De Gier, the Co-op bookkeeper, became post master. John said that mail service was increased to twice weekly in 1963, mail days being Tuesday and Friday.

By the early seventies Canada Post complied with increasing demands on the service and Neerlandia residents could enjoy mail service each working day of the week. At one time mail came to Neerlandia even on Saturdays, but that practice was short lived.

The pioneers have witnessed increases in the frequency and efficiency in the postal service. However, the one constant that has been retained is the habit of visiting with friends and neighbours on mail day.



2546

POST CARD

This space may be used for Correspondence

Only the address to be written here.

Telephone

The Neerlandia area had its first government phone in 1919 in Elizabeth Melsome's residence on the NE 22-61 3-5. Tom Wilson the foreman of the Chisholm Logging Camp, was instrumental in bringing it in because he needed it for his business. (Business calls became social contacts, and wedding bells soon rang for Tom Wilson and Elizabeth Melsome.)

This phone, though previously called Shoal Creek, later had its name changed to Tipperary because the Shoal Creek Store, which had been built, was getting a phone and appropriated the name.

The luxury of a quick phone call to a neighbour was unheard of. As one settler recalled, "Who was there to phone? No one else had a phone — besides who could afford it?" Only calls of pressing need were made to the doctor in Westlock when there was severe illness. Occasionally the minister would be called to perform a marriage, baptism, or funeral.

* * *

"Hello, Sweetheart"

Mr. Kampnar had a government phone. To use it one had to turn the handle on the side of the box and speak into a horn on the front. Many people travelling through, such as Frenchmen from Legal, would make use of the phone.

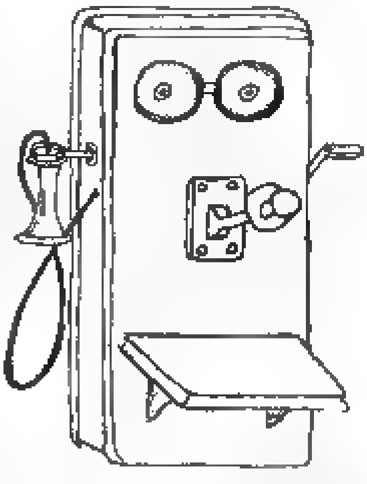
When Rev. Jongbloed was visiting the Neerlandia congregation, he would often make a call to Edmonton from Kampnar's. Once the operator was on the line he would say, "Hello Sweetheart, I want to speak to my wife." He would talk to his wife for five to ten minutes, finding out how she and the children were doing.

Ida Reitsma

* * *

When Peter Kampnar came and homesteaded on the NW 23-61 3-5, across the road from the Wilsons, he soon built a store and had a phone installed. There is a record of a 1921 AGT work order to move the telephone office from the store to his residence. Soon illness forced the Kampnars to move away. By this time the community had constructed a Co-op store in the hamlet, a phone was installed there, and, as a matter of convenience, the store manager Case Ingwersen became the AGT agent in 1925. Jan Koning became agent in 1935 and later the Neerlandia Co-op was named agent (1945). These were toll phones. The store building, which was constructed in 1938, had the phone enclosed in a booth. Below the phone but attached to it was the switchboard which contained three or four holes. Plugs which dangled on the ends of cords had to be plugged into the hole to connect the parties who wished to conduct a telephone conversation.

During this time there was also a small switchboard in the Neerlandia Store to service the line to Vega. This line had previously been erected about 1937 by Julius Boman, the owner of the Vega Store. By the mid forties the Vega Garage also joined the line



J Wierenga

* * *

Central at the Co-op

The Co-op was also the Central for the Telephone Company. It was the old crank system with two shiny bells, a receiver hung on the left side, crank on the right, and mouthpiece in the centre. The switchboard consisted of four lines which would be plugged in to reach the wanted party. These included the store, garage, Vega Mercantile, and the phone booth at the back of the store where people could use the phone privately. Sometimes an urgent message would come in for someone and we would have to see to it that it was delivered, one way or another. (I once made such a trip to Andrew Nanninga's place on Lambert's home-built motor scooter.)

I had the privilege of working with Mr. Ashley in the Post Office after Grace Tuininga left. The mail was sorted alphabetically and put into fairly big boxes. All the A's would be put together, B's together, and so on. Then it would be re-sorted when the customers picked it up. The store and Post Office were also open on Friday nights from seven to nine o'clock for a time in the summer.

Sophie Wierenga

* * *

Before we had phones the only way to let anyone know that you were sick and would not be teaching that day (there were no subs in those days) was to tell the bus driver. At each stop he would inform the students, "No school for grade four today!"

* * *

For several years there were no other phones in the community. Albert Davies and Ed E. Wagner of Mellowdale had phones, as did Herman Wierenga, who had purchased Tom Wilson's land. These men and other interested persons decided to form a telephone company.

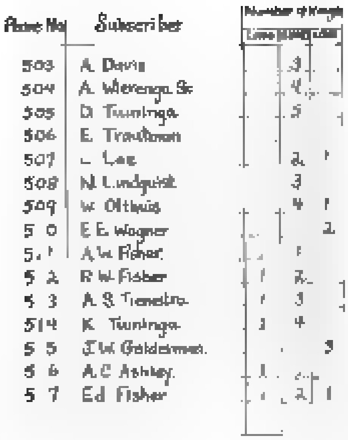
The Mellowdale-Neerlandia Mutual Telephone Co. held its first meeting November 26, 1949, and applied for a charter. The organizers were David Tuininga, A. W. Fisher, Lloyd Lee, Ed Trautman, and A. Wierenga Sr. with Katherine Tuininga as secretary.

The company was registered in August 1950 with the following signatures on the memorandum of association: A. W. Fisher (secretary-treasurer), A. Wierenga Sr., Lloyd Lee, Albert Tiemstra, E. Kublik, David Tuininga, H. Morrow, Earnest Morrow, R. W. Fisher, E. L. Trautman, and William Olthuis.

The capital of the company was $1425 with fifteen shares of $95 each. The subscriber rental was $2 per month.

AGT stipulated that the three existing phones were to be included in the Mutual but they could use the existing poles. The Mutual provided the wire and insulators and paid rent for pin space. With the Mutual came new job opportunities and Lorne Ordze was nominated as maintenance man. Each new subscriber was expected to work for two days or eighteen hours clearing brush from the line.

Each of the fifteen subscribers could hear the ring of every other subscriber so each had to have a separate ring. They varied from three short to three long with all sorts of combinations in



Phone No.	Subscriber	Number of Rings		
		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
503	A. Davis		3	
504	A. Wierenga Sr.		4	
505	D. Tuininga		5	
506	E. Trautman			
507	L. Lee		2	1
508	N. Lundquist		3	
509	W. Olthuis		4	1
5 0	E.E. Wagner			2
5 1	A.W. Fisher		1	
5 2	R.W. Fisher	1	2	
5 3	A.S. Tiemstra	1	3	
514	K. Tuininga	1	4	
5 5	J.W. Goldeman			3
5 6	A.C. Ashley	1		
5 7	Ed Fisher	1	2	1

between The most complicated ring was Ed Visser's: one long, two short, and one long. To call another person on the line it was necessary to turn the handle or crank on the side of the phone in the appropriate pattern

* * *

Emergency Ring

One advantage of the old mutual phone system was the emergency ring. When there was a fire at Clarence Wierenga's they just gave that one long ring, and everybody dropped what they were doing and rushed to the fire We formed a bucket brigade and got the fire out too.

One man was so excited when his garage was on fire that he just rang the emergency ring and hollered, "Fire!" and then hung up, leaving everyone to wonder where the fire was. We peered out of our windows, but snow was falling and we could see only a little way Eventually someone found out where the fire was and we all went there. By that time it was too late, though, and the garage burned to the ground.

* * *

In the meantime Bart Vander Wal, the Neerlandia Store manager, found having the switchboard in the store very annoying. He confronted Carl Mast with a job proposal After being approved by AGT, Carl and Agnes Mast had the switchboard moved to their residence on February 6, 1957 There were just four phones north of Neerlandia at that time

It appears that Dick Fisher, Jack Janssen, and the Vega store and garage were the ones with phones but the line was so poor that it was "hard to say what was on the other end of it." In many cases electric fence insulators were used and it was strung with bare wire The line went through trees along the road and when they rubbed against the wire on windy days it was impossible to hear what was being said.

* * *

Jack Janssen had bought an old phone from C. K. Mast. One day when Fred Toebes came to visit they decided to hook it up. The existing telephone pole was on the opposite side of the road. Fred and Jack realized that a wire attached to the pole and strung across the road would not be high enough for the traffic to pass underneath. They quickly solved the dilemma by attaching an insulator to a 2 × 4 and nailing that alongside the pole as high as they could reach. They completed the hookup by using electrical wire and were the proud possessors of a working phone After a year or two Jack received a phone call from Edmonton "What's your number?" they demanded.

"I have none," Jack replied, "I just did my own hookup. It's three rings I guess."

"Oh," was the answer. Subsequently Jack got a number (97), but was never charged for the use of the service

* * *

A meeting was held February 11, 1958, to organize the Vega Mutual Telephone Company (VMTC) and to discuss the possibilities of rebuilding the badly-dilapidated Neerlandia-Vega line. With forty-eight people present and eager to start, a board of directors were elected. Harry Branden, Jake Sturwold, Pleun Rylaarsdam, Ralph Neuman, Fred Toebes (president), and Peter Koch (secretary-treasurer) were elected. All those interested deposited ten dollars as a down payment on their share of the line.

Work began and AGT was contacted with the intended list of subscribers. A permit for cutting timber for the poles was obtained and the municipality was approached for approval and proper placement of poles. Every subscriber was to "bare his share of the line cost of material including clearing of his own share of the brush."

By August 1958 a public meeting was called and twenty-three subscribers requested a phone and a total of eighteen miles were to be covered.

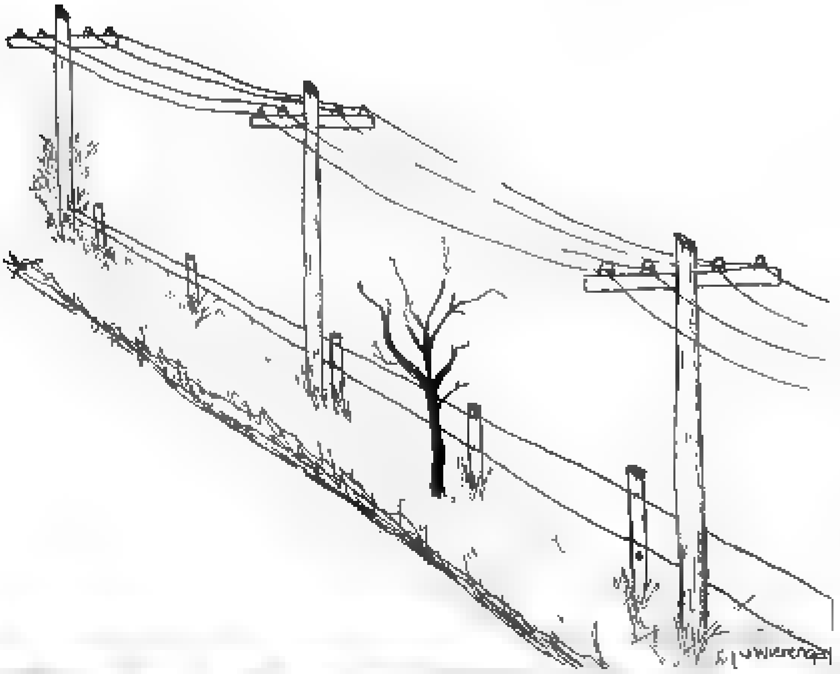
The problem of other parties listening in on telephone conversations had to be dealt with by the board of directors. The ultimate threat was disconnection. At one meeting a director had "positive proof" (he had seen it with his own eyes) of a guilty party and action had to be taken.

* * *

Then there is the temptation to listen in. One day my mother, while talking on the phone, said that she had too many beans and wished she knew of someone who could use them. About half an hour later, someone (on the same party line) phoned and said, "You wouldn't have any extra beans would you?"

Coincidence?!

* * *



Private hookups posed another problem. One man extended the telephone wire along fence posts to his son's house a mile or so away. Another made an "extension" to his son's house on the same yard. In both cases the guilty parties were required to remove the offending phone.

It was established that an alarm call would be one long continuous ring with all parties responding by listening for instructions. This worked well, except for one instance when a distraught farmer had his barn on fire. He dashed to the house and rang the phone off the wall. All the neighbours grabbed the phone and listened but no instructions came. In his excitement he had returned to the fire!

Even though the phone was a tremendous link with the world it became ineffective on one occasion when John Schuring was phoning the veterinarian about a sick sheep. Laying the phone down he demonstrated with his hands, saying "He has a head so *dik*." The vet never did get that message straight.

* * *

It was hard for people to get used to using the phone. They had been used to using gestures and facial expressions to convey their meaning, now it had to be all done by voice alone. Bill Olthuis had to learn to laugh aloud — something he had never done.

* * *

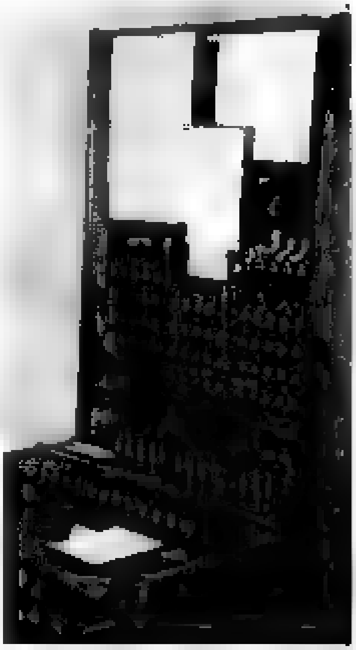
By 1960 the Mutual requested a two-hour extension to the telephone service; to this Carl P. Mast and AGT both agreed, making it possible to phone in the evening. Circuit #4 joined the VMTC at this time. To make this possible AGT had to go through the legality of revising their boundaries, then the area west and north of the store could be included.

When twenty-four hour service came into effect in 1961, a larger switchboard was installed in Carl and Agnes' home. Now telephone operators were hired to help out. Many cups of coffee were served by the Masts to customers making or waiting for calls. This diminished as time went on and people began getting their own phones.

By 1965 there were five lines in the VMTC and keeping them in repair was a big job. At the company's inception in 1958 Jake Sturwold was appointed temporary lineman, a job he kept until 1966. He requested release from the job at that time because his farm was demanding more of his time, even so he was on call till the company disbanded. He has installed many phones and climbed too many poles to count, all for the wage of one dollar per hour.

Several times the service charge was eliminated from the monthly bill because the company was in good financial condition. It would appear again when new lines were added or unforeseen repairs required.

In 1967 a meeting was called to consider AGT's proposal for underground multiparty service which was coming into the Barrhead area. It was accepted and so came the demise of the local operators' jobs. In recognition of eleven years of dedicated switchboard service, a plaque was given to Carl and Agnes Mast.



Switchboard in C. P. Mast's house, c. 1961

The Masts had enjoyed their work, especially for the social contact it provided. In the early days they made two trips in one day to Pleun Rylaarsdam through pouring rain and muddy roads. Two separate long distance calls had come in about deaths in the Rylaarsdam family.

In 1962 the Mellowdale-Neerlandia Mutual converted to dial phones. By this time there were about fifty subscribers per line, so five lines with eleven subscribers per line were installed. Calling someone became much simpler but the entrance of the dial phone meant the exit of the emergency ring. No longer was it possible to alert 14-15 neighbours at once.

Seven years later the AGT put in buried cable and the phones were changed to only four parties on a line and only two of the rings would be heard in any home. What a relief it was to not have to listen to all those rings. (And it was still possible, for those so inclined, to listen in on the phone.)

The rural telephone — what an exasperating, wonderful thing it was. How frustrating to try and get Central to find out that the rings might get through but the voices not. You could hear Carl say, "Number please" but no amount of shouting would make the voices carry through. Because of progress the lines were put underground but we miss our friendly operators. They knew where the fire was, where one might be reached if an urgent call came through, who just had a baby or was sick, or who had hung up as one dashed to the phone. Progress yes, but in many ways the old rural phone gave personalized service that is missing today.

Working in the Bush

LOGGING AND LUMBERING

Logging and lumbering played an important part in the life of the Neerlandia pioneers Though farming was the main concern the lumber industry was important for two reasons First, there was a need for lumber to construct almost everything on the homestead. Homes and many furnishings, barns, granaries, hay racks, grain boxes, and all outbuildings were made with lumber Second, the jobs created by the lumbering industry provided much-needed cash for the pioneers to sustain and build up the homestead into a profitable venture

One of the first sawmills in the area was Clemes and Fluet's sawmill which was set up in 1912 about three miles northeast of (Old) Barrhead In 1919 Fluet bought the other half-share and moved the mill to Mellowdale Many of the trees logged for the mill were from the Big Timber Siebren Tiemstra and Tjibbe Reitsma were among the men who worked at the sawmill, which operated in Mellowdale until the late 1930s

Cookhouse crew at Fluet's Sawmill. Dave Tuininga, fourth from right.

Lumber was seldom purchased in the 1920s Often men would cut logs on their own land and bring them to a lumber mill (Later a portable mill would move around the country.) The owner and operator of the mill would take half of the lumber sawed as payment and the farmer-logger would get the other half. Everyone seemed pleased with this arrangement During these years much of the lumber was used rough

There were also several logging camps in the area in the pioneer days; the best-known of these is Chisholm. It was known locally as Chisholm Mills or Chisholm Logging Company, and began logging in this area in 1921 The Chisholm logging camps were located along the Athabasca River anywhere from southwest of Fort Assiniboine to directly west of Neerlandia, and several places northwest of Neerlandia including Horseshoe Bend and Maykut Flats in Vega. Many Neerlandia men worked for the Chisholm Lumber Company.

Tom Wilson was hired by Chisholm as foreman, since he had previously done similar work in Minnesota Tom knew the bush and was an excellent foreman His job began in the summer, cruising the timber He checked the thickest patches, the most accessible areas, the size of the trees and their proximity to the river All the timber harvested was spruce, since birch and poplar are too heavy to float

* * *

Lost in the Woods

One of the first settlers intended to go to the sawmill about five or six miles south of his homestead. He left early in the morning. His wife had made a lunch for him to eat on the way So he started off going south along the Klondike Trail He walked for a long time and he thought, "I must be getting near to the sawmill, I better have my lunch first " So he sat down on a big log and ate his lunch, then started off again. Soon he saw a log cabin and said to himself, "I better ask how far it is to the mill." When he came near the cabin he saw some little huts with young chickens in them, and he said to himself, "Them huts are just like ours!" He knocked at the door of the cabin and his wife opened it and he stared at her and she at him. He said, "How did you come here?" She said, "You are back again?" Then he understood that he was home again and had never been to the sawmill, maybe never off his homestead He was lucky to be home again.

Ben Lievers

* * *

One young Neerlandia fellow was going to work for Chisholm one winter. Before he left, his father warned him, "Remember, when you get a job, you don't work for any cheaper than anybody else. You have to get at least nineteen dollars a month " So the young fellow went to camp. When he started working he asked Tom Wilson, "What do you pay?"

"Twenty-five dollars a month," was the reply.

"Won't work for that," declared the young man. "I want nineteen dollars!"

"You want nineteen dollars — why?"

"Because that's what my Dad said, nineteen dollars, no less."

"Okay," Tom said, "You want nineteen dollars, you get nineteen dollars!" When the young fellow came home after a month, his Dad asked him,

*"*Hoe gaat het, jong *(How did it go?)"*

"O good. The others all got twenty-five dollars, but I'm the only one who got nineteen."

* * *

There are many stories about Tom Wilson. One concerns Tom and his boss Mr. MacMillan Tom, with a bobsled cutter and his *beautiful team of horses Dan and Charley, was driving down the river showing the logging operation to the boss. Everything was going along nicely till the sled hit a hole in the ice and tipped The men were dumped out and Tom's boss landed with his seat in the hole. The horses took fright and began to gallop away. Tom, having to make a choice, began pursuing the horses — until a yell from his boss made him change his mind Mr. MacMillan, not in great danger, was rescued. Dan and Charley returned of their own accord Tom must have been a valued employee for he continued in his position as foreman*

* * *

During the late twenties and early thirties, working conditions were much the same in all the camps. Depending on the weather, November to March was the usual logging season. To get there, workers would walk or have someone take them with a team of horses. (Once there, you could begin to make yourself comfortable The bunks were lumber with no mattresses so the first thing to do was go to the barn for some hay The hay was covered with several old army blankets and presto there was your bed Some camps had straw ticks for mattresses Pillows — there were none unless you took your own from home but, if not, a jacket or pair of pants rolled up would be just fine) There were about thirty to forty men sleeping in one bunkhouse and depending on the size of the camp there were three or four bunkhouses Each bunkhouse was heated with wood-burning heaters and, for light, there were little coal oil bracket lamps hanging on the walls There were two or more washbasins provided for each bunkhouse for washing up. A barrel of water for washing and a bucket and dipper for drinking were supplied. Outside a "common john" was provided for the comfort of the men

The camps were strictly a man's world The best cooks would be hired, and could they cook! Cooking was a man's trade during that era There was a day cook and a night cook and between them they prepared large amounts of food and baked pies, lots of bread, cookies, and other goodies The menu was usually beef or pork with potatoes and vegetables, although in the later years it included chicken and fish Some men loved working in the bush camp for the sake of the grub. It was superb!

Two flunkeys also worked in the kitchen. Their job was all the "fun" things like peeling potatoes, setting tables, serving food, washing dishes, and cleaning up after the cooks.

The men known as bull cooks were essential to the smooth operation of the kitchen. There were at least two in each camp. They hauled the wood, then sawed and chopped it for the cook stoves and bunkhouse heaters. They also had to ensure a supply of water for cooking and washing and took turns at washing the floors and hauling in the frozen meat from the storage shed. When the cook was going to bake bread, the bull cooks were instucted to get birch wood, for this made a hot, even fire for baking Bill and John Olthuis worked as bull cooks for Chisholm in 1927 The pay was thirty-five dollars a month for a six-day week, including room and board

The logging was begun in a large ravine by the river. In the bush, trees were felled by two men, each working one end of a crosscut saw. The trick was to draw the saw back and forth smoothly and not ride it. To ride the saw (by putting too much pressure on it and being sluggish in letting the saw make the return stroke) caused the saw to pull through the log heavily and resulted in a twisted cut. As the loggers said, "A good sawing partner is a joy to work with, a poor partner a curse." A tree was never cut off totally. About two inches was left uncut and the tree would break off — otherwise it tended to twist and not fall where the logger wanted it to. The biggest trees at that time were about three feet in diameter and the smallest approximately eight inches at the butt end. After felling, the tree was limbed with a pole axe and topped. The logs were then cut into eight to sixteen-foot lengths, depending on how straight they were. (This type of logging is called short logging.)

Once the logs were cut, swamping took place. With a canthook or axe, the log was rolled over and limbed on the opposite side. The area around the log was cleared, so the log was exposed to the skidder. One or two horses were used, a chain tied around the log, and the log skidded to a roll way or skid way. A skid way consisted of two long logs placed six or eight feet apart, on which the short logs were piled crosswise. The front end of the skid way was on a head log to raise it to the height of the sleigh bunk.

From the skid way in the bush, the logs would have to be taken down to the river. To do this, first the logs would be loaded onto large sleighs ten or twelve feet wide. The loading was done by men using canthooks, and about twenty-five to thirty logs were put on each sleigh. (During the thirties a log jammer was used at Chisholm to load the sleighs.) These sleighs were then moved by four-up teams of horses. The sleighs ran in ruts which were iced to provide easy sledding for the runners.

Bringing logs to the skidway. Note log jammer at left.

* * *

A log jammer was a tripod affair made of logs with one pulley on top and one down near the base and a cable going through them

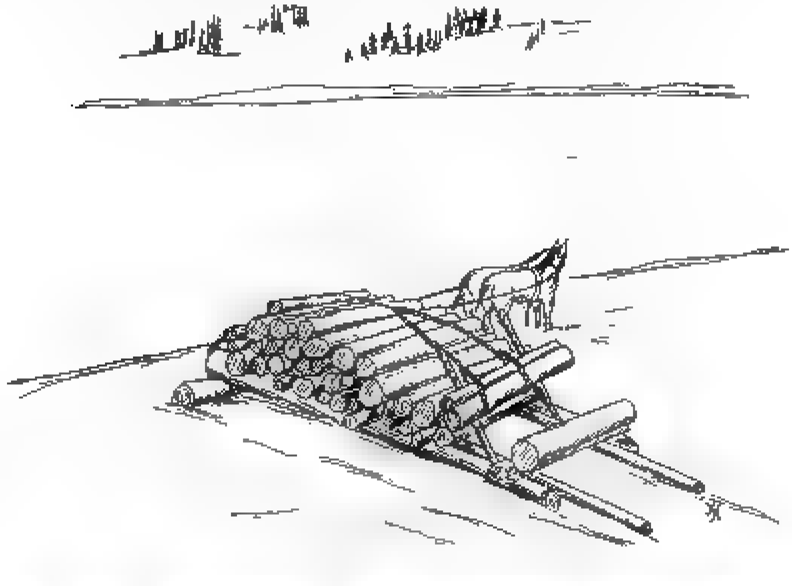
A team of horses pulling on the one end of the cable would pull three or four logs about fifteen to twenty feet up in the air, right onto a huge sleigh. There would be one man on the load with a canthook, receiving the logs. When the logs were high enough, he would signal to the man driving the team of horses, who would stop the team and make them back up a few steps. The man on the load would then loosen the cable and the whole process would start over again. They would make huge loads ten to twelve feet high. A small thirty-horsepower Caterpillar would pull the load through the bush along well-cleared trails to a central area close to a hill which went down to the river. Here there would be more loads and as many as six would be tied together and a larger Caterpillar tractor would go behind these loads to hold them back from going too fast down the hill and onto the ice of the river. There would also be a man with a bucket of sand on each front runner of the front sleigh. They would throw sand in front of the sleigh tracks to keep the loads from going too fast. But even then the Cat would backfire trying to hold back that enormous amount of weight.

John Ingwersen

* * *

The icing of the ruts was done at night when the crew was resting. Water was hauled from the river, poured in the ruts, and left to freeze overnight. Sam Howey and Ike Nanninga did some of this work together in the 1930s. The "road monkey" had the job of keeping the ice road clean and free from horse dung, tree limbs, and other debris. One of the men who had this job was Arie Emmerzael.

Once on the sleigh, the logs were taken to the riverside. Here they were unloaded from the sleigh onto a bigger skid way and the piles were staked — a notched pole was placed in front of the first logs to hold them back. These big piles of logs called decks were at least twenty feet high and up to two hundred feet long.



Piling decks at the river.

* * *

Sam Howey was a big man in more ways than one. One time, when I was about thirteen (1932), I went to the logging operation of Chisholm with some friends. We ate a meal there and then went out in the bush to see the operation We were watching them load a load of logs. When the load was completed, the Caterpillar tractor could not move the load because it was on some tree branches which had just been felled Sam Howey came along he was bush foreman — he soon had the load on its way by pulling one runner at a time for a short way and then the other

John Ingwersen

* * *

A day in camp would begin with breakfast at 7·00 a m Quitting time was 6:00 p.m. A big camp bell was the summons to meals It was a steel triangle and was struck, usually by the flunkey, in a circular motion by a steel bar — a wonderful sound to the men After a big supper, the men would retire to the bunkhouses Some would play checkers or cards, others would just talk or even rest (There was always your saw to sharpen or, if you were so inclined, you could darn you socks or mend your clothes. A washtub and scrub board were provided in case you wanted to remove a little toe jam from your socks.) Wires were strung around the heater and at night these were always hung with wet socks and mitts Four feet of the floor in every direction around the heater was covered with wet boots and shoes and other articles that needed drying before morning.

Evening was also the time for tall tales and the pitting of muscle against muscle in arm wrestling or broomstick pulling But at 8.50 p.m the foreman or bull cook would walk through the bunkhouse and announce the time Everyone knew it was "lights out" at 9·00 p.m and this was generally heeded At 9·00 p.m. the foreman would walk through again and any light that was still burning would be put out. The foreman was much respected and highly regarded and not a man to be argued with (After Tom Wilson, Sam Howey became foreman in the Chisholm camp in the early thirties) There was no talking at the dinner table either. Men were allowed a "please pass the salt" comment, but any banter was deemed unnecessary Discipline was strict, and almost always adhered to

There were no bathing facilities, so the men never took a bath from the time they came to camp until the time they left. In some camps, cedar oil was used to keep down the lice population If the oil was rubbed on chests and backs, the lice did not approve and disappeared to find a new home Most local workers went home for the weekend, but others stayed in camp all winter. A huge dinner, along with nuts and oranges, was always provided for the men who stayed in camp over Christmas

Towards the middle of February, a "chinook" could be expected It generally became too warm to work and often three feet of snow would disappear in eight or ten days. Many men would get what the loggers called "spring fever" and they would leave, not to return for the season

Each man was expected to work nine or ten hours per day, with

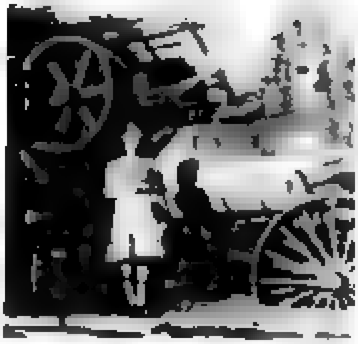
Sundays off. The pay in 1927 was twenty-six dollars a month with room and board but in 1934, when George Lievers was working at Chisholm, it had dropped to fifteen dollars a month a result of the Depression. A timekeeper kept account of the hours each man worked and made out the monthly pay cheques. Any necessities such as mitts, winter wear, moccasins, and boots, and extras such as tobacco or shaving supplies could be purchased at camp.

Bush work was hard, hard work. Many winters the crew had to work in three feet of snow, which was extremely exhausting. Nevertheless, the competition among the men was keen. Two men would fell, limb, top, and buck into lengths anywhere from 80 to 125 logs per day. (If your team didn't attain 80 — well, you just were not even worth your board, never mind the wages!) So each man did his best and the men were proud of their accomplishments and their partners.

There were very few accidents at the logging camps, but injured workers were sometimes given compensation. One time a group of men were cutting a trail through the bush for Chisholm Mills. Henry Schoonekamp was among them, and a tree fell on him. He had to go to the doctor since his back was injured and very sore. He walked in, the doctor said "Turn around." Henry did. The doctor said to him "You're okay." He did not even ask Henry to take off his coat. So much for the compensation pay!

When the snow became too soft, the loggers would be issued their final pay cheques and would move on to whatever work awaited them for the summer — usually farming. The winter's work however was only the first stage of the complete logging operation. When the river was high in the spring, the stakes holding the logs decked up by the river would be cut, and the logs rolled into the river to be floated on the big log drive to the town of Chisholm farther north on the Athabasca.

Chisholm Lumber Company continued this type of operation until 1937. By then they had depleted the big timber along the river and the big bush camps and log drives became a part of the past.


Steam engine at Garneau's Mill. Hilda Peters waiting, 1936

There were also a number of local lumber mills. These were established due to an increasing need for lumber on the farms. Harry Branden, Bill Chileen, Napoleon Garneau, Matt Lessard, John Tansowny, and Bill Williams all had mills in the area. These mills included the whole operation from felling to sawing and planing the lumber. They were usually operated by wood fired thirty-five horsepower steam engines. The operators would dig holes in the muskeg to obtain water for the steamers. The Shoal Creek area was full of beautiful spruce timber and many mills were in operation there. Most mills employed from five to ten people and the wages were often paid in lumber although, as one pioneer said, "You can't eat wood."

• • •

Old Stands

By the 1930s there wasn't much left of the old stands of trees. The government had tried its best to keep these groves standing since there was a lot of value in that wood. The surrounding farmers, however, who had to burn to clear the land, were usually not *too careful and fire would start in the woods. Then a number of men of the settlement would be called upon to, under the direction of the fire ranger, fight the fire. To do this trenches were dug all around the burning area, deep enough so that the uninflammable clay was reached. But woe betide if the rain held off and a wind arose. Then the whole surrounding country was covered in smoke for days. The sun was darkened until the greatly longed for rain descended and man and beast could breathe again.*

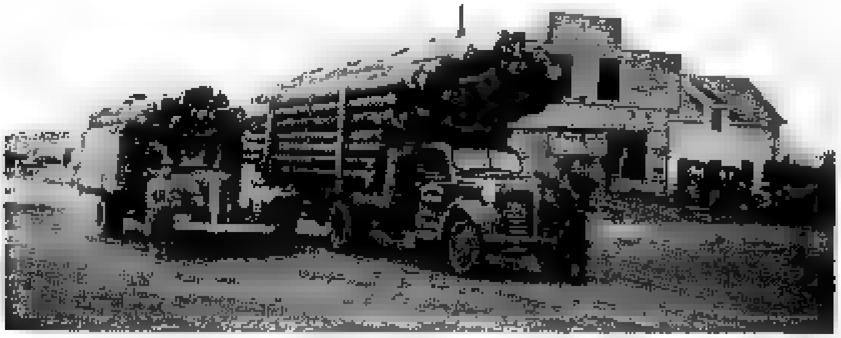
This burning naturally cost the government a lot on wages but, on the other hand, it helped the settlers to subsist during the first years. This continued until the government adopted another course and sold the stands of trees and sawmills sprang up. This again gave employment while it also helped the farmers obtain cheap wood for building houses and stables.

Case Ingwersen (memoirs)

* * *

Horseshoe Bend Sub-Contract

In 1923, Ben Lievers, Menne Nanninga, Jacob Olthuis, and John Terpsma made a sub-contract with Chisholm to log a small area near Horseshoe Bend. Andy and Ike Nanninga and Bill and John Olthuis were part of the crew and Tena Terpsma and Johanna Lievers were the cooks. The operation was begun by building a log shack and a barn on an island in the Athabasca River. The married men went home each Saturday evening, while the single men took turns staying at camp. One weekend when they were nearly finished, it was Andy's turn to stay. But he had a girlfriend and did not stay out that weekend either. When the crew returned Monday morning, they discovered the shack and barn had been ransacked and burnt down. Nothing was left — no tools or clothing or feed for the horses — so the partners made a deal with Tom Wilson to stay at the Chisholm Camp until they had finished their contract.



Hauling logs.

* * *

One winter four of us took a contract with the Chisholm Logging Co. Ltd. to cut logs along the Athabasca River. We built a

little log cabin on an island in the river and we cut logs to haul them on skidways along the river. Some of the others had their sons working with them, but mine were not old enough so my eldest daughter, Hanna, came along to cook for us. Most of us went home on Saturday night and came back on Monday with food for ourselves and the horses. On the last week of our stay all of us decided to go home and come back Monday to finish the job. We had to hurry because the ice was going out of the river and we had to cross the river to go home. So we came back on Monday morning and found our cabin and barn burnt to the ground — blankets and tools burned and no feed for the horses. So we stayed in the other camp from the Company and ate and slept there till we finished the contract. We never found out how the fire started but I believe someone stole our goods and put a match to the rest. We had horse blankets with buckles and rings and we could not find any of the buckles. John [Terpsma] had a box with a lock on it — we found the hinges where the box had been standing but the lock was twelve feet away in the corner of the building. We never found out and did not make much money on this contract but we did get experience in lumbering. In later years, we used that experience.

Ben Lievers

* * *

Dutch Mill

In 1943 four men from Neerlandia decided to try their hand at the lumbering business. They were George Anema, Gerrit Gelderman, Gerrit Ingwersen, and Cor Nanninga. This lumber operation became known as the Dutch Mill. Things were rather slow on the farming scene, and the men thought to make some extra money by having a small lumbering operation and selling the lumber.

An old prospector and trapper, Joe Caskenett, who lived in a cabin by the Athabasca River, took the men from Neerlandia over the timbered areas. They then applied by sealed tender to purchase a timber berth which would yield approximately one million board feet of lumber. This berth was mostly spruce and was located on the NE 34-63-3-5 in fairly steep ravines leading down to the Athabasca River. The timber was probably left by Chisholm Lumber Company because it was not very accessible and the trees were not yet mature at the time Chisholm was logging in that area.

The men moved to the site after there was sufficient snowfall and the ground was frozen. They built a cookhouse with an attached bunkhouse and a barn for the horses. The horses were taken from the farms. The cookhouse had two bedrooms and a cook stove, one table, and a few benches for storage.

There was already a road into the area, as the Lockwood brothers were washing gravel for gold in the flat nearby, but a tractor was used to repair the last stretch of road. Since the lumber was to be hauled out by trucks, a passable road was a necessity.

The crew would leave from Neerlandia early Monday morning by car or truck. Enough food to feed the crew of six or eight men, as well as feed for the horses, had to be taken along. As the winter wore on, the men encountered endless trouble with snowdrifts en route Floyd Rauscher of Vega was often called upon to tow the vehicles through the drifts with his tractor. As soon as they arrived in camp, the work would begin. the food was unloaded, water was hauled from the river to the cookhouse and stored in a forty-five-gallon drum, and firewood was cut for camp use.

The work in the bush, not much different than in earlier days, began by felling and limbing trees The trees were next cut into twelve to eighteen-foot lengths and horses were used to skid them to a skid way, where they were piled. The skid ways were built on the sides of the ravines, so sleighs could drive by and load with a minimum of effort. From the skid way the logs were loaded on sleighs and brought by horses to the mill yard, where they were again piled After a good winter's work, there would be approximately eight thousand logs decked in the mill yard ready to be sawed into lumber.

The first year the Dutch Mill was in operation the lumber was sawed in March That sawmill was a makeshift affair. It did the job, but the partners were not pleased with it because too much time was spent repairing it. Later they purchased a Coutts mill for about seven hundred dollars. The sawing was then done in the spring after seeding was completed on the farm. The partners were pleased with the new mill, it was fairly efficient with few breakdowns and repairs and capable of sawing up to fourteen thousand board feet of lumber per day.

At sawing time there was always excitement — this was the climax of the winter's work. The logs were moved by horse from the cold decks to the sawmill where they were sawed into one and two-inch lumber. Nothing was wasted but the sawdust which was either burnt or left to rot in piles.

Once the lumber was sawed, it was again piled, this time according to size to await the planer. Someone from Legal who had a portable planer came to plane lumber at the Dutch Mill. The planer smoothed the edges and the top and bottom of the boards. Tongue and groove lumber was also made at this time

The partners sold most of the lumber in the spring after it was planed. The first Co-op garage was built with lumber from the Dutch Mill. Cor Nanninga built his house and barn with some of it and Gerrit Gelderman and Gerrit Ingwersen also made use of it in building In 1944 the price of lumber was approximately thirty-five dollars a thousand board feet

The mill also did some custom sawing. Andy, Ike, and Louis Nanninga logged close to the river in that area and those logs were sawed by the Dutch Mill Peter Hoofdakker brought some logs to be sawed and so did some loggers from the Jarvie area who were logging across the Athabasca.

Logging and sawing was hard work, and the men were always hungry from the exercise in the outside air. Three big meals were served each day At 7:00 a.m., a breakfast of porridge, eggs, toast, and flapjacks was served For dinner and supper, served at 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m., there was meat, potatoes, and vegetables. The cooks also made bread, pies, cakes, and buns. So many raisin pies were baked the first year that raisin pie still does not taste special to certain people!

John Peters cooked for a short time in the fall of 1943, but soon Rulie Nanninga took over. Her husband, Andrew, worked on the crew and they had baby Mark along too. With them came the family cow to provide milk for them and the crew. Later that year Cor took his wife, Sena, and one-year-old daughter, Reatta, to the camp. Rulie and Sena shared the honour of cooking for the crew. The next year (1944) Andrew and Rulie did not return but Gerrit Ingwersen had moved his family to the camp, so his wife, Grace, took her turn at cooking. Annie Anema and Bertha Gelderman worked together another winter as cooks. One winter Rita Gelderman worked as cook's helper.

Visiting the Dutch Mill. Fred Toebes. Hilda Nanninga, Grace Tuininga. Bertha Gelderman, Cobie Leder.

One day Gerrit saw some moose tracks in the snow and that was just what he needed to get out his rifle and follow the trail. He was an excellent hunter and the crew enjoyed those moose steaks!

The help was all hired locally and the wages were three dollars a day plus room and board. The Dutch Mill is fondly remembered by many who worked there. Cor Hiemstra, Jim Jornitsma, Herman Gelderman, Ryer Krikke, Albert Mast, Cor Leder, John Peters, Albert Schoonekamp, Dewey Terpsma, Albert Tiemstra, John Van Ee, Lambert A. Wierenga, and Henry A. Wierenga were part of the crew at various times. They were almost like one big family. Gerrit Ingwersen must have been the father, for it was he who said grace at mealtimes and gave needed encouragement to the hired help. The women often packed the little ones snugly in a small sleigh and took them for walks in the bush or on the frozen river. It was a time of fun and fellowship.

The hours of work for the crew were from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After supper, the men were usually free to do as they wished. They talked of Model A cars and guns, sharpened saws, and told jokes.

* * *

A farmer and his son went out to cut wood with a crosscut saw. While they were sawing, an Indian trapper came along. He stood behind the father for a while, watching. The trapper suddenly

kicked the father in the seat of his pants and said, "If the boy want 'um saw — let him have it."

* * *

On occasion they held a haircutting session with different men acting as barbers. They sat on big blocks of wood around a forty-five-gallon gas drum, which had been converted to a wood heater. Bedtime was 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. and the bunks were crudely fashioned out of rough lumber. The mattress was timothy hay and over that was an army blanket. Pillows were provided and more blankets for a covering. Long johns were worn to bed, and socks were often kept on to keep the feet warm. All wet mitts and clothes were hung on the inside clothesline near the heater. The men all used leather mitts with home-knitted woollen mittens inside, which provided the needed flexibility combined with warmth.

Someone had to stay on weekends to feed the horses and milk the cow and, more often than not, George Anema was picked because he was the one partner who was "unattached."

By the spring of 1947 the leased area was completely logged out. The whole lease was cleaned up and even the log buildings were taken apart and sawn up. The Coutts mill was sold that same fall. The partners never did get rich or even make much money, but they had a nice bit of lumber and had gained a lot of experience.

* * *

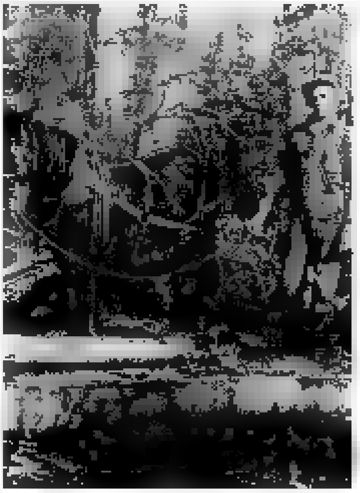
Beginning in 1946, power saws were introduced to the loggers in this area. The first power saws were heavy, clumsy, and awkward, and weighed around thirty pounds. They could be operated by one man and were much faster than the crosscut saw, which they eventually replaced. A tree could be sawed down in one minute flat. Each bush worker wanted one!

* * *

In the winter of 1948, John Ingwersen and Bill Olthuis cut spruce logs on 34-61-4-5, six miles west of Neerlandia. They obtained a permit from the Department of Lands and Forests. The cost was approximately three dollars for one thousand board feet of lumber.

They built a little shack and stayed there with their four-man crew. The crew was Archie Howey, Jim Jorritsma, Aebe Plantinga, and Henry Bouwman, who was the cook. They worked there most of the winter of 1948-1949. The lumber was sawed on the site by a portable homemade mill, crafted by Bill and John. Most of this lumber was for farm use.

Working in the lumber camps continued to play a part in the lives of many men from Neerlandia. Even after World War II several worked for Jimmy Thachuk or Imperial Lumber in the Timeau area or in the area now known as Judy Creek. These workers were mainly immigrants who had decided to farm in Neerlandia, but needed some extra cash to achieve that goal. Frank Bearda, Gerrit Beyers, Tom and Simon De Groot, Henk Navis, Pete and Case



Skidding logs out of the bush. Dewey Terpsma.

Sawing lumber. Bill Olthuis, Ben Bouwman, John Ingwersen, Aebe Plantinga.

Hauling lumber. Norman Toebes driving horses.

Working in the bush, George Visser, Clarence Tiemstra, Simon de Groot, Frank Hessels, Dave Tiemstra, Ralph Bos, 1951-52.

Selles, and Arie Veenstra were among those who supplemented their incomes in this fashion. The wages at that time (early 1950s) were from fifty-five to sixty-five cents an hour, with $1.50 charge per day for room and board

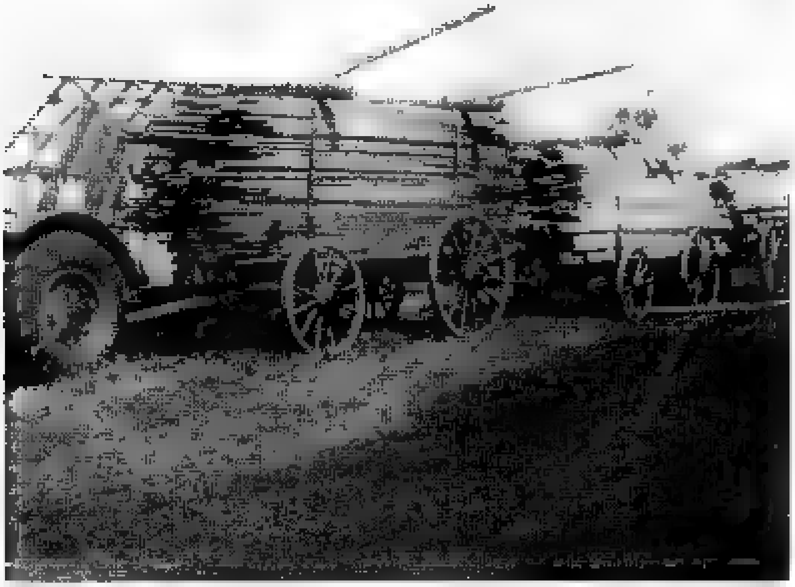
Accommodations in Thachuk's camp. Henk Nevis, Case Selles.

* * *

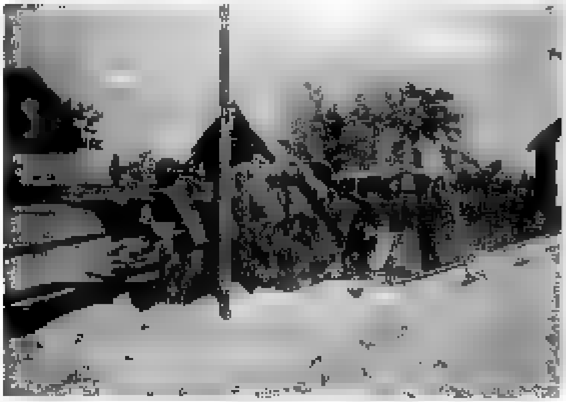
One year I and the rest of the crew, Simon and Tom De Groot and Bert Nanninga, sawed logs in the sand hills north of Vega. We had found a patch of about 100,000 board feet of lumber three miles from the end of the trail through sand hills and swamp. We did all the logging and sawing before Christmas. A trucker was going to haul the lumber out, but late in March the snow was melting and the lumber was still there. So with four men, two tractors, and sleighs we started hauling the lumber out to the end of the trail, for in the summer there would be no chance to get in there since there was a lot of swamp and if it was left the chances of it going up in smoke were quite real. We went in on a Wednesday and worked straight through day and night, managing to finish Saturday evening. That summer we took a planer in to plane the lumber and then hauled it home. A few years later we sawed logs north of Timeu (1953) and then in the sand hills north of Vega again (1954).

John Ingwersen

* * *


Bringing lumber home from the mill. Note the poles extending from the top of each load. These poles were twisted in the chain to keep the load tight.

John Tansowny's sawmill loaded to take to Vega, April 1948. The Oliver 90 tractor has a homemade cab.



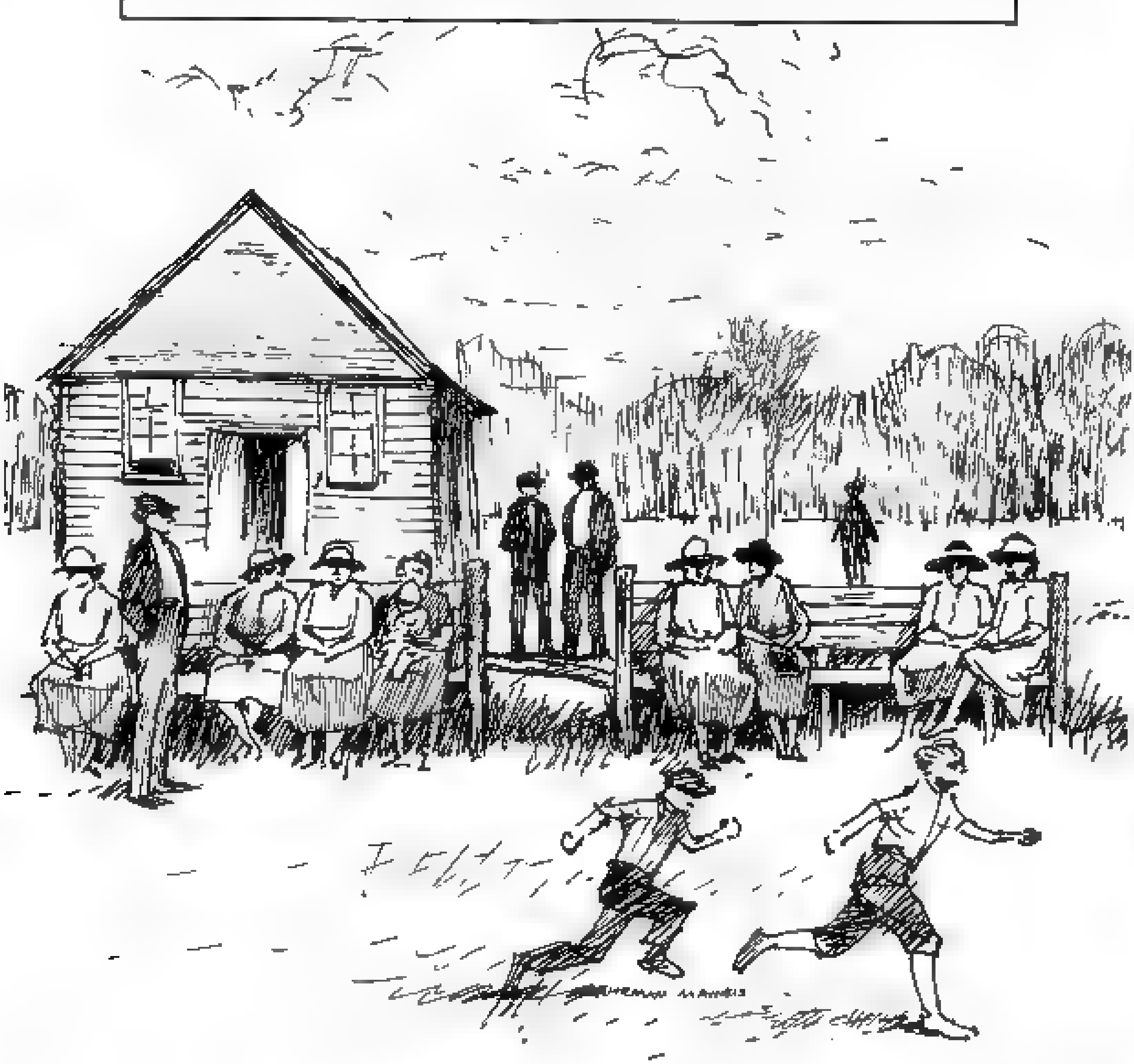
The final step in lumber production, planning. This is Gerrit Kippers on his farm, 1930s.

Logging and lumbering have seen dramatic changes since the early days of crosscut saw and horse. Today, trees are felled with power saws, left in full length, and skidded to the landing with a machine called a skidder. There the logs are limbed and topped, again with power saws. Then they are decked into piles to be picked up later with huge front-end loaders. They are loaded on large truck decks usually pulled by Kenworth or Mack trucks, and hauled to the sawmill site.

At the sawmill the logs are cut into lengths ranging from ten to sixteen feet with an electric cut-up saw. The lengths are then run through more saws to make the lumber. The saws are operated by push buttons, with very little manual work involved, and are powered by electricity and air hydraulics. Once the lumber is cut, it is edged, trimmed, and piled. All refuse goes on a conveyor up a chute to a burner.

Some men from Neerlandia still work in bush camps today. Some of them work on a contract basis and others are paid an hourly wage, which varies from $6.00 to $8.50 an hour. The camp life can be compared to hotel living, with every necessity and more provided.

When Work is Done



Social Life

Celebrations and anniversaries, especially in early days, were participated in by the entire community.

* * *

Harda Terpsma: "I'll tell you one thing. We made our own social life. We'd have Young People's gatherings. Clarence Tuininga usually ran them (he is old Klaas Tuininga now) and sometimes John would help him, and we had good times. After church, especially in the summertime, we would go to different homes, a whole bunch of us young people and we'd sing with the organ. We would have cookies and coffee, and then finally we went home. In the winter we went for sleigh rides on the hayrack, a whole bunch of us with a team of horses and we had a lot of fun."

Suzy Vanee: "Joe Holwerda used to take us out too — on sleigh rides."

Harda: "Yes, he did, and so we had a social life, and then like I said we had a choir. I always went to choir. John and I both. My brother Bill went too. We had a nice choir, and Kees Andriessen led us for the longest time. Henry Michael — he was really good too."

Gerrit Ingwersen: "Our social life was really something in those days. It was just like a big family. Once someone had a heifer calf and it would be announced right after church, 'So and so has got a heifer calf!' Hooray! Today that's a lot different. We lived close in those days.

I'll never forget when my dad and mother were 12½ years married. We were in the barn, Corny and I, milking the cows. We didn't know what was coming off and the folks didn't either. They thought, 'Nobody knows about it.' We were busy milking, I says to Corny, 'Where's that noise coming from?' We opened the door, looked outside, and here was a whole string of wagons and people on horseback coming down the alleyway."

Annie Nanninga: "You could hear them come a half mile already."

Gerrit: "And they brought everything along for the party. They brought food and coffee and everything was there. We had a wonderful time."

Harda: "When Uncle Ben and Aunt Alice were married 12½ years it was such a surprise. My aunt was standing with her hands in the dough making bread and all of a sudden the noise. John and I were there, we were still living on their yard. Case Ingwersen made up all kinds of stories on paper, on great big cardboard papers. He was really good at reciting and it was all about Oldegbers. They sang it, and it was about if there was a cow in need they called Albert Oldegbers and if it was a woman in need they would call Mrs. Oldegbers. They sang this and it was really cute."

Gerrit: "I'll never forget when your folks were married 12½ years. Your mother could laugh so loud. Oh could she laugh. We used to sing 'Oh Tannenbaum, Oh Tannenbaum'."

Harda: "That German song, that's the only thing I remember from German."

Gerrit: "And we used to play Ruth and Jacob. Blindfolded. That was a game. We'd hold hands in a ring and set someone in the ring blindfolded. And then if he was a man he would have to call 'Ruth, Ruth.' His wife would have to answer."

Harda: "She'd say 'peep' or something like that and he would have to find her. Oh it was lots of fun!"

Gerrit: "Sometimes he would get hold of the wrong woman, and hug the wrong woman!"

* * *

When a family went to visit a neighbour they sometimes would stay an entire day.

THE FAIR

— When the men got together to clear land around the church, then the women had a fair day. We'd make all kinds of things out of flour sacks.
— I remember my mother used to embroider all kinds of fancy little cloths and baby stuff.
— They showed them on tables outside usually.
— And then they'd give prizes too, you know.
— They used to feed the men too.
— All kinds of lunch.
— And we had a picnic.

OLDTIME PICNIC

The place where the church was built was heavy poplar bush and it was suggested to clear

the ground on the first of July, the national holiday, and have a picnic. The men would use axe, saw, shovel, and oxen, and the women would look after the amusement as well as something to eat. Everybody was invited to be there on time that day with the needed tools. This was a real oldtime picnic — not sport, but work. The young men started to chop the trees down and some dragged them by ox team on piles to be burned later. The trees were cut about four feet above the ground and others pulled these stumps out with the oxen. The picnics and get-togethers were quite often the beginnings of a love story among the young folk and a time for showing off babies by the mothers and discussion of politics or religion among the men. One thing was missing in Neerlandia — country dances, because the Christian Reformed Church believes dancing is sinful.

Ben Lievers

RECOLLECTIONS OF PIONEER LIFE

The great highlights of the year for the pioneer children were the Christmas concert and the Dominion Day picnic.

Beginning about a month before the concert, we would get together at the log church to practice on Saturday afternoons. The Sunday school teachers taught us the verses. As far as I can remember these were Henry Kippers Sr., Siebren Tiemstra, and Dina Messelink. Popko Schuring was also musical and liked singing so he helped with the songs, perhaps others did too. The day usually started at 11:00 a.m. The Christmas story was told, and the children were asked questions about it.

The programme was by the whole congregation. The three sisters Jennie Schuring, Martha Emmerzael, and Nellie Keyser were among those who sang, and they were much appreciated as they had good voices. The Messelink and Anema girls sang several songs accompanied by John Gelderman on the organ. Gertie and Sadie Tuininga also sang as did Della Anema, Tena Terpsma, and Gertie Tuininga.

For us children the highlight was the food. Large kettles of hot cocoa, sandwiches, cakes, and cookies, which many of us didn't get very often, were served.

The concert would end around 4:00 p.m. since it grew dark about that time. Before departing, the children each got a bag of candy and a small gift such as a small storybook or a plaque with a text on it to hang on the wall.

The Dominion Day picnic was also looked forward to with anticipation. Several weeks beforehand we would practice racing, high jumping and broad jumping and so on. Usually people came in their Sunday best. Everyone wore hats and caps in those days, even to school and picnics.

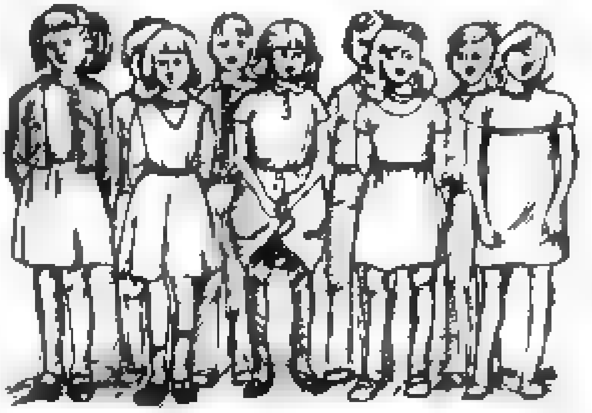
I can't recall what we had for refreshments in those days but do recall one lady having a large round tub of lemonade, made with lemon powder and water. It was sold for five cents a cup.

The day was spent with a lot of races: three-legged, relay, and sack race. Also high and broad jump. I can't recall any other games but there was no baseball at that time.

CHRISTMAS

We loved Christmastime. All the families would get together for a day. We all went with the horses and sleighs and some of us had bells on the harnesses. Sure sounded nice! We would sing Christmas carols all the way. Sometimes it was so cold the horses could hardly pull the sleigh.

The night before Christmas we would heat up rocks to keep our feet warm. The boys would fill the sleigh with hay or straw and we would take lots of blankets along too, so we could keep nice and warm. Each family brought something — cake, cookies, chocolate milk. We would have singing and hear the Christmas



story, have recitations, and after the program was over we would all get a reading book and some candies. Boy, we were happy!

Sadie Tiemstra

CONTESTS

On the First of July in 1919 they held an obstacle race for the men. They put up things along the course to hinder the men and one of the obstacles was a raised rail that they had to jump over. As Albert Mast was running in the race his foot hooked behind the rail and he fell and broke his leg.

In another contest two men would sit astride a smooth log which was high enough off the ground that they couldn't touch it with their feet. They had to cross their legs underneath to keep their balance. Each man had a sack filled with straw that he tried to hit his opponent with, to get him unbalanced and make him fall off.

Norman Terpsma

LET'S GO OUT TO THE PICNIC

When picnic day rolled around on July First everyone would come out with wagon loads of kids and also older ones, because on picnic day we were called in to school to listen to a short speech by a school board member, usually about patriotism. I don't think too many listened to the speech, because what they all were waiting for was the dime that was handed out after the speech. Most people were so poor that a lot of the children got only the dime which was handed out. I think this money was donated by the Co-op store, as was also the prize money for races etc. Before the picnic could officially start the flag had to be hoisted on the flagpole. There was a flagpole on the school ground about twenty-five feet high. A rope had to be put through a pulley on top; this was usually done by one of the Henry Lievers boys as they were good at shinnying up a slippery pole. For their efforts they would also get a dime. The reward was later increased to twenty-five cents.

After this the races started — straight races, three-legged races, sack races, wheelbarrow races. Then jumping — high jumping and broad jumping. This all took up several hours. In the afternoon there would be ball games — schoolgirls against the older girls not going to school. The same with the boys. They would play against the young men but that proved impractical as the young men were far superior

Putting up the flag on July First.

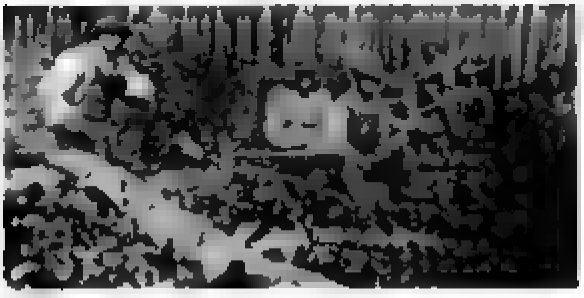
A 1923 twenty-five cent shinplaster could be used to buy five chocolate bars.

PRIZE MONEY

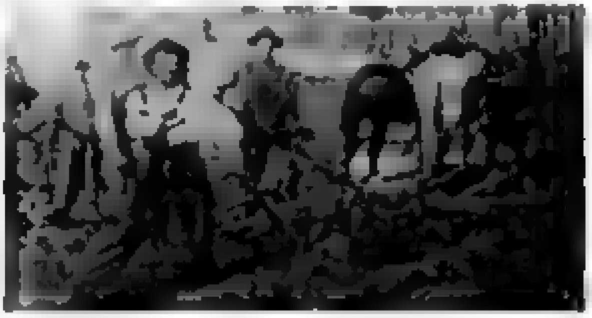
When I was a kid we didn't have much money to spend at the First of July. One of the older fellows who had won at some of the races gave me his prize money to use for treats. I sure appreciated that. I think it was ten cents worth — I bought a package of gum and a lollipop with it and I still had some cents left over.

Clarence Mast

JULY 1st . . . A HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR



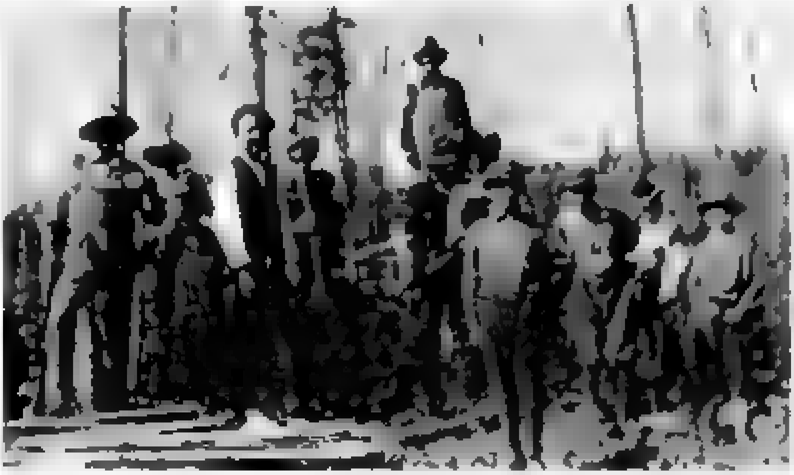
The first years, the day was spent clearing the churchyard. First the trees were chopped down. 1919. Klaas Tuininga, Peter Kampner, Raymond Baker, Martin van der Heide, ? ?



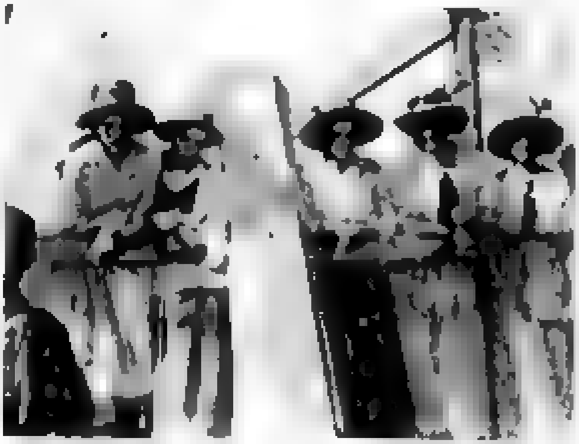
Plowing the grounds, 1919. John Oldegbers, Arie Emmerzaal, Pete Louws, John Terpsma.

The logs were cleared away, 1919

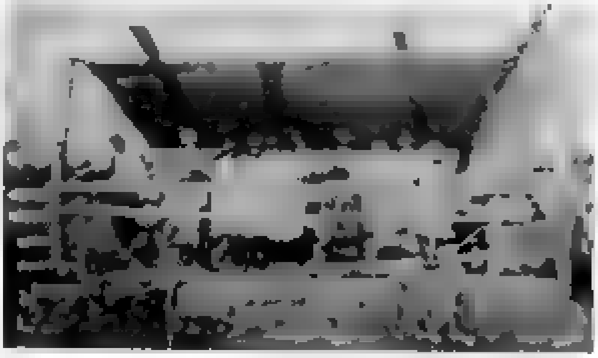
Coffeebreak in front of the log church, 1922. Klaas Krikke, Hendrik Kannegieter, Anne Michael, Dina Messelink, Jantje Schuring, Peterje Schoonekamp.



Young and old worked together. 1919. Front: van der Heide (?), John Olthuis, Garben Tiemstra, John Kippers, Gerrit Kippers. Clarence Tuininga standing on stump.

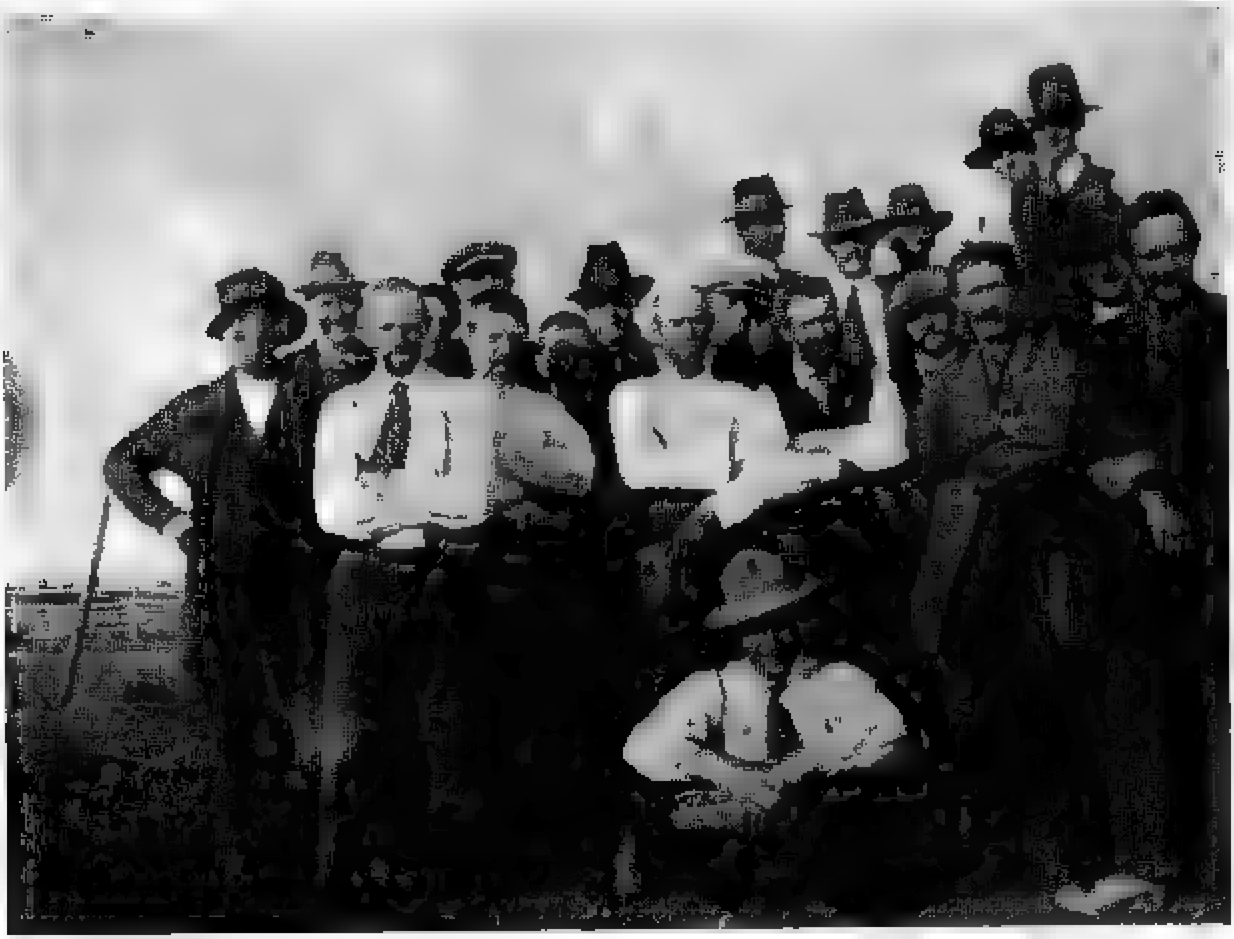


Some socialized, Gerben Tiemstra, Ida Kampner, Jennie Tuininga, Sadie Ritsema, Bertha and Ida Kampner. 1919

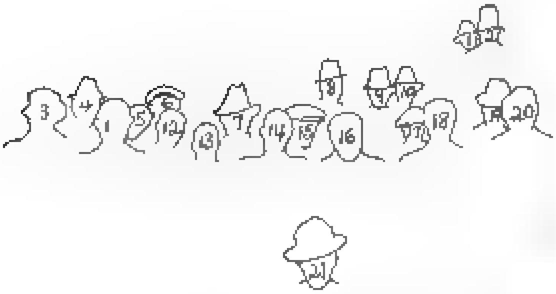


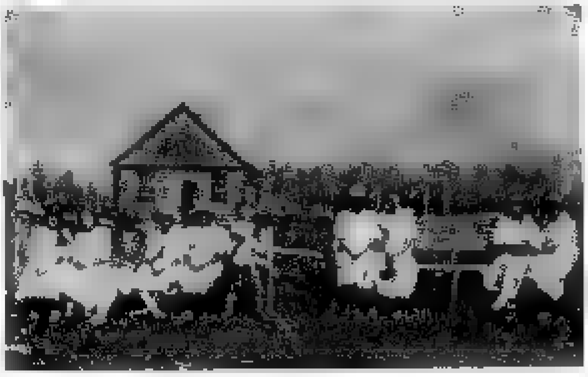
Refreshments were enjoyed under an improvised awning, 1919

The belles of Neerlandia, 1919 Jennie Kampner Ida Kampner, Sadie Ritsema, Hazel Violette Nellie van Dalen, Annie Emmerzael, Jennie Tuininga.

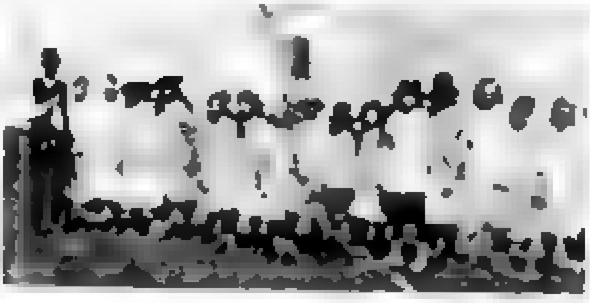


Some years later, it became a day of socializing. Men came dressed in their Sunday best. 1 John Oldegbers, 2. Dave Tuininga, 3. Douwe Terpsma, 4 Rienk de Jager. 5. Hendrik Lievers, 6. Klaas Krikke, 7 John Louws, 8. Joe Holwerda, 9 Popko Schuring, 10 C. K. Mast, 11. Albert Ritsema, 12, Hendrik Schoonekamp, 13. Pete Louws, 14 Jan Anema, 15. Toney Stunwold, 16. Case Ingwersen, 17 Jacob Olthuis, 18. Hendrik Kippers, 19. Wouter Groothuis, 20. Ben Lievers, 21. Willem van Ark.

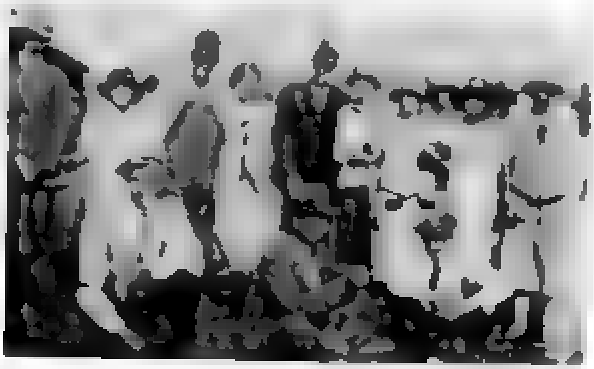




The women also had time to relax



Ready for a three-legged race. Willem van Ark and schoolgirls, 1923



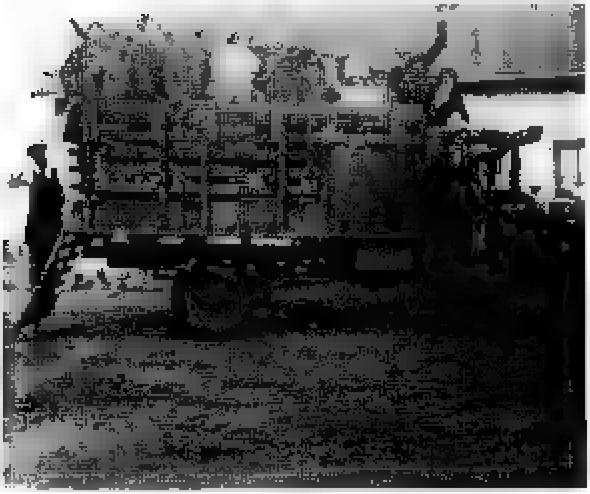
Some young people pair off, 1926. Back: Art Fisher, Susie Anema, Jerry Reitsma, Jennie Fisher, Jack (?) Tuininga, Pauline Sturwold, Gertie Tuininga, Tena Terpsma, ? Lievers, Della Anema. Front: Charles Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Frank Visser.

Getting branches to swat mosquitoes, 1927

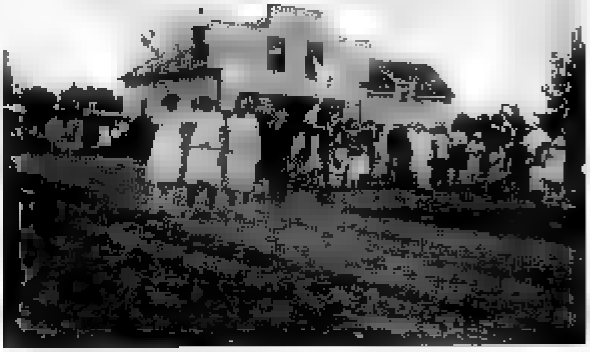
Young men at the picnic, 1926. Back: Bill Lievers, Willy Olthuis, Dick Fisher, Ed Visser, Gerben Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Andy Nanninga. Front: Norman Terpsma, Jerry Reitsma, Jack Tuininga.

Where are the boys? c. 1927. Back: Margaret Sturwold, Tena Terpsma, Minnie Lievers, Lula Sturwold. Front: Pauline Sturwold, Harda Lievers, Hanna Lievers.

July 1, 1928. Everyone dressed in their Sunday best for the picnic. Carrie Tuininga in a light grey suit with old rose scarf. Her silk hat with a straw brim is also old rose. Annie Ingwersen in a pink dress with old rose flower and hat. Susie Anema in a medium-blue twill coat with embroidery. Her hat is also old rose — the fashionable colour that year. Their stockings are peach — also a new colour. Ina Mast in black dress and stockings. Back Row: Andy Naninga, Jack Tuininga.



Sometimes the young people of Edmonton came for the day. Homeward bound, July 1, 1930. Back of truck: Billy Quick. Front: John Elzinga.



Everyone came. Foreground: Minnie Wiersma, Anna and Alice Elzinga, 1929.

Posing at the picnic. Back: Rev. Van Der Woude, Sophie H. Wierenga, Sophie A. Wierenga, Jennie Schoonekamp, Tena Anema, John Peters. Front: ?, Annie Ingwersen, Grace Nanninga, Johanna Wierenga, Mabel Elzinga, Eva Olthuis, July 1, 1933.

Other years the Neerlandia young people went to Edmonton.

BLUEBERRY PICKING

— That was a real excursion too every year, to go blueberry picking
— Oh, yeah, that was a picnic!
— That was the time of our lives!

CROSSING THE FERRY

August is nearing the end, our garden produce is all canned and on a beautiful display in our cellar, and now the great event of the year is here: blueberry picking.

George said tomorrow would be a good day to go as the grain was stooked and the threshing would not be until next week. Excitement filled our little home as we gathered up syrup pails for picking and milk pails to empty our full pails into until everything is filled. This year, we hear, the blueberries are big and plentiful.

Next morning the sun rises in golden splendour and we hurry to do our morning chores get lunch ready for the day, and we are off. Our oldest two look dejected as they have to stay home with the baby and do the evening chores.

It's a ten-mile drive. We pick up our two friends and try to hurry along. Our car lags a bit this morning. Perhaps the oil needs changing.

Before we know it we are heading towards the last part of the trip. We can see the sand hills. There is a face at every window of the car to behold the autumn beauty.

But suddenly we are at the top of a steep hill, and a large sign says, "Test your brakes." George puts all his weight on the brakes but finds out he has no brakes. We scream in fright and before we know it we are going down the hill at great speed, gaining momentum. We become very quiet, awaiting our doom.

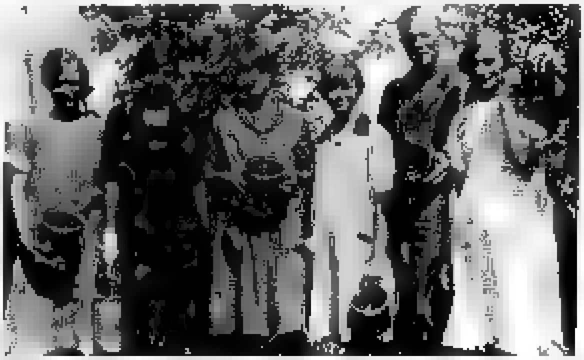
George hangs on to the wheel and we safely reach the bottom. Everyone settles down to again enjoy the scenery, which is now even more beautiful as the river comes into view. Hurrah! We arrived just in time — the ferry is

waiting. But there are two signs now: "Enter at your own risk," and "Test your brakes." What brakes? We all get out and think. We have two ropes but they are only short. Nevertheless we work with what we have. We put the car in neutral gear and it starts rolling. We — me, our friends, and four children — hang on to the ropes and rear bumper while the old Ford is going faster. We dig our heels into the sand but the car is still moving. Finally, after what seemed a terrifying experience, we get the old car stopped and it stands proudly on the ferry.

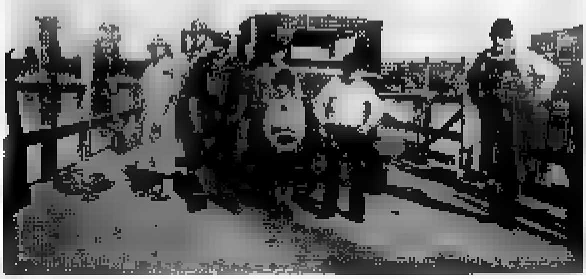
We all again enjoy the scenery and can laugh about our great adventure. We will deal with the huge hills waiting on the other side of the river when we arrive there.

The name of the driver in the above incident was changed to protect his identity.

BLUEBERRY PICKING



Going blueberry picking was a day's outing. Della Anema, Jennie Fisher, Tena Anema, Susie Anema, Charlie Reitsma, Carrie Tuininga, c. 1926.



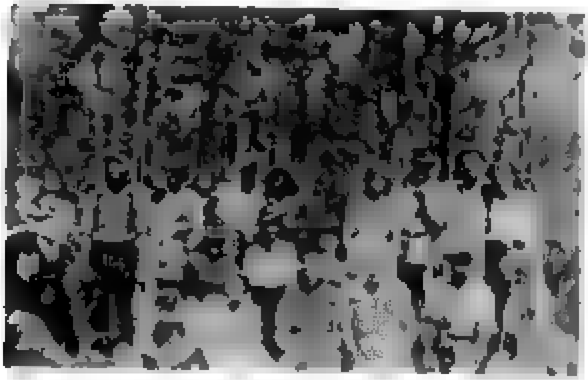
Crossing on the Vega ferry, c. 1936. Katherine, Hendrik, Jim and Ed Lievers, Violet and Frank Tillotson. Jimmy Fowler was the ferryman.

The best picking was across the Athabasca River in the sand hills. The Henry Kippers family on the ferry, 1930s.

Berry picking. Lucas Sturwold, Hendrik Kannegieter. Lute Sturwold, Dena Huinink in front, 1937

Another picnic

Some families went together. The A. Ashley, J. Ingwersen, W. Olthuis, and J. Reitsma families, 1943



The Menno Nanninga clan on a blueberry outing, c. 1949

INNOCENCE

"You know, we were so innocent in those days (1920s). We girls would walk to school together with the neighbour families and anyone else who happened to live along the way. On the way home, if it was a warm day, the boys would go skinny-dipping while we watched. We were all around twelve or thirteen years old then."

BRIGHT EYES

Brother Pete had a girlfriend who lived about four-and-a-half miles away and he mostly walked that distance through the bush. In those days there were quite a few bears around so he bought a revolver for protection. One night coming home he saw two bright eyes in the dark, so he went to approach this thing with gun ready. When he got to it he found a stump burning with the fire showing through the knotholes. After this he left the gun home.

Joe Tuininga

SHOT SUITS

John, Sid, and Peter Visser were in Neerlandia clearing the first ten acres or so on John's quarter section, which was a little northwest of Reitze and John de Vries' farm. This particular evening John Visser left to see his girlfriend, so Sid and Peter decided to wander over to the de Vries'. For a little excitement, Reitze made a shooting target on the wall of their granary in which they were living at the time. Only one gun was available; it was a .22. After each of the four had taken several shots, they found the target area pretty well perforated. Reitze and John did not seem to mind the holes in the granary wall, in fact it might help to air the place out a bit. However, they did not seem to feel quite the same way about their Sunday suits, harness, and other items hanging on the inside wall of the granary. The Visser brothers suggested that the suits could be mended, but the de Vries brothers considered the suits shot.

Peter Visser

SADIE'S WEDDING

Our folks were strongly opposed to strong drink, but when my sister Sadie married Charlie Tiemstra they decided to make an exception and have a little liquor at the party, which would be held at my parents' home. For this once they would have a jug of wine. When my brothers went to buy the wine they took advantage of the situation and also bought a bottle of brandy without the folks' knowledge. When it was time for a drink they mixed some brandy with the wine they served Dad and Simon Tiemstra. Well, it didn't take very long till the two men were feeling pretty high. Dad could play the accordion, oh boy, did he ever play. Mother wanted no part of this — she was really upset. She searched the house until she found the cause of it all and took the bottle of brandy outside and tried to break it by knocking it against a tree. When that didn't work she took the axe and smashed the bottle.

Joe Tuininga

SOCIAL LIFE
1933-37

The Schoonekamps really made me feel at home. Since the girls — Jennie, Annie and Rubie — were approximately my age, it made it easier for me to get in with the young people and for a young person that is very important. We all went to catechism on Sunday afternoon after the church service — the *kort begrip* was still memorized in the Dutch language; but the lesson was in English and taught ably by Rev. Van Der Woude. Wednesday was choir night with Uncle John Gelderman as director and as we had no organ our parts were learned by the "do re mi" method. Our concerts were enthusiastically attended by one and all and were a highlight in the church community. Further, our entertainment consisted of skating on Shoal Creek. We often walked both ways in sub-zero weather. We also had a basketball team of no mean accomplishment, challenging the neighbouring towns, and even winning now and then. This was the time of the horse-and-buggy days and, having neither, I would jog on the weekend, counting the rabbits (first years) on my way to visit my Uncle and Aunt.

Grace Boer

PAIRING OFF

The distant community-centre was four to five miles away, which most of the time was travelled shank's mare as the horses had been working in the fields and needed rest. By the time we arrived to play baseball, the sun was almost set. After that the boys and girls would pair off — the boy taking the girl home if he had the strength or ambition to do so — remember he had to walk back home yet

Cor Fisher

Sweethearts.

FEATS OF STRENGTH

"In the 1930s us young fellows would have contests to see who was the strongest. There was a huge stone on Ingwersen's yard and we would take turns trying to lift it. The other fellows would lay flat on the ground trying to see if there was a glimpse of light coming through underneath the stone. Some guys like John Wierenga or Jake Sturwold could wiggle it, but I think John Ingwersen was the only one that could lift that stone

Another contest had to be done at the Co-op – the Co-op had a flat scale with a weigh beam on high. We used to squat on the scale and put our hands underneath the frame Then we would apply pressure to see who could make the scale go the highest."

New Year's 1915

On New Year's Day we (Lubbe and I) invited all the bachelors in the settlement to a party There were eight of us. We celebrated until midnight eating, joking, singing, and shooting firearms into the air

Tjibbe Reitsma

A Bet

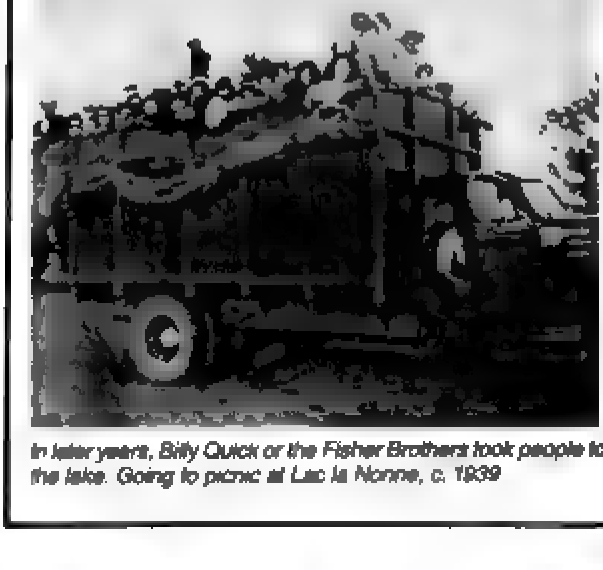
"One of my non-Dutch neighbours went to a dance out west of Neerlandia and after he came back, he was married. Some of us surrounding farmers were invited to his place for a bit of a celebration one night that week. Ike and Louis Nanninga and I made a five-dollar bet there with another neighbour, who was Polish, that he could not do the same thing come back with a wife after a weekend. The neighbour borrowed my horse and Ike's buggy and left on Saturday. He came back on Monday or Tuesday with a wife He owed one dollar for the horse and one dollar for the buggy, so we each had to pay him a dollar."

John Schuring

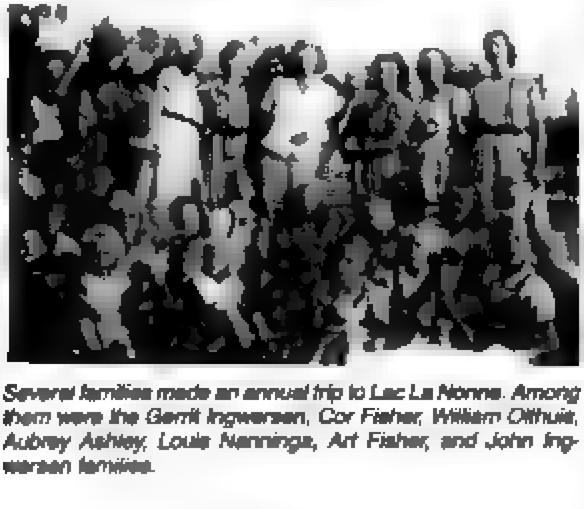
This picture was taken on July First, c. 1930. Notice the headbands the girls used to keep their hair in place while playing ball. Margaret Sturwold, Johanna Ingwersen, Lula Sturwold, Eva Olthuis, Alice Brown, Annie Tuininga, Annie Schoonekamp, Sophie A. Wierenga, Catherine A. Wierenga, Jenny A. Wierenga, Cor H. Hiemstra, Carrie Mast, Alice and Jenny Kippers. Seated Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Jenny Schoonekamp, Susie Anema.

TO THE LAKE

John Terpsma took the young people to the river for a day, c. 1921. Note harness on right. Charlie Tiemstra, Joe Holwerda, Bertha Kamonar, Nellie van Dalen, ?, Sadie Ritsema behind tree. Simon Keyzer, Frank Violette, John Terpsma. Foreground: Hazel Violette, Bob van Dalen (?), Ike Tiemstra.



In later years, Billy Quick or the Fisher Brothers took people to the lake. Going to picnic at Lac la Nonne, c. 1939



Several families made an annual trip to Lac La Nonne. Among them were the Gerrit Ingwersen, Cor Fisher, William Olthuis, Aubrey Ashley, Louis Nanninga, Art Fisher, and John Ingwersen families.

Cooling their feet: Elsie Ashley, Tena Nanninga, Rose Ingwersen, Carrie Olthuis, Anita and Grace Ingwersen, Liz Fisher. c. 1949.

Bathing beauties, c. 1949. Tena Nanninga, Carrie Olthuis.

Farmer's Day outing at Clyde Lake, 1956. Some people took offence that women and men went swimming together in the same lake. Peter Fisher, Albert Schoonekamp, and Steve Abday families.

FRIENDS AND FAMILIES SOCIALIZE

Many men or women formed quartets and sang at programs. Rita Krikke, Fred Toebes, Herman Gelderman, Ralph Krikke. Peter Piers.

Of course, there were birthday parties. At the Messelinks. 1924. Minnie Lievers, Susie Anema holding Frances, Albert Messelink, Annie Schoonekamp, Tena Anema, Jo Ingwersen, Lily and Jo Messelink, Jenny Schoonekamp, Annie Anema

Sophie Anema's party, c. 1941. Katie and Jane Dieleman, Clara Oldegbers, Sophie Anema, Thelma Sturwold, Betty Koning.

The Girls' club had a party before Trientje Wieringa got married, 1932

Lambert and Martin Wieringa, 1937

Hendrik Schoonekamp, Siebren Tiemstra, George Toebes in front of Schoonekamps', 1920's.

Back: Anna Bouwman, Rutie, Petertje, and Annie Schoonekamp. Front: Bill Toebes, Albert Schoonekamp.

Hendrik Wierenga, Simon Tiemstra, Johanna Wierenga, c. 1939

Dorothy Baker, Patricia Boorsma, Marilyn Mast.

Joe and Stewart Plantinga, c. 1936.

Won't Sandra be jealous?

Auction sale at Klaas Tuininga's Sr., 1943.

Susie Anema, Margaret Messelink.

Lula and Margaret Sturwold.

At Terpsma's sale. 1929. Della and Susie Anema, Carrie Tuininga, Tena Anema, Annie Tuininga.

MAMMALS

At one time the Neerlandia area teemed with wildlife Beaver, moose, lynx, rabbit, muskrat, and even buffalo were some of the animals that lived there. But by the time the Dutch settlers arrived this had already begun to change

There were no beaver, mink, or fox, and few lynx in the area. They had undoubtedly been trapped to extinction for delivery of their pelts to the fur trading forts. Beaver dams and other signs of beaver were plentiful Dams were found along every stream in the area, but by the time the settlers arrived there were no beaver.

Buffalo skulls and buffalo horns were found from time to time when the settlers were clearing the land, but there were no buffalo Hunters occasionally came upon bleached elk antlers, but the only report of the presence of elk was made by Bill Olthuis. In 1927 or 1928 when he was out hunting, he noticed two larger deer-like animals with a herd of deer. He was unable to identify them until he saw a picture of elk on a Wawanesa calendar years later.

At one time woodland caribou could be seen in the area, but by the time the Dutch settlers came they too were gone Cor Fisher once found a set of caribou antlers near Shoal Lake

Other animals were still abundant in the early 1900s. Most plentiful were three rodents the rabbit, the squirrel, and the muskrat. Rabbits, bane or blessing depending on one's needs, were everywhere. Though their numbers fluctuated in a seven-year cycle, there always seemed to be lots of them. In the early years they were a welcome source of food for the men, their chickens, and their pigs But rabbits were not so welcome when they invaded the gardens, necessitating the erection of rabbit-proof fences.

Squirrels scolded from the treetops throughout the townships and fell victim to the guns of the hunters. They were so plentiful that Bill Lievers and Bill Olthuis would each shoot twenty-five to thirty squirrels in a day's hunting, then go home and skin them

Though no beaver remained in the area, their cousins the muskrats were plentiful Many of the young men made spending money by trapping muskrats, and some of the family men trapped to augment their income. Another rodent trapped by the settlers was the weasel, so attractive in its winter coat of white

Of the canine family, only the coyote was commonly seen. Its larger relative the wolf may have wandered through the two townships but was not a resident. Perhaps the scarcity of the wolf was due to the near-absence of deer. Moose, the largest member of the deer family, were more plentiful than deer because Neerlandia with its many swampy areas was more suitable for these large ungulates. Some of the pioneers shot moose on their homesteads but, except for a few of the younger men, most of them were such poor shots that as one man said, "The moose practically had to bump against them before they could shoot it."

As the settlers began to clear and crop the land, the habitat began to change and so did the animal residents. Since the more open areas provided more suitable homes for deer, they were seen more frequently On the other hand, as the land became more open and drier the moose, a shy animal, retreated from humans to the still-swampy areas it preferred. Bears, fairly common in the early years of the settlement, soon retreated to less-populated areas Coyotes, rabbits, and squirrels quickly adapted to man's presence, but with the clearing of the land their numbers also decreased. Some animals which had never lived in the area began to move in as the land provided a suitable environment for them. As pasture and hayfields grew, the area was invaded by gophers, which in turn were followed by their enemy, the badger.

Rabbits became a great pest one winter during the 1930s. Toward dusk on the short winter days the rabbits would come out of the bush and head for the haystacks. The farmers set up snares to catch them. As soon as the snares were full the men would go out and kill them, then they would reset the snares. No sooner would they be in the house than they would hear the screams of the rabbits, and in a short time the snares would be full again.

Animals decimated by the fur trade began to return to the area as time went on. During the 1940s, beaver began to reestablish along the fringes of the area. Foxes were regularly sighted on SW 34-61-3-5 one summer in the early 1950s, and since the introduction of pheasants their numbers increased throughout the area

Except for mice, no wild animals are plentiful in Neerlandia. The number of mice vary in relation to, among other things, the number of coyotes. One fall in the 1960s the farmers were unable to combine their crops. The swaths in the field were like paradise to the mice. The following spring the area crawled with mice. There were the pretty field mice, their less-attractive relatives the house mice, and the lemming voles who would stand on their hind legs to fight the gulls who tried to make a meal of them.

Because of the limited numbers of wild animals in the area, one thrills to the sight on the occasional mule deer seen in the grain fields and pastures. The song of the coyotes in the evening is enjoyed by many.

INSECT REPELLENT

When the Scott boys went hunting through the bush, they wore cheesecloth over their hats down to their shoulders.

Norman Terpsma

HUNTING STORIES

This happened about two miles north of us. A homesteader saw three bears playing together and he ran for his gun and was able to kill one and wound the other but it got away. This wounded one was killed a few days later by a hunter and he found the bullet in the body. One bear was left and the trapper I mentioned before said, "This bear will come back to the place where the first one was killed." So they made a dead fall from logs and put bait into it. The farmer went one day to look at the trap but found nothing in it and forgot about it for a few days. One morning he found the bear in it, so he went home to get some help. They had some friends there from Edmonton staying for a few days. "You ladies want to see a bear? He's in a trap." "Yes, is he dead?" "Yes, he stinks! As dead as can be!" They went over — the two men and two ladies — and they found the bear dead with a load of logs on his neck swollen up and smelling. The men started to take the logs off one by one, and when the last log came off the bear started to roar "Rrrr . . .!" The women started to run and the men laughed and held their sides — the air came out of the bear's swollen stomach and that had made the noise.

Ben Lievers

In this part of the country it was quite easy to get lost in the bush. One trapper said he never was lost. He could go into the bush one day and hang his watch on a tree, then go the next day and pick it up. He came up to our place one day from his trap line and told us he had trapped a bear. If we wanted it we could get it. He gave us instructions where to find it. "Go west from here for two miles and then a mile north along the surveyor's line, west again till you find a tin can on a stick. Turn into the bush there and follow the blazed trap line." My neighbour and I found the bear meat and carried some of it home. On our way back we crossed a creek and stopped to fish in it. We caught quite a few. By this time it was getting late. We started home and were received with open arms by our wives — they had come together and wondered what had happened to their husbands — lost in the bush? or killed by a bear? And if we did not come back how would they find out what had happened to us? Worry, Worry! And we were fishing not far from home, and came home with part of a bear and fish. Bear meat, the trapper said, was good to eat. "Well," the women said, "We will cook it and see." "I would rather have a piece of a dead pig," I said after trying the bear meat. The women did not care for it either — wild taste to it.

Ben Lievers

One day I was not home and the wife had an experience with one of these lynx. She did not know what it was, but she heard the chickens and saw the lynx running away with one of the chickens. He was not in a hurry to get away till the wife took a stick after him. Then she tried to lock the chickens in the coop and barred the door and told the neighbour women, "You better lock up your chickens. I had a strange animal among the chickens, he would not run for me till I went after him with a stick. I did put the chickens in the coop only the rooster I could not get in." When she came back from the neighbour's, the chickens were running around and the barred door was open. The rooster was gone and we never saw him again. When I came home that night I was told the story and I warned her not to go after that animal again with a stick. "If he does not get a chicken he would tackle you and you are more worth to me than all our chickens." The next morning when we woke and looked out of the window the lynx was sitting in front of the chicken coop waiting for his breakfast. I went out the back door to a neighbour's for a rifle and told Mother not to go after the beast with a stick but stay in the house. When I came back the beast was gone and we kept the chickens locked up that day. The following day I was working in the barn, the rifle handy, and we let the chickens out. Not long afterwards I heard a call from the house, "There he is!" I grabbed the rifle and took a shot at him, but missed and had only one bullet left. So I ran after him to get a close shot at him. He was running away with a rooster and when he noticed me close behind he let the rooster go and came at me with open mouth. I fired my last bullet and he dropped dead When I skinned him, I could find no bullet hole in the skin, so I must have hit him in his open mouth. His fur was worth more than the chickens we lost I have never seen one again. There are not many left they say they travel great distances

Ben Lievers

My neighbour and I were going into the bush to cut some logs and there was about an inch of fresh snow "A skunk — where did it go?" "Here in this hole let's go back home for a shovel." I did not like the idea of digging a skunk out of his bed, but my partner said, "Nothing to it - the fur is worth $2.00." After awhile we could see his tail. Jacob said, "Hold the shovel. I will get him," and he took ahold of the tail and pulled him out of the hole and hit him over the head with a stick, but not before the beast could use his defense and Jacob get the full spray of it. I nearly fell over but Jacob said, "Nothing to it. It is worth $2.00." His wife called out from the house, "Go away. Don't get near to the house It makes me sick — go away!" I was feeling funny too and I put other clothing on, but Jacob said, "I will take the hide off." I was quite willing to let him and then divide the money evenly — that did not stink. I found out later that Jacob could not smell. Later he dug a nest of young skunks out, three of them, and when he came home with them one was still living and spraying. "Nothing to it," Jacob said!

Ben Lievers

A district trapper shot a bull moose for a homesteader in dire straits. Now this moose had a record set of antlers well over seventy to eighty inches. So they decided to take this set into Edmonton and sell it. When the old-time homesteader tried to peddle it, he was arrested for an out-of-season moose. The magistrate was a compassionate soul and did not charge him or fine him, except to confiscate the head. But I'll bet that head is in his den

Cor Fisher

ILLEGAL MOOSE

"Joe Holwerda was the game warden and one time we were hunting and Joe was going to go along Before we went he says, 'Boys', he says, 'Don't forget — nothing illegal!' You know and we shot two cow moose. And boy, I tell you, old Joe, he sweated. That very night he took them heads and he drowned them in the

The huntress. Rose Violette shot this hawk — four feet from tip to tip.

lake, by where he was living. 'Boy, if this ever comes out,' he says, 'I'm in for it.'"

Hunters didn't have to go far from home. Bill and Harry Lievers shot this bear on the homestead, 1938.

And this one at Garneau's mill, Bill Lievers and Paul Stevens, c. 1940.

ANOTHER BEAR HUNT

One November day Gerrit Ingwersen, Bill and John Olthuis, and Jack Tuininga were hunting northwest of Baird Lake. Their base for the day was a cabin on Fred Olthuis' homestead. They left the horses and sleigh there and then split up to hunt in pairs. Two of the men found a bear's den with a bear in it. They shot and killed the bear and then returned to the cabin. With a team of horses and a sleigh, the four men returned to get the bear. By this time it was getting dark so they lit a fire in front of the den. Bill was about to enter the den to pull the dead bear out when suddenly they noticed a movement inside the den. Jack pulled Bill back. It seemed that another bullet was needed to finish the bear off. While one of the men held a lantern, another shot. The bullet passed so close to the lantern that the suction of the air extinguished the light. Anyway, the bear was shot. When no further sounds emerged from the cave the men ventured in to drag the animal out. To their surprise they discovered three bears: a mother and two spring cubs. The men loaded the bears up and went to the Case Ingwersen house. There in the porch they sat skinning the cubs, tossing them from one to another, and celebrating their successful hunt with some of Mrs. Ingwersen's dandelion wine. They were soon feeling pretty good, and it wasn't because they were such great hunters.

FISHING

This is one topic where the truth has been stretched to the breaking point so I will stay on the straight and narrow. In the early years when very little land was cleared, the lakes and creeks held their level except in spring runoff or in a heavy rainy season. But today in the spring, runoff mostly lasts a few days — carrying a lot of silt from the farmland plus pollution from livestock, septic tanks, and drains. This was no concern in the early years. In the spring of 1927 there was a heavy runoff which lasted practically all summer, and thousands of fish were in the creek and lake, where they had spawned. During March of 1928, after the first thaw, the spawn came out of the lake by the millions. There were some fish eight to twelve ounces in weight — hundreds of pounds were caught, canned and pickled in vinegar. Most of these, however spoiled.

On a November day in 1928 a lot of pike (jackfish) were migrating downstream from Shoal Lake to the Pembina River much too late. These fish were between four to six pounds in weight. In one hour I caught twenty-six of these, which was only a small fraction of what passed me. The following spring, 1929, all the potholes in the creek were full of dead fish of every kind – pike, suckers, muskelunge, trout, ling, white fish, perch, plus every kind of fish that lives in the Athabasca watershed.

Shoal Lake is too shallow to water fish in most years. The oxygen level gets too low in the winter. One part per million is minimum for pike, which can survive on the least amount of oxygen. Other fish require more. This kill is the worst I have seen but I have seen other losses like this a few times. It was a pitiful sight. Many enjoyable hours were spent in and by the old creek in the early days, even if we had to steal the time to do so.

Cor Fisher

A rare occasion when fish came up the creek between Tjibbe Reitsma's and Raymond Baker's farms, early in the spring. The men pitched the fish out with pitchforks since they were that plentiful. Early 1920s.

THOSE KRIKKE KIDS!

Ryer liked to do some squirrel trapping on Uncle Bill's place across the road from us. Then one day he went to check his traps and they were all closed. This happened a few times. We got the idea Bert Michael was doing this. So one night after school on our way to Clara's birthday we saw his trapping trail, so we followed it and put a stick in his traps. A few days later he came down and told us how somebody had done this. He figured the Sturwold girls did this. We never said a word. Don't know if he ever found out. (Hope he never reads the book.)

Gladys Mast

HUNTING AT HOME

One morning I had the barn door open as I was milking, and I spied a big buck deer crossing the field south of the house and going onto dad's homestead. The deer was big, no fooling, so I said to Grace, "You know, I'm going after this buck after breakfast." Earlier I had lent my rifle to my brother-in-law Bert, but he had returned it. I had asked him, "Is it loaded?"

"You bet, the magazine is full," Bert had said.

"Fine," I thought, "I don't have to check, full is full." I took off after that deer and had just crossed the road allowance when I saw what looked like a bunch of sticks poking out of the snow. I walked on a little further but still could not see any more, so I raised my rifle and fired a shot where I thought the head should be. One of the sticks went flying and the buck jumped up like a shot and came straight for me. I pumped another bullet into the barrel and pulled the trigger, but it only said, "Click." I tried again and got the same result. The gun was empty and this buck kept coming in big bounds. I was right in the open and the only defense I had was an empty rifle. Would you believe it — the buck stopped dead about ten feet away, neck arched and eyes rolling. We stared at each other for a while, then with one big leap the buck was off. What a relief — that fellow could have made mincemeat of me! I did get the buck a few days later. I could tell it was the same one because he had one antler broken off.

Gerrit Ingwersen

PLENTY OF WILDLIFE

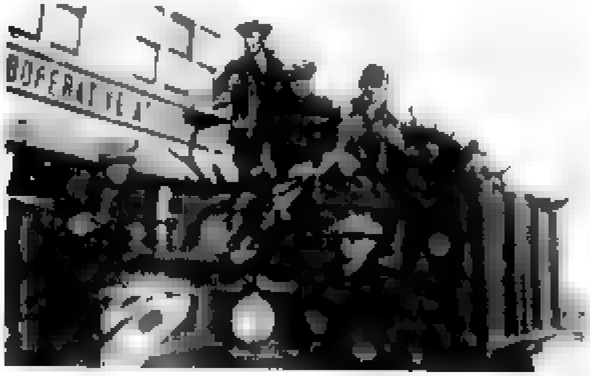
In the fall we would often leave at 3:00 p.m.

and be home at six with a two-hundred-pound dressed mule deer or sometimes a moose When stooked grain was left in the field there would be dozens of sharptail grouse feeding on them; the woods would have plenty of ruffed grouse

Cor Fisher

HUNTING PARTNERS

George Baker and Bertus Bos were hunting partners. Bertus usually wore a heavy parka with a thick fur collar and a fur hat. One day when they were out hunting in the Swan Hills area, George heard something ambling through the trees and, when he first looked through the trees, it appeared to be a grizzly George cocked his rifle, then whistled, and the grizzly whistled back — it was Bertus! A short while later they were heading back to the cabin over the creek ice when Bertus fell through the ice, right up to his neck. George quickly held out the butt end of his rifle and pulled him out Then George ran ahead to start a fire and make some tea while Bertus walked the rest of the way by himself. Once he got to the cabin, he pulled off his wet clothing and crawled into bed After he had some tea and finally warmed up again, he was none the worse for his adventure



After a successful hunting trip, 1945. Bill Olthuis, Joe H Wierenga, Aubrey Ashley, John Ingwersen, Albert Tiemstra.

A HUNTING TRIP

One November day in 1938, George Baker and I went hunting in the Roach Lake area for moose and deer. We used four dogs for power — they pulled a toboggan with our grub and other necessities. That fall we had a fair amount of snow, but on the southern slopes the snow had melted and we had to help pull that first day. We made twenty-six miles before stopping for the night. The next day we made it to the cabin owned by George Baker and Bert Bos at 9:30 p.m., dead tired. John Bos had a venison stew ready and I never tasted anything so good. The first morning we were there we heard the wolves howling or lamenting — the dogs figured discretion was the better part of valour and took off for home By the end of the week we ran out of coal oil for the lamp so the boys made a candle of deer fat with a rag inside for a wick. In a couple of weeks we had our game and it was time to head home Because the dogs were gone, I had to walk, and the first day made twenty-six or twenty-seven miles. I made it home next day. On Monday Art [Fisher] took his one-ton truck and fetched the game The trail was so narrow, the truck-box bolts left scars on the jack pines growing along the Klondike Trail. Thinking about that trip makes me feel weary, but it cured my insomnia.

Cor Fisher

One September, a hungry hunter shot a fat, juicy deer out of season. Coming close to the road he heard a car, so he hid his rifle and started walking down the road, meeting the game warden coming back. The game warden stopped and asked him if he heard shooting "Yes," he said, pointing. "Somewhere in that direction." So they hunted for a while but could find nothing. "Sure tasted good," he bragged later on.

Cor Fisher

FORBIDDEN TERRITORY

One day when I was just a kid, my dad and I were following the creek hunting muskrats. As we went, we crossed over the line from our land into forbidden territory — Dieleman's land. Old Dieleman didn't allow anyone to hunt muskrats on his land. We weren't having any success when Dad said, "*Kiek*, Jan, a *dikke rouk*" (Look, John, a big crow). Sure enough, there in a bush sat a big black crow. Dad took careful aim with his .22 and fired. Up popped the crow. It was a black hat on the head of Old Dieleman who had been sitting in the bush spying on us Fortunately Dad's shot had missed but we were scared and headed home in a hurry. We followed the creek back but continued on beyond your yard. Old Dieleman followed us as far as the yard, but when he couldn't find us there he went back. When we thought it was safe we returned home, thankful that no harm had been done

John Peters

BEAR OR BOAR

On at least one occasion a farmer had to butcher a fattener who had been ripped open The boar was blamed and lost his tusks. A few days later another pig was dead, this one having several parallel gashes in its side, indicating that a bear was the likely culprit Using the dead pig as bait, a hunt was staged. Numerous shots were fired at the bear in the early morning hours, but the beast made good his escape. Hearing all this shooting, Albert Krikke said he thought the Russians were coming

NEERLANDIA ATHLETICS
[illegible]
WINNING IS WHAT COUNTS

The backbreaking toil needed to survive in the wilderness left little time for recreational activities such as sports. Even if there had been time, sports were not considered to be of much value This view was based on a Bible passage which stated, "bodily exercise profiteth little" (1 Timothy 4:18). Furthermore, many settlers held to the commandment, "Six days shalt thou labour" to such an extent that some felt guilty taking a day off from their toil.

Nevertheless recreational activities including sports were always engaged in to some extent. The desire of young people to compete in athletic events with other communities however, met with at best a lukewarm reception by the old-timers of Neerlandia

The first reason for their opposition was the desire to remain a separate community Many feared that through competition with others their young people would become assimilated into the broader community. Gradually, however, this stand was eroded to such a degree that many Neerlandians now participate in sports with other communities.

A second reason was the fact that many athletic events took place on Sunday. The people of Neerlandia believe that Sunday is a day of rest and worship.

Even from the earliest days most people recognized the need for recreational activities There is, of course, a difference between recreation and competitive sports and some question the value of competitive sports, especially as it relates to an individual's self-esteem Nonetheless, as the need for physical labour diminished, there was an increasing emphasis on participation in sports on both a recreational and competitive level.

Fastball

By the early twenties the school children were learning to play fastball. William van Ark coached a girls' team that made at least one trip to either Mellowdale (or Old Barrhead) to compete Younger girls accompanied the team as cheerleaders. After each inning they were expected to shout with enthusiasm.

"K-yiu k-yee k-yikkety flin
Come out of your shells and watch us win!
We're wild, we're woolly,
We're chuck full of zip
Neerlandia public school, rip, rip, rip!"

As the team fell farther and farther behind, however, the enthusiasm turned to embarrassment

Girls' basketball team, 1922 Bill van Ark was the coach. Back Delia Anema, Tena Terpsma, Hanna Lievers, Clara Ritsema, Pauline Sturwold. Middle: Margaret Messelink, Gertie Tuininga, Herda Terpsma, Sadie Tuininga. Front: Susie Anema, Gladys Kippers.

A team from Mellowdale came to play against Neerlandia in the early thirties. Case Ingwersen was rather upset when he saw the

Mellowdale girls in their bloomer - like shorts and said Neerlandia should not participate in the game because of the improper dress of the opposing team. Rev Van Der Woude's reaction was quite different, however. When some concerned people came up to him and asked, "Did you see those shorts?" he replied, "Yes, what's there to see?"

During the thirties, fastball was played on Sunday afternoons after the church service Spectators also came to watch, among them Rev. Van Der Woude

In fastball, the calibre of play improved by the 1930s to the point that the young men, who had formed a team, began to look for competition in other communities. This caused some consternation, nevertheless they played in Vega and Mellowdale The young men of the Edmonton Christian Reformed church had a team that came to play in Neerlandia The city slickers had little trouble winning the games the first few years. Neerlandia teams also went to Edmonton travelling on the back of Fisher's truck Eventually the Neerlandia young men became tired of losing to other teams, so with John Ingwersen as coach and with a lot of practice they began to turn the tables. In 1938, to disarm the confident Edmonton team, the Neerlandia team dressed in ragged clothes. In a memorable game played that July First, Neerlandia defeated Edmonton.

Fastball continued as a favourite sport for many years. Games played between the married men and the single men were a July First feature. When the Lacombe, Edmonton, and Neerlandia churches held Young People's rallies, the respective teams played fiercely-competitive games.

Though interest in fastball declined in the 1960s and 1970s, a renewed interest has developed since then. Both men and women's teams began competing in a commercial league in the County of Barrhead

Hockey

With the construction of a rink on the Co-op store property in 1944, hockey — the most popular of team sports in Neerlandia — began. With little skating ability but lots of enthusiasm, Neerlandia teams were regularly defeated the first few years. There were a few experienced players who had been playing for the Mellowdale team and with the addition of these men — Jake Sturwold, Albert Schoonekamp, Frank Visser — a better team gradually developed. Albert and Frank had played defense for Mellowdale while Jake had been stalwart in the net and was nicknamed "Stonewall Jackson" The highlight of the winter season for a number of years was the competition with the Edmonton church team. The rivalry became intense and some of the activities on the ice had little to do with brotherly love When two young men, one from each team, were courting the same girl they "took it out" on each other on the ice

All of the practice by the school boys on the rink began to pay off when they began to take their place on the Neerlandia senior team Not only did the Edmonton team to taste defeat at their hands but Neerlandia started looking for more competition at the local level. A rural hockey league was in existence and the team desired to join them. For some community members the idea of competition outside of their own circles was bad enough, the thought of joining them in a league was unthinkable In 1952, a public meeting was held in the store hall to discuss the question, "Is it permissible to play hockey in such a league?" Rev. Mulder apparently favoured competition with other communities as did the majority of parents present at the meeting, although some were adamently opposed. After that meeting, Neerlandia joined the Barrhead rural hockey league

Tim Berger and John Ingwersen provided leadership and coaching during those early years. As with most of Neerlandia's early endeavours in sports, the first teams were repeatedly defeated

In 1956-1957, however, Neerlandia became league champions They repeated the feat the following two years and gained permanent possession of the trophy. In 1959 a new regulation-size rink was built on the Neerlandia School property

About 1960, the rural hockey league disbanded because hockey seemed to lose some popularity in the county for a time. Neerlandia had two teams that played in an Edmonton church league for a few years, though, and later a bush league was formed between Dapp, Jarvie, Linaria, Fawcett, and Neerlandia. It has been suggested that the reason for the decline of interest was the influence of Rev. Van Dyken, who was opposed to competition with other

Back: John Ingwersen, Albert Schoonekamp, Clarence Tiemstra, Bert Piers, Henry Piers, Henry Roth, Joe Mast. Front: George Visser, Martin Wierenga, Peter Piers, Ted Reitsma, Marvin Nanninga, Ken Ashley

communities. The more capable players (if the parents permitted) joined the Barrhead team.

The Neerlandia Flyers joined the Barrhead Commercial League in 1975, and in 1976, after a new rink was constructed in Neerlandia, a second Neerlandia team known as the Homesteaders also joined. The Flyers won the league title for the first three years, and the Homesteaders won it in 1979-80. During these years trips were made to Abbotsford, B.C., where the best of both teams, who had formed one team, played in a tournament held each year during Easter break. These were hard-fought games. On several occasions Neerlandia was close to the top, but never won.

Hard work and determination had been the key to Neerlandia's success in hockey over the years. Without a minor hockey program where fundamentals were learned at a young age, hard work was the only way.

Since 1976, with more teams and coaching at the minor league level, the calibre of player at a young age is high. With the establishment of a County minor hockey league this has been proven. All Neerlandia's teams did well in their divisions in the 1983-1984 season.

Both the Flyers and Homesteaders hockey teams have been disbanded and at present Neerlandia now has one senior team called the Knights, which was formed in 1982. They compete in a commercial league. In 1984 the Knights organized a hockey tournament which was held in Barrhead and attended by five teams from Neerlandia, Edmonton, and Smithers.

Whether they win or lose, Neerlandia expects their players to play their best and to respect the other teams.

Horseshoes

Since horseshoe did not require many people, it was usually played at someone's place. Joe Baker Sr. and Jerry Reitsma were good at the game and enjoyed taking on any challengers. In the late forties, a group of men often got together to play horseshoe. They also competed a few times with teams from Vega.

Since 1975 there has been a renewed interest in the sport. Tournaments are sometimes held at the annual July First picnic. Some men get together in the summer and challenge each other in singles and doubles play and some have also participated in tournaments in other Alberta towns. Alvin Nanninga has entered the Alberta Provincial Championships, placing fourth in 1984, and the Alberta Summer Games, where he and his partner won a gold medal in mixed doubles in 1983. Travis Nanninga played in the Junior event and in 1983 won the gold medal at the Alberta Summer Games and in 1984 he placed fourth in the Canadian Championships.

Curling

With the declining interest in hockey during the 1960s, some men took up curling. Two teams were formed and both curled out of Linaria for a number of years. Some of the curlers over the years competed in the Massey Ferguson Farmers playdowns and the Unifarm regional and provincial competitions.

Badminton

In 1972 a badminton club, consisting of five members, was formed. Since then the game has been played by many during the winter months. Some tournaments have been hosted for players from the Barrhead, Manola, and Westlock areas and Neerlandia players who attend tournaments sponsord by other communities.

Golf

Golf has been a popular summer sport for men, women, and children in Neerlandia. Neerlandia has held its own tournament at the Barrhead golf course during the summer months in 1983 and 1984. Many Neerlandians have participated in the annual church tournament in Edmonton.

Other

Mixed volleyball has made a comeback in the last couple of years. Eight teams have been playing on a regular basis. The teams are part of an intercounty league and play for recreation rather than competition.

* * *

The Neerlandia School has introduced badminton into its sports program. Out of this has come a number of excellent players. Of those who played, six have gone through the local and regional competitions to qualify for the provincial finals of the Alberta Schools Athletic Association.

Randy and Howard Gelderman (1982 and 1983) and Simon Strydhorst and Steve Vriend (1984) have won gold medals in boys' doubles at the provincial level. Brian Piers won silver medals in boys' singles in 1982 and 1983. Colleen Krikke won the gold in girls' singles in 1983 and 1984.

SPORTS

For recreation there was not much in those early days. In the summer there was baseball (one evening a week). In the winter, one evening a week was spent at singing society, whether you could sing or not you went, if only to have a social evening. In later years we tried skating on the lakes. We would spend hours clearing a piece of ice, then skate for a while, and quite often the next time we came the cleared ice would be blown full of snow again.

My first pair of skates (which I bought from John Terpsma) were Dutch skates which were tied under the shoes. These cost me twenty-five cents. The second pair I bought for three dollars from a fellow in Edmonton — that is as far as I went in skating.

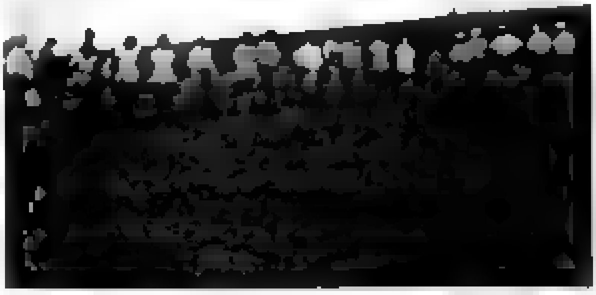
Baseball was different; we played that at school, especially with Mr. Ashley who was sports-minded. In grades seven and eight we had a pretty good team, at least Mr. Ashley seemed to think so. He wanted some competition so he made arrangements with Vega to play against us a few times a year. In order to go to Vega, someone had to take a vehicle. I was allowed to take a team of horses and wagon and the whole team would ride in the wagon for the six miles to Vega. I don't think we ever lost — that made everyone happy.

There was not much recreation in the wintertime in those years. During the mid-forties I was in the Co-op store board, and I mentioned at a board meeting that there was not much for the young people in regards to recreation. "I appoint you as a one-man committee," said the chairman, "You talk to the young people and see what you can come up with." I talked with some of the young people but they did not know what to do as there was not much money around. I reported back to the store board and asked for help, so the chairman appointed Bill Olthuis and together we set about getting something started. The first project was a small hockey rink right on the store ground. This proved popular as they had hockey games with various teams from around Neerlandia. So we decided to ask the school board if we could get a regulation-sized rink and a building for dressing right on the school grounds. This proved

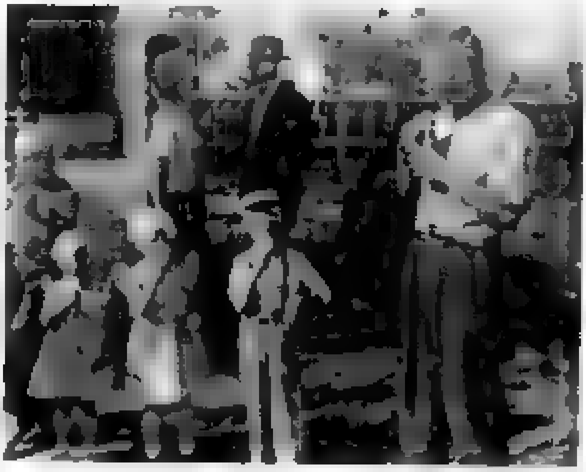
PICNIC DAY

Baseball games were played and everyone watched, 1940

Or balloon race.



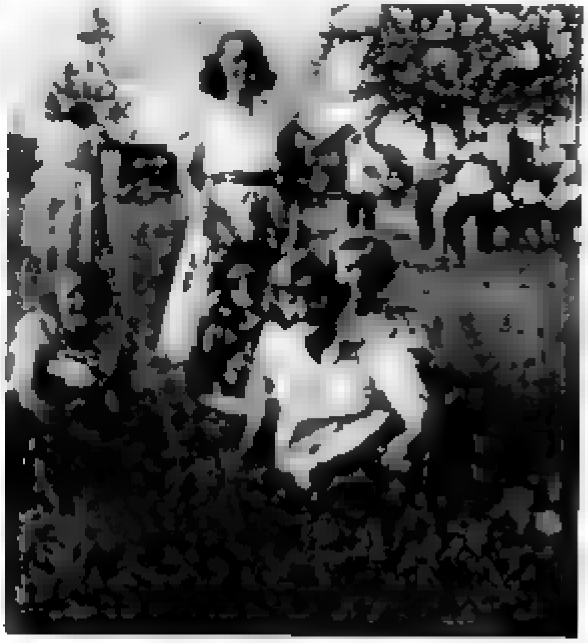
There were also races such as the sack race



Children enjoyed the treats. Hendrene, Hilda, Andrew, Henry Wieringa.

No money left for treats. Back: Elsie Olthuis, Manny Nanninga, Shirley and Joan Olthuis. Front: Marvin Nanninga behind George R. Visser.

Della Peters, Annie Anema, Grace Tuininga, Cor Fisher, Phyllis Tuininga, John Wieringa, Rose Ingwersen, 1937



Relaxing at the picnic: Ann Strydhorst, Florence Baker (standing), Tillie Elgersma, Elsie Olthuis, Dixie Wieringa.

successful as C. K. Mast was on the divisional school board and he had a lot of clout. They even got a well drilled by the school that could be used for flooding the rink. Not long after this, the young fellows formed a hockey team and asked me to coach them. We had a very successful time with the hockey team, first playing in what was called a bush league.

Of course the teams were not of very good calibre, coming from the bush. After a few years we were tops in the league. We then took on the Barrhead Juniors, but after we won the trophy for three years, they had enough of us too. We even played Barrhead Seniors — a team comprised of the best of Barrhead and Westlock combined. What a game that was; the arena in Barrhead was almost full of spectators. They thought they could teach us a good lesson, but as it turned out it was a six-all tie. In fact George Visser was just breaking in on goal and he did not miss too often, so they rang the buzzer and called it a six-all tie; they didn't want to be disgraced by losing to a bush team. I have many fond memories of those years — the winning spirit that prevailed on those teams was a major factor in the success they enjoyed. The opposition did not always come from the teams we played, much criticism came from our own people. Many of them feared mixed marriages. This indeed came to pass, but the hockey teams certainly were not to blame for that.

In the sixties even a few teams were formed that went curling in the winter. We went mostly to Linaria and also to several bonspiels in Barrhead and Westlock, usually winning some prize.

We even sawed forty-four thousand feet of lumber for a curling rink one winter. All volunteer labour, except everyone's hours were kept track of in case it did not go through. That is exactly what happened. The lumber was sold and everybody got paid for what he did. There were so many hard feelings in Neerlandia over hockey that the committee in charge decided it was not worth starting with a curling rink also and creating more hard feelings.

John Ingwersen

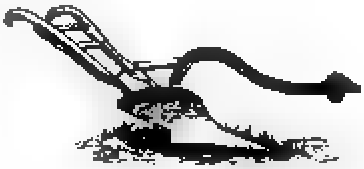
PICNIC DAYS

One year young married women played older men over forty. That was a real laugh — some of the older men had never played before. One of them hit the ball and ran to the pitcher instead of first base; another hit a home run and ran all the way home and asked, "What must I do now?" "Go again," someone said, so off he went again to first base.

Later in the forties there were quite a few married men who had played a lot of ball and they were challenged by the young men who were not married. This was always an interesting game and the people seemed to enjoy it.

There was much good feeling on those picnic days, as a lot of people with a little more money than others would buy treats for many less fortunate. I was fortunate to be at one of the picnics a few years ago and it was nice to see the same tradition still being carried out.

John Ingwersen



CONCLUSION:

From 1912 to 1984 is a mere seventy-two years — not long when viewed against the backdrop of world history — scarcely a man's life span. But in seventy-two years Neerlandia has changed from a wilderness to a thriving farming community. What was once undifferentiated forest is now farmland neatly divided into quarter sections and crisscrossed with roads.

The pioneers came to Neerlandia in 1911-12 in slow-moving ox carts. Their grandchildren speed about in cars, trucks, and airplanes. The pioneers laboured in poverty; their descendants live in luxury.

So many changes — but there is one constant. The pioneers came to Neerlandia to establish a Christian community, a place where they could live Christ-centered lives apart from worldly influences. Their grandchildren too try to live Christ-centered lives, though more exposed to influences from the larger community.

In a time when many rural communities have disappeared Neerlandia has remained. It has not only continued to exist but it has also grown. Though one factor in Neerlandia's continued existence is the desire of the residents to work together to maintain a Christian community, it is through the grace of God that they have been able to do so. With God's blessing on succeeding generations, Neerlandia will remain.

APPENDICES

1. Neerlandia has a future 992
The Settlement as the Nucleus
2. The Neerlandia Funeral Association 995
3. Glossary 998
Glossary of abbreviations
4. Dutch Glossary 1001
5. Map of the Netherlands 1003
6. Township maps 1004
7. World War II Veterans 1008
8. Teachers 1009

Neerlandia has a Future

My first visit was Neerlandia, where Mr McFarland brought me on September 30, [1928]

This settlement of Dutch farmers had interested me from the beginning. Nowhere else can one better observe how Dutch farmers will fare in Canada with the demands that are put on the settlers

The [Neerlandia] pioneers had a specific purpose: they wanted to stay together as much as possible, they wanted to start a settlement where no other settlers had settled in order to preserve their unity They were from one church, they were all members of the *Gereformeerde Kerk*

In north-central Alberta they established the settlement of Neerlandia, which has a population at present of three hundred. There are seventy children going to the school. They wanted to preserve their Dutch character as much as possible, as a church, they wanted to stay as one, they wanted to regulate the teaching of their children as much as possible themselves; and on a community level they wanted to work together so they would be better able to face the tremendous difficulties associated with the pioneering life

Neerlandia is not old enough to demonstrate the soundness of these principles, which are the basis for its foundation The settlement of Neerlandia is based on a solid foundation, which alone makes it worthwhile to pay attention to the development of that settlement. In my opinion, it is the only Dutch settlement that has a chance to succeed I don't claim that the *settlers* will succeed, that I cannot judge — nobody can at this time; that depends on factors that are not known to us. But, I have seen that the situation of the settlement is not unfavourable

Whereas a great number of Dutch settlements time and again have disappeared or become insignificant — I need mention only Dog Lake 110 miles north of Winnipeg where, of the 163 Dutch settlers brought by the committee of Van't Lindenhout, not more than three are left, Edam, in south Saskatchewan; Nijverdal, now called Monarch, in southern Alberta, the fast-disappearing colonies in the cities of Winnipeg and Edmonton — therefore it is remarkable that a settlement that has such unfavourable conditions as Neerlandia has is so thriving.

The Neerlandia settlers wanted to plant a church and school like they were used to [in the Netherlands] They wanted to regulate the social and Christian training of their children so the bond among the settlers would stay as close as possible They knew how difficult it was to preserve unity between people coming from different places of the Netherlands people with strong, differing characters and with different opinions. They believed and still believe that when church and school and home work together to train the youth, they run the least risk to lose their unity and that through unity they would be able to withstand the enormous difficulties that they would encounter as settlers. These ideas, which the settlers of Neerlandia have as a foundation for their community, answer the question, "How is it possible that Neerlandia, the most unfavourably-situated settlement of Netherlanders in Canada, is in a favourable position at the present while many other settlements, located in better places, went backwards or disappeared through the course of the years?" If one Dutch settlement in Canada has a future, it is Neerlandia

I am not the only one making this judgement, *Dominee* Brink, minister in Lynden, Washington, who stayed about four weeks among the settlers in Neerlandia, wrote in *de Wachter* of 15 September 1923, as follows "What I noticed in Neerlandia was the fact that our people did not go there to get rich. It is this fact that gives more optimism for Neerlandia than for some other communities in Canada and Montana. It seems to me that our people will be able to stay in Neerlandia and make a living because Neerlandia is progressing, not with giant strides, but nevertheless it is progressing. In many congregations in Classis Pacific the opposite is true — they are regressing."

The people of Neerlandia are full of courage. In the entire settlement, I met only one women who would like to go back to the Netherlands. Otherwise, no one longed to return to the motherland nor did they consider immigrating to the United States. They would like to see the community enlarged by more immigrants of the same faith from the Netherlands. For Dutch people who have different ideas concerning church and school, family and society than those of the people of Neerlandia, I must say that Neerlandia is not a good place to settle; they will never feel at home there, although they won't lack help and support

J. J. Leys

Excerpts from a letter written to His Excellency, the Governor of Suriname, in January 1924 after a twenty-day tour of Canada and the United States to evaluate the possibilities of a Dutch immigrant making a living in Canada as compared to Suriname. The recommendation: Dutch immigrants should be encouraged to settle in Suriname since prospects were brighter there.

'The Settlement as the Nucleus'

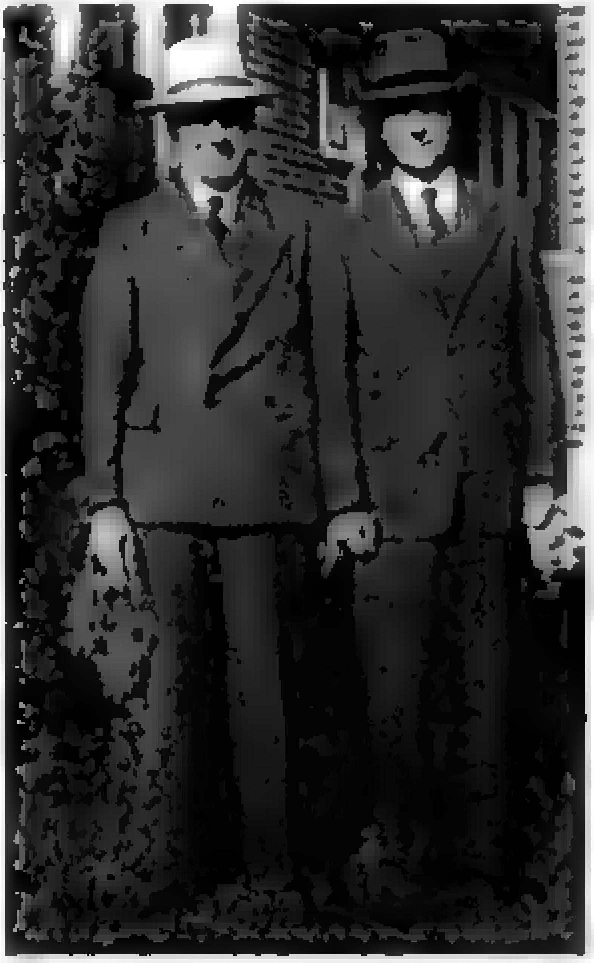
The individualistic character of the Dutchman also shows up when he goes to another country. One often sees immigrants from other nations, especially those belonging to the Slavic and Latin races, living together in settlements. The Dutch people, however, are often dispersed. Many settlements, which were established with the goal of working together against the difficulties of a strange country, were short-lived. Where the Dutch have stayed together, the character of a collective cooperation became almost totally lost. It was only in groups where the church is the focal point of the community that a remnant of a settlement still exists. A common faith seems to be a firm basis whereupon people of different characters, temperaments, and talents can work together and understand each other.

The spiritual unity overpowers the difference in social standings (in such a community). The Neerlandia settlement is a good example of this. It would probably, also due to its less favoured situation, have long since ceased to exist were it not for the spiritual bond and a firm faith which the pioneers maintained and encouraged.

[In the early years] They kept some chickens, a few farmers had a cow, and now the men went with the eggs to a store eighteen kilometres away to exchange them for groceries and flour. They came back carrying a bag of flour on their backs and other packages under their arms or packed everything on a litter attached to two long poles and carried by four men. This was no beaten path and over the creeks there were no bridges. In the winter this was an especially difficult trip since there was no opportunity to rest along the way.

One of the pioneers, who during the mobilization of Dutch troops in WW I entered active service again, obtained a teaching certificate and now teaches the children — in the history of the Netherlands also. Thanks to the liberal laws in Alberta, the gospel as the salt of the earth can be interspersed in the curriculum of the settlers' public school. They also have young men and girls' societies, boys' meetings, parent-teacher and slide show evenings, and so on.

On the way, one of the farmers was busy with the help of a stoneboat levelling out the roads. The stoneboat was pulled by a team of horses. We stopped a minute, made acquaintance, and in short terms [he] frankly told his experiences. His name was Tiemstra. He had come from the vicinity of Bolsward [Friesland] without a penny in his pocket. He had some help, had worked hard, and still had to work



T. Groeneveld, Rev. Rubingh.

hard, but could now say that he had fifty hectares of land seeded, thirty cows, ten horses, some machinery, and no debt. He was more than satisfied, and added cheerfully, "The grain looks good this year."

I would have liked to stay there for a few days.

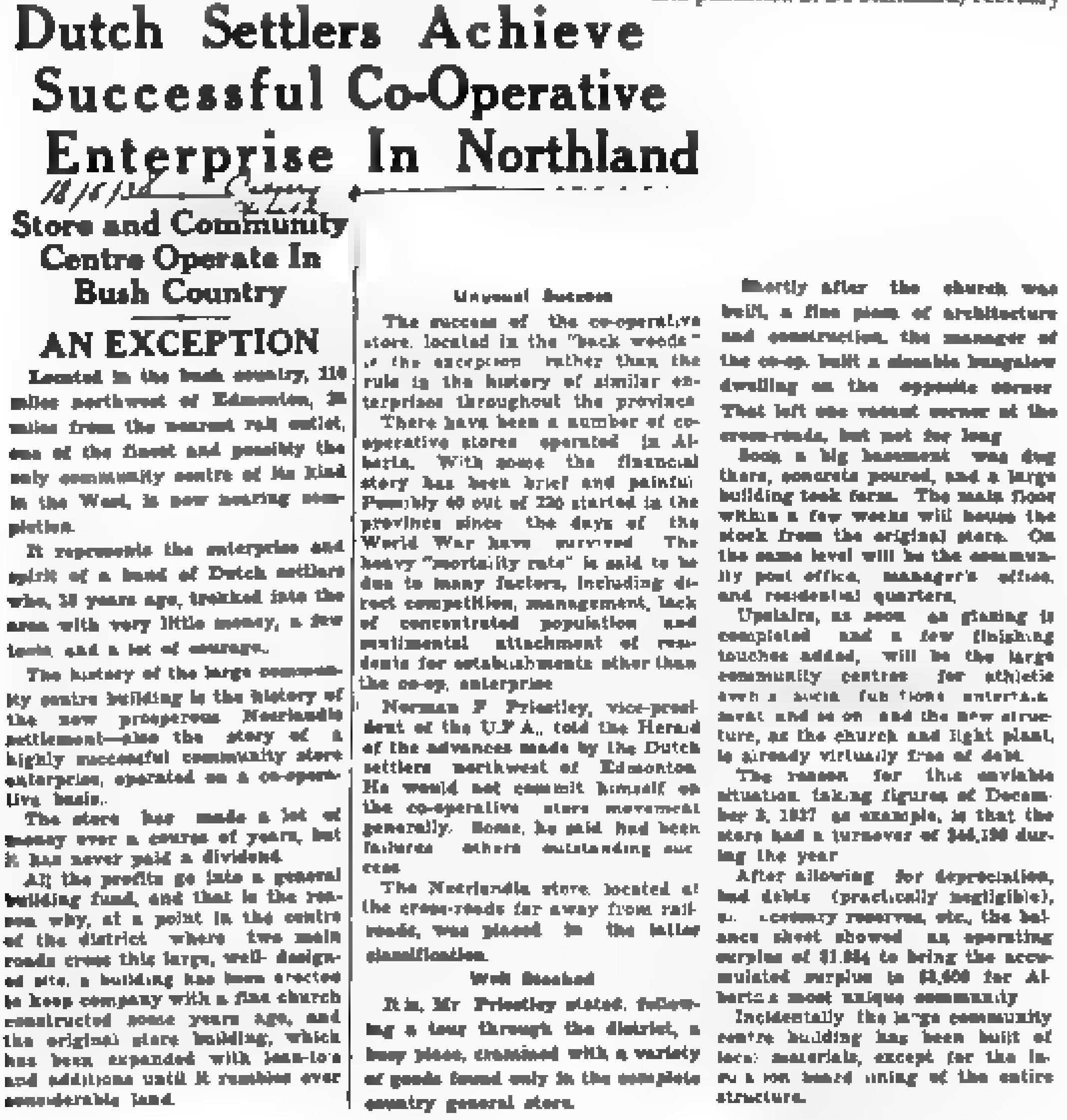
The atmosphere was so different from that in which we daily live [in the Netherlands]. In contrast to the word "absolutely" which is constantly on the tip of the Canadians' tongues, there shone through here in casual conversation a feeling of increased dependence upon the Lord, it wasn't overly pious or put on but we understood that "the Lord willing" and "we hope" were realities among the settlers.

I believe that this settlement, which has a favourable climate and the so-called 'Indian summer' — soft sunny weather after a few cold October days, has a good future.

Colonies like Neerlandia, although they are still on the outside of Canadian culture, can become the nucleus from where not only our church, but also our rich Calvinistic lifestyle may testify to the Canadian people.

T. Crossen

Excerpts taken from "Across Canada" written by T. Crossen and published in *De Standaard*, February 27, 1925



Dutch Settlers Achieve Successful Co-Operative Enterprise In Northland

18/5/38

Store and Community Centre Operate In Bush Country

AN EXCEPTION

Located in the bush country, 110 miles northwest of Edmonton, 28 miles from the nearest rail outlet, one of the finest and possibly the only community centre of its kind in the West, is now nearing completion.

It represents the enterprise and spirit of a band of Dutch settlers who, 25 years ago, trekked into the area with very little money, a few tools and a lot of courage.

The history of the large community centre building is the history of the now prosperous Neerlandia settlement—also the story of a highly successful community store enterprise, operated on a co-operative basis.

The store has made a lot of money over a course of years, but it has never paid a dividend.

All the profits go into a general building fund, and that is the reason why, at a point in the centre of the district where two main roads cross this large, well-designed site, a building has been erected to keep company with a fine church constructed some years ago, and the original store building, which has been expanded with lean-to's and additions until it rambles over considerable land.

Unusual Success

The success of the co-operative store, located in the "back woods" is the exception rather than the rule in the history of similar enterprises throughout the province.

There have been a number of co-operative stores operated in Alberta. With some the financial story has been brief and painful. Possibly 60 out of 220 started in the province since the days of the World War have survived. The heavy "mortality rate" is said to be due to many factors, including direct competition, management, lack of concentrated population and sentimental attachment of residents for establishments other than the co-op. enterprise.

Norman F. Priestley, vice-president of the U.F.A., told the Herald of the advances made by the Dutch settlers northwest of Edmonton. He would not commit himself on the co-operative store movement generally. Some, he said had been failures, others outstanding successes.

The Neerlandia store, located at the cross-roads far away from railroads, was placed in the latter classification.

Well Stocked

It is, Mr. Priestley stated, following a tour through the district, a busy place, crammed with a variety of goods found only in the complete country general store.

Shortly after the church was built, a fine piece of architecture and construction, the manager of the co-op. built a sizeable bungalow dwelling on the opposite corner. That left one vacant corner at the cross-roads, but not for long.

Soon a big basement was dug there, concrete poured, and a large building took form. The main floor within a few weeks will house the stock from the original store. On the same level will be the community post office, manager's office, and residential quarters.

Upstairs, as soon as glazing is completed and a few finishing touches added, will be the large community centre for athletic events, social functions, entertainment and so on, and the new structure, as the church and light plant, is already virtually free of debt.

The reason for this enviable situation, taking figures of December 3, 1937 as example, is that the store had a turnover of $46,190 during the year.

After allowing for depreciation, bad debts (practically negligible), necessary reserves, etc., the balance sheet showed an operating surplus of $1,844 to bring the accumulated surplus to $8,000 for Alberta's most unique community.

Incidentally the large community centre building has been built of local materials, except for the insulation board lining of the entire structure.

Article published in the Calgary Herald on May 18, 1938. Used with permission

The Neerlandia Funeral Association (1983)

The birth of a new community was followed by the age-old reality of death and all the arrangements needed for burial. In 1915 Rienk de Jager donated ten acres of land to be used for building a church and a place for a graveyard. It was not until the following year (1916) that a government-approved cemetery map was drawn up by Popko Schuring. The graveyard was officially registered as the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church Cemetery since the land belonged to the CRC, but it was used as a community cemetery. The graveyard map consisted of ten blocks with each block divided into eighteen plots. In 19[illegible] the size of the graveyard was doubled from ten to twenty blocks. In the early days, the plots were available for one dollar each, but the system was discontinued because few people bought plots. Consequently, there was no money available to pay a caretaker.

Koop Mast, who died in 1915, was the first to be buried in the cemetery. The body of his grandson who had died in 1914 and had been buried on Koop Mast's quarter was also moved to the cemetery at this time.

All of the coffins in the early days were homemade and many of them were made by Menne Nanninga and Ben Lievers, local carpenters. The graves were always dug by hand. This difficult job had to be done whether the ground was hard and dry as in summer or frozen hard as in winter. Even when machines capable of digging graves became available graves were still dug by hand for some time. It was considered improper to use machines for such a purpose. Until the early 1950s the body of a deceased person was prepared by the family and kept at their home until burial. Later the bodies were kept in a small building at the graveyard until the day of the funeral. The funeral took place as soon as possible, usually the third day after death. Only when someone died in the hospital were the services of an undertaker used. Beginning about 1953 the services of an undertaker began to be used by everyone. The cost of a funeral at that time was about three hundred dollars.

The cemetery was administered by the consistory of the CRC until the Neerlandia Cemetery and Funeral Society was organized in 1956. Before the society was formed, Case Ingwersen had been the first person responsible for recording the deaths and placement of graves in the cemetery. Others who had continued with the recording were Henry Bouwman, Jim Merkus, Henry Kippers, and Carl and Agnes Mast. The first executive of the society consisted of chairman Jack Tuininga, secretary Corny Nanninga, and treasurer Henry Kippers Sr. At this time the membership fee was four dollars plus one dollar for administration (treasurer's fees). The services of an undertaker from Foster and McGarvey of Edmonton were then approximately $175.00. The treasurer was paid fifty dollars annually for his services.

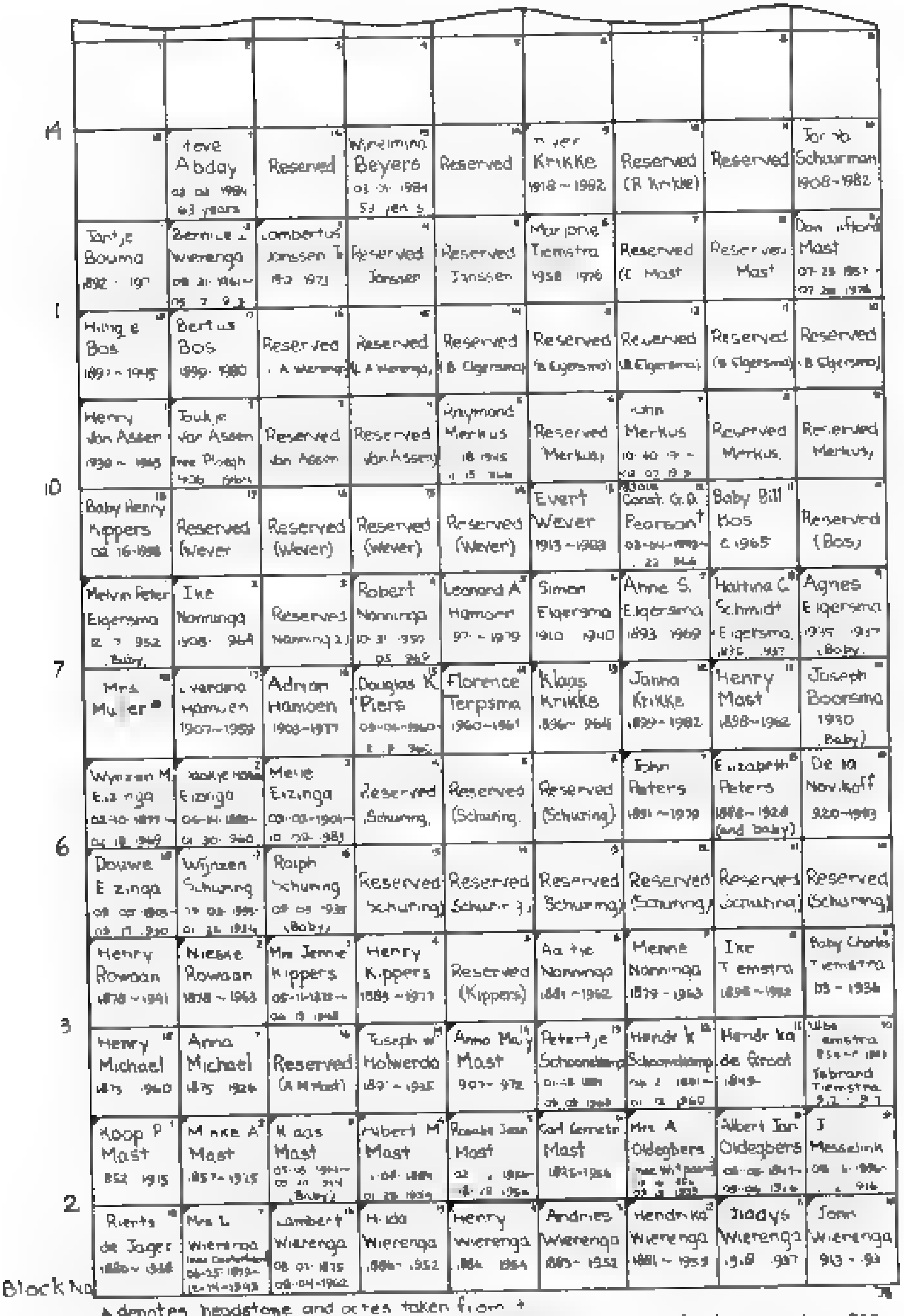
In February 1983 the society became known as The Neerlandia Funeral Association and a new constitution was adopted. The fee charged to become a member was set at a percentage of the cost of a standard funeral, depending on the age of the applicant. In 1983 the approximate cost of a funeral was twelve hundred dollars. The aim of the association as stated in 1956 is ". . . to help one another in the occurrence of death in the family. This help shall consist of financial and personal support to lighten the burden of the bereaved. We recognize this as our Christian duty in the light of Galations 6:2, 'Bear ye one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.'" Constitution (1983), Article 2 (a).

Although there was no official association to state such a purpose in writing, this had probably been the aim of community members since the time of the earliest settlers as they dealt with one another in the time of bereavement.

							Nolten Nanninga [illegible]	[illegible] Nanninga [illegible] 1986	
[illegible] Werkman [illegible]	Reserved Werkman	Christopher De Boer [illegible]		[illegible]	Reserved Kippers	John Kippers [illegible]	John W. Gelderman [illegible]	Reserved Gelderman	3
[illegible] Peters [illegible]		[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] - 1983	Henry [illegible] 1956 - [illegible]	Reserved Wierenga	Clarence R. Wierenga [illegible]	Reserved L. Wierenga	Reserved E. Visser	Edward W. [illegible] [illegible]	
Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Chantelle [illegible] [illegible]	Mrs Jenny [illegible] [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved H. Peters	Martje Peters [illegible]	Oene [illegible] [illegible]	Reserved [illegible] Peters	2
[illegible] [illegible] 02-28-1978 [illegible]	Anna [illegible] [illegible]	Settler Kaloran +	Reserved [illegible]	[illegible] Pieters [illegible]	Elizabeth Pieters [illegible]	Albert [illegible] Most [illegible]	Reserved A. Most	Erna # Broadhead [illegible]	
Reserved	Reserved	Reserved	Lester [illegible] Harwood 1951 - 1967	Joseph Baker 1880-1966	Annie Baker 1886 - 1965	Alberta Bouwman 1898 - 195[illegible]	Hanna Hendriks 1937	Pieter Hendriks 1935	9
Baby John Visser	Baby John Visser	Conrad Visser 10-20-1953 [illegible]	Iris Lorraine Tuininga [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	[illegible] Wierenga nee Nordin [illegible]	
Ralph Harwood 1920-1923	[illegible] Harwood 12-01-1923 Baby	[illegible] Nanninga 05-13-1940- [illegible]	[illegible] Harwood 1888-1956	[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]	[illegible] Harwood 1885-1966	[illegible] Anema 1884-1967	[illegible] Anema 1886-1965	Marvin [illegible] Wierenga 1954-1962	8
[illegible] Lievers [illegible]	Hendrik Lievers [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 1952	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	Reserved [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible]emstra [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible]emstra [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible]emstra [illegible]	
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]	Norman [illegible] [illegible] Baby	Martha [illegible] [illegible] (Baby)	[illegible] Krikke [illegible]	[illegible] Krikke [illegible]	William Krikke [illegible] 1960	[illegible] Krikke [illegible] 1966	Kay Anderson [illegible] 1965	5
Baby [illegible] [illegible]	[illegible] Wierenga [illegible]	[illegible] Lievers [illegible] 1949	Dien Lievers [illegible]	[illegible] Huiskamp [illegible]	[illegible] Toebes [illegible] 1972	[illegible] Janssen [illegible] 1948	Lamberta Janssen [illegible]	[illegible]hard Paas [illegible]	
Johannes Lievers [illegible]	Baby Ben[illegible] Lievers [illegible]	Jacob Krikke [illegible] 1944 Baby	Reserved [illegible]	Jerry A. [illegible] [illegible]	[illegible] Fisher [illegible]	[illegible] Fisher [illegible]	Wiebe Fisher [illegible] 1960	Baby A. [illegible]	4
Catharina Baker [illegible]-1943	[illegible] Baker [illegible] 1945	Raymond Baker [illegible] 1944	David Tuininga [illegible]	[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 1948	David Terpsma [illegible]	Netty Terpsma [illegible]	Anke Tuininga [illegible] 1952	Tena Terpsma [illegible]	
Johannes [illegible] [illegible]	William Emmerzael 1926 1927	[illegible] van Dijer [illegible]	Peter [illegible] [illegible] 1932	Leonard Emmerzael [illegible] 1944	Martha Emmerzael 1883 1950	Arie Emmerzael 1878 1954	[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 1959	Klaas Tuininga [illegible] 1954	1
									Block No.

- denotes headstone and dates taken from it
- # Erna Broadhead mother of Gwen (Broadhead) Lievers
- + likely Vega settler James Kaloran who died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the chest c. January 15, 1920

Plan of the Neerlandia Cemetery (north half)



Block No.									
14									
		Steve Abday 03 01 1984 63 years	Reserved	Wilhelmina Beyers 03 01 1984 53 years	Reserved	Pieter Krikke 1918 ~ 1982	Reserved (R Krikke)	Reserved	Jacob Schuurman 1908 ~ 1982
1	Tantje Bouma 1892 - 197	Bernice Wierenga 08 31 1961 ~ 05 7 9	Lambertus Janssen 192 1973	Reserved Janssen	Reserved Janssen	Marjorie Tiemstra 1958 1976	Reserved (C Mast	Reserved Mast	Don Clifford Mast 07 25 1957 ~ 07 20 1976
	Hiltje Bos 1897 ~ 1945	Bertus Bos 1899 1980	Reserved A Wierenga	Reserved A Wierenga	Reserved B Elgersma	Reserved (B Elgersma)	Reserved (B Elgersma)	Reserved (B Elgersma)	Reserved (B Elgersma)
10	Henry van Assen 1930 ~ 1985	Toukje van Assen nee Ploegh 1926 1985	Reserved van Assen	Reserved van Assen	Raymond Merkus 18 1945 15 1966	Reserved Merkus	John Merkus 10 40 19 ~ 02 07 19	Reserved Merkus	Reserved Merkus
	Baby Henry Kippers 02 16 1956	Reserved (Wever	Reserved (Wever)	Reserved (Wever)	Reserved (Wever)	Evert Wever 1913 ~ 1983	Constable Const. G.O. Pearson † 03-04-1919 ~ 22 1946	Baby Bill Bos c 1965	Reserved (Bos)
7	Melvin Peter Elgersma 12 7 1952 Baby	Ike Nanninga 1908 1964	Reserved Nanninga	Robert Nanninga 10 31 1959 05 1969	Leonard A Hamoen 97 ~ 1979	Simon Elgersma 1910 1940	Anne S. Elgersma 1893 1969	Hattina C Schmidt Elgersma 1935 1937	Agnes Elgersma 1935 1937 Baby
	Mrs Muller ●	Everdina Hamoen 1907 ~ 1989	Adrian Hamoen 1903 ~ 1977	Douglas K Piers 09-06-1960 ~	Florence Terpsma 1960 ~ 1961	Klaas Krikke 1896 ~ 1964	Janna Krikke 1899 ~ 1982	Henry Mast 1898 ~ 1962	Joseph Boorsma 1930 Baby)
6	Wynzen M Elzinga 02-10-1877 ~ 05 18 1949	Jacobje Hoek Elzinga 06-14-1880 ~ 01 30 1960	Meile Elzinga 09-08-1904 ~ 10 29 1983	Reserved Schuring	Reserved (Schuring	Reserved (Schuring)	John Peters 1891 ~ 1979	Elizabeth Peters 1898 ~ 1928 (and baby)	De la Novikoff 1920 ~ 1983
	Douwe Elzinga 08 05 1905 ~ 05 17 1930	Wijnzen Schuring 19 02 1899 ~ 01 26 1984	Ralph Schuring 08 05 1935 Baby	Reserved Schuring)	Reserved Schuring)	Reserved Schuring)	Reserved (Schuring)	Reserved Schuring)	Reserved (Schuring)
3	Henry Rowaan 1878 ~ 1941	Niesje Rowaan 1878 ~ 1963	Mrs Jennie Kippers 05-11-1888 ~ 04 19 1948	Henry Kippers 1885 ~ 1977	Reserved (Kippers)	Aaltje Nanninga 1881 ~ 1962	Menne Nanninga 1879 - 1963	Ike Tiemstra 1896 ~ 1982	Baby Charles Tiemstra 1935 ~ 1936
	Henry Michael 1873 1960	Anna Michael 1875 1926	Reserved (A M Mast)	Joseph W Holwerda 1897 ~ 1935	Anna May Mast 1907 ~ 1972	Petertje Schoonekamp 01-18 1881 08 08 1968	Hendrik Schoonekamp 2 1881 ~ 01 12 1960	Hendrika de Groot 1849	Ulbe Tiemstra 1854 ~ 1941 Sebrand Tiemstra
2	Koop P Mast 1852 1915	Minke A Mast 1857 ~ 1915	Klaas Mast 05 08 1944 ~ 05 10 1944 Baby	Albert M Mast 04 1884 01 28 1959	Rosalie Jean Mast	Carl Kenneth Mast 1935 ~ 1956	Mrs A Oldegbers nee Wit poord 1866 1935	Albert Jan Oldegbers 08 08 1861 ~ 09 08 1946	J Messelink 08 1 1856 ~ 1916
	Rients de Jager 1880 ~ 1966	Mrs L Wierenga nee Oosterhoff 06-25 1879 ~ 12-14-1943	Lambert Wierenga 08 01 1875 08-04-1962	Hilda Wierenga 1886 ~ 1952	Henry Wierenga 1884 1964	Andries Wierenga 1883 ~ 1952	Hendrika Wierenga 1881 ~ 1959	Gladys Wierenga 1918 1937	John Wierenga 1913 ~ 1993

▲ denotes headstone and dates taken from †
● identity unknown probably Dorothy Mickisen, Vega resident buried c 1930 (aged 92 years).
† Constable Pearson, R.C.M.P., husband of Amy Wever, killed while on duty

Plan of the Neerlandia Cemetery (south half)

Glossary

ANEMA'S CORNER: the point one mile east of Neerlandia hamlet where the Anema family lived for many years, beginning in 1913

BACHING: one or more young men living on their own without a wife or mother to cook, clean, or otherwise care for them.

Young men often bached on their homesteads.

BAKER'S CORNER: a crossroads two-and-one-half miles south of Neerlandia hamlet

The Raymond Baker family lived at this crossroads for many years

BANNER (*The Banner*) the official magazine of the Christian Reformed Church, alternately loved and hated by the subscribers — depending on the editorial policy

BIG TIMBER: a stand of heavy timber south of Siebren Tiemstra's farm, a forested area untouched by the fire that burned over most of Townships 61 and 62 some years before the Dutchmen arrived

BLOOMERS: Underpants for women and girls

Winter bloomers were usually fleece-lined for greater warmth

BROKEN-IN: the state of a horse trained to obey the commands of his owner.

Horses could be saddle-broke or harness-broke

GREEN-BROKE: the state of a horse that has received very basic training and is likely to disobey on the slightest provocation

BUSH: several acres of woods or forest

WORKING IN THE BUSH: A term used to describe the practice of almost every Neerlandian male at some point in his life of spending the winter working at a logging camp north or west or northwest of Neerlandia

CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY: the first of the Christian colleges supported by Christian Reformed Church members and the only one directly supported by the Christian Reformed denomination, the training ground for ministers of the Christian Reformed Church

It was to Calvin that the first school trustees looked for Christian teachers. The graduates of Calvin do not compare themselves to anyone They think the difference is obvious.

CALVINIST CONTACT: a magazine started by and for the Dutch immigrants after the second World War; published in Ontario

CELLAR. a hole dug beneath the house; used for storage of fruits and vegetables, and home to many mice which scurried in every direction when anyone descended to its gloomy depths — lantern or flashlight in hand

Access was gained through a trapdoor in the kitchen floor

THE CENTRE. the Neerlandia hamlet itself, also known as The Corner — the place where everything of importance in Neerlandia occurs.

CHICKEN HAWK: one of the hawks that preys on chickens, probably the goshawk.

When chickens were kept outside they could, at times, be seen scurrying for shelter as a hawk flew overhead

CHICKEN ROOSTS: bleachers for chickens, in pioneer days, made of rails

The chickens perched on these rails to sleep for the night

CHINKING: the practice of filling the cracks between the logs of a log building.

Moss, clay, and manure were some of the materials used. Chinking was usually done to the exterior of a structure

CONFESSION OF FAITH: publicly professing one's faith in Christ.

At this time one assumes the rights and responsibilities of full membership in one of the Reformed churches. Most young people make confession of faith in their late teens.

CLASSIS: a meeting of delegates from various congregations of a Reformed denomination to discuss matters relating to all the churches in the area.

CLASSICAL APPOINTMENT: an obligation laid upon a minister to preach to a congregation that had no minister of its own; arranged according to a system established by a classis of a Reformed denomination

On classical appointment a minister might have to baptize several babies

THE CORNER: see CENTRE

CREAM OF WHEAT: Depression porridge; an unbleached coarse meal, a nutritious and tasty cereal

CROSS COUNTRY or ACROSS COUNTRY: to take a shortcut to get from point A to point B

When point A was home and point B was school, it usually took longer to get from A to B using the shortcut than going by the road. The reason for this was distractions caused by rabbits or other attractions.

CRUISED TIMBER: walked through the

woods in order to estimate the amount of timber it contained in order to determine whether it was worth logging — done in summer

DAY LABOUR: the practice of hiring men by the day instead of contracting the job, considered cheaper.

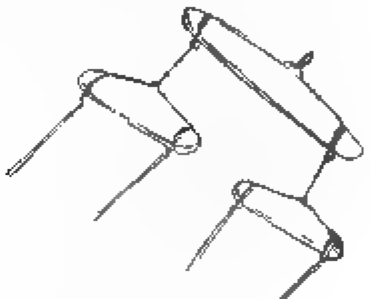
DOCTOR'S BOOK: the most important book, next to the Bible, in most settlers' homes, used to diagnose all kinds of human ailments.

On first perusing a doctor's book one resident thought that he suffered from most of the diseases described therein

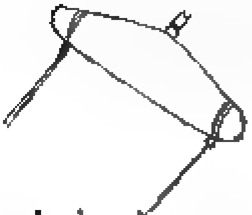
DORDT COLLEGE: one of four colleges most Christian Reformed postsecondary students attend, located in Sioux Center, Iowa, U S A

ELDER: a duly elected official in the Canadian and Christian Reformed churches to oversee the spiritual life of the congregation, supposedly the wisest men in the church.

EVENER: an arrangement of singletrees and doubletrees used to hitch four or more horses to a vehicle or implement.



Double tree
+
evener



Single tree

FATTENERS: pigs between the feeder and shipping stages of their lives.

FRONT ROOM: local term for what is now called the living room, used only on Sundays, for *huisbezoek*, or other special occasions, derived from the Dutch *voorkamer*

FLINCH: a card game; one of the few card games approved of by the leaders of the church

Pioneer children made their own cards

GAS, ORANGE AND PURPLE: gasoline for vehicles

Purple gas has colouring added to differentiate it from the more expensive orange gas Purple gas may be used in vehicles registered as farm vehicles There is no tax on purple gas

HARVEST(the harvest): harvesttime on the prairies.

Many men went to the harvest — in either Alberta or Saskatchewan — in late summer to help with the harvest there, before returning home to harvest their own crops which ripened later

HOUSE VISITATION (family visitation): the yearly visit by the consistory, in pairs, to each family in the congregation to determine their spiritual condition

KING'S COLLEGE (The King's College): the newest and nearest of the four postsecondary institutions favoured by members of the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, a Christian college located in Edmonton

MAIN ROAD: the road from Neerlandia hamlet southward to Highway 18.

MANGER FEVER: an ailment caused by looking into an empty manger for too long, starvation

ON TIME: a colloquialism for buying on the installment plan, as in "We bought the sewing machine on time because we could not afford to pay for it all at once."

PATENT: to obtain title to a quarter section of land that was originally acquired as a homestead

PLUG: chewing tobacco; a flat block of tobacco leaves with the stems removed and with molasses or other sweetener added

Men would bite a piece off a plug and commence to chew and spit Sometimes they would amuse themselves by trying to spit a pig or dog in the eye. A conversation would be punctuated with a "p-r-r-r-t" as the men would expel the juice generated by chewing Most of the chewing was done outside since the women frowned upon any spitting being done in the house.

PRAIRIES: the grainfields of southern Alberta, one source of income for the early settlers.

The term was used interchangeably with the Harvest.

PROVE UP: to fulfil the requirements of the Homestead Act preparatory to obtaining title to a quarter section of land.

SEPARATOR: 1. a machine used to separate grain from the stalks, also known as a threshing machine.

The first one in Neerlandia, owned by Klaas Tuininga and Siebren Tiemstra, was known as the Coffee Grinder.

2. a machine for separating cream from milk, operated by turning the handle, which in turn spun a bowl of discs causing the lighter cream to rise to the top and pour out of the narrow top spout, while the heavier skim milk poured out of the wider lower spout.

Thus task was usually reserved for children.

SHORTS: the dryish hull of the wheat; a by-product of milling, feed for animals.

STUMPING POWDER: a less-powerful form of dynamite.

SULKY PLOW: a one-bottom plow.

SUMMER COMPLAINT: a form of dysentery.

TIME AUCTION: the original "buy now, pay later" plan, a farm auction at which everything was sold on time.

No one had any money so when a family moved out the only way they could dispose of their belongings was by selling the items without immediately obtaining the cash for them. The buyers would write out and sign IOUs and give them to the seller, who had to trust the people to pay later.

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE: a Christian college in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.; one of four colleges attended by postsecondary students of the CRC.

Graduates of Trinity consider themselves superior to the graduates of Dordt.

TRIO: a list of three ministers from which one is chosen by a congregation of one of the Reformed churches to come and be their pastor.

On rare occasions the consistory dared to put up a duo, only two ministers.

VACANT CHURCH: not an empty church building; a church without a minister of its own.

Neerlandia was sometimes vacant for two or three years.

WALKING PLOW: a single-bottom plow; usually pulled by oxen or horses while the driver walked behind guiding the plow.

WORLD (the world): a Biblical term used to refer to that which is not Christian.

Some early Neerlandians had the notion that anyone and anything outside of Neerlandia was of the world.

Glossary of Abbreviations

AGT: Alberta Government Telephones
B.Ed.: Bachelor of Education
BA: Bachelor of Arts
CLAC: Christian Labour Association of Canada
CPJ: Citizens for Public Justice
CPR: Canadian Pacific Railways
CRC: Christian Reformed Church
DA: District Agriculturalist
NAIT: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Edmonton
RBC: Reformed Bible College (formerly called RBI)
RBI: Reformed Bible Institute, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.
RCAF: Royal Canadian Air Force
RCMP: Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RNA: Registered Nursing Assistant
SAIT: Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary
U of A: University of Alberta

Dutch Glossary

AFSCHEIDING: secession; refers to the breaking away of a group in 1834 from the *Hervormde Kerk* to protest against its "apostasy."

Members of the *Afscheiding* strain stress living a devout Christian life.

BEPPE: Frisian word for grandmother.

BOEREN: farmers.

BRIEFJE: note with written list of groceries and other needed items, sometimes difficult to decipher; written up by Neerlandia wives and given along with husbands when the latter went to the store.

Before 1956 *briefjes* were given to clerks in the Neerlandia store, who then brought all listed items to the customer.

BRIJ: a type of porridge usually eaten for dessert.

One such brij was *watergruwel (krentenbrij)* which was made with red fruit juice, currants, and pearl barley.

BURGEMEESTER: mayor.

CHRISTELIJKE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN: churches formed in 1892 as a result of a union between those of the *Afscheiding* and those of the *Doleantie*.

A large majority of the members of these churches were middle or lower class.

DE WACHTER: a Dutch language newspaper first published in 1868, under the auspices of the Christian Reformed Church.

De Wachter was widely read by *Gereformeerde* folk throughout Canada and the States.

DESSO TAFELKLEED: a thick rug-like table covering.

These table coverings are found in every Dutch home along with the short white lace curtains in every window, the ornaments on every available space of shelf or ledge, and the Delft blue china in the cabinet.

DIK: 1. fat, as in fat people
2. thick, as in thick soup
3. big, as in big drops.

DOLEANTIE: a movement led by Abraham Kuyper in which many left the *Hervormde Kerk* to protest its liberalism in 1892 and, with many members from the *Afscheiding*, formed the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken*. Kuyper stressed the importance of a personal Christian life, but also believed that Christians should be active in "every sphere of life."

DOMINEE: minister; title by which the minister was always addressed.

ERWTENSOEP: a hearty thick soup made with green peas; cooked with pig's feet, ham bone, or slab of bacon, depending on what was available.

FRIES: an odd language spoken by the inhabitants of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands, unintelligible to the average Dutchman.

FRIESEN: the inhabitants of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands.

Groningers consider *Friesen* to be outspoken and boorish.

GEBAKJES: rich pastries containing a variety of fillings, usually topped with whipping cream; traditionally served at celebrations.

GEREFORMEERD: reformed.

GEZELLIGHEID: a type of atmosphere in a home — a word impossible to explain to a non-Dutchman; the English word "coziness" falls short of describing the way *gezelligheid* makes one feel relaxed and 'at home' when having a *gezellig* visit.

GRAUWE ERTEN: yellow peas.

GRONINGERS: the inhabitants of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands.

Friesen consider *Groningers* to be stubborn and boorish.

GRONINGS: a throaty dialect spoken by the inhabitants of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands.

GULDEN: form of Dutch currency worth one hundred cents.

HEIT: Frisian word for father.

HOLLANDS: the national language of the Netherlands.

HUISBEZOEK: house visitation, a practice in Reformed churches whereby each family in a congregation was visited by the minister and an elder.

This visit was made yearly to gauge the spiritual welfare of the family and was subsequently reported on to the consistory. *Huisbezoek* was always held in one's front room.

KARNEMELKSEPAP: buttermilk porridge.

KERSTFEEST: 1. Christmas
2. Christmas celebration.

KLOMPEN: wooden shoes.

This footwear was worn by many Dutch immigrants when they first came to Canada.

KOEK: cake, usually loaf cake

LIJST: list.

MEM: Frisian word for mother.

MOEKE: *Gronings* for mother.

MOOIKE: *Fries* for aunt

NEDERLANDSE HERVORMDE KERK: state church of the Netherlands which was formed in the late sixteenth century as a result of the Protestant Reformation.

Generally, members of the higher classes attended the *Hervormde Kerk*.

OLIEBOLLEN: deep-fried dumplings made with raisins and currants, eaten dipped in powdered sugar; traditionally made on New Year's Eve and served on New Year's Day.

OMA: grandmother.

OMKE: *Fries* for uncle.

OOM: uncle.

OPA: grandfather

OPOE: grandmother.

PAKE: Frisian word for grandfather

PAP: porridge, sometimes refers to pudding

In earlier days, *pap* was the only food eaten for breakfast, with or without sugar, depending on the circumstances of the family

PET: cap.

PRUIMPJE: the mixture resulting after tobacco has been chewed, every so often the juices have to be spit out

Chewing *pruimpjes* was indulged in by many Neerlandia old-timers, usually the men

PSALMBOEKEN: songbooks originally containing only Psalms — later *gezangen* (hymns) were added.

A general rule of thumb was that the more *gezangen* that could be found in its *Psalmboek*, the more 'liberal' the church.

PSALMEN: Psalms.

SCHANDALIG: scandalous, shameful.

SIGAREN: cigars.

STADHUIS: townhall

Every marriage in the Netherlands must be solemnized in the *Stadhuis*. The couple may, following that, have a service in church.

STATEN BIJBEL: a version of the Bible published in the Netherlands in 1637; used in the Netherlands for many years before more recent translations became available

Often a *Staten Bijbel* was a big, heavy book passed from generation to generation. Births and deaths of all family members were carefully recorded in the front of the *Staten Bijbel*

STOEP: 1. steps, as in "There were four steps up to the door." 2. a porch.

STUIVER: form of Dutch currency worth one cent

TABAK: tobacco.

TANTE: aunt.

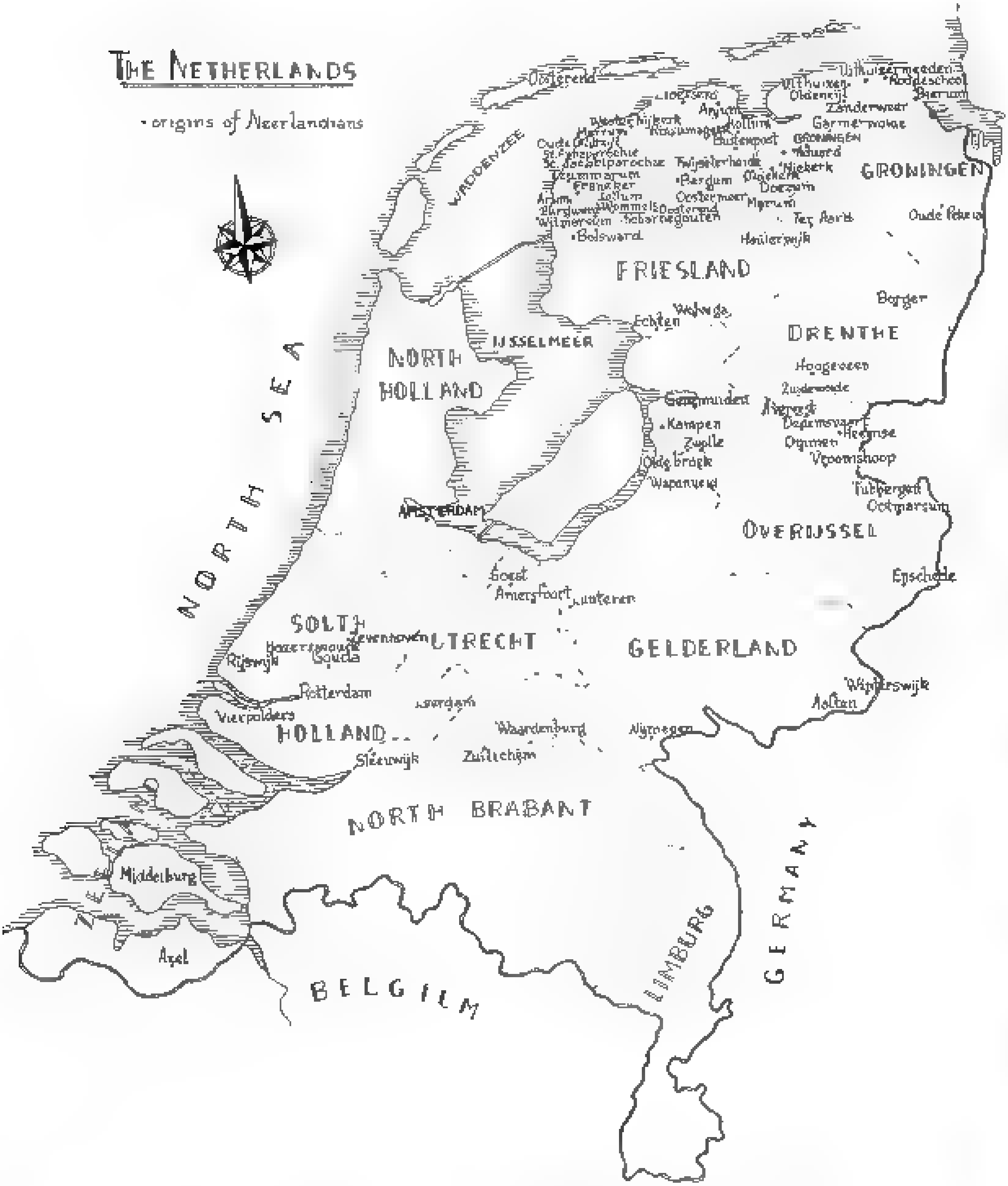
VOORZANGER: the leader of the singing in the congregation.

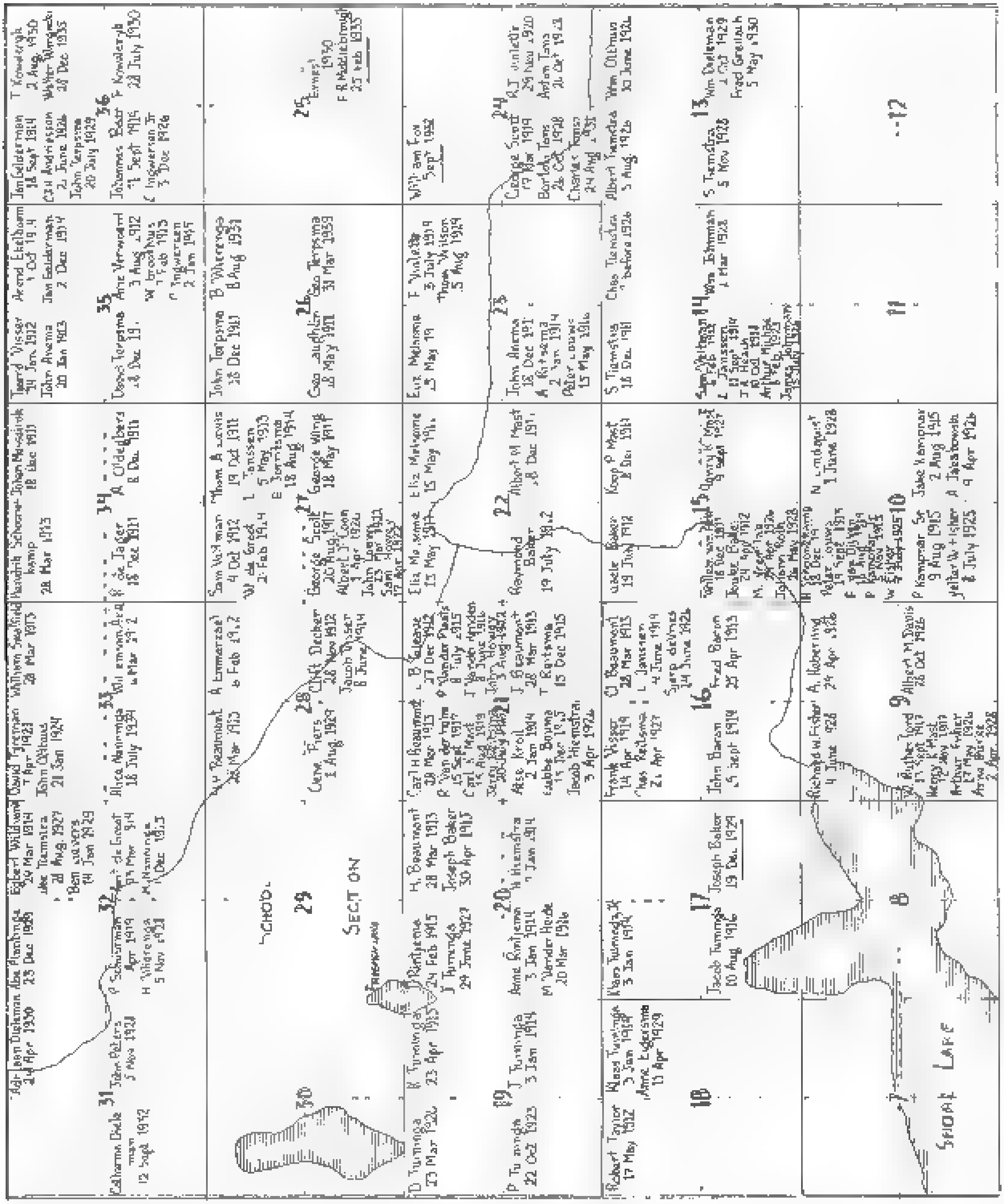
The *voorzanger* would sound the note on which everyone was to begin singing.

VROUW: 1. wife
2. woman

WIJN: wine

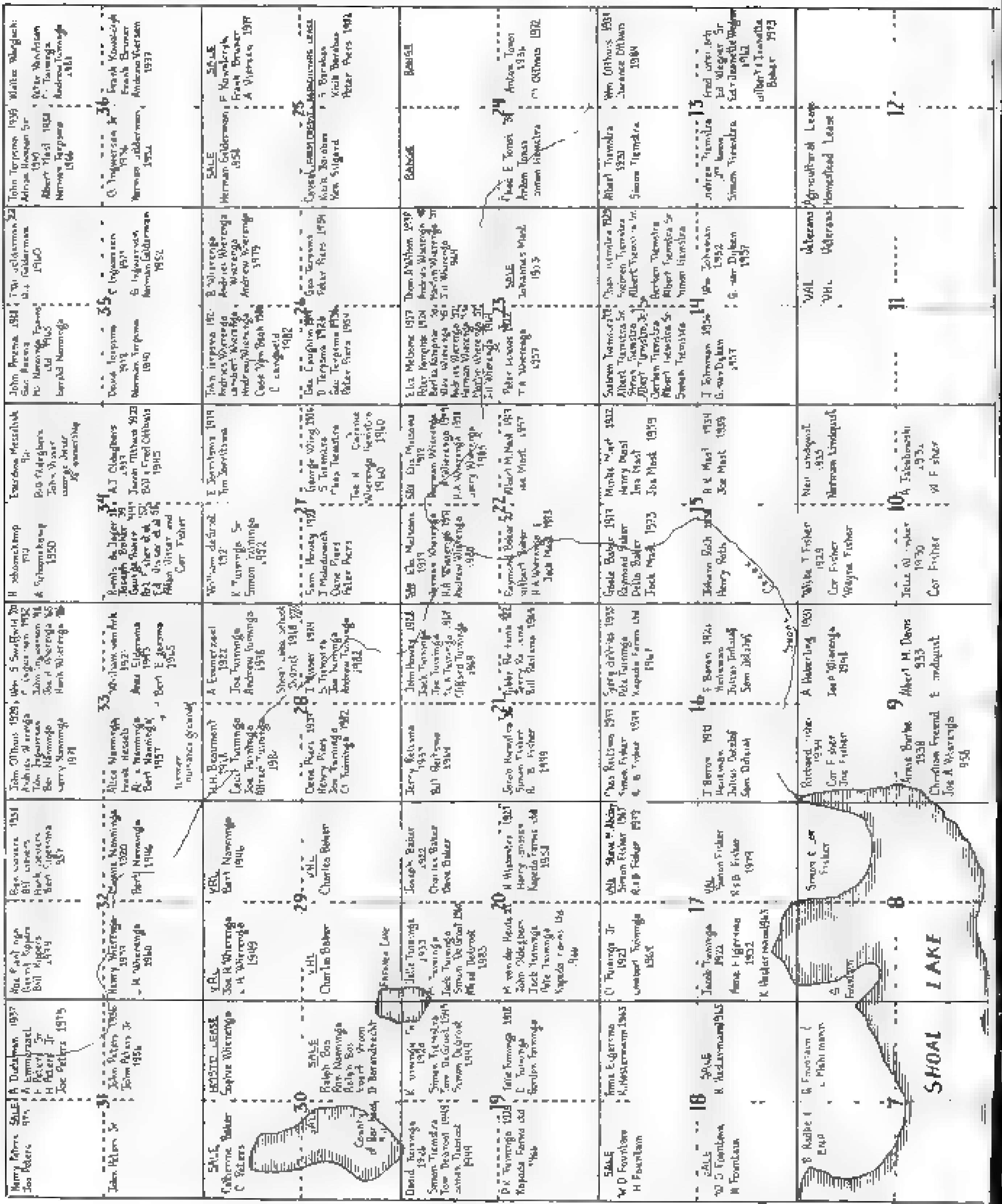
WILHELMUS VAN NASSAUWE: Dutch national anthem, always sung heartily by Dutch immigrants.


THE NETHERLANDS
- origins of Neerlandians
NORTH SEA
WADDENZEE
Oosterend
Uithuizermeeden
Roodeschool
Uithuizen
Oldenzijl
Bierum
Zandeweer
Garmerwolde
GRONINGEN
Adwerd
Niekerk
Anjum
Hollum
Buitenpost
Oude Bildtzijl
St. Jacobiparochie
Dongjum
Franeker
Arum
Wommels
Oosterend
Wilmerdum
Bolsward
Twijzelerheide
Bergum
Oostermeer
Doezum
Marum
Ter Aard
Oude Pekela
FRIESLAND
Borger
Echten
DRENTHE
Hoogeveen
Zuidwolde
Genemuiden
Kampen
Zwolle
Oldebroek
Wapenveld
Dedemsvaart
Heemse
Ommen
Vroomshoop
Tubbergen
Ootmarsum
OVERIJSSEL
Enschede
NORTH HOLLAND
IJSSELMEER
AMSTERDAM
Soest
Amersfoort
Lunteren
SOUTH
Zevenhoven
Hazerswoude
Gouda
Rijswijk
UTRECHT
GELDERLAND
Rotterdam
Leerdam
Vierpolders
HOLLAND
Waardenburg
Nijmegen
Sleeuwijk
Zuilichem
Winterswijk
Aalten
NORTH BRABANT
Middelburg
ZEELAND
Axel
BELGIUM
LIMBURG
GERMANY

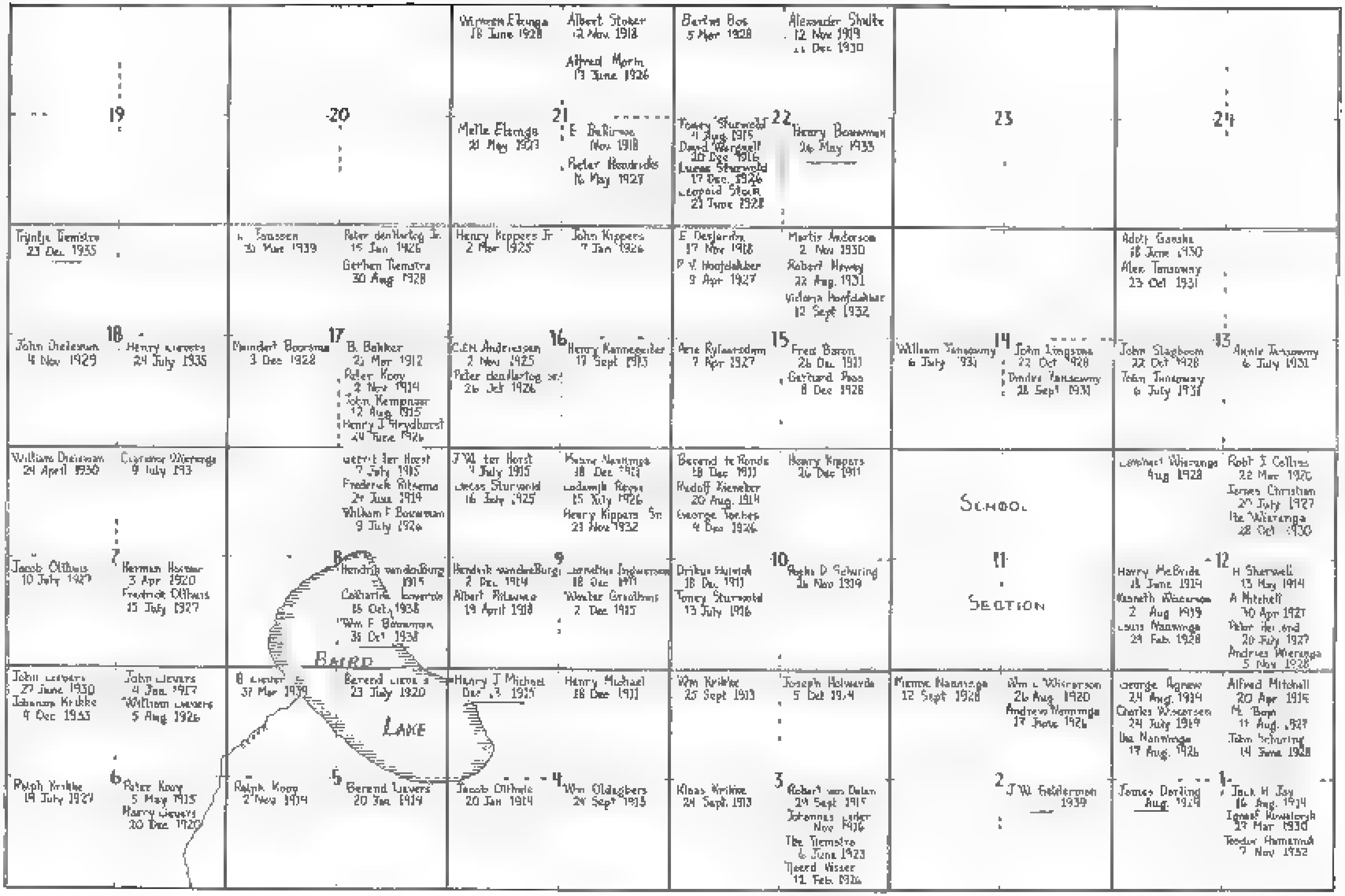


Map of Township 61 showing all those who filed [illegible] the homesteads until the land was patented. Information from Homestead Records.

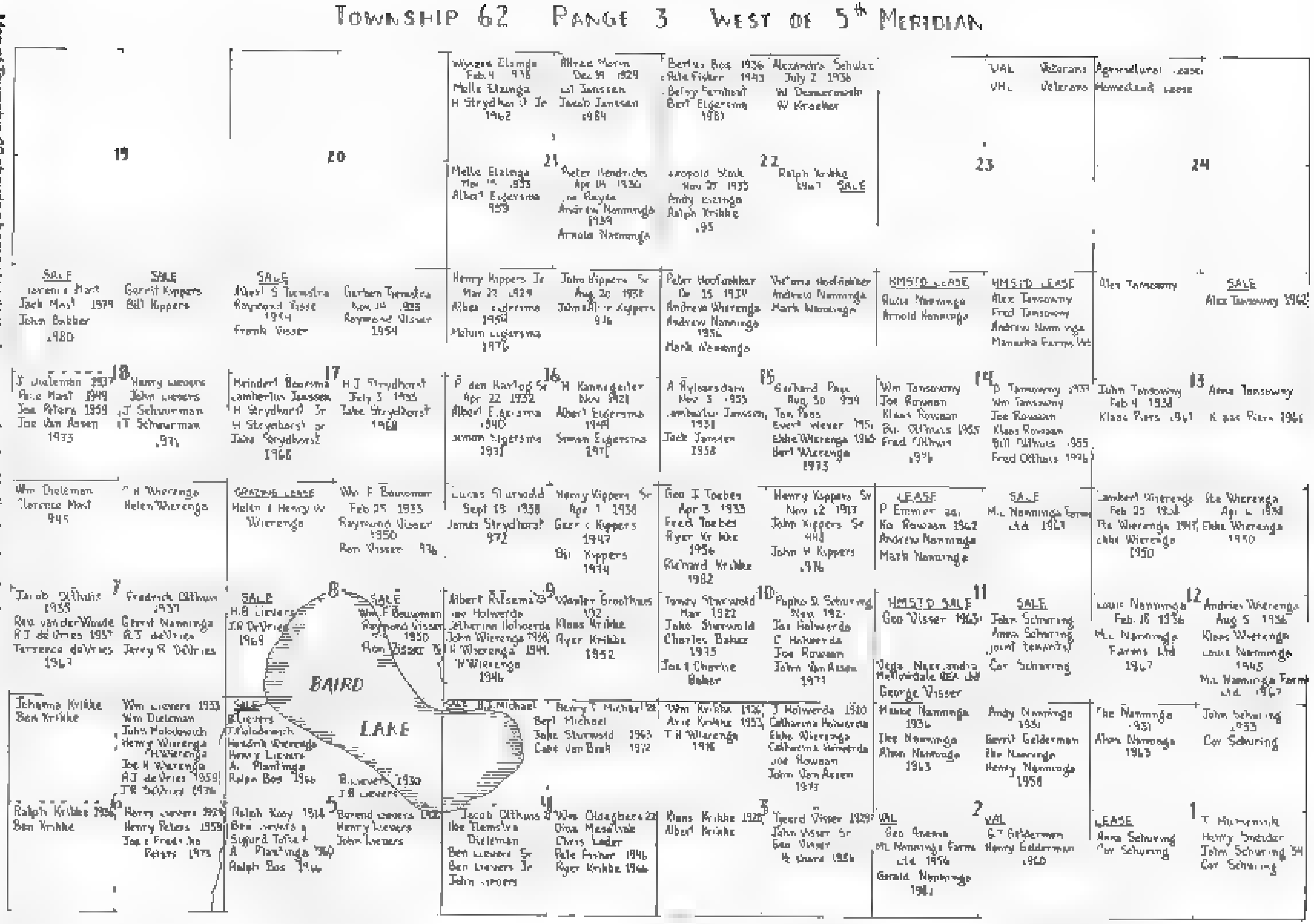
TOWNSHIP 61 RANGE 3 WEST OF 5th MERIDIAN



Map of Township 61 showing homesteaders who received patent to the land and subsequent owners. Information from homestead records and present or previous owners. In many cases the year of purchase is approximate.



Map of Township 62 showing all those who filed on the homesteads until the land was patented. Information from Homestead Records.



Map of Township 62 showing homesteaders who received patent to the land and subsequent owners. Information from homestead records and present or previous owners. In many cases the year of purchase is approximate

World War II Veterans

Charlie Baker	Reserve Pacific Volunteers, 1941 1944
Henry Bouwman	
Pete Emmerzael	First Canadian Corps Troops Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, 1941 1946; overseas 1942-1945
Simon Fisher	First Canadian Division, Royal Edmonton Regiment, served overseas.
Gerrit Gelderman	Antiaircraft Division; Artillery Division. 1942-1945
Cor Hiemstra	Fifth Armoured Division; 1942-1946
Bill Johnman	1941-1945; active duty in Africa and Italy
Jim Johnman	Royal Edmonton Regiment; corporal in Infantry; 1941-1944.
Pete Johnman	Ordnance Corps, instructor; 1940-1945
Bill B. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment Jeep driver, 1941-1945
Bill H. Lievers	Royal Edmonton Regiment sniper, 1941 1943.
Harry Lievers	Royal Canadian Artillery, gunner; 1941-1942,
Jim Lievers	Instructor
Clarence Mast	Seventh Reconnaissance Armoured Corps, 17th Duke of Yorks; 1941 1946, overseas 1944-1946.
Bert Nanninga	Vancouver Regiment, Irish Fuceleirs; 1942-1946, active duty in Jamaica, one year
John Peters	Engineers, served one year.
Simon Tuininga	Eighth Division, Fourteenth Infantry Brigade, King's Own Rifles; Air Force Flight 53, 1942-1946.
Ed Visser	U.S. Army, 44th American Engineers; 1941-1945: overseas.
Andrew L. Wierenga	Artillery, gunner, Infantry, sharpshooter; 1942-1946
Joe A. Wierenga	Heavy Artillery, Sydney. Nova Scotia, 1942-1945
Joe H. Wierenga	Light Antiaircraft: Artillery Esquimalt, B.C., 1942-1945.

Teachers — Neerlandia Public School

Henry van den Burg	1915
Helen Kooy	1916-1918
J. A. Heath	October 16-November 13, 1918
L. Dineen	1919-?
Simon Keyzer	May 1919-August 1921
Jenny Tuininga — teacher helper	September 1919-1921?
R. Walton	May 1921-September 1921
Mr. Fisher	1922-23
William van Ark	1922-25
L. Thelma Hare (Levy)	May-November 1923, August 1928-December 1929
J. R. Levy	1925
Miss Spaulding	1925-26
John Hammond	March 1-April 6, 1926
J. R. Levy	June-November 1926
Jack Tracy	1927-28
Jean Carlyle	1927-28
J. R. Levy	1929-30
F. R. McKitrick	1930
Jean Rae	1930-31
John Dickson	December 1930-June 1931
Alice Brown	1931-32
Aubrey C. Ashley	1931-45
M. E. A. Smith	1932-33
Grace Boer	1933-37
Reta Speers	1937-39
Olive Young	1939-42
Clara (Visser) Schoonekamp	1942-46; 1947-48, September 22, 1952-67
W. Alberta Robb	1944-46
Wasel Doschiwnek	1945-46
John Van Riper	1946-48
Sophie Gordey	1946-47
Tine Abday	1947-80
David Smith	April-June 1948
A. Irene Fowler	1948-57
Fern Borden (supervisor)	September 1-October 2, 1948
Lewis Vandermeulen	October 4, 1948-September 22, 1952
Wilma Visser (supervisor)	1948-April 14, 1949
Ruth (Schoenrock) Janssen	April 23, 1949-1951, 1952-54, 1955-
Janet Sturwold	1951-52
Magdalena Baker	1952-55
Margaret Bouwman	1952-54
Eleanor Bauer	1954-55
Shirley Olthuis	1954-55
Elsie (Olthuis) Navis	1955-
Mary Tansowny	1955-57
Joyce van Dijken (supervisor)	1956-part
James Tuininga	1957-59
Vladimir Bayduza	1958-62
Edith Sader	May 6, 1959-60
Reta Tuininga	1959-60
John Piers	1960-
Anne Tuininga	1962-64
Martha Kalmbach	September 30, 1963 (23 days)
Anna Churchill	May 3-June 30, 1964, 1967-1975
James Strydhorst	1964-65
Tena De Haan	1965-66
Sander De Haan	1965-67
John Bouma	1966-69
Ransford E. Dodd	1968-70
Joan Tansowny	1968-69
Helene Zolkewski	1969-70
Carol Bomer	1970-76
Norman Bomer	1970-76
Beverly Nydam	1970-72
Elaine Cuts	1972-73
Hazel Nanninga	1973-74
Reta Strydhorst	1973-March 29, 1974
Robert Wiley	1976-77
Kenneth Wold	1976-77
Evert Vroon	1976-79
Joy Siebring-Wierenga	1977-May 1980
Liz Esselink	1977-1981
Margaret Dykstra	1979-80
Frank Rayment	1979-
Kathi Hellinga	May 1980-March 1984
Jim Bosma	1980-
Joanne Vanden Brink	1981-83
Ron Guetter	1983-
Brenda Schulz	1983-
Alvina Dost	March 1984-

Teachers — Covenant Canadian Reformed School

Jacob J. Hoekstra	1977-1984
Antina Janssen	September-December 1977
Jeanette Kingma	January-June 1978
Cor H. Aardappel	1978-1981
Jan Jongsma	January 1979-1981
Helen Dorgeloos	1979-1981
Peter Koopman	1981-1983
Heres Snijder	1981-
Ailco R. Stel	1981-1984
Jantina J. T. Vander [redacted]	September-December 10, 1983
Rene Beijes	February-June 1984

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*Wel Bedankt**

A Furrow Laid Bare is the culmination of many hours of hard work by many people. Without the support of the community, preparing and publishing the book would have been an impossible task. We thank all the people who gave their support, encouragement, and help. We offer special thanks to the old timers who not only patiently and cheerfully answered the many questions of writers and editors as we sought information on Neerlandia's history, but also told us many humourous anecdotes.

In addition to the board of the Neerlandia Historical Society, who worked on all aspects of the book, many community members helped in the preparation of A Furrow Laid Bare.

For researching and/or writing articles we thank Shelley Bos, Dick De Vries, Lisa Hamoen, Gerald Nanninga, Louis Nanninga, Lena Nanninga, Clarence Olthuis, Rose Olthuis, Rose Olthuis, Sandra Olthuis, William Olthuis, John Piers, Marion Rayment, Andrew Strydhorst, Henry Strydhorst, Jake Strydhorst, James Strydhorst, Sya Strydhorst, Clarence Tiemstra, Dorothy Tiemstra, Phyllis Tiemstra, Simon Tiemstra, Clifford Tuininga, David Tuininga, Lambert Tuininga, Arend Veenstra, Johanna Visser, Wayne Visser, Grace Wierenga, and Janice L. Wierenga. We wish to make special mention of the contribution of two senior citizens, Carrie Olthuis, who wrote the letters to Mother, and Johanna Visser, who wrote the diary. These two writings found in the Daily Life chapter are fiction based on actual events in pioneer life.

For editorial assistance we thank Jeannette De Gier, Reta Strydhorst, and Angela Tuininga.

We thank Jo Ann Nanninga for co-ordinating the artists' efforts. For art work we are indebted to Wendy Jarmoutse, Elizabeth Bozak, Jenny de Vries, Ann Dotka, Eva Elgersma, Hilda Fisher, Karen Gelderman, Patricia Nanninga, Phyllis Nanninga, Jo Ann Nanninga, Joanne Nanninga, Henry Tham, Elaine Visser, Rita Visser, Chris Vriend, and Janice L. Wierenga.

For work on maps, charts, and diagrams we thank Carolyne Aarsen, Betty Gelderman, Teri Wierenga, and Jenny de Vries, who drew most of the maps. Thank *you to Alice De Gier, Mabel Elgersma, Johanna Visser, Neil Vriend and Winny Vriend for translating letters, articles and minutes from the Dutch language.*

Thank you to the typists: Carolyne Aarsen, Connie De Gier, Alvina Dost, Sylvia Nanninga, Fred Olthuis, Sandra Olthuis, Crystal Piers, Kim Pikkert, Lucille Terpsma, Lori Tiemstra, Marjorie Tuininga, Barb van Dyken, Anita Veldhuisen, Beatrice Visser, Scott Visser and Debbie Wierenga. Special thanks to Karen Mast and Alida Tuininga, who did the bulk of the typing.

Thank you to the many proof readers: Corinne Aarsen, Jeannette Bosma, Jeannette De Gier, Betty Gelderman, Pat Gelderman, Ruth Janssen, Arnold Nanninga, Dora Nanninga, Gerald Nanninga, Larry Nanninga, Liz Nanninga, Trixie Nanninga, Sandra Olthuis, Grace Piers, Lucille Piers, Reta Strydhorst, Sya Strydhorst, Albert C. Tiemstra, Angela Tuininga, Clifford Tuininga, Gordon Tuininga, Marjorie Tuininga, Case Van Beek, Irene Van Beek, Shirley Van Beek, Diane Wierenga, Fern Wierenga, and Janice L. Wierenga.

We thank Ann Tiemstra for co-ordinating the volunteers who helped to sort and label photographs. Thank you to the volunteers also: Carolyne Aarsen, Tjamke Elgersma, Betty Gelderman, Karen Kellogg, Rose Nanninga, Sylvia Nanninga, Tena Nanninga, Trixie Nanninga, Clarence Olthuis, Sandra Olthuis, Marion Rayment, Donna Strydhorst, Annie Sturwold, Angela Tuininga, Esther Tuininga, Marjorie Tuininga, Anita Veldhuisen, Florence Visser, Joanne Visser, Fern Wierenga, Helen Wierenga, Janice L. Wierenga, Rulie Wierenga, and Sophie Wierenga.

If we have inadvertently omitted anyone who helped, we apologize.

Finally we thank our spouses who not only helped us with the work but who also put up with many inconveniences while we were occupied with the tasks involved in writing and publishing A Furrow Laid Bare.

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Jim Bosma	*Norman Terpsma*
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*Thank you very much

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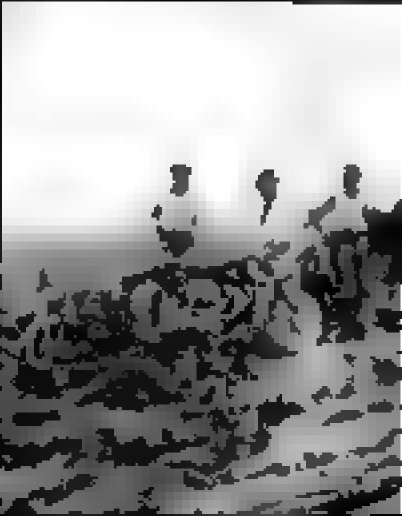

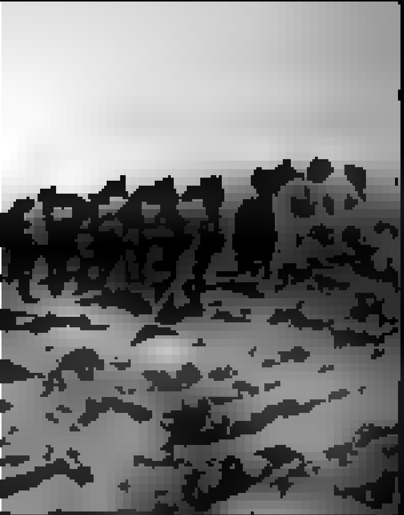

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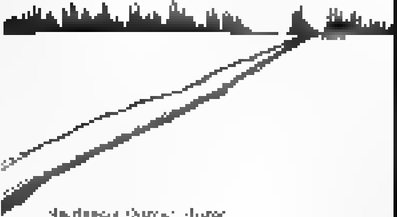

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Part One

Historical Frame Work

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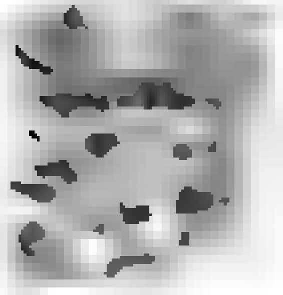

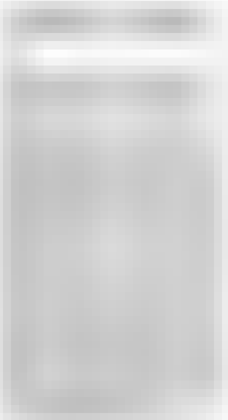

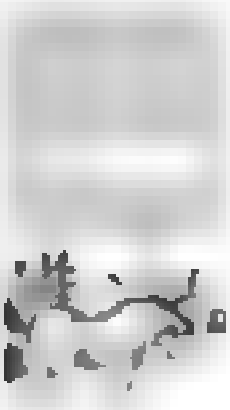

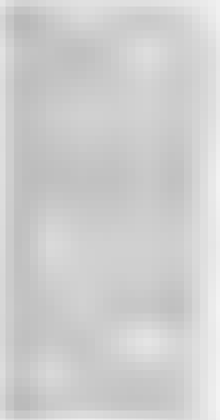

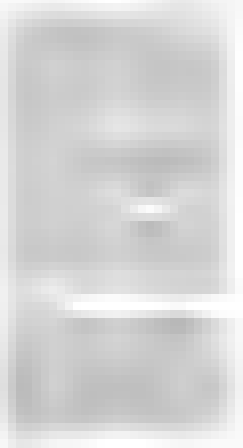

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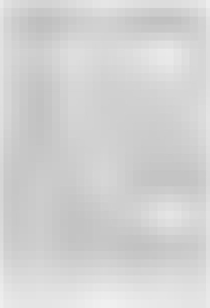

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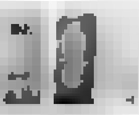

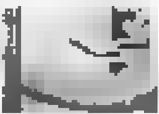

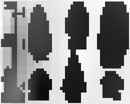

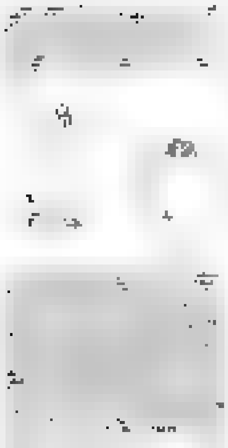

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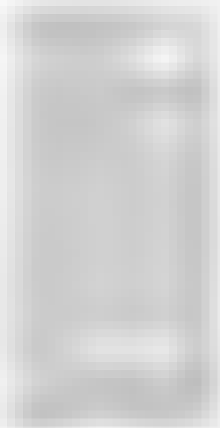

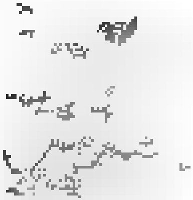

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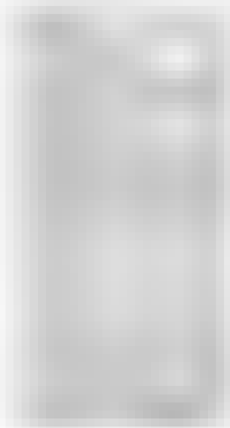

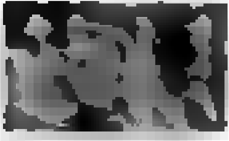

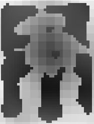

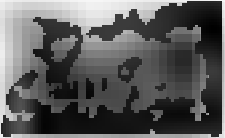

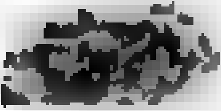

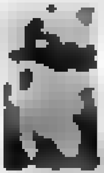

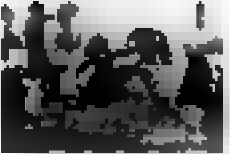

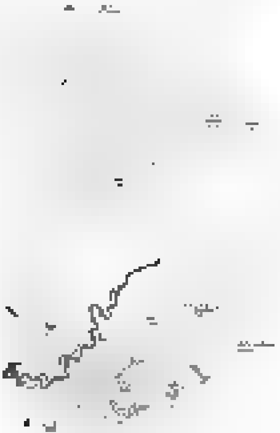

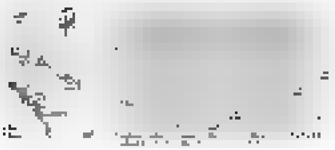

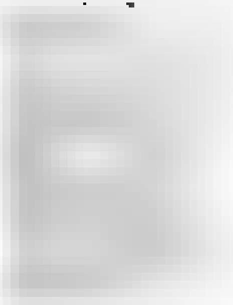

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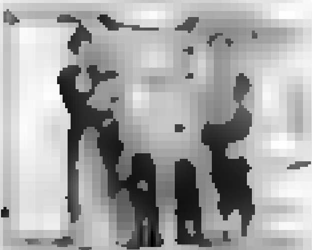

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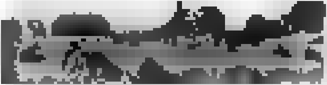

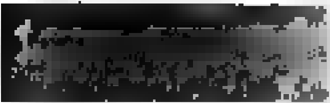

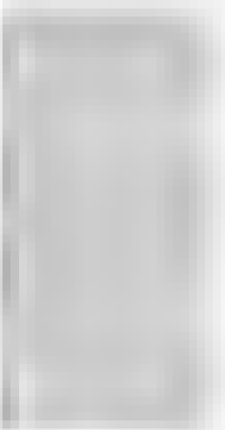

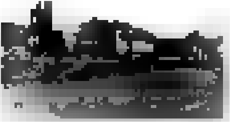

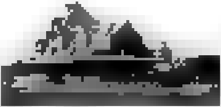

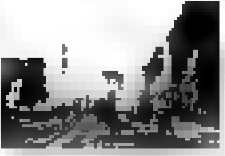

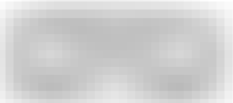

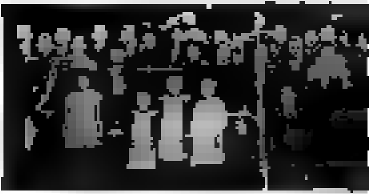

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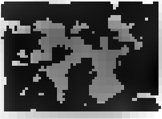

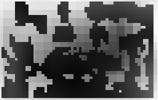

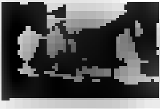

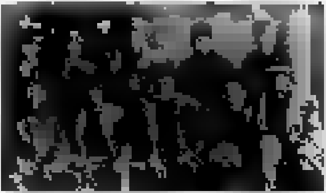

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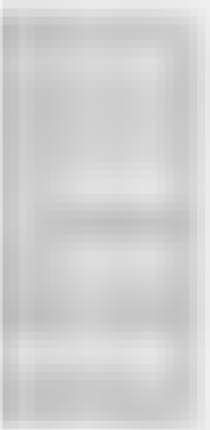

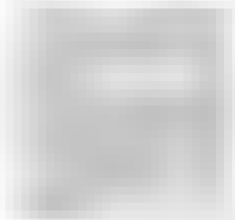

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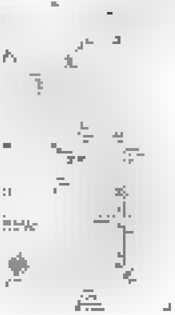

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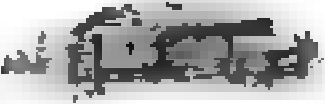

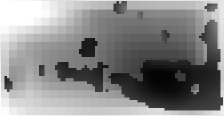

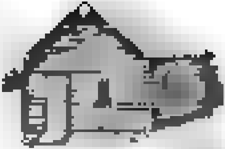

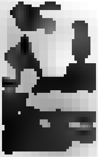

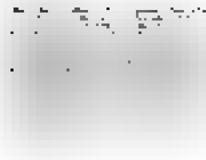

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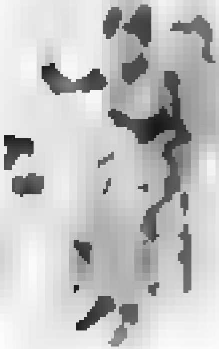

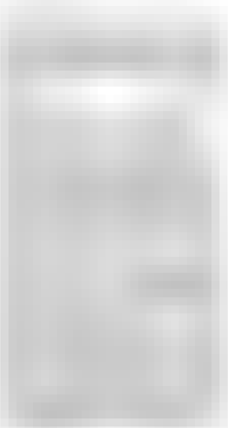

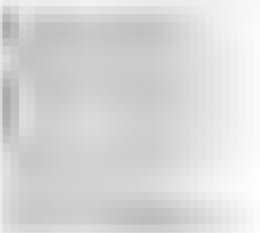

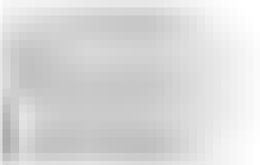

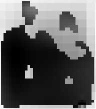

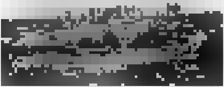

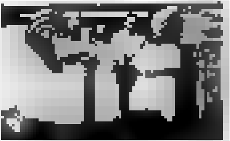

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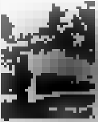

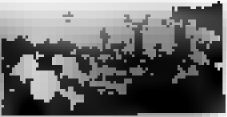

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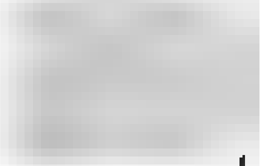
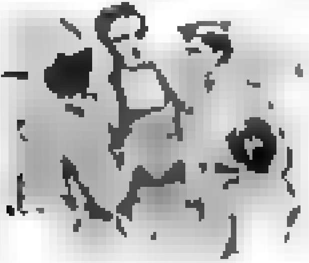
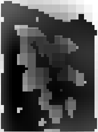
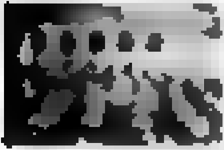
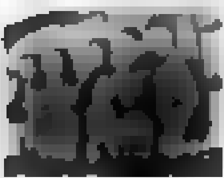


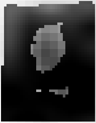
The War Years

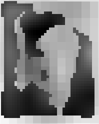


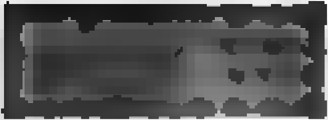


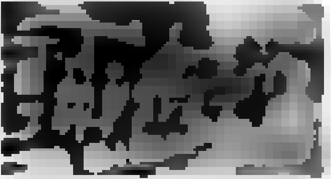


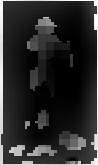


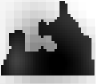


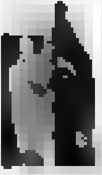


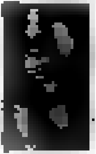


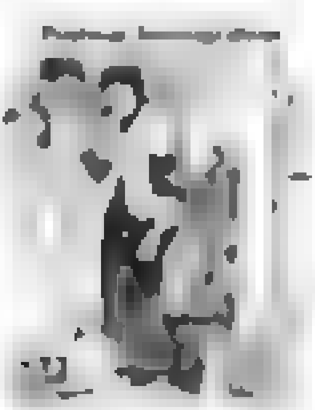


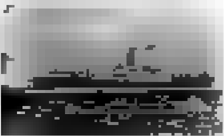


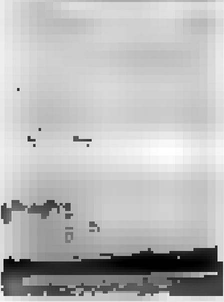


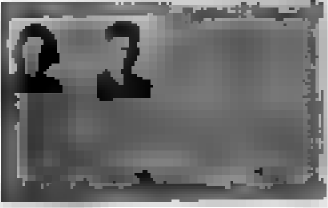








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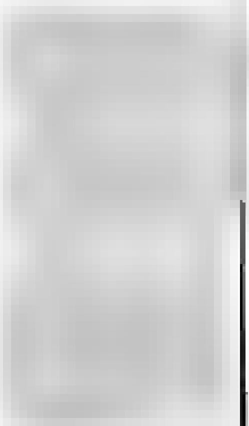
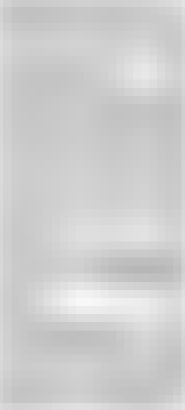
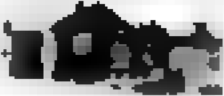
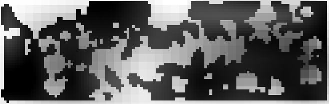
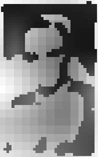






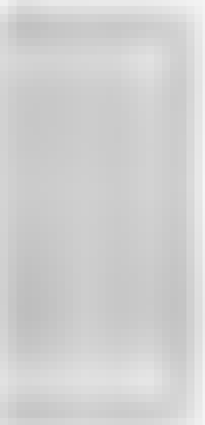


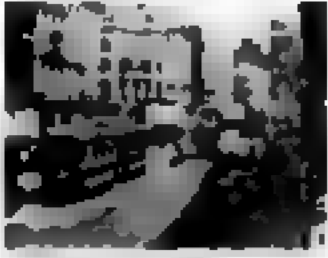


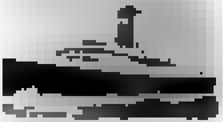
Part Two

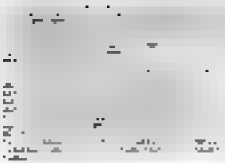
The Generations

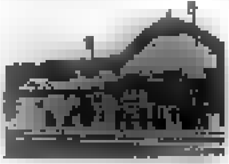
1911–1920

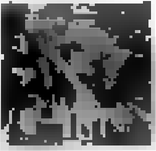


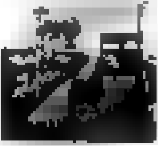


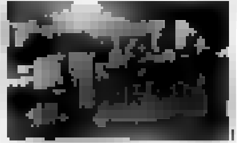


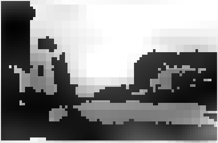


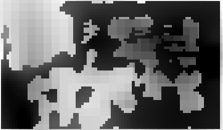


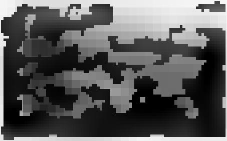


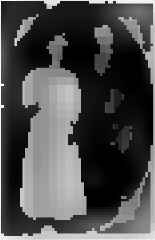


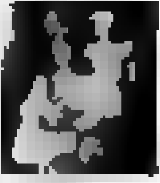


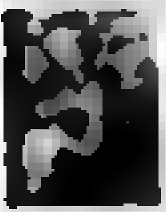


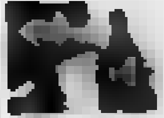


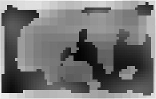


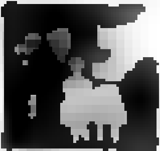


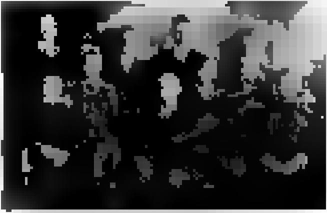


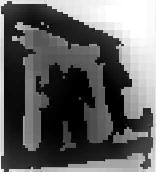


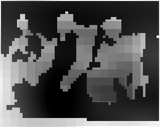


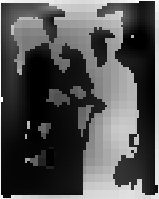


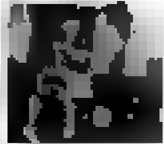


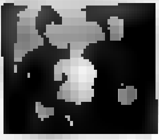


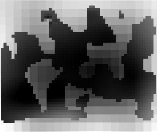


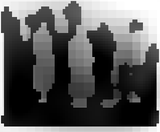


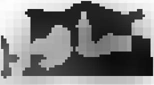


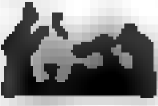


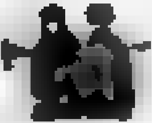


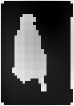


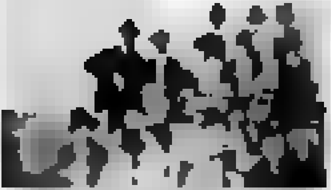


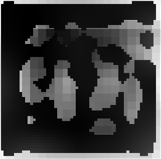


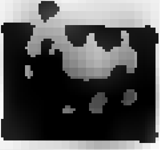


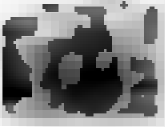


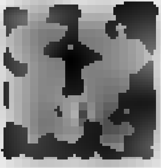


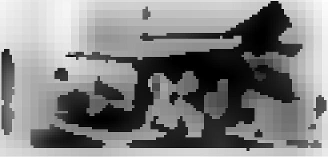


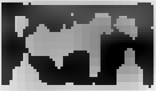


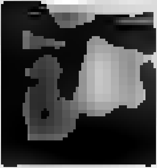


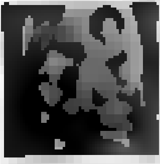


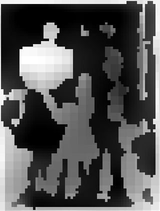


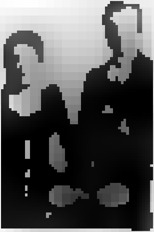


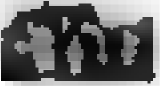


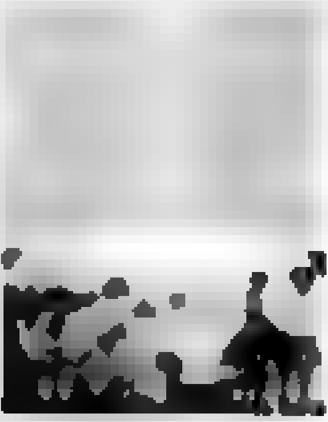


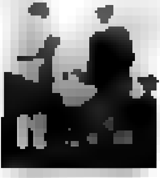


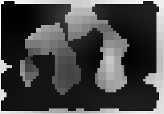


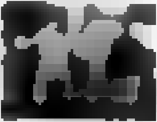


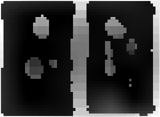


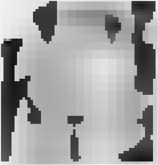


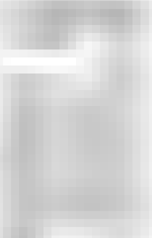


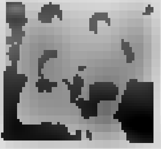


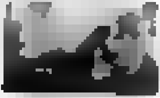


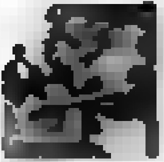


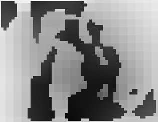


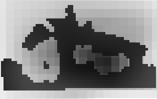


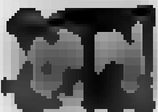


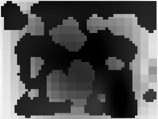


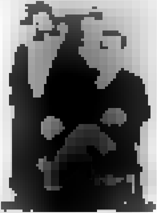


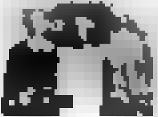


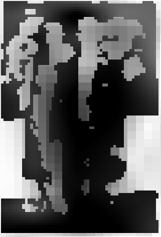


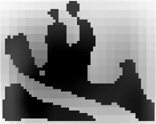


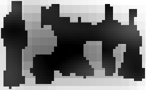


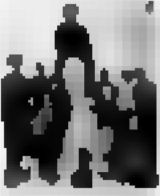


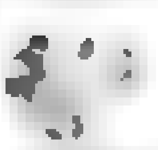


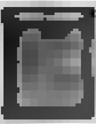


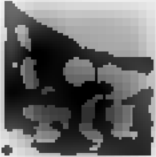


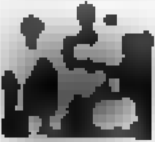


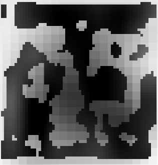


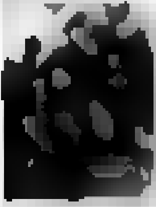


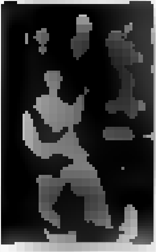


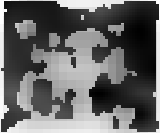


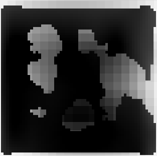












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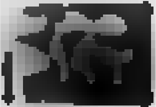

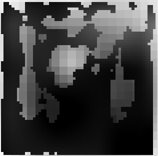

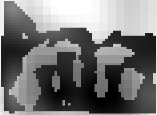

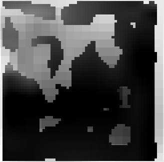

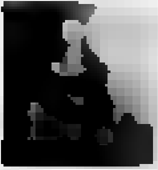

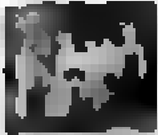

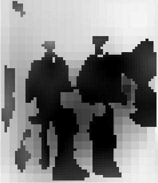

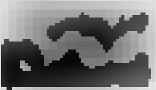

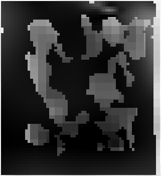

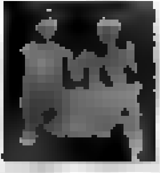

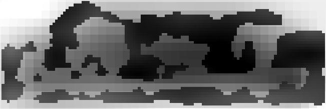

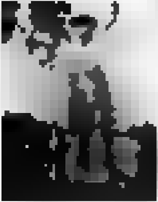

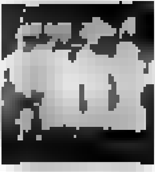

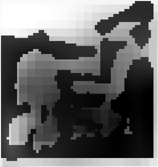

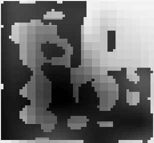

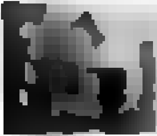

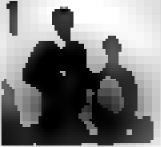

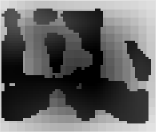

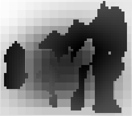

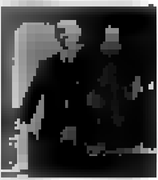

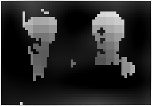

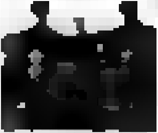

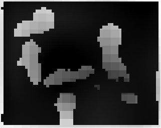

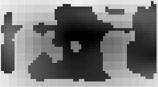

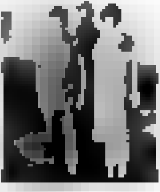

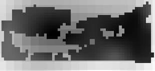

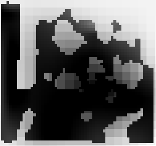

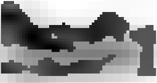

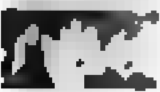

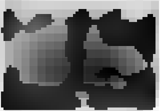

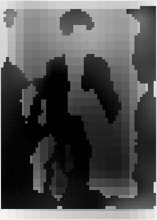

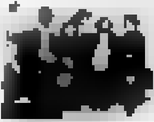

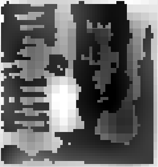

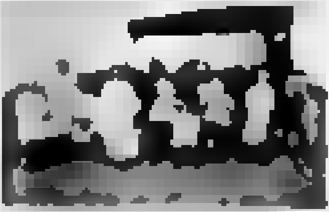

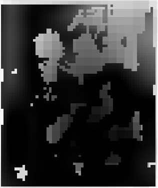

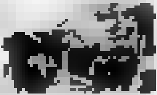

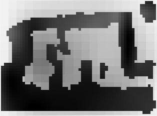

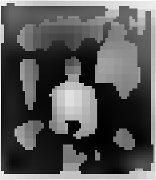

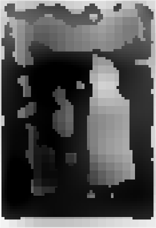

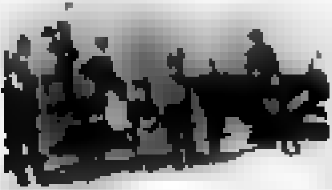

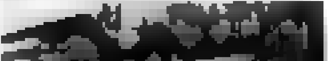

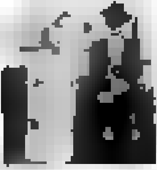

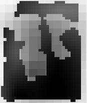

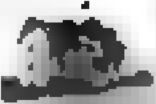

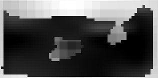

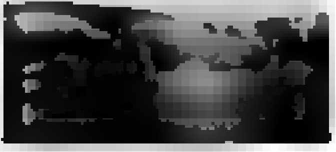

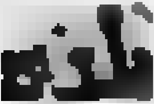

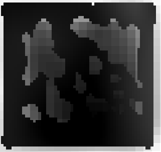

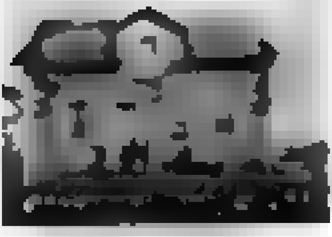

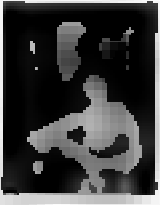

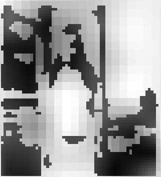

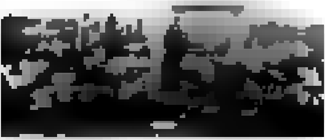

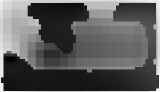

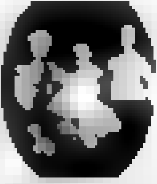

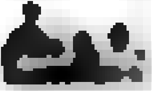

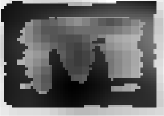

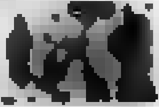

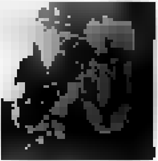

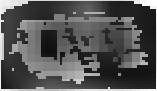

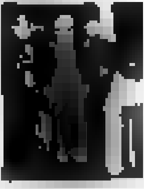

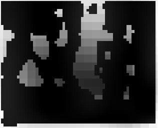

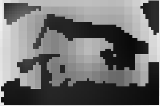

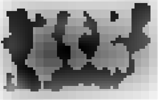

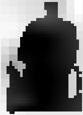

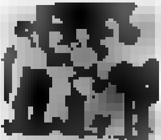

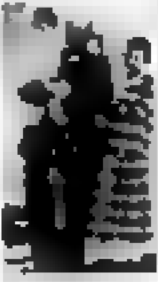

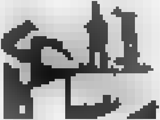

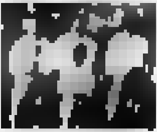

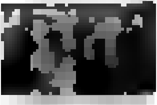

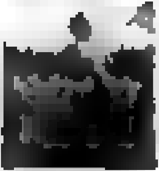

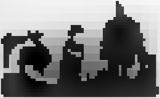

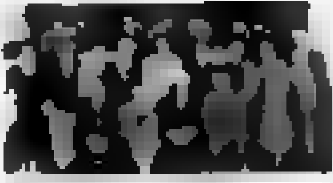

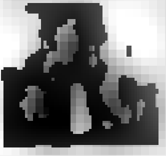

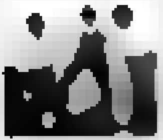

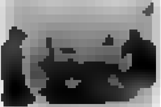

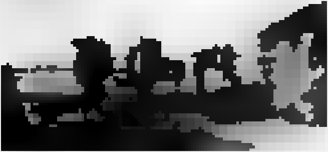

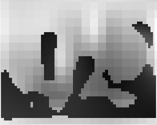

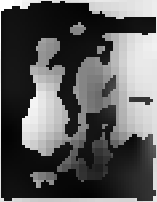

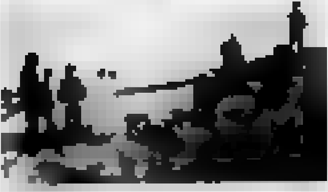

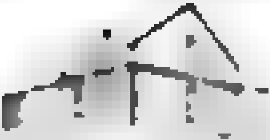

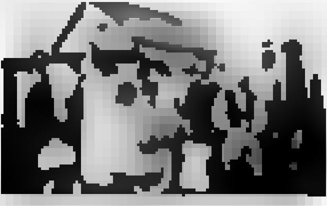

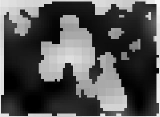

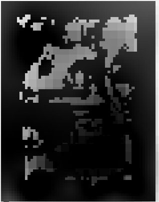

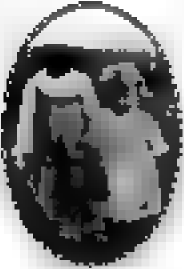

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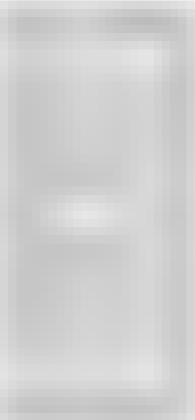

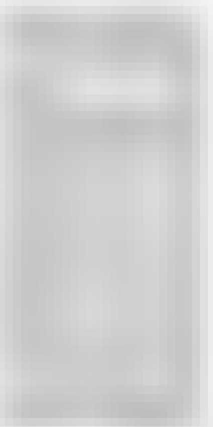

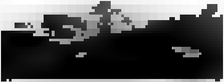

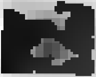

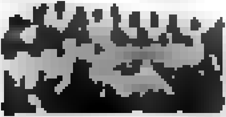

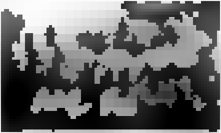

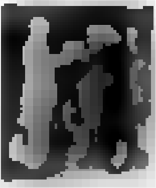

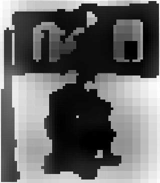

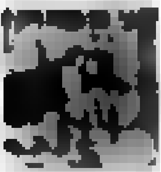

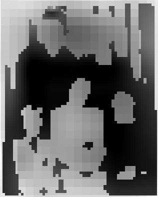

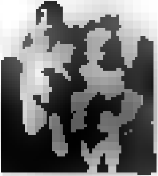

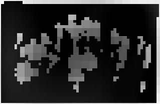

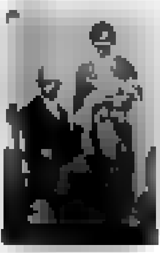

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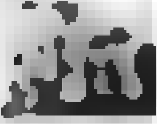

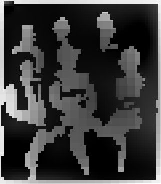

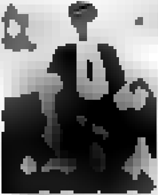

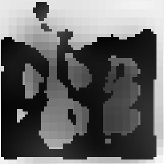

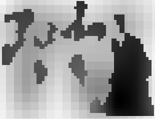

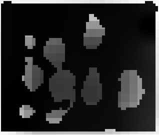

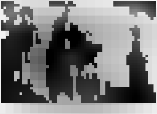

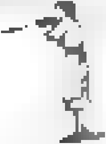

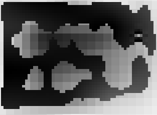

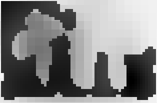

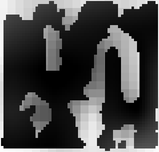

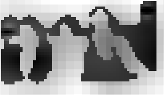

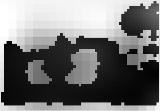

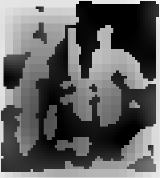

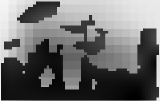

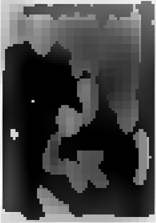

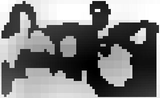

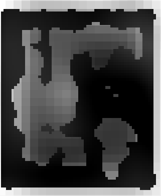

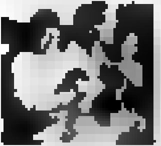

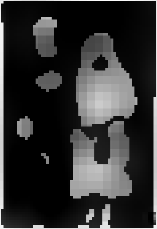

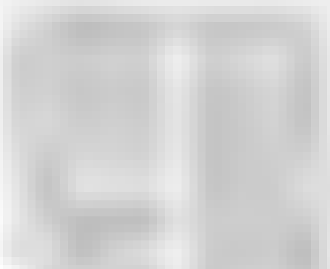

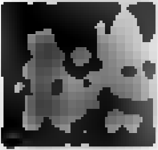

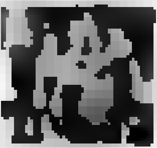

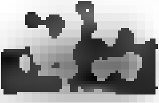

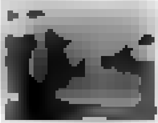

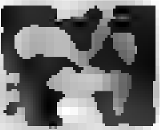

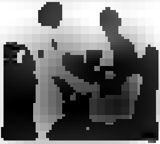

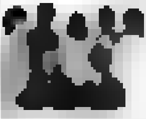

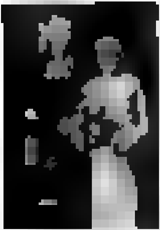

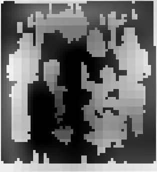

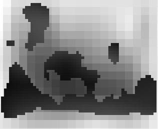

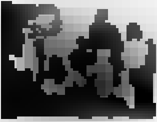

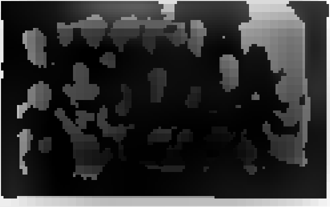

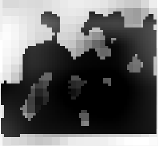

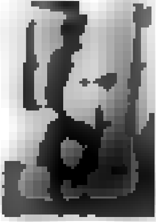

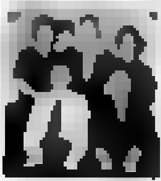

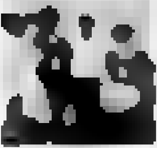

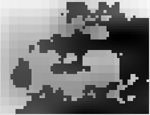

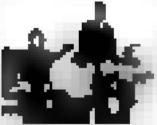

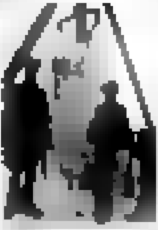

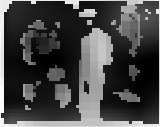

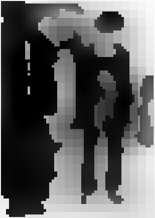

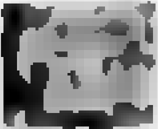

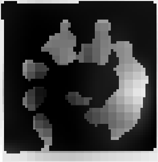

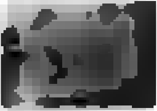

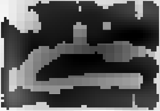

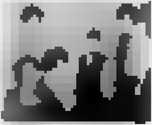

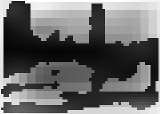

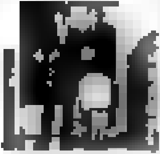

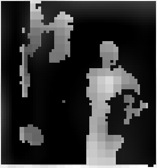

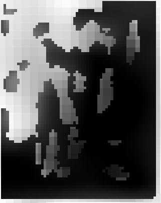

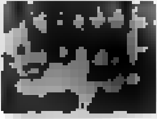

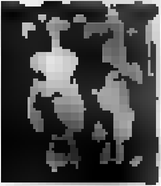

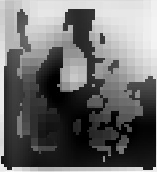

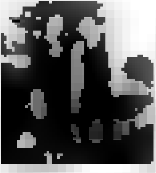

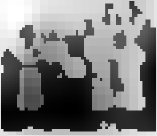

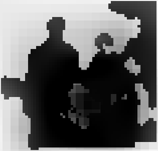

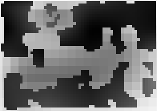

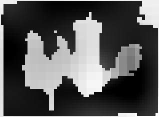

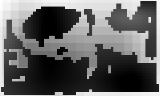

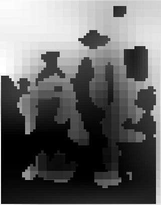

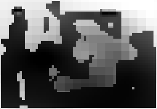

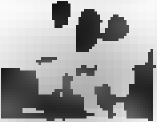

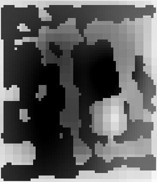

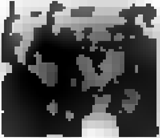

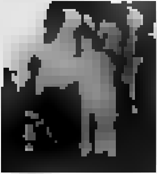

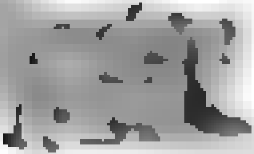

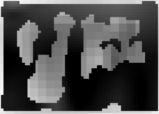

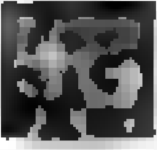

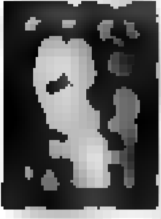

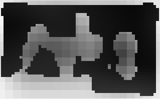

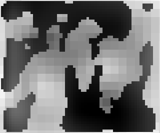

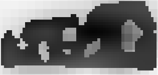

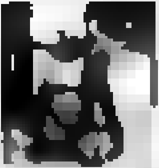

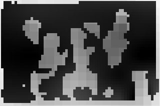

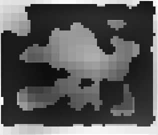

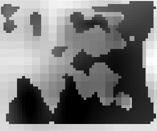

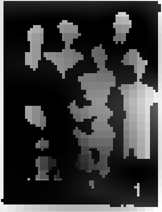
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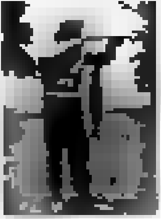

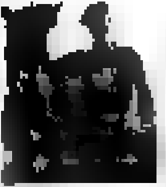

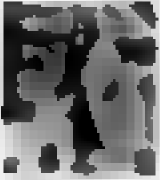

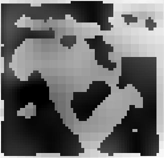

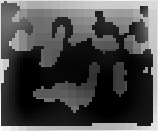

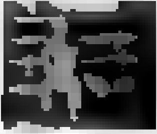

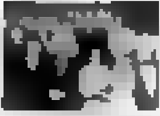

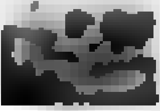

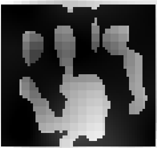

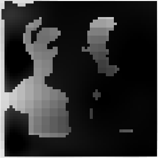

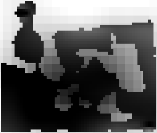

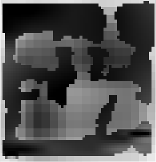

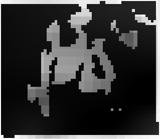

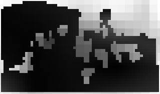

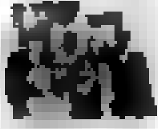

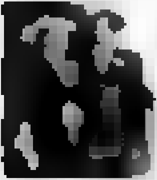

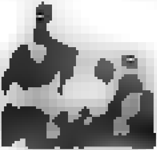

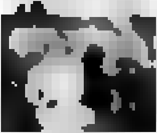

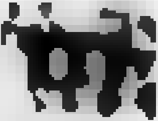

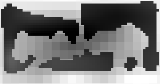

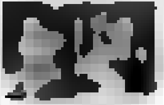

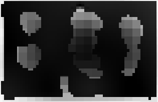

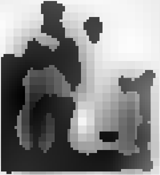

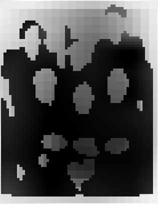

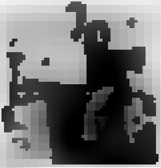

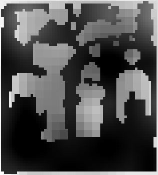

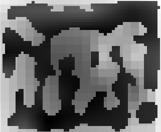

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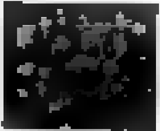

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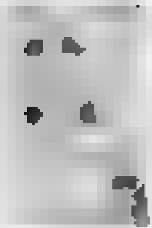

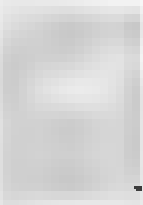

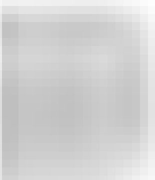

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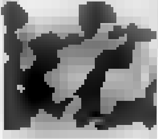

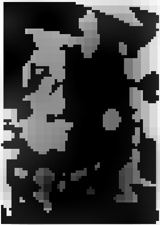

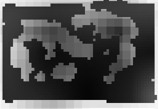

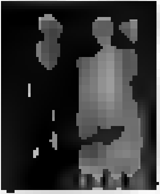

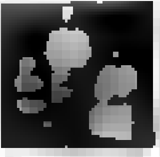

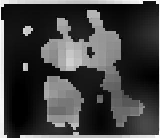

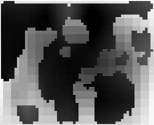

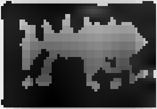

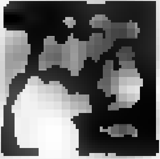

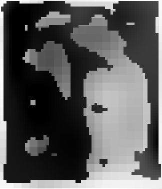

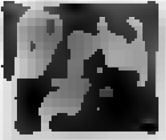

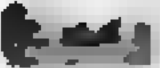

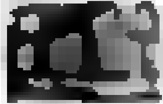

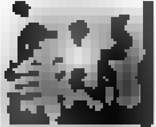

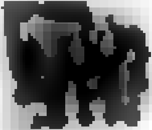

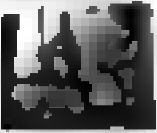

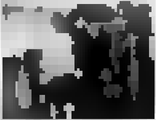

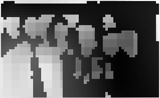

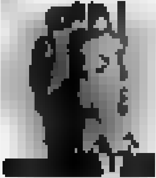

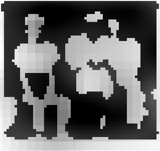

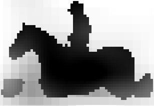

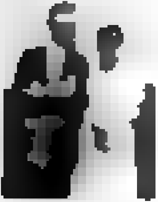

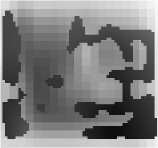

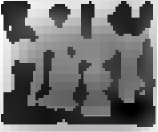

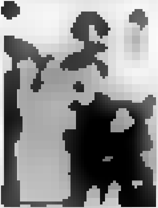

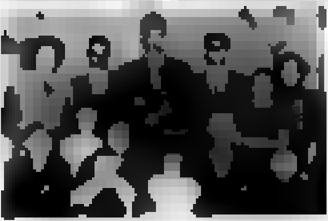

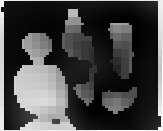

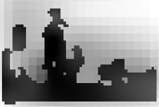

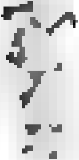

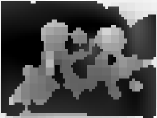

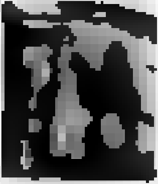

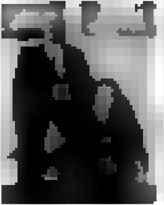

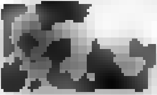

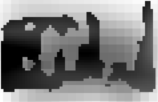

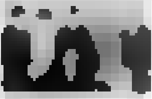

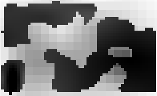

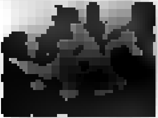

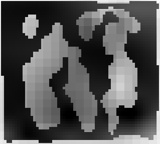

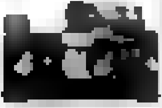

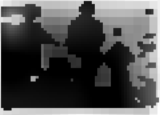

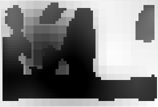

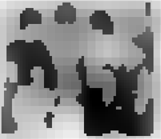

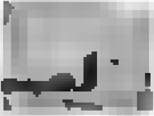

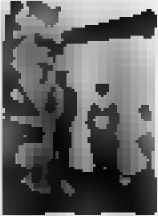

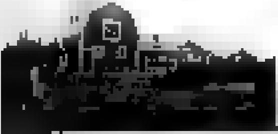

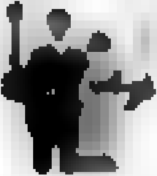

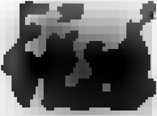

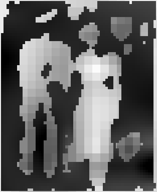

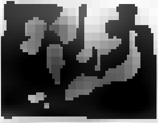

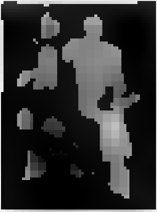

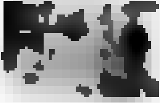

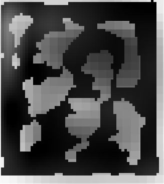

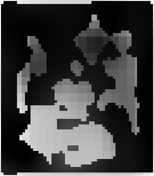

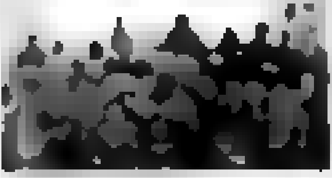

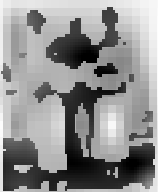

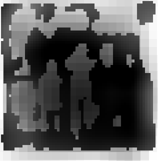

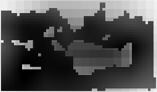

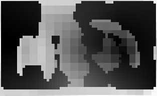

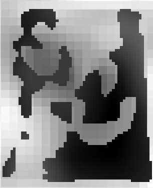

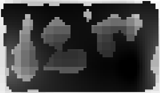

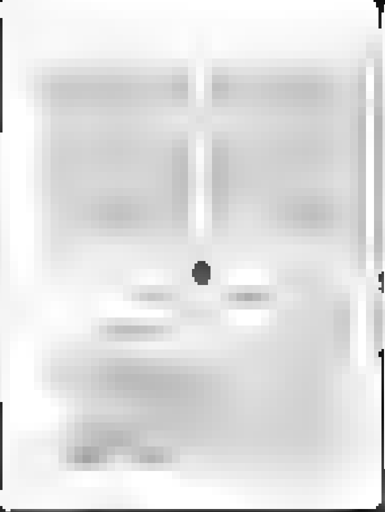

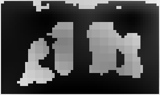

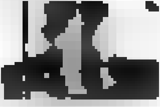

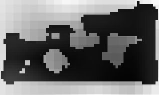

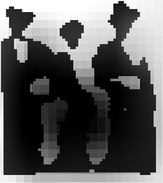

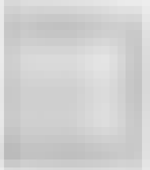

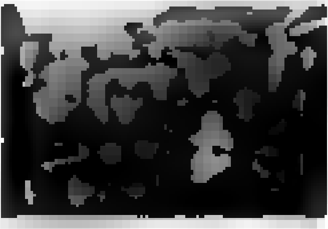

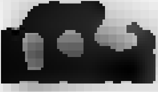

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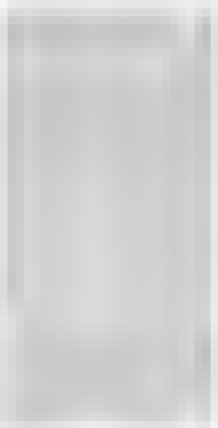

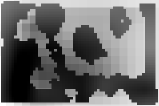

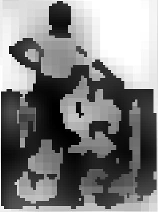

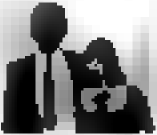

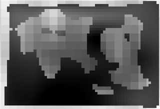

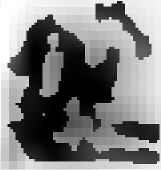

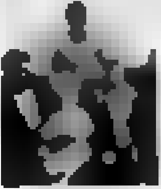

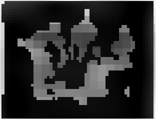

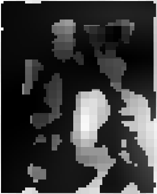

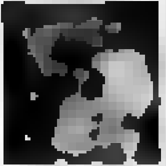

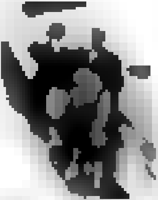

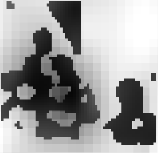

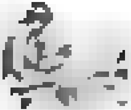

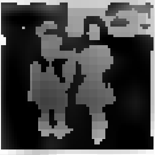

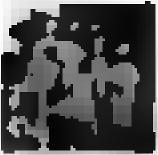

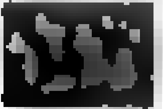

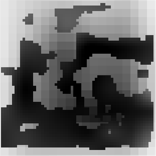

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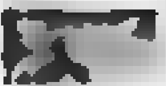

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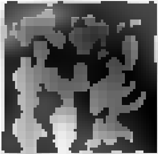

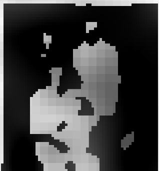

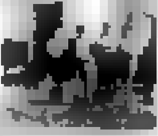
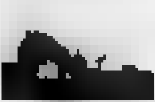
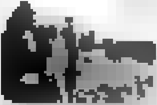

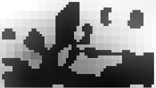

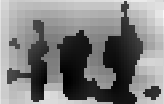

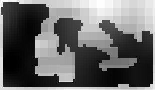

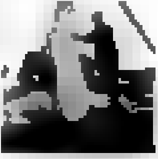

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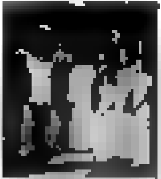

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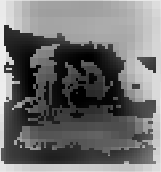

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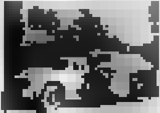

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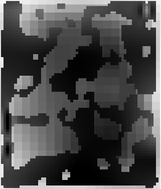

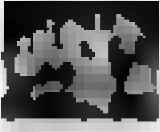

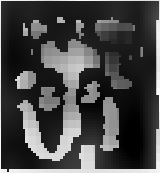

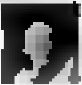

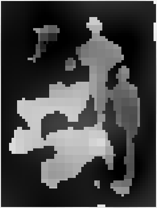

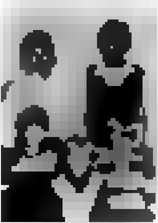

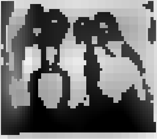

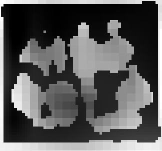

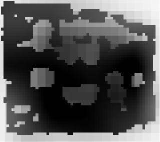

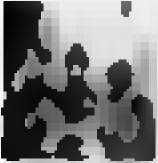

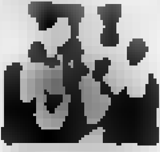

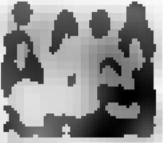

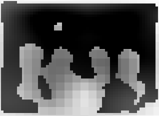

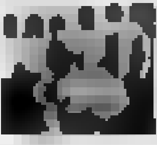

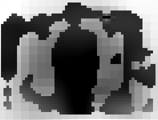

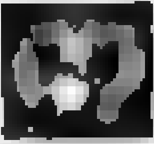

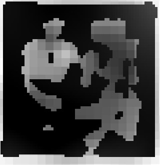

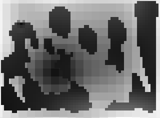

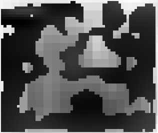

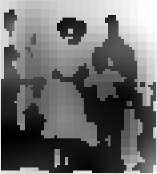

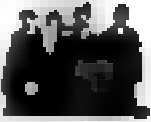

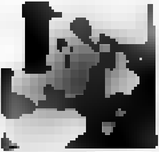

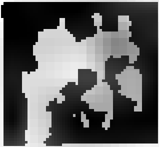

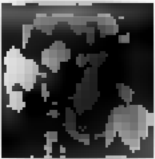

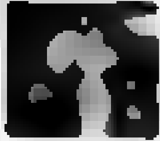

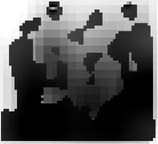

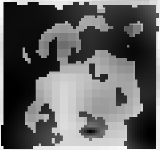

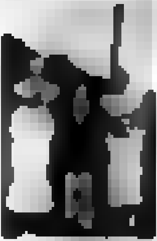

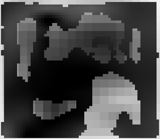

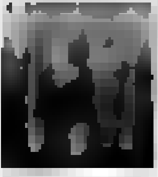

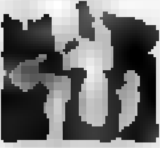

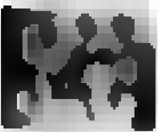

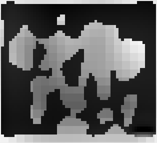

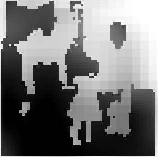

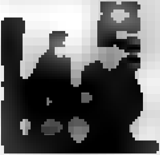

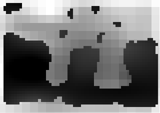

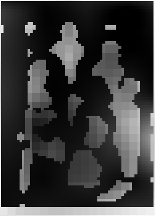

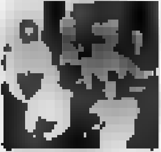

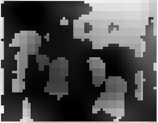

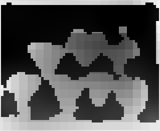

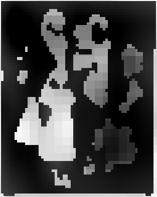

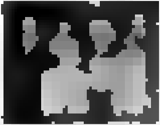

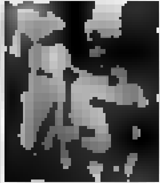

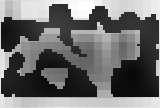

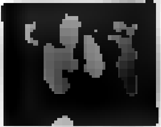

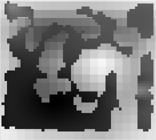

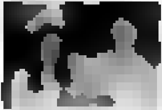

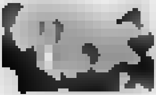

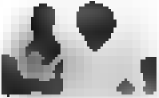

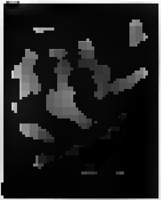

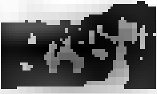

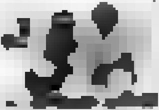

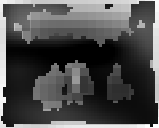

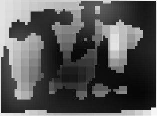

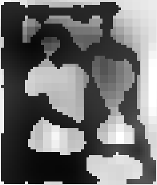

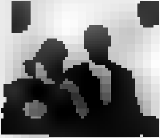

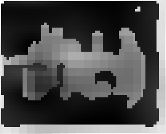

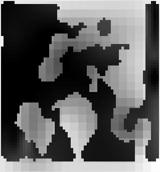

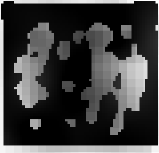

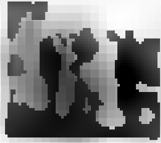

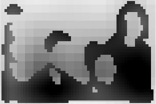

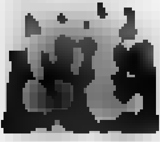

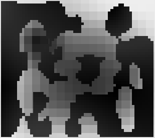

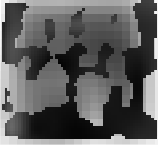

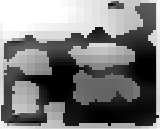

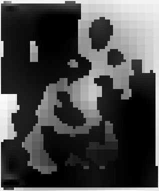

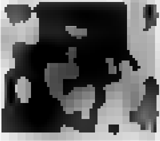

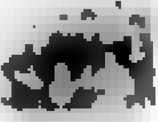

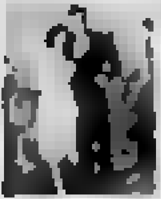

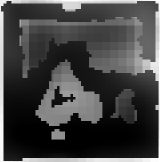

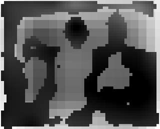

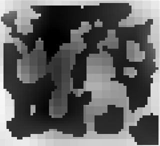

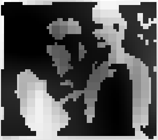

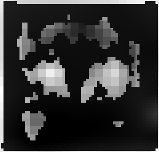

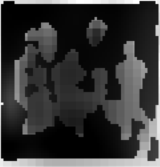

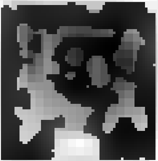

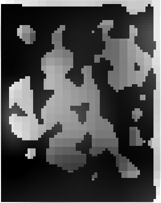

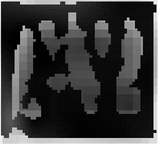

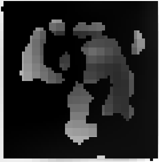

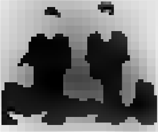

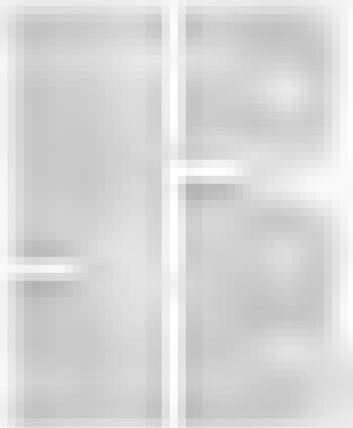

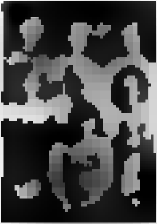

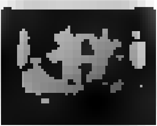

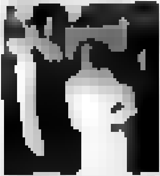

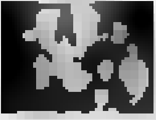

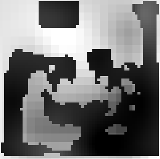

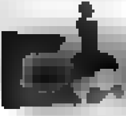

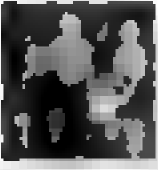

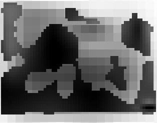

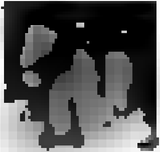

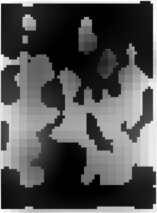

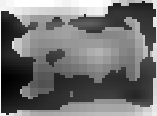

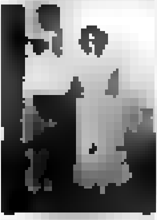

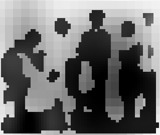

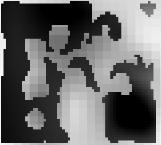

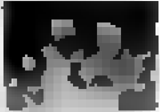

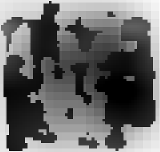

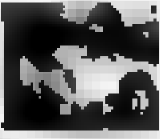

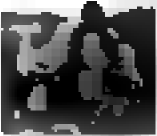

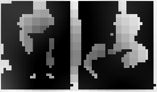

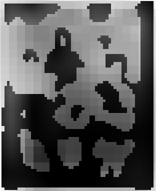

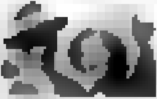

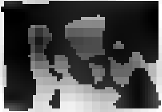

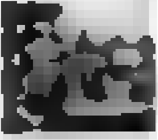

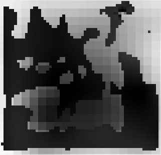

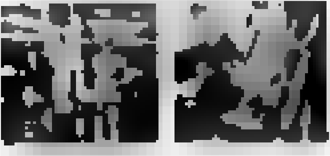

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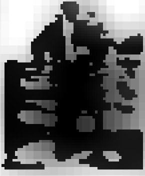

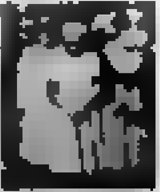

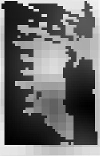

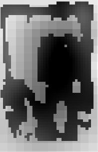

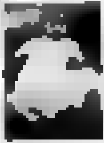

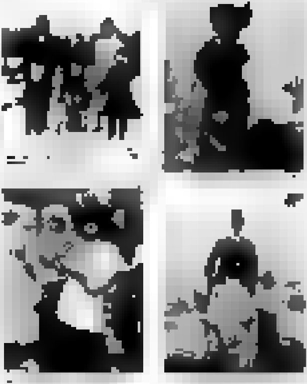

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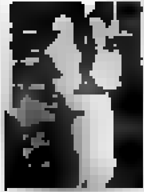

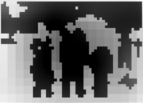

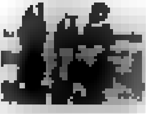

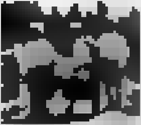

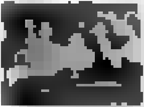

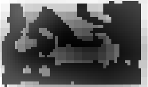

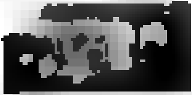

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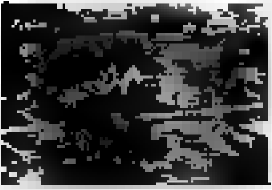

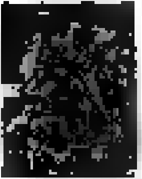

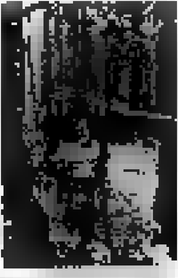

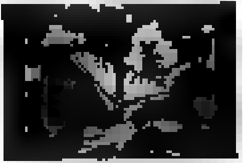

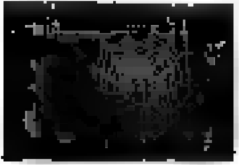

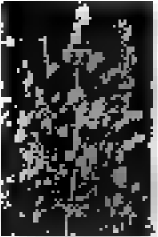

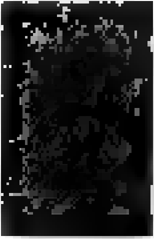

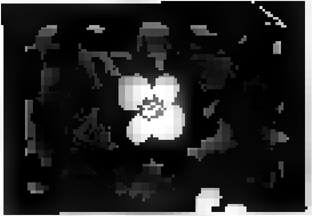

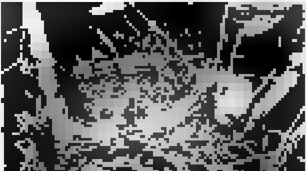

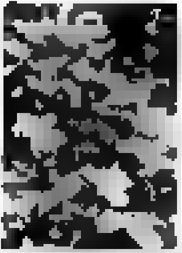

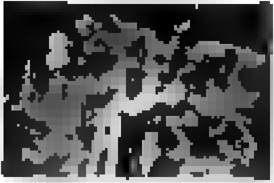

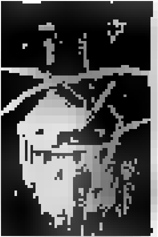

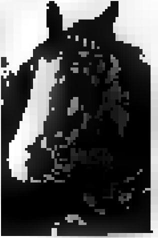

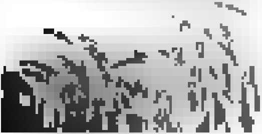

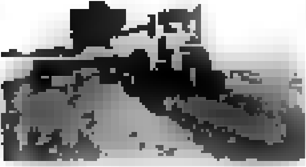

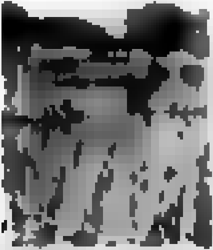

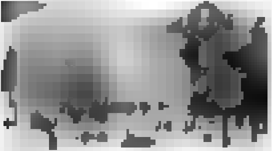

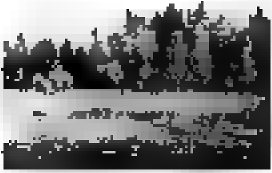

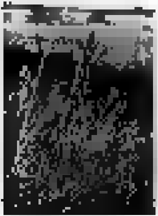

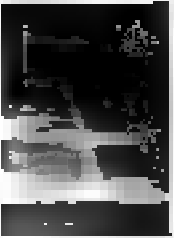

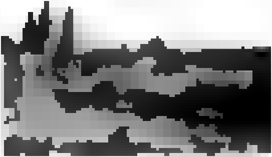

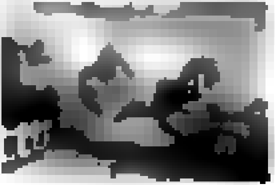

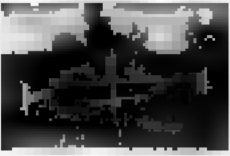

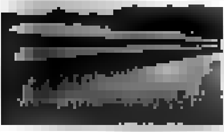

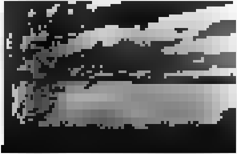

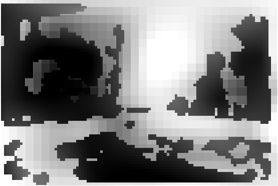

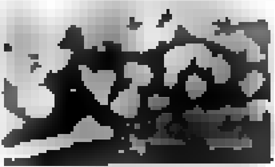

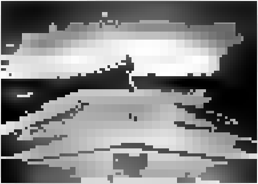

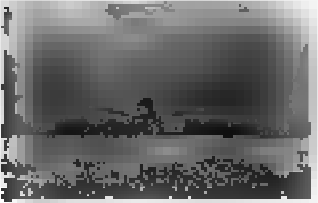

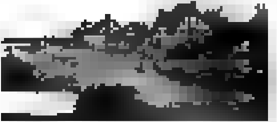

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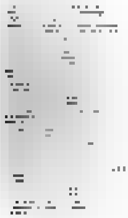
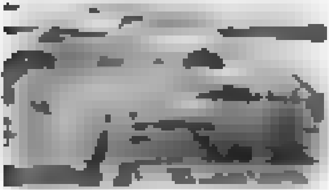
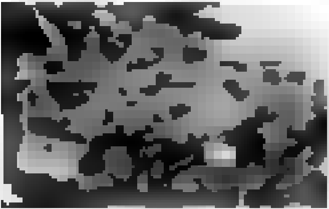


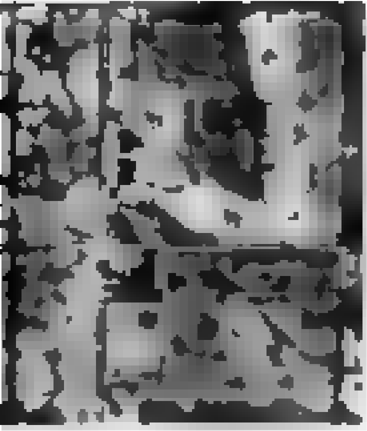
Part Three

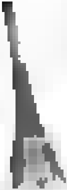
Community Growth

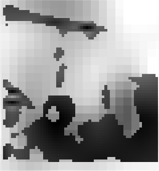
Daily Life

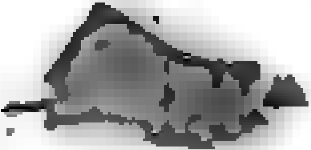


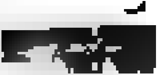


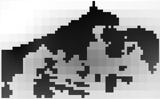


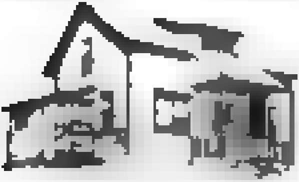


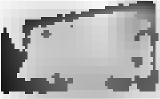


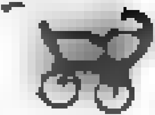


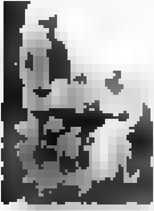


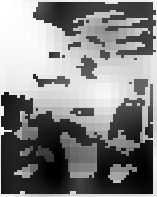


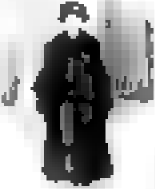


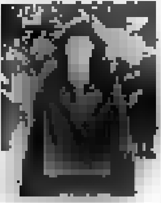


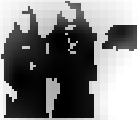


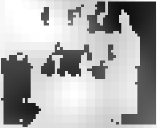


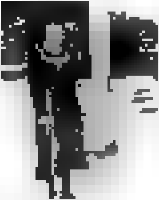


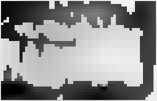


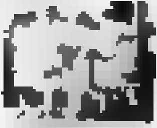


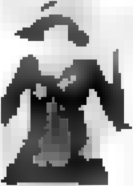


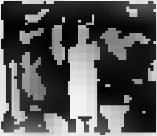












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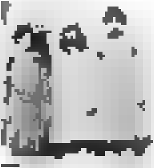

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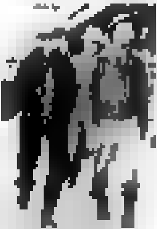

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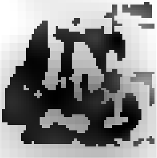

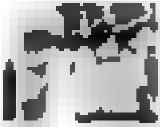

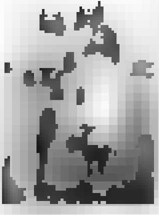

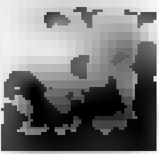

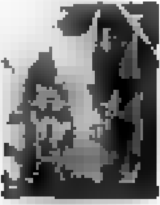

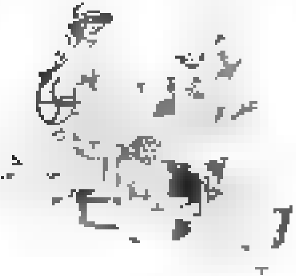

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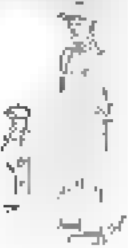

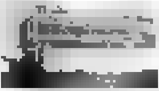

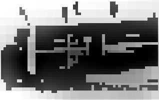

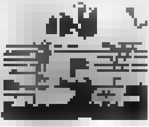

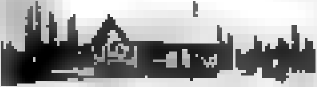

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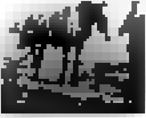

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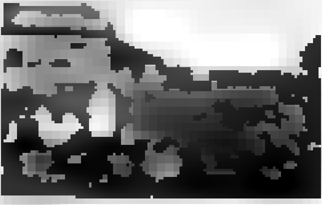

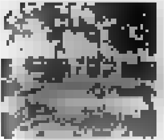

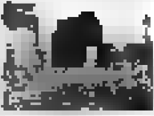

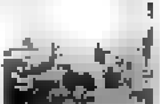

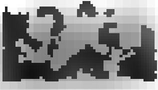

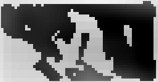

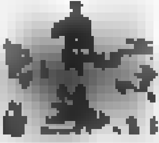

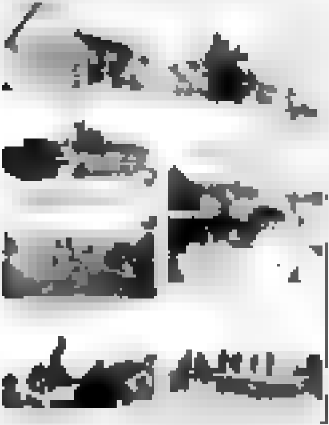

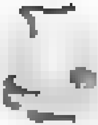

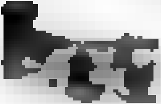

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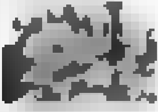
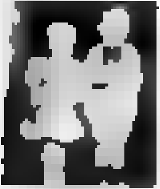
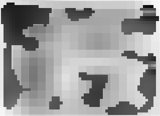
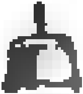
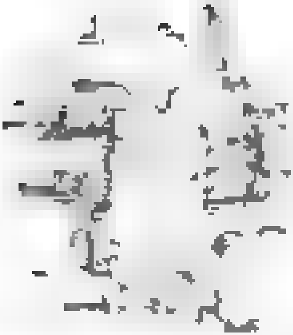
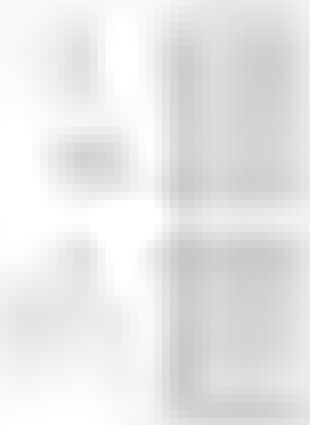




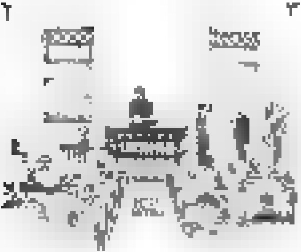


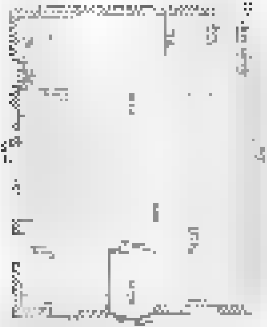


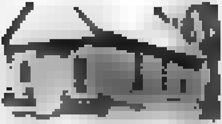


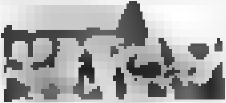


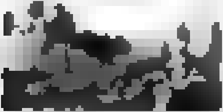
Pulpit and Pew

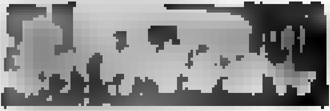


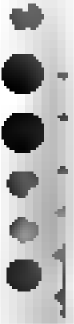


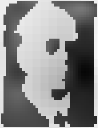


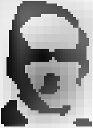


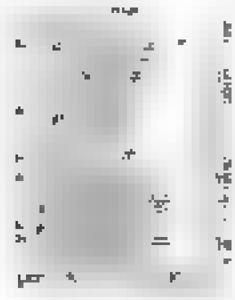












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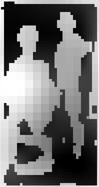

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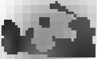

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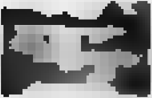

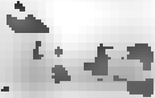

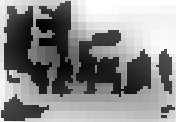

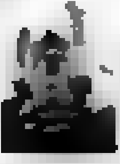

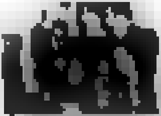

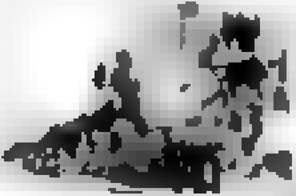

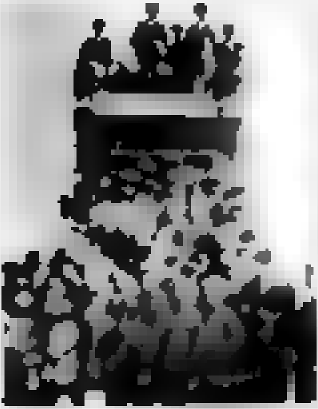

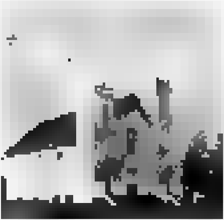

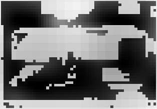

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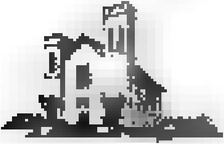

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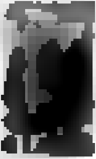

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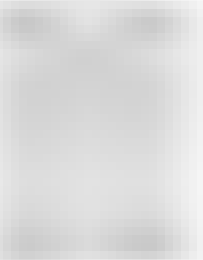

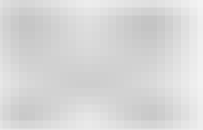

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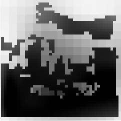

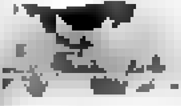

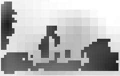

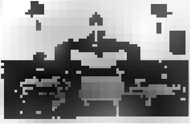

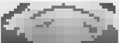

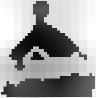

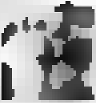

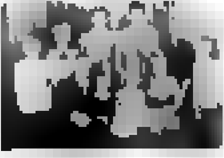

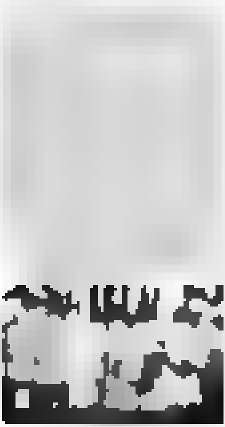

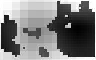

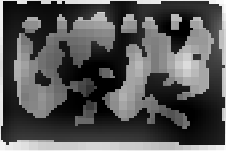

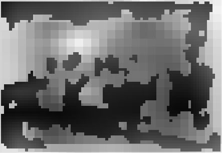

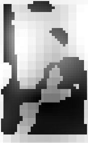

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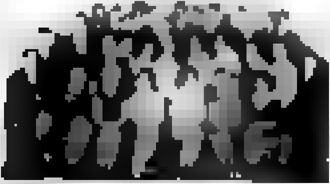

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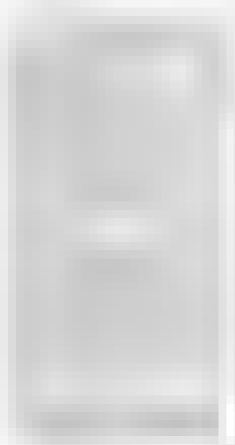
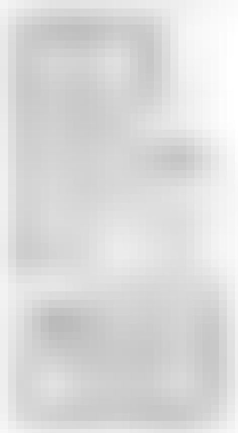
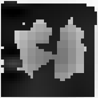
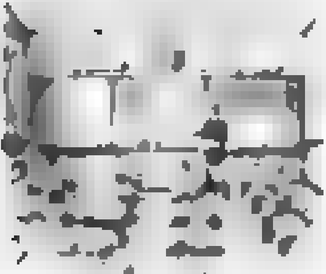
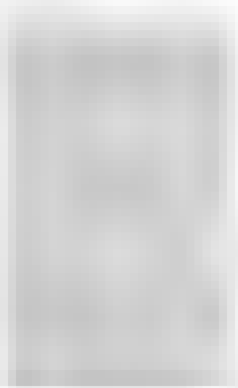






Notes and Scrap Facts





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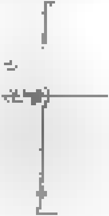

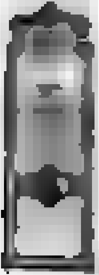

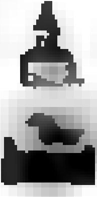

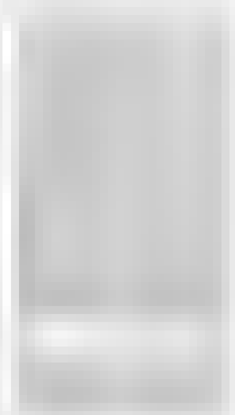

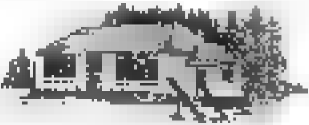

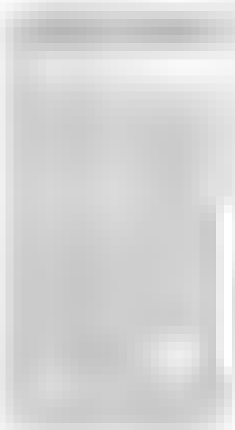

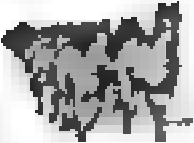

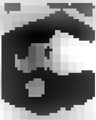

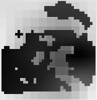

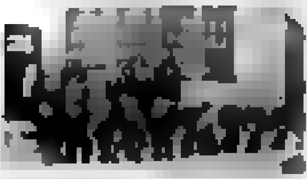

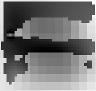

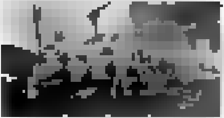

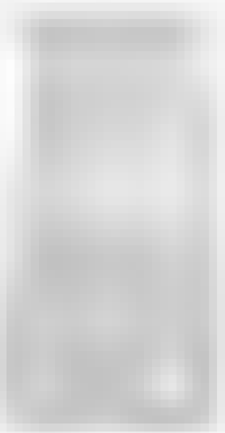

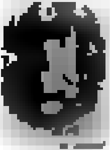

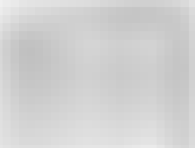

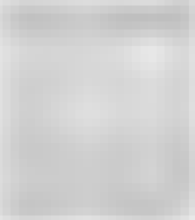

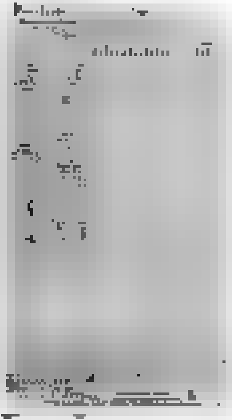

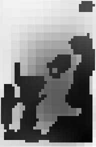

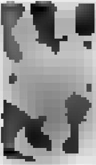

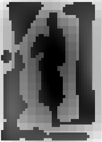

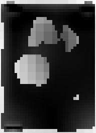

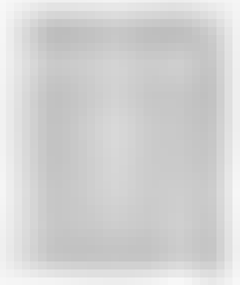

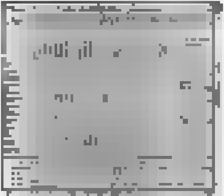

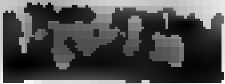

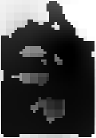

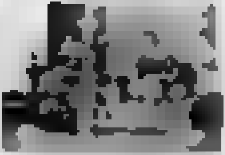

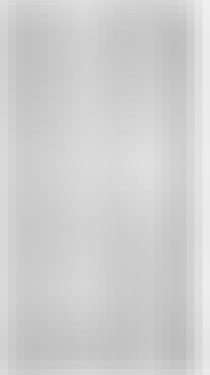

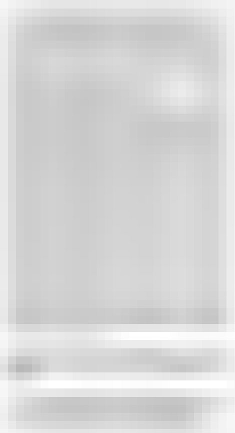

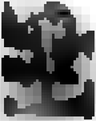

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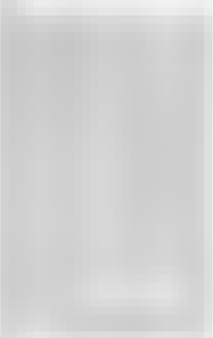

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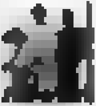

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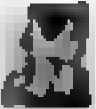

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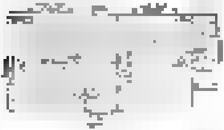

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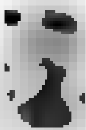

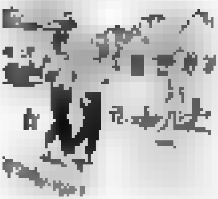

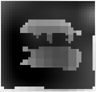

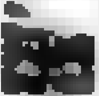

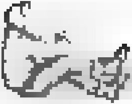

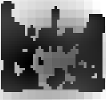

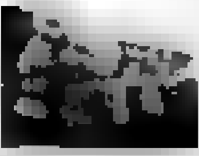

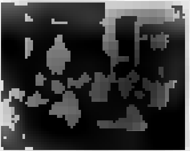

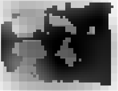

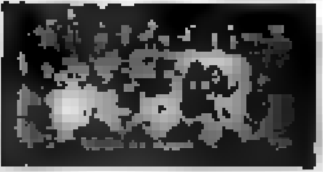

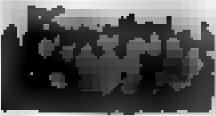

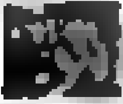

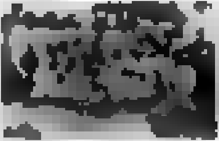

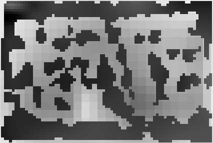

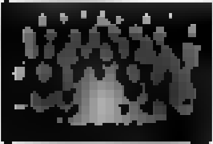

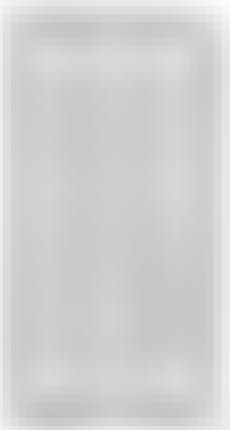

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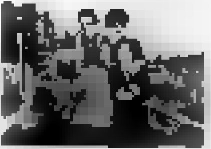

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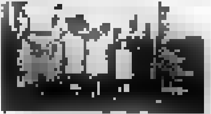

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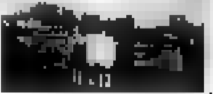

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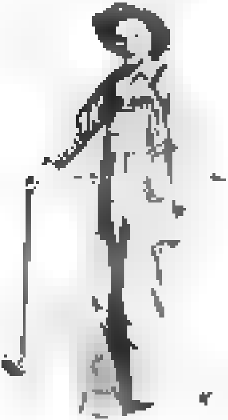

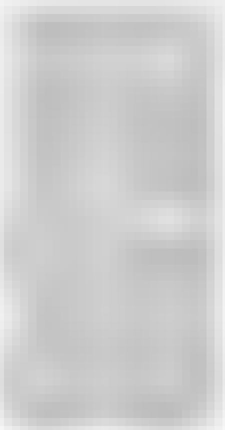

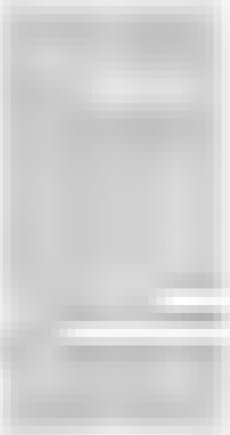

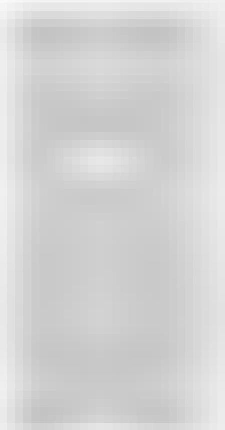

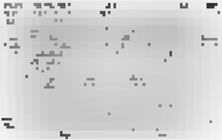

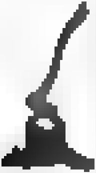

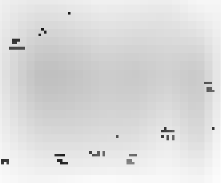

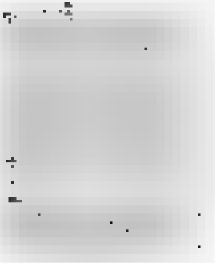

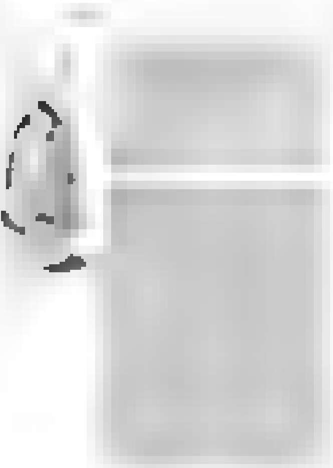

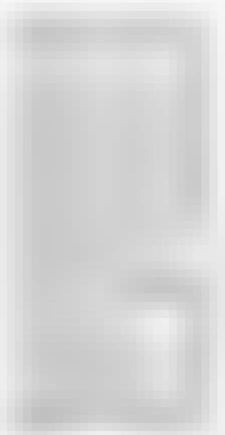

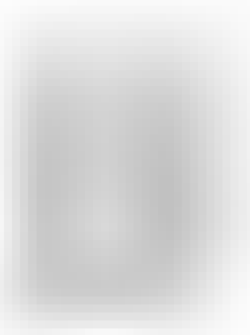

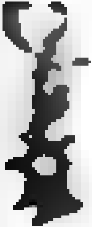

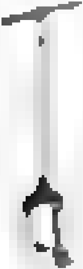

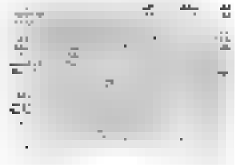

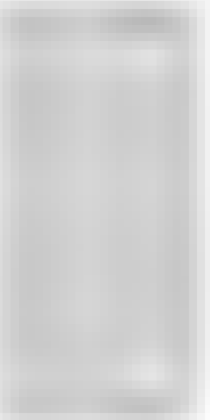

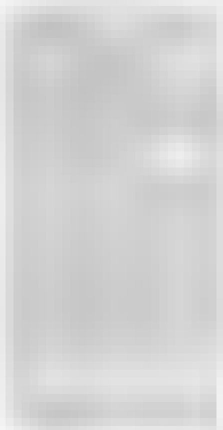

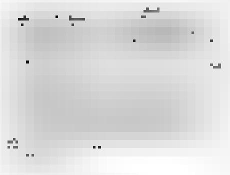

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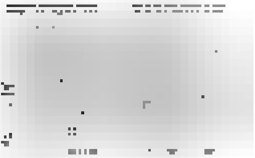

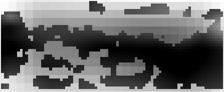

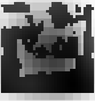

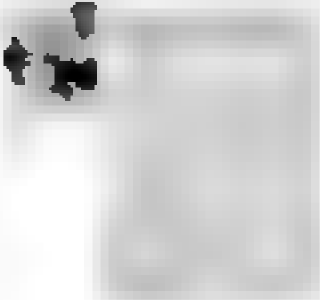

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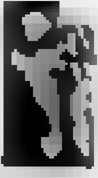

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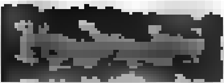

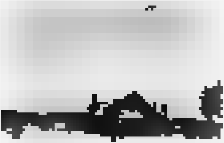

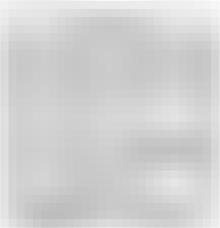

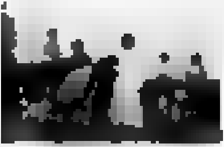

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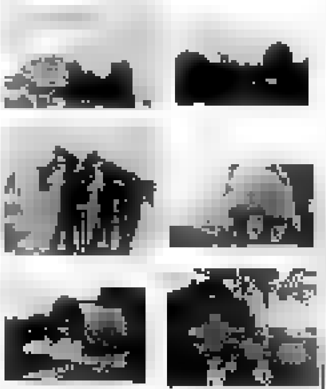

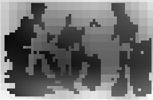

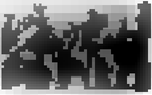

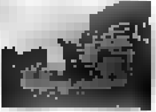

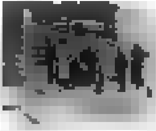

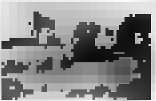

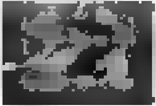

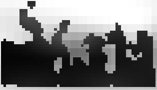

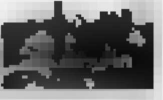

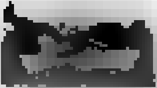

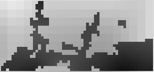

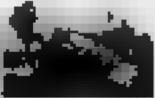

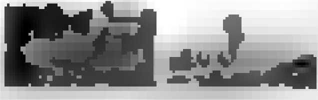

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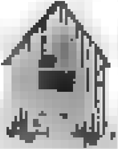

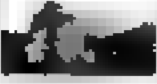

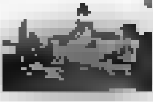

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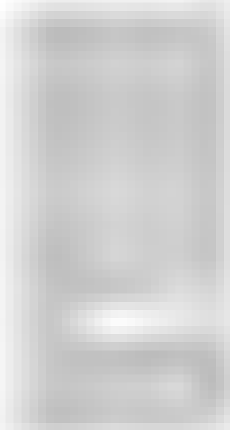

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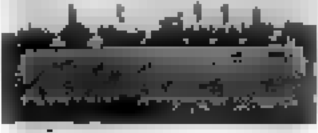

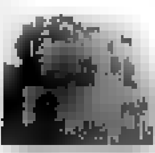

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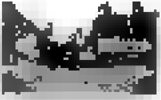

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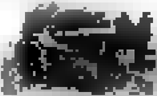

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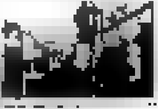

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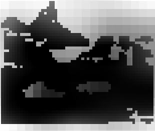

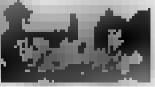

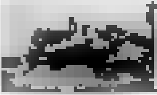

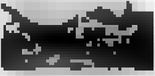

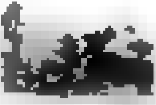

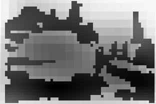

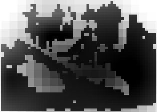

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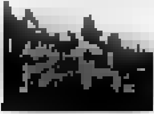

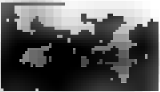

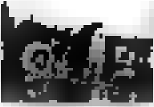

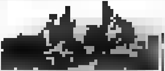

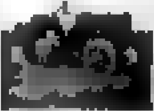

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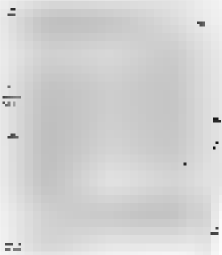

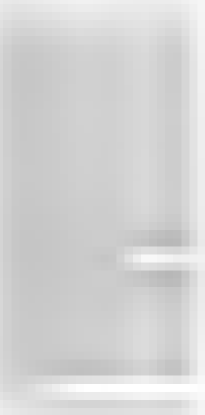

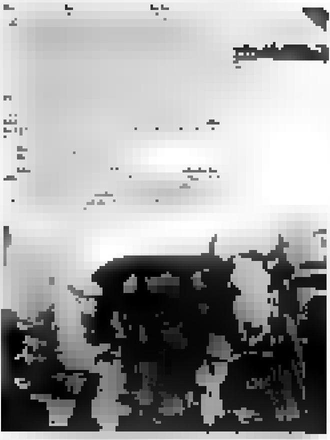

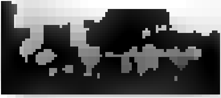

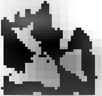

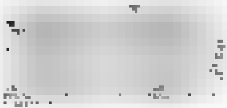

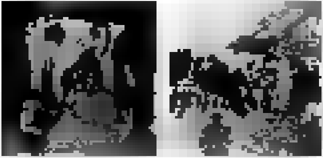

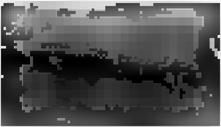

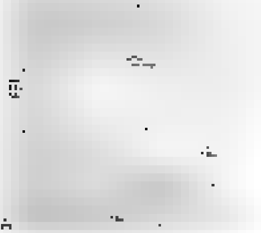

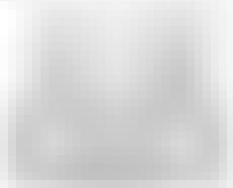

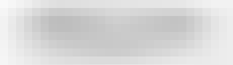

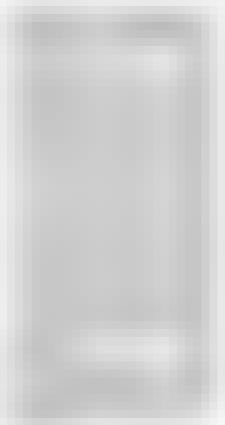

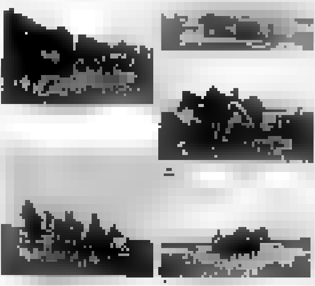

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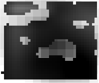

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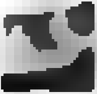

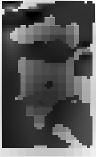

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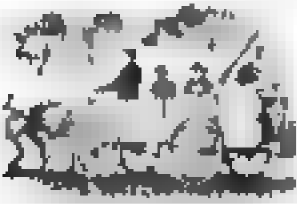

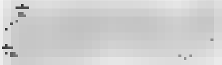

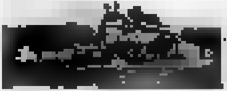

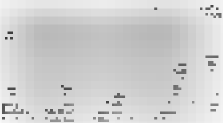

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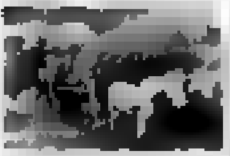

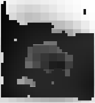

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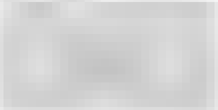

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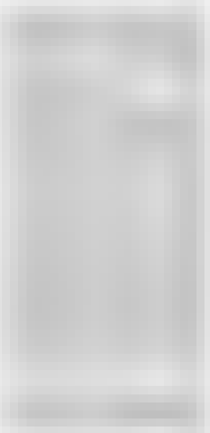

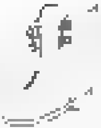

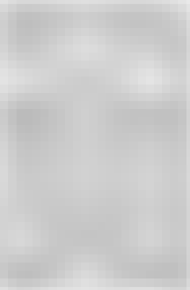

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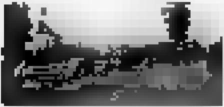

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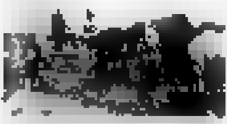

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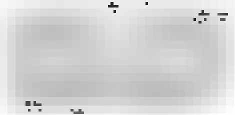
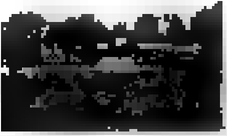
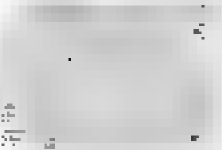
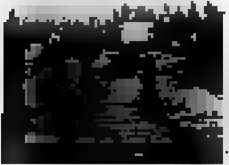
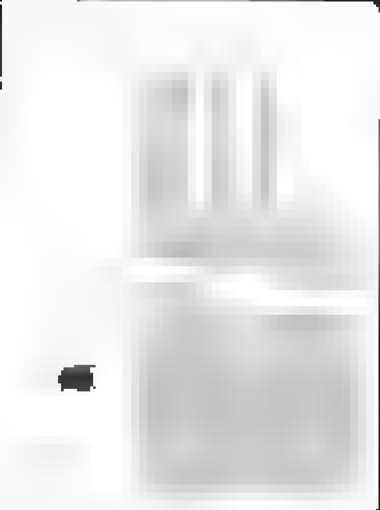
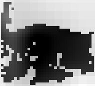


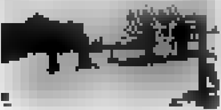


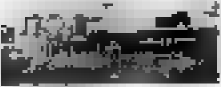


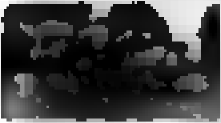


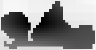


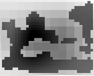


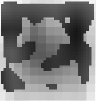


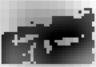


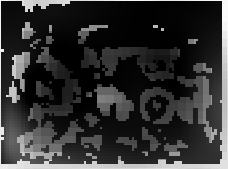


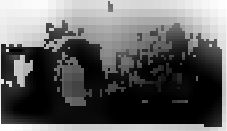


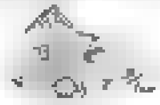


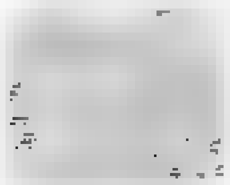


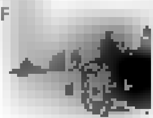


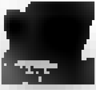


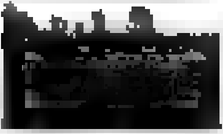


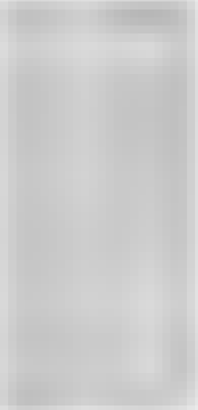


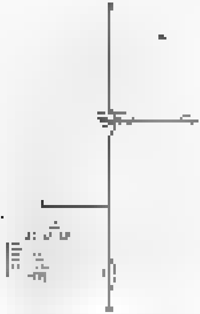


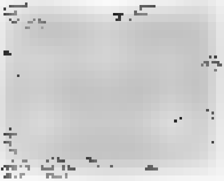


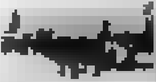


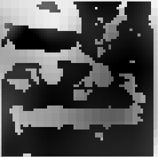


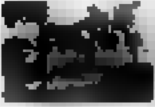


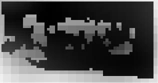


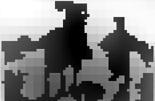


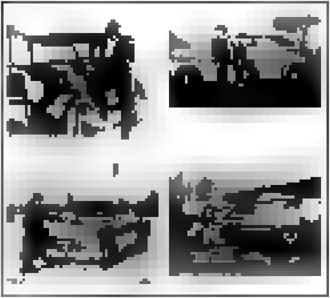




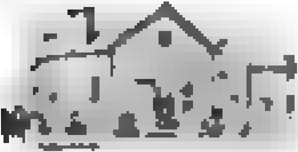


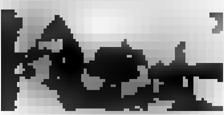


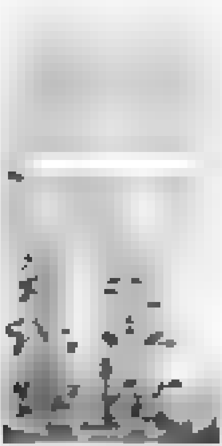


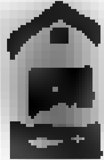


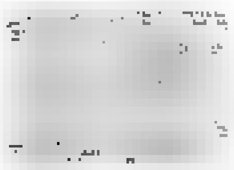
Co-operation and Enterprise











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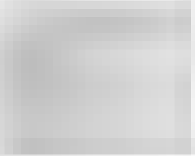

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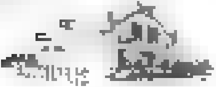

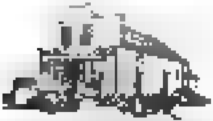

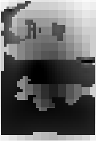

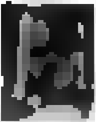

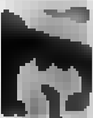

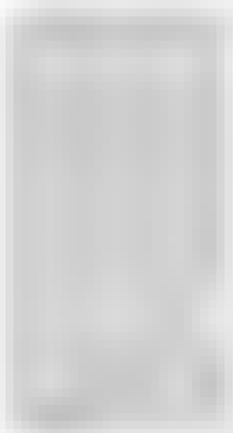

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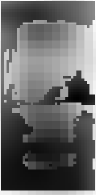

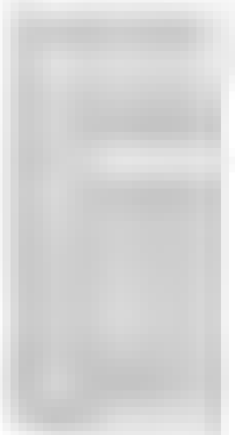

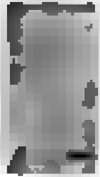

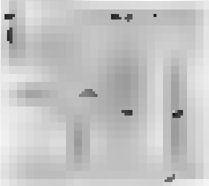

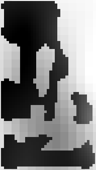

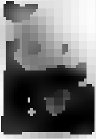

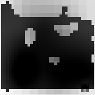

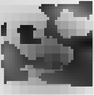

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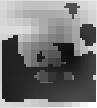

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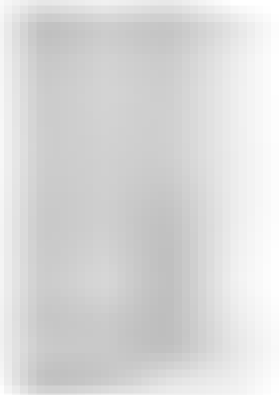

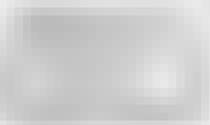

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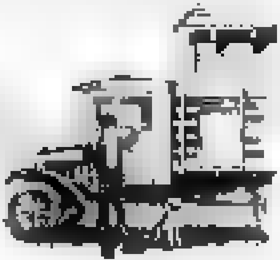

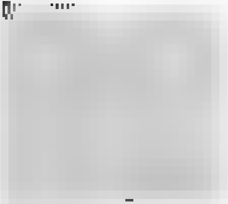

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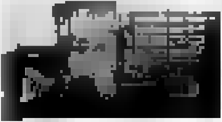

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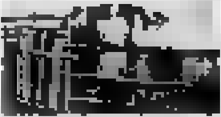

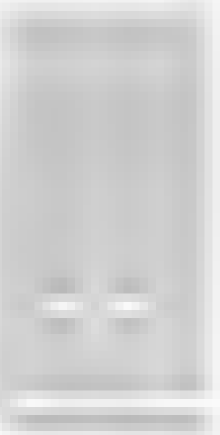

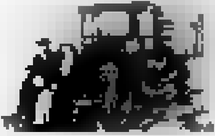

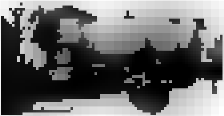

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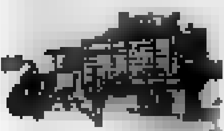

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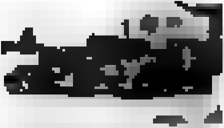

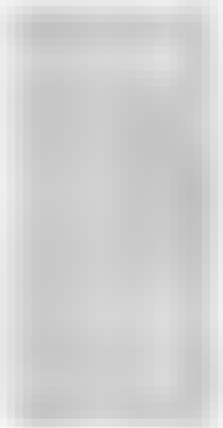

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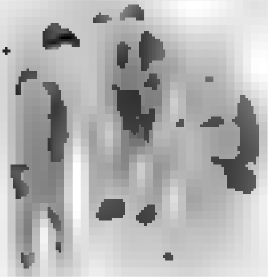

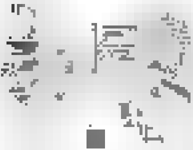

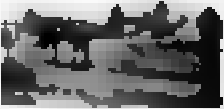

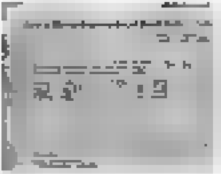

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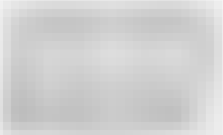

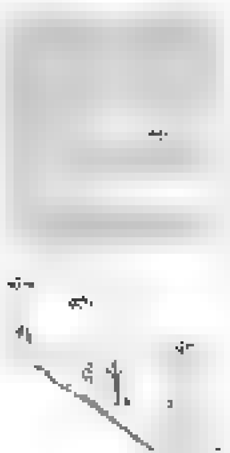

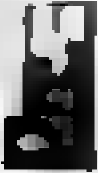

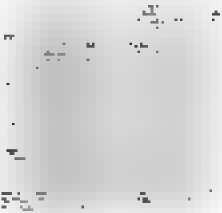

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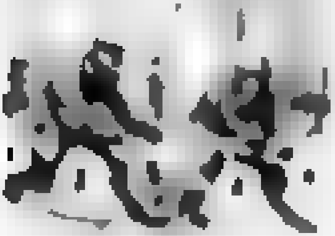

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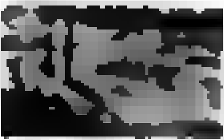

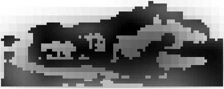

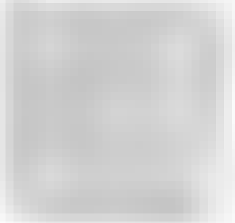

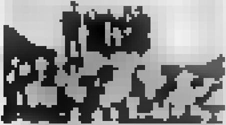

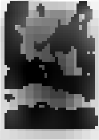

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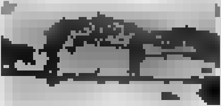

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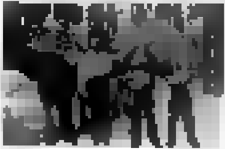

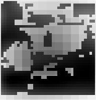

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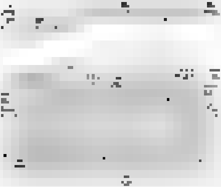

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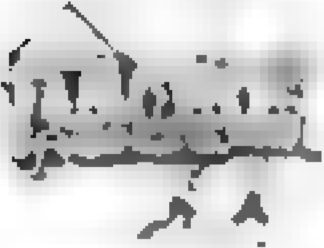

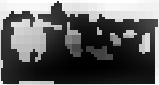

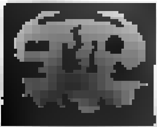

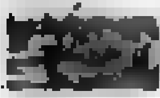

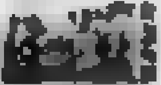

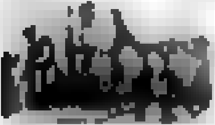

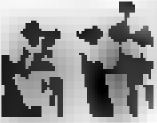

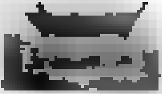

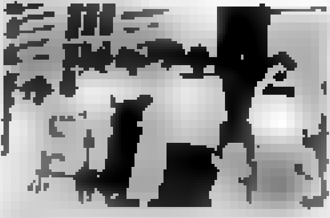

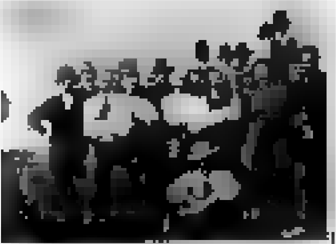

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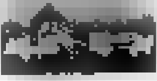

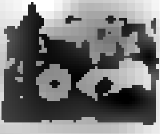

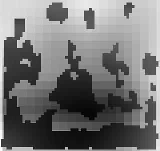

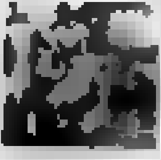

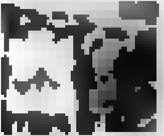

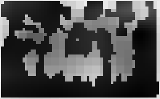

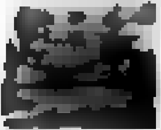

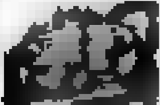

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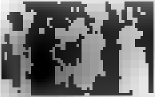

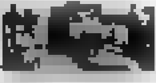

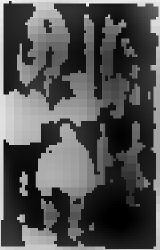

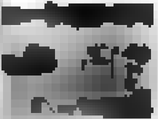

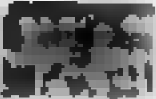

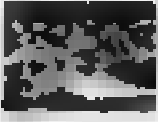

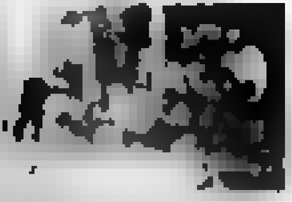

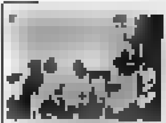

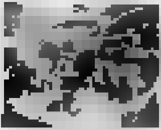

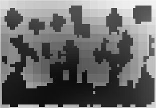

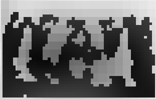

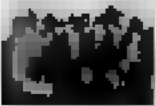

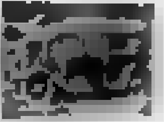

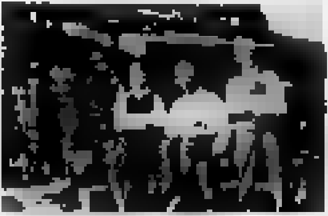

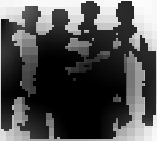

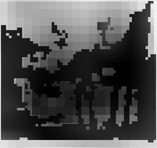

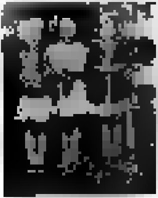

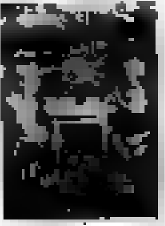

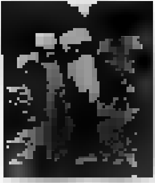

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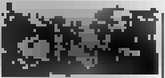

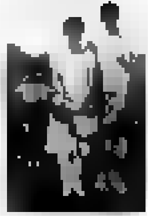

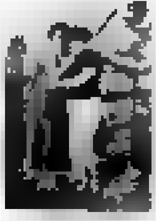

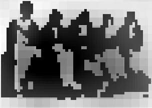

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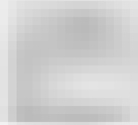

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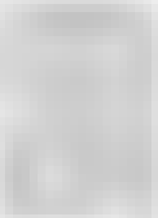

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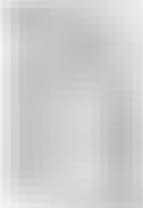

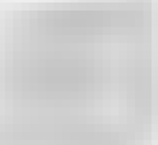

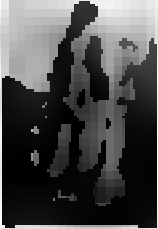

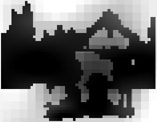

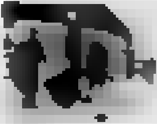

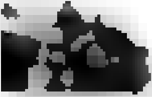

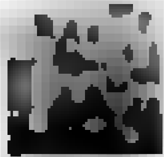

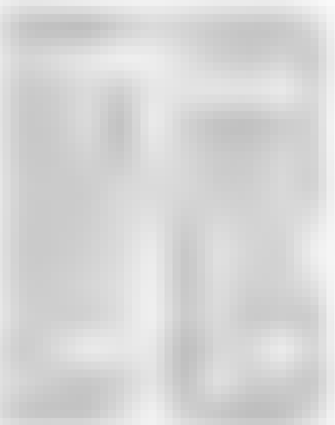

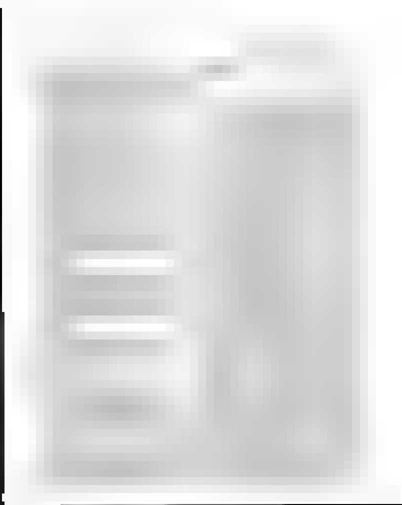

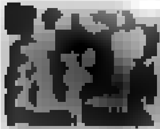

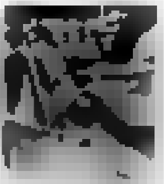

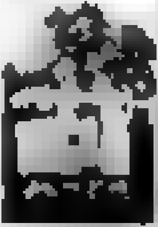

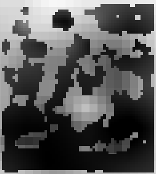

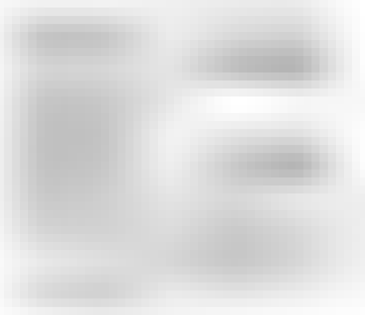

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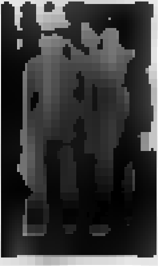

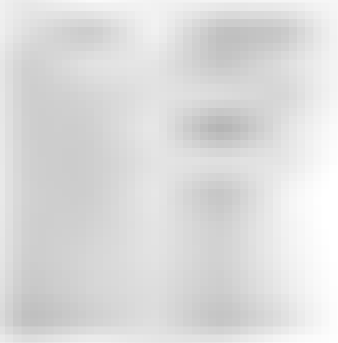

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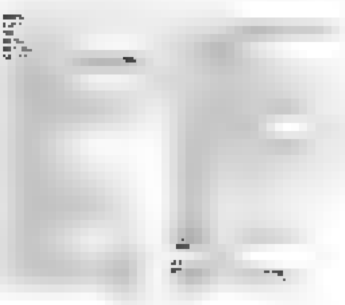

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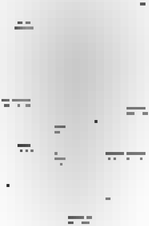

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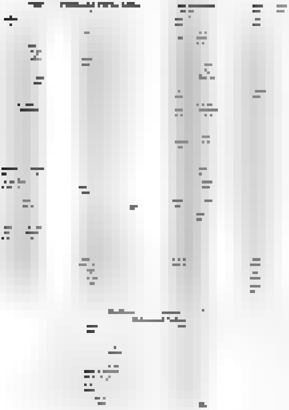

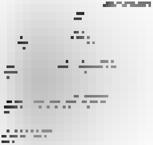

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